

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 45.

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 friends. What is happening? I have been so excited to be with you again this week. Happy Tuesday. I am back home. I am back into my routine and I am loving it. I have to tell you, I love travel so much and I love being at home so much. I love both of them.

I love the mix of routine and consistency that comes with being home. It feels so good. But I also love the spontaneity and disruption and excitement that travel gives me. They're both just so much fun. And if you're a travel person, you get my drift.

Okay, onto it, this week, we are going to dive deeper into one of my coaching tools and how I use it to self-coach on a daily basis. Self-coaching is how I have personally been able to break away from my job in education, elope, sell my home, move away from all my friends who I miss dearly, and build this coaching business when, to be honest, I had no prior experience in entrepreneurship or building a business.

I had no idea what I was doing, jumped off the deep end and did it. But self-coaching is how I have learned to love the life I currently have now and work hard to build up to a life that's even more abundant than I currently have right now. I want what I have right now and I desire so much more. It's okay for both, and self-coaching is how I do that.

So a lot of people ask me, what is self-coaching and how do you do it? How do you get out of your own head? I'm asked this question so many

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

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

times because I understand that people can understand the concept, but it's really hard to do until you practice it and just get it. Remember, you can't know how to do something until you do it.

So you, my friends, at the end of this episode, are going to be practicing the do, so that you know the how, okay? I know that people want to understand how to gain more clarity, make confident decisions, and choose abundance over scarcity and choose love over fear and frustration.

The answer to all of this is self-coaching. So what is self-coaching? Self-coaching is the process of examining your thoughts as an observer of the mind. You step out of your stream of thinking and you think about your thoughts.

So the best way to understand the difference between the two is this; what are you thinking about right now, right this minute? What is going through your mind? Do you notice how you actually have to pause and consider what you were just thinking about? That pause and contemplation shifts you from a stream of consciousness to consciously observing the thoughts that arise.

It puts you in a more neutral state to view what you are thinking. And this is a very, very, important skill because in order to understand why you're feeling a certain way or why you are getting a particular result in your life, you need to pinpoint the thought creating that emotion or result.

This cannot be done without stepping into the role of thought observer. So number one, how you shift from thinking to observing. The easiest way I have learned when to shift from thinking to observing is to use my emotions as a guide. When I experience uncomfortable emotions that seem to linger, I use this as a clue to stop and observe my thinking.

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

Emotions such as stress, anxiety, or prolonged fear, anger, or sadness, are all signals from your body that it's time to stop and examine what's going on up in that head of yours. Whenever I'm feeling these emotions, I ask myself, why am I feeling, blank? Then I write down the answers that come up.

So for example, I tend to experience a lot of anxiety. I did as a school leader and I do as a coach for school leaders. When the familiar vibrations of anxiety start to float through my body, I use them as my signal to stop and shift from thinking to observing.

I will ask myself, why am I feeling anxious? The thoughts that came up for me as a school leader were things like, "I don't want to meet with that angry parent tomorrow. I cannot keep up with emails. I need my fifth-grade team to collaborate. Our test scores are flat-lining, what am I going to do? And I can't even sleep because I'm so worried about work."

You can download your thoughts. Just write them all down, as many that come out, onto a piece of paper. And you can actually run a STEAR Cycle on those. And, guys, if you're new to the podcast, first of all welcome, second of all, if you don't know what the STEAR Cycle is, please go back to episode three, that describes the STEAR Cycle in overview. And then the following episodes, four, five, six, seven, they all go into depth on each component of the cycle.

You can run a STEAR Cycle on each of those thoughts, but I invite you to consider digging a little bit deeper. Sometimes, the thoughts that first appear have layers. All you have to do is continue asking why. And I like to keep asking myself why until my answers start to loop back around.

It looks something like this. "I don't want to meet with the angry parent tomorrow." Then I ask myself why. "Because I'm afraid it will go poorly." Why? "Because they're going to yell at me?" Well why is that so bad?

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

“Because I hate conflict and I want people to like me.” Why? “Because it’s super uncomfortable.”

Why is it so uncomfortable? “Because I hate being uncomfortable so much.” Do you see how that kind of loops around? Because you hate the conflict. Why? Because it’s so uncomfortable. Why? Because you hate it so much.

You can see how this process of asking why and why is that so bad, how it can uncover deeper rooted belief systems. The belief that conflict is uncomfortable better helps you understand why you’re feeling anxiety about that parent meeting tomorrow. So then you can run a STEAR Cycle on that thought to help you see how that thought impacts your emotions, your approach, and your result.

Number two, once you’ve identified thoughts that are creating anxious feelings or negative feelings for you and you want to shift them, you’ve decided, yes I do want to think a different thought, you may find yourself being, like, “Okay, I see that this thought is causing me stress, but I believe it’s true. I can’t unthink that that’s true. I can’t unbelieve it. How can I change my thinking if my thought is true?”

It gets kind of crazy, right? So this is the catch for most of us. When we fully believe a thought to be true – and there’s nothing wrong with believing a thought to be true, guys. Don’t beat yourselves up for believing what you believe. That’s not the problem. But it can be challenging for our brains to consider an alternate thought.

We are so sold on the current thought because we’ve collected evidence time and time again to prove it to ourselves that it’s true. The thought runs in the back of our consciousness, and without realizing it, our brain collects evidence throughout our day that reinforces that belief.

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

The longer we've believed something, the harder it is to disprove it to ourselves because we've gathered so much evidence. So give yourself some grace and time to practice this.

The key to initiating a shift in thinking is to work your way towards the thought you want to believe. The way we do this is by using what I call support thoughts. Support thoughts are thoughts that help us build our capacity to create intentional thoughts.

I use the metaphor of yoga blocks. So yoga blocks are these little foam blocks that are brick shaped and they are used to help you stabilize and hold a particular pose if your body is not able to do the full pose on its own. It's like a support system, like a brace.

You can start to shift to an intentional thought, which is a thought that you really want to believe but you just don't believe it yet. You can kind of go in that direction with the use of a support thought until your mind is able to grasp onto the thought you really want to believe.

It's like the kids who cross the monkey bars. They're holding onto one bar but they're too afraid and not ready and willing to let go of the bar behind them. They're kind of stuck in the middle. That's kind of like having a support thought. You're kind of in the middle, believing both.

So you do this, you create a support thought, by creating a thought that produces a more neutral feeling in your body. The way you create a neutral thought and a neutral feeling is by using the following sentence starters: it is possible that... I'm becoming... It is part of the human experience to... I am learning how to... I'm considering... I am willing to believe...

Those sentence starts can shift a thought into neutrality. You can also add a frame at the end of a thought. Like, you can think a thought and say, "And that's okay." Or you can say, "I'm thinking this thought and nothing has

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

gone wrong.” Or you can say a thought, “No matter what” Like, I’m willing to, no matter what.

These starts and frames really help me to neutralize a thought. And it helps to move you towards a thought that you want to believe and live by. So here’s what it sounds like in full. Here’s a couple of examples; it is possible that I can make an income outside of the teaching profession.

Some of you might feel like you’re locked into this job forever and you don’t know how you’d possibly make money outside of the job, but it’s possible to believe you can make an income outside of the teaching profession. Millions of people are doing it; so can you.

It’s part of the human experience to be frustrated when learning new skills. A lot of my clients, they get really frustrated. They don’t want to be new at something. They don’t want to fumble. They don’t want to look stupid or they don’t want to feel like they don’t know. They want to look competent.

It’s part of the human experience to be frustrated when we’re learning new skills. Neutralize the situation. I’m learning how to better manage my work schedule. We can talk forever about time management, but if you allow yourself the grace of I’m learning how to better manage my work schedule, then you know, day by day, you’re getting better.

I’m afraid to meet with angry parents, and that’s okay. It’s okay to be scared of conflict. Don’t beat yourself up that you’re feeling bad that you don’t want the conflict. Be willing to be afraid. It’s okay. It’s okay.

Finally, I am willing to take great care of myself, no matter what. One of the biggest complaints I get from school leader is, I’m exhausted, I’m overwhelmed, I’m frustrated, I have no time for my family, my friends, or myself.

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

If you said, I'm willing to take care of myself no matter what, then you can buy into that. You might not fully believe that, but you can be willing to believe it. Do you see how these thoughts generate a softer more neutral emotion?

They allow you to approach your day with more grace and more freedom and they really do neutralize the intensity of the emotions that come with an all or none kind of mindset.

Observing your thoughts and how they impact you is one of the most powerful things you can do as a school leader because it helps you comprehend that you really are in control of your emotions and in control of your actions and in control of your results.

Clients fight me on this because they believe it feels easier to blame others or the situation. They want to blame the hostile volunteer, they want to blame the boss, the meeting schedule, or the uncooperative teacher because blaming those people or that situation means that they, as leaders, get to continue believing their thought that the situation is the problem.

Here's what happens; we want to blame and push away our responsibility because we don't want to have to own that it's us, that there's a part of this that we are creating. That feels bad, to be the source of the problem. They don't then have to believe that the way that they're thinking is the reason.

People don't want to have to change their thoughts because it's easier to keep believing the same thought. They don't want to do that. They resist it. They fight it. On the flip side, choosing to blame circumstances outside of yourself means choosing to revoke your influence, control, authority, and impact.

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

You will not leave the impact you wish if you do not believe that you have the power within you to do so. I believe the most powerful aspect of self-coaching is that once you've tried it and you've experienced the emotional vibration of owning that you are the one creating your own problem – which sucks, my friends, it feels terrible – you begin to learn that you are capable of handling that responsibility for yourself and for your emotions.

Self-coaching does not prevent you from feeling badly. That is not the goal of self-coaching. Self-coaching helps you realize that you're strong enough to feel badly and that feeling bad does not mean anything bad about you. You simply notice the thoughts that are producing the negative emotions; that's it.

You study it and you see how that result is a product of your thinking. You deliberately shift your thinking to a more intentional thought. When you do that, you get a different result. And then, guess what, you wash, rinse, and repeat this process over and over for the rest of your life. How fun is that?

But I'm telling you what, that is how it's done. So, my empowered leaders, practice what you teach. Practice this self-coaching strategy. I promise you, it's magic. It is the way to either love the job or leave it. If you need more support with this, my book, called the Empowered Principal, is available on Amazon. You can get it electronically. It will help you get more empowered to make decisions from a more empowered place and decide from a place of clarity if you want to love your job or leave it.

This is how it's done, my friends. Go get it. I can't wait to hear from you. Drop me a line. Let me know how it's going. I look forward to hearing from you and talking with you next week. Take care, you guys; 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

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

Ep #45: Self-Coaching Strategies

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