

Kathryn: Welcome to episode 35 of Compass, I'm your host Kathryn Hunter. Are you concerned about taking your offline clients with you when you go remote? Today, Hope Allison and I talk about that and more when we discuss becoming a remote fitness coach. I wanted to let you know, currently, I am offering free one on one brainstorming sessions, to help you find your location independent path. To book, visit compasspod.com/brainstorming and let's get started. You're listening to Compass, where we talk with location independent womxn about their work and the paths that got them there. We get into their stories of struggle and success, finding clients, figuring out what to charge, and of course, we talk money. Join us and take the next step in finding your direction. Hope, welcome to the show.

Hope: Oh, thank you.

Kathryn: I like to start with your early life and see where that influences you later on. What did you want to be when you were five?

Hope: That's a good question. When I was five, that was a really long time ago. I believe I wanted to be a singer.

Kathryn: How had that changed by the time you left high school?

Hope: Oh, it changed a lot, drastically. I definitely didn't want to be a singer when I was in high school.

Kathryn: So what had it changed to?

Hope: That's a very good question. When I left high school, I decided to go straight to college and pursue just general education and there I got interested more in humanities and agriculture. I really loved learning about where our food system comes from, so I was pursuing a completely different path.

Kathryn: Is there anything from those studies that you use now?

Hope: I would have to say yes. Humanities, yes. I have used education definitely. I use now in my profession, but I, I didn't really know what I wanted to do until maybe 10 years later, 10 years later. I didn't go straight into my, what I'm currently doing directly out of high school.

Kathryn: How did you get into being location independent?

Hope: I decided to travel and I took a month off from what I was doing back home. Just decided from there that I wasn't truly happy in my current situation. Though, I decided that I was going to go back home and make my business more online and pursue being location dependent because I am much happier when I am traveling.

Kathryn: How do you describe your job to people who are just being polite when they ask?

Hope: I tell people that I'm an online fitness trainer and I also provide nutrition with the fitness programs that I offer and I have an app that walks you through every workout and fits into your schedule.

Kathryn: When you're talking to someone who really wants to know the details, what else do you say?

Hope: Yeah, I tell them that my service is very customized. I love meeting with women that are struggling to achieve their goals and what I do, is I offer accountability and a program that targets their individual goals. So, instead of a program that's designed as a challenge, as in a group like most fitness programs, I really work one on one with my clients, getting to know their struggles, their pain and what it is they need to get to where they want to be. So, I empower women to find a workout that they love, that challenges them and that they can actually do. Something that's realistic with their life. Most of my clients are very busy and they work very busy schedules. They are not location independent and they have nine to five jobs and some of them work six days a week. So I provide a tool that helps them know they have a workout scheduled and they do it.

Kathryn: How did you get started in fitness?

Hope: I actually was, I was a private chef doing meal planning, delivering meals, and working with clients that had very specific health goals, a lot of dietary restrictions. And I was trying to find a way to offer my program, my meal plans, to trainers and fitness coaches. So what I ended up doing was I decided I would become a personal trainer because I love fitness and I decided that it would really be better for me if I understood being a trainer, to be able to develop meal plans that help their clients. I didn't realize that I was going to love personal training, but it transformed my life and that was when I decided to pursue it and continue with exercise science.

Kathryn: How did you find your first clients?

Hope: In the beginning, all of my clients were clients I had worked with in a gym. I was working for a nonprofit gym back home and most of them wanted to continue training with me even though I was packing up and deciding to take my training online. So, that is where most of my clients came from in the beginning.

Kathryn: And where do they come from now?

Hope: Now they come from word of mouth, networking, sharing, and testimonials, mainly. They find me through some of my social media sites and reach out.

Kathryn: Tell us about your first major struggle.

Hope: Being online is way different than being in a gym setting. My first struggle was how am I going to find these clients? How am I going to find people that need this? And today is this actually still very challenging. So my first struggle was trying to figure out who my

target market ideally is and I've decided now that I really love working with women, new moms and busy working women.

Kathryn: And how about your first major success?

Hope: My first major success was getting a client that I had previously worked with to cook to cook her meals. And I got her to lose 10 pounds in two months with just changing her diet and also she learned to cook for her and her family and that was super rewarding. That's a major success there. Just seeing her transformed.

Kathryn: If you could start fresh today, knowing everything you already know, is there anything you would do differently?

Hope: Oh yeah, there are many things I would've done differently. You know, I started off with this pretty brand, this beautiful website and I believe that it's nice to have it now and I'm grateful for it, but I believe I would have preferred to just start out by showing up more on my social media, really engaging, and this is something I'm working on now because that is really how you reach clients online. You just need to be involved. You need to be online more and posting more content that is helpful. So that is something I'm still struggling with but working towards and that is something I would have started out with. To be honest, it's really simple if you just do that in the beginning. Having a nice pretty website is great, but in terms of reaching clients, it's much better to just be there and show up every single day.

Kathryn: Odds are, there's no such thing for you as a typical day. Do you want to give us what a random day looks like?

Hope: Most of the time I wake up bright and early. I like to start my day with a very positive mindset. So I do meditate every morning. Definitely helps me to have that positive mindset moving forward into the day. This way, if anything challenges me too hard, I can always remember that moment. From there, I do typically take time to learn. I like studying and researching every morning I give myself time for that or I will read. I love reading or listen to a mentor podcast. Then I like to work early. So, I set my working hours from about 8:00 until 12:00. I like to take breaks to get in meals and I always take time for a workout. So then after that I sometimes still come back to work depending on what I need to get done that day. Or I allow myself some freedom, go for a walk or I like to explore the area, get out and see culture where I'm living. And I have friends, so I do spend some time with friends or I do like to do some networking. So I do go to some workshops in the area where I meet other location independent people.

Kathryn: What are some of the things you do during your work sessions?

Hope: So for my work sessions, I plan and program for clients. So that takes a bit of time. I also do one on one calls. We have fitness and assessment calls. I also schedule check-ins that I do online as well. And then I like to post content. And right now I'm in the process of combining my businesses. So I'm doing a lot of behind the scenes work where I am going into my website and trying to dial in to what I want to change. And so I teach myself a

little bit about Wordpress because that is where my website is. It's a little bit challenging, but I'm enjoying it and I'm just getting back into starting to blog again. So sitting down and thinking through what I'd like to tell my readers and my clients.

Kathryn: What does licensing look like for personal training?

Hope: Okay. So I am a certified personal trainer back where I used to live. For online personal training, yes, you can get, there, you basically just need insurance. So there's really no licensing for online training, as far as I know. Although, I am right now currently extending my NASAM and studying, I am renewing that with corrective exercise specialist because I enjoy working with people that are recovering from injuries.

Kathryn: Do you keep up with any kind of continuing education, formal or informal?

Hope: Definitely. Like I said, currently I am studying corrective exercise. I'm always researching new training and I have a few, a few trainers that I like to follow and I try to keep up on different trends on different types of diets that work for, for different people like intermittent fasting, paleo, keto. So yes, I am constantly learning and educating myself online.

Kathryn: What are you excited about right now in personal training?

Hope: I'm excited about life. Right now, I'm excited about learning. Honestly, I have been learning so much the last few weeks and networking with a group of people. I found a really good group where I am. I enjoy networking and just meeting with other location independent people that, that have really good tips and we learn from each other and feed off each other. So it has been the most rewarding and I'm excited about the opportunity to continue to network with these people and be a part of it.

Kathryn: Now it's time to get into the numbers. What would you say your income range is and how long have you been doing this work?

Hope: My income varies. It really does. Currently, I have a few clients and they've signed up for longterm packages, which is great. So when they sign up for that, my numbers are higher, of course, because they're paying for six months versus one month of a training. And I'm also currently offering, like a first time sign up, which is a very low cost just so that my new clients get an opportunity to see if this is going to work for them. Because not everybody likes the idea of using an app or working with a trainer online. And so I like to give people a feel for what, for what it's like. All of the clients I've had though are satisfied with what I'm doing. And so when, like on a good, on a good month, if I have even just three people sign up for one of the longer packages, then my income range will look more like, if they sign up for the six months, then my numbers look like a \$2,000 month. It's not as much as I would prefer to be making right now, but thankfully I have other sources of income while I'm building my business. I'm able to supplement those numbers. I have learned so much about how to price my services in the last few months, so my numbers are, they're growing, but it definitely took some time to get there.

Kathryn: What would you say the beginning range would be?

Hope: It really just depends on how you're marketing yourself and in the beginning stages I was going about marketing, I would say I didn't start marketing myself well. So, like in the last few months I've learned how to connect with my clients and now my numbers are growing. But in the very beginning, if you, if you're not able to show up every day or find a way to reach your clients and have a good email list to go by and constant contact, right, you won't expect to see anything in the beginning stages. So it's really about connecting and that's the only way you will grow your business if you decide to do online training. And also having testimonials for training is very important just because people really want to see they're going to get results. So yeah, having, just having the clients always give feedback is really important.

Kathryn: What would you say the top income range would be?

Hope: I know a lot of other online trainers from a group that I'm a part of and I know that you can make a good source of income depending on how you value yourself and how much you're willing to charge for a package. So I know that people can make \$10,000 monthly.

Kathryn: US?

Hope: Yes, that is US. But even in the summer season, I will say most of the trainers, that's why right now my numbers are lower than we're going back into the school year, getting closer to the holidays, so of course more people want to train and wanting to dial into making sure they have somebody accountable for that. But in the summer months, a lot of trainers, we typically lose some of those numbers because people are traveling and they just don't have the time. They don't make the time. So it's really about how committed my clients are and right now I'm excited, actually if you want to know why I'm excited because yes, we're going, we're ending summer now and I know more more clients are going to jump on board with my training plans.

Kathryn: When you're pricing out your packages, how do you decide what to charge?

Hope: So this really depends on how much support they need and how often they are going to want to train. It also depends on their previous training. It's very customized, but I do have price points and I already have my packages on my site that are priced out. But it does change. It does depend on the person. In fact, I've considered taking my pricing off, but I feel it's good for people to have a good idea of what they're going to spend going into it. And I'm currently offering a really good special for a month trial for new comers, new clients, though I price that at \$29 for one month, which includes some one on one support. And you also have access to fitness programs in an app. So I feel it's a good way for my clients to see what they're getting and they can see the value and then decide from there if they want to take it a step further and then the price increases. I came up with it by doing some research and seeing what other trainers were, were pricing their services at. And I've debated actually raising my prices, to be honest, because of the time and the quality of service that I give. Currently, I feel my prices are good. I like that

it's reasonable and doable for the people I work with and I price it based on what I'm giving.

Kathryn: What, if anything do you do to keep your income stable?

Hope: I work as much as I can, so I take on other jobs as well. I supplement my income by doing other online work and anytime I can find anything online besides even just the training, like nutrition guidance or education, then I will continue do that. I also do some tutoring and I, I do teach that has been supplemental. Especially during the summer I did more online teaching because that's when there's a need and I have less training clients during the summer hours.

Kathryn: What tools or gear do you recommend beginners start with?

Hope: So it's helpful to have a computer, a laptop or a tablet. Definitely a good headset and mic, if you want to do online sessions with your clients and another thing that is very helpful is having a platform, an online training platform that helps you program for your clients. I chose an app that had a really amazing nutrition app and this is the only reason that I like it so much, but it also has a play by play instruction workout. So it's cool and my clients really like that. They just have to push play. I program their workout and they follow along. It's a virtual gym, which is awesome and not very many trainers use that in their training. But I really love having that because it gives my clients freedom to not have to have like all these papers and documents, pdf forms. They don't want to have to think about what they're doing and it's encouraging because the app also is like, yes, good job, you're doing great. And it's a little cheesy, I'll be honest, the way that they have it set up, but it's motivating. In fact, I like to use it for my own workouts sometimes just because it gives me an idea of what my client feels when they're doing the workout in the app. And it also has a great nutrition app attached where I get to dial into a client's specific fitness school and calculate the calories they need to take in. So a lot of the time I don't like to push caloric deficit, but if somebody is trying to lose weight, that is really where it comes from. So having the nutrition app is very helpful.

Kathryn: Do you mind sharing what the app is?

Hope: Oh yeah. I use Virtua Gym. I like it because you can build a community as well. With my client base, I can build a community and there's also a database of as many exercises as I need to program. Sometimes I can't find something that I want to assign to a client, but there's a way to put it in there. I really love this, yeah, I love this app. I'm always learning from it.

Kathryn: What's your number one tip for women looking to get into online? Personal training.

Hope: Okay. Before you get into it, research, research and have a platform you want to use. If you haven't done already online personal training, you definitely want to know your niche. That's very important. That's the best starting point and I recommend starting Facebook groups, challenging them, getting people connected to you and having a really good platform. Just knowing how you're going to execute the training program is very

important. But then also reaching them. So that's my second tip is make sure you have a way to reach your clients, Facebook ads or IG account and connect. Really connect with your clients and show them, show them who you are, talk about why you got into training in the first place and why you're going to help them and how you're going to help them.

Kathryn: What are your next steps?

Hope: Well, a lot of them are similar to what I'm explaining to you. Just constant engagement and really showing up every day. It can be a struggle. There's days where it's not always easy. I don't always know what I want to post on that. I've been learning so much about just really showing up and finding my clients and reaching them in a way where they know they're getting what they need from me. Really, my main goal is to help people achieve their goals. So my next steps are to work towards my own goals of getting more clients but also helping more clients and reaching more clients. So my next steps are being more active in groups and always networking, always networking and always sharing. I learn so much when I meet other location independent people. It's really good to have a mentor. I, that's another thing I'm working on. I've found a few people and having a coach while you're coaching others is really helpful.

Kathryn: Where can listeners find you?

Hope: You can find me in my Facebook group and that would be Freedom Fitness, Virtua Gym or you can also find me on my website which is a very long name. www.nutritiontoyouchefhope.com. I am currently offering 10% off all of my training programs, the personal training programs, that does not include the ones that are focused on nutrition right now, but then I'm also offering for first time clients interested in trying out the program with the app. So for one month of online personal training, which will include one on one support in the beginning. That one is being offered at \$29 for one month of online personal training. So it's a trial. It's so that you can decide if it's working for you.

Kathryn: Okay. And all of that will be in the show notes to make it super simple for everybody. Hope, thank you so much for joining us. This has been great.

Hope: Oh, thank you for having me.

Kathryn: If you want your own location independent life and are eager to take that next step, join us in compass insiders where every week I send you actionable tips, inspiration, and motivation so you can take that next step towards going remote. Join us now at compasspod.com/insiders Did you enjoy this episode of Compass? If so, please take a moment to write a review. Leaving a review helps other women find us so they can find their direction too. Thank you for listening to Compass. You can find today's show notes at compasspod.com/035 that's compasspod.com/035. Join us next week when we talk with Hannah Dixon, VA trainer.