

STIFEL

You Are Not Stuck: Facing Fears, Making Changes, and Achieving Dreams



Attendees of the recent WIN luncheon with author and yoga teacher Becky Vollmer learned about the importance of choice and overcoming fear when making life changes.

Stifel's [Women's Initiative Network \(WIN\)](#) recently hosted a luncheon featuring [Becky Vollmer](#), a personal empowerment writer and yoga teacher. Attendees gathered to learn about Becky's new book about becoming brave enough to create dreams, examining what's holding us back, and making concrete changes.

Stifel Health Promotion Specialist [Christa Stauder](#) played a significant role in bringing about this luncheon, so I spoke to her about her friendship with Becky, Becky's book, overcoming fears, and more.

An Empowering Luncheon

When Christa began her journey at Stifel and learned about WIN's mission to empower women, she immediately wanted

Becky, a good friend she met through yoga, to speak to Stifel's associates.

"So many people were struggling over the past couple of years, and I wanted to bring some inspiration back," she says. "Becky has had an incredible personal journey and is a powerful, relatable, and inspirational speaker."

In-person WIN luncheons had been canceled since the pandemic's start, so this luncheon was just the second in-person event in recent years.

"I was so proud to watch Becky address the women at Stifel. After all the work we put into ourselves, we were standing in the same room seeing our long-time mission of empowering others become a reality," Christa recalls. "She courageously shared her story and was able to connect with that room full of women. I was inspired, and many other attendees were too."

What made this WIN luncheon so impactful was that many (if not all) of the attendees, like Christa, could relate to Becky's experience of facing fear and making significant life changes.

Christa, specifically, had been working in a hospital setting for ten years when she realized that she didn't feel fulfilled in her career.

"I'm a single mom of three children, so deciding to get out of an unhealthy marriage, starting over with my children, finding my purpose, and being out of work filled me with fear," she recalls. "I decided to pursue a degree in Health Science emphasizing health and wellness. I accepted a job in March of 2020, and then the world shut down a week later," she recalls. "I found myself jobless with three children."

With this experience in mind, Christa mentions one piece of advice that Becky shared.

"The opposite of fear isn't just courage. It's choice. And I want every woman to remember that she always has a voice, and she always has a choice."

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Becky's strong belief in the power of choice has been a throughline in her life, and it led to her founding [You Are Not Stuck](#).

In her own words, "Change starts with acknowledging that the life we're living doesn't align with the life we want. From there, it's about letting go of fear and getting off autopilot. We must remember that we all have choices. We just have to be brave enough to make them."

So, after studying journalism and serving as co-chair of a global sustainability practice group at a large PR firm in St. Louis, Becky began hosting workshops and retreats to empower people to make changes, let go of fear, and pursue their dreams. Then, in 2014, she had the idea to write a book.

"She wrote *You Are Not Stuck* to help anyone who feels trapped or choiceless become empowered to go after the life they most deeply desire and to provide a process for determining what life looks like," Christa says.

However, nurturing a book from seed to fruit wasn't easy. After starting a proposal in 2014, Becky began to pitch to literary agents in 2015.

"When someone expressed interest, I did what many tender-hearted, doubt-filled, depressed humans might do: a brief happy dance with a clap on my own back, and then I walked straight over to my bed, crawled in, and drew the covers over my head," Becky shared during the luncheon. "Even when I emerged, this

book remained in a metaphorical space for years as I divorced, moved, and remarried, all the while saturated with the frustration that I didn't have it in me to move this forward."

After many years of hard work, *You Are Not Stuck* will hit the shelves in January of 2023. But in the meantime, Stifel associates can find empowerment and support within each other.

"Often, we learn and find inspiration from others' journeys and stories," Christa says. "So, having these empowerment support groups such as WIN led by female associates modeling healthy leadership helps build a support system from within. Empowerment is a form of self-love, and support groups are an opportunity for women who have done the inward work and found their power through self-love to mentor other women."

"I, for example, would often find myself paralyzed by the fear of the unknown, the negative self-talk, and the thoughts of failure, but we grow and learn in the most uncomfortable moments of life," she adds. "These moments – and events like this luncheon with Becky – empower us to reflect and make the necessary changes so, as Becky says, we don't remain stuck. I'm grateful for the hard moments. If I didn't have these moments of fear, I wouldn't have the opportunity for growth and the opportunity to help others. I wouldn't be sitting here today talking to you."

Attendees who would like to learn more about Stifel are welcome to visit St. Louis for a home office visit. This in-person, all-day event would provide a deeper look at how Stifel can help advisors transition and grow their business.



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WOMEN'S INITIATIVE
NETWORK