

POINTS OF COURAGE: EPISODE 05

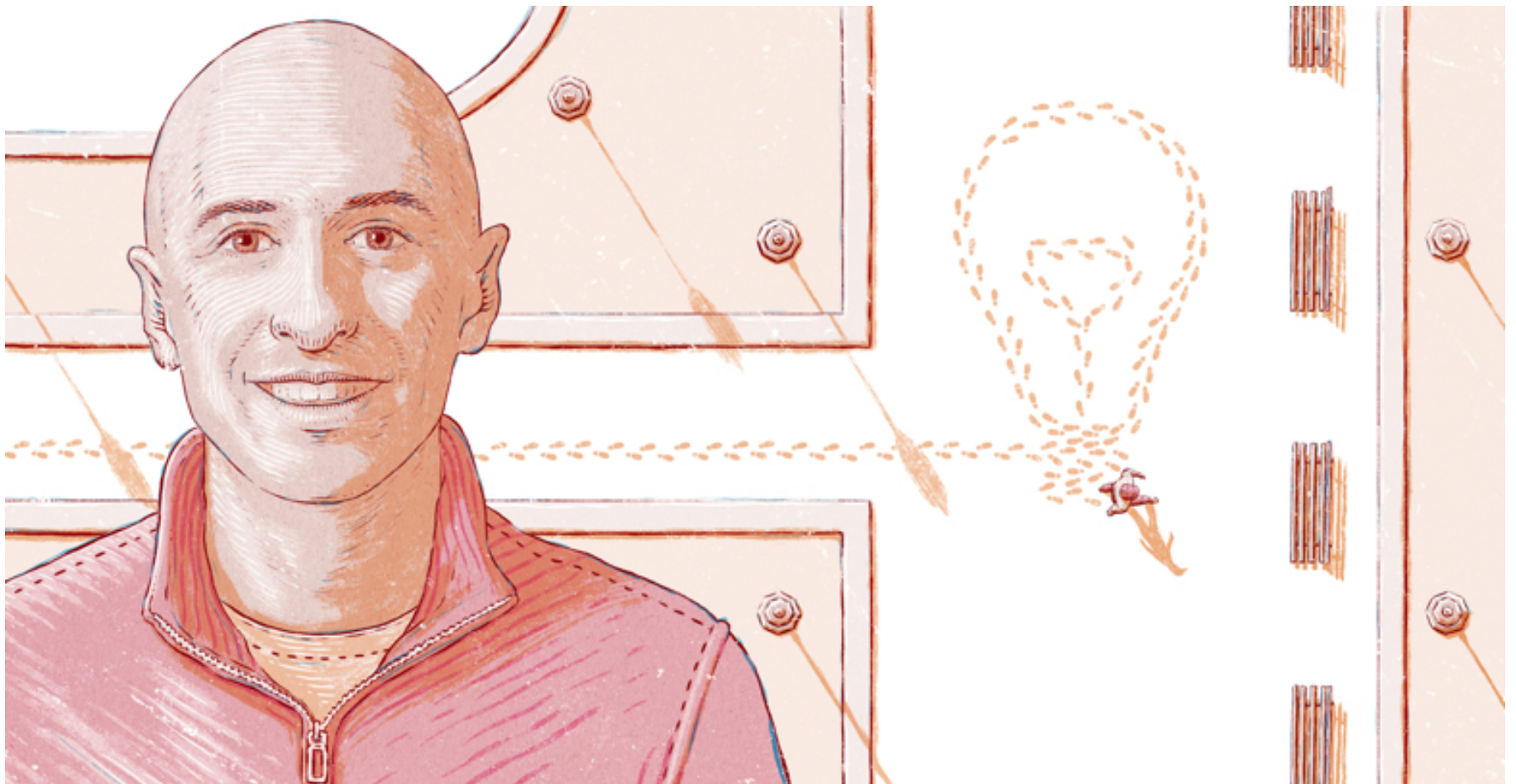
PeerAspect

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POINTS OF COURAGE: ARTICLE

Live in the Moment, Fail Toward Success

Instead of stopping in his tracks, Scott pushed on and made a life change that brought him true professional success and satisfaction.



Scott Kaufman always wanted to run his own business. There was only one thing getting in the way— his “Plan B” was pretty amazing. By his late 30s, Kaufman had a great job at an international climate change company and had just obtained his Ph.D. in environmental engineering. Then, in 2011, things took an unexpected turn; he was diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease.

News that would have stopped others in their tracks somehow had the power to catapult Kaufman forward. “At first I thought my life was over,” says Kaufman. “But Parkinson’s is a slow-progressing disease, and I realized that I still had a life to live.”

Faced with uncertainty, Kaufman suddenly had the courage to start his own business. He quit his job, got rid of what wouldn't fit in a rental car, and left his home in Brooklyn. He moved to Boston to be closer to PeerAspect's cofounder, Sujeesh Krishnan. Today, Kaufman is the cofounder and CEO of PeerAspect, a software and services firm that helps companies collect data needed for compliance, sustainability, and other critical programs.

But his path to success in the startup world wasn't as straightforward as it had been in the corporate world. The original business model for PeerAspect didn't take off.

Despite the initial setback, PeerAspect had created software that led to their second—and winning—business model based on data collection and management. This time Kaufman and Krishnan were onto something. They landed a lucrative contract with a gas and oil company.

“We learned that you can fail in a constructive way,” says Kaufman, imparting a piece of advice he holds dear.

From the beginning, Kaufman received a lot of advice from friends and business peers on how to be a successful entrepreneur. “Not all of it stands out,” he says. “To me, what's most important is that you feel supported. That matters more than what people actually say.”

Business colleagues and partners have also helped Kaufman take on new risks and challenges. When you factor in all the day-to-day stressors of being an entrepreneur, simply having **business liability insurance** with a partner like Hiscox gives you one less thing to worry about.

To counter the pressure of running his own business, Kaufman leans on taking long walks. “I often find myself thinking about things at work that I didn't even know were an issue. Then, by the time the walk is over, I've solved them.”

Kaufman sees expansion on PeerAspect's horizon. “There's a tremendous need for data,” he says. “All companies need it in different ways, and there are no human-friendly ways to get it. We're trying to build a data solution that's friendly for people to use, and to work with us on.”

To help steer PeerAspect towards growth, Kaufman will continue to rely on what's worked thus far. “It's about focusing on the present moment,” he says. “And when things don't work, knowing there will be other chances. If you can remember that when you're in the process, it makes it much easier.”

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