

The Climb

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I'm at the bottom of an old mostly dry well. I'm stuck. I'm alone. I'm sad. I'm angry. I can't get out. I've been abandoned. I am completely separated from the world. Forgotten. Replaced. Unappreciated. Unloved.

Occasionally from time to time, I try to crawl out. I don't get very far. I've been down here for years now. I've lost all hope of ever getting better and having a real life. I contemplate disappearing and what a relief that would be. I long to end my misery and suffering and isolation. There doesn't seem to be any way to do it. I'm stuck. Withering day by day.

Karen's one to one support and her hypnotherapy audios have been with me now for many months. It is as if I called out from the bottom of the well and she heard me. She told me to hang on and that she would be back to help me. I cried out my gratitude. I waited. She came down to me. She appeared at the bottom of the well like a vision. She talked with me and really listened. She heard me in a way that no one else ever has in my entire life. Somehow in those moments she gave me enough to sustain me. She left and was gone. This began a new phase of her appearance and sustenance. She saved me.

She shared and taught me new ways of thinking and feeling about the world and about myself. Her words resonated and comforted me. I began to develop new thought patterns. I slept better. I lived better. I was still at the bottom of the well and yet I began to slowly accept and understand that I really would be okay.

Over the course of many months my visits and her appearance continued. Every facet of my inner strength and resilience was emerging and growing.

I started climbing.

Some days I only made it a few inches. Some days the walls were slippery and wet. Some days I climbed several feet up only to get stuck again. Or slide and fall. These fleeting moments seem both exhilarating and hopeful as well as devastating and disappointing. I remained at the bottom of the well for a good bit of time during this transition.

I continued climbing every day.

Sometimes multiple times a day. Even a moment's glimpse of hope was worth hours of struggle. This was not a pleasant time but better than before.

My visits with Karen continued and in addition to Karen and climbing, I called out more. I found two other women (health practitioners) who had helped others in similar circumstances with tools that could tangibly improve my predicament. Over the next few months,

I experimented with these new tools and my climbing definitely improved. It could have been better shoes and gloves to grip the walls on the climb up. It could have been the headlamp that showed me where to climb. I learned to spend more time and more care in climbing. These tools made all the difference.

One day I pushed harder and made it all the way to the top. It was thrilling and terrifying. The experience of daylight and opportunity was overwhelming.

- What would I do now?
- Where do I go?
- Who are my people?
- What happens next?

Karen has been with me during and after my time in the well. She didn't stay with me at the bottom but instead provided regular cherished visits.

She provided the means for me to recreate the inside of me that allowed me to believe that I could climb. I had to do the climbing myself. No one could do it for me.

Karen has always known this. And so did I.

My thinking shifted.

My abilities emerged.

My actions took hold.

I climbed.

And I got out of that well.

Suzanne, thank you for your openness and courage. Your story is a thread of connection reaching women around the world - reminding them they are not alone in that well.