

Ascend Professional Pathways

Customized professional development to
empower those who drive your mission.



ascendpropathways.com

Navigating Imposter Feelings

In this technological day and age where we seem to be living in a perpetual echo chamber, if you speak with enough people, you will realize that most of us are familiar with feelings of inadequacy and doubt. Sometimes, the severity can be so much that it would be debilitating to one's progress in achieving their goals as it can skew one's perception about their capacity for performance. Acknowledging that experiencing Imposter Feelings is common among our colleagues can help in diminishing its effect, however, deliberate action is still needed to overcome its hold on us.

This guide is designed to steer us towards action and an objective response, use it when you are doubting yourself in any particular situation, or use it as a preventative tool to stay ahead of any doubt that may creep in.

We can break down this process into three main components:

1. Being aware of when imposter feelings occur and identifying them as such.
2. Homing in on the specific fears and doubts to better overcome them.
3. Looking at things objectively and removing the emotional response.

Then, we identify effective actions to take to move towards results and get over feeling stuck. Lastly, we reflect on what was meaningful and reinforce what will continue to help us as we work towards our goals.

“Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer the negative elements in your life, don't sit at home and think about it. Go out and get busy!”

-Dale Carnegie

Approach this guide with the intention to narrow in on precise aspects that are causing the negative feelings. Use these questions as prompts for deep reflection, self-discovery, and meaningful conversations with others. Take notes and write down your thoughts, feel free to focus on the areas that resonate the most.

This is a robust exercise, take your time as you can always come back to it periodically. The goal is to source solutions, not cause more overwhelm. Keep an open mind and be honest with yourself, and feel free to navigate this document that best aligns with your most pressing challenges.

Thomas Passalacqua

Certified executive coach specializing in sales training & facilitated learning.

516-946-2965 | thomas@ascendpropathways.com



Identifying their origins: Being aware of when Imposter Feelings occur and identifying them as such can empower you to shorten their effect and lessen the severity. Take time to develop your attention and self-reflection. Think back to a time when you notice these feelings overwhelming you:

What can you identify about when or where the doubt usually occurs? What are the signs, the emotions, the thoughts and mindset? What, if you could identify, would be the exact trigger?

What did you notice about your inner dialogue, self-talk, and responses to when you tried to overcome those doubts? What did you notice about yourself making unsupported proclamations about your abilities?

When can you identify that your emotions are taking over and causing you to ignore an objective perspective?

How would you define your imposter feelings? Would you describe them as feeling inadequate, less than, lacking confidence, not doing enough etc?

Homing in on the fears and doubts: The better you identify what you are doubting the better you can pair solutions. Take time to reflect and to identify what the precise situation is where you are stuck and describe your doubts and dial in on where the uncertainty lies:

Thinking about your situation, can you identify what the precise sticking point is?

Separating yourself from your emotions and being as objective as possible, describe your apprehension:

Further explore your uncertainty: What can't you see past? Is it a matter of not having specific information, skills or experience, knowledge, or resources?

How could you obtain solutions to these roadblocks, what would be the plan?

Consider this exercise to challenge your fears, focus deeply when asking yourself these questions:

What is the actual fear you are anticipating? Despite your best efforts, what if the very situation you are afraid of actually happens? How can you be better prepared to navigate that scenario? What would be your very first step? The better you prepare for the worst-case scenario, the easier it is to overcome that fear and move forward. How can you overcome the fear of the unknown?

Looking at things objectively: Removing your emotional response and shifting perspectives. Looking at situations through an objective lens rather than an emotional one can help free you from getting stuck.

In the moment when Imposter Feelings occur:

Whenever you make a proclamation, ask yourself: “Is that actually true or just an emotional reaction?” What assumptions might you be making that you can shift?

Who can you speak with to talk things out and vent to before taking any action? List three people who you can call or text to talk this through with. Oftentimes being alone causes you to stay within one perspective, speaking with others can help shift the viewpoint.

Ask yourself: “How is my current attitude or thinking actually helping me to achieve my goals?” How is your current mindset enabling your success or preventing it?

How can you best interrupt the negative spiral when you do experience it? Physical activity, taking a break, speaking with someone, etc. What has helped you in the past to break out of that debilitating mindset?

Using past examples of proof of your capabilities:

Identify past examples of similar situations and when things went well. What were the results?

Thinking back, where were the tiny wins and the small achievements that allowed you to succeed? What specific actions led to you achieving this success?

With what group of people are you most successful with? Who is most responsive?

What past interactions provide a clear example of you being able to accomplish hard tasks?

What other aspects are in your direct control?

Reframe your doubts:

What are your strengths that you bring to this particular situation?

What are you most proud of? What are your proudest accomplishments?

Where do you have an advantage? What would your closest colleagues say you are good at? What attributes would they say are your strongest?

What are the strongest relationships you have that provide evidence you are capable of achieving your goals?

What are you grateful for? Identify and acknowledge what blessings you do have:

Where can you give yourself more credit?

Taking action: Getting active and working towards improvement is an effective means to get you back on track. Focusing on precisely that what is preventing you from moving forward needs to be the object to overcome. Thinking about your long-term goals but acting on short term objectives and turning those negative emotions into habits of actions and results, and making small, consistent progress.

Describe your overall goal:

What is your ultimate goal that you want to achieve? How can you support achieving that goal at this moment? What would you need to do to better accomplish your goal?

How can you focus on moving forward and not being stuck in the past or stuck in doubt? What needs to change in the immediate to allow you to make progress the quickest?

Think back as if this moment already happened, describe the situation in the past tense as if you have already accomplished it. What were the actions you took? What were the reactions of those involved? How did you respond? What were the successful moments? What did you do that allowed you to be successful?

Make real-time progress:

What is one significant action you can take that would generate the most results?

If you could take one small action without spending time, money, or effort, what would it be?

Identify 1-3 people you can speak with to get some help.

What other steps can you take to get you closer to your goal?

Creating a healthier mindset:

How can you separate your ego from this situation?

What different mindset or attitudes can better move you towards achieving your goal?

How can you be more solution-oriented?

How could you identify and challenge limiting beliefs? If you notice yourself making excuses of why things wouldn't work, perhaps you need to reconsider how you are trying to get ahead.

Getting creative:

Create an Achievement or a Positivity List where you identify and highlight your past successes. Display this as a reminder of your capabilities and focus on the positive experiences throughout your life.

Take time to create a collection of achievements that you are proud of, use the following template as an example. Display it in a useful location where you can review it to better reframe your perspective:

Past achievement:	How I accomplished it:	Why I am proud of this:	Habits, actions, & mindset that enabled this accomplishment that I can replicate again:

In another perspective, create a list of experiences that were not successful but identify the lessons learned:

Past experience:	What went wrong:	What I learned:	How I can apply that lesson moving forward:

What are your strengths that you can amplify to better align you with your goals?

How can you create time and consistency to remind yourself of this inventory of success?

What are other helpful reminders that reassure you?

Broader thinking:

Who is within your immediate network and support system that can be a resource for opportunity? How can they better support you?

Who would be in your extended network that you could potentially connect with? How?

What gets you most excited when thinking about your ambitions?

What are some short-term or immediate interventions you can do to break out of the negative mindset?

What are more long-term strategies to build resilience and work on your ultimate vision? How can you break out of thinking about this moment in isolation, thinking more broadly? What would a longer-term plan include?

Reflections: Take time to ponder what these questions brought up for you. What would you benefit most from moving forward? The more you separate yourself from emotional reactions and act more objectively, it empowers you to make progress.

Actions & Reactions:

How can you better identify the triggers once you know them, create more awareness, and how can you intervene and get back into control?

How can you respond without an emotional reaction? How can you respond more objectively?

How can you create space to pause, reflect, and choose a powerful reaction when you feel these emotions?

What actions of yours can you focus on moving forward that will better enable continued success?

How can you take the time needed to care for yourself, reflect, and choose?

If you could control as many aspects of your situation as possible, to be able to limit the number of uncontrolled variables, what would you focus on?

Your supportive network:

Who are your allies that can support you?

How can you strengthen your base of supporters?

Who can you build new relationships with to bring strength and support?

What resources can you tap into to better support your development?

Reinforcing the positive:

What did you realize about the results from all of the above? What can you actually influence?

What benefits came out of reframing your perspective? How does this process steer you to a more logical outcome and away from a negative emotional reaction?

What positive emotions would you like to experience more after following these interventions?

What did you realize about yourself after going through this exercise? What was most salient?

To further refine your strategy and establish the best methods to achieve your goals, Book a Call with Thomas!



Visit [AscendProPathways.com](https://ascendpropathways.com) for more tools and resources for achieving your goals, navigating challenges, and maximizing your potential!

Thomas Passalacqua

Certified executive coach specializing in sales training & facilitated learning.

516-946-2965 | thomas@ascendpropathways.com

