



Vera Raposo
Interviews
Nicole Dean
about Lifestyle Design

YourCreativeBiz.com

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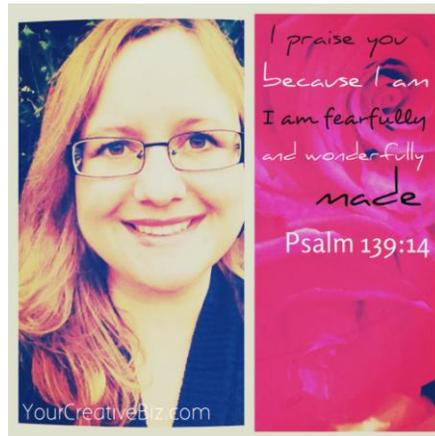
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About Vera Raposo



Vera Raposo is the founder of YourCreativeBiz.com and her blogs have been featured on Entrepreneur Magazine, eHow, America's BestCompanies, Dell, Logoworks by HP and more.

YourCreativeBiz.com is devoted to teaching women entrepreneurs around the world how to push all limits in their life so they can have the business of their dreams. Vera also shows women how to put their marketing on autopilot and cheerfully create a highly successful and meaningful business that fits their lifestyle.

About Nicole Dean



Nicole Dean of NicoleontheNet.com is a funny, smart, big heart, heckuva person to know - who also happens to know her stuff and rock the business world.

Nicole is known for helping passionate and excited experts, bloggers, authors (kindle and infoproduct authors), and coaches to multiply their marketing and their income, boost their productivity, and add in various passive income streams so they can earn more and live their lives to the fullest.

Would you prefer to listen to this interview?

You can find it here:

<http://yourcreativebiz.com/podcast-nicole-dean-lifestyle-design/>

Vera: I am joined here with the lovely Nicole Dean. I'm very happy to have Nicole here on our podcast.

Nicole has really created the life of her dreams, and this is what I want to inspire you to do, as well.

Nicole is the Busy Marketer's Coach. She calls herself the Mostly Sane Marketer. I found a really funny little tidbit. She has five or four different about pages. She's so funny. There's a list here, and I've just posted it on Facebook, actually. It says, "During my first podcast interview (when Kelly McCausey interviewed me for WAHM MVP), I grabbed the phone, hid in my bathroom, and drank a beer during the interview."

I love that.

Note: You can find all the other "fun facts" here

<http://www.nicoleonthenet.com/14005/weird-things-you-didnt-know-about-me/>

Nicole: I was just a little nervous, I'm not drunk now. 😊

Vera: That's funny, too. Anyone who wants to start a podcast can do a podcast or be a guest on a podcast, just drink a beer. So funny.

I wanted to have you on the podcast and I'm so thankful that you're here because you can really speak to what I'm looking to accomplish big time in my life now is finding the peace and the happiness and the joy; really having a business that is based around your lifestyle.

Thanks so much for being here today, Nicole.

Nicole: You're welcome. I'm excited. This is a great topic.

Vera: What does having a lifestyle and biz by design mean to you?

Nicole: I think there are several parts to that. Obviously you need to be profitable. You can't just say, "Oh, I'm going to sit at the beach all day. Isn't that great?" You have to have a profitable business, as well. There's this balance there.

To me, the gift of having a lifestyle and business by design means that I have the freedom to say "yes" to the things that make my heart sing and that speak to my soul and that I get excited about and that can really help people.

It also gives me the freedom to say “no”. As you get a bigger name and you have more successes, you draw people to you who want to work with you. That’s normal.

I have the freedom to say “no” now. Even if I know a project is going to be extremely profitable, if it doesn’t fit with my lifestyle goals, then I can turn it down and not panic, not feel like, “Oh my gosh, I’m walking away from all that money.” I just know in my heart and in my gut (because my gut’s usually smarter than any other part of my body). My gut tells me right away. It either jumps for joy or it kind of holds back and goes, “Nik. Really think about this.”

I’m able to say, “You know, I really appreciate the offer but it’s just not the right fit for me at this time,” and feel good about it without panicking and saying, “Oh my gosh, I walked away from that money. What am I ever going to do now?”

That’s a huge gift to me, and I am just extremely thankful.

The important words when you said “lifestyle and business by design” is “by design.” We’ll talk more about that throughout this interview, I’m sure.

Vera: Yeah. Just to give people a little bit of a background, I met you back in 2004 and what you do and what I do as well is we sell information products over the years and we offer products for sale online. It’s all done online, but we also get to go out and have a life outside of being online.

Nicole: Definitely.

Vera: I just wanted to share that before we got into the next question because people might be listening and thinking, “Well, information products and ebooks and all that kind of stuff, yeah. I don’t know. How is that even possible that you could make not just a full time income, but really to be able to create this lifestyle that you want and to be able to turn these things down?”

How do you think it’s even possible? How can you share that?

Nicole: How is it possible to create the profitable side of things? You want to talk business?

Of course, that’s what I love.

To actually create the profit, that’s where the fun is for me. You figure out something that you’re very interested in that also can help people solve a problem, and you create solutions for them. You charge for those solutions.

The easiest way to understand it would be nonfiction books on Amazon; how to get out of debt. If I was passionate about helping people to solve their debt problems, I could

create a resource on Amazon, a Kindle book or a print book, which is so easy now with the resources that are available.

I could even interview experts. I don't even have to know everything. I just have to be able to find people who do.

I then turn that into a resource that can help people, and sell it. Therefore I'm making money, I'm helping people, and I'm proud of what I've built.

You don't want to just go out and create information products to profit. You want to be able to help people so that, again, you're proud of what you do when your kids ask, "Mommy, what do you do for a living?"

You can say, "Oh, I help people get out of debt. Here's some of my stuff."

You don't have to feel uncomfortable about it because you're not doing anything wrong. You're actually helping people.

Looking at Kindle books, that's just one form of an information product. You can also create ebooks that you sell on your site, you can do coaching programs, webinars. It doesn't need to be writing. It can be speaking. You can do paid speaking opportunities. There are so many ways you can get your message out.

Even one-on-one coaching programs are information products as well, because you're informing people, educating them, inspiring them, and helping them to improve some area of their life.

In general, that's how I would describe the business that I'm in.

Vera: For me, I've done different information products in different markets and things. Right now, I'm being very slow with what I'm doing in a way that I want people to feel my heart behind the whole thing. I really want to take my time with it and launch something that truly, like you said, you're proud of but that's also really meaningful.

I love that about what we can do in this day and age. 20 years ago, people were like, "What?" Now, you can do that and you can do well with it.

What are three key things that you personally do to ensure that this lifestyle happens for you?

Nicole: You've seen me come up the ranks since we've known each other since 2004. So, it's been a few years.

One of the things that I've done is I always talk about setting your business goals, your financial goals, but also your lifestyle goals and knowing what you want each of those pieces to look like.

The number one thing that I do is I reassess regularly. Your lifestyle and financial goals change on an ongoing basis.

Right now your financial goals may be to make \$500 a month. In a year it may be \$5,000 per month. In a couple of years after that it may be \$50,000 a month. You have to reassess these things.

Plus, your lifestyle goals are going to change, as well. If your kids are little right now, you may plan to work during naps. That may be it. When they're at school, maybe you plan to work while they're at school but you volunteer in the afternoons. When they get to high school, maybe your goal is just to be there in the afternoons and in the evenings. That changes, and then they're out of the house. What is your life going to look like for you over that period of time?

Reassessing regularly is one of my big things - my business goals, my financial goals, and my lifestyle goals and really looking at what I want those to look like now and in three years, five years, 10 years so that I know that I'm heading in the right direction.

The second thing is that I always multiply my marketing. We work so hard in our business, so anytime I do anything in my business I say, "How can I use this again?"

For instance, with this podcast. When you contacted me you said that you're going to have it transcribed and you're going to be using it as a tool to spread the word about both of us. That's exactly what I do. Every time I invest my time in my business, that's time I'm away from my family. How can I get the most out of that over and over again?

If I write a blog post and it's awesome and it gets great feedback and people really get helped by it, you know what I'm going to do with that blog post? I'm going to put it into a document and it's going to become part of a Kindle book. Either as the inspiration for a Kindle book or one chapter for a Kindle book because I already took the time to invest in creating that. Why would I just walk away and then go, "Okay, well that's done." That doesn't make sense when you think like a business person.

You can see my books on Kindle here: <http://www.amazon.com/author/nicoledean>

The third thing is that I do have people who work for me. That's obviously not something everybody can do from day one. Over time, it's allowed me to have the freedom to step away from my business and still make money and know that my

business is supporting my family even if, on the good side of things, if I want to cruise around the world or I wanted to live on a sailboat for a year.

Or in case of a bad thing where I was unable to work, which these things happen in our lives where you unfortunately know all too well that the healthiest person can become unhealthy very quickly. If you don't plan for that, then that can really throw you. If you do have things in place, you're able to focus on what's important which is taking care of yourself or whoever it is that you love that needs you at that time.

Those are my three things.

Vera: That's great, Nicole. Multiplying is so important. People think marketing is just, "Okay, we put it out on Facebook," or, "We put it out on the blog," and you're done. You have to put a lot more effort into it so that you can get a better, bigger return. Why not?

Nicole: Exactly.

Vera: That whole thing with my daughter when she got sick, two years before that I was selling off my last store location and preparing for a future after the business that I had to carry my family past having the store. We wouldn't have the store anymore. That's when she got diagnosed and I was like, "Whoa, okay. Now I can just take my laptop and go in the hospital."

It was not what I envisioned. You have to prepare for anything. I think people just tend to not want to think about those things, but I think it's really important.

What are some things that you've been able to do because of your business?

Nicole: As you know, I like to travel a lot. My son is 16 years old, so I've really been trying to travel a lot the last few years. When they graduate high school and go off to college and get girlfriends and jobs – suddenly they will have all kinds of obligations. We've been trying to travel as much as possible the last few years. We at least leave the country once a year, hopefully more.

Plus, all of our extended family is 1,000 miles away, so every summer or every other summer we try to spend at least three weeks by our family up there.

This last summer, of course, it's a long story. It's on my blog, but we hosted an orphan through New Horizons for Children, which is an organization that does a lot of work with orphans in Latvia, the Ukraine, and in Asia. (You can read the story here:

<http://www.nicoleonthenet.com/11712/our-adoption-journey-has-come-to-an-end/>)

We hosted a 15 year old orphan in our home for Christmas in 2011 and fell in love with her, and then proceeded to start the adoption process.

We were over three quarters of the way done, and she got very scared and she panicked and although she loves us very much, she was terrified of giving up her friends, going to school here, and starting over. She couldn't do it.

Obviously, a year of my life was spent in mountains of paperwork and driving to New Orleans to beg people to sign forms even though I didn't have an appointment, contacting my congressman because she was about to age out -- we had to work really quickly because she wouldn't be available after that.

Of course, after it fell apart, I had several months of mourning and trying to understand what the purpose of it was and all of that. She's a good girl and she's still my daughter, she just happens to live very far away. It is more than a bit interesting parenting a child from 5,000 miles away.

Vera: No kidding.

Nicole: I've put it into perspective now, though. My 16 year old could choose to go to college in Australia in two years and I'd be dealing with the same thing.

Vera: That's true. My daughter moved to Toronto straight across the country. Graduated high school and said, "See ya."

Nicole: Exactly.

To make a short story long, last summer we ended up spending five weeks in Europe.

That was possible because of my business. I was able to work half an hour to an hour a day. Some days I didn't even log on at all.

We were able to not only afford the trip after we had paid for all of the adoption stuff, but we also had that time available without obligations and were able to just kind of disappear. We didn't have reliable wi-fi, and we had no cellular service. But it was all ok.

Because my business is built the way it is, I knew everything would be taken care of and things would run smoothly. If there was an emergency, my team would deal with it and I just enjoyed my time.

We spent three weeks in Latvia and then we went over to Ireland and spent two and a half weeks there with our friend Darina. We stayed with Darina Loakman (<http://bohskincare.com/about-boh/behind-the-scenes/>) there.

Vera: Oh, you're kidding me. I did not know that.

Nicole: All four of us stayed in her home with her and her husband and their three boys, and their two chickens. It was a great time.

Vera: That is so wonderful.

Nicole: Just having my business enabled me to do that. Because if we had jobs that required us, we couldn't take off five weeks. Not without a whole lot of planning.

Vera: And not without about 30 years of service.

Nicole: Exactly, and that's after the year before when we went to Wisconsin for three weeks and we were in Jamaica and the Bahamas prior to that, and I was in San Francisco. We have this freedom because of the way the business was built. It's because of that freedom to say "no".

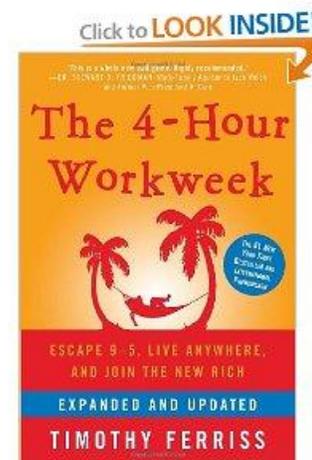
People have asked me to partner with them on membership sites that involve a forum. I can't do that because then I need to be able to log in and support those people every day or I'd be letting somebody down. As awesome of an opportunity as that is, it doesn't fit with my lifestyle design.

Vera: Yeah. That's so great.

I did a bunch of travel last year, and this year sent my son on a mission trip to India which was really nice. I can't say it's all been easy and rosy because it hasn't been after divorce and all that sort of thing, but I feel like I'm really getting my bearings and good foundational stuff here.

It's great. I'm looking forward to more travel maybe next year. It's a great way to run a business and live a life.

I'm actually reading [The Four Hour Work Week](#) again. I love that book. It just inspires me to work less. I'm just a recovering workaholic, seriously. I was work, work, work all the time. It's such a good thing. I'm really glad that we're talking about this because it encourages me.



I was just talking with someone about this. When you're raised a certain way, you just accept that that's how things have to be, right? You work like a maniac growing up, and

then you just accept that when really it's actually okay to go watch the sunrise at the beach. It's okay to do these things and go away and have a business that supports you while you're gone. It's interesting.

Nicole: Exactly.

Vera: It's interesting what our thoughts tell us.

What is one thing that you would recommend to someone who's just starting out?

Nicole: I would recommend that you look one year down the road and five years down the road and 10 years down the road. I mean really close your eyes, turn off the TV, put your phone down, and picture what you want your life to look like. Otherwise, you're going to be five years from now and be in the same place.

You have to picture it. Without getting all fluffy and airy fairy stuff, you can't aim for something if you don't know what the goal is. Just close your eyes and look at your life one year, three years, five years, even 10 years from now and think about what your business is going to look like, what your finances are going to look like, and what your lifestyle is going to look like.

What do you have to do to make that happen?

Start at the end of the map, where you're going, and then you can start to map your way back to today. If you don't do that, you're just going to keep going in circles. That's something I do on a very regular basis. I look at, "Okay, I'm right here right now. I wanted to be here, but I think I need to move that a little bit to over here. Let's remap our plan. How am I going to get to the new destination?"

Having the original goal there in your head is essential to knowing whether the decisions you're making on a minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day basis are the right ones to get you there or not.

Vera: Yeah. I think too, just having a good website and then putting something up for sale and go from there.

It's funny, too. People think they have to have this huge, huge following and this crazy, huge internet presence before they can start actually selling something. That's so not true.

Nicole: That is absolutely not true.

Vera: We have friends who have started in markets that they've never been in before, brand new. You have to start with your email list and different things, but you have to start with a product too and have something to sell.

What is something that has surprised you along your journey?

Nicole: The thing that surprised me the most is how many amazing friends I've made along the way.

Vera: Yeah.

Nicole: Hands down. They are generous, they are smart, they're talented, they're amazing. Just the network of people I've gotten to know. We get together on a lot of occasions.

It's funny because I actually make one of my friends' recipes and she's somebody I met through [Solo Masterminds](#); Tracy Roberts. She came and stayed with me for awhile and she made this Caribbean chicken. Now I make it all the time and the kids walk in and they say, "That's Ms. Tracy's recipe."

Vera: Aw, nice.

Nicole: It's so fun to have that business connection become a personal connection and how it's enhanced my life so much.

The other thing that surprised me is this. I found that the more I paid attention to making choices that aligned with my personal goals rather than focusing so much on my financial goals, the happier I've been, the more money I've been able to make, the more money I've been able to give back, and the less burned out I've been. It's funny that as soon as I started paying attention to my gut and what felt right and what would get me to the lifestyle I wanted, the financial side of things started to take care of itself more and more.

Vera: Right.

Nicole: It's funny, but it's so true.

Vera: When you're happy, things happen.

Nicole: In the nine years since we've met each other, that's a long time to go without getting burned out. You really do have to pay attention to what your gut is saying or you're just going to burn out. You're going to wear yourself right out and lose your mojo when bad things happen, and they do in business. Poop happens. It will, it does.

Vera: Did you just say nine years? That means that my oldest, Tory, was only 11 years old when we met.

Nicole: You said 2004, right?

Vera: Yeah. The funny thing is we were both with our kids at a very different place than we are now. Matt is graduating this year, so I have two who are graduated and a lot more independent and on their own, and just one at home. It's like I have way more time to dedicate to my business and this lifestyle design.

Nicole: It's interesting because that can either be a good thing or a bad thing.

Vera: How's that?

Nicole: Because I find that during the summer where I limit myself to only working an hour a day, I get so much done. Whereas when the kids are at school, sometimes I don't. A whole day goes by and it's like, "What did I do today?" because I don't value that time as much and I don't structure myself as well to know that when I sit down, this is what I have to do and I can't go down rabbit trails.

Sometimes having more time can actually be a detriment rather than an asset.

Vera: That's true, yes. You think it's all this time. Even when I was in the hospital with Tory, I couldn't even say, "Okay, this hour every day I'm going to work." It was like the minute I could. Doctors are coming in and out and all sorts of things were happening and going on and surgeries and transfusions and a bunch of crazy, crazy stuff. I'd be like, "Okay, it's 10:00 p.m., I have half an hour before her next med," or whatever.

You really, truly value that time a whole lot more. Totally, I get that.

I am a recovering workaholic. Really truly. Just to give you an example, I don't know if you know about this but I got very sick after Tory got sick. About a year after, I was rushed to the hospital and I was booked in there for about a week.

Everything turned out good, I was fine. I just needed help. It was because I had abandoned my body. I feel like my brain and my heart completely disconnected from my body and I just totally disconnected.

How that all kind of happened was I was sitting at the computer working, I was sick to my stomach and I was still working. I'm going, "Ignore, ignore, ignore."

Do you have any advice for the workaholics that are listening?

Nicole:

Absolutely. I want to go back to what you said just now, because it's actually a very common phenomenon that the caretaker is the one who ends up not making it through a lot of situations like that. You see it in hospitals all the time where one person goes into the hospital and then the spouse is the one that ends up getting really sick while the person who originally came in gets better.

We have to take care of ourselves and can't put our own needs to the side to take care of others. It goes back to the air mask on the airplane. You have to put your own air mask on before you can help anyone else because if you're passed out, you can't do any good at all. You have to take care of yourself.

I can say that all day and night, but I fall into the same thing. The advice I have for workaholics is basically the same motto I've had since 2000, so 13 years now. The motto that my husband and I both have is ***"The days are long but the years are short"***.

I know you've heard me say that over the years, over and over and over again.

That's because it's the one thing that I can say to myself that snaps me out of, "No, this doesn't have to get done right this second. No, I don't have to sit here and finish this today. The world is not going to come to an end if I don't get my Kindle book up today. It will really be okay. My daughter wants me right now. There's no reason why this Kindle book has to be up tonight. It can be up tomorrow."

Walk away and make her the priority that she should be. *The days are long, but the years are short.*

In the middle of the day it seems like you have all the time in the world, but then you blink and like you said, your kids are graduating high school and you think, "Where did that time go? Why didn't I spend it better?" We all have those regrets even if we're trying our best. We could do better. We all know it.

Vera:

This is how I explain it is that when the kids were little and babies, I got a little annoyed because everyone stops you and says, "Oh, it goes by so fast."

You're like, "Yeah, yeah. I get it, I get it."

How I explain it is like you go to sleep one night, you wake up, you look around and say, "Really? What just happened here? It just went so fast."

It's just a matter of like you said, making that time during the day when you can and accepting that. I've had a hard time accepting not working. For me too, it's about recovering from my own spirituality and my own health, my soul. Everything that needs

to be fed and taken care of so that I can be a better mother too for the future going ahead.

Nicole: That is so true. I was actually going to say that. The same things with the days are long but the years are short is with exercise. You can be in the middle of the day and say, “I don’t have time to exercise now. I’ll do it tomorrow.” Then a month goes by and you say, “You know, I never went on that walk.”

Vera: Yeah.

Nicole: I haven’t been to the gym, I haven’t gone on a walk, I haven’t done yoga. It’s been a month because every day I think, “Oh, I have all the time in the world,” and then boom, I’m five pounds heavier and I realize that I have not done the things that are really important to me.

I always say that I know how well I’m running my business by how my jeans fit. If my jeans don’t fit well, that means that I am not a good CEO of my business right now because I’ve gotten out of balance. That means I need to get my butt out there, get some sunshine, take a walk, do something fun, play volleyball with my daughter in the front yard. It means that I’m not living by my own rules. I have to get back.

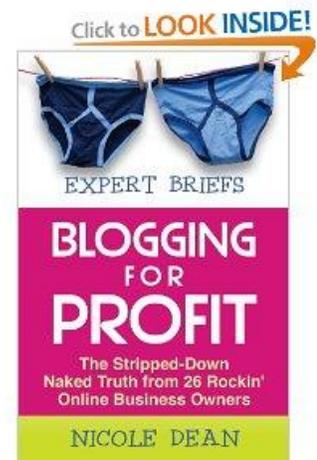
You can say it all day and night. I could say it over and over and over again. The truth is, we all ebb and flow. It’s a constant reassessment. Like I said with your business, you have to reassess because if you don’t, you can slide back into those old habits so quickly without even realizing you’ve done it. You have to be on top of it on a continual basis.

Vera: One thing before we close that I absolutely love about you is you bring humor into everything that you do.

Nicole: I try.

Vera: My life scripture is Phillipians 4:8 and it’s to think on what is lovely, what is pure, admirable, what is of good report.

I love that you bring humor and laughter and everything because we all need that. You just put out a book called [*Expert Briefs: Blogging for Profit: The Stripped-Down Naked Truth from 26 Rockin’ Online Business Owners*](#). You have a picture of two pairs of, I don’t know what you want to call them.



Nicole: They're underpants, yeah. Briefs.

Vera: Underpants. I guess that stemmed from your Expert Briefs blog posts, right?

Nicole: Yes.

Vera: Yeah.

Nicole: It was a labor of love. I think the book is fun, inspiring, and educational. It's everything that I wanted it to be. I'm very, very proud of how it turned out.

Vera: That's awesome. I'll definitely have a link to that for everyone listening.

You can find Nicole over at NicoleOnTheNet.com, where you can find all her wacky stuff, advice, and specifically online business information product publishing, all of that sort of thing she's very good at and very informative on.

Thanks so much, Nicole, for being on the podcast today. I'm very thankful to call you friend, and I look forward to our future. I'm glad we did our second podcast in nine years.

Nicole: So funny. Thank you, Vera, for inviting me. I'm so excited about your new direction that you're going in with your business. I'm very excited for you.

Vera: Thank you, Nicole. Have a great day.

Nicole: You, too.

Resources:

- YourCreativeBiz.com - More from Vera
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- [Solo Masterminds](#) – Where Nicole & Vera met and became friends
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