

Learning while Brunching with Nicole Dillon from Women Who Brunch

SPEAKERS

Nicole Dillon, Lara Schmoisman

Lara Schmoisman

This is Coffee N. 5, I'm your host, Lara Schmoisman. Welcome back to Coffee N. 5. When I moved to the United States, I had such a culture shock in many regards. I not only had to learn language, I also had to learn those little things that makes a culture what it is. One of the things that I had to learn is about that meal that was somewhere in between lunch and breakfast, called brunch. Immediately became one of my favorite meals that are also what I loved was the culture part of that brunch, the part that was a time to relax, a time to chat, a time to have a mimosa, but also was an opportunity to meet real people. And recently, I've met another woman for loves to brunch: Nicole Dillon. She created a Women Who Brunch. And I will let her tell us more about this.

Nicole Dillon

Yeah, thank you. And I want to also say thank you for being on like having me on. I'm very excited to chat with you. Like I told you, I got my my lipstick on, my coffee ready. And I'm so excited to talk about brunching community.

Lara Schmoisman

Yeah, I love that. Because now we have matching lipsticks and I was drinking our coffee. So

Nicole Dillon

we were ready to take on the world.

Lara Schmoisman

Exactly. And that's one of them. That samples that I can give you like new connections and new people that I met. And it's amazing. And we have this synergy. And so tell me,

Nicole Dillon

yeah, so Hello, everyone. I'm Nicole Dillon. A little bit about me and the journey. So I'm the founder of Women Who Brunch. I'm also a nine to fiver. So I do this as my side business hustle really hard at both, and the balance between those but Women Who Brunch is exactly what it sounds like. It's for women who love brunch, and food and connection and community and curiosity. It combines all of those things. And I started back in 2013. So I was living in New York City, and I, I am event planner, I'm in marketing, and I go to a ton of events. There's a plethora of events in New York City. And I just felt like at the time I was going to so many events like one a day. And I would get all these business cards. And at the end of the week, I would not remember who anyone was. And so that's where it kind of

started. So it was also in 2013 when Sheryl Sandberg, the CEO, COO of Facebook, her book Lean In came out. So was this really mix of empowerment and breaking the glass ceiling and women initiative, like that whole conversation was really being a buzz. So is this mix of like, yeah, women and then also like, I crave connection and community. I mean, New York City is... there's millions and millions of people, and you just kind of feel lost in at all. And especially like as an adult, it's super hard to make new friends. And, and of course brunch is such a lifestyle in New York City. So I wanted to combine the all of these things. And that's when I started Women Who Brunch. So with the events themselves, we keep them really intimate. So I kept them in about 10 to 12 women. So it's a really unique.

Lara Schmoisman

Let me ask you a question because Okay, you got this event. You got the women who want to brunch. What happened next? People came in and they start talking or you have to initiate it? Did you have a plan? Did you have a questionnaire? How did it work?

Nicole Dillon

Yeah, hey, I see it just like a mix of really, I had a lot of community management experience, social media digital marketing experience. So I was just like really hyping it up. And that event planner in me, I love to plan. So each brunch has a different speaker restaurant and discussion. So it's not a formal presentation. It's very casual. I keep them mostly kind of prefix. So, um, you know, you can order, you can talk, you know, the speaker talks about their subject, and then there's room to network and ask questions. So that's kind of how the breakdown of the brunches go. And so like, again, when I built it up so much. We have such a big like digital presence on email and Social media that they would just sell out so fast. And then like word of mouth kind of happened very quickly.

Lara Schmoisman

So but you felt like these women were in need of knowledge, you were in the need of new friendships... What were they looking for?

Nicole Dillon

I think all of the above, I think that's the beauty of it, because each person comes for different reasons, because they want to check out a new brunch place, because they're craving connection. Because they want to learn about the topic. And a big one is really they want to meet new people, and especially in the city, and I've seen so many friendships afterwards, that they recommended for jobs, or they just hang out after brunch. So I've seen a lot of that.

Lara Schmoisman

And that's great. I think it takes a lot of courage for a woman's mostly because I mean, I never want was one of those. I mean, I hit it clicks and was more like a free soul that I try really hard. I have to be honest. And I try really hard to be part of clicks, and it doesn't work for me. I'm just go with the flow. And I go with whoever I felt that I want to be. And I don't I don't care. I never care if they are color or race or how do they look, it was for me was completely nothing. And I just always love to meet new people and hear about their stories. But also, I have my friendships, and I have friendships or they're all friendships, newer friendships, friendships that came through kids friendships that came from work. But friendships are cycles. And I mean doesn't mean that you stop caring about the person or loving even a

person or a friend. It just means that friendship is a choice traits. And there are times in our life, that there's just friendships or they're not so meaningful or the time it's not that you don't care for them. But it's that choice trait is not working as much. So it's totally okay to try to identify that that's happening to you. And you don't need to be alone or you don't need to be stuck. trying to force those relationships.

Nicole Dillon

Totally 100% agree. And I think we get caught up in just our lives, our work our the digital noise, our families. And I think that is what you said is so important to it's a two way street, I've had so many friendships where I do care about them. But I've reached out so many times. And if I don't, you know, feel that reciprocation. You know, that sucks.

Lara Schmoisman

For me, for example, I honestly love friends, but my life change drastically since I started my company, and I'm super busy. Not let's not even consider COVID on all this. But honestly, I need the support of my friends through this journey. If I cannot get the support of my friends, I just feel like right now is not something I want to deal with. And people also, and I found this a lot in women. I'm not saying that men don't do it. But I feel like women are more open to do it. They're very judgmental. And they feel like they can give opinions many times. I'm a woman so I cannot speak for a man but in my friendships with men didn't happen as much. But I have friendships with women, so they're very judgmental, and they can give an opinion of what you're doing without being in your shoes or being in your in your field. And that could be very hurtful. And with new relationships is people meet you in the way that you are right now. They are not comparing you with who you are before.

Nicole Dillon

I think friendship is such a long journey when you first meet Yeah, it's like it's like dating, you got to get to know after a while.

Lara Schmoisman

I say to my clients always like I always compare my clients with dating. At the beginning. I say what we're dating, is a relationship I will never know what you like or what you don't like if I you don't tell me and with friendship is the same you need to be open and get to know each other and see what you have in common and what you don't.

Nicole Dillon

Yeah, and I think that also reminds me of this just digital culture of social media. I think a huge chunk of it stems from that as well, we feel like we have these platforms and I almost sometimes forget we forget how to communicate and have that human behavior inside of us to us like I don't know if someone comes to my page and they're saying like nasty things like that's like someone coming to your home like and saying they don't like like that's your value. Yeah,

Lara Schmoisman

Yeah, or people or people, depending on how much how many likes, they have, oh, how many followers they have? It's a value. And it's not, they prefer to have a lot less followers, but followers or

friendships that communicate and engage, I prefer that than the likes, to be honest, because that's what is real,

Nicole Dillon

truly. And I've seen that so much recently, I think. I mean, COVID, there's a lot of ups and downs and positives. But I tested out so many things where I was not ever camera facing. And I put myself out more and even recently, like, I think of things that really resonate with me, and I'm always still like, should I post it? and it's always like the ones that do so well with this is like relatable. And I think we have to also get back to that side of it on the digital side.

Lara Schmoisman

Yeah, but also at the same time there is like, I felt like a lot of the posts out there are being people think too much what to post in many regards, and will losing that broadness or being real. So I always say even to my clients, and to myself, you know, you're in marketing like me, and we know that we need to have a brand and the branding, and you need to be true to your brand, and keep it throughout all the platforms. But at the same time, you need to be a brand that you feel comfortable if you're forcing your message. And you think too much the message is not real anymore as a personal brand.

Nicole Dillon

Totally. And I get stuck on it all the time. So it is such a practice.

Lara Schmoisman

So how do you get out of that thing?

Nicole Dillon

I just...really surrounding myself, I guess with other social media people that really do it as well, you are you know, it's like that quote, you're like you are the five people you surround yourself with. It's surrounding yourself with other like minded people. And and I get that drive from from those. So if I see other people doing I feel more empowered to do it myself. I think that's what it is for me.

Lara Schmoisman

Yeah, I mean, it is it is, at the same time. Are you comparing yourself with other people out there in social media? Or you're trying to read them as inspiration? Because how do you draw the line there?

Nicole Dillon

Totally. I do it all the time. It's, it's, it's bad. Um, it's hard. I think it was more present at the beginning of COVID, where I'm just like, what do I even do? What do I even want to do, because it's such a, my brunches were in person and kind of what's next, especially with I have such limited time being a nine to fiver. So I would pull and compare myself to other communities. But I think I have to stop and always remind myself of, I'm a unique, I'm only one of me, I'm a unique person, I have my own unique story to share. And I have to keep reminding myself of that what someone else is doing. Like I can't always be worried about what this person or this person is doing, or also never get anything done. And just have to remind myself of my story. I think,

Lara Schmoisman

For me, a turning point was like to decide that people are not competition, I honestly believe that there is no competition. We are collaborators. And I think and I think this year more than ever, is time to collaborate and don't see the others and try to imitate others. And that's one of the reasons I do what I do. Because I feel like so many companies, so many individuals will try to copy other people's strategy. You need to do what it works for you. And the minute you stop seeing the world as a competition, you just relax. And that was a big lesson for me. I might see other people as inspiration. Yeah, other people see that they're making millions of dollars, who knows if they do great for them. I don't know what people are doing, where the money comes from. Each one has their own journey and their own story. And I think the moment that you make peace with that, you are in a much better place.

Nicole Dillon

Now. That's a great point. And totally, I've done so much of that especially even last year of collaborating with so many so many people in other communities. I will always try to support other like women communities when they reach out. That is an excellent, excellent point.

Lara Schmoisman

So what I mean you still have your nine to five and you have Women Who Brunch and you have your podcast and what else what what's next for you?

Nicole Dillon

No idea. Um, I think I mean, I'd love to start a family. I think that's a big a big goal outside of brunching and work because I think family is super important. I can't wait to travel again. I think in terms of goals, I mean, I ideally would love to do it, like, a full time of brunch. And I think what the perk or benefit of I guess, you know, silver lining of COVID if there is one is it really helped me discover what I do and do not like. So I felt like I really gave it last year. A lot of testing. And I think that's okay too, to kind of figure out that. Yeah, what you do and don't like and I love creating recipes and creating content and sharing that with people and food photography. I love the events and I definitely want to get back to those. But just this like storytelling and this, I love that side of it.

Lara Schmoisman

Go for it. You know what you want, so I can't wait to see more of a feel. Nicole, thank you so much for being here and Coffee N. 5. Thank you so much for sharing your story with us and, and be brave and speak up and being true to yourself.

Nicole Dillon

Thank you for having me.

Lara Schmoisman

Thank you for joining us. If you like the show, remember to leave a review. I will really appreciate it. If you want to know more about marketing and and myself, follow me on Instagram. My handle is Lara Schmoisman. Was so good to have you here today. See you next time. catch you on the flip side. Ciao ciao.