CCA 90 MINUTE WORKSHOP

Beyond the Couch: Why Therapists Must Think Like Business Owners in 2025

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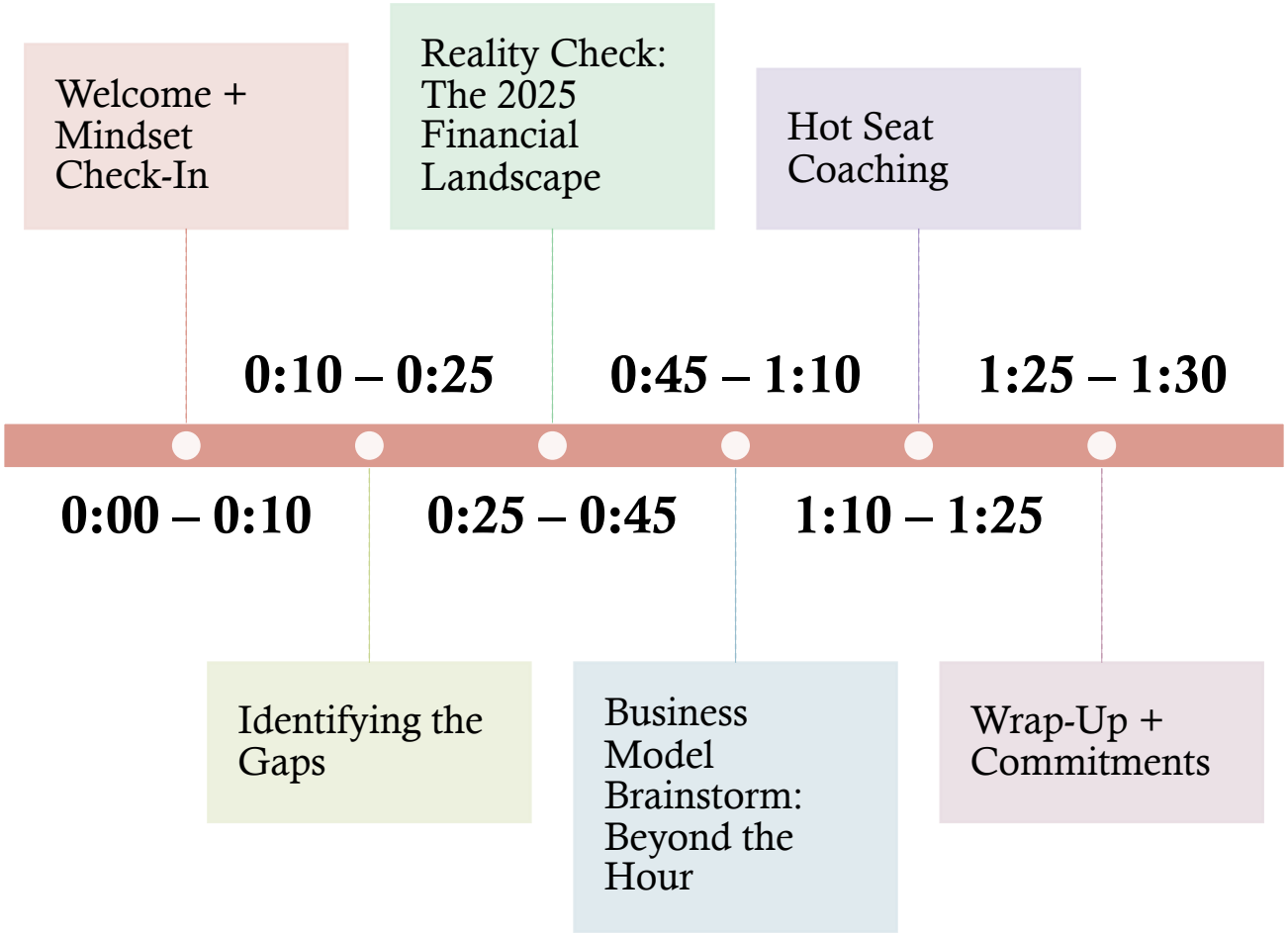
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

1. Identify the Gaps: Describe the disconnect between graduate-level counseling education and the real-world business competencies required for private practice success, including budgeting, pricing, marketing, and scalability.
2. Understand the Financial Landscape of 2025: Analyze current economic challenges affecting private practice, including inflation, increased operational expenses, and the shifting behavior of therapy clients in a financially volatile environment.
3. Shift the Mindset: Apply foundational business strategies to counseling practice, including service diversification, alternative income streams, group practice models, and pricing structures that support both accessibility and sustainability.

AGENDA / SESSION FLOW



WORKSHOP OVERVIEW: WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF THIS WORKSHOP?

Mind the gap: what is your learning goal for this workshop?

Warm-up: unpack limiting beliefs about business and therapy

safe space for business discussion

When you hear the word *business*, what emotion do you feel?"

"Making money means I'm not client-centered"

"Marketing feels unethical"

HOW PREPARED WERE YOU AFTER GRADUATION?

- Independent paneling
- Budgeting & fees
- Ethical marketing
- Taxes & insurance
- Time-based income limitations

REALITY CHECK: 2025 FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE

Inflation, rising costs, shrinking reimbursements

Client financial stress and session drop-offs

Poll: *What's your biggest monthly business expense? Or what do you think is going to be your biggest monthly expense?*

REALITY CHECK: 2025 FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE (2)

Inflation & Cost of Living Pressures
Rising overhead costs: rent, utilities, EHR platforms, liability insurance, office supplies.
Impact on clinicians: stagnant reimbursement rates not keeping pace with inflation.
Therapist income erosion: even modest annual inflation compounds into significant real-wage loss.
Ripple effect: increased client cancellations or reduced session frequency due to personal financial strain.

Inflation, rising costs, shrinking reimbursements

Client financial stress and session drop-offs

Poll: *What's your biggest monthly business expense? Or what do you think is going to be your biggest monthly expense?*

REALITY CHECK: 2025 FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE (3)

Increased Operational Expenses
Technology costs: telehealth platforms, cybersecurity, HIPAA-compliant tools.
Administrative burden: billing, credentialing, and documentation
Marketing and visibility expenses: SEO, social media ads, websites, Facebook groups
Professional fees: CEUs, licensure renewals, supervision, and professional memberships all rising annually.

Inflation, rising costs, shrinking reimbursements

Client financial stress and session drop-offs

Poll: *What's your biggest monthly business expense? Or what do you think is going to be your biggest monthly expense?*

REALITY CHECK: 2025 FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE (4)

Shifting Client Behaviors in a Volatile Economy

Budget-conscious clients: increased demand for sliding scale, reduced session frequency, or shorter-term therapy.

Higher client turnover: financial uncertainty makes long-term engagement harder to sustain.

Delayed or deferred care: clients postponing therapy until "things stabilize."

Rise in telehealth preference: clients seeking convenience and cost-effectiveness over in-person care.

Increased acuity: economic stress amplifies anxiety, burnout, and relational strain, increasing session intensity.

Inflation, rising costs, shrinking reimbursements

Client financial stress and session drop-offs

Poll: *What's your biggest monthly business expense? Or what do you think is going to be your biggest monthly expense?*

REALITY CHECK: 2025 FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE (5)

Strategic Implications for Therapists
Reevaluate pricing and boundaries: align fees with realistic business costs and sustainability.
Diversify income streams: groups, courses, consulting, or partnerships.
Adopt leaner operations: audit subscriptions, automate admin tasks, share office space.
Educate clients: normalize conversations about fees and value, financial transparency builds trust.

Inflation, rising costs, shrinking reimbursements

Client financial stress and session drop-offs

Poll: *What's your biggest monthly business expense? Or what do you think is going to be your biggest monthly expense?*

BUSINESS MODEL BRAINSTORM: BEYOND THE HOUR

Activity: *Resilient Practice Map*

- Productized service
- Scalable offer
- System/boundary for time protection
- Headway, Alma, et al.

Coaching Tips:

- Test before scaling
- Overcome perfectionism & guilt
- Scaling = sustainable service

CASE GROUP ACTIVITY

- Build a business plan for a fictitious practice
- Share group “A-ha” moments
- Brainstorm diversified revenue streams

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CASE GROUP ACTIVITY (2)

•ThriveWell Counseling, DBA Brigid Carney counseling

•**Business Model:** Fee-for-service private practice offering individual, group, and supervision services with an intern training component.

- **Mission Statement:**
  To empower adults and young professionals to thrive emotionally and relationally through evidence-based counseling, accessible group programs, and mentorship for future clinicians.
- **Vision:**
  A sustainable, community-rooted counseling practice that promotes mental wellness while modeling ethical entrepreneurship for emerging therapists.

Develop your business model, your mission statement and your vision

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CASE GROUP ACTIVITY (3)

A. Individual Counseling

- 50-minute sessions focused on anxiety, burnout, and relationship issues
- Fee: $150/session (****sliding scale available for need-based clients****)

B. Group Therapy Programs

- **Anxiety Skills & Support Group** – 8-week closed group
  - Focus: Mindfulness, CBT skills, peer connection
  - Fee: $50/session per participant (6–8 clients per group)
- **Professional Burnout Recovery Group** – Ongoing, open-enrollment
  - Focus: Work stress, identity, and self-care for professionals
  - Fee: $60/session per participant

C. Intern Services

- **Reduced-fee counseling** provided by supervised master's-level interns ($40/session)
- Focus: Accessibility for underserved clients and intern skill development
- **Supervision:** 1 hour/week per intern

D. Workshops & Corporate Wellness

- Quarterly public workshops (e.g., "Managing Anxiety in a Digital World")
- Corporate trainings on burnout prevention and resilience
- Fees: $300–$1000 depending on organization size

CASE GROUP ACTIVITY (4)

Market Analysis

- **Who are your target clients?**
- **What are the market trends:**
- **What can you offer that is unique group therapy?**
- **What can you offer to universities and to interns that no one else is offering?**

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INSURANCE & RISK SNAPSHOT

- The 411 on insurance:
  - Brief presentation on:
    - No balance billing
    - Paneling
    - Clawbacks
    - Denials
    - Audits
    - Managing insurance challenges ethically and effectively

HOT SEAT COACHING: PRICING, PACKAGES & BOUNDARIES

- Objective: Tackle real participant challenges
- Structure: live coaching
  - Sample Topics:
    - Raising rates
    - Managing cancellations
    - Creating group sessions
    - Creating marketing opportunities
- Peer reflection and feedback

WRAP-UP + ACTION COMMITMENTS

Reflection Prompt: *"What is one thing you will do differently in your practice this month?"*

Optional share-out

Revisit "Parking Lot" questions

KEY TAKEAWAYS

YOU ARE ALREADY A BUSINESS OWNER—OWN IT.

ETHICAL, SUSTAINABLE, PROFITABLE THERAPY *IS* POSSIBLE.

BUSINESS BOUNDARIES PROTECT YOUR CAPACITY TO CARE.

THANK YOU!

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TWO (2) HANDOUTS

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