

**Ep #276: A Four-Year Check-In with Cady North:  
Financial Planner and Now, Author**  
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**XYPN Radio with Maddy Roche**

## **Ep #276: A Four-Year Check-In with Cady North: Financial Planner and Now, Author**

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**Maddy Roche**

**Narrator:** [00:00:01] Join your host, Maddy Roche, as she brings you into a community of fee-only financial advisers who are successfully building profitable businesses that serve the next generation of clients. Learn from innovative advisers whose unique stories will inspire you to dream big and take action on your goals. Are you ready to live your best life and help your clients live theirs? Then you're in the right place.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:00:25] Hello and welcome to this episode of #XYPNRadio. I'm Maddy Roche your host. I'm excited to have XYPN member Cady North, owner of North Financial Advisors, a fee-only firm in San Diego, California. And the show with me today, Cady joined us on #XYPNRadio nearly four years ago during Episode seventy nine to share her journey, transitioning from the corporate world into that of an entrepreneur. Today she's on the show to talk about what she's been up to since. Establishing a great work life balance, moving across the country and most impressively and most recently writing a book. As Cady and I discuss on the show, writing a book was always one of her goals, but one she never made any progress towards achieving. As she worked with her predominantly female client base over the years at her financial planning firm, she realized she wasn't the only one who needed to be unstuck when achieving their goals. With some soul searching, coaching and a stellar authors program at her alma mater, Cady was able to do something she had thought years about and wrote a book of her dreams in just eight months. Cady talks today about why she chose the topic she did the actual process she went through to write and publish it. And most importantly, she shares some of her tips that she shares with her financial planning clients who want to achieve their goals but haven't yet been able to move towards

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them. If you're interested in what it's like to actually go after your dream, whether it's launching a firm or writing a book, or both, the show is for you.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:01:55] Avocado toast, selfies, a mountain of student loan debt. Gen Y is anything but traditional, and with over seventy five million people, it's a population you don't want to ignore. Learn more about how to serve this unique population in our guide called *Attract and Profitably Serve Millennial clients in your RIA*. Discover three key ways to tap into the millennial market and six things that they want from their financial advisor. Visit [XYPlanningNetwork.com/Millennials](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/Millennials) for your free copy.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:02:27] You can find any of the resources we mentioned during the episode at [XYPlanningNetwork.com/276](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/276). Also be sure to go to [XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP) to join our private group just for #XYPNRadio listeners. It's the community of advisors we've all been looking for that's there to provide support when we need it the most. Best of all, it's free. I encourage you to check it out. Again, that's [XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP). Without further ado, here's my interview with Cady North.

[00:02:56] --swish --

**Maddy Roche:** [00:02:57] Hello, Cady. Welcome to #XYPNRadio. How are you?

**Cady North:** [00:03:01] I'm good, Maddy. Thanks.

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**Maddy Roche:** [00:03:03] Good. I'm so glad to have you on the podcast for your second time. Cady North has been on our podcast once before back in episode seventy nine. If you want to go hear really all of her career and what she was starting to build then four years ago, feel free to jump back in time and listen to that episode. But Cady, thanks so much for joining us today. And there's so much to dive into now four years later.

**Cady North:** [00:03:26] Yeah, absolutely. I'm excited.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:03:28] Sure. So why don't you give the listeners just a little bit of an update of what happened over the past four years for you and in as much detail as you'd like, I'd love just a rundown of your firm and who you're working with. And then we will dive into why you're on the podcast today.

**Cady North:** [00:03:44] Yeah. Yeah. So I've had my firm for almost five years. It'll be five years and just really just a few weeks, really. And so I work with about 50 clients. They-I have a bicoastal practice. So I've got a lot of folks on the East Coast, a lot of folks on the West Coast, but I'm actually physically located in San Diego. I originally had started my firm and was based in D.C. and so I had a very DC centric firm. But a little over two years ago, I would say I decided that just for fun and for getting a life change in, is to, my husband and I decided to move to San Diego. So we moved the practice and really it didn't change much for me. I didn't lose any clients. It-it actually created a lot of opportunities because now I have sort of almost like two locations to have from a marketing perspective. So that turned out to be a really surprising and wonderful way to kind of expand and grow. I work primarily with women who are successful in their careers, but they're sort of wondering what's next and what are some of the things

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that I-that I could do that would make me happier and more fulfilled in life. So a lot of times that involves coaching my clients through a career change or starting a business of their own. And so I'm I kind of pay attention to those sorts of conversations and prospect meetings as a as a way as an indicator for whether or not someone going to be a good fit for my firm.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:05:17] Sure. I'm interested in getting over those five years that you've built this firm. Did that niche change much at all? Was was what you've built today what you thought you were building five years ago?

**Cady North:** [00:05:27] Yeah, I mean, I thought it when I first started that I wanted to work with people who were really into the business owner space maybe already or were like getting there. And since then, I've-I've really shifted the focus to-to wanting to work with people who are much more in that infancy stage of thinking about those sorts of things. Because I, I enjoy kind of the the mindset process around taking getting the courage and getting yourself up to speed to want to make a big change like starting a business.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:05:56] Awesome. When you were on the podcast in Episode seventy nine, you were talking about wanting and predicting that you would be taking on three or four clients a month when in reality it really was more like one and a half. You said you work with fifty clients now and you tell me about kind of are you planning on building it further than that? And have you been able to keep pace with what your goals were for accumulating more clients?

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**Cady North:** [00:06:18] Yeah, I mean I definitely had some ebbs and flows over the last few years. And so I think my max that I ever wanted to hit was probably like three clients, because once I started thinking about how much work that really was, like I got-I got a bit overwhelmed, you know, so I quickly kind of raised upfront fees and kind of addressed things that way to make sure that I'm not like closing every single person who comes my way, because to me that's an indicator that my fees were too low. And so so, yeah, I mean, I end up turning nowadays. I end up turning away a lot of people. I have a waitlist. I don't take on a take on maybe four or five clients every year if that. And-and so I, I'm not interested in that like hypergrowth or I'm not-I'm not interested in sort of the ensemble practice where I'm going to have five lead advisors and that sort of a thing. I'm more interested in doing sort of very deep work with the clients that I do have and making sure that I have a lot more balance in my life because, you know, in my corporate days, I-I did the 80 hour work weeks, I did the traveling all over the place. I did the constant go, go, go. And it's just not for me. It's not it's not what I have an interest in doing as, in my professional life. It doesn't mean that I don't love what I do. It doesn't mean that I don't feel like I'm successful at the work that I do. It's-it's sort of a it's a very personal choice to make sure that I have enough balance in my life and as limited stress as possible.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:07:55] Yeah. What a relatable quality to have with your clients. Is that something that you share with them, that you are, in fact, yourself searching for that work life balance?

**Cady North:** [00:08:04] Yeah, and I would say at this point, I'm not even searching for it. I have it. So but yeah, I mean, I do I am very upfront with my clients and that I deliberately keep my practice small because I want to do that and work with the clients that I have. And everybody super

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appreciates that because they can see the value in having, you know, the one-to-one kind of relationship versus I think what is quite typical and sort of the broker dealer world or working, if you're a you have a big book of business at a bank is like you might have two hundred and fifty clients and it's hard to keep up with, you know, as an adviser. But I think as a client you begin to feel a little bit more commoditized and you don't get the opportunity to do some of the things that I get to do with clients, you know.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:08:50] Oh, I love that. Would you mind diving a little bit deeper into what it means to do deep work with your clients?

**Cady North:** [00:08:56] Yeah, so, you know, the a couple months ago I was I've been working with a client who is very, very successful, an executive in a in the large real estate company. And, you know, we spent probably three meetings together talking about ways in which she could do something more meaningful with her life, which involves dogs. And she-she wants to work with dogs. And so rather than looking at 60 page financial plans or, you know, just looking at different spreadsheets or projections about things, you know, we actually just spent three meetings talking about just the mindset around how do I get over the fact that I make this much money and I'm want to give it all up so that I can work with dogs all day. And I she found it to be extremely, extremely valuable and helpful. Right. And, you know, this is something that she's looking at making a change probably over the course of the next year or so. Right. And when we first started the conversation, she was thinking this is going to be like a preretirement thing in 10 or 15 years. So it's I mean, that's the kind of deep work that we're talking about. You know, I have another client who inherited some money from a grandparent, and it was a it was a tragic loss of the grandparent. And she came to me thinking that she was just going to be doing like some basic financial planning, thinking through, okay what do I

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do with this? What do I think about my money and my budget and stuff like this? You know, we ended up talking deeply about career things. We talked about relationship things. She decided in the midst of our work together that she was ready to actually take the next step with her partner. And now they're engaged and they're going to be getting married. And they bought a house together. And it's like those things weren't on her radar before we started talking. She was sort of happy with the status quo and a lot of ways and the deep work that we did was realizing how important some of those things really are for her in light of everything else, you know. -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:11:10] Absolutely.

**Cady North:** [00:11:10] - So it's-it's almost as if I'm molding and melding the discipline of financial planning with the discipline of life coaching, which involves career coaching, that sort of life coaching in a way. And it's heavily inspired by George Kinder during the work at the Kinder Institute, which I did the EVOKE process, the EVOKE training area of this year.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:11:36] Wow. Yeah, wonderful. We've had a group of advisors on the podcast before talking about the EVOKE program and how beneficial it has been to to implement some of these core questions into the conversation, because as you allude to and as you've mentioned, the relationship between money impacts so many different aspects of our lives. And I commend you, Cady, on building a firm where you can say you've reached the work life balance because you actually had some time recently to write a book, which is really why you're on the podcast today to tell us a bit about some of the nuggets of wisdom that you share in that book and the direction you took it. Can you tell us a little bit about the resiliency effect, please?



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**Cady North:** [00:12:14] Yeah, yeah. So actually, part of my own life plan and doing the work with the Kinder program was to figure out a way to be more comfortable sharing more of my story publicly, but also to be able to reach more people through a medium that was not necessarily the one-to-one, which is very time consuming and writing a book is something that I've wanted to do for many years. In fact, I've asked my business coach for several years and other coaches I've had like, hey, I need to get some resources on this. Like, I want to make this a goal this year and then nothing would happen. And I want to get some resources to make this a goal this year. And then nothing would happen but just sort of a series of events kind of all happened at once that that aligned to allow me to find and figure out how to do this in the first one was having the Kinder training and sort of just getting really energized around the idea of what it meant, what it could mean for me to be able to do this, to write the book. And I also at the same time came across a really excellent program that is professor from Georgetown University, where I went to business school, has called the Creator Institute, where they take people through take a whole cohort through the process of writing a book. In six months, you get a draft of a book done. -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:13:33] Oh.

**Cady North:** [00:13:33] - And so my first phone call with this professor, I was like, I don't really know. I think I maybe can I do it this fall or maybe next year even? I have a lot going on. I just really don't know. And he said to me, look, Cady, there is never going to be a good time to write a book. Never. And so I would I don't even know if I'll be doing this program in six months from now. So if I were you, I would just hop on board and do this.

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He's like, your idea is fantastic for a book and I think you should do it. And I was like, well, I guess I'm writing a book. (laughter)

**Maddy Roche:** [00:14:06] (laughter) Yay, that's-that's such a wonderful program. How many people participated in the Creator Institute?

**Cady North:** [00:14:13] There were over one hundred authors in my cohort and they-they've gotten so large with each, they do like three rounds of it per year. They've gotten so large with it. They have to break you up, break up the cohort into like a couple of nights a week. Different different meetings like mini cohorts within the cohort sort of thing. But yeah, I mean, we all just finished our presale campaigns and all of us were doing this all at once. And it's kind of cool because you're part of a group and there's people writing poetry books, there's people writing cookbooks, there's people writing fiction, nonfiction. So but that's sort of the concepts than the approach is all very similar in a way. And so we all can commiserate. We all can share our strength and experience and cheer each other on. And so it's-it's really nice to have that. And I don't I don't think I could have done it, especially really at all without that kind of support, because it's like there's many times when you start down this road and you're vulnerable and you're sharing your own stories and you're talking to people and interviewing people and you self-doubt kind of creeps in and you're like, why am I doing this again? Aren't there like a million books on this subject? Or like having people said this before? I just don't know. Like, you know, so there's all sorts of things that your brain will do to you to tell you, like you're not good enough for this. It's not right. Or this is a lot of work. Why, why, why do it? But being a part of this cohort kind of help me push through some of those things and like, no, that's that's not true. I'm happy with this. Like, this is really important. And, you know, just the feedback when I wanna share the story of why I wanted to write this book with other people, my cohort,

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everyone would respond, wow, I really want that book like I want it now. And that's hugely, hugely motivating.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:16:11] Absolutely. And I love how that mirrors so much the same experience you really had five years ago as you started your firm. I hear from advisors all the time that imposter syndrome creeps up and that -

**Cady North:** [00:16:21] Oh yeah.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:16:21] - There's never a good time to launch your firm and all those things. And here you are five years later, diving into something even more personal and more unique to you and who you are. Would you mind sharing with the listener kind of the premise of your book and what it's about.

**Cady North:** [00:16:36] Yeah. Yeah. So I mean, imposter syndrome (laughter) -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:16:40] Oh (laughter).

**Cady North:** [00:16:41] - Actually the first chapter is all about imposter syndrome, but more importantly, kind of how as a society we're sort of trained to overwork ourselves and continue pushing the needle further and further out and never celebrating the win so that we can appreciate what we've done in our accomplishments. And I think the reason why we do it is

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because, you know, we're we're sort of trained to say that our self-worth is based on what we do and what we produce as opposed to just who we are. And so I-I knew this about myself. I knew this because I lived it right. But I also started to notice a real trend in working with clients that I have, as well as prospects that, many of them would come to me and they say, I've got this really big goal that I want to do, and they share it with me thinking, oh, it's just a dream. It's just it's just something I want to do, you know, like, for instance, work with dogs instead of do my multiple six figure job that I do. And-and then immediately, the next thought coming out of any of these people's mouths was, well, but not right now. I mean, that's like later on down the road. That's something I'm going to do later. And my question is always, well, why, like what's stopping you from doing it now? And because it's not always about the money and usually it's not about the money. It's it's about something else. And so I really wanted to dig in and research why that is. And so I-I started with interviewing. I interviewed and profiled 50 women who had done varying degrees of big changes. It career changes are starting starting businesses in their life. And but also had who had been through something big, like a burnout situation. They had gone through something where they-they decided they couldn't go on any further, which is a little bit of what I experienced in my kind of corporate-corporate life experience. And-and so it was just really interesting to see all the commonalities here. And really, it's not about what I found out. It's just not about sort of this outward journey of like checking boxes, getting another degree, reaching a certain threshold or title in your career life hacks. Right. It's not about any of that stuff. The people who are successful at this and end up living their best and most successful and fulfilling lives have done an inner journey, too. And it's a parallel in most cases. But the more important one, the larger path, more important path. And this inner journey involves doing a lot more self reflection and diving into some of the things that make you tick and involves going back and looking at some of your experiences and adversities that you've had in life and questioning, you know, is there something about that that makes me react today in a certain way or that hinders me and my mindset from even wanting or expecting to

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have the best that I can have in my life? And for the vast majority of us, the answer is yes. There are things that have happened to us that are getting in the way. And so the book is kind of walks you through some of these things about how you can walk your own inner journey on this to discover not only what is most important to you, but give you the energy and the courage to actually start living your best life.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:20:08] Oh, I love that. And I don't want you to spill the beans because I know the book has not been released quite yet, but you have a couple of tips that you share and that you'd be willing to share with the listeners in terms of what are some of these inflection points that-that really help people get pushed to the other side?

**Cady North:** [00:20:23] Yeah. So, I mean, one of the things that I, I heard a lot from people is, is a courage to be vulnerable. And I mean, this is a Brene Brown thing, of course, she talks about this all the time. But, you know, I think there really is something to be said for sharing your experience with another person or daring to even share it with yourself in a journal entry, right? -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:20:47] Yeah (laughter)

**Cady North:** [00:20:48] - Because I think it you know, those things that we are most that we most fear saying out loud are the very things that as soon as we do, they just have so much less power over us. And so, I mean, that's a huge piece of this. It's not about learning new skills. I can tell you that. I mean, one of the chapters is all about the things we have to unlearn. Right? It's not about learning new things. It's-it's sort of these coping

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mechanisms that we have and figuring out ways of letting go and unlearning some of the behaviors that we've had in the past because they're-they're not going to serve us if we want to make a big change in our life.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:21:27] I'm interested in what your own journey was like, both to start your firm and with this book. What do you feel it got in your way over the years from writing the book? I mean, obviously you launching a firm took up a lot of time. But what was it about this other aspect of you, the wanting to be an author and share more that kept you from doing it until now?

**Cady North:** [00:21:50] I mean, fear, fear of wanting to share like some of my experiences publicly and fear that it wouldn't be good enough or perfect enough? Yeah, I mean, those things are huge and very scary. You know, it's I kind of I refer to myself as a recovering perfectionist, right. And it's-it's hard when you feel like you like you would embark on something that you don't already have all the answers for, you know?

**Maddy Roche:** [00:22:26] Yeah, absolutely. You're a member Cady that over these years has really made herself accessible to other advisers in this industry. You're a mentor at heart, both to me and to other people you've come into just in passing. And I'm wondering, it sounds like you had some really great people, both with the training with George Kinder and the Creator Institute. Did you have any mentors that you really looked up to through this process that helped guide you along this journey?

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**Cady North:** [00:22:52] Yeah, I mean, I have a business coach, Elizabeth Jetton, and I know I know a number of other XYPN advisors work with her. She's been amazing. And it's it she just has a really great way of reflecting back to you exactly what you just said. And it makes everything super powerful that way. (laughter) But she also has a lot of really great ideas, too, as far as deepening your practice and deepening your relationship with your clients and one of her big tendencies, you're always in discovery mode. It's like you don't just have a discovery meeting. You have a discovery relationship with your client. And every time you speak, whether it's email or phone or video you're looking at, you're always wanting to have develop a sense of curiosity so that you continue to deepen the relationship. And so, you know, I've taken that to heart and and I'm always looking for new ways to ask a question or to be curious about a response that a client provides, because it typically means there's something more behind it. And it also improves the trust of the relationship so that in the future they feel even more open to sharing things that are going on inside their head. And what I found is that many of my clients, I'm the only person that they can do that with. They don't hardly share that with their family members. There's just-there's just something about having and it is important, I think, for it to not be a friend. Right. It's important to have sort of a third party unbiased person to that. You can sort of explain some of these things to and be willing to explain a fear and feel like you're not going to have it thrown back at you for whatever reason. And so-so, yeah. And I found that I really enjoy that aspect of the job. I enjoy deepening those relationship with my clients. And it's like not everyone is super into some of this stuff. And that's fine. But but for the ones that that are it's like it's a hugely it-it makes my value that much greater, I think. And I do get the feedback that that they appreciate it a lot.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:25:10] Mm hmm. I was going to ask if if all of your clients have kind of adopted the life planning addition to-to the service and if so, how or if not, how do those relationships differ? Because I imagine it's

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hard once you're kind of on the life planning train to ever get off of it. Ever want to look at it any differently than that through this lens? Have you been able to strike that balance with your existing clients?

**Cady North:** [00:25:36] Yeah, I mean, I just I just try not to be too regimented with it. You know, it's like I don't need to have a rule that's like you do life planning or you're out. You know, I think that goes against the spirit to me of of what this is all about. Right. And but I do think that making myself available in that way is, you know, is helpful. And so whether or not they sort of take it up to, you know, take me up on the offer or not is up to them and that's totally fine. But, you know, I'm going to continue to be curious and ask, what do you think that comes from or what does that remind you of when somebody is expressing a fear or an objection or a concern about something. Right. And continuing to look for those ways that I can deepen the relationship, even if we're not formally going through this part process, through the EVOKE training that the EVOKE training taught me. Right. -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:26:32] Yeah.

**Cady North:** [00:26:34] - So, so, yeah. And for any new clients, though, you know, I am definitely bringing them through the process, but I even still I see differences and discrepancies between client to client as to how deep they want to go with things. And that's totally fine. It's totally fine.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:26:52] How deep that can go with things. I mean, -



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**Cady North:** [00:26:54] Yeah.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:26:54] - a lot of times I'm amazed with my own journey. It's like the things I talk about this year were things I couldn't even shine light on last year, you know? So just having space with someone like you in a formal setting to be asked these questions and to be able to marinate and chew on them over the months that you work together is so powerful for the end client and provides such value. I love the topic, Cady, that you took in the direction you took with this book. But it's as a financial planner. My question is, well, why didn't you write a financial planning book?

**Cady North:** [00:27:25] Yeah, yeah. I mean, I just I feel like that space of the how to do this or that with finances is-is just crowded, is extremely crowded. And yes, I could add to the conversation and-and have something be a lead magnon or even turn in some of my create some of my blog posts and package them into a book. I could have gone that route. However what I found in practice with my work with clients is that those are not the things that actually make the biggest difference, it's digging into some of this deep inner work of like, you know, what are the things that are limiting beliefs that are keeping you from living your biggest dreams, that- that actually has made the biggest difference with my clients. And so, you know, I'm all about sort of like bang for the buck. And this book was kind of a dual purpose and like part of my own journey. But knowing how important that has been in my own journey and how-how important it's been with my clients, I just felt like that was the more appropriate topic for me to explore.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:28:34] Yeah. And you've kind of hit on it in the past through some of your answers. But it's interesting. I'm interested to learn more about how this changes who you are looking to work with in the future

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and how you prospect and how you vet your clients. I loved what you said earlier, that your prices were too low because you were signing everyone. Are you really looking for a specific person now that you've kind of evolved your own-your own self in your firm that fits a mold that's different than what you were working with previously?

**Cady North:** [00:29:03] Yeah, I mean, I don't know if it's a if it's entirely different or maybe just a refinement. You know, something interesting that has happened since launching a pre sale campaign and being ever closer to actually publishing-publishing this book is it's already been a magnet for me and it's a very surprising way and that I've already gotten prospects who are sort of ready to sign without much discussion or thought because, you know, not only is a book kind of like a credibility boost of like kind of ultimate proportions. Right. But they see kind of the-the you know, the topic and the commentary and what we're looking at. And they're like, yeah, that's what I need. And I even had somebody who's been on my email list for three years buy my book and then reach out and schedule a prospect meeting and then sign all in the same week. So I think as a side note like this can be a really great way to build business and-and to really funnel people that are your most ideal client to you. But as far as, like, the refinement that I want to do with you, I'm reaching out to and kind of working with is kind of refining some of those psychographics of the people that I work with. I know it's not really enough to define a niche of like what industry you're in or where you're at in life or your gender or-or orientation. Right. Like I there's a component here of like who this person is that-that I'm refining, I think and I started off by using words like is a bread winner, you know, either single or of the household the woman is, interested, has you utilize sort of consultative services in the past and or if not, is interested in actually, you know, working with someone on that level versus somebody who has the mindset of like, I just want the information and I'm going to piece out. Right. And so people who are looking to work with on a collaborative, collaborative approach and so, like thinking through those

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sorts of psychographic qualities of the client is-is kind of some of the more refinement to that that I'm doing. And I think the book is a good way to shuffle out people who maybe aren't interested in doing some of this work, because, you know, I-I don't really want to do work with people who weren't there yet, who aren't ready for that at this point.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:31:39] Yeah, I've always thought people doing work on themselves are the most interesting people. They're the ones that are able to have those really meaningful discussion. So I also love this journey of yours that-that it layer so well onto what you do professionally with the work with your clients. But it really was a goal of yours personally to write a book. And I'm interested in the nuts and bolts on how you actually write a book Cady. Is it-is it exactly how we picture it? You're alone with a little candle in your office typing up the first paragraph. How how did you begin the process of actually writing a book?

**Cady North:** [00:32:15] Well, the first thing I learned is that there are no rules. -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:32:18] Oh okay

**Cady North:** [00:32:18] - you know, I think it's like a lot of people say, well, you just got to get in there and just same time every day, force yourself to write some words on the page. And, you know, I just didn't I learned from my teacher through this program that there's actually three different kinds of people and that fall into the vast majority of styles. And one is the person who's got to get in there every day and write some words on a page. And that's one style. Another style is somebody who's very deadline driven. And

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it's like they're not going to do anything until the deadline is looming and they're they're going to maybe write twenty thousand words. In a week, right, that's also not me, what I learned is that I'm more of an episodic writer and so I sort of strike while the iron is hot. I get some ideas, some creativity flowing, and I find that I get in flow with it and I will just crank out some stuff and I'll do way more than I sat down that day to do just because I'm using the energy that I developed through the actual act of writing words on a page. And one of the most interesting things that I did whenever I encountered some writer's block, as I said, okay, well, I'm not going to actually write today. I'm going to take a walk and I'm going to turn on my voice recorder and I'm going to start talk writing things that are coming to mind, things that I want to do, almost like a a walking bullet point meditation list -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:33:40] Yeah.

**Cady North:** [00:33:41] - You know, things that that, you know, you want to write about, but you just haven't written down that bullet point yet or, you know, things you want to say. But, you know, and nobody actually writes a book the way they speak. So there's limitations to that approach, I think. But there is. There is I found it very valuable because what I could do in a five minute speak writing session was there's a tool called Otter A.I. which will take your word down immediately and transcribe, as you're speaking. Right, that I would use and immediately there in a five minute conversation with yourself, you've got a thousand eleven hundred words written down on a page and it's not in any shape to publish at all. But it's like a very good basis for a chapter or an individual story within a chapter. And having a little bit of success with that was enough typically to give me enough energy to get me over the hump of sort of a writer's block moment. And so that was a that was a cool technique that I used. But I mean, deadlines also helped

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that this program had very strict deadlines. It's like we had a green light date where we would talk with the publisher. And by the way, that the publishers kind of integrated with this program, too. I didn't have to, like, shop for a separate publisher or anything like that. Yeah. So it's like the publisher had its date. It's like green light dates. You have a phone call, and if you haven't gotten as many words as they wanted by then, you had to kind of go back to the drawing board sort of thing. But if you did, somebody would review what you had and give you a green light. And so that was a nice kind of milestone stage. And then everybody had to have thirty thousand words by the time before we could launch like a presale campaign kind of thing. And so you just work towards it. And word count is kind of a cool motivator, too, because you can see like what you've done and how many words you can write in a day and think about, okay, well, how many weeks do I have before I get to my goal here? In some weeks you do really well and some weeks you don't, but you just kind of keep chugging along with it.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:35:52] Yeah. Episodic writer. I love that. I feel like I'm an episodic worker (laughter) -

**Cady North:** [00:35:57] (laughter)

**Maddy Roche:** [00:35:57] - that comes-comes in bursts of energy. I so appreciate that. I'm interested. What was the upfront cost to the program and did you have any upfront costs to launching this book?

**Cady North:** [00:36:10] Not a whole lot. This Creator Institute that I worked with, they integrate like editors. So I had a developmental editor that was

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helping me with the structure and I would have an additional weekly meeting with her to sort of talk about fears that I had to workshop, things like titles and chapter headings and things like that. And so the cost is really the cost of getting an editor. But the program itself, I think, subsidizes quite a bit of this because the upfront cost I had was something like four hundred dollars. And then I had before we moved through the publishing phase of pre publishing and setting up a pre sale campaign, I think I had to send another three hundred dollars or something like that. So the-the they-intentionally keep the costs very low because they're one of their missions is to expand this to more people than are typically able to write a book. So they typically have a much higher ratio of women and people of color coming into this program and writing books, completing books. And it also skews very young. So there's a lot of people who are fresh out of college trying to figure out what their career is going to look like. And they're taking a little turn to write a book, you know? And so it's-it's they-they write grants and they get a lot of funding. I think that helps subsidize some of the costs with this because it's rock bottom. I mean, it's just extremely, extremely low. And and then they work with a hybrid publisher. So the typical publishing route, right, is that you write a book. The publisher deals with all the upfront costs of writing the book, but then you owe them something like 70 or 80 percent of the of every single sale of the ultimate book. Right. And oh, by the way, you have to do all the marketing because they don't do that.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:38:02] Oh, no.

**Cady North:** [00:38:04] And so oftentimes, in order to even get an advance or to do anything that you would think a typical author gets, you have to have like 20, 30, 50 thousand followers on social media before a publisher will even say, okay, I'll consider working with you. A the complete opposite

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spectrum is self publishing, where you just figure out what you're going to write about. You truck along, you do it. You might hire an editor, copy editor. You get on the Amazon platform, you design a cover, you self publish and you're away. That's that's another approach. You're flying blind a lot of the time because you don't necessarily know how things are supposed to go. There's lots of books, there's lots of resources, but it's a very do it yourself kind of model. And that's a benefit, too, because you get to keep all the profits of the book ultimately. But you're you're also doing all your own marketing. This hybrid model that I went with and the publisher that I chose is kind of like the best of both worlds, in my opinion. So, you know, they have the in-house expertise. They have a cover designer on staff. They have somebody who knows who can teach us about marketing and presell campaigns and what that's all about. And you have the editing staff incorporated, and those are the fees that I paid kind of go towards that. And then we did this presale campaign where we had to sell presale, a certain amount of books in order to reach certain thresholds of the campaign. So I basically had to sell, I think it was one hundred and fifty books in order to publish a soft cover and an e-book. And then if I sold over two hundred books, then I could also publish an audio book and a hardcover. And it's sort of like a way for the publisher to say, like the proof is in the pudding. It's like if you can do this, then let's do it. And the presales, the money that came in from the presales are what covers the cost of publishing. Right. So I raised in my presell campaign, which lasted 30 days, I sold like two hundred and twenty books. I'm going to be able to donate some of that money to charity, which is cool. And but I, I was able to raise enough funds to actually cover the cost of publication. And then once I started selling books for real, like on Amazon and through other channels, I get to keep all of those profits. I don't have to give any of that to the publisher because I've already paid them right. They did all the work that they were supposed to do that they were contracted to do. So that's kind of the beauty of this hybrid model. You know, they have some in-house expertise that you can-you can tap into, which is really nice.

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**Maddy Roche:** [00:40:46] Yeah. Would you mind talking to the listeners a bit about what your presale campaign was like? I'm lucky enough to follow you on social media, so I was very impressed. And I didn't know you had the infrastructure behind you of how to do this. But I was so impressed how consistent and clear your message was, what your ask was and how exciting it made me feel for you. Tell us a bit about what that what that process was like.

**Cady North:** [00:41:11] Yeah. So, I mean, it was it was real scary for me.-.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:41:14] (laughter)

**Cady North:** [00:41:14] - I'm not a huge social media girl. Like, I don't love that. And and also, when you do something like write a book, it's kind of like you just you have this big release of like I did this thing guys like, are you going to like me? -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:41:27] (laughter),

**Cady North:** [00:41:28] - Do you like me? -

**Maddy Roche:** [00:41:29] Imposter syndrome?



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**Cady North:** [00:41:32] - (laughter) It feels vulnerable. Right, to share not only that you've done this big thing, but then to say and will you please buy it? And so you do have to make an ask. And I had to get comfortable with that. And thankfully, being a financial planner and having a business for all these years made me comfortable with comfortable enough with that. But I'm I don't do Instagram stories daily. I don't share a whole lot of stuff. But I was doing that stuff daily. Right. I had to get on there and think about new ways to use Boomerang. And I was doing little dances. I was sending little messages. I was thinking people publicly who bought my book, which kind of help generate a lot of new interest and excitement. But really it allowed me to tap into how people how excited people were for me. Right. And that gave me more energy to keep going with it. And so it's like you start off with a big bang. It's like I had I was having like seven hundred dollars in sales every single day for the first week. And it was crazy. And I was like, this is this is insane. And then you reach like a doldrum stage after the two weeks, a first two weeks go by where it's like, is anybody going to buy my book today? I don't really know. So you kind of think about ways to drum up excitement, but ultimately for everything, for everything that I was doing on social media, behind the scenes, I was reaching out one-to-one to people, and especially during a time like COVID, it was a cool experience to have because I wasn't just like, please buy my book. I did this thing. Thanks. Call me later. It was like, hey, I want to know how you're doing. What's going on with you? Like, tell me all about it. Last I heard, you were doing this. What's going on with you now? And I got to catch up with so many people that I hadn't yet had the opportunity to catch up with during COVID. And I think all of us have felt a lot of like very insular and scared to reach out. And it's you can feel lonely. And so it was a cool thing to-to do, to be forced to do in a way. But it also gave me a lot of energy because I knew that I was catching up with a lot of people I haven't talked to. I mean, I had people buy my book that I went to high school with that I haven't talked to in decades. I have people bought my book that I worked with like seven years ago, you know, colleagues and coworkers. And so it was just a really cool almost kind of like a mini reunion I had for a month with all these people.

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**Maddy Roche:** [00:43:55] Oh, gosh. It gives me goosebumps from start to finish. How long was this program of kind of putting pen to paper and now getting enough books sold to make sure you have a hard copy in an audio book? How long did all of that take?

**Cady North:** [00:44:09] So I kind of started the decision making like, yes, I'm going to do this in January. I think I had my first meeting with the professor in January, and then I turned in a draft manuscript like a completed draft manuscript in the at the end of June. And it's a draft manuscript, right? It's not a beautiful piece of work. It's the first draft. And then in at the end of July, did the presale campaign lasted for a month. And then now I've been working on revisions with my editor. And so the revisions process is actually pretty intensive. And it's sort of like revision one, revision to revision three. And everybody who preorder my book is a part of my beta reader community. And now we'll get the chance to get previews of like early copies, early-early chapters and things and get to lend their feedback as well, which is kind of a cool, cool thing. So it's happened way faster than I ever would have thought. And it's largely, again, due to this program that I've been a part of because they intentionally make it fast, because there's so much time that we all waste and, you know, it can be done much faster than than people realize.

**Cady North:** [00:45:23] Yeah, but I'm sure as you talk about in your book, the decision to do it was probably what took the longest and -.

**Cady North:** [00:45:29] Oh yeah, years. We're talking years here.

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**Maddy Roche:** [00:45:31] - (laughter)

**Cady North:** [00:45:31] I struggled with this for years. And I even when I decided to do it, I wrote a blog post about it because I was like, other people need to know what this process has been like. So it's about getting unstuck. And, you know, the questions you have to ask yourself to kind of develop some of that energy and get you off going in the right direction. Yeah.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:45:52] You should be so proud of yourself, Cady. This is-this is so neat that you've taken this angle. I love seeing and working with advisors so much because after four or five years, they each kind of find their own little thing they want to do, whether it be a podcast or a book or continue to be out in front of the media or become the world's best boss. They go from financial planner and business owner to something else eventually. And then I'm loving the word unstuck. And so many of the concepts that you've talked about today really hit home. And I'm sure they will hit home for our listeners. And I'm interested in Cady, what's your why whether it be just for this book or just how you wake up in the day. But what motivates you?

**Cady North:** [00:46:32] Yeah, I mean, I think having fantastic clients is really motivating, but, you know, it's like during the summer months, I do floaty Fridays and I block off my calendar every single Friday afternoon and I go to the beach and hang out in the bay or, you know, go out on a sailboat or something like that. It's like there's a lot of activities that I enjoy and it's not the same every day or every week necessarily. But I like to have variety in my life. And, you know, it's another thing I actually wrote a chapter on in the book is because, you know, I think society tries to make us, like,

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pigeonhole us into a lane. Right. And you know what's your major going to be, what's your job going to be. Oh, you're doing something else now. Why did you change? There's all these questions that people ask us. It seems weird to incorporate like multiple different skills into one thing. But the chapter that I wrote is really about celebrating, you know, cross-functional learning and all the things that, you know, and sort of figuring out what that intersection looks like and where you find kind of a unique niche. And so there's like I kind of have all these weird disparate interests and I get to live those things. I don't have to say no to any of them. I know I have the time to explore the interest that I do have and then the new interest that I that I develop along the way.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:47:58] And that everyone is a work life balance. That's wonderful. Cady, final words of wisdom for someone who might feel stuck as we round out this episode. Maybe one of your tips you haven't mentioned yet or re-emphasis of one you've already mentioned.

**Cady North:** [00:48:18] Yeah, I mean, I think the first question is what is something you can do? Most of the time there's an answer lurking there and we maybe haven't thought about it or we maybe haven't allowed ourselves to listen to it. So ask yourself that question or even get a friend to ask it of you and repeat it back, because it's really it's a really powerful question.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:48:38] Very. Thank you so much, Cady, for the work that you do for your clients, for yourself and for this industry. It's been a total joy to know you over these years, and I cannot wait to read your book.

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**Cady North:** [00:48:49] Thanks, Maddy.

**Maddy Roche:** [00:48:51] Avocado toast, selfies, a mountain of student loan debt. Gen Y is anything but traditional and with over seventy five million people, it's a population you don't want to ignore. Learn more about how to serve this unique population in our guide called Attract and Profitably Serve Millennial clients in your RIA. Discover three key ways to tap into the millennial market and six things that they want from their financial advisor. Visit [XYPlanningNetwork.com/millennials](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/millennials) for your free copy. Be sure to join our VIP community at [XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP) to hang out with other #XYPNRadio listeners, ask questions for future mailbag episodes, and finally to find a community of like-minded financial advisors. Thank you so much for joining me today. We'll see you next time.

**Narrator:** [00:49:38] You are not alone and you are not crazy it's scary starting, building, and growing your own financial planning firm. And that's why we put together a free private community. Just for you, the cutting edge financial planner. Go to [XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP](http://XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP) or text XYPNRadio to 33344 and join a network of thousands ready to change the lives of Gen X and Gen Y clients.