

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 31.

Welcome to *The Empowered Principal Podcast*, a not so typical, educational resource that will teach you how to gain control of your career and get emotionally fit to lead your school and your life with joy, by refining your most powerful tool: your mind. Here's your host, certified life coach, Angela Kelly Robeck.

Hello, my fellow principals. How are you doing today? I am so good. I have to tell you that I wrote this podcast on June 1st when I was on a plane heading to New York City and then on to DC. So the New York City trip was purely for pleasure and the DC trip was purely for business.

Mitch and I went to New York City and it was our first trip alone. Can you believe this? We have been together for almost ten years and all of our travel has been with either family or friends. We had Alex with us growing up, so he was always with us. We never left him behind. And if we didn't have him for some reason, we were with other friends because we love to be with our friends.

So first trip alone, and with Alex in college now, we have this new flexibility in our life. He is away and it's just the two of us and we just decided, you know what – Mitch has never been to Manhattan. He wanted to see Billy Joel perform and so for his birthday, I bought him tickets to see Billy at Madison Square Garden. We were so excited.

We had so much fun. We spent three glorious days together and it was such a blast. And as I was writing this podcast, I was thinking to myself, man, I need to pinch myself sometimes when I think about the life I now lead.

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

I'm living exactly the dream life I said I wanted for years. My work location is independent. I have a very flexible schedule and I'm able to come and go as I please while earning a living doing something that I absolutely love. Two or three years ago, I did not even think this was possible.

I wanted to believe it was possible, but I certainly had my doubts. Yet here I am today, living completely different than I did just a few years ago when I was a school leader. When I think back to that lifestyle, that lifestyle included wake up, let the dog out, drag myself to work, be stressed all day, come home exhausted, have a glass or two of wine to kind of unwind and numb myself from the long day only to catch up on emails. And then usually I passed out around nine or ten o'clock before I could even finish working.

This lifestyle, on the other hand, includes waking up when my body is ready, getting to work out, being able to choose what I eat and when, go to the bathroom when I want – and teachers, you know what I'm talking about. Let's see, I get to schedule my work when it suits me best, which is definitely during the week and in the mornings. I'm not a night person at all. My brain turns off around five or six o'clock, sometimes seven.

But I work in the mornings, I record this podcast, I love it so much, and I still have time to schedule in for reading and learning and listening to other people's podcasts and spending time with my family and friends. And I just sometimes am amazed at myself that I created this life. How is a change this dramatic even possible?

I've thought about this because it is the magic question and I finally came up with the magic answer. And I can tell you in one word, that answer is coaching.

Let me share a true story that happened on the day that I wrote this podcast because it does relate. Just bear with me here and you'll see what

[The Empowered Principal Podcast](#) with Angela Kelly

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

I'm talking about. So on the day I wrote this podcast was the last day of school for my friends in my former school district. And one of my closest and dearest friends was moving to the east coast. She's now there.

A long-standing tradition at my school site for departing staff members is to take a popular song that that person really likes and rewrite the words to the song as a goodbye song for them. So the entire staff gets a copy of the newly written words, we gather around and we surprise this person by singing this song to them and then we give them a little farewell basket of goodies to send them on their way and wish them well.

It's a very touching tradition and there's rarely a dry eye in the room. For example, on the last day of my principalship, my staff rewrote the song Don't Stop Believin' by Journey. I love Journey. I actually chose a Journey song to walk in to for my wedding. They're one of my favorite bands and that song, Don't Stop Believin' is just everything that I believe in, which is never stop believing in yourself and other people.

Anyway, they rewrote that song and it was so awesome and when I hear it on the radio today, I still think of that moment. And on this day, it was my friend Emily's last day and she is a country girl at heart, born and raised in Texas. So we rewrote the song Chicken Fried by the Zac Brown Band for her.

Oh my gosh, you guys, it was so sad and I would not have missed it for the world. I had to wake up at 5am to pack for my flight to New York and DC and then drive over the hill from Santa Cruz over to Mountain View in order to make it to the school on time in order for the song performance, which was at 8am; early.

So I arrived in the area early to make sure that I wouldn't miss it and I stopped at a nearby coffee shop. I ran into a former parent, which is no surprise because this coffee shop is frequented by many of the school

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

families around the neighborhood, so it was kind of fun. But this particular parent had been the president of my school site council when I was a leader at this site.

He and I worked really closely together and we often would have these long discussions about the educational system and we would say to each other, “Wow, if you had a magic wand, oh the changes we would make in the world of education.” It was so good to see him again.

He asked me how the coaching business was going and I told him about the podcast and my upcoming book and my amazing clients and how my vision is to bring emotional fitness and resiliency to all the school leaders and staff members and eventually all the parents and kids. Like, I want to do it all. I want to help every human being I can on this earth feel better about their lives and their capabilities.

He was so excited to see me and hear about the work, yet I could see he didn't really understand exactly what it is that I do, which I get. He said this comment to me, and I'm definitely paraphrasing it to the best of my ability. He said, “I think that everyone on the planet needs a life coach. We all need help with life from time to time. It's just that not many people are willing to spend the money on it. I mean, after all, if you're going to buy something, you really want a guarantee. So if people could get a complete guarantee that their life would change for the better before they invested the money in coaching, then they'd probably do it.”

And I was listening to him and I found it fascinating to listen to someone's perspective outside of the coaching world about investing in coaching because I work now with fellow coaches and we sometimes get in our bubble, just like we do as educators. We get in our education bubble when we're talking and everything that we talk about makes sense to us because we're in it every day. The same holds true as a coach. I'm in it every day. I

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

believe in it so much. Who would anybody not invest in coaching is what my brain wants to think.

But I was reminded that not everybody understands or believes in the power of coaching. Even someone as open-minded and willing to understand as this parent was, I noticed he was still somewhat apprehensive about having a coach or what paying a coach provides you. And this interaction got me thinking about what holds people back from trying something new and different in their lives and why coaching feels so scary and what eventually enticed me to invest in coaching for the first time.

I feel like this topic is so pertinent because people want to change. They want to feel better. They want to do different things or try different things. They want to hone their skills or take a look at their characteristics, but they don't know how or they're not sure or they're afraid to. And I share these stories with you to invite you to consider the possibilities that your life contains if only you dream it and allow it to take place.

So first of all, what holds people back? Number one, they don't understand what coaching entails and they're concerned about committing to something they don't understand or know or like or trust.

So a lack of information is very common when we are considering some kind of an investment in our time or in our money and the easiest solution is to simply get the information you need. So if you're intrigued about something you want to do but you don't yet know how to do it or you don't yet have it, ask questions. Research the topic. Talk to people who have already done it. Learn as much as you can about whatever it is you are considering.

Another thing that holds people back is that they don't believe they will get a return on their investment. Their brain comes up with thoughts like what if

[The Empowered Principal Podcast](#) with Angela Kelly

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

I spend \$10,000 on a coaching program and I don't get the results I want. Boom, fear takes in, fight or flight hits and they flee. The problem with that is that if you don't ask or research or investigate what a return might look like or what your goals are worth to you, you'll be back to square one.

So you are definitely not going to get the results that you want if you don't invest in them and don't try for them. It's kind of funny, but it's true; our brains do that to us. It keeps us in this false sense of security, but in reality, we're not getting what we want by not trying.

Another reason that people hold back is that they're afraid that having a coach or having support or asking for help is a sign of weakness. We're so worried, you guys, that people will judge or make fun of us or think that you're in some kind of therapy. And this stems from a concern of what other people will think about us in general.

Our greatest fear is judgment and it's so significant that we're often unaware that that fear is in motion and it holds us back. And because it is part of the human psyche to judge, we're not only worried about what other people are saying about us, we're worried about judging ourselves.

So we don't want to be perceived as weak and we are worried that people will judge us, therefore we hold ourselves back. And last but not least, another reason we hold our self back are money blocks. This is something I have really been thinking a lot about lately and I'm going to share with you in a future podcast how to bust through some money blocks, because we believe that we must make money in a certain way. We believe all these things about money and it really holds us back from either spending money on things we value or staying in jobs because we believe that we need to make money in a particular way.

The belief systems we have about money has us so fearful about how we spend and how we create money. We also don't want to be judged

[The Empowered Principal Podcast](#) with Angela Kelly

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

because we don't want to be perceived as selfish or lavish or excessive. We don't want to spend the money on something because we're afraid that people might view us as being too self-indulgent.

If you think about what money is, money is a tool. It's an exchange of energy and we use it to provide ourselves value. Money is a tool. It's an exchange of value. I pay \$100 for a pair of shoes. I pay full price for those shoes because I expect that those shoes are going to give me \$100 worth of value. They're going to be comfortable on my feet. They're going to take me where I need to go. They're going to protect my feet. They're going to look great with my outfit. Whatever it is I'm buying them for, I believe that that exchange of money for that product is of equal value or very, very close.

If we believe that we will get value out of what we buy, we're very happy to spend our money. However, if we're worried that we will not get the value out of what we buy, we're hesitant to spend our money. And I promise you, I'm going to do an entire podcast on this because it's so powerful and it drives many of the decisions we make in our life.

But for now, I just want you to be aware that you have money blocks, which are just money beliefs, that you believe to be true that definitely are in the driver's seat when it comes to investing in yourself or in anything for that matter.

Another question I get a lot from prospective clients is why does coaching feel so scary? Why do I not want to jump in and do it? So for those who are interested in hiring a coach or you're intrigued at the idea of having a coach, you're most likely going to have some fears arise as to what is involved with coaching. And that's very legitimate.

You should ask those questions. The questions that come up most often for me are things like what exactly happens during a coaching session? How

[The Empowered Principal Podcast](#) with Angela Kelly

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

much time do I need to set aside? Will there be any homework? What do I talk about? How do you help people over the phone? And will anybody else know?

Anything we try for the first time comes with a certain level of uncertainty. That's to be expected. As humans, we are wired to crave certainty. We want to know what to expect and have some level of consistency in our lives because that creates a sense of safety and peace for us, right.

But on the other hand, we also seek out uncertainty. We crave having some surprise and adventure and spontaneity in our lives. Some more than others, I realize, but all of us at some level want the anticipation of something new because it brings excitement, curiosity and joy into our lives.

Uncertainty is the spice of life. It's how all things were invented. We need to explore things in the world that make us feel a little bit uncertain. It's okay. coaching is most definitely going to feel uncertain at times, especially in the beginning, and that's okay.

Coaching can also feel scary because of what it might bring up for us. The reason many people do not want to hire a coach is because they are worried about unveiling problems in their life. And the reason people hire a coach is because they have a problem that they want to solve, but what they don't realize is that the problem is usually not the problem.

So in my client's cases, they don't like the way they're feeling about their jobs as a school leader and they want to feel better. What I do is I help them see what's causing that emotional response to their job and show them how they can gain control over their emotions so that they can learn to manage their feelings and be in control of feeling better.

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

And this process usually brings up some deeper emotional wounds to the surface and we must acknowledge those and process those so that they can heal. This process can be highly uncomfortable and many people prefer not to go there.

Let me be clear here; coaching is not therapy. It's not about going back to the past and digging up old wounds and traumas. It's designed to help people feel better than they already do right now and help them move forward in their lives and expedite transformation. Sometimes this process does bring up negative thoughts and emotions from the past, but the goal is focused on the future.

So we're shifting to thoughts that feel better so one can let go of past pain. We don't sit around and talk about the past pain; we are forward focused in our future thinking, okay. I think what frightens people the most about coaching is being vulnerable. Being coached requires you to open up, share thoughts that hold true for you and allow someone to see the real you, including the parts of you that you hide from yourself and others.

But what you'll realize is that in order to get results from coaching, you must be willing to be honest with yourself and your coach. Staying on the surface will not get you the results you paid for.

Look, I've had clients who sign up, but then they avoid our coaching sessions at all costs. I've even had one client pay me in full and then only show up to a few calls. The crazy thing about that is that she emailed me quite a while later saying that she hated the calls in the moment but they made her stop and think about what she really wanted in her life.

And from just the few calls we did have, she completely changed the way that she approached her business, she improved her relationship with her husband and she started home schooling her children. She is ridiculously

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

happy and successful with her life and she's doing exactly what she wants to in her business. She is such a coaching success story.

So in order to experience true transformation, a person must be willing to question their beliefs without self-judgment and lovingly forgive themselves and take actions that require courage in the face of their fears. If coaching is so awful, who would anybody do it? That is a very good question, my friend.

I cannot tell you why you should consider hiring a coach. And to be honest with you, you don't need a coach. Nobody needs a coach. But what I can tell you is how I got started and what prompted me to invest in myself and in my life and get a private coach. My guess is that my reason is pretty similar to most other people who have coaches and the simple reason was this; I wanted to change in my life much more than I wanted to stay comfortable.

I desired so much in my life that I was willing to do anything it took to have it, even in spite of my fears. I wanted that solution to my problem and I was willing to pay for it even when I was freaking out about the cost. I wanted to live from a mindset of abundance rather than from a mindset of scarcity.

I was ready to commit to the work and I was willing to feel the emotions that came with that commitment. People make significant changes for one of two reasons; out of inspiration or desperation, and I was desperate for a change. I knew I could not go on living miserably for the rest of my life.

I felt that I was being called to serve others in a very different way. I did not have the skill sets to change my mind on my own and I searched until I found people who do what I wanted to do. I became so inspired by those people who took the leap of faith that I decided my happiness was worth any investment I could make.

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

The risk of trying coaching as a solution was so worth my investment. It was one of the scariest things I've done and one of the best things I've done. And I do not say these things to sell you on coaching, I'm not here to sell coaching, I'm here to provide a service of love and gratitude and possibility.

Coaching may or may not be for you, but I felt really compelled to share this with you in the event that you had the same questions and fears that my school-site president had, that I had when I was entering into the coaching world and I'm sharing this for those who are desperate to solve their problems and who are inspired to make changes in their life for the better but they just need a hand to help them along the way.

My mission is to bring emotional fitness and awareness to our educational system. I want to teach by sharing the tools and strategies that I've learned so that I can help you help other people. We are all on this planet to share our knowledge and talents with one another. Every service or product that we buy is an exchange of knowledge and talent and value.

I happily pay for spa treatments because the ladies who provide this service have the knowledge and talent that I don't have. I happily pay for my iPhone because I don't have the knowledge and talent to build my own phone and connect it to the internet. That's crazy sauce. I happily pay for my iPhone.

All of us are here to share our talents with one another. If you are someone who has been wanting to expand your ability to share your knowledge and talents with those you're called to serve, coaching is simply one way to get you there.

For me, coaching is empowerment. May you be the most empowered version of yourself you can be. Have an amazing week. I'll talk with you next time. Take care, bye-bye.

[The Empowered Principal Podcast](#) with Angela Kelly

Ep #31: Why I Invest in Coaching

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