

Welcome to the Hair of the Dog podcast. My name is Heather Lahtinen, and today we are diving back into the coaching journals, and this is our fifth in a series. You can listen to previous episodes. They are 1 92, 1 96, 2 0 1, and 205. If you would like to get caught up, it's not imperative, but it could give you a general idea as to what our clients are working towards.

The coaching journals are two Elevate members that have agreed to share their experiences and let us follow along with everything that they are working on in their business. This includes their thoughts, ideas, plans, strategies, along with challenges and obstacles. They share specifics on number of clients, how they're getting those clients, sales goals, and their actual numbers in terms of what they are bringing into their business.

They get a business coaching call every month with me to talk through what's happening and where they need help. The goal of the coaching journals was not only to help these two photographers, but to share with everyone, which includes you, what it takes to build a successful pet photography business. Today you will be hearing from Christi Baker. You can find her at Christibakerphotography.com.

Christi is preparing for a major life event. She's having a baby. And in this conversation we worked through the transition from in-person sales to selling via a gallery. We also worked through a silent auction snafu and what she learned. You'll also hear from Monica Adelson. You can find her at [pup and me photo.com](http://pupandmephoto.com). Monica's brain presented her with many questions in this call,

and some of them were, how am I going to pay my bills? Why am I not booking clients? What is stopping me from making a thousand dollars a day? How can I get out of this anxious loop? We explore all of that and more, and if you are seeking assistance in developing your business, please consider exploring our Elevate program. I am extremely enthusiastic about guiding you through any hurdles you may encounter and supporting you in creating a successful and flourishing pet photography business.

And what makes us different from any other photography business program is that, well, like everyone else, we provide you with all the checklists and strategies. Everyone does that, but we also know how to support you when none of it works. Essentially, when the standard approaches fall short, we step in with tailored guidance and support to address your specific challenges.

Make sure you check out Elevate at hairofthedogacademy.com/elevate. I hope you enjoy these coaching calls. Welcome to the Hair of the Dog podcast. If you are a pet photographer, ready to make more money and start living a life by your design, you've come to the right place. And now your host pet photographer, travel addict, chocolate martini connoisseur,

Nicole Begley. Okay. Monica, give us an update. How are things going? Yeah, things are going really good. So we're not quite at goal for August, but that's okay. Like that, that happens. So, well, There's still 10 days left, Right? There's still 10 days left. Yes, there's still time. We are launching our membership again for,

to like bring in some more people. So hopefully that will boost our revenue for the month. So, yes. Where may I ask where you're at for the month? Yes, we are. Oh my gosh, I think I just texted it to my partner. I think we were at like 6,000. I can run my, And the goal was 16 per month,

correct? Yes. Yeah. Okay. Okay. We just need to generate a thousand dollars a day for the next 10 days. Easy. Yeah. Easy, easy peasy. I mean, Why not? Right? So on that note, I went in and was like, okay, I need to like change my mindset on this. I talked with Angela doing the one-on-one coaching with her because I was like,

okay, I'm going to use, it's getting towards the end of Elevate. So I was like, I need to use up all my coaching, like everyone does, right? Yes. Everyone's scheduling everything. And like, we found that like, I was like feeling very anxious about money because like, I'm not hitting my numbers this month, right? And I was like feeling very anxious.

'cause she asked me a question about inquiries and I gave her my income number and she's like, hold on, that's a problem. So, but it really helped me change my mindset. I'm like, okay, so August, I'm gonna spend some time leaning into training, leaning in the marketing, and seeing like what I can do to set myself up for success for September,

because I have zero bookings for September. And I'm like, why am I not booked? And I've had like low inquiries for August, and I'm trying to think like, maybe it was because like in May and in June I was very busy and, and maybe wasn't as marketing as hard as I was in those, you know how there's like three months,

look, look back three months where you were? Yes. And like, see Yes. Where what, what were you doing? I was very busy photographing and making a lot of money, and then probably wasn't marketing as hard as I should, Right? Yeah. So we implemented a marketing calendar and for the next year, so just did that yesterday,

like plugged in, like in-person events, content creation, like all that stuff, like promotional, like we mapped it all out. So that's good. But it's just a matter of like getting it out there now. Yeah. Okay. Tell me about the anxious thoughts about the money that you were experiencing. Yeah, I, I get, I get anxious because like,

like I know I can do it, right? And I'm like, okay, how do I, I know I can do it again. So what is stopping me from making that thousand dollars a day? Like, and, and thoughts behind that. I get really anxious because like, I wanna, I wanna pay my bills. I feel like, kind of like when I reached out to you about the one-on-one coaching,

I started to feel really anxious because I was like, I don't know if I can pay her next month. And that made me feel very like, embarrassed and like shameful because I was like, I wanna pay you 'cause you're amazing. You know what I mean? So I was like, I don't wanna, I know I can pay you and I,

I know like that will give me the fire, the motivation too. But like the back of my head, I was like, but September, I have nothing booked. How am I gonna pay Heather?

You know what I mean? So, well, Anxious, Like It's important to your brain, presented you with several questions there. Oh my Gosh.

Somebody like, how am I going to pay my bills? Why am I not getting bookings? So we just need to start answering the questions. Yeah. Like, okay, I wanna come back to that in a second. But I wanna go back to the feeling of anxious is like when we say to ourselves, I'm not going to be able to pay my bills,

or I'm not going to have the money, or how am I, yeah. The actual thought you're thinking is that I'm not going to be able to pay my bills. Yeah. So Be very clear with the thought. Yes. Yeah. Because that's the thought driving it. And my brain is the filter is how, right? How, Yeah. The filter is the question.

The brain's like, well, Monica, you're not bringing in money. You're not, you don't have inquiries, you don't have as many bookings. How are you gonna do this? That was all presented to you by your brain, you know? It's like, thank you very much. Thank you. And that, But then you started to feel anxious.

Yeah. But the Thought driving, the feeling like the, like the anxious feeling is, I'm not going to be able to figure this out because in the same breath you said, I wrote this down, you said, I know I can do it. Yeah. I've done it before. I can do it again. I know I can do it.

But let's not mix these two thoughts together because one thought is, I can't do it. And it leaves you feeling anxious. There's another thought. I know I can do this. If you think that thought, what do you feel? Like, so much relief and like, inspiration. Like I don't feel Oh, Inspired. Yeah. Okay. But think,

so what I'm doing is I'm building two models on a sheet of paper. So one model is the, is the anxious feeling driven by the thought. I, I don't know how to do this. I'm not gonna be able to do this. And then what do you do when you're feeling anxious and scared? Oh, I spiral. Like I just go into this suck spiral state,

and I have to like, I have to like journal my way out of it. So I have to like sit down and like be like, hold on. No. Like, let's check in. But yeah, I definitely like you get into that terrible mindset where like you're not, it reflects on like your social media as well, and like maybe your marketing,

like it comes off Everything. So Yeah. I always say it oozes from your pores. Like it just comes out of you so you're feeling anxious and you're spiraling and you feel stuck and you're not sure what to do. And then what happens is things don't get done. You're not marketing your business, at least not effectively. You know, you might be taking some action,

but it's certainly not inspired action. And then you just stay in this loop. Exactly. That's why we, I was like, I'm not gonna let myself do that. And we wrote out a whole marketing calendar for the next 12 months to like, you know, have a plan, so we're right. So then that way I'm not doing this last minute,

like, I need to run a promo or a whatever and just like feeling rushed. Yes. You

know what I mean? Yes, yes. Running the scarcity. So we wrote down like a whole list. We brainstormed a whole list of marketing stuff or in-person events that we wanna go to, all that. And then we categorized it by like what type of events they're,

I learned this on the hair of the dog academy. I went in and like did their calendar training. So yeah, I was like this, but it calmed me down so much, like writing it all out and just seeing like, I have a plan for every month. We have different types of marketing in place and that's very much like my go-to thing that I like to say.

Like, I'm taking action every day towards my goals. Like, and that was me, like laying it all out so I can calm down. Okay. When you did that, when you took all of that action, how did that feel? Oh my gosh, so much relief and like clarity. Like, so much clarity because it's like, it's right in front of me.

Like I have a plan. I know what I'm doing now. It's not like chaos. It's not chaos. It's, it's inspired action. Exactly. Yeah. It's planned and yeah. Strategic. This is so interesting. Did you, did you recognize that when you planned that calendar, you went straight to the action line? Oh, You went to like,

I'm gonna take all this action. Yeah. And what I was like teasing out there was you're feeling inspired and the thought is, I have a plan. You said that. Yep. When you are thinking, I have a plan, I know this plan works, I know I can do it. And you're feeling inspired, you created a calendar. Yeah.

And then you'll just execute on that. Right? Okay. So the important thing here is like everybody always tells me all of the action they're gonna take that they say, Heather, I know I need to market my business. I need to work on my pricing, my website. I need to do, they go straight to the action line, which is,

which is great. Yeah. But I'm really more concerned with what you're thinking. Yeah. That's driving that. Yeah. Hmm. Are there any other thoughts that drove that action? The one, the one I heard you say was, I have a plan, but were there any other, I think it's mostly like what you're, I think it's like,

I want more consistency as well. And so I often feel like I don't, I, I'm not sure if it's like the way my brain works or maybe just because like it's my first year full time in business. Like I don't have a clear plan, if that makes sense. And so like every month, like I hear something new, so like,

I just signed up for the photo book project like Jess did, and like, that like wasn't planned. Do you know what I mean? Like, I, I want everything to be very planned moving forward to give. Okay. Why more? Ah, because I, I don't like, I don't mind like, some sporadic stuff happening, but I don't like the feeling of creating a promotion or whatever out of a scarcity mindset.

I don't think it goes well. It makes me, yeah. Like I don't, I don't wanna be in that position where I'm putting myself there to make something. You know what I mean? I want it to be, yeah. But does not having a plan always equal something

being done from scarcity? No. No. 'cause the calendar contest I Right.

Was I put that together in like two days. Like, it was just totally unplanned and last minute. But it, but it didn't come from a place of scarcity. I felt like it came from a place of like, I wanted to like, help my rescue and I really loved the idea of like raising funds and also making some money. So,

so, okay, But why was, why is that a, why did that work? Why is that okay? Yeah, because that's not consistency, that's not planned. Right. That's so true. I think it worked because it wasn't born out of like a scrambling feeling of like, I need to make this money right now. You know what I mean?

Like, I, I wasn't looking, being like, my books are empty the next month. Like, I wasn't looking at it that way. It was just like, even though they're sounds like fun. Right? Even though they're So how Did you do that? I think it was because it was fun, right? So what I was excited. Yeah.

What if it, I mean, what you had said was, I want consistency, but what if you didn't? And what if you didn't need it? What if it wasn't consistency? It was just trust that things like the book project come up, you get excited about them, you execute from a really clean place, clean thinking, you know, and it just,

and it works because it's fun and exciting. So maybe it's not consistency that's, Yeah. Just finding things that like actually make me happy and that I feel really good about, that I'm excited about. Yeah. What if there's a balance between having your plan, like you planned out the marketing calendar and creating some consistency where you could Yes, of course.

And leaving space for creativity and inspiration. Oh, I like that. What if that's a good one? What, what if I did that? What If I, what if the thing, I think I need consistency in a plan. Like you said that as if it's like, like that's what it is. Period. That's, yeah. I just,

yeah, that's the answer. I just wanna question the assumption that that's really what you need. Because in the case of the book project, this goes against both of those things, Right? It really does. Yeah. Isn't that so interesting? Yeah. So maybe it's something different. Yeah. Yeah. That's a good point. Maybe, you know,

consistency. Like, okay, who doesn't love listen consistency. You could get from a corporate job and you could get a steady paycheck, but you'd be in jail. So Yeah. There's consistency. Yes. Maybe, maybe that's, maybe that's not it. Yeah. You like to plan because you like to feel in control. Yeah. It's a way of controlling.

Yeah. But also like, yeah, I think oftentimes I forget about like what I did the previous year, so I'm like scared of forgetting like what I did was successful. So I'm trying to like write out those things too. Like, like going back to the calendar contest, like writing that out. Like when did I start that? How did that project go?

Was it, you know, good for everybody. So I feel like I often like, forget, like

looking back, I'm like, what did I do last year? Why was I so busy? So I'm trying to like, Well, hey, that's actually a great question. You actually have evidence and proof that you can do this. Yep. I really do.

So is it possible that just like, that, that feeling of anxiousness came from a thought that your brain presented you. That wasn't actually you by the way. It was just your brain saying like, oh, was your brain like gaslighting you? It was like, oh yeah. How are you gonna do that, Monica? Right. If you could just catch that faster,

sooner and say, I know I can do it. I've done it in the past, I know what I'm doing. And, and this is all just a matter of me thinking better thoughts. Yeah. And I just need to shift the thought. This is just a matter of me thinking better thoughts. I don't need to believe everything my brain presents me with.

Yeah. I'm going to stop listening to it and start talking to it. So when it says how you're gonna do this, when it presents you with any question, answer the question. Yeah. This is how I'm gonna, this is how I'm gonna make the money. This is how I'm gonna get coaching. Yeah. This is how I'm gonna invest.

Yeah. This is how I'm gonna market. Get clients. Because you actually did that. You Yeah. You, you went in right into action of creating the marketing calendar. Yeah. Yeah. That came from a thought. You just didn't realize it. Yeah. And the thought was, I have a plan, I can create a plan. So you created a plan and you feel inspired by it.

Yeah. And then, and then everything starts working again until you brain presents you with another garbage thought. Right. And then You just, yeah. You just have to say like, I, I know I've told you this, but I'm always like, when my brain does that to me, I say, okay, your opinion is noted. Thank you.

I know you're just trying to keep me safe, but yeah, I'm gonna go ahead and pursue this anyway because everything is working. I know what I'm doing now. I, I mean, does it surprise anyone that you would have like a couple of really big months and then No. Yeah. Because Of what's written in the Big Leap. You Yes.

I have that on my list. You Hit an upper limit. Yeah. What Was, what was your highest month to date? 16,000. Yes. It was like a little over 16. Yeah. You Hit 16,000 and there was what, what, what mixture of thoughts and feelings around that. Oh my gosh. I felt like once I hit it,

like everyone was like, everyone was so excited. Right? And I was just sitting here and I was like, so what if I can't do it again? And I did that, that you, my brain didn't let me celebrate very much. Like I tried, you know what I mean? Like, I was like, I'm so excited. Yay.

But then also in the back of my mind, I was like, Ugh, are you sure? Two questions. Your brain just gave you two questions. Are you sure? And what if you can't do that again, Monica, that is not you. Right? It's not, yeah. It's not, It sounds so like, woo, but that your brain did that to you.

'cause you hit an upper limit, you're like a new identity. I'm a 16 k a month earner now. Yeah. Your brain said that to you. I want you to right now answer those two questions. Yeah. Actually, I'm a 20 k monthly photographer. I've been writing that down in my journal to counter Yes. I thought, because like,

I want to make more. And I'm like, that was was, that was easy. Like that was easy. I, I can, yeah. So that's my counter thought is, But when your brain says, what if, what if you can't do that again? Oh, What if I can't? Well, if I can't do that again, I will say that I have the power to do that.

Again. I have plans in place, I have data and numbers that show like I did it. Like, and ever since then I've been making five figures each month. So that's not bad. I'm very happy about It. Just very good. You, you can really simply say to your brain, shut up. Sit down. Yeah. That's the best answer.

It's what if you can't do that again? Yes, I can. Yeah, I clearly can because I just did. Right. Of course I can do it again. Yeah. What was the other question? I forget now that your brain said, what if you can't do that again? Are you Sure? Yeah. Are you sure? Yes. I'm sure.

I'm so sure. I'm very sure of myself. Yeah. It's, it's, you know what I picture, I picture your brain like, you know, in the back of your head and it's going like this to you. It's like, are you sure it's like giving mean you decide Outta the dark cave. Yes. Yeah. And you say, yes,

I am. Thank you. I am Yeah, You can do it again because you, you have proof. This is just, this is just a matter. I notice It's just a matter. Yeah. And I notice, like, I feel this way every month now, like towards the end of the month I get this kind of like, anxious feeling,

but then the first of the month hits and I read my numbers and I'm like, oh, why was I so stressed? Like, hey, Listen, it's worth exploring the thought that's leading to the anxious feeling or the stress feeling though. What do you think you're thinking at the end of the month when you're running those numbers? I'm scared of gonna have to go back to corporate America.

Okay, so there's a, a fear. Yeah. Yeah. Like I, no thanks. Nope. Nope. I'm very happy with my life right now. So we do not wanna do that. Would You let that happen? No, I wouldn't let myself, yeah, I Wanna back to that. No, that's not, that's not on the table.

No. So I'm Not even gonna That's Not even, it's not even an option. No. So don't even for one second, entertain it in your brain. Yeah. When it comes up, I'm feeling anxious because I don't wanna go get a job. Yeah, okay. Fair enough. Because I'm not going to get a job because I really do not want to.

Right. Like, it makes sense that you're feeling anxious if you're thinking you might have to go get a job. Right? Yeah. But if you don't think that thought, Yeah. You wouldn't have anxiety from that thought. I mean, it might come up from another

one, but, but it wouldn't be that one. Yeah. Yeah. And say no,

do, do You see how I'm so focused on identifying the thought that's causing the feeling that's not serving you? Yes. I need to get better at that. You Just need to find it aware. It's just awareness. No, you are actually, I think you should give yourself more credit. I think you're really good at it. It just takes us a minute,

you know? And that's why, that's why we have a coach. That's why we have elevate. That's why we talk about it so that you can get some help uncovering the thought that's causing the feeling of anxiousness. And it's usually some version of like the brain offering you doubt. Yes. Yeah. And it's so interesting because I feel like most people don't understand like,

this is so beneficial. Like, you know what I mean? Like before I met you, I was like, I don't know about this. And like, I am so hooked. Like I'm Yeah. All about it. Right? I will never be without a coach. I talked to my business coach yesterday and guess what? Talking about pricing and money,

just like everyone else, I have the same issues and she helped me uncover my thoughts. And I said to her, I was, I said, Carrie, oh my gosh, I'm so embarrassed because I, I, I teach this. Like how am I not seeing it myself? And she's like, we cannot see it in ourselves. That's why everyone needs a coach.

You need to talk to someone because when it's in your mind, it's in the dark and it's jumbled and it's confused and it's getting tossed about with a bunch of other thoughts and feelings. Yeah. Like you had said, you actually said to me at the beginning, you had a sentence that combined two opposing thoughts. You said, how am I gonna do this?

I don't know what to do. And then you said, I know I can do it. Yeah. That sounds very much like me. So, you know, my job is just to show you your thoughts. Oh look, isn't that interesting? Yeah. That I believe, I actually believe I can do this and I know how to do it.

And maybe it's not me that is offering me the thought that I don't know how to do it. It's just my brain trying to keep me safe. And these are, it's really important. I'm actually thinking about doing a series on the podcast about anxiety and how important it is to separate you from your brain. Yes. Like the real Monica. Yes.

Oh my gosh, yes. The real, I do this to myself. Before photo sessions, I, because I used to get terrible anxiety. I would feel like I was gonna be sick. Like I'd be sitting in my car waiting in the parking lot, feel like I was gonna be ill. And like now I like, I'm like, nope,

my body's gonna take over. Even if I am terribly sick, even if I'm crapping my pants, like my body will take over and it will be fine. And like that, like that thought. I don't even have anxiety pre-session anxiety anymore because I'm like, my body's gonna take over. It doesn't matter if my brain's not there. My body knows what it's doing.

It's gonna be taking beautiful photos. Yeah. Amazing. You drop into belief for yourself, right? Yeah. I I need to do that with my money now. Yeah. And separate, Separate out any, any of the thoughts that cause any negative emotion. So we're talking about fear and anxiety today, but any thought produces a negative emotion. I promise it's not from you,

it is from your brain. It is not you, it is separate. These are two separate entities. There is your brain trying to keep you safe. And there's the real Monica who is inspired and excited and hopeful and knows how to do it. Anything that you think on purpose produces a positive feeling. That's how I know when it's coming from the real you versus your brain.

Yeah. Yeah. And so when you, when you, when like you're in a position to do this yourself, like coaching. Yeah. Like, oh I'm feeling like crap. Well that's so interesting. My brain must be offering me a thought. I am going to choose as Monica to think a better thought and tell it again to sit down and shut up.

Yeah. Okay, Great. I love it. Okay. Good luck this month and let us know how it goes and we'll talk soon. Sounds good. Thank you. Thank you. Bye-bye. I'm so excited to hear an update. Chrissy, tell us where you're at, what's going on, what you're thinking, and how can I help you? Awesome.

So really right now starting to kind of look forward into both holiday planning and then maternity leave. So that's really where my brain is kind of launching into. I've got some clients really kind of have a nice setup through the fall. So I've gotten to kind of where I want to be. I've a marketing event this weekend. If it's not too hot outside,

it's like supposed to be over a hundred. Oh No, thank you. Yeah. Which I was like, I might have to pull out of that if I'm not feeling like just might not be a great mix with pregnancy, but we'll see. So yeah, no, with that I feel pretty like motivated to kind of keep tweaking things to get it to kind of where I want it to be.

As I come back from maternity leave, I don't expect to come back like a full hundred percent. So like what is scaling it and ramping it back up, I guess what I would say to that. So yeah, that, just trying to kind of start brainstorming through that and kind of spent a couple hours on that this morning. And so I feel pretty good about it.

Okay. Great. Yeah. What challenges do you have? Anything that I can help you with? Oh gosh. I think one of the things that, I posted this in the Elevate group, but I would love to chat about it. So I am like, basically we're not going to do any childcare until probably about eight months. So after about the first quarter,

it's gonna be mostly on me. And so we've, my husband and I have like mapped out an idea of like, okay, well I could photograph on like Sunday mornings and go with clients and do just like one day a week and that's, that'll be enough for now as I start to ramp back up. And then I was like thinking, I was like,

okay, I p s like how do I do that? How do I time it with naps? It's probably gonna go like haywire at some. So I started just brainstorming. I was like, okay, what could I do? Could I like just make it one day a week? And then I like kind of started thinking, I was like, well what about gallery options?

I know this isn't necessarily maybe what most people would choose to do, but as a way to kind of take, create like that stop gap of, okay, yeah, this is the time I'm gonna be able to allocate and dedicate to it, whereas I can get the work done and deliver it, but also wanna create a really good experience with that.

So that's kind of where I was like, I wanna explore that a little bit more and like really think about kind of how can I still make it a really pleasant experience for a client in addition to helping me know that, you know, they're gonna be days that just go high haywire and they're not gonna go the way I planned them. So working through that.

Okay. So what are you thinking? What do, what do you think will will maybe be the best approach or how could you plan for contingencies? What does that look like? Yeah, I, I like the idea of transitioning to a gallery only just for, you know, testing it out, seeing what works and figuring kind of like what are maybe best practices,

parameters that I can really put around it so that I get clients that, you know, don't linger to often or like they look at it once and then they disappear. Right? You wanna make sure that that kind of sale comes to fruition. So I think creating like a sense of urgency and stuff like that is really where I wanna make sure that the,

just the whole experience goes seamlessly from, you know, session to you get the gallery, you know what to expect and like that the ordering really becomes a, a bit more of a seamless process. So, Okay. Walk me through that. So I'm a client and we have our session and you send me, okay. And obviously you'll be communicating the whole time.

They'll have this information, but let's just like, fast forward to, you're sending me the email to tell me that my gallery is ready. What, what, what does that look like? What do I do? What are the packages? Yeah, so I think still sticking with like my three packages, which I'm in the middle of updating right now.

Three, three coherent packages and then a little bit of a la carte. So like, you know, no more than three options probably under Waller albums and then like a portrait collection type thing if they want more of the like desk situation but a link, a portal to somewhere, Right? A portal where they can go in, they can look at all their portraits,

select their favorites so that they can kind of help narrow themselves down and then they can do all of the ordering and paying through that to make it super easy, super seamless so that I make it easy for them to pay me. Yeah, I hope so. Of course that's the goal. Always make it easy for people to give you money. Yes.

Will they have picked their package ahead of time? No, I do session fee and then you can opt for, you know, collections afterwards. One of the things I do like to do, and I, I was doing this on my higher packages, I wanna increase my prices to the point where my smallest package is already included in that because your session fee just gets credited Okay.

For you if you purchase that package. So I need to work through like the tech, I would need to work through the technical elements of like how that would work. So these, your packages are a combination of wall art albums, digitals? Yes. Yes. Yeah. So it's matching digitals and then a combination of prints or wall art. So the two larger packages right now are wall art album and then the matching digitals that come with it.

'cause Yeah, because I already built them. I already created them. You Should. Yeah. Yeah. That's easy. That's easy. Okay. What, I mean, I know that people are doing this, I know that this is a thing. What are the challenges people face with this model? I think some of the challenges is like that physical interaction with a product,

right? From the I P s to this more digital based W place, which I think there's a solve for that, but I won't go there for you yet. I think some of the other things is that life gets in the way people miss the email. Mm. When they don't have an appointment, they don't make things in a pr a priority.

Right. Again, I think there could be a solve for that. What other things? I think kind of just se like selling, right? Like the emotional kind of pathos that kind of comes through with selling in person maybe isn't as strong in the digital environment. But again, I know people are doing this and I know that they're successful so I know that there's a,

there's a, It's possible. Yes. Yeah. Right. Yeah, I would definitely agree with that. Will you have physical products with you on the day of the shoot to show them so they can see things? That's What I would like to get to. Yes. Right now my smallest wall piece that I carry around is a 20 by 30 and it's just freaking massive than by car.

So I'd love to get like a 16 by 24. That's just a little bit easier for me to cart around, especially 'cause I live in the city, people's cars get broken into all the time. I don't have like a closed trunk space. Hmm. So just making sure that like, I think through that a little bit more diligently. But I do tend to take like an album with me a lot of times that tends to be like a really good thing just because I love selling albums.

So that generally works out pretty well. So yeah, I do And I wanna like start doing a lot more of that of like, here, come check this out. Some locations that's hard just because you have no idea where somebody parked and they didn't park close to you. Right. But I was just wondering how much does the actual SA session change knowing that you're not going to be seeing them again?

Like are there things that you can do or say in the session that you would have, you know, in the past you would've done it at the I P Ss, but because that's not going to happen, how could you sort of, you know, integrate that into the session itself? I mean I think like even just free session, even asking like,

are you a wall? Are you an outlet? Yeah. Like those kind of questions. And then also like taking portraits where, you know, maybe I switch from horizontal to vertical and be like, this would be amazing in a hallway. Like just making comments like that to kind of like sparked that like creativity, getting them to imagine what it would look like in their home and yeah.

So I feel like kind of just even engaging a little bit more in that way with a client would definitely help. How can you look at this also as like the first couple of times or, or when you do your first one, like as an experiment, like you, you try, you try different things. Yeah. And then you kind of see like,

well that didn't work or, or it did and that's great. Like, but sort of putting your scientist hat on when you come back from maternity leave, like let's just go into experimental mode. How can we provide the best possible experience Yes. And still maximize the sale. Yeah. And I think that's where like again to your point, put together a hypothesis.

Say like, this is what I'm testing this time and I think that this is what the result will be. But if it's not, that's okay. I can go back, debrief, look at it again and say, okay, what adjustments can I make? And then kind of the atomic habits thing. Yes. Yes. Changes just continuing to improve over time.

Yes. I love James Clear. That is probably that and the gap and the gain are actually right here on my bookshelf because they're my top two favorite books of all time. Yeah. I'm reading the gap in the game right now. Okay, great. I love it. So you want, you wanna make sure you stay in the gain when you're experimenting and it's all about like how you frame it and the mindset around developing a hypothesis.

I'm testing it, I'm seeing if it works. And if it doesn't, that's great. 'cause now I know that that doesn't work and I'm gonna try something else. And I, I want you to have this like biases, I've said this towards action where it's just like, I'm gonna experiment with this and then this and I'm just gonna try all of these things.

But probably implementing one at a time so you can determine what's working and what's not working and then make more educated or better, I guess educated guesses on what to experiment with next. And I also, since we're here, let's talk about this urgency because if you don't put a deadline on it, then obviously people will linger. They just won't get to it.

So what are you, what are your thoughts there? I was thinking five days. Yeah. Five or less. Yeah. Yeah. I just think sometimes with a week, right. Especially if you like what week is too low, for example, like I open it on Saturday, they get to, they're like, oh, I'm gonna do it next weekend.

And they get to next Sunday and they go, ah, Oops. Yeah. Right. I feel like five days creates a sense of urgency and I, like in my contract, I do have like a stipulation if I open a gallery for them that like a reopening fee is \$50. So just making sure that's well communicated. So that would kind of avoid that behavior upfront.

But in the off chance that somebody was like, I'm sorry I was traveling internationally. Like bye. Everything was crazy. Like to have those times of like give and take a little bit. Right. With that, as long as it doesn't become habitual with clients. Yeah. Because what is the consequence? I mean, if it's a \$50 fee, I mean,

I don't know that that's enough of a consequence. Yeah. You think more like, I don't know, one 50. Yeah. I mean something that makes me think like if I think \$50, I'm like, oh okay, well I'm busy this weekend, I'll just pay the extra and do it next weekend. Yeah, that's true. And then that means me going back and forth and reopening the gallery like 17 times.

Right. Exactly. Exactly. So one thing I, I have seen that does work, you would have to maybe restructure your pricing just a little bit. Okay. Is offering a 10% discount if it's ordered within five days. Oh, So you would obviously mark up the price, make sure that you're covering that so you can afford to do it. Yes.

And that it makes sense with your cost of goods sold, all of those things. But then you take a percent or maybe even more 15% because again, 10% to me is like not that worth it. But 15 might be, I mean whatever makes sense. We have to look at the math and make sure that you're still profitable and you're still within the range of cost of goods sold.

But that the incentive is they save money. Yes. So that's more of an incentive to me than the, than the other than having to pay. That's true. Yeah. That they save, right? Like they feel good about it. Right. It's not like, it's not the like, ah, oh no, if I forget about my dentist appointment I have to pay \$50.

Exactly. You could get even a little more granular with it. You could do this, you could say the gallery's open for five days and if you, if you don't place order within five days, the gallery comes down and there's, you know, this \$150 restocking fee. But if you order within three days, you get 15% off. Yeah. Okay.

And then, you know, may maybe you get all these people ordering hopefully within three days. Wouldn't that be amazing? Because again, I think to your point, if the goal is for this to be easier on you and provide a better service to the client personally, if you come to me and ask me for something and you give me too much time,

it's, that's way worse to me than if you said, Heather, I need you to write this, could you do it by tomorrow? I might be like, oh man. But yeah, I'll get it done. I'll Do, yeah. Because I would rather have that short deadline. Yeah. And get it done and checked off my list. Like I don't,

I don't like, you know, loose ends. But I think, I actually think that photographers giving people too much time is an incredible disservice to the client. Yeah. I think giving them a tighter timeframe actually helps 'em make a decision faster. I agree. Yeah. 'cause I think like there's this sense of like, oh, well what if I should do this instead?

Or Indecision also Get them to think, like they start thinking about, well that's a little too much right now. Whereas like you want it to be more of an emotional purchase. You want it to be more of a like, this was an experience, this is me treating myself to something. And that's where I think like creating that sense of urgency is helpful with that.

Yeah. So just some ideas to make sure that that's not lingering. Let me give you an example of this. I've always sold gift certificates for my business because why not? You know, if somebody wants to buy one, I love that. But early on in my career, I didn't realize the importance of putting some sort of deadline on it. Now actually,

I don't know. But I'm pretty sure that legally you cannot expire a gift card is my understanding. So, you know, check your legal requirements, but at least putting a like Best Buy date. Yeah. Oh I love it. Of Views within the next six months. Okay. I didn't do that. I actually got an email yesterday from someone who said,

Hey, my husband bought me a gift certificate a couple of years ago and she gave me his email address, his name. And Christi, I was, I went into my QuickBooks, I went into my email, I went into my PayPal and in my Stripe, I have no record of this. Which is actually really shocking to me. 'cause I have records of absolutely everything.

So that gave me a clue that either he didn't, but I believe that he did. But, or it was so long ago. It was when I was in my old version of QuickBooks, which was prior to 2016. Like online version. Yeah. Yeah. I mean it was like a lot, well, for me, for when I went on it.

Yeah. So I got back to her and I said, Hey, could you just let me know like an approximate date range or the amount? And she said, oh, it was several. It was like a lot of years ago. And she didn't actually tell me. I'm thinking it probably had to be more than eight years ago. And it was for like one-on-one photography lessons,

which I don't offer anymore. Oh, okay. So I actually, I'm gonna just put her into the academy and give her access to the courses. You know, because I act, I believe that he probably did and it's just like lost somewhere. Yeah. But my point is it that that took up a little bit of time and space that I'm thinking I should have been managing these better at the time and putting some sort of limit on when this needs to happen.

Because I, and then that made me think, I bet you I have more out there. I bet you I have more gift certificates out there that I don't even remember that people are

gonna, I mean, okay, so my point is the urgency and the, the boundaries, the guidelines are there for everyone. So it's important to put them in place.

Yeah, No, I agree. Yeah. That's funny. Yeah, in Georgia, you can't expire gift certificates. If they're gift as part of a silent auction, you can put an expiration date on it. But other than that it's Right. It's not legal to do So. But I do see, I see companies do it. I bought a gift certificate for like a cooking class for my husband and I was like,

this is a joke. And that's not legally like binding at all. It's like, okay, well we can still use it after two years. It's fine. Well you know what it's funny about the law is people just say things and do things without even understanding that. But did you know that like, you know, those signs that are in parking lots that say reserved for like DoorDash or Uber Eats or you know,

pick up for the restaurant. You know that those aren't legally binding, like my understanding, oh, I didn't know that. Is that it's not, it's just like a courtesy thing. So if somebody part, and people do obviously park in, I don't, I don't know why I feel like so guilty. I'm like, I'm not barking in that Chick-fil-A spot.

Somebody needs their chicken sandwich, I'm not doing it. But it's actually, they legally can't enforce that. It's just courtesy. So it's just interesting. My my point to there is like you can put a timeframe on something and I mean, you know, deal with it. Yeah. Or approach it how you see fit. But yeah, it's just to encourage people to follow through.

Yeah. You're like, Hey, yeah, no, that the gift certificates, I love the like activate within seven days, please reach out to the studio. That's been like a really helpful one. 'cause I feel like it does get a lot of people to like actually take the action, so. Right, Right. Which you would probably honor it anyway if they didn't even activate it within seven days.

Of course. But it's just Right. It's just good business practice. Yeah. Because then eventually they at least get around to it maybe in 30 days and you're like, right. I feel better about that than like two years. So, Okay. Great. All right, let's wrap up with overall thinking and feeling around this plan for the galleries prepared scale.

I have a question. Yeah. On a scale of one to 10, how prepared do you feel about moving into that model? I would say probably somewhere in like the seven range. Like could implement probably would go a little bumpy at first. Like, especially if I started doing it like right now or tomorrow or for my next session. But I know that I'll get there and I'll just work on it.

So yeah, I've, I think I can get easily get to a nine or a 10 in terms of like the confidence of like right gonna work. I, my C R M has a gallery system built in and I have used it before with some mini sessions and that's been, that's worked pretty well. Well, I was gonna ask you that. Yeah.

What are you using? Sprout Studio? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Yeah, if the, I would

definitely try. Okay. Which leads to another question. Would it possibly be beneficial for you to test this out on one or two clients this fall? Would that make sense or No. I mean potentially I do. I heavily communicate like that. We'll do their session or their sales session virtual or in person.

I think I've pretty much switched everything to virtual now, so I, I could test it with somebody. I mean, maybe it's just something to consider if like, if something comes up and it works for you or for the other person, maybe there's like an extenuating circumstance and yeah, you're like, Ooh, perfect time. I could test this and yeah.

See if it works. That just might be something fun to do. Yeah. I did do it with a silent auction client and that went horribly. So lesson learned on that. But I think that was just a, it was more of a fluke than a thing and it was just a lot off. So. Okay. I learned a few lessons from it,

so. Okay. What do you mean by horribly just outta curiosity? So, oh gosh, this is an interesting client shot in April. We were supposed to shoot last October. They had to push back. They were out of town, weren't even gonna be here for most of the winter. I was like, okay, you know what, that's fine.

Did their session in April, two weeks. I had their sales session ready to go. Was sitting on the Zoom waiting, waited for 15 minutes, didn't show up. I reserved the right to shut it down, send an email and say, Hey, if you would like to reschedule, please reschedule. They called me, said that they got into some sort of car situation breakdown on the side of a road,

didn't realize like that it was happening today. They only had their phone with them and was like, well that's not a great viewing option. Right. So we rescheduled for a different day. They canceled out again, rescheduled for another day. This mind you, this is all going through like June. So photo, oh wow. People, this is happening in June.

I think I had, after they canceled, maybe the third time I set up a gallery, I was just like, I'm gonna set up a gallery for you. Please go in, pick your favorites. And then we can set up time to go through them and pick out your artwork, go through, get all their favorites submitted, get it into kind of like what I used to help for sales sessions,

just so I can do album mockups and wall our mockups and stuff like that. They had asked a couple questions about pricing. I had shared my pricing previous to that, mostly digitally. They came back and were like, we can't believe digitals aren't included. So we would like to just call it quits here. Oh, I followed up, I said,

you have a \$500 product credit that is generally used for wall art and albums. I would be happy to make the exception to use it towards a pack, a small package of digitals if that's where you would prefer to, to allocate that money. And they were like, oh yeah, sure, thanks. So they ended up buying like the package of digitals that got like basically where the certificate covered it.

And so I was just like, okay, lesson learned. What is the lesson there? Like tell, tell us what the lesson is. I think one is like when people continue or like cancel. I do have a cancellation policy now and it's highlighted in yellow on a contract of if you cancel your i p s appointment, it's I think what, I don't remember what I put in,

but maybe, you know, \$150 fee, let's just say what it was. That, and that they, they have to pay that before they can reschedule for an I P S session. The other side of it is, I think the whole first contact until session lingered too long. Again, to your point with a sense of urgency, they forgot about stuff.

I probably like forgot that I mentioned something. Who knows. Communication, I think just got lost a little bit there. And while I, you know, I provide a session guide digitally, I provide pricing guide digitally. I provide a product guide digitally. I think I've come to realize most people just don't read them. Oh, Absolutely not. They don't read them.

So when Jess covered her mailers, I was like, I have to do, I have to implement something like that? Especially if I'm gonna go to this gallery style model. And it, 'cause I've had a couple sticky situations with pricing. So I was just, that was kind of a key takeaway for me was just like, make sure people really understand pricing.

And then lastly, with silent auctions, I know that Nicole is like a big proponent of like the value that you give in terms of product credit covers, at least the smallest thing you have. And I was kind of talking with Jess about that and we were, she was like, I offered the session and then that five by seven print, it cost me a couple bucks.

So if somebody like that's it completely like dishes out on me, it's not a big deal and I can go find it. I'll go find that new client that I need and I can spend my time and my efforts elsewhere. Yes. And to your point, that lingered for so long that it, it's just brain space. Hmm. Right. Yeah.

And you're like, I spent like three hours just trying to get this person on the phone so that I could sell them something. Whereas like that three hours is very valuable time and you don't get it back. So There you go. Okay. Lot of lessons there, but I think one of the biggest ones is that timeframe that there was just such a huge gap in every point in the process that they either forgot or got lost or they didn't read it,

whatever. Yeah. And when we compress that and we communicate more, that is less likely to happen. I also, I did know about Jess's approach with winners of any, any type of, you know Yeah. Type of giveaway. And I love it. You get a five by seven yourself. Five by seven. Yeah. No, I love it.

Especially 'cause when you look at your cogs, you're like, okay, if they this like, yeah, my cogs is this and like maybe that's fine in some senses or if you like feel like you really have the silent auction game or raffle game down. Definitely. Right. But as I'm kind of testing things, I would like to test this model out to

see how it works for me.

Yes. Just so that I can kind of, again, hypothesize Yeah. Test something it works and then move forward from there and what can I create from that experience, so. Okay, Great. Perfect. That was actually super helpful to hear all of those things and I hope that was helpful for you as well. Yes, definitely. Yeah. Thank you for talking through this.

I really appreciate it. Yeah, of course. Okay. Have a great day. I'll talk to you soon. You too. Bye Heather. Thanks for listening to the Hair of the Dog podcast. This was episode number 208. If you wanna check out the show notes for access to any of the resources that we mentioned, simply go to [www.hairofthedogacademy.com/ 208](http://www.hairofthedogacademy.com/208).

Thanks for listening to this episode of Hair of the Dog Podcast. If you enjoyed this show, please take a minute to leave a review and while you're there, don't forget to subscribe so you don't miss our upcoming episodes. One last thing. If you are ready to dive into more resources, head over to our website@[www.hair of the Dog Academy](http://www.hairofthedogacademy.com). Thanks for being a part of this pet community.