

National Research Project

Current Struggles facing High-end Financial Advisors



The Mark of Mastery™

What is the research project

What:

We've established a simple framework for what affluent Ideal Clients are willing to pay the most for: Questions to research:

- ▶ Why don't more Financial Advisors align their work with this?
- ▶ What obstacles are preventing Financial Advisors from delivering at the clients' minimum standards?
- ▶ What frustrations are High-end Financial Advisors experiencing right now

Who:

Comprehensive Financial Advisors with 5+ years experience
(NOTE: Most non-anonymous respondents thus far are "top producers")

What is the research project

How:

Asked 26 questions over 13 days via email.

Respondents filled-out a form every day (took less than 4 minutes per day)

Sample Questions:

- ✓ What headwinds are you facing now that you weren't facing a year ago?
- ✓ What would you be embarrassed to admit to another advisor about your practice right now?
- ✓ What excuse are you most tired of hearing yourself repeat?
- ✓ If I shadowed you for a week, what gap would I see between what you say you want and what you actually do?
- ✓ If your best client could see how you run your practice daily, what would impress them? What would disappoint them?
- ✓ Where do you feel you're wasting the most energy in your practice today?
- ✓ What's the one thing you keep avoiding because you know it would change everything?

What is the research project

How:

Asked 26 subjective questions over 13 days via email (not multiple choice).

Respondents filled-out a form every day (took less than 4 minutes per day)

Sample Questions:

- ✓ What headwinds are you facing now that you weren't facing a year ago?
- ✓ What would you be embarrassed to admit to another advisor about your practice right now?
- ✓ What excuse are you most tired of hearing yourself repeat?
- ✓ If I shadowed you for a week, what gap would I see between what you say you want and what you actually do?
- ✓ If your best client could see how you run your practice daily, what would impress them? What would disappoint them?
- ✓ Where do you feel you're wasting the most energy in your practice today?
- ✓ What's the one thing you keep avoiding because you know it would change everything?

Eliminating the struggle

Let's crack the code today,
once and for all.

Let's eliminate the struggles

The 5 Struggles

1. Exhaustion / overwhelm
2. Quiet isolation
3. Stagnation: fear of wasted potential
4. Inner conflict between growth and safety
5. A declining sense of self-trust.

Exhaustion / Overwhelm

Actual Examples. Words used by advisors:

“I’m spending too much time learning tools.” “I’m trying to perfect my planning work-product.” “I’m not making progress as fast as I want.” “I’m stuck doing everything myself.”

Common theme:

“I’m afraid I’ll never feel fully competent - that I’ll always be behind the curve. I know I’m capable, but I can’t seem to get out of my own way or get the systems to click.”

Reality-based Insight:

“You don’t need to be perfect to be powerful. You just need a clear system that builds confidence through progress, not perfection. You’ve done the hard part - now it’s time to lead instead of grind.”

Isolation & Lack of Support

Actual Examples. Words used by advisors:

“It’s just me.” “I don’t have a team.” “I need an admin.” “I’m trying to do everything myself.”

Common theme:

“I feel alone carrying the weight of this business. I’m tired of being the only one who cares. I want to lead, not just survive - but right now it feels like no one’s in the trenches with me.”

Reality-based Insight:

“You were never meant to build this alone. The right structure turns isolation into collaboration - so your business starts to feel lighter, not heavier.”

STUCK: Fear of Stagnation & Wasted Potential

Actual Examples. Words used by advisors:

“If nothing changes, I won’t hit my life goals.” “I’m wasting energy.”

“It’s taking too long.” “My results don’t reflect my effort.”

Common theme:

“I’m scared I’ve plateaued. I know I’m capable of more, but I can’t seem to break through. It’s not about working harder - it’s about finally seeing all this effort produce momentum.”

Reality-based Insight:

“You’ve worked too hard to stay stuck at this level.

What if the breakthrough isn’t in doing more
-but in changing how you move forward?”

Conflict Between Growth and Comfort

Actual Examples. Words used by advisors:

“Growth vs. comfort.” “I want progress, but I avoid the hard stuff.”

“I know what I should do - I’m just not doing it.”

Common theme:

“I crave change but resist discomfort. I tell myself I’m strategic, but deep down, I know I’m avoiding what actually moves the needle.”

Reality-based Insight:

“Real growth starts where comfort ends.

It’s not about willpower

- it’s about aligning what you say you want with what you actually do.”

Erosion of Self-Belief

Actual Examples. Words used by advisors:

“I’m frustrated.” “I’m not confident.” “I don’t feel ready for success.” “I’m tired of my own excuses.” “I join one program after another; every time they don’t work I just join another program.”

Common theme:

“I’m losing trust in myself. I’ve been promising myself change for too long - and it hurts to realize I might be the bottleneck.”

Reality-based Insight:

“The problem isn’t you - it’s the system that left you guessing. Rebuild your confidence by taking control of what’s in your hands. You’ve already proven you care - now it’s time to prove you can win.”

What's missing
from this list of 5?

Eliminating the struggle

Exhaustion / Overwhelm

The guaranteed solution to exhaustion & overwhelm: Pattern interruption

✓ **This is the Last Program I'll ever join:**

A test whether or not you really want it!

✓ **FOCUS:** Pick 1 program or method or business model
(drop the rest for 90-days)

✓ **Selection criteria**

- ✓ 1. Confirm there's evidence the method you've chosen actually works
- ✓ 2. Only consider programs which guarantee the outcome you're seeking
- ✓ 3. Direct access to an individual(s) who have successfully executed it
- ✓ 4. Commit to one-on-one mentoring at least 3X every week for 90-days
(give it your "ALL" in a burst for 90-days ...a focused 90-day sprint)
- ✓ 5. **Ride or Die for 90-days:** Resolve to execute every Action Item and Recommendation your mentor makes (just for 90-days).

Isolation & Lack of Support

The guaranteed solution to this problem: Pattern interruption

✓ **This is the Last Program I'll ever join:**

A test whether or not you really want it!

✓ **FOCUS:** Pick 1 program or method or business model
(drop the rest for 90-days)

✓ **Selection criteria**

- ✓ 1. Confirm there's evidence the method you've chosen actually works
- ✓ 2. Only consider programs which guarantee the outcome you're seeking
- ✓ 3. Direct access to an individual(s) who have successfully executed it
- ✓ 4. Commit to one-on-one mentoring at least 3X every week for 90-days
(give it your "ALL" in a burst for 90-days ...a focused 90-day sprint)
- ✓ 5. **Ride or Die for 90-days:** Resolve to execute every Action Item and Recommendation your mentor makes (just for 90-days).

STUCK: Fear of Stagnation & Wasted Potential

The guaranteed solution to this problem: Pattern interruption

✓ **This is the Last Program I'll ever join:**

A test whether or not you really want it!

✓ **FOCUS:** Pick 1 program or method or business model
(drop the rest for 90-days)

✓ **Selection criteria**

- ✓ 1. Confirm there's evidence the method you've chosen actually works
- ✓ 2. Only consider programs which guarantee the outcome you're seeking
- ✓ 3. Direct access to an individual(s) who have successfully executed it
- ✓ 4. Commit to one-on-one mentoring at least 3X every week for 90-days
(give it your "ALL" in a burst for 90-days ...a focused 90-day sprint)
- ✓ 5. **Ride or Die for 90-days:** Resolve to execute every Action Item and Recommendation your mentor makes (just for 90-days).

Conflict Between Growth and Comfort

The guaranteed solution to this problem: Pattern interruption

✓ **This is the Last Program I'll ever join:**

A test whether or not you really want it!

- ✓ FOCUS: Pick 1 program or method or business model
(drop the rest for 90-days)
- ✓ Selection criteria

- ✓ 1. Confirm there's evidence the method you've chosen actually works
- ✓ 2. Only consider programs which guarantee the outcome you're seeking
- ✓ 3. Direct access to an individual(s) who have successfully executed it
- ✓ 4. Commit to one-on-one mentoring at least 3X every week for 90-days
(give it your "ALL" in a burst for 90-days ...a focused 90-day sprint)
- ✓ 5. **Ride or Die for 90-days:** Resolve to execute every Action Item and Recommendation your mentor makes (just for 90-days).

Erosion of Self-Belief

The guaranteed solution to this problem: Pattern interruption

✓ **This is the Last Program I'll ever join:**

A test whether or not you really want it!

- ✓ FOCUS: Pick 1 program or method or business model
(drop the rest for 90-days)
- ✓ Selection criteria

- ✓ 1. Confirm there's evidence the method you've chosen actually works
- ✓ 2. Only consider programs which guarantee the outcome you're seeking
- ✓ 3. Direct access to an individual(s) who have successfully executed it
- ✓ 4. Commit to one-on-one mentoring at least 3X every week for 90-days
(give it your "ALL" in a burst for 90-days ...a focused 90-day sprint)
- ✓ 5. **Ride or Die for 90-days:** Resolve to execute every Action Item and Recommendation your mentor makes (just for 90-days).

Quick Wins

What to do in the next 1-7 days while you're
deciding on your level of commitment to
focus & implement

Exhaustion / Overwhelm

Quick Wins: over the next 1 – 7 days

- ✓ Do a “systems fast”: stop all new tool learning for 7 days and work only with what’s already built
(Free Thought Time 20min a day M-F)
- ✓ Identify the #1 problem or struggle preventing you from making progress
 - ✓ Then invest 20 min every day quietly thinking about ways to resolve it
 - ✓ Free Thought Time: keep at it until you have several different strategies
- ✓ 1 daily crucial result: create 1 Action Item daily for a long-term goal
(some small bite-sized piece every day). Commit not to leave work until it’s done.
- ✓ Inbox Zero: Invest the time to completely clear your inbox.
Then, commit to keeping it cleared daily
(do, delay, delegate, or dump on every 1-pass)

Isolation & Lack of Support

Quick Wins: over the next 1 – 7 days

- ✓ Schedule one coffee or zoom with another business owner today.
Share success stories, headaches or obstacles, encouragement.
Block time for daily peer communication - even 15 minutes.
- ✓ Engage with and participate in TheMarkOfMastery.com community.
Pick a group or a community to interact with in your Financial Advisor community, then commit to give as much as you get from the interactions
- ✓ Identify 3 people you trust and send each a short “need a sounding board” message.
- ✓ Hire a virtual admin for one small project.
- ✓ Use a co-working space for one day to feel connection.
- ✓ Send a voice memo to a mentor - reconnect with guidance.
- ✓ Audit your weekly schedule for lonely hours; replace one with collaboration.

STUCK: Fear of Stagnation & Wasted Potential

Quick Wins: over the next 1 – 7 days

- ✓ Write your “Why This Still Matters” statement and post it visibly.
- ✓ Do one action that scares you (call, ask, offer).
- ✓ Audit your week: cut or delegate all non-growth tasks.
- ✓ Schedule 30 minutes daily for proactive business development.
- ✓ Reconnect with one inspiring client or peer.
- ✓ Create a “Momentum Dashboard” tracking effort vs. results.
- ✓ Review wins from the past 90 days to reignite belief (celebrate your progress)
- ✓ Identify and eliminate one hidden time-waster.
- ✓ Choose one skill to advance right now.
- ✓ Pick one dormant idea and ship it within 72 hours.

Conflict Between Growth and Comfort

Quick Wins: over the next 1 – 7 days

- ✓ Identify one avoided task and do it today.
- ✓ Celebrate every time you do something uncomfortable
- ✓ Schedule your discomfort (literally block it on calendar).
- ✓ Take one micro-action aligned with growth each morning.
- ✓ Tell one person what you're committing to this week.
- ✓ Review your top 3 fears and reframe them as opportunities.
- ✓ Journal on: "What am I protecting by staying comfortable?"
- ✓ Replace "should" with "must" in language.
(Start an "unacceptable" list)
- ✓ Visualize success and discomfort daily.
- ✓ Start the day with a 5-minute cold shower - physical courage builds mental courage.

Erosion of Self-Belief

Quick Wins: over the next 1 – 7 days

- ✓ Ask a trusted peer: “What do you see in me that I’m missing?”
- ✓ Deliver one client result this week that reminds you of your skill.
- ✓ Reach out to a grateful client and revisit their testimonial.
- ✓ Write a “Proof List” - 10 ways you’ve succeeded before.
- ✓ End each day with “3 Wins” list.
- ✓ Speak your vision out loud daily.
- ✓ Journal: “How would I act if I already believed I could?”
- ✓ Get public - post one insight online.
- ✓ Change physical state: exercise, posture, energy.
- ✓ Reset workspace - visual cues of achievement.