

Ep #34: Go All In



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 34.

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.

Hi, everybody. How are you? How's it going? For those of you who are already back in session and you have students on campus, I hope those first days together were really amazing. And for those of you who are still in planning and preparing mode, I hope you listen to episode 32, where we talked about wrapping our head around the upcoming year.

In today's episode, we're going to dive deeper into going all-in this year and what it means to go all-in. I'm going to start with a summary of a story about my son. This situation just came up over the last few days and it's such a powerful lesson that it started me thinking about what it really means to go all-in and why we waver from being fully in on something.

And interestingly, this has come up in my mastermind group quite often and each of us have been sharing what we personally believe it means to go all-in. and so I thought it would be appropriate to share this as a podcast and talk about what you think going all-in means, why we go all-in, why we don't go all-in and what we can do to get ourselves to go all-in.

Okay, so three days prior to this recording, we were at a Tour de France brunch at one of Alex's best friend's family homes. We've been good friends with this family for a long time. I think the boys met when they were in the third grade. We were there along with several other friends, including two of Alex's best buddies. These two men, these young men, planned a trip to Europe and they've been planning this trip for a couple of months.

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And actually, right when they got the idea to plan it, they did invite Alex to come along.

Alex thought it over but decided at the time not to go with them because originally, he believed the thought that he did not have the money to go. So he was feeling sad about it. He brought it up a couple of times to me, but he was committed to not going because he really believed the thought that he did not have the money to go.

Now, fast forward to the brunch, the three of these guys were checking out their phones, you know, last minute deals on flights to Paris, just in case something might pop up. Well, guess what – of course, a cheap flight popped up and they were able to get a flight one way to Paris for whatever flight they were looking for and then he actually found another one way that was on the exact same flight, return flight coming homebound, as the boys were already scheduled on.

So Alex got pretty excited about it and they started talking and the boys were really, really pushing him and encouraging him. They're like, you're our best friend, you have to be here and make these memories with us. But Alex was still very unsure because when he commits to something, he fully commits. He goes all-in.

And the more that they talked and the more that they encouraged him to go, he started shifting his thinking. And so he asked us if he could have a conversation. So Mitch and I stepped out and we listened to his story, we listened to his beliefs, and these are the thoughts I saw coming up for him.

He was saying things like, "I shouldn't go because I didn't help plan the trip and if I even consider going, I'm going to have to ask if I can take time off of work. I probably won't get the time off." Or, "I planned on working these two weeks and now I'm going to make less money than I would have if I would just stay home and work. I really don't have the money to go, but I do really

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want to go. If I don't go, I'll miss out on this opportunity. What will people think of me if I go? What will my friends think of me if I don't go? Mom and dad, what should I do?" was the final question.

So, because we don't make decisions for him, we spent a couple of hours talking and coaching on this whole situation. And this kid's been around me as a coach for quite a long time, so he's pretty proficient at self-coaching and he will now ask for the coaching perspective. It's so great. He doesn't want me to be mom, he wants me to be his coach and I love that, but he'll specify when I'm supposed to shift gears.

So anyway, we came to the conclusion as a family that whatever he was going to decide, he needed to go all-in. So what we said to him was, "If you decide to go on the trip, go all-in on that decision. And if you decide not to go on the trip, go all-in on that decision. Pick one decision and choose to love that decision. Own that decision 100% and approach the situation from a place of fully owning your decision."

It was so powerful for him to think about. I observed this entire process he went through and related it to making decisions about our educational career path, because I know a lot of us spend time and energy not going all-in or having both feet in different quadrants of our lives.

So as I observed Alex going through the process, I was like, oh, I see how this connects to my clients who are confused about what to do with their professional lives. So number one, this is what Alex had to do. He had to lean into the feelings.

He had to decide, from a place of feeling, what decision he wanted to make. And here's the ironic thing – and I'm going to get a little deep here for a minute, so hand with me – there are so many people who say they don't know what to do, they can't make a decision, they can't decide, and

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they can't differentiate between what they should do and what they shouldn't do.

And I thought about this and why does this happen to people, and the reason it happens to us is because it's really difficult to differentiate what a yes feels like and what a no feels like in our bodies. It's important to know and understand that there is a difference between those feelings of anticipation, excitement, and fear when your mind is anxious but excited and ready to dive into something versus the, oh my god, how am I going to make it through another school year? How can I do this? I cannot see myself doing this forever – that sinking feeling that comes when you are in a job that is out of alignment with your essential self.

These emotions can be challenging to distinguish because they feel the same in your body. How tricky is that? The emotional vibrations that occur when you're in danger's way are the same emotional vibrations that happen when you're really excited because adrenaline is released from your adrenal glands and that's triggered by your nervous system. So when you feel nervous or anxiety, you trigger your nervous system, that triggers your adrenaline glands. The adrenaline rushes into your bloodstream and causes your organs to respond, and those are the vibrations you feel.

You feel that rapid heartbeat, the shortness of breath, the sweaty palms, the increase in blood pressure, those knots in your stomach. You know those feelings? Those body experiences are the same intense vibrations when it's a no versus a yes, so it makes it really confusing as to whether something should be labeled as an exciting adventure or a dangerous life-threatening situation.

That's crazy, right? So here are some of the ways that I differentiate between a yes and a no. Fear and anxiety are some of the emotions that tell us no. When you're trying to decide a big decision, such as whether or not to stay in your job, and your body is vibrating from those intense

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emotions, it can feel like just choosing the status quo is the best choice. And I've thought about this, why would feeling bad – if you're already feeling bad – why would it be okay to continue choosing that?

But what I realize is that what happens with us is that when a situation doesn't truly resonate with us but that we've been in that situation for a long time, our minds are comfortable with the situation and they tell us that it's normal to feel this way; that it's just acceptable, that it's just the norm, so we can carry on and continue in the status quo.

So when I think back to Alex, he was telling himself that he'd already said no and that no should be his final answer. And now, while on the one hand I really commended him for his commitment to his prior decision and his commitment to his employer, and I could also see that he was kind of brewing on the fact that the situation had changed because what kept him from saying yes in the beginning was the price of the flights. And that situation had changed, so it shifted him a little bit. It got him thinking in a different way.

Also, he had been earning money all throughout the summer and realized that he had more money than he first thought, which is really he had more money than when he first made the decision. So he felt like saying no was the right thing to do because it's what his brain and body felt were comfortable; it's what he had already committed to, so his brain was like, well this is what we expected. We don't like change, therefore, it's better just to stay with what we decided and stick to it and not make any new decisions. And also, no further action would be required, right.

So why kick into high gear and have to plan an entire trip abroad in three days? That seems crazy and the brain's just like, no, I'd rather go with the discomfort of not being able to go than having to kick into high gear. The same holds true in your career. Think about this, even though your essential self might be trying to get your attention through your mind, your

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emotions and your body vibrations, it can feel like just another day of the grind.

So here are some of the ways that our brain tries to get your attention by saying, no this isn't in alignment with who I am, who I want to be. You find yourself numbing or buffering as relaxation activities. You're trying to disengage from your life. Perhaps you feel tired, sick, or you catch colds often. You accidentally forget things. You make silly mistakes. You don't want to talk about it anymore. You want to push it away and ignore it, yet you don't really think about anything else. You don't have much else to talk about. You feel stuck.

You can't imagine doing this job forever, but you're not sure what else you would do or the job just doesn't jazz you on a regular basis. And I know, every job has its highs and lows, but I mean that dullness that comes with – it's not a super-high, it's not a super-low, it's just kind of a flat line.

So I love this about Martha Beck. This is what she says. She used to tell us, if it feels like somebody is feeding you rotten eggs and every day you're coming to work and they're telling you, eat the rotten eggs, eat the rotten eggs, that's different than loving your job and having to do something you dislike within a job you love.

If someone's feeding you the rotten eggs, it's time to decide and take different action, okay. so think about where you are in your career, think about the vibrations you feel on a regular basis. The difference between the vibrations of anxiety and anticipation from a no or a yes is there's a heaviness to the no.

It feels like there's a weight on your chest, on your shoulders, in your mind, and that is a clue that the vibration you're experiencing is trying to tell you that you're not following the path that you could have so much more joy if you chose something different.

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Okay, so let's shift gears and talk about the difference between the no and the yes. So that anxiety anticipation also are emotions that tell you yes. There is a certain type of emotional vibration that occurs in our bodies when we are about to experience something new or exhilarating.

When we say we can't wait for something to happen because we're so excited for it to occur, what we are referencing in that phrase are the high levels of vibration that are happening in our bodies. We truly can always wait, but we use this phrase to express the anticipation and excitement of our anticipation.

This type of emotion is a pretty obvious choice that indicates we are on the path that aligns with our essential self. We love this feeling as humans. It's a high for us and we seek it out. We want to feel it really often. It feels really good to feel in alignment. And it is through these emotional vibrations that we determine if we are heading in the best direction for us.

And I can tell you specific times when it happened to me. I felt it when I moved to California. I felt it when I had Alex. I felt it when I left education to become a coach and I felt it most recently when I married Mitch. But with that said, these vibrations can become so intense sometimes that they are highly uncomfortable and you actually want them to stop.

They can hold us back in our lives if we don't recognize them as a yes. With a strong yes, with something that scares us but it's a yes, there's almost always a really high level of fear that's involved. That fear tends to be future-focused and it predominantly comes in the form of questions, like what if? What's going to happen if? What if I don't? What will I do if? What if I fail? What if I can't produce? What if I made a mistake? What if I regret my decision?

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Those what-ifs, they are always future-focused. They also can be a fear of the past or letting go of your comfort zone that is about to become your past. That is the fear of regret. You don't want that.

So, how to tell if the vibrations are a yes – you spend time thinking about what a yes would look and feel like. You smile thinking about the possibility, even though you're in your comfort zone, the forward thinking makes you smile. You find yourself wanting to talk about the situation, ponder over it and spend your energy thinking about it. Your reasons for no are based on abstract fears and all of the should have, could have, would have, and you know those are a telltale sign of why you are saying no to yourself when you want to say yes.

Your energy rises upon your thoughts around saying yes and, I find this one super-cool, you find the universe aligning for you to say yes. If you're finding these types of little symptoms or little signs that you're leaning towards yes, when these are all in play, it's time for you to decide and take forward action.

Now, if it's a yes, you need to take the leap of faith, despite all the social self-criticisms and questioning that will happen. People are going to say to you, that is selfish, you shouldn't do things at the last minute, you don't have things in place, how can you do this? They're also going to say things like, it doesn't make sense, we've never done it this way before, I don't think that's a good idea.

If your answer is a no, you're also going to have to take a leap of faith despite all the social self-criticisms and questionings that are going to come up. It's the same thing; no matter what you decide, these questions will come up to you. Why would you do that? That's crazy. What are you going to do? I'd never do that. You should do this instead.

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Only you, my friend, can decide if a decision for you is a yes or a no. so, once you've read your body compass, you have to decide. Decide means to cut off all other options. You're going all-in, and going all-in is about discontinuing to look at other options.

You're not going to look for another solution, you're not going to question the decision you choose; you're going to take action on the solution and the approach you decided upon because doubt impedes execution. It stalls you. When you decide, you look completely forward and let the natural next step guide the way. You ask yourself, what is the next step in this approach, and then commit-in all the way.

You also need to be fully present. Don't ruin the moment that you decided to be in by allowing your thoughts to weigh you down. So I think about Alex. I don't want Alex going to Europe and then feeling guilty for choosing to go to Europe the entire time he's there. What you decided is already now in the past. Stop letting those thoughts about the past ruin the present.

When you have thoughts of I should have or I shouldn't have, those are signs you're thinking about past options. Let those go. Being in the moment means you're taking everything in all around you with as many of your senses as possible. Smell all the smells, see all the sights, try the new foods, hear the new music and conversation and touch the world all around you. Laugh with your friends, give them hugs, to remind you of these special moments and take lots of selfies, I told him.

So when you are in the moment of your decisions at work, you are at your most empowered state. Choose to approach your situation with courage, confidence, and high energy. When you make a decision at work, whether you're in your job making small decisions, go all-in on those decisions.

When you're making huge decisions about your job and your career, go all-in on those decisions. If you choose to stay, stay and be all-in. if you

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choose it's no longer serving you to be in that position, go all-in and go all-out, but don't go back and forth with your questioning and your regrets and your doubts. That will just impede your life. It will just stop you in your tracks.

So choose to be empowered, choose to approach your situation with all you've got because by doing that, you are choosing to believe that your decision was an excellent one for you. And just as a friendly reminder, there are no mistakes in your decisions. You can change your decision at any time, but when you decide to do something, go all-in with that decision for as long as you can until it's clear to you and you've made a conscious decision to intentionally choose another one, just as Alex did today.

It was such a powerful weekend. He went all-in. He had hard conversations at work. He hustled his booty off and got everything purchased, packed, and ready to go. As I record this podcast, he's on a flight to Paris. The kids are going to France, Germany and Italy and I think these two weeks are going to change the trajectory of this kid's life.

I am thrilled for him. I can't wait to hear all about it. I can't wait to hear from you. So if you have questions about how to be decisive and how to go all-in, please reach out to me. Check out my new website. I have an updated website that I love. A shout out to Sasha and Kathy for being my web designers. They're amazing. I love them so much. They went all-in, made it beautiful, made it super easy to contact me.

So if you've got questions, you need help going all-in, reach out to me. I am here for you. Have an amazing week. Go all-in. I love you guys. Talk to you next week; bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit www.angelakellycoaching.com where you can sign up for weekly updates

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and learn more about the tools that will help you become an emotionally fit school leader.