



Private practice can be daunting and overwhelming, so this book provides you with a road map for creating, running, optimizing, and enjoying a successful lactation business. Whether you're an IBCLC or aspiring to become one, you'll have the tools and resources you need to make a career from your passion.

Lactation Private Practice: From Start to Strong

by Annie Frisbie, MA, IBCLC

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BY ANNIE FRISBIE, MA, IBCLC

LACTATION PRIVATE PRACTICE

From Start to Strong

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO
CREATING A
LACTATION BUSINESS

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Paperback ISBN: 978-1-7320885-2-8

Mobi ISBN: 978-1-7320885-3-5

EPub ISBN: 978-1-7320885-4-2

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Published by Annie Frisbie IBCLC, Inc., PO Box 5731, Astoria, NY 11105,
paperlesslactation.com

Printed on acid-free paper.

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Annie Frisbie IBCLC, Inc. 2019

First Edition

Copyediting by Brian J. White
Photos by Laura Vladimirova, bebirthphotography.com

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PREPARING FOR IBCLC PRIVATE PRACTICE

There are three key components to IBCLC private practice to understand when approaching this decision. The first is that you will be a healthcare provider, serving people who are often feeling anxious, overwhelmed, and even afraid. The second is that you will be an entrepreneur, running a business with the goal of supporting yourself and your family. Finally, you must meet or exceed the Clinical Competencies for the Practice of IBCLCs.

When asking yourself whether or not you have what it takes to enter any profession, use future-focused thinking in order to evaluate your potential for success in the field. This self-assessment is not about where you are right now, but what you believe you can become. So when you read these sections, don't ask "Am I good at this skill?" Instead, ask, "Am I excited to learn more about this skill?"

A seed, in and of itself, isn't good at growing—in fact, if left alone with only its own innate qualities, nothing at all will happen. It will stay a seed. But if a seed gets the right kind of input (sun, water), within the right context (appropriate climate), and receives the necessary care (cultivation), it will achieve and even surpass its full potential.

The seed is you. The context is private practice as an IBCLC. Later chapters of this book will delve deep into cultivating your practice. But first, let's explore the input you'll need to give your seed—clinical skills, business skills, and staying power skills. If what you read here excites you and motivates you to want to learn, grow, and thrive in the climate of IBCLC private practice, then this may truly be the work you are meant to do.

Before delving into a discussion of the skills needed for private practice, it is important to point out that there are barriers to developing these skills, some of which may be significant. Qualifying for the exam requires both financial resources—to pay for education materials, the fee for the exam, and costs associated

accruing supervised clinical hours—and access to an appropriate setting in which to perform the supervised clinical hours.

It's the second that can prove most daunting for aspiring lactation consultants in underserved communities. Perhaps there are no other IBCLCs in your area, for example if you live in a rural setting or if your community lacks representation within the greater local IBCLC community. You may also be wondering how to afford to be able to essentially work for free while gaining the supervised clinical hours. If you do not have children that you breastfed, some of the volunteer organizations may not be an option for you.

At the time of this writing, these issues are still very much unresolved. There is a growing awareness of the ways in which systemic racism contribute to inequities in maternal and infant mortality rates, and voices which interrogate privilege and advocate for change are gaining in influence. While these advances are welcome and necessary, they are only the beginning. Much more work needs to be done to change the paradigm and open up more opportunities for applicants from underserved communities to become IBCLCs.

If you are reading this book and feeling shut out of the profession because of your race, ethnicity, gender identity, economic status, or anything else, first let me say that I hear you and I believe you. Your struggle is real and valid and represents a crisis for our profession. I encourage you to share your story, not only to be heard, but also to leverage the power of social media and the collegiality of the IBCLC community to aid you in reaching your goals and provoke necessary changes in the structures of our profession.

- Clinical Competencies for the Practice of IBCLCs
- Barriers to the IBCLC Profession
- Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE)
- Seven Ways to Support Black Breastfeeding Week



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