

January 2022 Enerpace PaceSetter: Loss & Resilience

The Enerpace PaceSetter



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We Grow Agile Leaders Who Grow Purpose-Driven Firms

January 2022

Hello Subscriber,

I'm so grateful my life overlapped with that of Karen Staib Duffy. We met at UChicago Women Business Group and Chicago Booth events, since we're both alums. In fact, it was at one of those events years ago that she told me about her recent adoption of 3 very young sisters from Russia - AND the challenges and pleasures of instant motherhood!

We interacted at Chicago Coach Federation events and shared many mutual LinkedIn connections. So when I needed to add another Executive Coach who also works with leaders in career transition, I was pleasantly surprised to find that my ICF Search returned her name. We had several conversations exploring and designing what it could be like to become a member of the Enerpace Affiliate Coach Team. Once she accepted, she jumped in with enthusiasm and her special humor, just as she did in all things. She fit in instantly and quickly became a crucial member of our "Core Team" that meets biweekly to update, share, learn and collaborate. Karen often told me how much she valued the comradery she found with us, while we all benefited from her experience, insights and brainstorming - - or "throwing spaghetti at the wall" as she usually prefaced her ideas.

Shortly after joining our team, Karen shared with us that she'd been battling metastatic breast cancer and that it had spread. But never fear, she had done copious research and was engaged in a treatment regimen that combined the best aspects of western medical science, nutrition and supplements, and energetic, holistic healing modalities. In energy, humor and appearance, no one would have suspected that this disease was such a part of her life. She dealt with whatever she needed to, then got back to the business of living the life she cherished.



In 2019, Karen and I attended the 'Conversations Among Masters' coach conference in Baltimore. She really touched me when she casually remarked she signed up primarily because she wanted to get to know me better! Sharing multiple meals, workshops and peer coaching activities gave us the opportunity to do just that. The most impactful was a session that drew upon the red and blue pill choice in the movie 'The Matrix'. We were given a purple pill, and tasked with coaching each other to such a profound commitment to a goal that we would ingest this pill to embody it and make it our reality. I coached Karen and by the end of the exercise, she swallowed the pill with her commitment to her goal of "healing and living with joy".

And she did! Her laughter was frequent, full-bodied and contagious. She never showed up as anything other than optimistic and positive. Even when her test results were concerning, she had another plan to move forward. When she lost her hair, she bought a variety of super-stylish wigs that she ROCKED on numerous occasions. Despite her illness, she didn't let Covid keep her from doing what was important to her - - getting her eldest to college, time with her sisters, a lunch with the Enerpace team, or my mother's wake even prior to vaccines. She was always there for the people she cared about. That was a given.

In 2021, Karen set a goal for herself to find a corporate client for Enerpace. She proceeded to manifest such an opportunity when her friend and former coworker requested assistance in developing emerging leaders. Karen and I co-created and ran a multi-month series of workshops and activities, which spawned the opportunity to create other programs for this great regional bank. Even though leading virtual training sessions was outside her comfort zone, she put in the work and hours to master her part and always showed up with her trademark professionalism, energy and humor.

That's why it felt like a literal punch in my gut when she confessed to me privately in October that she felt like she was losing the war. She asked for help in fulfilling a new corporate engagement that she'd just been awarded. There were 6 leaders who wanted to get started immediately. I agreed instantly, switched roles to become an affiliate of HER company, and we planned to work with 3 clients apiece. Unfortunately, by November she asked me to work with all 6, as the next phase of treatment required her full attention and energy to get into a clinical trial. Everything was all buttoned up before Thanksgiving, since I was leaving on vacation the very next day. As I told her, "I've got this".

Karen suffered a hemorrhagic stroke the Saturday after Thanksgiving. After a few days in hospice care, she transitioned on November 30th. <https://www.davenportfamily.com/obituary/Karen-Elizabeth-StaibDuffy>. Her services were overflowing with love, photos, tears, hugs and remembered laughter.

I believe her soul knew the next phase of her journey was going to make it impossible to continue living in joy – for her and her family she so treasured. So it was time to go. I know love never dies and I believe to the depths of my soul that we're always still connected. I've felt her at my shoulder as I coach the 6 magnificent leaders she left me, thanking her for this final gift which is still so bittersweet.

So many lives have been lost in the past 2 years due to the pandemic. Others to gun violence, war and climate tragedies. I know everyone is experiencing never-ending loss and grief. And we're all just tired of it.

How do we accept all that has happened and all that continues? Do we "Just keep swimming" like Dory in 'Finding Nemo'? How can we move forward with joy, as Karen did?

Joy is a choice. It's a way of being that we can choose to adopt. For me, the first step is to work on resilience. Resilience is necessary for the energy and strength to make that choice, despite our grief.

One day and one baby step at a time.

Elene



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Quotes You Can Use

Ari Honarvar

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Upcoming Events

I'm thrilled to share our Women's Salon Series topic for February, "[Advancing All Women Through Female AllyShip](#)" with Sarah Alter. Sarah is the CEO of The Network of Executive Women, an organization comprised of female allies and advocates.

Learn how Female Allyship can support you professionally and advance your organization's DEI goals! Men, learn how to be an Ally to the women you care about.



Join me at the Union League Club of Chicago on Wednesday, February 9th at 5:30pm - either in-person or virtually. The price is \$45 which includes a drink and hors d'oeuvres. The virtual price is \$25.

Not a member of the Union League Club? No worries, you can still attend this special event!

[To Register](#)



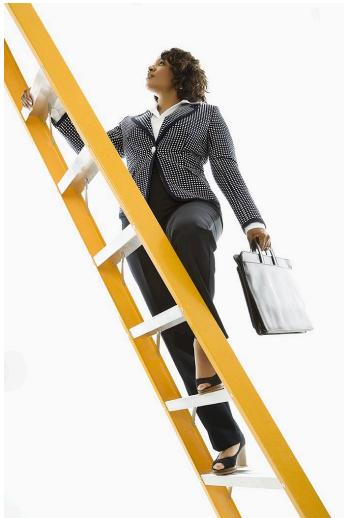
Leadership Learnings

The Hidden Perils of Unresolved Grief

Charles Dhanaraj and George Kohlrieser, *McKinsey Quarterly*

There's been an 'elephant in the room' for all of us during the pandemic. Everyone is grieving a loss of some sort. Leaders aren't therapists. Yet we can set the right tone, recognize grief exists, and support our people in moving from awareness to acceptance.

[Find Out More](#)



Career Management Corner

Working mom's 'Out of Office' message goes viral on LinkedIn

Cassandra Stone, *Motherly*

Got kids? Got an email auto-reply feature? Here's how one mom used her auto-reply to speak the truth, increase her resilience and encourage empathy for others.

[Find Out More](#)



Business Building Blocks

9 Ways I Built A Stronger Small Business in 20 Minutes or Less

Amanda Pressner Kreuser, *Inc.*

When we're overwhelmed, everything feels enormous and equally pressing. A tip to increase resilience is to have a list of things like

this that we can tackle in small pockets of time to increase our energy and move projects forward.

[Find Out More](#)



Enerpace News

We all know someone who gets their point across in a subtle, passive and sometimes sarcastic way. So, how do you respond?

Check out Elene's thoughts and others as well in the article, "How to Deal With A Passive Aggressive Coworker".

[Find Out More](#)



Enerpace Expert

The Importance of Mourning Losses (Even When They Seem Small)

Kavitha Cardoza and Clare Marie Schneider, *NPR*

Is there a loss in your life you feel like you "should" be over already? Something that feels so small in comparison to the tragedies of others? This expert terms this 'disenfranchised grief' and provides suggestions for healing and resilience.

[Find Out More](#)



Cool Tools

What *Can* You Do? Here are 50 Ideas To Get You Started

Christi Hegstad, *Blog at christihegstad.com*

When things feel hopeless, small baby steps can help your resilience. This is a great list of small things all of us can do, even when we feel drained and burned out.

[Find Out More](#)



Great Books

Resilience: It's Not About Bouncing Back: How Leaders and Organizations Can Build Resilience Before Disruption Hits

by Jennifer Eggers and Cynthia Barlow

Two consultants who have seen it all know that we don't bounce back to the same place after disruption. Where we started is gone. Using real examples, this book provides a framework to build resilient companies AND resilient leaders.

[Find Out More](#)



Quotes You Can Use

"Perhaps the most radical act of resistance in the face of adversity is to live joyfully."

Ari Honarvar - Iranian, Author, Poet, Activist, Musical Ambassador of Peace

Ready to learn more?

Go to www.enerpace.com to request

a complimentary consultation!

Questions? Contact us today 1-630-832-4399



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