

## 0072 Collaboration Hacks for Private Practitioners with Laura Long

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.

This podcast is sponsored by the Abundance Party, where for only \$39 a month you get courses on honing your niche and marketing your practice, scripts for the business side of things, monthly trainings, a chance for a 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](http://Abundanceparty.com). Alright, onto the show.

**Allison:** Welcome back to the Abundance Practice podcast. I'm your host, Allison Puryear of [Abundanceparty.com](http://Abundanceparty.com) and [AbundancePracticeBuilding.com](http://AbundancePracticeBuilding.com). And I'm super psyched to have my good friend Laura Long from [yourbadastherapypractice.com](http://yourbadastherapypractice.com) here with me today. We're talking about something near and dear to our hearts. We're talking scarcity and abundance and collaboration and saturation. Yeah! We're going to start, Laura, because I feel there's a lot to say about this. And I know we both hear a lot from our people about their experience of these things.

**Laura:** Well and I think it stemmed from, you and I talked about part of it, we were just having a random conversation one day and I think we were talking about collaboration like you and I, or maybe you were asking how you could help me with something and I was like, you know what, I get so many emails from therapists about oh, my market is too saturated. I can't raise my fees. Or there are too many therapists, I don't want to network with them because what if they don't want to refer to me, there are too many. Or I'm trying to think of how else it can show up. But it's just like, I thought, you know Allison, this could be a really good podcast episode because here we are over text basically showing that abundance is real.

**Allison:** Yes! I remember now! I was like painting built ins while we were texting. So, I'd paint a little bit, then I'd load my brush and respond. Yeah!

**Laura:** So, I thought that we need to be the model therapists and not just be ones who say, oh yeah, I practice abundance and have an abundance mentality. And don't practice scarcity. I think that it's a whole new realm for our respective tribes to see that we practice what we preach.

**Allison:** Absolutely. Yeah. And I think about how much the private practice coaches and consultants. We have each other's back. We help each other out. We talk about each other's awesome stuff. I think that's probably not what a lot of people are paying attention to unless they just happen to notice. But I think, generally, as private practice consultants it's something that we all believe in because we've been successful through collaboration and through joining forces with other therapists that it only made sense to continue that in the consulting and coaching space.

**Laura:** Absolutely. Well, and I was actually talking to Kate and Katy from the [Private Practice Startup](http://PrivatePracticeStartup) just yesterday about this, too. Like they had posted, and it's funny, like you were just saying, I don't think other therapists are really paying attention to what's happening behind the scenes for consultants like

us. But we have each other's back. They had posted something on their Facebook feed about having a retreat where they were really trying to work on creating their ecourse that they have coming up. And I just like called them on, I think it was Sunday, out of the blue, and was just like hey guys. They were like we have some questions. How did you do this? I was helping them. It was completely collaborative, but you know, no one sees that.

**Allison:** Yeah.

**Laura:** They see I'm launching something and then they see you're launching something, then they see they are launching something or Tiffany McClain is launching something. But they don't realize that we all are working together and because we're collaborative, we are also putting out the best stuff, too.

**Allison:** Agreed.

**Laura:** Think about Next. The thing, the big thing you and Tiffany do, Next. That is 100% collaborative.

**Allison:** Oh, absolutely. And it's so much fun because it's collaborative. Tiffany and I fill in each other's gaps really well. So, the participants ending up getting much better help than if it were either of us doing it alone. I mean, the way you and I have talked about different offerings and things like that with each other, we've given one another great feedback and great ideas that just kind of up levels our own stuff. Which is fantastic.

**Laura:** Yeah. And one thing I wanted to do with your audience is encourage them to think about creative and unique ways they can collaborate with people who they may think of as competition. So, one example is there is, I do marriage counselling, and there is another marriage and family therapist in my area and we refer to each other. One would think that we compete with each other because we serve the exact same population. But in fact, we're always calling and consulting about cases. We are organizing a networking event in the next month or two. Because we serve the same people we can actually do more than just, she [audio breaks 05:30.3] I don't want her to take all of them away. Like, do you guys realize, out there, how many couples need help? How many children are in need of help? How many people with eating disorders are in need of help? I guess just really plugging the idea of abundance and collaboration. I want your audience to see that it's real. It's not just something that we like talk about but don't practice.

**Allison:** Yeah. Absolutely. In building my practice, it was in all three places, all three cities that I've built it, it was other eating disorder therapists that essentially helped me fill my practice. Because they were full, and they needed someone to refer to. And now, I get to kind of continue that tradition, and when someone new moves into town, and they are like, hey, I specialize in eating disorders. I'm like thank God. Here are some clients.

**Laura:** Yeah. So, I just opened up a brand-new practice in my town. And I have a business partner who is another therapist. He is an addiction counsellor and does a lot of trauma work. Which is obviously different than what I do. And we found another therapist who was thinking about private practice but hadn't really gotten the ball rolling yet. And we took her out to dinner and are trying to get her to join us. Even though she does addictions and trauma. One would think, so if we already have someone here that does that, why would we bring on someone else? The truth is, my business partner is full. We need more great therapists to help with that population. So, we're collaborating with her and hopefully bringing her on board.

**Allison:** And I want to talk about the very real possibility that there are other therapists with a scarcity mindset who do maybe feel like you're encroaching on their territory. There may be some people like that. And every now and again when I'm helping my folks network effectively and efficiently, they run across one of those people and it demoralizes them. So, yeah. There are going to be some people out there who are afraid of collaboration. But the vast majority of people are not. Just like, there are always going to be people who are dealing with their stuff and projecting it onto you. But, mostly, the people that you are going to want to hang out with anyway, are the people who are going to be like, how can I help?

**Laura:** So, another thing that's coming to my mind right now is I do supervision, and I have an intern who also sees couples. And her practice is not far from mine. So, I'm giving her feedback on her website, or things that she can do to add value to her clients. That is the opposite to scarcity, too. You would think that well, why would you be helping her if her practice is so close to yours? Why are you trying to make her website good, so she can take your couples? But it's like, no, her ideal client is a couple, but their personality is going to be way different than my ideal client. And I need people to her as well. So, my area is saturated, what am I going to do? I think that is just complete BS. Like that means there is a demand. And I think for the first time I truly heard that and swallowed it and actually let it absorb into my body was when I heard you. You were like if the market is saturated, that means there is a demand.

**Allison:** Yeah. I feel like that's....I've been lucky to live in places that people call saturated. And I've gotten to see lots of people with very full practices as a result. I have a blog post that we'll put in the show notes called "The Myth of the Saturated market". And it's interesting because the word saturation sounds like a very businessy term. So, I think that therapists, as they are learning this business stuff, kind of latch onto it. Their fear latches onto it. I mean, it's like Starbucks only opens up where there are other coffee shops that are doing well. That's their business model. That's why they always open up across the street from the mom and pop store or the other Starbucks. They don't just kind of go out in a place where there aren't already successful coffee shops.

**Laura:** Yeah. So, the whole idea of saturation is something that comes up a lot when I get an email from one of my tribe members who is like I don't know what I'm going to do, like should I...I don't want to raise my rate because there are so many other therapists charging way more, or even there are a lot of therapists charging way less, I don't want to up my fee. And something that comes to my mind is if you're living in a saturated market, you are most likely pushing each other to do even better work. So, everybody benefits.

**Allison:** Absolutely. And it means you've got great people you can bounce things off of when you're feeling stuck with a client. And that's going to happen. The longer you're in private practice or the more clients you have in private practice, it doesn't matter how experienced you are. People are complex. And there is absolutely no shame in saying, whoo, I feel a little bit out of my element with this client or this concern or this whatever. And having a community of people you can rely on clinically, not just for referrals. It's really powerful for your entire city.

**Laura:** Right. Ok, so I'm not a math person, so I'm not about to run a bunch of numbers here. But, I did, while you were talking, I did just a really quick analysis and if we, so my town is a little bit on the smaller end. It's like a medium sized suburbs. So, I'd say there's probably 20-25,000 people in my town. But if you lived in maybe a little bit of a bigger one, so say 50,000 people in your city, which is not a lot of people by the way. And you only served one person of those people, that is more than probably a

full-time person. Like 500 people in an entire year. When I was full time, I only served I think it was 100, maybe like 130 people in a year. Which is less than 1% of the population. Which means if there are other therapists...so if 30-40% of the population at one time or another is in some level of counseling and you're only serving less than 1%, I feel like that is, we need to remember, it doesn't matter how few or how many people live in your area. You are really only serving a teeny, tiny little portion. So, there's always room for more. There's always room for more therapists that are good. There's always room to collaborate. I don't know, the scarcity mindset just makes us think that there's not enough people to serve. So, we have to just horde them all.

**Allison:** Right. I love that point. It's one of those times when math really works out for us.

**Laura:** Which is not often for me.

**Allison:** Right. Well the actual doing of math is hard for me most of the time. But, I will say, this happens, too, when the math works out for people when they are like, when can I leave my job? I'm like, well, if you look at how very little money per hour you're making in your job, the good news is you can leave after just few clients.

**Laura:** Right.

**Allison:** I love the idea that....and none of us can take on 1% of the population in the year. So, there is also less pressure of not just the potential competition of other clinicians. But also, with attracting clients, you only need to attract a few, essentially.

**Laura:** I was talking to one of my coaching clients about this recently because she too lives in a saturated market. And she was saying, I think she had some fears about growing, is she going to grow fast enough because she's self-pay and there are people who take insurance around her. So, we did that math, too. I was like, okay, let's look at how many people actually live in your area, and I know you're only trying to attract a small percentage of them. So, let's see, let's say that you see like 20 people a week, so that's basically your active caseload is 25-30. Do you think that there are 30 people in your town of 32,000 that fit within your target market? Like 32 people. Yes, you can fill your practice. And the person next door, if they serve the same exact population, they can fill their practice, too. And that's still only 60 people out of 32,000. So that's one way that scarcity shows up. So, when you and I were talking about collaboration and how that actually makes us better. Instead of practicing with a scarcity mindset. That's when I was like, we need to get on the podcast and tell them that this is real. We're not just like touting, oh yeah, abundance. Just have an abundance mentality. Everything will be okay. Its like no guys. This really is a thing. And it works.

**Allison:** Yeah. Absolutely. I think it's also this see change moment for people. It has to kind of clunk inside them as like an oh, and usually you're only going to get that through experience. So, I'm really okay with everybody just acting as if, until they get that aha moment. So even if you're feeling a sense of scarcity, still reach out, still network. Just let it live inside you. And I also want to be clear that scarcity is going to pop up for us forever. I still get a scarcity mentality sometimes and my business is called Abundance. Right?

**Laura:** I'm so glad you brought that up. Because it's not like we get rid of it forever. It still tries to creep back in. because that's just fear. Its like anxiety, fear, what if this doesn't work. So, having scarcity come

up for us is very natural. Very normal. And will continue to come up regardless of how “successful” you are. I’m glad you brought that up.

**Allison:** For me now, when it comes up, I just examine it, like ooh, I’m feeling that, what’s that about? And I think that if I didn’t have that sense of scarcity sometimes, it would probably mean I didn’t care.

**Laura:** Reasoning for the win!

**Allison:** There we go! So, I think if it comes up for you, great. Don’t let it lead you. Let it just be an indication that you really genuinely care about your practice. And that’s beautiful. You should totally care about your practice.

**Laura:** Yeah. So, when scarcity comes up, just acknowledge that its there. Try to examine and explore where its coming from and then still act as if there is abundance. Because there is.

**Allison:** Yeah. In fact, oh, I’m just going to out myself. I think that we had just met around the time that the podcast was airing, right? Or I was recording the first podcast episodes.

**Laura:** I think I was your first episode.

**Allison:** Yeah. And I remember feeling that sense of scarcity. I was like, oh my God, Laura’s really smart. What if she’s smarter and better and everything better than me? Ah! So, I acted as if. I was like, you know what, there is plenty of space, I logically know that. And you know what, I’m going to invite her on the podcast. She’ll be one of my first podcast guests. And it was me acting as if. And it was great because you are super smart. And you’re super great. And I get to share you with my audience and they get to become your audience if they don’t know you already. And I want my people to have everything!

**Laura:** Oh, that makes my heart warm.

**Allison:** Yeah! Friends!

**Laura:** Think about your favorite artist. Your favorite music artist. So, if you really like, I don’t know, I haven’t listened to music in a while, but if you’re like a country fan, right? Most people who like a certain type of music, they don’t just love one artist in that and just hate everybody else. Like this person has a really cool song that’s out right now. Oh, this other person just came on. But if both of those people put out a cd, you’re probably going to buy both of them. Or download them on Spotify. That’s an example of how abundance works. And what you bring to the table is slightly different than what I bring. And so, there are people who really love you who maybe don’t like me. And that’s cool because they have you. And vice versa. And, there are people who love both of us, just like there are clients out there for everybody. And what one person may like about me as a therapist, another person is going to really get a lot from my intern who also sees couples. So, it's not just like one or the other. But, I mean, especially in the online consulting business. I mean, I know you just can’t like share actual clients all the time with therapy. Don’t do that. But, what we’ve been doing essentially, like we understand you can love things about different people and still get a lot of great information about them. And no one has to pick sides.

**Allison:** Absolutely. I love that. And it’s funny thinking about some of my favorite music. I love the Abbott Brothers, I love Jason Isbell. I’m like, the idea that they are competition for one another and they

may feel that sometimes in moments of scarcity. But they are also probably like man, that was a really good song. Good on him.

**Laura:** Totally. Thank God that they are both putting out really great music that you get to enjoy. Because each of them has a slightly different take on the same genre.

**Allison:** Absolutely.

**Laura:** Abundance.

**Allison:** Well and speaking of abundance, you have a course coming out this month.

**Laura:** Oh, I do!

**Allison:** So, can you tell them?

**Laura:** [inaudible 18:01.9]

**Allison:** Tell them all about your Badass Therapy course.

**Laura:** I was telling you before we started recording, you were like, so what's the name of the course? I was like, Your BadAss Therapy Practice. And your website is? Your Badass Therapy practice? Your business name is? Your Badass Therapy Practice. It's almost like I'm trying to say something.

**Allison:** Its consistent branding!

**Laura:** Yeah. So, we're about to enroll my 5<sup>th</sup> cohort over the last two years. This is so amazing. So, I have now taken 160 therapists through this. It is 7 modules over 8 weeks. It is designed for both the newbie as well as the seasoned therapist who maybe is struggling or still doesn't see the number of clients that they want. Or isn't totally happy in their practice. So, it's not just for newbies. That's kind of the big question that people ask me. But each week we go through a separate module. It's a cohort style. So, no one's skipping ahead, no one's falling behind. We all go through it at the same exact time. You get a badass buddy who's been through the course before. And will answer questions for you to keep your ass accountable. So, we will start, I will enroll people the end of July and then we'll start the beginning of August. I'm really excited about it. And everyone gets a 30 minute one on one with me as part of their enrollment.

**Allison:** Awesome! Yeah. So, they can go to Your Badass Therapy Practice, and if they are not already on your email list, can they get on there now so that they'll hear all about when its launching?

**Laura:** Yeah. So, they can get on it now. Just enroll at [yourbadasstherapypractice.com](http://yourbadasstherapypractice.com). if you haven't already taken my free Psychology Today course, its called From Bad to Badass. You can look at both the free course as well as the paid one that's coming out by just going to [courses.yourbadasstherapypractice.com](http://courses.yourbadasstherapypractice.com).

**Allison:** I love it. Thank you so much for being on, Laura. And I hope that people are, let's give them kind of a little homework assignment. Would you guys please be willing to reach out to somebody today? Don't wait. Because it's going to fade, the desire to do it will fade. Reach out to somebody in your niche today.

**Laura:** Yes. Someone local to you that sees the same people. Reach out to them and ask them to do something. Coffee. Lunch. Chat. Something. And be genuinely interested in them.

**Allison:** Yeah. Absolutely. It's not sell yourself time. It's never really sell yourself time. It's just relationship building time. All day long.

**Laura:** Let's give them a really quick, like how they can start that conversation. Or how they can start the email. So, its like, hey. Just reaching out. I see that we serve the same people and I would love to have some high-quality people that I can refer to. I would love to grab coffee or lunch or something. And maybe even seeing if you can give a few dates. Saying, what about next Wednesday? I have this time or this time. Or next Thursday at this time. What do you think?

**Allison:** I think that's great. And I always use the subject line, I'd love to connect. And that way they know it's not a potential client, most likely. Its warm. So that one's always worked really well for me. And I always do email instead of phone. Because phone feels invasive all of a sudden. And as our generation gets older and we become closer to millennial, I don't know. So, I think it feels a little bit less invasive to send an email and is less scary, generally, to send an email. So, let's not be heroes. We can be easy.

**Laura:** And if you don't hear back from them, that's okay. Like the world is going to keep spinning. And not everyone has heard this episode. So, there are still people out there who may still view you as competition. But the point is, like Allison is saying, reach out anyway. Do it anyway.

**Allison:** Yes! Awesome! Thanks Laura!

**Laura:** Thanks so much Allison. I appreciate it!

**Allison:** Absolutely. And I'll make sure that we should put the picture of you and me and Tiffany and Jane when we went out to lunch a couple weeks ago while Tiffany was in town. You should put that in the show notes, so people can see us in all our abundance!

**Laura:** Yes! It was an abundance party for real!

**Allison:** Absolutely!

**Laura:** By Allison!

**Allison:** I'll talk to you later!