

Bridgit Dengel Gaspard, LCSW
Co-Founder, New York Dialogue Institute
161 West 54th Street, #804, New York City 10019
nyvoicedialogue@yahoo.com • 718.522.4009
www.newyorkvoicedialogueinstitute.com

So You Want To Have A Private Practice... Cheat Sheet From An Alum

Join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and buy their liability insurance (which covers malpractice.) NASW has a new benefit to enroll as a referral source for EAP (Employee Assistance Programs that corporations offer.)

NEW YORK STATE LICENSING REGULATIONS

- Graduate from Columbia University School of Social Work with your Masters in Social Work (MSW) and complete your training in the identification and reporting of child abuse
- START THE PROCESS TO TAKE THE LICENSING EXAM IMMEDIATELY AFTER GRADUATION (it takes awhile and your hours toward your LCSW do not start until AFTER you have your LMSW)
- Go to <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw/lmsw.htm> for the forms and procedures to apply to take your LMSW test (Licensed Masters in Social Work)
- Take and pass your LMSW test
- Work 3 years AFTER you get your LMSW and enjoy supervised experience in diagnosis, psychotherapy and assessment-based treatment planning (and a whole lot more!)
- Return to <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw/lmsw.htm> to apply to take your LCSW test (Licensed Clinical Social Worker)
- Take and pass your LCSW test
- NOW YOU ARE LEGALLY ENTITLED TO PRACTICE PRIVATELY in New York and are a reimbursable psychotherapist
- New York has one more level: the LCSW-R which you are eligible to apply for after three years of supervised practice as an LCSW. It's complicated, but without the "R," social work services are covered only at the *request* of the insured group. The "R" *requires* insurance carriers to provide reimbursement for psychotherapy services whenever a health insurance contract includes reimbursement of psychologists and psychiatrists. At this point I have not heard of an insurance company not paying an LCSW without the "R."

SOME BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

- You set your own hours and get to design your practice (yay!) and are responsible for all costs, cancellations, etc. (yikes!)
- Much is required:

a space, a schedule, a budget (how will you cover the "lean times"), insurance and tax information, a billing and documentation system, private practice supervision, professional development, marketing (yes, although you might call it something else... like networking for clients.)

Do you know who your biggest referral source will probably be? Other therapists!

In high school I used to say I wanted to be an actress or a therapist. I wound up doing both, which my practice incorporates. Visit my web site to find all kinds of information including our [Introduction to Voice Dialogue](#) on Saturday, December 10 from 1-6pm, as well as links to published articles and more...

<http://www.newyorkvoicedialogueinstitute.com>