

The Essential Guide To **Starting Your Solo Mental Health Practice**



STARTING A SOLO PRIVATE PRACTICE?

Here's what you need to know.

Starting your own solo private practice may feel overwhelming, but with the right approach, it is entirely achievable.

Beyond providing excellent client care, you'll also need to manage the business side of your practice. And so, to help you navigate this journey, we've gathered insights from experienced psychologists and therapists who have successfully run their own practices.

Whether you're transitioning from a public or group practice or have recently obtained your license, these expert tips will set you up for success.

TIP #1

CONSULT WITH AN ACCOUNTANT

Before launching your private practice, it is essential that you determine the right business structure. An accountant with experience in healthcare practices can provide **valuable insights into the pros and cons of different business structures.**



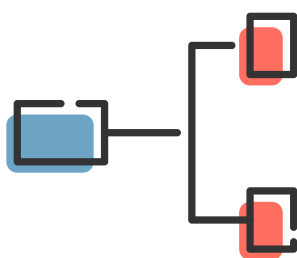
One common question practitioners ask is whether to incorporate their practice. Incorporation can offer benefits like lower taxes and protection for your personal assets. However, since every situation is unique, a detailed discussion with an accountant is necessary to **determine if incorporation is the best approach for you.**

Additionally, accountants can **advise on pricing strategies, payment structures, and tax planning** to help you avoid financial pitfalls. Many practice owners find financial management—such as taxes, billing, and insurance—to be a challenge, making professional guidance crucial for long-term success.

TIP #2

TREAT YOUR PRACTICE LIKE A BUSINESS

For example, think of it as a hospital. Your practice needs to be well-organized and fully functional, with an efficient medical records system, documentation protocols, and billing services. You'll also need to set up contracts with insurance companies and credit card payment services while ensuring compliance with legal and professional requirements, including data protection regulations.



A business also needs marketing. Creating a website, building a social media presence, and networking with other professionals will help you attract a steady stream of clients.

To fulfill these different functions, many solo practitioners choose to outsource administrative tasks like bookkeeping, accounting, and marketing to save time and prevent costly mistakes. However, if you prefer a hands-on approach or are unable to hire staff, you can learn these skills through online courses and resources designed for solo practitioners.

TIP #3

REDUCE EXPENSES BY SHARING OFFICE SPACE

If you plan to offer in-person sessions, renting an office is necessary. However, leasing commercial space can be costly, especially in prime locations.

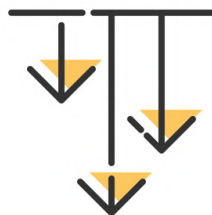
One way to manage expenses is by sharing an office with other therapists. This setup offers several benefits:

Lower costs

You can split rent, utilities, and office furnishings with your colleagues.

Professional support

Working alongside like-minded professionals can provide a sense of community and reduce the isolation that often comes with solo practice.

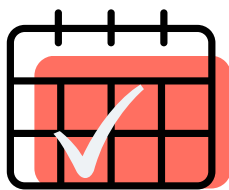


Once your practice is financially stable, you can consider moving into your own dedicated office space.

TIP #4

SET ASIDE TIME FOR ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS—AND REST!

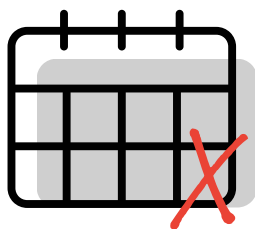
Running a solo practice means juggling multiple responsibilities—patient care, administrative work, accounting, and marketing. To maintain balance, set aside specific days for administrative tasks.



For example, you might designate Fridays for bookkeeping, client follow-ups, and marketing activities.

Additionally, be mindful of your workload. Consider limiting your weekly appointments to a manageable number (e.g., 25–30) to prevent burnout. Many new practitioners fall into the trap of overbooking clients, leading to exhaustion and decreased quality of care.

Establish clear working hours and stick to them. Learning to say “no” when necessary will help you protect both your well-being and the sustainability of your practice.



TIP #5

ACCEPT THAT YOU WON'T KNOW EVERYTHING AT FIRST

Even with thorough preparation, you won't have all the answers right away—and that's okay. Building a successful private practice takes time. Even well-established practices faced challenges in their early years.

To keep learning and improving:

- ✓ Read industry guides and enroll in relevant courses.
- ✓ Take advantage of free resources such as bookkeeping certifications from QuickBooks and Xero or digital marketing courses from Google.
- ✓ Seek guidance from experienced colleagues and attend networking events.
- ✓ Join professional groups and online communities where you can exchange knowledge and receive referrals.

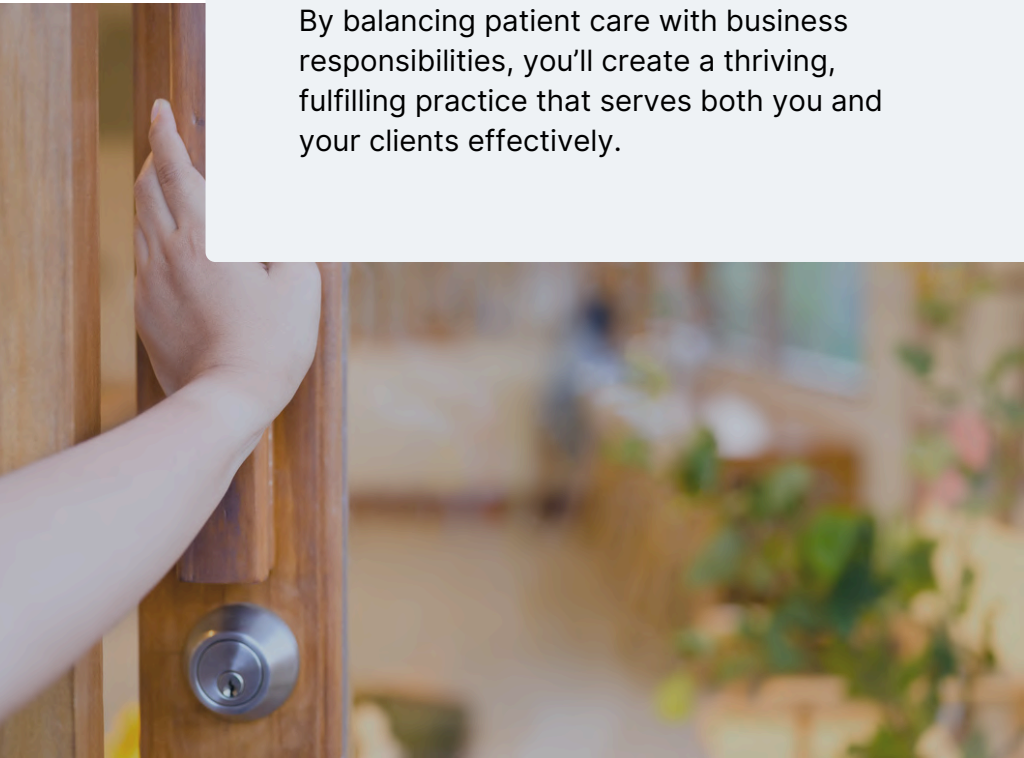
Embracing this continuous learning process will help you grow your practice and build a strong professional network.



Starting a solo private practice comes with challenges, especially in the beginning. However, with careful planning and the right support, you can navigate your first few years successfully.

Simple strategies—like sharing an office, consulting an accountant, and setting clear work boundaries—can make a significant difference in your practice’s sustainability.

By balancing patient care with business responsibilities, you’ll create a thriving, fulfilling practice that serves both you and your clients effectively.





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We offer specialized corporate tax preparation, bookkeeping, and financial statement services designed specifically for mental health practitioners.

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