

**Ep #360: From Wirehouse to Solo RIA—When
Following a Calling Serves You AND Your Clients: A
Conversation with Kaysian Gordon**

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Alan Moore

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Narrator: Welcome to your community of fee-for-service financial advisors who are successfully building profitable firms that serve the next generation of clients. You'll learn from innovative advisors whose unique stories will inspire you to dream big and take action on your goals. Are you ready to live your great life and help clients live theirs? Then you're in the right place.

Alan Moore: Hello and welcome to this episode of XYPN Radio. I'm your host, Alan Moore, and I'm excited to welcome XYPN member Kaysian Gordon, founder of Kaysian Gordon Financial Planning, on the show today. Kaysian started her career at UBS and after a short hiatus in public accounting, came back to UBS and joined a team that was focused on doing financial planning for ultra high net worth clients. She spent 14 years there learning the ins and outs of serving those clients and was the first on her team to get her CFP designation. While there, she started a weekly devotional that she's now been doing for seven years, and it helped lay the foundation for her current niche of working with women of faith that are in transition. She ultimately felt called to leave UBS and joined another organization that let her start building her own client base. And she learned a lot about the type of client she wanted to serve and the service model that would work for both her and for her clients. In late 2021, after two years at that firm, she left and launched her own firm with the help of XY Planning Network. She's been growing quickly and her clear niche has helped as she's getting in front of speaking engagements in front of her ideal clients, getting referrals from other advisors and center of influence and more. She also talked about how important time of life is, as she is a single mom with a ten year old daughter who, by the way, she co-authored a book with and how her life stage has impacted the design of her business and how she ultimately wants her life to look. This is a really fun interview you don't want to miss. Without further ado, here's my interview with Kaysian.

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Alan Moore: As the host, you can probably tell I really enjoy these conversations with XYPN members who are sharing their very real and inspiring stories. The real part is especially impactful for me. It's true that the rules of safety are written in blood—and we all gain from listening to those who've "been there, learned from that." If you'd like to learn more from the experiences of others or to share your own—or maybe just need other sources of inspiration—go to XYPlanningNetwork.com/Events and register to join one of our monthly webinars where you can participate in these impactful conversations.

Alan Moore: Hey Kaysi, welcome to the show. Thanks so much for bringing on.

Kaysian Gordon: Thank you so much. It is my privilege to be here.

Alan Moore: I am, I'm excited to, to be able to explore more. I know a little bit of your story, but excited to, to learn more about your background and, and what led you to become an entrepreneur, as well as, dig into your, you know, sort of unique planning process and your niche. So to, to sort of kick things off, would you give listeners just a, a quick overview of the practice, where you're located, your, kind of client that you typically work with, and then we will, we'll dig in from there.

Kaysian Gordon: Sure. So I am located in Valley Stream, New York, so Long Island. I started, I launched a firm last year, so February of 2022. Thank you so much XYPN, for making that process, like as amazing as it was. And I serve women of faith who are going through some kind of financial transition in their lives.

So whether it is changing careers or planning for retirement or just starting to think differently about money, I realized that so many of the women I'm serving, they're making good money, but they're not necessarily sure of what the next steps are to be outside of the 401k. What else should I be doing and how else should I be thinking about that?

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So I, you know, I just love working with women and to be able to have such a, a personal relationship, outside of the financial planning aspect of what we do.

Alan Moore: Fantastic. How is, so you launched just over a year ago from the time of this recording, how many client households are you working with now?

Kaysian Gordon: So, that's a bit of a, there's a backstory. I actually left, the wirehouse in 2019 and the team that I started with said, all the clients you bring on are yours. So that was the most amazing setup. And so when I launched last year, I had about four and a half million of AUM to start and having found XYPN and how, kind of like giving us permission to do planning in a different way and charging differently.

I've brought on about 14 clients in the last year, working on, on planning stuff.

Alan Moore: Wow. Okay. I can't wait to dig into that. So to backtrack, even pre-wirehouse world, like how did you get into financial planning? Was this your career path all along?

Kaysian Gordon: No. I'm say, and something I shared in another podcast. It was a prayer. So my religion is we don't work on Sabbath. And I was just starting to get into that religion and I'm like, Lord, if you, if you want me to not work on the Sabbath, you will need to find me a job that does not have me working on the Sabbath.

And so, I got an internship at UBS, big wirehouse. And I was there for two and a half years left, went into public accounting. My now former boss tried to convince me to stay before going to accounting. He said, you're not accountant. And I said, well, I have an accounting degree. I should go find out.

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And I'd already started the CPA coursework. Almost as soon as I got my CPA license, he called me back and said, this was now 2005. UBS is going towards a wealth management model. And like almost all the financial planning stuff without the term financial planning associated with it. And I said, sounds good.

I'd be mentored by one of the top advisors in the country and had been for many years. And so I went back and I was there from 2005 to 2019.

Alan Moore: Okay, 14 years after having already been there for a couple of years. So you spent the majority of your career at UBS.

Kaysian Gordon: Exactly. So I would say even leaving in 2019, I'd already spent almost 17 years of my 20 year whole career

at that point with one team, by the way. One team.

Alan Moore: That's incredible. I, I'm, I'm curious what pulled you into public accounting? Was it just you weren't doing the work at UBS that you wanted to be doing and want to try something different? Like what sort of took you the direction of public accounting for a bit?

Kaysian Gordon: I can't say there was something definitive. I was working on my CPA, you know, like my CPA license. So there was a path to doing something and I knew even at 20 or 21 that once you had something, especially education. No one could take it away from you. And because I had the accounting degree, I already started passing parts of the CPA exam and back then it was like stretched out over the course of years, right.

To take the exam. And that's basically what I went. I said, you know what? I'm on this path. I should go explore what this path looks. And I quickly realized that it was not my path. But even now, 20, like almost 20 years later, it's definitely the CPA license is one of those great things to have because there's just so much that comes with it.

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Alan Moore: Absolutely. So you were at UBS for 14 straight years, for 17 of, of the 20 years. What type of work were you doing at UBS? Cause again, we think, you know, when I think of UBS, I think of wirehouse. You're just cold calling selling stocks, right? Like, that's the, the mentality we probably have about the wirehouses.

So I guess what was your experience there, over that, over that 14 years?

Kaysian Gordon: So, as I said, I worked with one of the largest teams in the country. We did a lot of hedge funds, private equity. We did not do cold calls by then. My now former boss was fully well-established and it was all relationship based and referral based, and all of that. So there was none of the cold calling.

And to be honest, I did not even know I was doing sales. And this is such a funny story, like it was probably over 10 years in of my, you know my second go around there and I was interviewing with another company. This is probably the first time I'm telling this story publicly. I was interviewing with another company, another wirehouse, and they're like, do you do sales?

And I'm like, no, I'm relationship based. And of course I did not get the job right because I'm not going on and selling and it easily took another year plus. Before I realized that we had been selling the whole time. However, it was so relationship based and so, based on what we knew of our clients and what made sense for them, that it didn't feel like the traditional sales that we did.

Alan Moore: Yeah, it's so interesting what our perception of sales is. I mean, we think of door to door knocking or cold calling, like that's sales.

And I hear that a lot from advisor. Well, I don't want to do sales. I'm like, I get it. I don't want to, I don't want to knock on doors trying to get 401k rollovers, either like, oh, you've been laid off.

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Let's move that money over to an IRA. Like, I don't, I don't want to do that either. But to your point in the end, you're, you're selling, you're just doing it in a, in a different way. And so, but it, it's interesting cause when you're on a team, you know, a lot of times you think of sort of whoever that lead advisor is, is probably the one who's out rainmaking generating the, the leads and, and, bringing to the clients.

But it sounds like you and, and the other advisors were also doing sales as part of that team.

Kaysian Gordon: So, yeah, so my role or the title and try saying this fast was Senior Wealth Strategy Associate. So I was an associate to the financial advisors and we did a lot of the analytical work making the recommendations sitting together in a team structure. It was a very team oriented and I definitely appreciate that.

So there was a lead advisor. There was an an associate on it, on, on the client side of it. And then there's an operations person. And again, by the time I was leaving, the team had grown to over 13 people, so not a small team. And we each had a different role. I had a lot of client facing relationship in addition to my analytical roles.

So it, and again, because of my CPA background and by then, an MBA and a CFP®, I was able to talk the language of an advisor while being there, but still in an associate role.

Alan Moore: CPA, CFP®, MBA, you're starting to sound like Kitces here with all the letters.

Kaysian Gordon: And I've added another one.

Alan Moore: When did you get your MBA? Was that while you were at UBS?

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Kaysian Gordon: Yes. So I started back at UBS in 2005 and of course, being single, like what else is there to do? Go to school. So I got my MBA night school. So part-time while working at UBS did that from I think 2007 to 2010. And that coursework prepared me. So I have a dual concentration MBA in finance, accounting and taxation.

Don't say that fast. And then, that coursework prepared me to take the CFP® exam, so I was kind of examed through that. So I did self-study. And for those listening, I failed the first time. But it does not matter when you have the letters behind your name eventually, right? So failed the first time and then took it the second time and passed.

Alan Moore: Awesome. Thanks for sharing that. Did, did you do anything different the second time or was it really just more, more study hours or, or something else?

Kaysian Gordon: I think life was just happening. So I took it in the summertime, the first time. In the last few days there were a lot of life events just happening. And then, it was, it was one of those like close fails, and you knew it was a close fail. And I did not want to do it again. I'm just like, I have all these designations already.

I already did all of this. And I remember my, my niece in-law said to me, she's like, Kaysi I, Kaysi, I look up to you. You should really do this again. And I'm just like, come on, that, that's serious guilt there. And I, I took it again and, and really just happy that I did.

Alan Moore: That's cool. That's awesome. so when you were at UBS, what was sort of your typical client, that, that the team was serving?

Kaysian Gordon: So high net worth, ultra high net worth. So clients typically with, larger than 5 million in AUM, that it made sense to have the complicated investment strategies for. I think over, even after like 2005 when I went back with the wealth management model of what we were

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going to, we did not start implementing some of those strategies, for quite a few years.

It, it was a process, but we started doing more estate planning with estate attorneys, making sure they write insurance policies as were necessary, were, were implemented. But the bread and butter had been the types of investments that we did and that we could do for, clients who wanted something differently.

Alan Moore: Okay, so it was a lot of investment management. It sounds like financial planning sort of got added incrementally over time.

Kaysian Gordon: That, exactly that.

Alan Moore: Would you say you were doing comprehensive financial planning by the end? Like did, did it look like comprehensive financial planning at that point?

Kaysian Gordon: It did. I'd say in the last few years more so, but for very few clients, you know, like some of the questions that you're answering for a client who has 30, 40 million is going to be very different than the type of clients now. Right. So we, we started implementing more financial planning, but again, I think heavier on the investment side.

Alan Moore: And then with those investments, were you, was your team evaluating all of these private placement investments and hedge funds and all that? Or was there sort of like an investment team at UBS, you know, sending some information through, because that is a lot for, I mean, it's a, it's a, you know, a reasonably sized team, but still that's a lot.

Kaysian Gordon: So again, my, former boss, he had been in the space for 20 odd years, before hedge funds was a thing. And so he was one of those advisors who were, grandfathered into being able to source his own hedge

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funds. And private equities. So he was able to bring to his client base things that were not available to most of the rest of UBS.

So again, you know, having, having laid the foundation for many, many years prior, to be able to, to do things that not many advisors were. And he created quite a reputation, for doing the right thing for clients.

Alan Moore: Oh, that's awesome. That, and I imagine that also was a nice, you know, part of the sales pitch process of, you know, having access to certain investments that even other advisors at UBS don't get access to. It's, you're not even selling against the other firms. You can sort of sell against other advisors within the UBS network as well.

Kaysian Gordon: Exactly so.

Alan Moore: So you mentioned that you were able to bring in some of your own clients. Were you sort of restricted in a way to like only bringing in ultra high net worth clients or was there a shift at some point that happened that that allowed you to start working with clients that maybe didn't meet that 5 million AUM threshold?

Kaysian Gordon: So let me just step back and clarify that. So I left UBS in 2019. And so it was the team that I went to afterwards,

that first we were, I had a broker-dealer, and then in September of 2020, my partner launched his own RIA. So I got to see a little bit of that process. You know, like coming from the world that I came from, I had no idea, no idea this side of the world existed.

But I'd say in 2014, I got this desire to start thinking about what the next chapter would look like and who, who do I really want to work with? And I'd say even then it was to work with women who kind of looked like me in terms of making decent money. But who was giving them that kind of advice, that kind of handholding, that I believe I got at UBS.

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Just being immersed in financial guidance. And I said that to someone and they're like, no, no, you can't say that cause you won't be hired by another wirehouse. And I kind of took that, but just kind of thinking like I, I don't know if I want to be hired by another wirehouse. Right. but again, not knowing that there was this side of the world.

And again, that's why I'm so grateful to XY for opening the door to what did not look possible.

Alan Moore: Absolutely. Yeah. So, okay, so you leave UBS, you went to another, so it sounds like more of an RIA that, and then ultimately you were there for a couple of years, and then that is sort of the transition point to launching your own firm. Is that accurate?

Kaysian Gordon: That's correct.

Alan Moore: Okay. so what caused you to leave UBS in the end?

Was it this sort of desire to work with, with clients who looked like you, who were in more of a, a financial situation similar to you?

Kaysian Gordon: So going back to my faith-based background, I was at work, it was a Friday afternoon, and as clear as day, I heard a change is coming. Okay? Yes. I've been waiting for this, like waiting for, waiting for this. And honestly, I thought it was going to another team somewhere else, and like, you know, I, I just thought it was going to be working with another large team, taking care of clients and getting compensated fairly decently, right?

And it was like, no, no, that's, that's not what it's going to be. And I was going to be starting from, zero clients, zero leads. I think also in an analytical role, you also don't even know how to be a financial advisor, right? Or lead financial advisor. And I think that was the beauty of going and working with this other team.

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Even though I was responsible for bringing in my own clients and doing all of that, I got to learn how to be a financial advisor in that, in that.

Alan Moore: So just for my clarity, so you're at UBS, they say a change is coming and basically the change was, you're own.

Kaysian Gordon: The change was more of a spiritual hearing.

As opposed to, someone saying that. So that was in October of 2018, but I did not leave there until May of 2019. So I had like a six month window. I told them in December that I was leaving. So again, another unusual thing when I, whenever I've shared that. You, you told them that you were leaving and you weren't asked to leave?

Alan Moore: No. Like that? Just kind of, I'm like, people are asked to leave when they tell, you know? Yeah. That happens more frequently than not, so

Kaysian Gordon: Right. So I, I was there and they actually asked me to stay longer, more than, more than the time that I told them. And so I did not leave there until May of 2019 to go. Now work with this new team as of June of 2019.

Alan Moore: Okay, so you make the transition to the new team. What ultimately sort of transpired that led you from there to launching your own firm? Did you know that was going to be the path since you were able to bring in your own clients or was that sort of a, another change that, that was unexpected over the years?

Kaysian Gordon: I, I love that you said it that way. It was another change that was totally unexpected. So my thinking might have been. So again, I was at UBS for 14 years straight. So I'm a long-term kind of stick with it, you know, make it work. And a little over two years in, I started thinking about what my five-year plan was going to be.

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And the five-year plan was, I'm going to hang out here for another, you know, three years. It's already two years. It had, my birthday had just passed, so it was like September of 2021. And within a matter of, I don't know, hours or days, it was a very, very short timeframe. I felt like, no, this is not going to be.

So I'm thinking, okay, maybe, maybe a year I'll get to that 10 million AUM mark and then I can make the next move. And quite clearly I felt the sense that, no, this is a now move. I am not ready for this move at the moment. You know, like I have not made these metrics of income or AUM or any of these things that I would've felt comfortable, having.

But that was in October-ish. I reached out to XY they connected me with someone at Schwab. And even that phone call was just an incredible, phone call. I talked to Agatha Beckett. And she just confirmed all the things that, had been going through my mind and I felt like I'd been being led to.

And I was, my firm was registered by February of 2022, so not even like, I don't know. We, we started the process, Kendra and I, again, shout out, huge shout out to Kendra. We started that before Thanksgiving and firm was registered February 3rd, 2023. Excuse me, 2022.

Alan Moore: Okay. That's awesome. Were you working with the clients inside of your current niche at your previous firm? Were you finding a lot of, of women that, women of faith that, you know, were, were looking for financial planning or did that sort of develop later?

Kaysian Gordon: That developed later. So I don't know if I knew how to articulate that. I wanted to work with women of faith. And I remember talking through networking. I met like a coach. So when I was leaving UBS, I got a coach and I just published my first faith-based devotional book geared towards women, and he said, you should combine faith in financial planning. That was not something I'd ever, ever heard of. And it kind of like he said it, I heard it, but I didn't hear it. And then, I want to say about a year later, I was, again through networking. I met another coach who has become a dear friend of mine and he knew I'd worked with a coach and he

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said, did your coach tell you you should be combining faith and finance together? I'm like, he did. He did.

Alan Moore: Did he email you?

Kaysian Gordon: But even then I had to figure it out. And I remember talking to someone else, it was a networking call, and he kept on asking, if I met someone who needed financial guidance, how would I know to send them to you? And I'd say it was one of my most frustrating networking called, but it came, I came off that call with, I serve women of faith.

I serve women of faith, and that's the thing that would separate me from all the other financial advisors because we know that there are lots of people. Who titled themselves as financial advisors. Right. so that's, that was going to be one of the things that would separate me. So it had, it took, it was quite a process.

And even when I started, because of the world that I came from, I went, I think I swung completely the other end working with clients who probably did not need my guidance. Right. So I started with, younger clients, not charging enough and just, yeah, you know, the typical story, you know, the not enough to pay the bills working, but not enough to pay the bills.

And so I had to kind of right size the ship, and being able to start fresh in 2023. Excuse me, 2022 allowed me to kind of assess who I was working with, who I, who do I really want to work with, and how to make that move.

Alan Moore: The, it's such a unique, path that you've taken that I don't hear this very often, if ever, that you sort of had the opportunity to try on entrepreneurship, in this previous firm where you were able to bring in clients, work with a lot of different clients, really sort of hone your niche and your message and all of that.

And then you, you sort of had a second try at it in a way, when you launch your own RIA. It sounds like you were able to, to really just get clear on.

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You know, and like I said, hit the reset button. Be sure you're working with the clients who really valued, the services were willing to pay you that, that you enjoyed working with.

So that's really cool. I, I don't hear that very often.

Kaysian Gordon: Thank you.

Alan Moore: And so when you say women of faith, is it any faith? Is it a particular faith that, that, of client that you work with?

Kaysian Gordon: That's a very interesting question and I've thought of it myself. It really is of any faith, you believe in something that's bigger than you. So even though I'm a Christian, I work with women who are in different beliefs, different things, they might not believe the same as, me as a Christian. But I'm able to have conversations in such a way that it takes, it takes the overwhelm over, out of finance, and it just becomes a real conversation.

So yeah, so, and I've really thought about that and I don't think it's specific to, Christianity. I think it's just showing up in a way that the women know that I truly care about them as an individual more, more than their finances or to get them to their financial goals.

Alan Moore: And I imagine it means a lot to know that you're not going to enter the meeting with judgment, around their faith and the way their faith is incorporated into their finances. Cause in the end, faith, obviously, our values and, and what we value impacts how we spend money, how we save money, the, the, the things we choose to do.

So, You know, you've been, look at your website, you've been, you have a devotional, sort of a devotional blog, and it looks like this has been going on for, for a while. How long have you been, writing this blog?

Kaysian Gordon: So in, in June, it'll be seven years. I started in

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Alan Moore: Seven years, okay. So you were at UBS when that started.

Kaysian Gordon: Yeah. So it's funny you can't do a whole lot of things when you're, in such a wirehouse from a compliance perspective, but that had nothing to do with finances. And I felt so called to do it when my friend said it. I'm not even a writer.

Like I came up with all the excuses as to why I couldn't do it or shouldn't do it. And then I ran out of excuses and I started doing it. So yeah. Since, yeah.

Alan Moore: That's awesome. So yeah, so it wasn't a finance blog, so therefore UBS compliance

doesn't have oversight over it. It, it's truly a devotional blog. And so what has sort of given you the energy to maintain that? I mean, seven years, you know, three, 350 plus, oh no, that's bad math. Yeah. 350 ish, blog posts.

That's a lot. That's a long time to stick with something. So I guess what has given you the energy to continue to, to publish?

Kaysian Gordon: My thought process is as long as I get a message to share, I'm going to keep sharing. And so it forces me to be intentional about did I learn something this week that is shareable? And the lessons keep coming. And thankfully, it does not take me very long to write, and like sometimes I almost get embarrassed to say that it, I write it Sunday morning, it goes out at eight o'clock on Sunday morning, and at seven o'clock I'm like, okay. So I don't sleep at all on Sundays, by the way.

Right. So I'm writing it and it takes me 15 to 20 minutes if that, to write, you know, a 300 word thing that just becomes clear as I'm writing it and what the message is going to be. And sometimes I don't even know fully what the message is going to be until I'm done. So yeah.

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Alan Moore: And has that led to, well, I guess first before I ask about clients like, do you have sort of a steady following? Is that something you put a lot of energy into sort of getting that message out? I guess, what has been the experience of engagement with those devotionals?

Kaysian Gordon: So I'll say that through that I've published two devotionals. I'm writing slowly, slowly writing the third. I've also co-authored a children's book with my daughter, because she's seen me write, right? So she's like, we should do this together. I posted on Facebook, I've posted it, you know, since the beginning.

And there's a following. I don't know what those numbers are. I have a group that still has 400 and something people in it, maybe close to 500 even after this many years. But I also recognize that I share in other groups and there are people around the world who will probably never, ever meet me, but would've read something that I've written. So it's become less about knowing the numbers and, and just continuing to make the impact regardless of whom it's reaching.

Alan Moore: Yeah, it is one of those things with content, I feel like we can get skewed in our views where we're like, oh, only a hundred people read that. Only 200 people read that. But if I put you on stage in front of 200 people speaking. Like that's an intimidating, well at least it's, for me, it's an intimidating thing where, you know, it's taken a lot of practice to not get fearful of, of speaking to that many people.

And so, sometimes content, you know, is one of those like, we're like, oh, it's got to be tens of thousands or millions of people. And it's like, it really doesn't, even just a few dozen people who are reading it, one, you're, you're having the impact, that you want to be able to have. It's a great way to scale that impact versus having

24, you know, 30 minute calls a week with folks that even if it was 24 people that read it, and the content lives on. And like I said, it's, it's then leading to some of these other projects like books and such, which is, which is really cool.

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Kaysian Gordon: So Alan, even before you go on, I'll add to that. So I was on a flyer for a finance presentation I was doing for another church, which also has opened up the door because I'm faith, finance and all of that. So I did that this weekend and the pastor friend shared it with me, saying he'd shown it to his secretary and her response was, we should get her to come to our church.

She's been at x church and she's really like, she's really good. And so I am, again, it comes back to, I may never know what my impact is or who's in the audience, but people are seeing it and Carl Richard says this all the time, or I've stolen it. You have to play in traffic to get hit.

Alan Moore: Mm-hmm.

Kaysian Gordon: And so I've been playing in traffic and getting hit.

And it's, it's sometimes we want the overnight success. And I talk about that a lot. But when we listen to, I listened to Andy Panko's podcast this morning with you and he did quite a bit of work before getting to this, the point of that level of success. But we see where he started the, the Facebook group, not realizing that he literally plunked all his energy of the early days of, COVID into creating this Facebook group and to get the love of success that he got.

So, I'm, I'm, not that I'm learning, but I'm definitely recognizing that, be careful of the overnight successes that you see.

Alan Moore: Yeah, I was just looking up that the Steve Jobs quote says, if you look more close if, if you really look closely, most overnight successes took a long time.

Kaysian Gordon: Exactly so.

Alan Moore: Yeah. A lot of times there's 10, 20 plus years, behind that success. And, and you know, we generally, Michael does a really good job

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of this on his podcast where he is really looking, you know, he uses that iceberg, metaphor of you only see the 10% really trying to get to that 90% because, it is amazing how much.

How many tears are in that 90%? And if you don't, I mean, I don't know any entrepreneur who's found success that hasn't cried multiple times. And just, you know what, you just get punched in the gut repeatedly. And that is, that is the process, especially when you're trying to do things differently.

You're, you're pushing against the mold, I imagine, that you have run into, some headwinds at times, especially, you know, trying to, to incorporate faith into finance that is not always going to be popular. Anytime you put yourself out there that authentically, whether it's faith or or, or something else, you are going to, you're going to, you're have haters.

Whether they, they tell you that or not. Like there's just, there's going to be that headwind. And so that, you know, coupled with entrepreneurship, it, it, it does take a lot and, and I would imagine you can answer this for yourself, but that probably being able to lean on your faith in those times has been helpful.

Kaysian Gordon: Absolutely. but also again, I've been able to do something that I never, ever dreamed in my wildest dreams to be able to do and to be able to sit down with someone who is, looking at their plan. And to have a compassionate kind yet, very frank conversation around how they're dealing with it and they walk away from the conversation knowing that it was filled with kindness and grace.

Right. and, and to be able to do that, it's just like, wow.

Alan Moore: That is, and I imagine for your clients as well, it's kind of a wow when they've, they've, they may have experienced other, advisor processes and such that don't necessarily, provide that same level of support. You know, when we talk about a niche, I, I, I've been trying to, to

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sort of really the, Michael and I both been trying to shift the conversation around, you know, it's not so much, it's not a profession, right?

It's about serving a need, helping, helping someone through sort of a common problem. And the, and it sounds like the problem. For you and the, the challenge, it's not problem, this sounds so negative, but the, the real, the challenge is in that incorporating of, of a person's faith into that planning process.

So can you talk about how, sort of how your process, your financial planning process looks different than maybe other advisors because of the focus on working, with women of faith?

Kaysian Gordon: So, and I'll, I'll say that even in the last couple of weeks, I'm recognizing, that I might be tweaking, right? And it is still the woman of faith, but because we're women of faith, we tend to give so much of ourselves to others, and that's coming out of detriment. And I'm seeing it in, in the financials where, you're giving so much and you're not taking care of yourself as well.

And I'm starting to have more and more conversations around that, you know, and especially as I listen to some of the podcast recordings that you've done with others. So there's the faith component of it, but it's also how do you give to others in a way that is not self-sacrificing.

Alan Moore: That's sustainable.

Kaysian Gordon: Right, it's sustainable, it's not self-sacrificing.

But you also see that, how that translates to life. And I've had a saying for quite a few years that finances do not just affect our finances, it affects our whole lives. Right? And the impact of the woman who is giving so much of herself, whether herself or financially or whatever else, it usually comes at a detriment to them.

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So I'm, I'm starting to noodle with the idea of tweaking it and even becoming a little bit more fine tuned in terms of the financial planning process. I'm meeting with clients quarterly, you know, when I'm going through the traditional financial planning. As I said, I start on the other end where I was not getting paid enough, and giving too much.

And so I kind of scaled that back and said charging more, and meeting quarterly. But now my clients, you know, a few of them have said, I'd like to meet more often. So it's that hand holding. It's now, right sizing the ship for them, making sure that they're on the right path. So I'm starting to see that maybe for some of those clients, they'll have more upfront meetings, and then we can taper off to more, a more normalized schedule, but while they're getting a handle of all the different parts and the moving parts of their financial lives, to be able to, to make the next step.

Alan Moore: Okay.

That's awesome. So what, what is sort of your typical, or I guess, minimum fee new client today coming in? What, what are they paying for the, for the various services that you offer?

Kaysian Gordon: Sure. So it's \$3,950. I started last year at \$3,500. I raised it at the end of last year to \$3,950 billed on a quarterly basis. So one of the things I think I, I, I keep saying I wanted to serve women who are like me, and I keep going back to what would I be willing to pay for this service. So again, you know, and fully, I'd say year in, I, I, I still haven't figured out quite how to count it.

Is it three years in or one year in? So it all depends on perspective. So at this stage that I'm comfortable there, but I could also see where if I'm doing a lot more on the upfront, that I'd have to raise it to be realistic and to be able to serve the number of clients that I want to serve. Because I also, and again, this is something that's come up in a few of your other podcasts about being in the season of life, right?

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And I'm a mom. I have a 10 year old who is, You know, for the first seven years of my life I was running into the city every day and did not have, the same opportunities to now. So my office, my home is two minutes away from school and my office is two minutes from there. So, you know, like last Friday I went and I helped with the, or Thursday I helped with the book fair setup and I was in the office in like 10 minutes, right?

So to be able to do those things and to show up for her, and she gets so excited still, that her mom is there and she got first choice of the books because we were there. So to be able to do those things in this season and then as seasons change to figure out what that looks like for the business.

Alan Moore: Yeah, I want to loop back to that for sure. Let me close out the, the fee conversation, just cause I'm curious on the service model. You know, you came from a world where you're doing a lot of, very sophisticated investment strategies that are typically for your ultra high net worth. Are you providing investment management for your clients?

Kaysian Gordon: I do, and again, I'm thinking about what would I want to pay? So up to \$500,000, it's 1.25. Above that, it's 1%, and then kind of going down, the higher the dollar amount gets. And my thought process is if a client is coming to me with even \$400,000. Andy, Andy Panko said it, it was just like, are you doing that much more on the investing side, the real value that I'm adding is the planning conversations.

So I'm not going to double charge them. I'll say, as long as you're paying my minimum fee, we'll do the investments and we'll do the planning conversations combined.

Alan Moore: Okay, so you're not charging, so if they have four or 500,000, you're not charging both a planning fee and investment

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management. They kind, they're, they offset. Okay. That makes sense. and then are you, are you leveraging, some of those more sophisticated, private placements, hedge funds, those types of investment strategies?

Or have you sort of shifted into a new, I guess a, a different investment philosophy that works for, for your client?

Kaysian Gordon: I've completely shifted. I believe in keeping it simple and especially for my client base. They're not looking for, I don't serve ultra high net worth clients, right? I serve individuals, and working towards high net worth clients. They don't need the overly complicated stuff. I find that the clients who I serve and enjoy serving are the ones who are looking for

more building on the fundamentals. So keeping it simple so that they can get farther, and to be able to do more while they're enjoying their lives.

Alan Moore: Okay.

Yeah. And, and obviously investment management, investment philosophy should be catered to the clients that you're working with. If somebody came to you with 20 million, that is a different investment strategy than than 400,000, which makes a lot of sense. One thing that, I'm curious about is the transition from, you know, just the planning needs, the conversations when you talk to someone with minimum 5 million, but assuming you're working with clients, but 10, 20, 40 million is so different than the clients you're working with now.

Do you feel like, did you have to sort of relearn financial planning or learn a new style? You know, like learn a new financial planning to work with your, your clients since the, the conversations are just so vastly different.

Kaysian Gordon: I had to unlearn a lot of things. And I, I said this to Carl Richards once. It's just like I literally had to unlearn a lot of the things that I've been taught and get, I learned so much, right. Working with the team

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that I did taking, learning how to take care of clients well. But there was also the day-to-day financial planning for the clients that I serve now. And

I pulled out my fundamentals book a couple weeks ago cause I'm like, am I doing this right? Right. Am I covering all the topics that I need to cover? And again, I took the CFP® exam in 2011. You know, I, I passed in 2011. So it's been a long time and I, I just like, am I covering what my clients need? And I've just also come to recognize that financial planning is so different based on who you serve.

And the more podcasts I listen to and the more, strategies of, of what I hear is just like, it depends on who you're serving and what their needs are.

Alan Moore: It really does. Yeah. I mean, the

CFP covers whatever, 180 topics and they don't even cover all of the things that it should, in my opinion, to be able to work with clients. And then, you know, that's, that's the 80% that's like, I don't know, you're sort of similar for everybody. Then there's the 10 to 20% that's unique for your niche.

That's, that CFP® is never going to cover and sometimes that's technical. In your case, that's much more, on the psychology side, I guess, of, of just how to communicate and how to incorporate those, the, that faith. And, and to your point, what's really interesting, it many times, you know, there'll be some coaching conversation about helping people dial back their giving, emotionally, you know, because it, it, if it's, if it's taking too much from them.

So, which is a conversation most advisors don't want to have, nor could they have if they were forced to, which is, which is really cool. So when you're thinking about, you know, you mentioned sort of time of the life and, and you've got a, you know, you said your daughter's 10.

I, I love that you co-wrote a book together.

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How old was she when you wrote the book?

Kaysian Gordon: This was in 2020. We were home in the pandemic. And I love this story. So, you know, my, my home office had been set up and I had my, my paper and she, we bought a dollar stapler, from a stapler from Dollar Tree. And she came and she cut off a little strip on the paper and she stapled it and she's like, we should write a book together.

What should it be about? And she said something about talent. I think she'd heard that story at church the weekend before. So I wrote Amelia and Her Many Talents and she was, she loves the piano, she loves singing, she loves to do all these things. And so I've basically wrote a book on that and wrote the end, and I read it to her and I'm like, I think we just wrote a, I think we just wrote a book.

So I reached out to my publisher and she gave me the name of an illustrator and we got it illustrated. And we put it on Amazon. And so, and she's like, I want to gift everyone in my class. And I'm like, and she's very generous. And so we gifted one to everyone in her class that year. And it was, it's just such a fun story, when kids see us doing things and there's the, the authoring of the book, right?

Or the co-authoring of the book. But there's also the financial side where, and again, another story that I love, she's 10 and we talk about money in our home. I'm a single mom. We're, I'm divorced. And she, you know, whatever she wants to buy something, she says, can you check if I'm in a financial position to do so? And so, it is, you know, like I'm amazed watching her and to see how much she's learning when I'm working from home. And she's hearing these conversations or we're talking about, you know, can she afford to do something? All the things that she's picking up. So, COVID definitely gave some benefits to that.

Alan Moore: Yeah, the, it's just amazing what our kids pick up on, in terms of what we do and, and those habits and curiosity about the things that we're doing. So that, that's so cool that, you know, it's very obvious she's

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been watching you, being an author, being, being savvy financially. And, and I appreciate you sharing that.

I mean, you know, starting a firm as a, as a single mom, with a, you know, eight year old, I guess at the time. Like that, that is not the time where we're supposed to become an entrepreneur, right? We're supposed to wait, but it, it sounds like you, you know, ultimately were called to do this and, and felt like it was, it was, it was the right time, whether you agreed that it was or not.

Kaysian Gordon: A hundred percent. Right. And even back to your point of you don't know many entrepreneurs who get the chance to be an entrepreneur while they're figuring it out. And so I had the team structure that I was used to. You know, I, I never would've thought that I enjoy being a solo advisor. I, in my mind, I needed the team and I needed the team to be able to transition in that way.

I also needed to see what the other side of the world looked like from, a financial advisory perspective. But now I, I, I feel like I'm a solo advisor, but I have this amazing community of, again, shout out to XY. I have my cohort. We still meet once a week. We started that in January of 2022. And we've become friends, and we have the most honest conversations about all the things that are going on as new business owners.

I have a partner who I consider a true partner, from the team that I worked with previous. And he is, he is my, I rely on him. He's my right hand person. For just so many, so many of the things. So did I need that in between phase? Absolutely. And I encourage anyone who's thinking of, what does life look like as a financial advisor to try to find a spot where they can. If they can get paid, even better, while they figure it out.

But to, to also, and also make sure that you have your finances in order in order to do that.

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Alan Moore: So what, when you think about what you're building towards, you know, again, some of this is time of life. You mentioned earlier, you know, sort of the, the number of clients you want to work with. Like, when you think about that five year plan for the business, where do you want this business to go? Do you want to grow big?

Do you want to stay solo? Do you want to hire, like, what, what do you have in your head for, and sort of what, what's the plan that will likely be disrupted? But what's the plan at this point?

Kaysian Gordon: As long as we agree it will likely be disrupted, right? I have not, I did not plan to be here. So the five year plan is hopefully to be at a point where maybe I'm no longer taking clients, as actively, or I've also kind of in my mind, I'm okay with graduating clients when they no longer need me so that I can serve others.

I don't want to be at the point where I'm running myself ragged. Maybe to have an assistant, maybe a part-time. I don't, I don't want the traditional large team. I don't want the large firm. Again, having come from the large firm, I see all the other things that come with that. So it's not my desire to grow this huge business, outside of myself.

I want to be able to take care of clients in a way that they, they know that it's more than financial planning that I'm offering.

Alan Moore: Absolutely.

Kaysian Gordon: My, my traditional number has been to maybe to get to 75 clients, but also now as of this morning thinking maybe it's 60, if I charge more or, and give more service, based on the need.

So yeah, still kind of noodling all of those things in my mind.

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Alan Moore: Absolutely no, I, I love asking the question, but also again, recognizing that, the best laid plans are just ripe for disruption. And we, we want to know sort of the direction you're headed, but

also we learned a lot as we go and, you know, I know a lot of advisors that think they have a number in their head and halfway there they're like, no, that number was way too high.

Or they get there and they're like, ah, that number was lower than, than, than I thought it needed to be. And, so lot, lot of learning to be done. So as we're, coming up on our time together, I'll ask you the final question and, that is, you know, if you could go back and give your younger self one piece of advice, what do you think that piece of advice would be to, to younger Kaysi?

Kaysian Gordon: I think, you know, and I've thought about this question quite a bit and it's a hard one. So, be diligent with my personal savings. I mean, I've done, I've done pretty okay, but be more diligent still while enjoying life. And I'd say even more so, wishing that I had, you know, a few years, so I felt called to, to this side of the world in this manner.

But wishing I had a few years to kind of have that runway, and it does not take six months like I thought to be back to my corporate salary. It does not take that, right. So making sure that you have your own financial life in order before, you make that leap, so that when you do, you can fully focus on, where you're going and how you want to get there, without having to take any shortcuts.

So, yeah, so that, that would be the advice to my younger self and anyone else listening, to make sure that you have the runway if you're going to start in this business, to be able to survive two to three years before you start seeing any kind of real income.

Alan Moore: Absolutely. Well, Kaysi, thank you so much for taking the time to come on the show and, and share your story and, and path to

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entrepreneurship. Even though it maybe wasn't the plan, you've had, you've just found amazing success. And, and yeah, look forward to doing a, a catch up interview one day, to hear how things progress for you.

So thank you for taking the time today.

Kaysian Gordon: Thank you. I appreciate it. It's been fun.

Alan Moore: Also, be sure to go to XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP to join our private Facebook group for fee-for-service advisors. It's the community you've been looking for that's there to support you no matter where you are in your journey—best of all, it's free. Again, that's XYPlanningNetwork.com/VIP.

Narrator: Thanks for listening to XYPN Radio. If you enjoyed the show, please be sure to leave a review that will help grow the movement of fee-for-service advisors, serving next gen clients and building the firms of their dreams. That's all for today's episode, until next time.