

## Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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

## Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others

Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 54.

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.

Well hello there. How is your new year going? By now, you are back at work and hopefully with a little more pep in your step. The holiday break is such a replenishing time, for most of us I will say.

But even if the time was spent buzzing with holiday activity and you're a little bit exhausted, it's usually a welcome change or a welcome type of energy from the intensity of the school year, right? So now that you're back, we're going to continue our conversation about building relationships.

And this time, we're going to talk about building relationships with the other humans who are also running around on earth with us; specifically, the ones who have also been called to educate and work with young humans.

I find that working with other people can be one of our greater challenges. And I say this because that is what I spend the most time coaching on. When people call me, they start with maybe they want to consider a different career or they're having trouble in their career, but when it comes down to it, it's mostly about the relationship either with themselves or with other people.

So today, we're going to talk about how to build a relationship with a new individual that you meet. We want to talk about how to build that relationship before we get into a confrontational situation. And then, next week, we're going to go ahead and talk about why we find ourselves

## **Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others**

getting caught up in conflicts with other people and how we can help navigate that.

Let's start with ourselves. In any relationship, as you know, there are two individuals. We want to learn to relate together. One of those individuals in this relationship is us. Last week, we talked about how to build that relationship with ourselves and we discussed that the more we align our brains and our hearts, the more available we will become to build real true authentic trusting relationships, not just with ourselves, but with other people.

So the first step to building any new relationship is to start by cleaning up our own thinking. When we meet somebody new, our brain has dozens of thoughts about them, most of which are subconscious, but some of them are going to come right to the top.

Your brain is going to do things like think about how this person looks, how they smell, you're going to observe what they're wearing, you're going to think about how they hold themselves, the shape of their body, whether or not they smile or make any eye contact. Your brain is definitely going to focus on what they say and your heart is going to focus on the energy or the vibe that they give off.

So you're taking in all of this input and all of this information and you're creating a story about this person in your mind. Now, this happens with every situation we're in. It's totally normal. What you want to do is simply be aware that it's happening.

Don't tell yourself you're not going to do it because that's not true, that's just a lie. You can't control the brain from creating thought. And you don't really have to do anything with all of this input, other than be aware that it's happening and that your brain is going to come up with a series of thoughts

## **Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others**

about the person. That's just part of human beings, that's just what we do, it's okay.

So when you meet this someone new, you can explore that experience by observing the thoughts you're having about them. You can notice what types of sentences your brain develops. And let's just get really real here; you're going to notice that your brain is very judgmental.

It's okay; we're designed to be judges. We've been conditioned to be judges. What I want you to do is this; I want you to try and view the thoughts without further judging yourself for having the judgmental thoughts. You don't want to go down the rabbit hole of beating yourself up because your brain is generating these judgmental thoughts.

We all do it. And guess what, guys, they're doing it to you too. They're having a story created in their brain about you. You're having a story created in your brain about them.

So let me give you an example. Let's say you get introduced to Sam, the new Special Ed Director for the district. Your brain might have this series of thoughts as you're introduced, "Wow, he's really tall. I wonder where he came from. He's got a firm handshake. He seems to know what he's talking about. I like that suit he's wearing. He's looking good. I hope he's better than the last director, because you know what happened with the last director."

And your brain's going to come up with all the evidence about the last director. And your conclusion might be, "Wow, he seems like he's going to be a great person to work with." Now, what you do when you're aware is just to notice the thoughts, notice the story.

It is easier to do this by writing down the thoughts. Like, you think about that interaction after you've had it and you scribble down all of the

## Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others

sentences that came into your mind. It helps you separate them from yourself.

I can now do it on my own. I can go, oh wow, that's a bunch of thoughts I'm having. But in the beginning especially, it is always better to write them down, guys. Just write them down.

I want you to see how the story unfolds, and as you read those thoughts, how they generate an emotion about the person, towards them. Just notice that. Hold those thoughts.

Now we're going to go on to meeting the new director of HR. Her name is Jane. And you meet Jane and you think to yourself, "Oh my gosh, look at that outfit. Is she going to work or to the clubs? How did she even get hired? That is some red lipstick. I wonder where she came from. Who hired her? She wears too much perfume. She's probably never even been a director. She looks like she's trying way too hard. Man, do I miss Sally? Now, Sally was a good director."

Notice the thoughts. Notice the story. See how the story generates an emotion about Jane. Do you see that? And that happens so quickly, you guys. Our brain is so fast, lightning speed, comes up with a million thoughts, creates this little story, and all of a sudden, the next thing you know, you run into somebody at work and they say to you, "Hey, what do you think of Jane, the new director of HR?" And you go into your story.

You're not even aware it's happened. So the trick is catching the brain at sneaking in all these thoughts that are creating a story which you, if you don't question that story, you latch onto believing it. And all of a sudden, you're now talking about Jane as if she's this particular person.

## **Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others**

And the flip can happen. You can just totally fall for Sam, the new Special Ed Director and be all about him, when really, you haven't even experienced them in the long-term. Do you see how the brain does that?

Okay, so you can see, through that first example with Sam, how you most likely are not going to have too much of a problem or any difficulties building a positive relationship with him. Once your brain has created that story, it's pretty easy to seek out evidence that proves the story true.

This is also fascinating, you guys. Our brain will cling onto evidence that proves that story true and it filters out the facts – even facts that actually happen – to prove the story to the contrary, because as we know, the brain likes to be right. It wants to be in charge and it doesn't want to be challenged.

So it's going to cling onto facts, quote en quote, that solidify this original story because it wants to be true. It wants to be right. It doesn't want to be wrong or be challenged or questioned.

So Special Ed Director is going to have a pretty easy time with you. The director of HR is going to have more of a challenge with you and you are going to have more of a challenge with her because your brain has created a story that she's not someone that you want to get to know and like and trust and collaborate with.

Knowing that our brains do this to us is very important. You cannot stop your brain from generating the thoughts; please know that. You can't stop the brain from thinking. But you can be aware that thoughts are created and that you, in a split-second moment, you can stop yourself and choose to either believe or not believe the story that it is creating.

It's really tricky, but here's the fun part; you can examine these thoughts by using a tool that I call the STEAR Cycle. Now, for those of you who have

## Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others

been following me for a while, you know the STEAR Cycle. It's in the book that I've written, it's on all the podcasts, or most of them. I talk about it on my Facebook Lives, I teach it in my webinars.

The STEAR Cycle is a process for examining how our thoughts create the results in our life. If you're new to the podcast, welcome. I will try to explain the STEAR Cycle as simply as I can.

In its most simple form, our brain creates thoughts that are influenced by the situations around us. Situations are anything that are outside of us and our control; things like the weather, taxes, cost of living, our parent's health, the traffic, and all other people and all of their behaviors are all situations. They're all things outside of us that we cannot control.

Now, as we engage with situations all around us, our brain generates thoughts about what these situations mean to us. And what we make them mean depends on our past, our past experiences, what we've been conditioned and socialized to think and believe about certain individuals or situations.

And based on what we make those thoughts mean, our thoughts trigger an emotional response in the body. Based on that response, we choose how to approach the situation. And the way that we choose to approach the situation, however we decide to approach it, produces a particular result.

So the STEAR Cycle simply stands for situation, thought, emotion, approach, and result. You can study the STEAR Cycle more in depth through the podcasts in the beginning, I think numbers three through six, or you can study them more deeply in *The Empowered Principal* book, which you can find on Amazon.

Now, this tool is essential in thought management because we are always going to have thoughts that we believe are factually true, and we're going

## **Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others**

to base our emotions and our approach according to our belief in these thoughts.

When you can extract your thoughts and view them as being separate from yourself and from what you truly believe, that is when you realize you have the full power to create any result you want. This is an important first step when you want to build healthy relationships with others. You must see that your brain is creating a story.

Now, step two is this – step one is to identify the thoughts your brain is having, and you can analyze them using the STEAR Cycle. With the STEAR Cycle, you can also see how your thoughts are impacting your approach. You can decide your approach ahead of time, then choose a thought that motivates you to act in that way.

So here's what's cool about the STEAR Cycle; you can put anything in any of the lines. So if you want to feel a certain emotion and you're not feeling that emotion now, you can put that emotion in the cycle and see how it would play out if you were feeling that emotion.

In this case, you're going to practice replacing the approach, the way that you approach somebody, especially a new relationship. You're going to put that approach – you're going to pre-decide how you're going to approach them in the A-line, and then you're going to play out what result that might occur of and what you have to be thinking in order to be approaching that person in this way.

I know this is like 2.0 for people who are new to the STEAR Cycle, so stick with me on this. Go back and listen to prior podcasts so that you can get a real deep understanding of what the STEAR Cycle is.

Through my years of working with a variety of personalities, I coined my approach for developing authentic relationship as the HOW method. HOW



## **Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others**

stands for honest, original, and willing. Before you enter into a new relationship with a staff member, a parent, a community or maybe a board member, you can choose to approach the introduction by getting into a state of HOW.

You want to commit to being honest and transparent with this individual. That's the H. H means honest. This means that every time you interact as honestly and with as much transparency as much transparency as possible.

Staff members and parents really appreciate transparency from their leader. And think about it, so do we. With our leaders, it's really, really nice when we feel a sense of honesty and transparency. It's one of the fastest ways I know how to build trust with others, and when someone is exhibiting those behaviors with me, I trust them much more quickly. So, H is for honesty.

Now, the O stands for original. You are the one and only you there is, and I find it super refreshing for other people to see the true me as I see in them. I want to see people's quirks. I want to see their hang-ups, their imperfections, their silliness, and that is my job, to show up as the original version of Angela as a school leader. The same is true for you.

Showing up as the genuine you lets others connect with you in a very authentic way. They get to feel your humanness and in return, they want to be more open and authentic with you. So not be afraid to be original. Students do not need to see more people molding and conforming to other people's expectations. Believe me, they get enough of that with their peers, they get enough of that with social media, they get enough of it through movies and TV.

They need to see people, people like us who are in charge of their education, being true and authentic to who they are, the original person you

## **Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others**

were meant to be. You need to be original in your thoughts, and original in your actions. That is so powerful for kids and your staff members to see. Now, this requires some vulnerability, you guys. But it will allow you a much greater impact as a school leader.

The W in HOW stands for willingness. Be willing to be open to other people. Open your heart to them, trust in them, believe in them ahead of time. Be willing to receive feedback. Be willing to be wrong. Be willing to try, to fail, and try again.

And by chance, might I say, be willing to be successful. It astounds me how many of my clients, they're actually really good at, like, okay, I failed, okay, I called my stuff out, but they're a little bit more afraid of being successful, because what might happen if they're successful? What might happen if they get what they want? They're almost afraid to be successful.

Be willing. Be willing to receive success. Be willing to receive abundance. Be willing to receive gratitude from other people. Open your willingness to feel all of the emotions of the human experience. You can only expand your ability to feel positive emotion to the same degree to which you are willing to feel negative emotion.

And since the worst thing that can ever happen to you is an emotion, exercising your willingness to be vulnerable is one of the most powerful practices you can implement. So when you can get your brain to actively focus on the HOW method, you'll stand a greater chance of building highly engaged, positive, and credible working relationships with your team and with your community.

And did you notice how the foundation of building relationships with other people starts with you? I love this, because it reminds me that I have a significant amount of say as to how the relationships in my life go.

## Ep #54: Building a Relationship with Others

So, step number one is to clean up your own thinking. Understand your brain's going to create a series of thoughts that turn into a story. You can acknowledge that story and then make a decision ahead of time if you want to believe that story or not. And then step two is to put in your approach ahead of time.

Decide ahead of time how you want to approach individuals. And I recommend the HOW method, which is the honesty, originality, and willingness. Come in full transparency, in openness, in full integrity, and be willing to be open to this individual and that approach will generate a much more authentic building relationship practice for you.

So, give HOW a try and let me know how you're doing and what questions are coming up for you. You can simply email your questions to me at [angelakellycoaching@gmail.com](mailto:angelakellycoaching@gmail.com).

See you next week, guys, have an amazing empowered week.

Hello, my fellow leaders. For those of you who are my private clients, you have access to the *Empowered Principal Podcast* workbook that accompanies this month's theme. In the workbook are daily and monthly activities that allow you to dive even deeper into this work and expedite transformation in your career and your life.

If you, listener, are ready to take your leadership and life to the next level, sign up for a free consult call today. You can find me at [angelakellycoaching.com](http://angelakellycoaching.com). I'll see you there. Take care.

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](http://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.

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