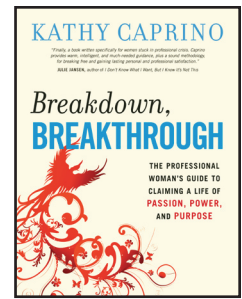


Breakdown, Breakthrough

An essential new book for professional women in crisis



“Clearly, we’re talking about a no-turning-back situation—a time that calls for a reckoning and reevaluation.”

**—Kathy Caprino
Breakdown, Breakthrough**

Are you a professional woman longing for a radical change?

You’re not alone.

Seven out of 10 working women report that they are facing a major turning point in their professional lives, according to Kathy Caprino, a Connecticut-based work-life expert and author of *Breakdown, Breakthrough: The Professional Woman’s Guide to Claiming a Life of Passion, Power, and Purpose* (Berrett-Koehler, \$16.95).

“Professional women, particularly those in their middle years, are at a critical juncture,” says Caprino, who, in conjunction with the Esteemed Woman Foundation, conducted a national research study—“Women Overcoming Professional Crisis: Finding New Meaning in Life and Work.” Caprino explains, “After devoting years to building successful careers, most of them feel that their professional lives and identities no longer work.”

In *Breakdown, Breakthrough*, Caprino reveals the key findings of her yearlong study—identifying the 12 common crises of professional women, including chronic health problems, failure to find work-life balance, and painful losses of the “real me.” She also shares 14 deeply personal stories—her own included—and shows how women are overcoming crises of personal and professional identity. Additionally, she introduces a hands-on holistic model for breaking down and breaking through: sensible mind-body-spirit solutions and specific advice and tips.

A professional crisis—or “breakdown”—is a wake-up call, warns Caprino, a trained psychotherapist and career and life coach. “It’s telling you that major change in life or work is required—now.”

The *good* news?

According to Caprino, if you let it, a breakdown can lead to something much better—a true “breakthrough” in how you work and live. She reminds women, however, that breaking through is a process—not a one-size-fits-all quick fix. Throughout that process, she recommends three steps: stepping back (to gain perspective); letting go (to do away with thoughts and actions that keep you stuck); and saying “Yes!” (to yourself and to developing beliefs and behaviors that open the door for change). Other advice and insights:

- ▶ Why a woman’s midlife is a time of reckoning and reevaluation
- ▶ The gender divide—how professional women break down in ways men don’t
- ▶ How to tell a “tough time” from a true professional crisis
- ▶ 12 warning signs of a work-life breakdown

— more —

- ▶ The four levels of breakdown for women—in relationship with themselves, others, the world, and their “higher selves”
- ▶ What “disempowerment” and “empowerment” really mean for working women
- ▶ The power of denial—why women resist the word “crisis” and how it hurts them
- ▶ How to stop making excuses—and start dealing with fears
- ▶ Breaking through—one step at a time

Bottom line: Nine out of 10 working women say they’re facing at least one of 12 common professional crises, and over half say they don’t know what to do about it. But after breakdown *can* come breakthrough. Caprino offers genuine inspiration and guidance for stepping back, letting go, and saying “Yes!”

Kathy Caprino, MA, is a work-life expert and author of *Breakdown, Breakthrough: The Professional Woman’s Guide to Claiming a Life of Passion, Power, and Purpose* (Berrett-Koehler, \$16.95). A national champion for professional women in crisis, Caprino is a trained psychotherapist, specialized career and life coach, and sought-after writer and speaker on women’s issues. She is founder and president of Ellia Communications, Inc. and a former corporate VP, who today openly shares her own story of breakdown—and breakthrough. Caprino lives in Connecticut with her husband and their two children. Contact her on the Web at elliacomunications.com or breakdownbreakthrough.com.

**BREAKDOWN,
BREAKTHROUGH:
The Professional Woman’s
Guide to Claiming a Life
of Passion, Power,
and Purpose**

Kathy Caprino

Berrett-Koehler Publishers

ISBN 978-1-57675-559-4

Paperback Original
216 pages

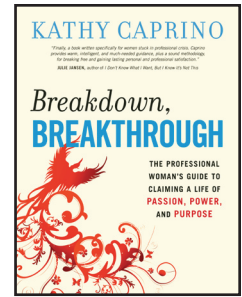
November 2008
\$16.95

Contact Patti Danos at (312) 335-1464 or pattidanos@earthlink.net.

© 2008 Kathy Caprino. All rights reserved.

Breakdown, Breakthrough

Identifying the common crises of professional women



“Crisis is a wake-up call that demands your attention and reveals that major change in life or work is required, and fast.”

**—Kathy Caprino
*Breakdown, Breakthrough***

“I can’t do this.” It’s the desperate cry—or negative mantra—of professional women everywhere. Working women are in crisis—reporting deep-down feelings of disempowerment in their relationships with themselves, others, the world, and their “higher selves.” In *Breakdown, Breakthrough* (Berrett-Koehler, \$16.95), author Kathy Caprino, a trained psychotherapist and work-life coach, identifies the 12 common crises of professional women. Among them:

▶ **Suffering from chronic health problems**

Failing health—a chronic illness or ailment—that won’t respond to treatment

The mantra: “I can’t resolve my health problems.”

▶ **Losing your “voice”**

Contending with a crippling inability to speak up—unable to be an advocate for yourself or others, for fear of criticism, rejection, or punishment

The mantra: “I can’t speak up without being punished.”

▶ **Facing abuse or mistreatment**

Being treated badly, even intolerably, at work—and choosing to stay

The mantra: “I can’t stop this cycle of mistreatment.”

▶ **Feeling trapped by financial fears**

Remaining in a negative situation solely because of money

The mantra: “I can’t get out of this financial trap.”

▶ **Wasting your real talents**

Realizing your work no longer fits and desperately wanting to use your natural talents and abilities

The mantra: “I can’t use my real talents.”

▶ **Struggling to balance life and work**

Trying—and failing—to balance it all, and feeling like you’re letting down who and what matters most

The mantra: “I can’t balance my life and work.”

▶ **Doing work you hate**

Longing to reconnect with the “real you”—and do work you love

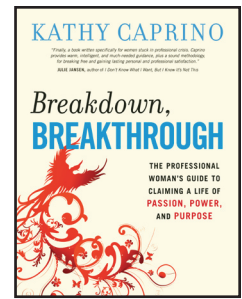
The mantra: “I can’t do work that I love.”

Contact Patti Danos at (312) 335-1464 or pattidanos@earthlink.net.

© 2008 Kathy Caprino. All rights reserved.

Breakdown, Breakthrough

Breaking through—one step at a time



“Breakdown represents a critical turning point that can, if you let it, lead to something much better.”

—Kathy Caprino
Breakdown, Breakthrough

A professional crisis is telling you that change must occur—*now*. That doesn't mean it will be easy—most likely, it won't—but, one step at a time, you can create your own breakthrough. Kathy Caprino, a career and life coach and author of *Breakdown, Breakthrough* (Berrett-Koehler, \$16.95), offers 10 tips for getting started:

▶ **Listen to your body.**

Your body is always communicating, but are you listening? From minor aches and pains to major forms of disease or malaise, pay attention to what an ailment may be saying to you—not just about your body, but your mind and spirit, too.

▶ **Heed your hunches.**

Your intuition, or inner voice, is an invaluable source of information. Start developing a keen awareness of the “dialogue” within you—even asking questions and waiting for the answers. Rarely, if ever, will your gut-level hunches lead you astray. Follow them!

▶ **Say “no” to an either-or life.**

Are you focusing on just one aspect of yourself? Don't do it. This is not an “either-or” life—it's an “everything” life. Reconnect with a talent or dimension of yourself that you love, but has gone by the wayside while you over-identified with a single role or function.

▶ **Speak up.**

Speaking the truth sounds simple, but it's not. Still, it's essential to learn to express yourself, or you'll feel stuck. Throughout the day, at home or work, ask yourself, “What do I want to say here?” Then take a risk and put it out there.

▶ **Embrace “good enough.”**

Many women strive, even slave, to be the best—driving themselves crazy in the process. If you're one of them, “practice” accepting good enough. Sooner or later, it will be just that—good enough!

▶ **Figure out what you're most afraid of.**

Get in the cage with your fears. One by one, take them on and face what you're *most* afraid of. How is it driving you, limiting you, and wearing you out? Deal with these issues once and for all, and you're sure to get unstuck.

▶ **Get real about money.**

Money is simply an energy form—with no particular qualities in and of itself—yet it can be the means to either limiting or expanding yourself. Take time to understand your own beliefs and history around money. (Are they healthy?) And even if it's not the ideal situation yet, find a way to balance what you *need* to do with what you *want* to do.

— more —

► **Stop making excuses.**

We're all good at making excuses for not acting on our dreams. Take a long, hard look at your own excuses, see them for what they are, and let them go.

► **Be open to angels.**

Odds are, there are a number of "angels" in your life—people who love and support you, believe in you, and will give you the gentle push you need to venture into the unknown. Be open to their help and act on it. You might be steeped in doubt or fear, but they're not.

► **Find a role model.**

You might already have a role model—from your own mother to Mother Teresa. If not, get serious about finding one. Look for someone who brings to light the qualities and successes you admire and aspire to, and whose story resonates.

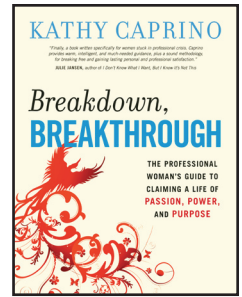
Finally, relax! *It's not all up to you.* There is a "higher power"—someone or something bigger than you—to help you reach for your dreams.

Contact Patti Danos at (312) 335-1464 or pattidanos@earthlink.net.

© 2008 Kathy Caprino. All rights reserved.

Breakdown, Breakthrough

Recognizing the breakdown—before the breakthrough



“Breakdown often seems to strike out of the blue, yet we rarely get to this point without warning signs along the way.”

**—Kathy Caprino
*Breakdown, Breakthrough***

How can you tell if you’re simply going through a “tough time” or experiencing a true professional crisis—a critical situation requiring real and lasting change? According to Kathy Caprino, a work-life expert and author of *Breakdown, Breakthrough* (Berrett-Koehler, \$16.95), here’s a start: If you check one or more of the statements below, it may be time to break down—and break through.

- I have chronic health problems that just won’t get better.
- I lost someone or something I loved, and I feel deeply changed because of it.
- In some ways, I don’t like or respect who I’ve become.
- It seems like every time I speak up and say what I think, I get smacked down.
- I am mistreated—even abused—at work, yet I remain there.
- I’ve had it with constantly proving myself—competing and winning at all costs.
- My financial situation has me trapped.
- I have talents I’m not using, but I long to use them.
- I want to do work that makes a difference and really means something, but I don’t know how.
- Things are falling apart in my life—all at once.
- Balancing my life and work feels impossible, and I know I can’t go on this way.
- I hate my work, but have no idea what else I can do.

Contact Patti Danos at (312) 335-1464 or pattidanos@earthlink.net.

© 2008 Kathy Caprino. All rights reserved.