

## Where Are They Now: Katie Lynch

You're listening to the Abundant Practice Podcast where we work through the stuck places folks hit while building their private practices. Each week we dive into practice building through different lenses. You'll get trainings, listen in on mini consultations and conversations with other consultants. Each month there is a niche deep dive where we flush out a niche from a marketing perspective. Plus every now and then we throw in a Where are they now? episode and check in on the clinicians who were on before to see how the advice played out. When relevant the show notes will include a worksheet for you to bring the content into your practice or life. Because I love you listening, but I want you to take action, too.

This podcast is sponsored by the Abundance Party, where for only \$39 a month you get courses on honing in your niche and marketing your practice, scripts for the business side of things, monthly trainings and a chance for one on one with me and a much more intimate Facebook group, where I currently respond to every post. You can check that out at [AbundanceParty.com](https://AbundanceParty.com).

On to the show.

Hi guys. It's Allison Puryear from [AbundancePracticeBuilding.com](https://AbundancePracticeBuilding.com). I am here with Katie Lynch from [PresentHeartCounseling.com](https://PresentHeartCounseling.com). Katie was my 2<sup>nd</sup> podcast ever. And so, since there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday this month, I'm really excited to do a Where are they now, show. And find out what's been going on with Katie and her practice. Welcome Katie!

Katie: Thank you Allison. I'm so happy to be back on.

Allison: Yay! So I know we talked, almost a year ago, a really long time ago, can you tell us a little bit about where you were at that time and what you were worried about?

Katie: Yes. Absolutely. About this time last year, actually, I was knee deep in trying to figure out how to open my private practice. I was exploring all the logistics that go into opening a private practice. Trying to figure out how I was going to do it financially, and also how I was going to balance opening a part time private practice while trying to slowly transition out of my agency work. One of my biggest concerns this time last year was *how the heck am I ever going to make money in private practice on my own?*

Allison: Right. I remember we did some math, didn't we?

Katie: Yes, we did.

Allison: Which is an awkward thing to do on a podcast, but it worked.

Katie: I still have the little piece of scrap paper I wrote on then.

Allison: That makes my heart so warm! Awesome. So, tell us a little bit about where you are now. Then, we'll backtrack.

Katie: I'm like glowing at saying this. I have met, let me back up, [initially] I made some pretty concrete goals for myself this time last year, for the entire year of 2017. I really viewed my work of going into private practice into phases. I'm happy to say that I planned on meeting my clinical goals, which are also in turn, my financial goals, by January. I actually met them last month. So I'm ahead of the game.

Allison: You met them in October?

Katie: Yes. I met them in October.

Allison: Wow! A whole quarter ahead. That's incredible.

Katie: Yeah. The other really exciting thing about my practice is how it evolved into two very distinct niches that I feel really passionately about. Both of which are very close to my heart. The first being I do couple's therapy. I have some advanced training in the Gottman method. So, I've been very specifically doing Gottman method with my couples. And my second niche which I feel the most excited about is I work with women and couples who are struggling with infertility and who are also possibly pursuing alternative family building. That has been just like my calling. I have this beautiful experience this year where I finally feel like this is exactly where I need to be as a therapist and the people I'm serving. And it's been a really awesome experience to get to that point, because I was very nervous about niching. And I'm now seeing how important it is to super ultra-niche. Because it's like magic when you do it.

Allison: It really is.

Katie: I'm still a little tiny bit in my agency job. I transitioned out of the majority of my agency work. I left a big portion of that in June. I'm still there about a day and a half a week. Mainly because I have really good health insurance there. My husband and I are in the process of going through IVF treatment. And I need my good health insurance, because in Massachusetts, we are lucky enough to have mandated fertility coverage in our health insurance plans.

Allison: Oh my gosh, everybody move to Massachusetts!

Katie: Yeah, right! So, I'm really just at the agency right now to do my final phases, phase out. And when I'm ready to kind of let go of that beautiful health insurance that is helping us hopefully make a beautiful baby, then that would be my phase out of my agency work.

Allison: Got it. And how many clients are you seeing in your private practice?

Katie: I set a goal to have, I think of it as how many clinical hours am I doing, not necessarily how many clients. So, I had a goal for myself to do 10 clinical hours by January. I met that goal in October.

Allison: Amazing.

Katie: Depending on how this next month and a half goes with the holidays, I might see a little bit more than that, or I may just stay right at 10, and if that's the case, I'll be happy, because I met the goal.

Allison: Absolutely. That's fantastic. And are you taking insurance, or no?

Katie: Oh no. No, no, no.

Allison: Got it. So you sound very happy with that choice?

Katie: I am *exceptionally* happy with that choice.

Allison: There's one thing I want to point out. Because I've heard this from other people who work with couples or individuals struggling with infertility. There's this sense of oh, I have to take insurance, because they are already spending so much to try and get pregnant. And I think this is proof positive

that that's not necessarily the case. I used to hear that around eating disorder work, too. Oh, eating disorder clients want to use their insurance because they are already having to see a dietician, they are already having to see their MD, and potentially a psychiatrist. And I feel like these are these myths that get built up and then perpetuated by people who are making kind of fear based decisions. If you want to take insurance, beautiful, you all go take insurance. But don't make the choice to take insurance based on fear you won't get full, because look at Katie.

Katie: Yeah. And I will say that I struggled with that personally, you know my husband and I are struggling with our own infertility and I struggled at first with that decision a tiny, tiny bit. You know there was a brief moment where I thought, well, should I take insurance so I can serve anyone who might need to have the services? But, I personally see an acupuncturist every single week. And I pay out of pocket, and she does not take my insurance. And I could see an acupuncturist who does take my insurance and I chose to see one who specializes in infertility. So, I know I value spending my money with the person that can do the work the best for me. And that was kind of the attitude I had going into it. I won't be the best fit for everyone. And if there's someone who does need to use their insurance, I have some trusted therapist I can refer them out to. And I do offer a reduced, I have two reduced rate spots for individuals who need either infertility counseling or post partum counseling. So there's two spots, both of those are filled right now, but I did make that decision.

Allison: Were there some bumps along the road, or was it a pretty clear trajectory?

Katie: I feel as though there were bumps that happened later in the year for me, so over the summer I started to have a little bit of anxious feelings about, am I ever going to meet my goals? And interestingly enough around July or August time, I was getting very self-doubty, and starting to question, *am I making the right decision with my business?* Can this area support what my fees are? You know, I just stayed the course. I woke up every day. I did the work. I just kept plugging away, and when I started to feel doubtful, I used that as a key opportunity to ramp up my networking and my outreach to my community. I put my anxious energy in there. And then the fall came, it was like a light switch went off at the end of August, and there was a couple weeks I was like wow, I cannot believe all the abundance that's coming into the practice right now, and it stayed steady since then. It's pretty exciting.

Allison: Yeah. And [unknown 09:09.1] I wrote a blog post about when you're in that stage of waiting for the phone to ring, like what to do with yourself, and we'll put that in the show notes. Because that's a really hard stage. You've been trucking along, and when it feels like there's a dip out of nowhere, it can be demoralizing.

Katie: Yeah. And I didn't experience what maybe some practitioners experience when they first open, so my first week of officially being open, I had clients.

Allison: Wow!

Katie: Yeah.

Allison: You're a unicorn!

Katie: So, I wasn't filled, but I had always consistently been seeing clients every week since I've been open. So, when I started to not feel like I was, I was starting to feel worried, why aren't things going to

the next level? Why aren't I meeting my goal that I set for myself? That's when I started to get a little self-doubty.

Allison: Do you feel like there are some things about yourself through that experience that you're really maybe appreciating the struggle now that you're through it?

Katie: Yes. I am a very, I try and think when I think about life goals, I try and think as though they are absolutely happening. So the majority of the day, I'm like, no that's happening. That thing I want? It's happening. And, I do that in my business, with my husband, my husband owns his own business, in his business when he's having doubtful moments, I'm like, no, that's happening. Because that's a goal. It's happening. I never put it out in the universe that it's not going to happen, or I try not to. So, I feel like that kind of got me through the harder days, also, of just being like, stay with the attitude I know has always helped me be successful in the past. I'm also exceptionally organized and I love systems. So I tried, right from the get-go, a lot of systems around marketing and networking. I can tell you where every single one of my clients came from, how they got to my door.

Allison: Yes! That's awesome, right? Because then you know where to keep investing your time. And sometimes money!

Katie: Yeah, exactly. So I feel like those parts of my personality really helped me kind of stay the course through the little bumpy road part.

Allison: Fantastic. So the hyper-niching, most people are like yeah, I don't know if there are enough people who fit that? What gave you the confidence to go for it?

Katie: When I first decided to open the practice, I was pretty confident that I was going to work with couples because I have a passion for doing that work. I was actively getting trained in the Gottman method and I felt really excited about that. But as far as the infertility work, as I was starting to share my story with people in my life, I was finding that almost everywhere I went, in most conversations, somebody was disclosing their own struggles with building their families or their sisters or their best friends. Or their co-workers. I was like, God, there's so many of us out there. There are so many of us. And infertility and alternative family building covers such a wide range of life experiences for people. And I had this period of time where I was like, it's all around me. And there's so many people that have been suffering on their own. Kind of like in the shadows quietly and not really sharing their experience with people. Then, the more I was kind of deeper and deeper into my experience, I was realizing there weren't a lot of resources in my area for this type of support. And one night I was working on my website copy and working on, I was doing these activities early on before the practice was open, where I was writing out letters to my ideal clients. I would just like write her a letter. And I just kept finding that I was writing to women who were struggling to build their families. I was sitting at my desk one night and I remember it clear as day, I just had this like huge warmth come over me, and I was like, this is what I'm supposed to be doing. I was doing a heavy focus on marketing the couple's work, I didn't totally put that off to the side, but I re kind of focused my intention with my work and haven't looked back since. That's just how it happened.

Allison: That's awesome. What has been most effective for you in marketing this niche?

Katie: There are a couple things. I had a feeling we were going to talk about that, so I made a little list.

Allison: Pulled up your spreadsheet?

Katie: Yeah. So I have to say, number one, and I'm not paid to advertise them, but my website with [Brighter Vision](#), I have to give it to them. I have had a lot of people who Google me, or not Google me, Google looking for support, both for the couple's work and also for the infertility support. And Brighter Vision has done an amazing job with my website. So I think the website has been a big one. The other piece that I did a lot of work on early on was identifying in my community where people like myself who are struggling to build their family are showing up. Where is everyone? And, that actually first started with my acupuncturist and I was sharing with her that I was opening the practice. She gave me a list of local Ob-Gyns that she was close with who helped her when she opened up her practice here. And, she connected me with them. I started doing a little bit of networking with them. And then, I reached out to our New England chapter of Resolve, which is just the National Infertility Association. And, I became a member. So I'm a member of RESOLVE. And I'm also a member of RESOLVE New England. Got connected with the folks over there. And a couple months after I had been opened, I got contacted by them asking to do a workshop for one of their conferences. So I started to relationship build through them. And, started getting referrals through them, because they run local support groups. And, we're definitely always happy to refer people out to trusted clinicians. And then, the other piece that I did was, when I needed to put some of that energy out, some of that anxious energy I was talking about earlier, I would letter write. So I would write letters to other OBGYNs that I didn't know personally. I would write letters to other healing professionals, so some of the acupuncturists in the area, some of the massage therapists in the area. I did a letter writing campaign to all the hair dressers in my area. Basically was like, hey, I tell my hair dresser everything, so if you ever feel overwhelmed with what your clients are telling you, you can refer them to me if you feel like it's out of your comfort zone. So I did that. And I just really tried, and I reached out to all of the fertility clinics in New England and the New England area. And, I got connected with a particular fertility clinic who just became a referral source for a particular service I offer for clients who are struggling to decide if they are going to do donor conception or not. And if they are going to do that, they are required to meet with a therapist. So this clinic refers their clients to me. So that's been another source. Then, the final source is [Psychology Today](#). I wrote a very specific Psychology Today profile. Saying this is what I do. But really writing it to the woman I've been writing letters to this whole year.

Allison: Awesome.

Katie: And I was very nervous about doing that on Psychology Today. Am I not casting a wide enough net on Psychology Today? But, you know what? Plenty of people, the people who needed to find me, found me on Psychology Today. And the people who didn't need to find me, didn't find me, and that's ok!

Allison: Yes!

Katie: So those have been kind of my primary ways of getting referrals.

Allison: That's awesome. So one thing I want to point out that I think is probably just embedded in your personality and probably a lot of the personalities of the people listening, because it's also in mine, so like this idea, when you have anxious energy, being in action, I think that there have been times where I have been, oh I put all of this energy into this thing, like being in action in this way, because I was anxious. And maybe it didn't yield anything, but you know what, it yielded a little bit less anxiety in the moment. It served me better to do that and try something than just to sit there and stew. Because I can

ruminate with the best of them. But being in action at least gives my brain a little bit of a direction. And it sounds like for you, the action that you took, was really effective.

Katie: Yeah. I would say for the most part, most of the action I took was affective. The only thing I would say that I spent a tiny bit of time experimenting with that did not work for me, and I just think it's because I'm not well informed enough about how to make it work, is Facebook ads. So that was the only thing I thought, I spent a little more time on that, just for a very short amount of time at the end of the summer. And it didn't really yield much. Well, I shouldn't say that, one person did say that they found me through Facebook. But you know, it definitely was not worth what I put into it.

Allison: Yeah. There's a big learning curve there.

Katie: Yeah. Big time.

Allison: Anything else you think folks should consider, know, like we'll make sure we link to that very first episode you were in, too, so that people can hear you then, versus you know. Because your confidence is off the charts now, it sounds like. In a way that there was a lot of fear still when we talked before.

Katie: Yeah. There was a lot of fear. And I think a lot of the fear, looking back was around the financial component of doing this. And the piece that I would really strongly recommend is just doing the work on yourself, on whatever the money stuff is. Because I spent a lot of time working through some of that, both pragmatically and coming up with my fees, and thinking about budgeting and what could I spend on the practice, all of that stuff. But also, just allowing myself permission to make money. It is okay to make a living.

Allison: Absolutely.

Katie: I think coming from, you know I'm a social worker, and I don't think that is always something we allow ourselves permission, as social workers. And I think that that piece of work was really important for me to do. And helped with my confidence. I think that somehow it connects to the value. My clients value me, and I think they value me because I value myself in that way. I think that's an important piece, to not ignore if you're feeling uncomfortable around the financial pieces of building a practice.

Allison: Absolutely. And I think the first step of that can be the math. So there's a handout in that first, in the Friday of that first set that we did, that maybe we'll put in here, too. So starting with the math and looking at your response to that math. Is it elation and jubilation of oh my gosh, I can work 11 hours a week and make more than I'm making working 40? Is it deflation? Of like are you kidding, I've been working 40 hours and I could be working this much? Maybe this is wrong. Maybe I shouldn't do that. Like noticing what comes up. And then, those first few clients where you are asking for money and it feels super awkward, noticing what comes up there. And setting your fees. Money is so rich. Oh, I did not mean for that to be a pun. It just came out. It's juicy, though, right. It's just...

Katie: I think also, when you're thinking about money, if you know you are going to have some challenges around interacting with your clients around money and collecting your fees, I have systems in my practice, that I don't really have to talk about money after the first session, for the most part. My clients are all set up for simple practice. They fill out all their paper work ahead of time. I collect a credit card. And in my financial agreement that I have the client sign in the first session, I say, unless you tell

me otherwise, the card you have on file is the card I will charge at the end of session. So we don't have to have an awkward money talk every single session. And I've had two cancellations in this past year, and I've charged my cancellation fee. And it's fine. Everybody survived. And I think it's just set up the systems and do them ahead of time, and make them a boundary part of your practice. And I think that helps with some of the anxiety as well.

Allison: Absolutely.

Katie: One final thing, don't make your fee, well I will just say, I did not make my fees based on emotions. I made my fees based on concrete evidence. Here is how much I was spending on my practice, here's what I need to make to be able to pay my own bills, and I set my fees based on that. I wasn't like, I'm worth X amount of dollars. It's not about my worth.

Allison: Exactly. I think my friend Tiffany and I have had conversations about this idea of charge what you're worth, but there's not a number for what we're worth. That's not a thing. Which can serve to confuse people a lot, but if you just come from math.

Katie: Yeah.

Allison: I sound very, more logical than I think I am, but I keep saying that. But, with this issue, I feel very math driven. Because it usually yields the results I like.

Katie: Yeah.

Allison: Wonderful. Well, Katie, thank you so much for updating us on where you are. And I'm so glad you are having so much success.

Katie: Thank you. It was so good to get to talk to you again. And, I have to say thank you. Because you were a big part of me making the jump. And I had purchased your little, I forgot what it was called, the special last year, all the great, what to say when, and that was the actual first investment I made in my business. So you were a big part of that last year. So thank you.

Allison: Thank you. And if you guys are like what to say next? What's that? You can go to, it's now a part of the Abundance Party, which has that and a bunch of other courses as well. So if you guys need a little extra help, you can go to [abundanceparty.com](http://abundanceparty.com) and see if it's a fit. But yeah, thank you so much, Katie.

Katie: Thank you.

Allison: Take good care!

Katie: You too! Bye Allison.

Allison: Bye