

SOLO VS. GROUP PRACTICE:

Making the Right Choice for Your Career

Choosing whether to start your own practice or join an established group is a big decision. It carries implications for your clinical autonomy, financial goals, work-life balance, and professional trajectory.

There's no "right answer," and many behavioral health professionals experience both practice models throughout their career. This worksheet is designed to help you understand the two options and see how they align with your current goals and desires.

How to Use This Worksheet

1	Start with self-reflection: Begin with the Self-Assessment Questions. They help identify your core values and preferences as a working professional.
2	Review the Pros and Cons: Familiarize yourself with advantages and challenges of both practice models. Note which factors feel most important to you personally.
3	Complete the Scale Assessment: This helps quantify your natural inclination toward either practice model.
4	Interpret your results: After completing the assessment, look for patterns in your responses. While the numerical scoring provides a general direction, pay attention to which specific aspects of each practice model generated your strongest reactions.
5	Use as a conversation starter: Share your completed worksheet with mentors, supervisors, or peers who have experience in both practice models. Their insights can give you further clarity.

Self-Assessment Questions

Reflect on each statement, considering your genuine preferences rather than what you think you "should" choose.

- How important are stability and predictability in my job?
- Is autonomy over work a major priority for me?
- Am I comfortable managing administrative tasks and overhead?
- How important is peer collaboration?
- Do I need/want flexibility in my schedule?
- Am I willing to incur some amount of financial risk?
- Do I have business management experience, or the desire to learn it?
- Do I work better within established structures, or on my own?

Pros and Cons

Solo practice and group practice each offer rewards and challenges. As you review this section, pay attention to which items seem most important to you.

PROS

Solo Practice	Group Practice
Control of your case load, treatment methodologies, and treatment planning	May fill your client roster more quickly
Set your own pay rates	Existing structural support for technology, workflows, and organization
Choose your own tech and software	Greater financial stability



Solo Practice	Group Practice
Set your own hours	Learn practice management from experienced professionals
Autonomy in the types of clients you accept	Support for billing and insurance
Choose whether to accept insurance	Few, if any, starting costs
Design your own workflows	Less admin work/greater bandwidth for clients
Set the vision for practice growth	Peer consultations and mentorship
Flexibility in where you live and work	Predictable hours

CONS

Group Practice	Solo Practice
Less control over your workload	Assume all financial risk
Practice may set guidelines for session length and frequency	No built-in client acquisition pipeline
Less control over pay rate	Manage billing and insurance yourself
Little choice in which tech solutions to use	Startup costs can be significant
Less flexibility in hours	Responsible for non-billable admin work
Practice controls or influences the client types you accept	No built-in mentorship or collaboration
Practice may influence methodologies used and/or treatment planning strategies	Business learning curve can be steep
Adapting to pre-established workflows	Work/life balance may be difficult as a business owner

Scale Assessment

This scale is designed to help you visualize how strongly your desires, needs, and goals align with each practice model. Rate yourself honestly on each question from 1 to 5.

- 1 = Strongly align with the group practice experience**
3 = Neutral
5 = Strongly align with the solo practitioner experience

Solo Practice	Group Practice
I feel confident assuming some financial risk	Financial security is important to me
I want to build a client roster myself	I want a ready-made source of clients
I want autonomy over decisions	I want shared responsibility
I'm willing to take on administrative tasks	I want minimal administrative tasks
I prefer to work independently	Peer collaboration and mentorship is important to me
I want flexibility in my schedule	I want predictable hours
I want to manage clinical work and the business side of my practice	I want to focus on clinical work, not business decisions
I'm comfortable managing the billing and insurance process	I don't want to manage the billing and insurance process

Review your answers. If you have more 1's and 2's, your work style and goals may lean toward joining a group practice. If you have more 4's and 5's, you may lean toward being a solo practitioner. If you chose mostly 3's, you might easily consider either environment.

This worksheet is only a starting point. Take your time with the decision—your professional future deserves thoughtful consideration.

Must know
details

