

Ep #192: Slowing Down on Purpose



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Ep #192: Slowing Down on Purpose

Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 192.

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 empowered leaders. Happy Tuesday. Welcome to the podcast. Welcome to your week. I have to tell you. I am recording these podcasts for the month of August in the month of July because I am traveling in August, and I'm travelling at the end of this month here in July. So I am going to be going to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. We are going for a week with my son and his family—well us, our family—to celebrate his graduation. Then my coach is having a trip to Cabo San Lucas for our business mastermind in August.

So I am batching several of these recordings, and I am so excited to be going to Cabo not once but twice. So I'm recording these right after the fourth of July. And I have been having several conversations with my clients and with principals online who have said that now that the fourth is over, their life is over. They feel like the good life is over. Summer's over. The Fourth of July signifies to them that summer's going quickly. They're going to have to go back to work. Once the Fourth of July comes and goes, our brains go back into work mode and our bodies go back to anxiety mode.

If you're listening to this and it's the end of August, for sure you're back in full swing. What I want to show you is that nothing has changed about summer and your life other than your thoughts. The date has changed, and that's all make believe. We just made up calendars. We made up time. So nothing's really changed other than your thoughts about summer and now

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it's the end of August as you're listening to this podcast, going into September. You're fully working.

I want to say first of all that there's nothing wrong with that jolt of energy that you get at the beginning of the year. So your thoughts start to shift back to work. The anxiety goes up, the energy, the enthusiasm, the excitement, but also kind of that worry, anxiety kind of doubt, fears. Am I going to get it all done? Time abundance goes out the window and time scarcity comes into the window, right?

All of that, there's nothing inherently wrong with that energy. It's supposed to be there. That is what the beginning of a new year feels like, especially if you're a brand new school leader. It's really exciting and fun. You can ride on the coattails of that energy to keep you going when things feel tired or when things feel overwhelming. You want to use that adrenaline that's running through your body, but you want to know where that adrenaline is coming from. It's not coming from work or your to-do list right now. I know you're in the thick of it at the beginning of this new school year.

Where it's coming from is your mind. It's in your brain. It's the thoughts you're thinking about. The body's response to those thoughts is its way of preparing you. It's going into fight or flight. So it's not a problem depending on what you make it mean. So if that revved up energy feels really fun for you and you're able to use it to fuel yourself, that's great. By all means go for it.

However, if you're on edge with worry or doubt or fear and you're not sleeping or you're feeling overly exhausted and overwhelmed. Or maybe even that little bit of nausea that you feel when you're really nervous. I'm going to invite you to slow down. Slow your thinking down. Slow your emotions down. Slow your body down. We're going to talk about slowing down on purpose today.

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I'm intentionally talking about slowing down at the beginning of your school year when your body and your mind and your heart is racing, and all of that energy is pumping through you, and you want to go really, really fast. We're talking about it now because you can't survive your year—or you can't thrive, I should say—when you're always using adrenaline and fight or flight and that spike of energy to keep you going. Your body doesn't sustain in that way. It doesn't serve you physically, mentally, or emotionally.

So I'm going to talk about slowing down right now because I want to plant the seed in your mind for you to begin to implement these ideas all year long. There's going to be times you forget, and that's okay. Re-listen to this episode anytime that you need a reset. Anytime you feel like you need to take a breath and slow yourself down and remind yourself how slowing down is beneficial and how it actually supports your leadership and really benefits you and your school.

So I'm going to step back a little bit and talk about some thoughts that I had during the pandemic. Because the pandemic was a situation that created, almost enforced, our world, our everything—the way we do everything in our world—to slow down. So I'm going to share my experience and my observations of myself during this pandemic. I want to just note that each of us has had a very different experience, and I really acknowledge that. I'm simply talking about my personal experience of the pandemic as a gateway into this conversation and this concept of slowing down on purpose.

So when I think back to the pandemic, the pandemic was kind of an immediate stop, immediate halt, immediate pause. It forced us to slow down in many different ways. Now you might have had the opposite experience where you revved up. When the pandemic went down, as a school leader you had to rev up. Yes, school leadership felt busier than ever and took up a lot of time. I know this because dozens of clients came

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running to me and signed up for coaching to help them with that influx of change.

There were ways, when you think about the pandemic, that forced us to slow down. We could no longer entertain ourselves at restaurants and theaters and concerts and bars and whatever. We could not get on airplanes and trains and automobiles and go see our people. We weren't allowed to engage in the world in the way that we used to. So it did force us to slow down in terms of our physical movement on the earth, moving around and seeing people and spending time with them. It required us to find other ways to entertain ourselves.

At the beginning, for me, I will say it actually felt like a really nice change of pace. I was out. In an effort to offer coaching, help people, help school leaders understand how coaching benefits them, I was out on tour basically. I had written a book. I had just started this podcast. I was on foot. I was shaking hands. I was going to conferences, networking like crazy. Purposing presentations and doing anything I could to share this work with the world of education, and I was tired.

I was on planes. I was in hotels. I was at conferences. I was presenting. I was keynote speaking. I was trying to expose education to life coaching concepts, strategies, and tools with every ounce of energy that I had. I loved it. I am so grateful for those opportunities. I have been able to present and be keynote speaker. I love all of that, and I do want to get back to that. When the pandemic hit and it forced me to cancel all my flights, cancel all of the conferences. We weren't able to go anywhere.

First I panicked because I was like how am I going to get ahold of school leaders and get this information into their hands? Which thankfully for this podcast has been the conduit between you and I in terms of how to support you in this pandemic era, okay? At first I panicked, but as I slowed down I

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started to notice whoa. I was spending so much energy and time traveling, booking traveling, booking hotels, applying to get into conferences, writing proposals, writing up presentations. It was how I spent the bulk of my time. Promoting my book, going on book tours, going to offer the book to all the people.

I had to physically slow my body down, and it was hard because my mind was going 200 miles an hour. My emotions and my momentum was going 200 miles an hour, but now I was stuck here trying to figure out what was Zoom? How do I use it? How do I help people in this online format? We really had to slow down.

What I noticed in myself was how I had become so used to being busy. I was always on the go. I was always trying to engage at work and at home. I was consumed with being out and meeting people, telling them I'm a life coach and making offers to help them. How can I help you feel better about the work you're doing? How can I coach you up? How can I coach you out if that's what you desire? How can I help you? That was my mission.

So I noticed that I didn't know how to just be still. I didn't know how to be alone and just be with myself without feeling like I should be busy. I should be going. I noticed this across the board. As clients were coming in, they too felt like they needed to be on the go busy, busy, busy all the time. If they weren't, they felt like something had gone wrong. Not being in motion was very uncomfortable for many of us.

I didn't know how to feel bored or how to feel restless and just let it be okay. I didn't know how to not entertain myself with human interaction in person, in real life. I wasn't just how to entertain myself without being out in the world. This pandemic hits us and forces us to slow down. It brought up to the surface how often we are distracting ourselves from life, from

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emotions that we don't like to feel like boredom or restlessness or the discomfort of sitting and not doing.

What many people did in the world, and you probably did this too as did I. There were times where we started to just find other ways to consume without slowing down. To avoid slowing down actually. We started baking. We started watching *Tiger King*. We started eating or over drinking or over working out or bingeing Netflix or catching up on millions of podcasts or YouTube videos or whatever. All the things, right? Reading books. We were consuming, consuming as a nation, but just in other ways.

I was in Costco shortly after the pandemic released and people were able to go back into Costco without the line and getting temperature checks and all of that. I was speaking with one of the employees. She said 50% of Costco's sales during the pandemic were alcohol. 50% of their profit or their sales in total was from alcohol. People definitely were finding alternate ways to be busy or entertain themselves. When they couldn't be busy, they slowed their mind down with alcohol so that they didn't have to feel bored or restless or sit with themselves without giving into the urge to do, do, do more, more, more.

So I've thought about this a lot during the pandemic. What I've noticed is we fill our time up with things and being busy because we've been conditioned to not slow down. We're told not to slow down. We think slowing down is a bad thing. We think that it's less productive and that it's lazy. We label it as a negative action. The inaction as a negative action.

I know all you type As out there are just like me. We don't want to be ever labeled as less productive or lazy. That's a very bad thing in our mind, right? We want to always be in high productivity mode because we make not being productive mean that we're not being at our best or that we're being a lazy person. We're labeling ourselves.

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So I've watched myself and other people respond to having to slow down, and it's fascinating. Because although we say we're really busy and that there's so much to do and not enough time. When we were given time, when we were invited to slow down, that drove us more crazy. We had to sit with slowing down and not being busy. So I want to sell you on why slowing down on purpose helps you as a school leader.

Number one, slowing down helps bring you to this current moment. When you slow down and you think about what's right in front of you, you don't focus on the past or the future. You're looking at what's here right now that I need to address. When you have the belief "I only need to focus on what's right here in front of me right now" as a school leader. When you have that thought, you will never feel stressed out.

I repeat this. When you truly believe that what's in front of me right now is the only thing I need to be focused on and you slow down and are just in that moment, you aren't stressing about what happened in the past or what you need to get done in the future. Because all you're thinking about is right there right now.

So when you come into work, and you have your calendar planned and you're sitting down at your desk. It says work on the board report. You are actually working on the board report. The only thing that matters in that moment is the board report. Now what you did yesterday and not what you need to do tomorrow. You slow down and you're in that moment. You get that work done before you start thinking about the next thing.

Now, I know what your brain's saying. "That sounds lovely, but people need my attention. They're asking if I have a minute. Somebody is interrupting me. There is a child that needs my support on campus." If those things happen, you can put structures in place to minimize them. When they truly do happen, and they do. We know this. You say to yourself, "This child

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needs me in this moment right now. That is what my focus is, and that's all I need to do." It's no longer about the board report.

If you get interrupted, a child needs your support and you have to go out onto campus and help a child, that's it. That's what you're doing in that moment. Instead of being frustrated that you got interrupted and you were supposed to honor your calendar and you were supposed to do the board meeting minutes or whatever.

A child had a meltdown, and now you're upset. The way you approach that child is going to be very different than when you approach the child from the mindset of, "This is my work right here, right now. This is all I need to be focused on." So slowing down and practicing the art of slowing down brings you to the current moment and releases you from the stress of the past and the future.

Number two, slowing down creates clarity and perspective. When you slow yourself down, what you're doing is giving yourself time to clean up the thoughts in your brain that aren't serving you. You adjust your perspective. You stop for a moment and notice, "Oh, I'm thinking I shouldn't be interrupted today. That's a funny thought because that is always true. I always get interrupted, but I'm thinking that I shouldn't. Every time I'm thinking that I should not have interruptions today and they come, that really upsets me."

It's kind of funny because why am I thinking I shouldn't be interrupted? Why do I have that thought? Where is that thought coming from? It doesn't serve you. It doesn't serve the people you're serving on your campus, and it makes you frustrated. So when you say, "Of course I'm getting interrupted. I'm a school leader. That's my job. My job is to get interrupted. When the interruptions come in, I welcome them. I invite them in. What you got? What's going on? How can I help?"

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Now I say that because I remember having this argument within myself about interruptions. I finally noticed how ludicrous it was in my mind to be thinking I shouldn't be interrupted and I'm so frustrated and annoyed when people are interrupting me when in reality my job was to be interrupted all day long.

So I still planned my calendar, but when I did get interrupted I let it happen. I also learned how to mitigate and neutralize and minimize interruptions by putting systems in place. I wasn't just sitting there waiting for an interruption to walk into the door. I wasn't inviting them in unintentionally. I had to learn that balance of honoring my calendar and getting things done and putting systems in place to minimize interruptions, but I also stopped believing that I shouldn't be interrupted. Once I did that, I felt so much better.

So slowing down your brain helps you adjust your perspective. It helps you realign to your values. What am I believing? What do I want to believe? What's working? What's not? What's the priority? What can I eliminate? It helps you refocus. That is a benefit to slowing down. You want to have time in your day that feels slow. That is giving you that time to look and observe yourself, how you're engaging in your job, how you're engaging with other people, and what's working and what's not. Where are you feeling resistance? Like I was feeling resistance to interruptions.

Once I realized oh, I don't need to resist interruptions. I just need to acknowledge that is the job. I let go of all that pain around interruptions. It felt like a miracle to me when I made that realization. All that happened was the way I thought about interruptions. The framework, the mindset around interruptions shifted and I felt better immediately. I no longer had to argue that interruptions should not be part of my day.

Number three, slowing down mentally helps you slow down emotionally which helps you slow down physically. When you slow down your brain and

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you look at it and you observe it, you get out of fight or flight mode and that constant adrenaline rush. It helps you slow down your body and your emotions so that you can get back into your prefrontal cortex and you can observe your current situation with more neutrality. It helps you make decisions from facts versus reacting emotionally like a gut reaction or stalling out in inaction because you feel fear or doubt or overwhelm.

So slowing down mentally helps you emotionally relax, helps you physically relax. We all know the benefits of relaxing our physical body and our emotional body and our mental body. All of that has to work together, but you start with the mind.

Okay. One more thing about slowing down. This is something that I have personally had to experience over the last few months. As my business has been growing and more and more school leaders are saying yes to life coaching and are actively in my audience and in my clientele, we've got the Facebook group popping over there. It's so much fun. I've had to slow down in terms of wanting to be out in the frontend of my business where I'm selling and I'm marketing and I'm creating content for you all and podcasting and webinars and trainings and videos and all of those things that I absolutely love to do. I could just do it all day long every day.

I've had to slow myself down and work on the backend of my business. You can do this in your school as well. You will know when you need to do this because systems will be breaking down. Protocols won't be working. It's when you know you need to build foundational systems at your campus level. It might be a behavior management program, or it might be systemizing your lunch or your master schedule or recess or bus duty or something big like that where it's impacting...

You know how you have everyday you're kind of dealing with dismissal's a problem and you're just out there trying to put a Band-Aid on it. You have to

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slow down and say like, “What is the problem? What’s the problem behind the problem and how do we solve for that?” What do we do at an operational level, at a systematic level that’s going to solve and smooth out this process for the long haul?

This will feel very counterproductive and uncomfortable. We don’t like the slow down. We just want to get out there and deal with dismissal for that ten minutes a day versus taking two hours out of our day and really analyzing what’s going on, where’s the crunch, where are the hiccups, how can we smooth this out. Retraining your entire community on these are the new dismissal procedures so that we can have a smoother dismissal.

All of the work that goes into creating the back end of your leadership operations I call them, like your campus operations. Most of us don’t want to be doing that. We want to be out doing kind of the in the spotlight things. We want to be out mingling with the people or we want to be in the classrooms, or we want to be in the campus with the kids. Sometimes, I’m going to say 50%, we need to be doing that backend work.

So slowing down helps you build the foundation of your leadership and the foundation of your campus operations. Your leadership operations, your campus operations. Part of the backend work involves reflecting on your own leadership skills, but this is talking about slowing yourself down on purpose in order to solve problems that are more systemic in nature.

So lots of reasons to slow down. Why don’t we? If we know slowing down helps us physically, mentally, and emotionally, if we know it helps our campus, helps our students, helps our staff. If we know it brings us clarity and perspective and if we know it helps us be in the moment and avoid stress of the past and the future, why don’t we do it? Let’s talk about it. What are the obstacles that get in the way?

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Number one, shiny penny syndrome in education. Y'all know what I'm talking about. The shiny penny over there. It's the next great thing. Education is so good at this. It's the next great thing, right. We are so busy looking for the latest and greatest and the trendiest thing that we don't even give time for the last priority or the last initiative or whatever we're implementing to work out. It's what's going on this year? What's going on next year?

Why do we do this? Because we'd rather keep jumping onto the new things and trying new things and being mesmerized by what's new out there than do the real work that it takes to have the patience and solve for the obstacles that come up with the current initiative. Slowing down requires us to observe and analyze for ourselves what's working? What's not working? What do we need to adjust? Is this true that we need to adjust anything, or does it need more time? How much time have we given it? Our brains are really good at saying, "Uh, we've had this in full swing for like a month now. Not seeing any changes."

Slowing down requires us to give ourselves and our priorities and our initiatives and our goals time to work. We don't want to give something time. We want the solution, the result, the outcome right now, right here. When it doesn't happen immediately, we think something's gone wrong and that we have to change it. That it's the thing that doesn't work.

If you have ever been on a diet of any kind, if you've followed some kind of diet protocol out there in the world, you get on the diet. First of all you're like, "Why haven't I lost weight? I'm following the diet." A week later, still haven't lost weight. Two weeks later, still haven't lost weight. Must be the diet. No. We haven't given it time. We haven't given our body time to adjust to that diet and to go through the discomfort of having to say no to certain foods or certain times of eating or whatever protocol you're trying. If

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you're implementing it with fidelity, the reason the diet doesn't work is because we stopped, we quit, we didn't do the thing.

So for anything to work, it first requires us to believe it will work. Without a doubt. 100% belief. That's hard to do. You can't jump from not believing something all the way over to believing. You have to build up your rungs of belief that something will work. So if you're on a diet and you are, let's say no flour, no sugar. This is something that really works well for my body. I do low flour, low sugar. Pretty much no flour, low sugar. For that to work for me, I have to first believe that it's possible for it to work. So this means spending time and energy working on where we believe it's going to work and where we still doubt.

So at school if you're implementing a program, I know one of the things we implemented at my school was Responsive Classroom. We used it as a school wide approach to building community and teaching kids' self-regulation, behavior management. It was an all-encompassing program. We had to believe that Responsive Classroom was our solution. We chose it. We researched it. We investigated it. We decided it was the right fit for our school, and we started to implement it one component at a time. We believe in the program fully.

So when we started implementing the program, of course it didn't work. The kids were like what? The teachers were like what? I could have said, "Responsive Classroom? Yeah, that doesn't work. Sounds good, but it doesn't really work. Onto something else." No. How do we make Responsive Classroom work? What components of Responsive Classroom do work for us? How much time are we willing to give it? We have to retrain kids. We have to retrain ourselves in these specific strategies. So you keep working to believe that that is the solution in order to keep taking the action to implement it to the degree in which it actually works.

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One of the thoughts that I love to believe is that everything works. What if we decided to believe that everything works? No matter what you decide, what program, what initiative, what priority and focus. Whatever that is, it will work 100%. What would happen if you believed that? That the only reason it won't work is because of some little adjustment or tweak we need to make. Some little mindset or thought work we have to do. What if we believe the only reason it works is because of something we need to do to make it work? When we say that something doesn't work, what we're really saying is that we don't want to admit where we haven't done the work.

So with Responsive Classroom, if teachers were out there saying, "Responsive Classroom doesn't work. I've tried it." I would ask what have you tried? How many times have you tried it? What do you feel doesn't work and why? What do you think is going on? It wasn't Responsive Classroom's problem. It was people's thoughts about Responsive Classroom, or what they thought they implemented and what they actually implemented.

I know you understand this. I'm sure you're all out there with initiatives right now wanting your teachers to have buy-in and to believe and fully implement with fidelity as we used to say. The truth is that everything can work, but we have to believe in it.

So think of something you fully believe in right now. 100% believe in. When I think 100% belief in I love my son. I love my kids. I love my spouse. I love my partner. I 100% believe that. When I 100% believe that I love my family, I do the work that comes with loving them even when it's hard. Even when I'm not feeling the love back, I love them fiercely. I show up with love.

I love them even when it's hard to love them and I want to strangle them. But I believe with 100% that I love my family without a doubt. Zero doubts. So what happens is even when days are hard or even when I don't show

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up as my best self or even when I have failed at loving them, I continue to love them and believe that I love them without any need for evidence.

So when you're leading your school, there are times when you have to believe in something or believe in your teachers, believe in a program, believe in an initiative, believe in a goal without the need for evidence in order to believe it. The same can work for you in the opposite direction.

I see this so many times with job satisfaction and with people's relationships with time and money. Clients will say that they can't imagine going to work as much as they love summer break. They can't even imagine that.

When you believe that your job is so hard, or you believe that there's no way to have more time or have more money or that you can feel sufficient with the time and money that you actually have right now. When you believe that none of those can be true, you're constantly looking outside of yourself for the next thing to fix it. You want to get a different job. You want to get a job that requires less of your time. You want to get a job that makes more money. You're constantly looking outside of yourself. If this program didn't work, then we're going to try that program. Then that program doesn't work, we're going to try this program.

Instead of looking at our thoughts about the program or the goal or the staff or the people, whatever it is. Our money, our time, our resources. We think we have to change the resources, change the people, change the program. Fire that person, hire another person. Get more money in from the state. Get more support systems in place. Get more tools. Get more resources. Get more technology. Or we think we have to switch jobs in order to feel better. Or we think we have to delegate more in order to have more time.

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We're looking at everything outside of us instead of looking at our thoughts about it before we pounce onto the next shiny penny. So what happens is the new thing comes out and we drop our belief in the current approach, and then we try the new thing. We just get into that cycle over and over and over versus committing to the current thing until we get the results that we want.

I'll say this. It feels really good to be on the cutting edge, but only if it's working for you in your school. Shiny penny syndrome is different than the cutting edge in that the shiny syndrome you bail as soon as something feels hard or doesn't work. When you're on the cutting edge of something, it means you're willing to be a pioneer in figuring out how to solve a problem that hasn't been solved before. That's what life coaching for educators is doing. What I think we're offering here is cutting edge versus shiny penny.

Now is there ever a time where you evaluate a program and adjust or maybe you decide to continue? Absolutely. If you've given a current program 100% implementation. You've given it time. You've adjusted for improvements. You've tracked the progress. The gap between where you were and where you are now and where you want to be can be solved by moving to a new program then make that decision.

Notice why you're making it. Are you making it because it's a shiny penny and it's the next new thing and that sounds really fun and this one doesn't really work and it's too hard? Or if you've gone through the entire process of implementation or more or different or adjustment. Just notice how you're making the decision to make the change. Is it based on data and facts, and you've given it plenty of time? Or is it the shiny penny syndrome? That's obstacle number one.

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A follow up to that, number two, is FOMO. Fear of missing out. In education we're constantly watching what other schools and other districts and other campuses and other school leaders are doing. We're looking around. We're going to the conferences. We're talking to people. What are you doing? What are you thinking? When you do that, it's not to say you don't want to network and you don't want to collaborate.

But when we're thinking that catching onto somebody else and not doing what other people are doing and questioning yourself, like what should I be doing? Am I missing something? Should I be doing that? When you're questioning all of that, you're looking outside of yourself. You're not trusting your own leadership.

If you can't trust your own leadership, how do you expect your staff to trust you if you can't trust you? You have to practice trusting in yourself versus looking around you and being fearful that you're missing out or you're doing something wrong or you're not doing the right thing or you're not keeping up, which is the third obstacle. The myth of keeping up.

So if you're always on the lookout for what am I missing? Fear of missing out. What do I need to know? I need to be in the know. There's a lot of principals who feel like they have to be updated on the latest and greatest of everything, and you want to be able to speak to the trendy topics. That all involves your brain wanting something or someone outside of you and believing that that is where the answer is versus considering the idea that maybe the answer is within you, and that your campus has everything it needs in full sufficiency. You're going to give the things you already have plenty of time and attention so that they can work.

Number three, the myth of keeping up. We are taught by society and by our mentors to keep up, to not get behind. We need to know everything, do everything, try everything. We're always being distracted with something

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new and keeping up with the new. So we feel really behind in some way when we're comparing ourselves and then worrying about what other people are doing.

We end up scrambling and getting to the next thing, bringing in the shiny penny, and spending our time and energy focusing on what other people are doing so that we can feel like we're keeping up and that we're not behind. It becomes a really negative output cycle because we are chasing our own tail is what's happening. We're looking outside of us, but we're chasing our own tail going in circles.

Slowing down on purpose helps us measure what we're truly after, decide how we'll know if we have even achieved that goal or outcome, and it will help us stay on track and methodically keep approaching the goal without feeling the need to chase or keep up or try something new or the fear of missing out.

So with all of that going on in our brain, it's no wonder we don't want to slow down. We're told not to slow down. We're told to hustle. Keep up the big fight or energy or whatever it is. Keep going, keep going, don't stop. Relentless commitment. That was what one of my superintendent's phrases. It felt like if you ever let down and slowed down you were doing it wrong.

That can't be true. Slowing down is the opposite. It's a benefit. Your teachers need to see you slowing down so that they can take a breath and slow down. You will set the tone for that. You set the pace. If you're a runner out there, you set the pace. The leader sets that pace of how fast people are going to go.

So how do you combat these obstacles? How can you overcome the shiny penny, the FOMO, and the myth of keeping up? The answer in one simple

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term is life coaching. Life coaching sounds like the shiny new object right now. I know because I've been in life coaching. Well, I've been a life coach for over four years, but I've been in the industry for over 10 years.

I took life coach training my second year of school leadership in 2012. I did it for personal reasons, but I have been in the life coaching community for over a decade. And I believe that it's just now starting to tap into the surface of education. Life coaching is new for many of you. It feels like you might be jumping on the bandwagon. Or if you've heard of life coaching for a while, you're like, "Oh that too shall pass."

Here's what's different about life coaching and coaching yourself. Learning to coach your mind in order to create results that you want and learning how to slow your life down so that you can experience as much of life as possible. Life coaching is different in that you can't unlearn it. Once you understand the tools and the strategies and how to implement them in both your personal life and your professional life, you can't unknow that ever. No one can take it away from you.

It is an education. It is a learning. It is a way of approaching your career and your life in a way that you've never experienced it before. Once you know that, you can't go back. It's like the first time you learn how to drive a car. Once you've tasted the freedom that comes with getting your license and getting behind the wheel and being able to take yourself wherever you want, you can't unknow that freedom.

Coaching, in my opinion, has been the most valuable learning of my life. The way that you slow down yourself and the way that you experience school leadership and work/life balance and relationships and having sufficiency around time and money and resources, building community, experiencing things in life you never thought was possible. The way that it happens is through your mind. So coaching, for me, has been the most

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valuable learning of my life. It's helping me to experience my career and my life in ways I could not have imagined. It's helping me expand my impact on the world.

Combating these obstacles has to happen in your mind. It can't happen from changing your circumstances, changing the situation you're in, changing jobs, changing districts, changing schools, changing out your staff, changing curriculum companies or programs. None of that helps you feel like you're keeping up, feel like you're not missing out, feel like you're getting the latest and greatest thing. What helps you with those obstacles is readjusting the way you see them in the first place.

So my pitch to you is that life coaching, the tools and strategies that I have taught, and I am learning throughout the course of my life and how I've implemented as a school leader, that's just the beginning. It's here to stay because you can't unknow it. When you learn it and then you give it to your staff and then they're able to give it to kids, they can't unknow it.

Slowing down on purpose is all about creating the experiences you want in your life in your mind first. Letting yourself have the time and the focus to create results from thinking about what it is you want and how you think you will need to get there. Then adjusting that approach over and over and over until you reach it. So you can have work/life balance. You can create an amazing school campus. You can raise test scores. You can increase graduation rates. You can do anything if you slow down on purpose and think through the thoughts that you will have to believe in order to get you there. The way you do that is through life coaching.

With that, have an amazing week. I love you all. I will talk to you next week. Take care. Bye.

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If this podcast resonates with you, you have to sign up for the Empowered Principal coaching program. It's my exclusive one to one coaching and mentorship program for school leaders who believe in possibility. This program is designed for principals who are hungry for the fastest transformation in the industry. If you want to create the best connections, impact, and legacy for yourself and your school, the Empowered Principal program was designed for you. Join me at angelakellycoaching.com/work-dash-with-me to learn more. I'd love to support you in becoming an empowered school leader.

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