

Ep #44: Having What You Want and Wanting What You Have



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 44.

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.

Happy Tuesday, ladies and gentlemen. How's it going? How are you doing? What's going on for you this week? I would love to hear from you. I am doing fabulous and I hope that you are as well.

As I wrote this podcast, I was on the way home from Hawaii. I visited the island of Kauai, which is absolutely so breathtaking. I've been there once before, but my last visit was almost exactly 20 years ago. I was actually pregnant with Alex at the time, which is how I remember that it was 20 years ago.

It was beautiful to see how the island has stayed the same, and how it's changed, but mostly it's everything that I remembered. It was amazing. I also found it very inspiring to change up my physical space and surroundings because I noticed how traveling, at least for me, provides me with the opportunity to practice having what I want and wanting what I have.

This trip was initiated by my good friends Susan and Lance, who own a timeshare in Lihue. They received an upgrade from a one-bedroom junior suite, which is what they normally stay in, to a two-master bedroom apartment-style suite. So there were two master bedrooms on either side, and then in the middle was this communal space. It was like a kitchenette living dining space.

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We each had our own balcony and we overlooked this gorgeous pool which overlooked the ocean. I felt like a rock-star. It was amazing. And they got an upgrade and they were thrilled to share the extra space and invited us to join them, and I was beyond excited to accept.

Mitch, however, my husband, while he was completely torn at this decision, he chose not to take the time away from work. We've been off a lot this summer with the wedding, and then we got a gift to the Celebrity Golf Tournament, and we've been traveling to Portland to see family and friends. We've just been doing all kinds of fun things, so he made a decision to stay home and be present for work.

I initially decided not to go without him, but deep down, I really wanted to go. I mean, you guys, it's an amazing opportunity. The only thing I had to pay for was my flight. Everything else was covered by my friends, and they were so gracious to offer.

And one of the compelling reasons that I chose to create this business of my own was so that I could live a lifestyle that was location-independent. I wanted to be able to visit my mom and family whenever I needed to and whenever I wanted to, and I want to be able to travel during the school year, basically.

And beforehand, I felt chained to the school calendar and I felt obligated and responsible to be present on my campus when I was a leader. So I wanted this concept of location-independence and I knew that I would definitely have said yes to this trip if it only involved myself, so it was nagging at me for days.

I notice that every time the thought, I really want to go, popped into my head, I felt guilty about vacationing without him. I wanted to go, but I also wanted to go with him. I didn't want to leave him behind. But I also didn't want to pass up the opportunity to visit Kauai again.

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I, personally, had the complete freedom to go, but the thought that I wanted Mitch to go with me was holding me back. Thinking that thought when it wasn't what I'd been offered was what was actually causing the feelings of guilt and disappointment.

I was wanting what I didn't have. I didn't have the option of going to Hawaii with Mitch. I had the option of going to Hawaii without him. I had to make this decision to either go without him or stay home with him. This was the reality of choices that was offered to me.

So after some self-coaching, I made the decision to go without him. I chose to have what I said I wanted. I said I wanted a location-independent lifestyle so that I can visit anywhere in the world and have the career of my choice at any time. So when the opportunity presented itself, I saw it as the chance to prove to myself and to the universe that I actually did want what I said I wanted, even when it wasn't completely easy and comfortable to say yes.

You, as a school leader, are going to be presented with the same types of opportunities in your role as a school leader. There will be things you want to have that you do not currently have and there will be moments where you accept the opportunity to actually have what you say you want.

As an aspiring leader, you will eventually be offered the position as school principal, the position you said you wanted. In that moment, you have to have, or receive, what you want. You have to say yes to the position, right? And once you have the role of school leader, then you have to want to have all the fun, but also all the problems that school leaders have.

So in my case, I chose to have this location-independent lifestyle that I said I wanted, but then I had to want to have the problem of my location-dependent husband not being able to travel with me every time. Can you see that?

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We cannot expect to have what we want without embracing the new problems that come with having it. These are good problems to have, you guys, because they are a product of having what we want I was, again, challenged with this concept very shortly into my travel day to Kauai.

The outbound flight was scheduled from San Jose to LAX and then from LAX onto Kauai. The first leg of my flight was awesome. I had an exit row seat, the flight was smooth, it was on time. I arrived at LAX. I think we even arrived early. How cool is that?

And when I got there, I learned that the second leg of my flight was delayed by 90 minutes. And I was like, that's a bummer. Now, in the past, let me forewarn you, this would have sent me into a tizzy. Just 90 minutes late, I'm like, "I don't want to spend one extra minute of my time traveling. I want to be vacationing."

But self-coaching, I was able to quickly wrap my head around it and accept the reality of the delay. That's what I'd been offered, right? So I went to the store. I grabbed a water and I pumped out a few email newsletters. And it actually felt really good to accomplish something above and beyond what I had planned for that day. So I looked at it as an opportunity and a positive thing.

The 90 minutes pass, we board the plane. Again, I got exit row seats and I sat next to a really friendly young couple. I just love them. We were sitting there for over an hour and we still had not taxied back from the gate. And then, the captain came on and notified us that the plane had some maintenance work completed that required a signoff paperwork to be done.

This was going to take about another hour. So they had us de-board the plane and told us that we were going to leave within the hour. Okay, I'm thinking to myself. So now we're three and a half hours behind our original

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arrival time. And my brain was like – my brain was starting to twitch and my initial thoughts that popped up were like, god, this is such a bummer.

This happened to me on another flight to Hawaii and it's taking precious island time away from all of us. I was getting mad. And then I almost slapped myself. I was like, what am I saying? Here I was, last minute traveling to the Hawaiian Islands in the month of October, which is something I would have never done when I was a teacher or a principal. And here I was, complaining that we were running behind schedule.

I was all, whoa, check yourself, Angela. You are living the life you only dreamed of living a few years ago. This is a very, very good problem to be having right now. And as I thought that thought, an abundance of gratitude washed over me.

I realized that our ability to want what we have and have what we want is available to us at any time. It also made me acknowledge that no situation we desire comes without its own set of challenges.

As school leaders, it's important to remember back to the time that we were aspiring up to the level of our position and how anxious we were to be there. And now that we're here, in order to feel a sense of happiness and satisfaction with our work, we need to embrace the problems that also come along with the job.

And by embracing them, I don't mean that you force yourself to love the problems or pretend they don't bother you. What I mean is that you take them on. You dive right in. you get busy solving them. you enjoy the process of figuring out an awesome solution.

It's about accepting that the job will have its own set of challenges, and instead of resisting and avoiding them, you understand you are going to be

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faced with them and allow them as they arise. Where we trip ourselves up is when we want to embrace only the good stuff.

We have an image in our mind of how great the job was going to be before we actually are in it and we dream of how good it's going to feel to be in charge, make significant changes, and be the leader we have always dreamed of being. When we actually get into the position and situations start coming at us left and right, our reality quickly does not match those expectations that we set for ourselves.

And this is when our emotions flair up, because the job does not feel the way we envisioned it feeling. And that incongruence stems from wanting only half of what we said we wanted.

In order to feel better about your leadership role, you must first decide to want what you have. I was at a Tony Robbins event where he explained this to a woman who was suffering from childhood abuse. He said this, "If you're going to blame her..." meaning her mother, "Then you have to blame her for everything, not just the bad stuff. If you are going to give away your power to her, then you have to give it all the way to her. You have to give away everything. You have to blame her for giving you life, blame her for your ability to survive that abuse, and blame her for the amazing life you've created in-spite of your childhood circumstances."

I thought that was so powerful. And the same holds true for us. If you want to feel empowered as a school leader, then you must choose to want all that comes with the job, including the parts that you don't enjoy, because that is what having the job entails.

People get upset when I suggest this to them. They don't want to have to accept that there are things about the job that they don't want to have. And here is my response to that; you can choose to complain about it, fight it, resist it, and avoid it, but this approach results in a lack of impactful results.

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You're spending your energy pushing away the parts of the job that suck instead of asking what approach you can take that will produce solutions. It is completely your choice not to want what you have and not have or take on what you said you wanted. I just simply want you to notice that the results you get when you make this choice are a product of your thoughts.

Wanting is a choice. Having is a choice. It does not mean that you will not experience stress, discomfort, or mental strain. You will definitely experience all of those things when you decide to take on your role full on as a leader, trust me.

But what it does mean is that you are experiencing those emotions based on a decision to want and to have. This is much more empowering than choosing to believe that the job should only present the parts that we find easy, simple, and comfortable.

Think of it this way; why do people play Candy Crush or, I don't know, whatever game you play on your phone – why do people play games, those video games? They play because they don't always win, because the game isn't always easy.

We, as humans, are drawn into trying that super side level 20 times before we master it. We love that stuff, right? If every level were as easy to win as level one, we would quickly lose interest. Within minutes, we'd drop it. We'd be like, this is boring.

Our brains are designed to thrive on challenges. Keep that in mind, guys. Your position as a school leader is going to be full of challenges. Some will be short-lived and you'll master them within a day or a week, or even a month. Others will stay present for you for long periods of time, for weeks on end, months on end, years on end.

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The challenge is there on purpose. It's there to drive you. It is designed to create frustration so that you fire up and actually decide to seek solutions. Every person who bothers you, every rule and regulation that seems pointless and in the way, and every system that's broken or doesn't work is there for you.

It's there for you to conquer, for you to master, for you to learn about yourself. You have to want it. You have to have it. Now, you have to go and get it. Have an empowered week. I can't wait to talk with you next week. Take care, bye-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 and learn more about the tools that will help you become an emotionally fit school leader.