



FOUND BETWEEN

TRAINING INSTITUTE

OTpreneur

How To Establish A Thriving Private Practice

*Kaylin Lawrence OTR/L &
Dakota Lawrence LPC-MHSP*

About Us

FOUNDERS

- *Mind The Gap: Therapy & Consulting*
- *FoundBetween Training Institute*

SPECIALITIES

- *Complex Trauma*
- *Self-Harm & Suicide*
- *Chronic Pain/Illness*
- *Neurodivergence*
- *Sensory Processing Disorder*



Dakota Lawrence
LPC-MHSP, NCC

Kaylin Lawrence
OTR/L

Let's Rip The Participation Bandaid Off:

Who Currently Owns Their Own Practice?

Let's Rip The Participation Bandaid Off:

Who's Thinking About Starting Their Own Practice?

Let's Rip The Participation Bandaid Off:

Why?

The Case For Entrepreneurship

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL OTP

- OTPs possess the skills needed to be entrepreneurs
 - We are courageous, creative, and committed practitioners
 - We know how to modify and adapt in innovative ways to form a solution
 - We have phenomenal “people” skills
 - We’re underrated - making us a commodity people don’t realize they need
-

Why Entrepreneurship?

01

Expanding Beyond
Traditional Roles

02

03

01

Expanding Beyond Traditional Roles

Emerging practices are all over the place. Just because something hasn't been done before doesn't mean that there isn't a demand for it.

OTs have a unique perspective and unique skill set that can be utilized in new contexts, to the benefit of all involved.

Ex: OT in mental health



Why Entrepreneurship?

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Reshaping
The System

03

02

Reshaping The System

External Sources (i.e. payer sources) have been limiting the scope of OT and other healthcare practices for years.

This limits opportunities for OTs as well as their clients to procure the services they need. Even in-session choices are limited by what interventions are “reimbursable”.

Systems are perfectly designed to deliver the results they deliver. New places of pressure or friction create opportunities for systemic changes.

Ex: Covid/telehealth, Betterhelp



Why Entrepreneurship?

01

Expanding Beyond
Traditional Roles

02

Reshaping
The System

03

Being Your Own
Boss

Why Entrepreneurship?

01

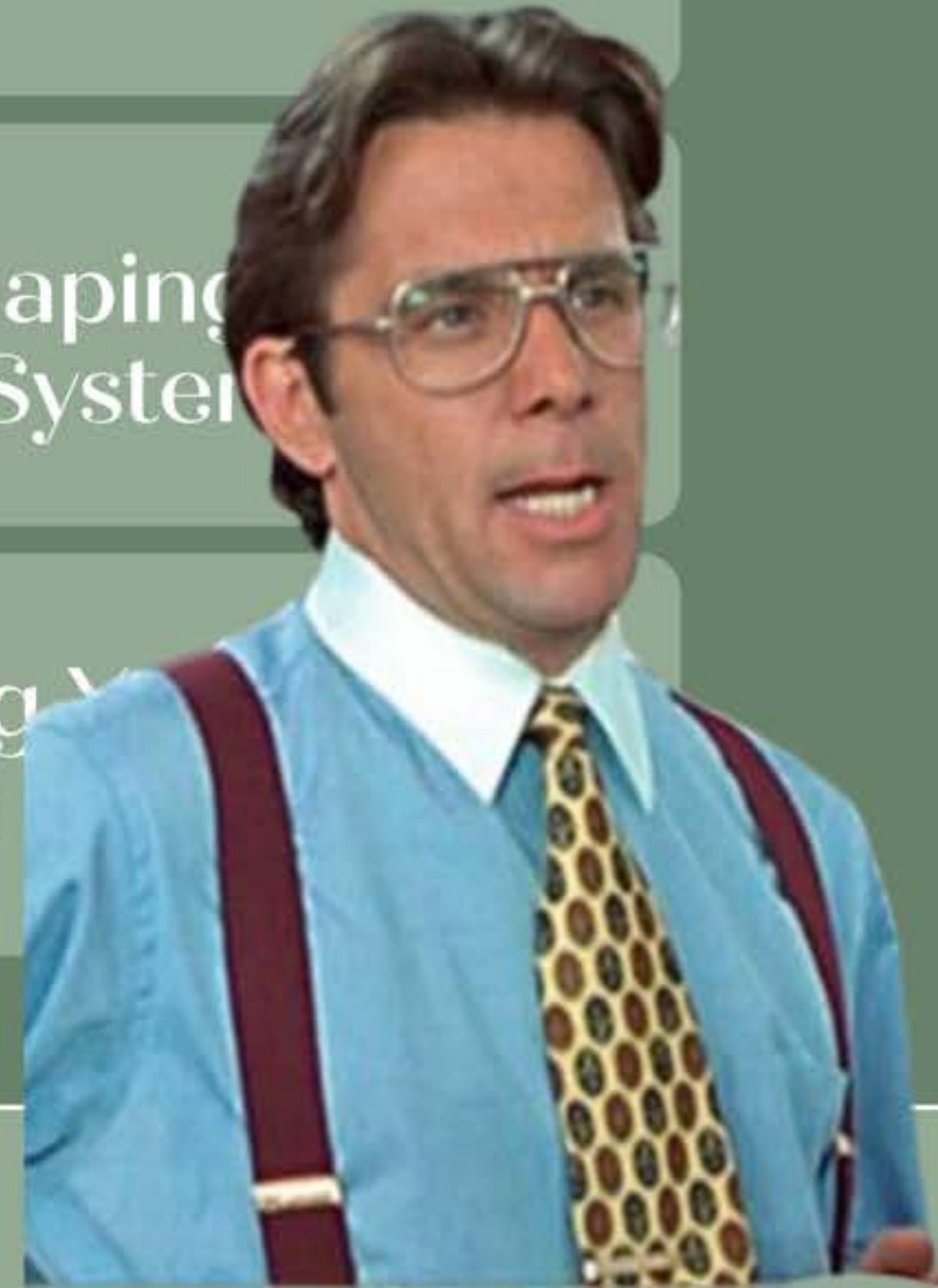
Expanding Beyond Traditional Roles

02

Reshaping The System

03

Being Your Own Boss



Why Entrepreneurship?

01

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The System

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Create The Culture
You'd Like See

03

Create The Culture You'd Like See

There are a lot of bad bosses and bad systems of care out there.

Entrepreneurship is an opportunity to take care of yourself, your clients, and the people on your staff in a sustainable and enriching way.



Challenges Of The Current System



01.

Insurance Restrictions

Should we be asking: "What is billable"? or "What does my client need"?



02.

Productivity Measures

Is a system built on "churn" sustainable? Do clinicians become "collateral damage"?



03.

Lack of Autonomy

If our work is about enhancing freedom for our clients, shouldn't we prioritize the same value for our clinicians?



04.

Professional Silos

When we work from a "what's billable" framework, we can become professionally isolated.

The 3 C's of Entrepreneurship

The 3 C's of Entrepreneurship

01. **COURAGE**

02. **CREATIVITY**

03. **COMMITMENT**



1. Courage

- Definition:
 - The ability to do something that frightens you
 - Strength in the face of adversity
- Distress Tolerance:
 - Know what your tolerance level is
 - Maybe you need to start small and scale up
 - At some point we have to decide to “take the leap”

2. Creativity

- Definition:
 - The use of original ideas
 - The ability to bring into existence something new
- Originality
 - Successful businesses fill a niche in the marketplace
 - Consumers buy solutions
 - Innovation is the name of the game!





3. Commitment

- Definition:
 - The state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc
- Carve out a business plan with a growth mindset and COMMIT
 - Momentum takes time, ignoring that time commitment or abandoning your plan all together is like take one step forward and two steps back

Framework For Building A Private Practice

Step 1:

Vision & Niche

Population - Vision - Values - Your “Why”

“Who Am I”?

Vision & Niche

01

Population

Who does your practice serve?

What are their characteristics?

What is their unique experience in healthcare?

02

Mission & Values

When clients walk in your clinic, how do you want them to feel? What about your staff?

How will you impact your community?

03

Your “Why”

Who, or what, are you doing this for?

When things get hard (and they will get hard) what will keep you going?

Exercise 1:

Finding Your Niche

Step 2:

Business Foundations

Entity Type - Compliance - Liability

“How Do I Protect Myself”?

Entity Type



Sole Proprietorship

Simplest form of business structure.

A single individual owns and operates the business without forming a separate legal entity.

Owner is personally responsible for all debts, liabilities, and obligations of the business.



Limited Liability Company (LLC)

Creates a separate legal entity from its owner(s), providing personal liability protection for debts and obligations.

Combines the flexibility and pass-through taxation of a sole proprietorship with the legal protections of a corporation.



PLLC

A Professional Limited Liability Company (PLLC) is a special type of LLC designed for licensed professionals (such as therapists, doctors, or lawyers) who must meet state licensing requirements.

It provides liability protection for business debts while holding members personally accountable for their own professional actions or malpractice.



S-Corp

Tax designation that allows a corporation or LLC to pass business income, losses, deductions, and credits directly to its owners' personal tax returns, avoiding double taxation.

Owners still have liability protection, but the structure comes with stricter IRS requirements and limits on shareholders.

Other Considerations:

Registration

What paperwork does your state require you to file in order to be a “legitimate” entity?

Ex: EIN

Compliance

What specific federal and state laws govern how your industry runs and/or how you take care of your employees?

Ex: HIPPA, Mandated breaks

Liability

What liability are you taking on by venturing out on your own? What systems can you put in place to reduce liability?

Ex: Malpractice, taking students

Location

Will your business have a physical space?

Will you do home visits?

Will you offer telehealth services?



Know What You
Don't Know:

Hire A Lawyer

Step 3:

Services & Revenue Streams

Service Type - Referral Sources - Budgeting

“How Do I Make Money”?

What Kind of Services Will You Offer?



Individual
Therapy
Services



Group
Therapy
Services



Contract
Services



Consultation
Services



Workshops



Trainings



Online
Products

Payer Sources

Option	Pros	Cons
Private Pay	Full rate, faster payment, autonomy, less paperwork	Clients pay out-of-pocket → smaller client pool, accessibility concerns
Insurance Reimbursement	Broader access to clients, steady referrals, increases affordability	Lower rates, delayed payments, heavy documentation, paneling process
Contract Services	Guaranteed caseload, stable income, reduced admin work	Less independence, rates set by organization, limited branding autonomy

How Much Will You Charge?

Your rate isn't just about covering expenses—it should also reflect your expertise, market demand, and the long-term sustainability of your practice.

01

Know Your Costs

Fixed expenses: rent, utilities, insurance
Variable expenses: Marketing, CEUs, Supplies
Don't forget taxes!!!!

02

Research Your Market

Typical Rates in your region & speciality
Compare private pay vs. insurance rates
Consider level of training & expertise

03

Value & Sustainability

Account for non-billable time (documentation, marketing, admin).
Account for future growth

04


Test & Adjust

Start with a rate that feels sustainable
Review every 6-12 months based on caseload & expenses

02

Research Your Market: Examples







Dakota Lawrence

Licensed Professional Counselor, LPCMHSP, NCC (he, him)

Verified by Psychology Today 3 Endorsed

Hi, I'm Dakota. My clients often report feeling stuck—whether from trauma, chronic pain, or deep emotional distress. They've tried to cope alone but know they need support to truly heal. They seek a safe space to process emotions, break free from the past, and build resilience. More than symptom relief, they want to rediscover joy, meaning, and self-connection. Their goal is to not just survive but thrive. I help guide that journey with compassionate, evidence-based therapy, empowering them to heal, grow, and reclaim their life.



Let's Connect

(615) 492-9309

Email me

My Practice at a Glance

Available both in-person and online

112 South Maple Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
(615) 492-9309

Email me My website Share

I offer therapy sessions in-person or online on our secure Telehealth platform. We'll meet in whatever format is most comfortable for you!

I specialize in Trauma and PTSD, Chronic Pain and Personality Disorders

\$150 Per Session

INCOME BY ZIPCODE

Search by Zip Code

Home / Tennessee / 37130

37130 Income Statistics

COMPARISON TO SURROUNDING AREAS

37130 Median Household Income

The median household income (\$60,389) for 37130 is less than the median household income for 37149 (\$68,733), 37127 (\$85,947), 37128 (\$89,069), 37129 (\$89,772), 37085 (\$123,469), 37090 (\$85,048), 37118 (\$86,447), Rutherford County (\$82,588), Murfreesboro city (\$76,241), and Walterhill CDP (\$93,188). But it's more than 37132 (\$-1).

37130	\$60,389
Murfreesboro city	\$76,241
Walterhill CDP	\$93,188
Rutherford County	\$82,588

Get Median Household Income for all Zip Codes in Tennessee.

Don't Be Afraid To Jump Off The “Private Pay Cliff”



Consider Interdisciplinary Practice



Referral Streams

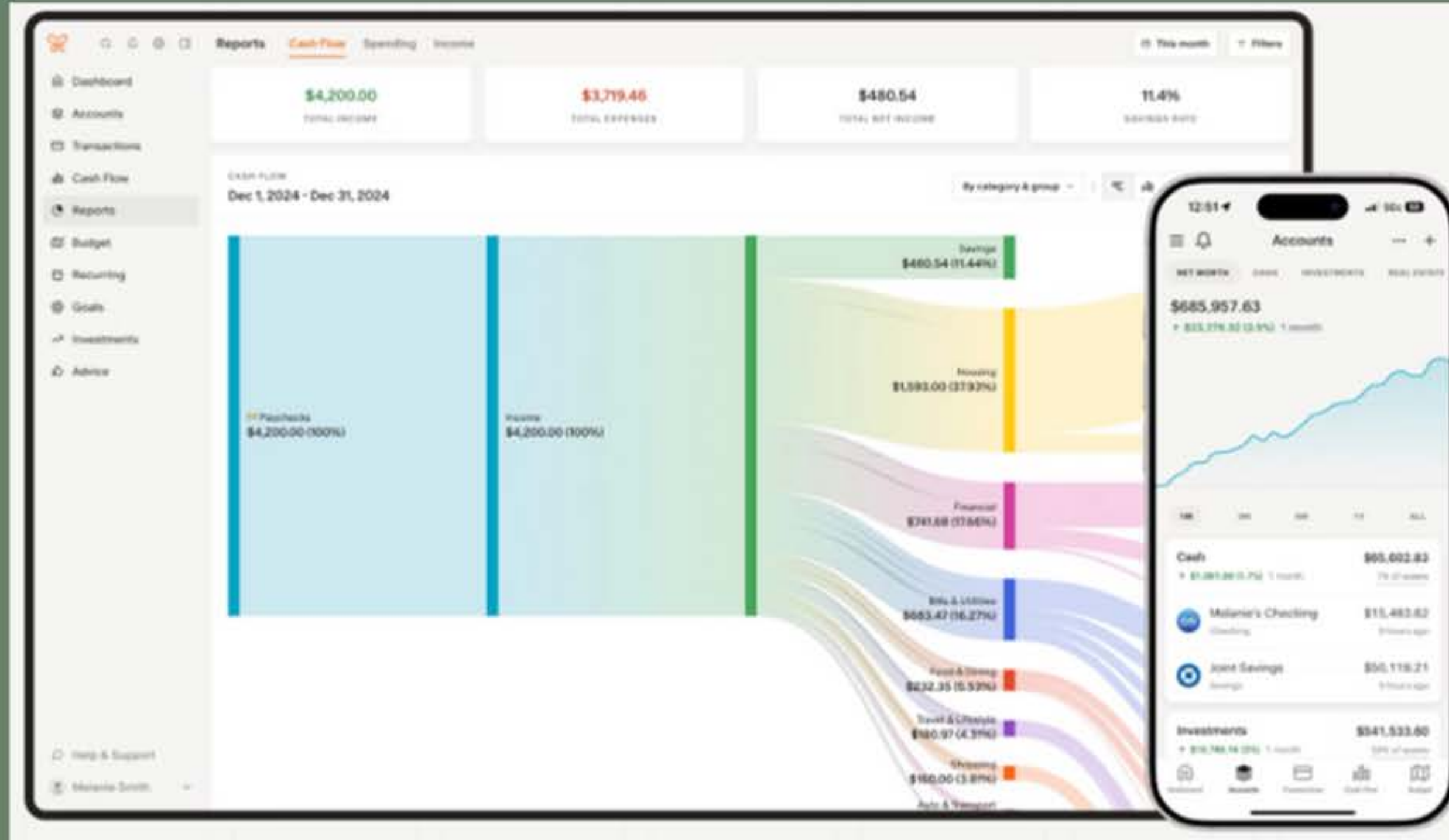
- **Professional Networks:**
 - Physicians, mental health providers, schools, rehab centers, community agencies.
- **Community Connections:**
 - Local organizations, churches, nonprofits, fitness/wellness programs.
- **Digital Presence:**
 - Website SEO, Psychology Today, social media, Google Business listings.
- **Word of Mouth:**
 - Client satisfaction, reputation, and existing relationships.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:**
 - Cross-referrals with other OTs, PTs, counselors, and healthcare teams.

Budgeting

- **Start-Up Costs:**
 - Licensure, insurance, legal fees, furniture, tech/EHR systems.
- **Fixed Expenses:**
 - Rent, utilities, payroll, software subscriptions.
- **Variable Expenses:**
 - Marketing, continuing education, office supplies.
- **Revenue Planning:**
 - Anticipate client volume, session rates, and seasonal fluctuations.
- **Financial Cushion:**
 - Build an emergency fund and plan for taxes (set aside 25–30%).



Budgeting Tool Example: Monarch



Taxes!

Taxes!



Taxes!

Set aside 25–30% of your net income (profit after expenses).

- **Federal Income Tax:**
 - Usually 10–37% depending on taxable income brackets.
- **Self-Employment Tax:**
 - Around 15.3% (Social Security + Medicare) if the business owner isn't on payroll.
- **State & Local Taxes:**
 - Varies widely—some states have no income tax, while others add 3–10% or more.

Know What You
Don't Know:

Hire An Accountant

Step 4:

Operations

Scheduling Systems - EHRs - Billing

“How Does This Thing Run”?

Remember:

If You're Doing It All...

Remember:

If You're Doing It All...

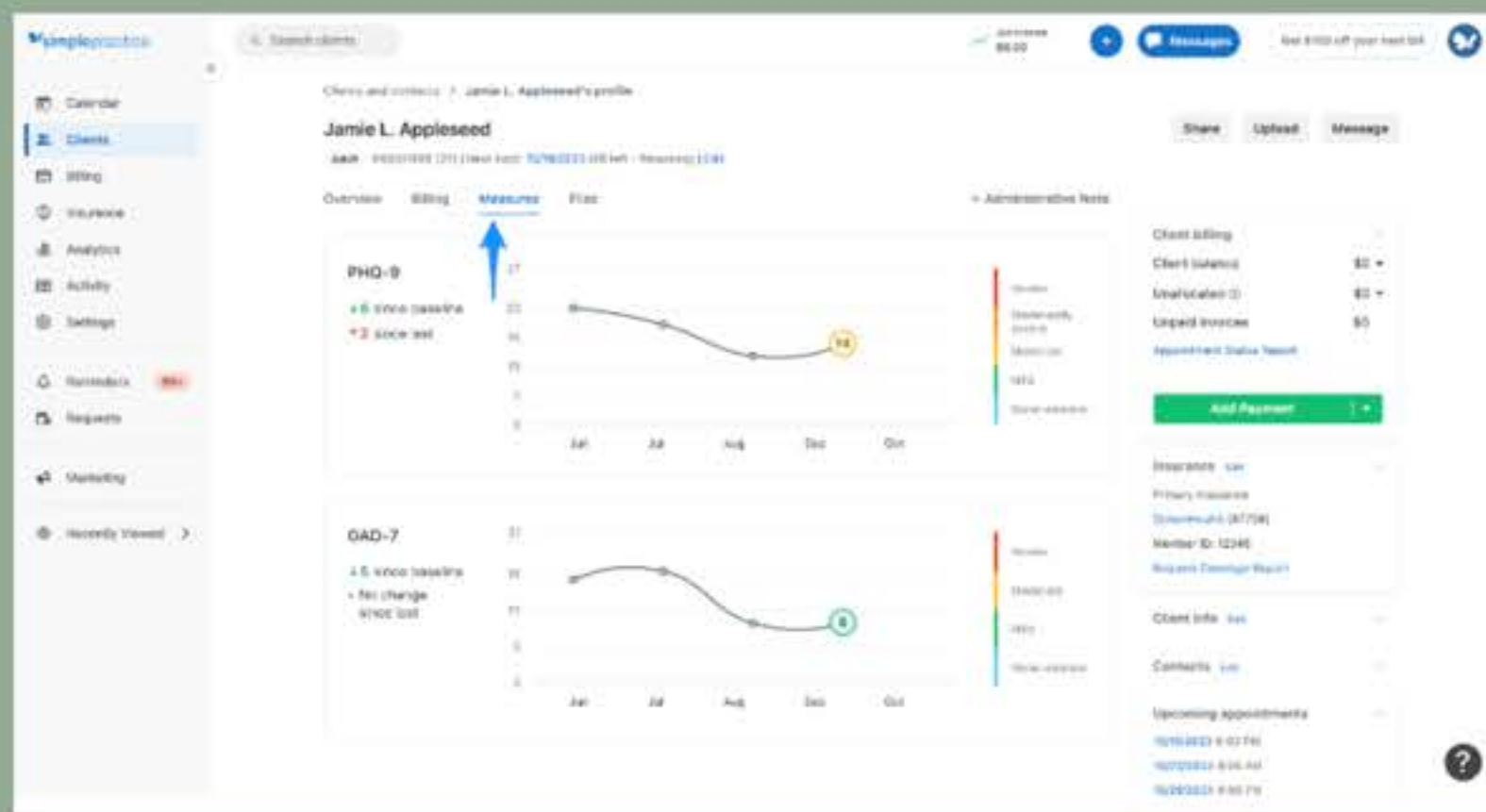
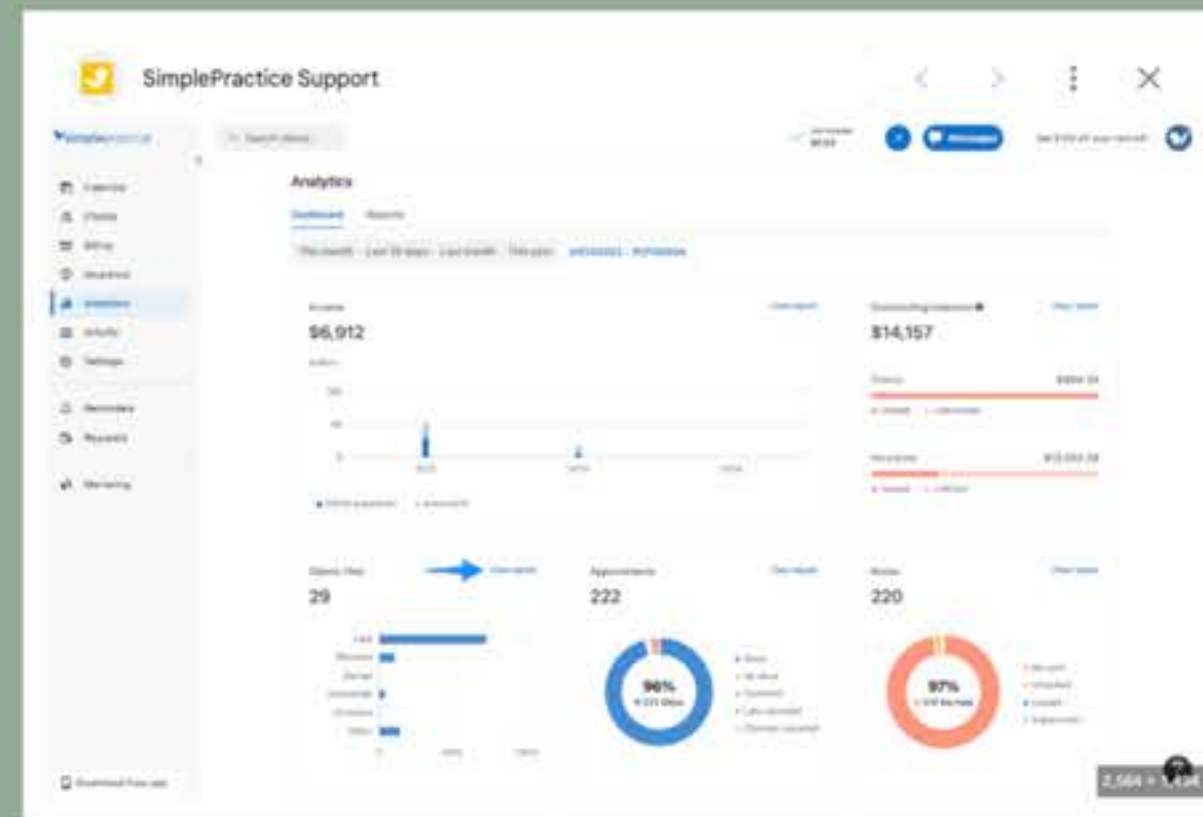
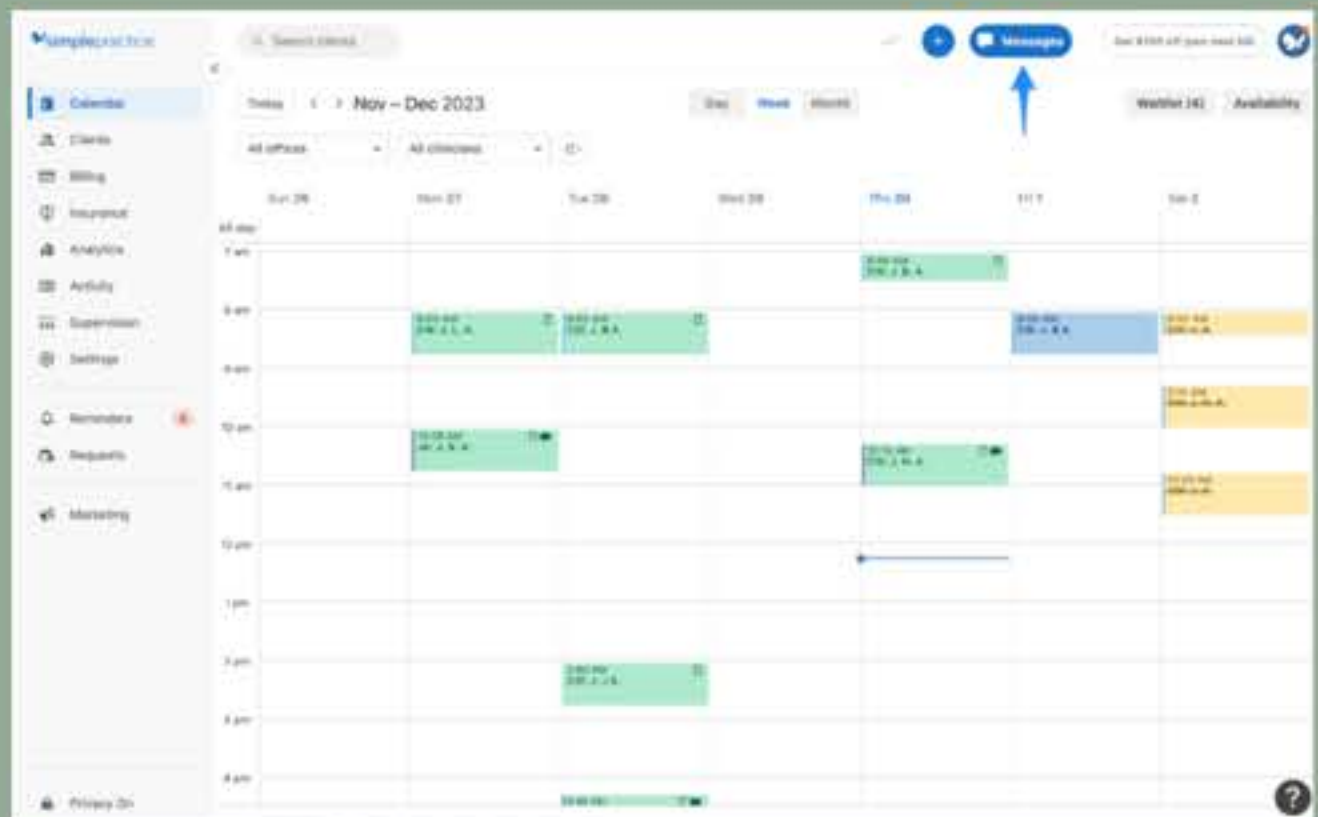
You Won't Be
Doing It For
Long

Scheduling Systems/EHR

- Centralized Management:
 - Combine scheduling, billing, documentation, and client communication in one platform.
- Accessibility:
 - Cloud-based access for you and your clients (HIPAA-compliant).
- Efficiency:
 - Automated reminders reduce no-shows and streamline workflows.
- Popular Options: SimplePractice,
 - TherapyNotes, Jane, TheraNest.
- Integration:
 - Look for platforms that sync with accounting tools and telehealth.



Scheduling Systems/EHR: SimplePractice Example



Systems, Systems, Systems

Time is your most limited commodity. You can't do everything!

The most efficient way to handle day-to-day operations is to create systems that help you automate as much of the “grunt” administrative work as possible.

Some things to consider:

01

How will clients book appointments?

Will you answer & return every call to your office?

Or utilize an automated scheduling software?

02

How will you keep track of your budget?

Will you itemize every receipt?

Or utilize an automated billing software?

03

How will you manage SEO and social media?

Will you manually create, film, and post content?

Or utilize AI software to generate and schedule new content?

Know What You
~~Don't Know:~~

Don't Have Time To Do:

Hire Support Staff

Developing Your Brand & Professional Identity

Beyond A Logo

- Your Story:
 - The “why” behind your work and the unique perspective you bring.
- Consistency:
 - The tone, visuals, and experience clients associate with you.
- Trust & Credibility:
 - Builds recognition, reliability, and client confidence.
- Client Experience:
 - Every touchpoint—website, office, communication—shapes your brand.



Values



Voice



Identity

Essential Branding Elements



Logo



Mission
and/or
Tagline



Color
Palette



Font &
Voice

Essential Branding Elements



Interdisciplinary
By Design

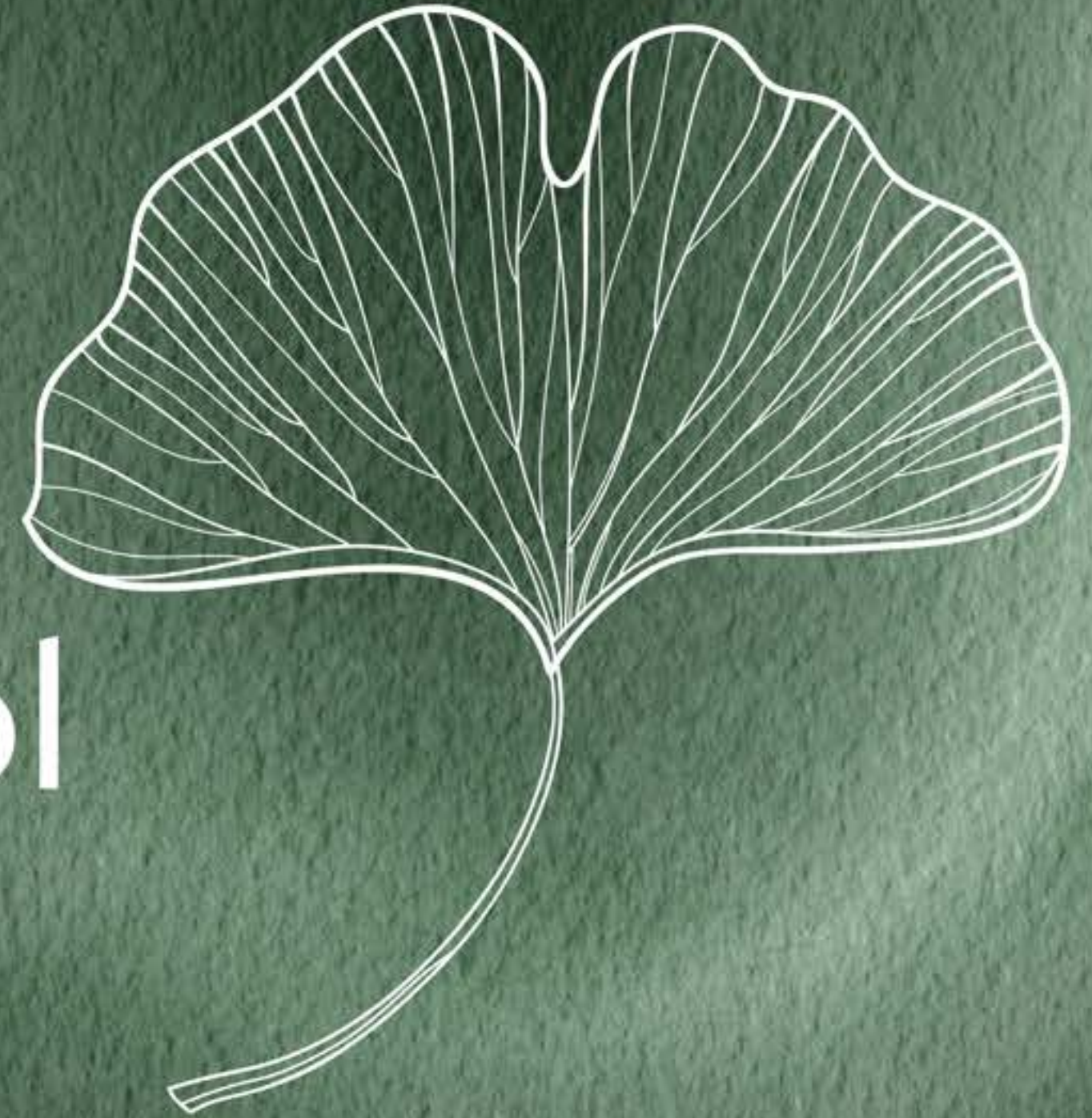




Essential Branding Elements



Storytelling is a Professional Tool



Consider The Ginkgo Leaf

Know What You
Don't Know:

Hire A Designer

Exercise 2:

Find Your Voice

3 Tips For Success

01. Payroll Will Be Your Biggest Expense – Make It Sustainable

If you're not careful, you may "overpay" your clinicians (or yourself). Leave enough room for all those "little expenses" that add up.

Consider using a range **between 40% - 60%** of billable income. The remaining 40-60% is **NOT** profit. It covers:

- Taxes
- Rent/Space
- Essential utilities, like EHR systems
- Benefits packages
- Future Raises
- Support or expert staff (reception, accountant, lawyer, etc)





02. Market, Market, Then Market Some More.

Do not undervalue the impact of a “warm handshake” while keeping up with the times.

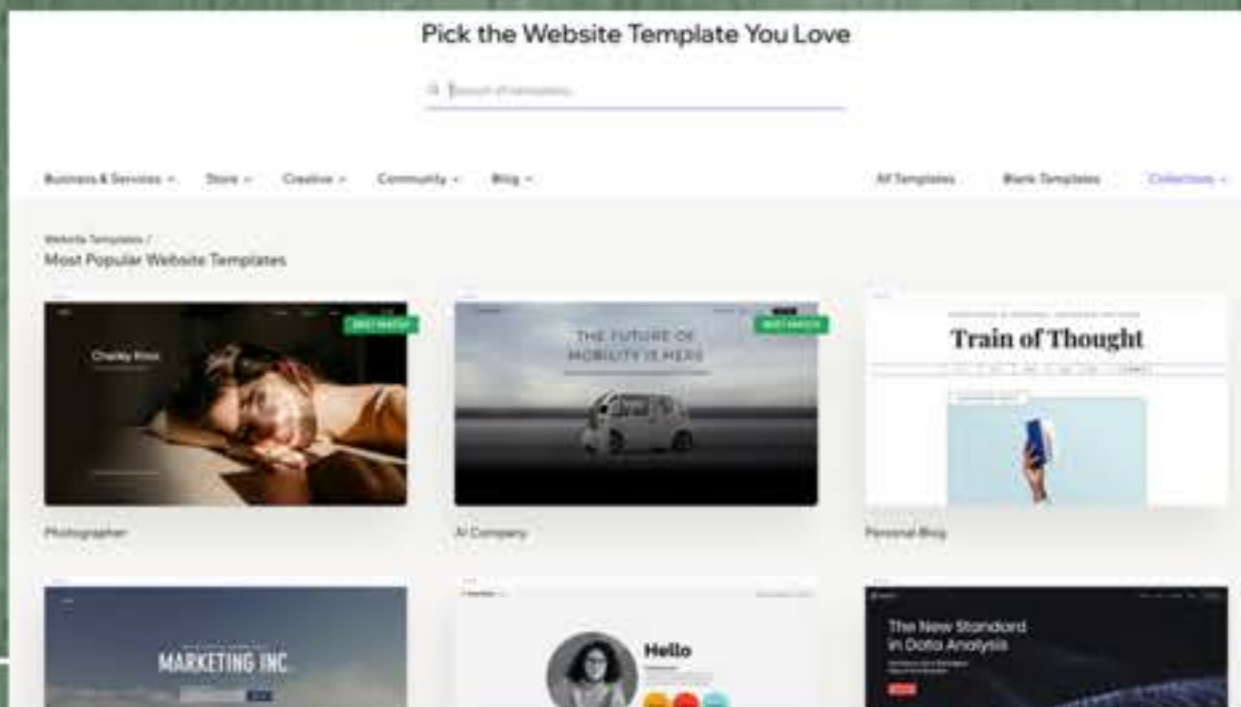
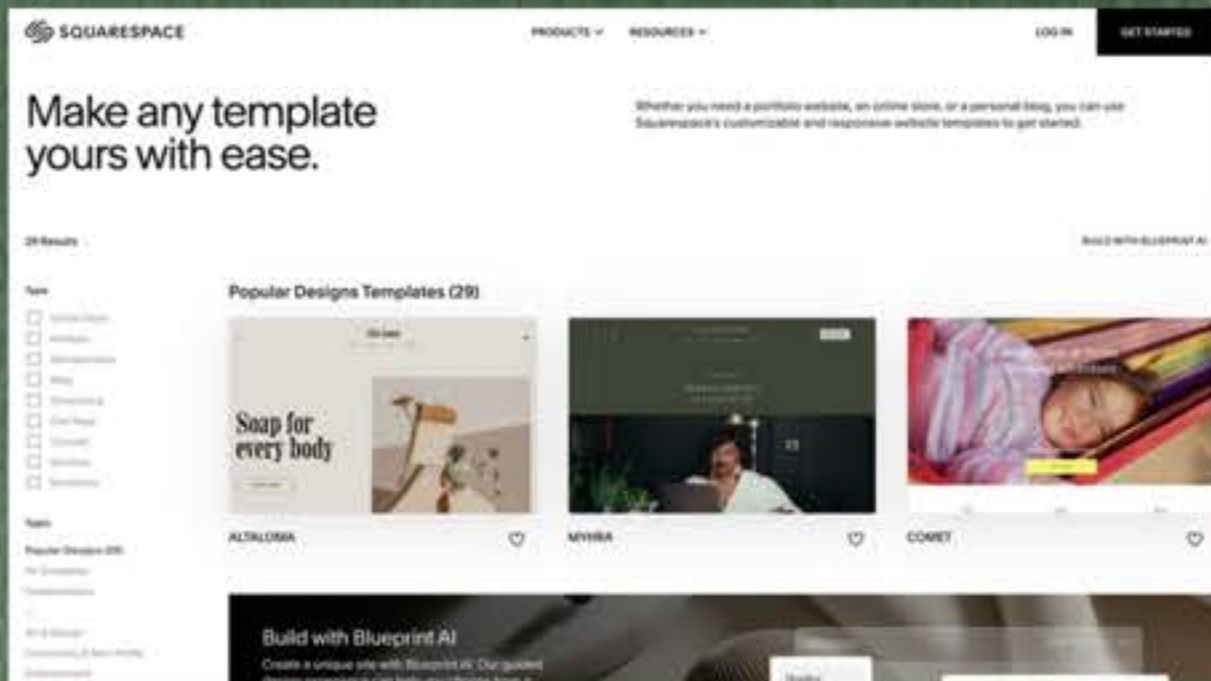
Some Considerations:

- Participate in consultation groups
- Go on as many coffee meet-and-greets as you can. Always come with curiosity.
- Bake (or buy) cookies. Hand deliver these to your potential referral sources with your business cards.
- Understand your “ideal client”, then meet them where they’re at.
- Conferences!

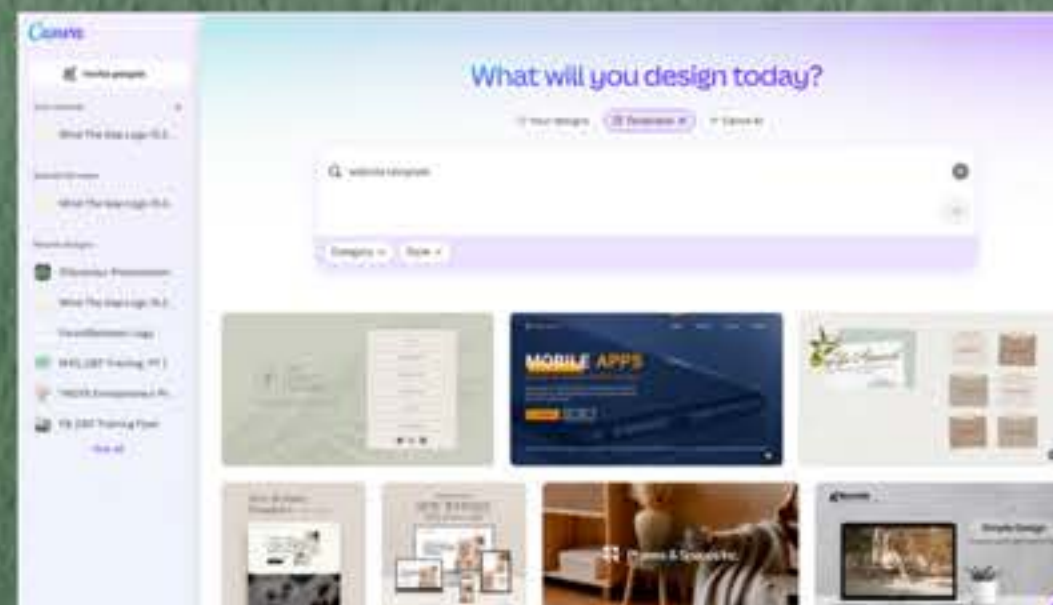
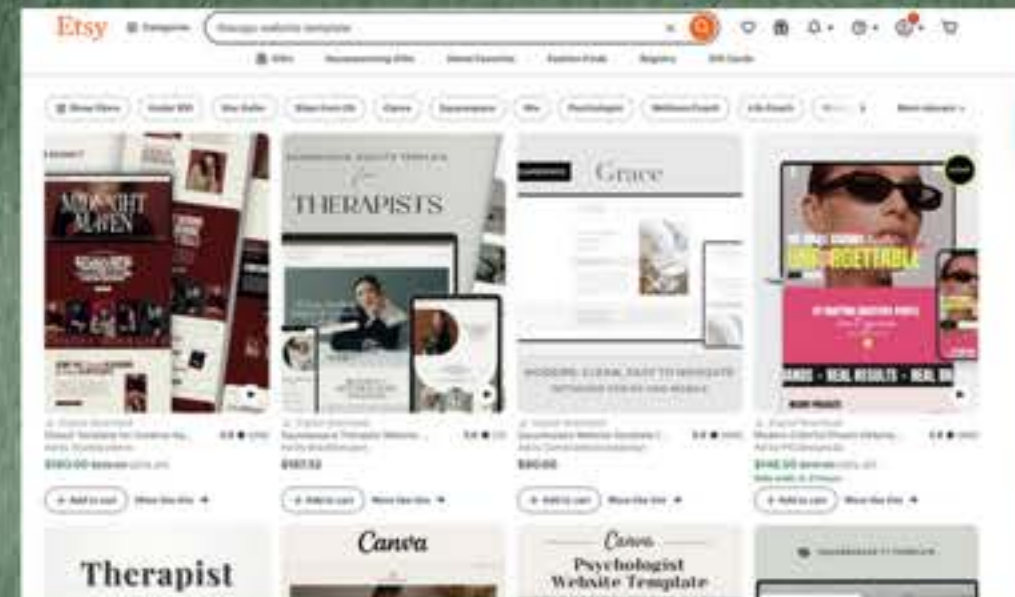
Yes You Need a Website

No, it doesn't have to be complicated.

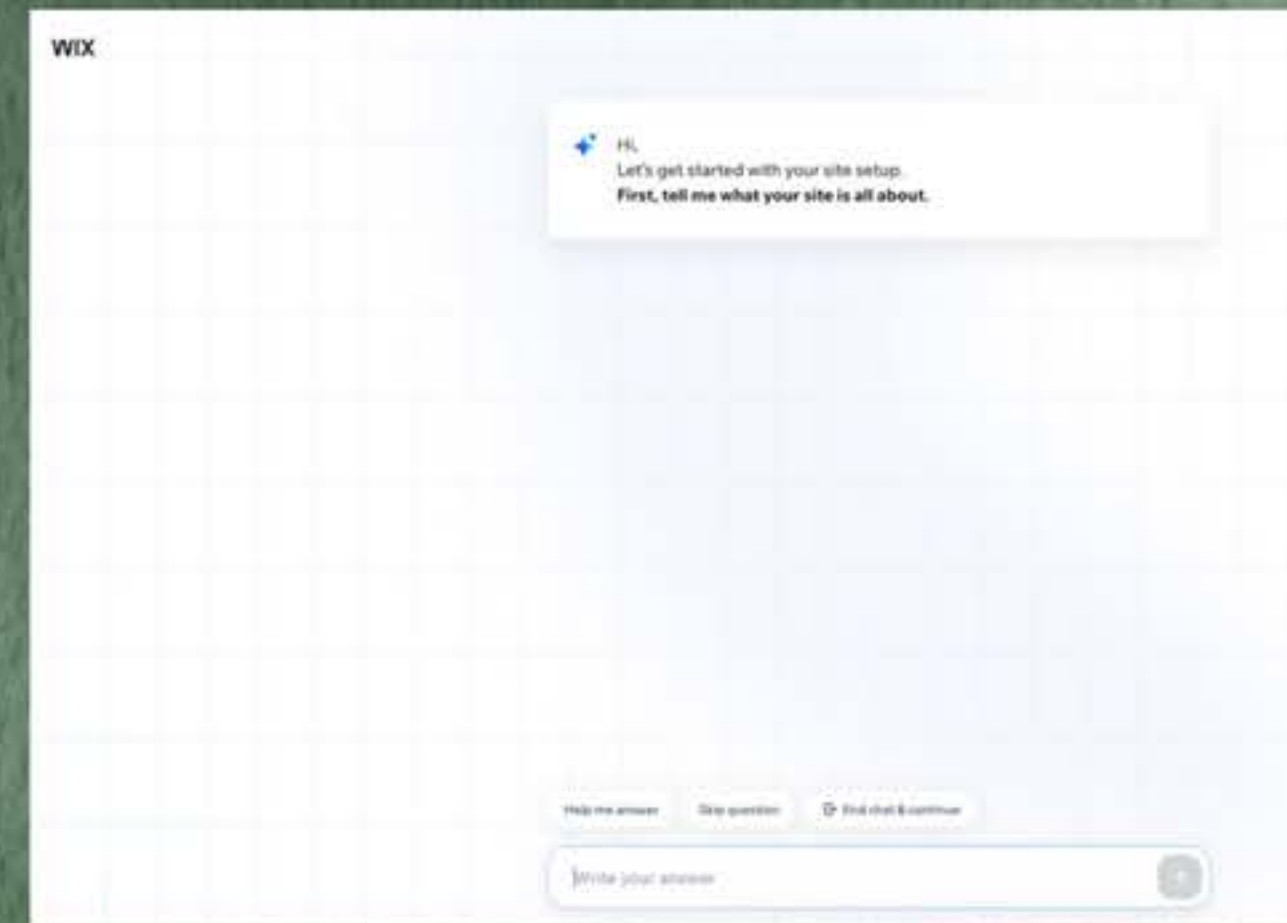
Option 1: The Industry “Big Boys”



Option 2: Super Specific Templates



Option 3: Let AI Help



SEO

Search Engine Optimization

Yes, It Is Complicated (Sorry)

SEO

- **Definition:**
 - SEO helps your website show up higher in Google searches so clients can find you.
- **Goal:**
 - Increase visibility, attract ideal clients, and build credibility.

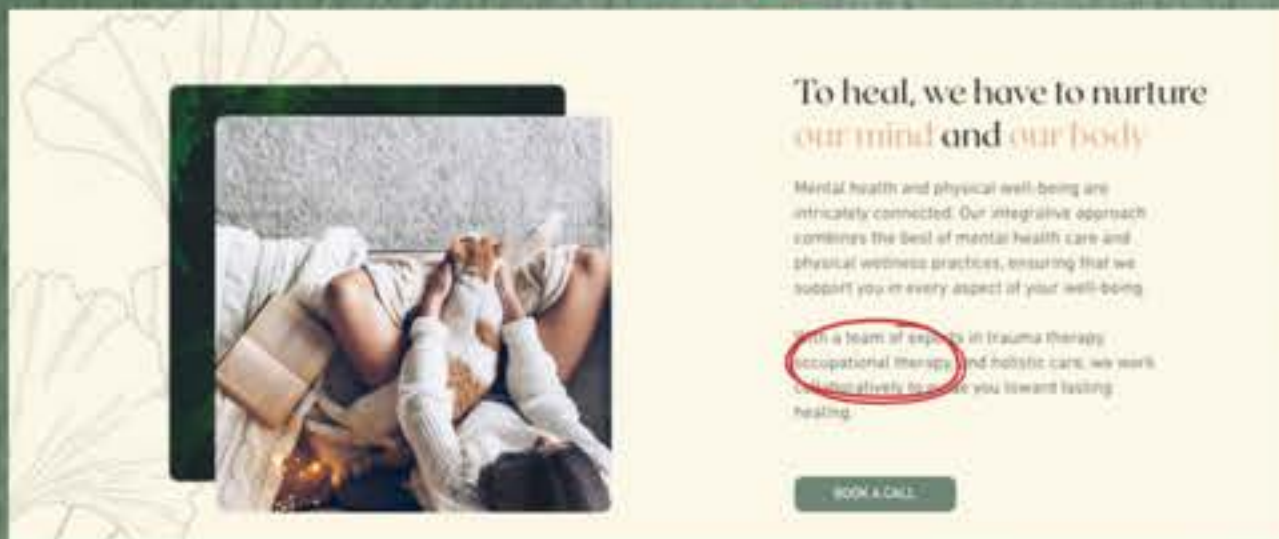
Tips for Effective SEO

- Use keywords clients actually search (e.g., "anxiety therapy Murfreesboro").
- Create clear, client-focused page titles & meta descriptions.
- Keep website content fresh & valuable (blogs, resources, FAQs).
- Ensure your site is mobile-friendly and loads quickly.
- Claim and update your Google Business Profile.
- Gather positive reviews to boost rankings and trust.

SEO Example: Occupational Therapy

Search Term:
Occupational Therapy Near me

Homepage:



Secondary Pages:



Regular Blog Posts:



Know What You
Don't Know:

Hire A Designer

03. You Need To Grow

- **Why Growth Matters:**
 - Strategic growth can improve profit margins and sustainability.
 - Expanding services or caseload can create stability and momentum.
- **The Risk of Rapid Growth:**
 - Scaling too fast strains systems, finances, and staff.
 - May dilute your mission, vision, and core values.
 - Burnout and loss of quality in client care.
- **Finding the Balance:**
 - Grow intentionally, not reactively.
 - Revisit your mission regularly to stay aligned.
 - Build systems before scaling further.



Building A Team

Team Building Considerations



1099 vs W2

Cultivate Your
(Work) Culture

Mind The
Gaps (In Care)

Look For
Leaders

Case Study Walkthrough

Mind The Gap

A LOVE STORY

- MTG is a labor of love for each other, our community, and our professions
- Dakota and I hypothetically discussed going into business together for years
 - We were eventually pushed off the cliff to either fall or fly
- We are committed to providing quality care that bridges the gap between traditional physical and mental health care
- We also greatly value promoting a nurturing and supportive work environment for our staff
- Overall, we want learn from hard lessons and do better for our clients, staff, ourselves, and our community



Mind The Gap
Therapy and Consulting

Time Line of MTC



Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Never under estimate the power of networking and community eminence
 - Our number one referral sources are personal/professional contacts, facebook, and work of mouth
- You must have a growth mindset to survive.
 - Coasting is not an option
- You have to learn to manage your time and your stress
 - Distress tolerance is step one
- Passive/Multiple Income streams are important
 - YOU are not an infinite resource
- Your employees are your most valuable asset - make sure they know it.



Word To The Wise

- Make sure you have the right mindset
 - This is a journey full of many obstacles
 - It's a marathon, not a race
 - Consistency is KEY
- Hire out when you need it
 - No you didn't go to business school
 - No you don't need to go to business school
 - Yes, you need a CPA and attorney
- Build your support structure
 - And don't be afraid to use it: ask for help!



Know What You
Don't Know:

Hire A Business Coach

Exercise 3:

Make Your Action Plan

Most of All...
Remember
Your 'Why'





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THANK YOU

Do you have any questions?

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