

Ep #46: Mind-Management: The Real Work



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 46.

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 Empowered Principals, what is up? How are you guys doing? How is the week going? I am going to share some honesty with y'all today. I have to be true to what is going on.

I am in it deep this week. The struggle is real. It is so real. I'm going through some massive mental transformation and it is super uncomfortable, I'm not going to lie. I'm amazing and I'm uncomfortable. I'm both at the same time.

So today, I thought I would share my struggles with you so that you can see that every human being on the planet goes through struggle. Everybody feels super uncomfortable, and we all live through the experience of extreme discomfort and negative emotion.

So I will share my story and I will share how it relates to my school leaders and my clients. One of my mentors has been coaching me on building my business. I highly admire and respect her. So in always wanting to be the good students, and you know what I'm talking about – if you're a teacher and an educator, you want to be a good student.

And the reason you're in education is because you love that scene; you love that climate, you love the atmosphere of teaching and learning and being a student and being in a school. You love that, so we perpetuate the current system as it stands because we loved school, we loved being good students, and we went into the profession because we love it, right?

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So in being that good student, I want to do everything the teacher says. I want to do it well. I want to get the gold star. And when you think about when we want that, the reason we want that, we want to earn their respect and their admiration because we want them to like us, because them liking us makes us feel good.

So until this week, I really believed that achieving the goals I had set for my business would be the way to earning her respect and admiration of me. And I believed that when I achieved all of my goals and I was the A-plus student, I was going to get all these accolades and get the achievement awards or whatever I had going on in my mind.

But when I believed this whole theory and I failed to achieve my goals, it felt terrible. It was horrible. I felt like – you know when you're a kid and you don't want to get in trouble? You don't want to fail or get in trouble with your parents, and so you avoid hearing your parents being upset with you or disappointed with you or having them tell you that they're disappointed in you – that feeling of angst and just guilt was vibrating all over my body.

It was yucky because I set a goal, I made it known, and I didn't achieve the goal. And I was making that mean that I had failed; that I had disappointed her, and that I did not want to hear her say, "You didn't achieve your goal. You failed." I just wanted to avoid that at all costs because it was super uncomfortable.

But instead of avoiding it, like I would have in my past, I'm stepping into the new woman I am becoming and I decided not to pretend that things were going better than they actually were. I showed up, I asked a lot of questions. I let the answers to those question sting in my soul.

And I sat in the discomfort. I just simply let her tell me the truth. And the truth was this; my results are being created by my thoughts, pure and

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simple. And in the moment that she said this to me, I could not see what thoughts were creating my result. I felt like I had blinders on.

I felt like I had done the thought work, I had self-coached, I had mind-managed, and I had navigated this. But I really could not see what thought was creating this result that was a failed goal, basically. The result that I achieved was not the goal that I had set for myself. So I couldn't understand why that happened.

I'm telling you, guys. So in my mind, I was saying things to myself like, "What does she mean? I'm doing this podcast for you guys. I wrote a book, for crying out loud. I have a website. I'm on social media. I did all the things on the checklist. I'm doing what she's telling me to do."

So I was like, I don't understand what thought is blocking me from achieving this result. And what she said was, "I could do all of the things that you just mentioned and still not meet my goal, even with all the value I've offered. So there's something missing, because you did all of those things, you offered what you thought was of value and you didn't meet your financial goal."

And I was like – I hated this thought. I hated the thought that I'm not yet creating enough value for my clients. What drives me, my mission, what I believe in, is how do I better serve my clients? How can I stop the suffering that happens in education for school leaders? I want to create that value for people. And to hear from my master coach that I'm not yet creating that level of value really stung.

And of course, let me be honest, I went into a complete state of childhood-like emotions. You know, I was pouting a little bit. I had a little temper-tantrum going on in my brain. There was some self-pity going on and I was indulging in a lot of, "I don't know how to. Just tell me what to do. I don't know how to do it myself."

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I really wanted her just to tell me how to fix this problem. Basically, I was like handing over my responsibility to my coach and saying, “You achieve my goal for me. Tell me what to do.”

Here’s the funny thing about it; she actually highlighted exactly what I was not yet doing in my business and told me exactly what to do. So I had the answer. She told me the answer. What was happening is my little brain was throwing a temper-tantrum like a child. I just didn’t want that to be the answer because it didn’t like doing it.

So when I took a step back and observed this interaction from an observer’s standpoint – I like to call it the eagle eye, like you’re up in the sky looking down, observing from the big picture what’s happening – I noticed that I was engaging with this whole process exactly the same way my own clients do when they are challenged with a new way of thinking.

So when I coach a client and it’s a thought that really rattles them or really challenges them, like it’s so hard to believe and they think it’s the situation causing the problem and not their thinking about it, I was totally overcome with connection and compassion for them because I, again, was introduced to the real work we are all meant to do in this world.

As school leaders, we believe that all of the tasks on our calendars and all of the to-do lists are the work that we are supposed to be doing. Our brains think that being caught up at work and getting everything checked off on the box is the ultimate goal.

We think that it is our charge to take on all of these tasks and do them expertly and efficiently. We believe that if we follow the rules, do it by the book, and use our research-based strategies, that the process of being a leader will feel better. Are you with me on this?

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The point that we often miss is that our situation at work, it's a product of how we are thinking about work. This blew my mind today, guys. Like, think about this again; the situation at work, whatever currently you are dealing with at work, whatever situation or circumstances you are dealing with in your current position, those are a product of how we are thinking about our job.

So when you believe that there's not enough time to get everything done and you're feeling stress, your approach to work by trying to do more and spending more time doing it with the goal of catching up, in the end, is your result, that you are never caught up.

So what's happening is you're spending all this extra time outside of work trying to catch up and you've created the result that work is taking up all of your time. Do you see that? It's crazy. I'm doing the same thing, guys, in my business too, so do not beat yourself up for this. Do not feel bad.

What I figured out is that the solution is not to work harder or work longer, the solution is to stop thinking that there's too much to do and not enough time to get it done. The work you need to focus on is not that to-do list, but what you make your to-do list mean.

What you make that to-do list mean is exactly why you are in the situation at work that you are in. Your circumstances at work are a window into your thoughts. If you are experiencing a lot of conflict at work, then you are having thoughts about conflict.

You're having thoughts like this, "I don't like conflict. I don't know how to handle conflicts. I just want there to be no conflict. Conflict is such a bother." Right, all of these thoughts we have about wanting not to have conflict is the very thing creating the conflicts that occur at work.

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The fact that there is a conflict in your job is simply a circumstance. They just happen. And, guys, I want to tell you, they're never going away. The reality of the job is that you will have to deal with conflict; conflict on your staff, conflict with a parent, children having conflict with one another, you having conflict with maybe somebody at district office.

You are going to have conflict; that's simply a situation. You're going to continue having fear about any kind of conflict because you choose to hold onto the belief that you don't want conflict. And that fear of not wanting conflict and the belief you don't want the conflict creates your feelings of fear, which then has you avoiding conflict at all cost, which results in you feeling sick to your stomach anytime you think about having to deal with a conflict.

So, back to my story and my goal – I didn't meet a goal I set for myself. In order to measure my value to you as my clients, I have to do the math. I have to measure my value by the number of clients that I serve, the amount of money that I'm making. And when I didn't meet those number goals and the math didn't result in what I wanted, I initially made it mean that I am failing; I'm failing my clients, I'm failing at my business, I'm failing at serving to my capacity.

I really compared and despaired with my fellow coaches thinking that all of them were meeting their goals and I was, of course, the only one who wasn't. You know that all or none thing? Like, everybody else is doing it, but not me.

I was thinking that I must not be as good of a coach and all of these not enoughs, I'm behind, I'm not good enough, and whatever, you get the drill. That series of thoughts are what created my reality. It created the failure. So in order to change the reality in changing that failure into a success, I don't need to work harder on my business. I don't need to spend more time working on my business, I need to change what I'm making not meeting that goal mean.

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So if I make it mean I'm a failure, then I'm done. I might as well stop doing all this work. But if I make it mean that I'm learning, then a neutralize the way that I view this failure in my business, I take note of what's working and what isn't, I celebrate the small wins that I did accomplish along the way, because by the way, when we think we've failed, we write-off everything that actually did work because we threw out the baby with the bathwater.

And when you decide that you're learning versus failing, you celebrate those small wins and you keep taking action towards achieving the goal. In every situation, the work is less about how you're going to handle something or accomplish a goal and more about what you are making that work mean.

Managing your mind about your job is the single most empowering move you can ever make. Think about this, you guys. What is the cost of not managing your thoughts about work? What will happen in the long run if you continue to believe that you don't have enough time to do everything you need to do and that you should be getting it all done?

How will that impact your personal life? How will you feel about your job in two, three, or five years from now if you believe that you hate meeting with confrontational parents, yet all that seems to pop up is meeting with confrontational parents, because that us the job; that if you believe you shouldn't have to do that but you hate doing it, how are you going to feel in that position in a year or two or three or four or five from now?

What influence will you have as a leader if you feel you have no control over what happens on your campus or that your teachers aren't listening or paying attention or doing what you ask them to do? What's the cost of not managing your thoughts around all of these situations? It's huge.

It might make you quit the job. You might feel miserable and burned out. It's definitely going to take a toll on your physical, mental, and emotional

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wellbeing. It's going to impact your personal and your family life. It's massive. Not to mention the cost of how much you are spending on your time.

Think about this; if you're making \$100K in your business right now and you're working 40 hours per week, I think that averages out to like \$55 an hour, let's say. If you work 60 hours a week, if you're working 10-hour days or 12-hour days, whatever that is – let's say you go from \$100K at 40 hours a week to \$100K at 50 hours a week, even one more hour a day, you are making \$35 an hour versus \$55 an hour. It's a huge impact, you guys.

The cost is everything. It's mental, it's emotional, it's physical, it's financial. So if you want to stop feeling like you are failing at your job and start believing that you are capable and impactful, then the only work you need to do right now in this moment is manage your thoughts about the job.

Once you do that, the rest of the work will become a true delight, I promise you this. Imagine coming to work each day honestly deeply believing that you are on top of things and that even when things don't go as planned, you are still continuing to learn and grow as you go.

Nothing has gone wrong. Whatever situation arises, you know that you are capable enough to handle it because you're managing your mind, and your mind determines this ahead of time. The situation you are in has nothing to do with it.

I am so firmly committed to my mission of bringing this work to the forefront of school leadership. It is the fastest way I know how to bring about real change. We can change our approach on a dime as soon as we believe a new thought that better serves us. And, you guys, I just did this today with my business.

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I shifted from believing that I was failing to believing that I was learning. And how would you feel if you decided to believe this for you? The real work, my empowered leaders, is managing your own thoughts. manage this and you will be able to manage anything else that comes your way.

Go manage that mind. Get empowered. Hey, if you are ready to get the support you need to manage your thinking, my December cohort is opening for business. All you have to do is sign up for a free consult call where we sit down, we talk about your problems, we talk about the thoughts with those problems. We figure out if we're a match to work together, and then we get busy doing the real work.

If you want to finally get busy and get some of this stuff under your belt, sign up for a consult call today at angelakellycoaching.com.

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.