

Kathryn: Welcome to episode 40 of Compass, I'm your host Kathryn Hunter. Do you want to make sure you can serve the needs of clients with a variety of income levels? Today, Britt Sheflin and I talk about that and more when we discuss becoming a hypnotherapist. I wanted to let you know, as of November 4th I'm retiring the free one on one brainstorming sessions and launching an hour long discovery call where in addition to figuring out what your location independent career will be, we also work out a plan to get you there. If you've been hesitating on booking a brainstorming call, do it now and visit compasspod.com/brainstorming. 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. Britt, welcome to the show.

Britt: Thank you, Kathryn.

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?

Britt: You know, I don't think that I really had any sort of career in mind. I really just wanted to be happy and enjoy life and I actually spent a lot of time in hypnosis when I was about five. So I was often in many different little fantasy worlds that I had created for myself.

Kathryn: Had you chosen a direction by high school?

Britt: Not specifically. I knew that I wanted to do something creative. I'm definitely a late bloomer, but by high school I knew that I wanted to do something that was artistic or creative but I hadn't, I hadn't quite picked this direction yet.

Kathryn: Did you pursue college?

Britt: I graduated high school early and then I took a bunch of art and photography classes, which really shaped the, the next directions that I took, but I did not ever get a degree until I, until I became a certified hypnotherapist.

Kathryn: Is there anything you use from your art studies in what you do now?

Britt: Oh, absolutely. I think figure drawing and photography shaped the way that I see the world, more than any other class I ever took.

Kathryn: How did you get into being location independent?

Britt: So the moment I turned 18, I knew I really wanted to travel and see the world and my top three choices at that point was India, New Zealand and Alaska. And I happened to find a ticket to Alaska on December 5th and I believe that was 1995 and so of course I couldn't say no to that. And I happened to have a friend who was going to be living up there for the next few months. So I was able to have a place to live and be introduced to people. And so I went and did that. I took the opportunity and it was so amazing and I

completely fell in love with Alaska. But I wanted to do, you know, I wanted to live a little bit more free and wild. And so when spring rolled around I ended up moving into a series of tree houses that were built in this tiny town at this tiny ski town in Alaska and there were probably about 10 different tree houses and I think I lived in five different ones throughout the course of the time that I lived there, just hopping around. And it allowed me to do things like trail run to work and save up my money to go to Hawaii and Mexico. And it was just such an amazing experience being able to live in the woods and not be really tied to having rent or a mortgage and to just be able to be free to go traveling. I went, went the lower 48 every year when I lived up there as well, so that was kind of my first foray into the experience of being location independent.

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

Britt: I am a behavior modification specialist. That is the easiest way to explain it to people who maybe don't know what hypnotherapy is or don't really have the time to get into the further nuances of what hypnotherapy is and what it can do for people.

Kathryn: And when you're talking to people who really want to know the details?

Britt: When I'm talking to people who really want to know the details I generally tend to ask questions about what particular aspect of it they would like to know. Hypnotherapy encompasses so many things. It's releasing things such as fears and phobias. It's behavior modification, it's replacing those things that you've let go of with more positive actions, feelings, thoughts, behaviors. So depending on which part they're more curious about, I will go into more detail about the different aspects of hypnotherapy, hypnosis and you know whatever, whatever they would like to know about, in particular.

Kathryn: How did you get started in hypnotherapy?

Britt: So I was, I was a private chef and I had picked my daughter up from preschool when she was about two and a half and I was driving home and got in a car accident. Somebody ran a red light and hit the car we, you know, went to the hospital, I had a concussion and the windshield wiper vaporized a portion of the front windshield glass and it puffed vaporized glass into my eyes and my ears and my nose and my mouth. So I got as much of that flushed out at the hospital as I could, but I had inhaled a bunch of it up into my sinuses. And so I got what is called anosmia and anosmia is when you can no longer smell and taste things. As you can imagine as a chef, that was, you know, a very pivotal moment. I was really lucky to be working for a company that was supportive and allowed me to order food and kind of have things half premade because I couldn't tell what anything tasted like while I was getting treatment. But still I knew that if this was going to be going on forever, then that I wouldn't be able to stay in that career.

Britt: So I knew I had to have a backup plan and I had always admired this hypnotherapy college that's here in Tarzana. And I just decided to take a, you know, a leap and check into their program and you know, everything I checked out about them and speaking to people who had been through the program before. Everybody had such wonderful things to say about it. And they're like the only accredited hypnotherapy college that I

know of. They've been around for 50 years, so they really, really knew their stuff. So I was pretty convinced that this would be a good opportunity for me. And the reason why I had been leaning in that direction, why I ultimately chose hypnotherapy over any of my other ideas was that I had used hypnosis for my childbirth and it was such an incredible experience. It just made it so beautiful and it was really the penultimate experience of my life. And I figured, you know, if hypnosis can do that for me, what else can it do for me and what else can I do to help other people with it? And so that was ultimately how I decided to take the leap into hypnotherapy.

Kathryn: So then you, you went to school for it. What are those studies like?

Britt: The school that I went to, HMI, it's really comprehensive. It's 30 or more hours a week if you're doing all of the curriculum properly and attending all of the classes. So it's really intensive and it's a year long intensive program and it's so high quality and they have, you know, your basic courses. But then there are supplemental certifications that you can earn while you're there as well. And then an amazing continuing education program. So they have NLP and additional certifications for the things like childbirth and stop smoking so that you can really hone your specialties. And that was one thing that I really appreciated about the program is that their basic knowledge is 50 years of experience from a lot of incredible instructors, but then also the continuing education and the supplemental education and the availability of a well organized union. And they have monthly speakers that you can learn about a new topic. So people who have graduated from there before and how they're using their knowledge from the school in multiple different ways. So I really appreciated that it was so intensive and it's just by the time you get out, it's just such a life changing experience. If anybody is thinking about going to school for hypnotherapy, I highly, highly recommend it. It's just so thorough and so well done. A lot of psychologists and medical doctors and psychiatrists will go to that school to integrate hypnosis into their practices because it is so well regarded.

Kathryn: How did you find your first clients?

Britt: So at HMI, there is a residency program, so you go through six months of residency in their clinic and they will connect to you, you can either bring in your own clients and you document all of the sessions and you work underneath another qualified hypnotherapist or they will find people for you. Yeah, it can be a combination of those or all on your own, just whatever works for each resident. But yeah, it's six months and I think in total it was something like 500 hours to graduate.

Kathryn: And how do you find clients now?

Britt: You know, most of my clients are word of mouth. So whenever I have a client who loves to talk about their experiences with hypnosis and hypnotherapy, they send them my way and then I acquire my new clients like that.

Kathryn: Tell us about your first major struggle.

Britt: So my first major struggle I think came with trying to do online advertising. So as I mentioned, I get a lot of clients, word of mouth. I tried putting out some different programs and some different offers online and I seem to really struggle with marketing. You know what I mean? We did learn some basic marketing in in classes, but when you're trying to run a full time practice and then do marketing on the side, it gets really challenging. So I think that's been, was my first struggle and continues to be, my biggest struggle at this point is any sort of online marketing and advertising.

Kathryn: How about your first major success?

Britt: I was really, really lucky to find one of my top specialties with my very first client in residency who had several different phobias and she, in retrospect, released her phobias much slower than than the average person. But it was absolutely incredible and so powerful for me to see with my first client, than walking in one person who basically couldn't function in elevators or airplanes and had severe claustrophobia to be able to get her to function and to be able to go on her honeymoon and to be able to take the elevator in her building and to be able to go to a rooftop bar with her girlfriends. To just see the transformation of how powerful that was. to be, to have something that's completely debilitating and life altering. And then to have them walk in one day and they're like, I can completely do this now and I'm fine and you know, so happy.

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

Britt: The only thing I wish I could do differently was to have started earlier. I wish that maybe I wasn't such a late bloomer and I had found this career earlier. You know, but at the same time, it it all into place so beautifully and so organically that I'm not actually sure that I would change anything.

Kathryn: Is there licensing you have to keep up with?

Kathryn: Yes. Yeah. I maintain my licensing. I do continuing education in order to stay in the union and also as a member of the hypno, American Hypnosis Association. I maintain a certain amount of continuing education as well. Yeah, so it's, it's important if you want to maintain your, your quality and your qualifications because new knowledge is coming out all the time and it's really important to stay abreast of that.

Kathryn: In addition to the continuing education hours that you do for your license, is there anything else you do formal or informal?

Britt: Yeah, I do my own studies. I read everything I can get my hands on about hypnosis. I listened to podcasts. I watch TED talks and in addition to that, I also find that when I write things I learn a lot. So if there's a subject I'm very fascinated by or feel that I have a little bit of knowledge on, but I would love to gain more knowledge and at the same time be able to share it with people. Then that's, that's how I kind of learn for myself outside of the parameters of the continuing education.

Kathryn: What are you excited about right now and hypnotherapy?

Britt: I am really, really excited about finding ways to bring hypnotherapy to people who either don't have access to it physically or cannot afford regular hypnotherapy rates. So I've been creating these DIY kits, which are basically prerecorded sessions with instructions, which would give all of the cognitive and behavioral modification assignments that I would give to any one of my clients coming in for a certain thing. And then I prerecord the sessions in all of the different suggestibility types. So oftentimes you'll hear people say something like, Oh, I can't be hypnotized, which is not true because we're all in hypnosis multiple times a day. It's just that everybody experiences it differently and everybody's subconscious mind takes in things differently. So what's really exciting to me about these DIY kits is that it covers all of the different suggestibility types. So if there's somebody who thinks they can't be hypnotized, we have different techniques for getting them into hypnosis so that they can receive the same benefits as the other people who are classically very easy to hypnotize and hypnosis works really well for them. So it kind of levels the playing field for people both financially, geographically and also suggestibility wise.

Kathryn: Odds are, there's such thing as a typical day for you. Do you want to give us what a random day looks like?

Britt: Sure. So on a typical day I would take some phone calls of people who are curious about hypnosis, have questions, want to learn more about habit change and behavior modification. And then I generally schedule two to three people in the middle of the day. And then I set aside time to write and record my DIY kits, my prerecorded sessions for people. And then I also set aside time for things like posting in my social media and building my website and taking care of bookkeeping, since I'm just a one person, small business.

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 the work?

Britt: So I've been a hypnotherapist for approximately two years and my income range is between \$80,000 and \$100,000 a year.

Kathryn: And that's US?

Britt: Yes.

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

Britt: \$40,000 to \$50,000 is probably a good goal, especially because a lot of people transition their career over time. So you might not just immediately leave your old career, you might do it part time for the first year until you build your practice enough to be able to leave your regular job.

Kathryn: And where do you see a topping out?

Britt: Within the general population of hypnotherapist, I would say maybe \$150,000 to \$200,000 a year. Although there are, you know, some bigger celebrity hypnotherapists who charge upwards of \$350, \$400 some people up to like \$1,500 an hour. So once you start getting into those ranges, the income is much higher. But those people are very few and far between. I would say most people are going to be somewhere in the \$40 to \$150 range.

Kathryn: How do you decide what to charge?

Britt: I decided to charge in the middle range because I want it to be accessible, but also cover my time and expenses. So my hourly rate is \$175 an hour for in person sessions. Because I am location independent and generally want to have the flexibility to be other places. I offer a discount for my online and Zoom sessions. Most hypnotherapists they charge it at the same rate as the in person sessions. But again, I love the flexibility and I don't have to maintain an office, so I charge only \$100 an hour for the Zoom and online sessions or phone sessions. And then again, my, my big passion is leveling the playing field and equalizing access for everybody to receive the benefits of hypnotherapy. So, I also have a third tier, which is the prerecorded sessions. And if they've already been prerecorded, it can be as little as \$10 a session. So I like to have, have a range of what's comfortable for, for people and meet them where they are at in any given moment.

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

Britt: You know, in a creative field, I feel like there's always going to be fluctuations. I'm really lucky in that I have multiple income streams within the realm of hypnotherapy, so if I'm seeing less people in person, then I focus more on doing the DIY kits and vice versa. If I'm, if I'm more free to do one or the other than I, I focus on filling up my time with that.

Kathryn: What's your number one tip for women looking to get into remote hypnotherapy?

Britt: My number one tip would be to get incredibly proficient with people in person first so that you can really recognize the signs of where somebody is in hypnosis and then to also become very familiar with the technology so that when you transition into doing distance therapy or hypnotherapy, you have all of the tools to not only treat them as if they were in the same room as you, but to also mitigate any technological challenges. You know, sometimes calls drop out or video drops out. It's very rare, but there are ways to familiarize yourself with transitioning from one medium to another very quickly, so that the session does not need to be interrupted. But otherwise it's really the same as as a regular session.

Kathryn: What are your next steps?

Britt: My next steps are to continue becoming more and more location independent. Since we had our daughter, we've really only been semi location independent and more on the kind of weekend warrior spectrum of the thing, of things. But we are currently selling the remainder of our possessions and going truly 100% completely location independent as of the end of this month.

Kathryn: Where can listeners find you?

Britt: My website is www.brittsheflin.com. That's b, r, i, t, s, h, e, f, l, i, n. And my social media is @thehikinghypnotist, so both on Facebook and Instagram.

Kathryn: We'll get all of that in the show notes, to make it super simple for everybody to connect. Britt, thank you so much for joining us, this has been great.

Britt: Thank you so much, Kathryn. I really appreciate your time.

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/040, that's compasspod.com/040. Join us next week when we talk with Amanda Foltz, cybersecurity contractor.