

Where Are They Now Ada Pang

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 a 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.

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Welcome to the Abundance Practice Podcast. Today, I love these, this is one of the Where are they Now's. We are checking in with Ada Pang. Hey, Ada!

Ada: Hey, Allison!

Allison: She was on one of my very first podcasts. So if you want to go to 5.1, because this was back when there were three a week. And she was one of the brave souls. I think maybe Ada, you might have been one of the very first people I ever recorded with. And hers was called "[When You Are Doing It All Right.](#)" Because at that point, Ada really was, doing it all right. So, you can check her out at [Peoplebloomcounseling.com](#). And I invited her back on because I knew she was kicking butt. And I wanted to talk to her about what was working. So you guys can take some of what she has done and see if it will work for your practice.

I'm so happy that less than a year later, from when the podcast aired, you're in a different place. So tell us where you were back when we recorded that and where you are in your practice, now, Ada.

Ada: Sure. Allison, thank you so much for having me. I remember when we recorded was December of 2016. And then it was aired in March of 2017. And, when it was recorded I was on two EAP plans, I was struggling to get a steady flow of clients. On the off week I might have 15 clients, but they may be, 30% of them might be EAP clients. And I just had a hard time getting things going and things flowing. So, since then, I was just this past summer looking back and being like, well I do average a little more than 18 clients a week. And that's my sweet spot. Because I've got consults and supervision, all these other things going on. And they are not predominately EAP. Because I actually recently got off of the two EAP plans. And they are people who found me online or someone recommended me. And it's been really wonderful to just be in that space where things are happening more organically. As opposed to me feeling like scrambling and trying to make things happen.

Allison: Yeah. It's interesting. Because even just the calm in your voice, most of us go through that scrambling phase. There are some stories where I opened my doors and was full in two weeks. But those are extraordinarily rare. And I think there must have been some magic or something involved. But most of us go through that struggle. I'm curious, what got you through that phase? Especially when you were already, like the title says, you were doing it all right. And you weren't getting the immediate kind of feedback of this is working, here are clients. How did you get through that emotionally?

Ada: I know, Allison, that you practice act as well as [unknown 3:51.6] and I think a lot of it is about going back to my values and practicing committed action. Doing, these are the things that matter, even though in the immediate moment I am not seeing results that I want to. I keep plugging along because I remember the why. Why did I go out on my own? Why am I doing this? And, over time, meeting other people in the community, having face to face and coffee and meals and so forth, really encouraged me to know I'm not the only one that's struggling. And I think building that sense of community definitely also helped me down that path.

Allison: Yeah. It's amazing, and that's part of why I have the Facebook group and I do so many things in groups is because I feel like, the loneliness when you feel like you are not succeeding. It's stifling and it's really hard to keep going. But if you put out there, I'm struggling, this is hard and you have 4 other people be like, oh amen. I so get it. All of a sudden you've got more energy to keep going. So, yeah. A plus to community!

Let's see. What do you feel like were the things that really helped you build your practice? **I want to put a little asterisks here for people who are listening. ** I love when people share what worked for them. But I also want to make sure that everybody knows that what worked for Ada might work for Ada because that's more congruent with her practice or her as a person. If you are really shy and an introvert, and Ada networked with 5 people a day, then don't feel like that's the only way to succeed or that's what you need to do. For those of you who align with whatever she says next, then it's worth a shot if you create a plan around it.

Ada: I definitely did not network with 5 people a day. I did deepen some of the relationships that I initially started. And that was one of your recommendations, Alison. That was really helpful. And naturally I wanted to get to know these people, as well, because they were wonderful and they still are. And, patience, I think, was really important. Knowing that I was planting seeds. Coming back to act, you know, this is what matters. This is why I'm doing what I'm doing. And keep plugging along even though I'm not getting the instant gratification. And also believing that somehow, and hopefully it's in my offering and my service to other people is that something would come back. And there's no guarantee with that. But somehow knowing if I'm being helpful, there would also be something kind in return. And maybe I should frame this in terms of blogging. I do put a lot of energy when it comes to blogging and wanting to write quality posts. I post about once every 2 weeks. With plus and minuses in terms of time variance. And it certainly is with the intention of giving to my audience. Whoever may be watching or reading. And I boost them on Facebook, like a dollar a day. So really not expensive. But people like it. And it doesn't matter whether they become my clients. My goal is for them to benefit from that information. And with that in mind, I think there are some people who do read it and feel like, oh, maybe I should be in touch with Ada, and so forth. So, I think that has really helped as well.

Allison: So it's interesting, the timing. Last hour I recorded with Michael Formica. And we were talking all about content marketing. And that is airing. So I guess when people are listening to us right now, it aired last week. So if you guys skipped content marketing, Michael and I spoke a lot about exactly what Ada is saying. It's an act of service. It's also something that gives your potential clients a way to know you a little bit better. And makes them more interested in getting in touch with you. So, I feel like blogging is one of those things. And for people who hate to write, vlogging, you can do videos, too. Most of us are super uncomfortable the first several hundred times we do videos. But then we get over it. But finding some way to create some content that's really valuable for your ideal clients is an act of service.

Ada: And I have been off and on for a while. In terms of not wanting to see too many clients. In that, even in my blog, I don't have a call to action at the end. It's really more, I have this information, clients ask me about in session. And I really wanted to share with more than just the people in my office.

Allison: So it would be an easy tweak if things slowed down, for whatever reason, to just throw a call to action in front of these blogs, or at the end of these blogs that you already have. And then reboost them. You may as well promote the content you have created again. Because not everybody may have seen it the first time.

Have you noticed anything about that ebb and flow? Is there anything you feel like you've learned about the ebb and flow of clients that you want to share?

Ada: The holidays were definitely slower. And I just see that as time to work on my business. And time to take some time off. So, I think anticipating that, also took the anxiety out of it. The beginning of this year was also slower for me. And again, I was fine. Because there were other things that could occupy my mind. And so, kind of taking data to see when people are calling and when there is this gap, helped when to anticipate what to expect.

Allison: I end up having a slower time at the end of the year as well. Where some people, especially with folks who work with substance abuse or like who's practices are focused around family of origin issues, some of them seem to have an uptick around the holidays of new client calls. My ideal clients are very much like, I'm going to start January 1 on this new lifestyle thing. So they always wait until January. So were you kind of able to root yourself in, getting clients before the holidays? This is just a holiday slow down. It will jump back up at the beginning of the year. Were you able to root yourself in there or did you have moments of freak out?

Ada: No. I was able to root myself. And also, because my clients were also going on vacation, and I was already penciling them in for this month, in January. So, they have appointments in the books. And I already know they are more likely to come in and continue the work we have started. So, because I have six other things that I was focusing on doing and tinkering with, aside from just seeing clients, I basically just rooted my attention to those things.

Allison: Was there anything that you did that you just feel like did not work for you?

Ada: In terms of my attempting to network with primary care physicians and visit multiple times with, first of all a letter or a card. Then, even some chocolate and offering lunch and all of that. That did not get past the office managers, who I call the bouncers. And, so my multiple attempts did not lead to anything. And what I have found more helpful was signing up for service, at least in the Washington area, I don't know if it's available in other states, it's called Quartet Health. And they hook up or line up primary care physicians. They are usually the ones asking for referrals with mental health providers who meet that need.

Allison: That's cool. We'll put that in the show notes.

Ada: And I have gotten referrals there. But sometimes their referrals also might not be very appropriate, depending on the insurance. The match is not perfect. I guess nothing is. But I've actually said that I wasn't accepting new clients. Then, apparently on the day last year, I said, oh, I will start accepting clients on this day. I got three new referrals from them, all in one day. And I then I had to say, no, I'm

not accepting new clients. And refer them back into the system where they can find somebody else. But yeah, it seems like that can be a way to connect with a primary care physician. At least in Washington.

Allison: Got it. I'll look into that. And we'll put it in the show notes for anybody in Washington, or if it's beyond. Awesome.

Anything else about this journey in the last, over a year, that you feel like would be helpful for people to hear or know?

Ada: I think about how there are other ways in which we can practice what we love aside from seeing clients, butts in chair, or butts on couches. And is there a group that you like to lead? Are there organizations that are already doing some work that you are interested in that you could be a contractor with? Would you be interested in teaching or mentoring or supervision? Are there side products you are interesting in, counseling related or even not, that you can...it's almost like thinking about it as an investment that you don't want to put all of your eggs in one basket in terms of, I got to have clients call me. And it's for counseling. And that's it. And that there would be other things that could help you diversify your investments and your time and energy.

Allison: So are you exploring some of these alternative forms of income?

Ada: Oh, you know, how many ways can I tell you? Since the last time we chatted, I got connected with Cancer Lifeline. And this is a year and a half after I connected with them that they called me and said, hey there's this support group. Would you like to lead it? And I was like yes. And then, I also blogged about the fear of cancer reoccurrence. And then I asked, hey, I know you guys contact presenters to give presentations. Would this be a presentation you would be interested in me giving? And have since given it once. And I'm giving it two more times this quarter. And, I'm still dabbling in, or I should say bathing in EFT and really wanting to learn that well. And I'm half way through my supervision hours in terms of becoming an AMEFT supervisor. So I'm doing that. And I have 5 other projects that I'm interested in doing. And I'm going to hire a W2 clinician. So that I'm hoping that somebody else could see more clients. And I would see fewer. And I could do some of these other things I'm interested in.

Allison: Empire building for sure.

Ada: I'm really needing to slow down. Allison, it's funny. You said that my voice is calm right now. This is not how I am yesterday. I was going at a hundred miles yesterday. And I had to really slow down and reflect. I cannot sustain and I don't want that, to be the presentation that I have in the world. So it's about coming back to ACT again. You know, how do I want to be? And what do I want to be about?

Allison: I think it's so important, because many of us, who are drawn to private practice, are go getters and type A's and willing to put in all sorts of work. Because we are really passionate about this thing that we're doing. And we have to be so careful. Because those of us who are at this mindset that we really quickly seem to just bound right on over the boundaries. With self-care and things like that. So having been there several times. Wait a minute, I should slow down. And being teased as somebody who's constantly hyper manic without the down side of the depression that tends to go with that. It's been interesting, it's like my year of 2018, my intention, or word for the year is easy. And vetting everything through, would that be easy? Because I tend to make things harder than they need to be. Or how could I make that easy? And it's been a really fun word so far. I wouldn't have ever chosen it in the past. I would have been like, easy is for losers.

Ada: When you mention the word easy, I think about ease.

Allison: And I think part of it is confronting my own fear of laziness. Which for anybody who knows me, knows I'm not a sit still sort of person most of the time.

Ada: I know. I can identify with that.

Allison: There's like a guilt with the word easy, that I'm kind of just like exposure therapying my way through.

Well, Ada, thank you so much for coming on and giving us this update. And I'm so glad your practice is thriving. Its meeting your needs. Its meeting your wants. It's giving you the space for creativity and business.

Ada: And it's a work in progress. So we'll see where it goes. Thank you Allison.

Allison: Keep me updated for sure. Talk to you soon! Bye

Thanks for joining us on the Abundance Practice Podcast. Check out this week's show notes for relevant links, resources and homework. If you're new to private practice, check out the [free checklist](#) you need to get started at [Abundancepracticebuilding.com/checklist](https://abundancepracticebuilding.com/checklist). And if you need more support, check out the Abundance Party at abundanceparty.com. See you next week!