

Bonus #1 (COVID is Not Over)



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to September 2021, bonus episode number one.

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 leaders. Welcome to this month's bonus episodes. I have been working with so many school leaders, and I felt very compelled to put together a three part bonus series throughout the month of September to discuss what you are currently dealing with right now. This is something that I talked about at the beginning of the pandemic, which is the emotional tsunami that would be hitting our schools once students and staff came back to campus.

We're going to be talking about this in three different parts. So I want you to take each one of these and spend some time thinking about what I am sharing with you today. Okay. Bonus episode number one. COVID is not over. We all expected this pandemic to have subsided by the start of this school year, the 2021 school year if you're listening to this in real time. If not, welcome to the party. If you're listening to this in the future, we are going through a pandemic as I speak.

So it's September 2021. The kids have been out of school in some form since March of 2020. So the end of their school year two years ago, all of last year, now here we are going back to school in some form, in some way. Every school is doing it differently. We really did expect by this school year that the pandemic was going to be over.

The kids have been out of school for over a year. We feel this urgency to get them back in the classrooms. Parents want the kids back in the

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classrooms. Businesses. Everybody who was employing parents wants the kids back in classrooms so that parents can get back to work. Kids want to be back with their friends. Teachers want to be back with their students. You want to be back with your staff. We all feel urgency to get back into the classrooms and get onto campus.

We feel a lot of panic when we think about kids being one and a half plus years behind. We have a lot of thoughts around behind. If you want to talk about behind, listen to my podcast on the myth of behind. I believe and I teach that this concept of being behind and having students feel behind all of the time and teachers being pressured because the school's behind and the test scores are behind. That's all a big myth that we've created unnecessary panic and suffering over. Okay. Go to that episode if you want to talk more about that.

But we do. We feel this urgency and this panic that kids are super behind, and that now we are super behind, and we've got to get them back on track. And I want to add that we felt this little surge of hope when the vaccines came out. We started feeling hopeful and excited and relieved that this pandemic was going to be over. We believed that going into this year, we were going to feel better. The school year was going to feel easier.

Then Delta hit. Even more contagious than before, than its previous variants. It was breaking through vaccinated bodies, people. It was going rampant in younger and younger people, younger children, younger adults. Which brought it right back full circle to the schools, putting a focus on the schools. You as the school leaders had to put protocols back in place, but this time around we're not doing it for the first time. We're not doing it for the second time. We are not doing it out of fear of getting sick and not understanding the virus.

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We are in complete COVID fatigue. We are sick and tired of talking about getting sick. We don't want to talk about it. We don't want to deal with masks and social distancing and quarantining and contact tracing. All of that. We don't want to do any of that. What we want to do is teach and lead our school. We want to talk about programming and instruction and innovation and teaching and learning and collaborations and PLCs and SEL and all the things that we love to talk about as educators. We don't want to talk about pandemic policies. We want to talk about innovative instructional practices. People are frustrated beyond belief.

Yet, despite all of that, we have no way to change this. People are feeling really annoyed, very upset. They're irritated, frustrated, all of it. Lots of anger. In my conversations with both my one on one clients and my mastermind students, the sentiment is the same. We are all in resistance of the current reality. Our minds want to tell us that we should be over this thing. We should be moving forward. We shouldn't be talking about COVID. We shouldn't have to deal with COVID. It's been long enough. We don't have time to keep dealing with this. We've got to get to business. We've got to get back to teaching and learning. We don't want to deal with it.

Here is the deal. COVID is not done with us. We might be done with COVID, but COVID's not done with us. This is not over yet. We don't know the truth of when it will be over. We can't see the finish line quite yet. Because of that and wanting it to be over and thinking it would be over, having these high expectations, we feel angry and frustrated. We're in resistance to this reality. That resistance to what's happening is adding lawyers of pain to your school year. It's adding painful emotions and experiences that come with being a school leader or a teacher for that matter.

Now I'm not saying turn that frown upside down and just be happy that COVID's here and skip into the office blowing bubbles about campus. No. I'm suggesting that you take a moment to experience the actual emotion

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that you're feeling. For many of us when we're feeling some level of anger, the frustration and the resentment and the resistance, all of that. What's really going on at a deeper level is that we're masking another emotion. In the case of COVID, what most of us are actually feeling is disappointment and grief and sadness.

We're disappointed that this year isn't back to normal, as we all want to say. We are sad that we have protocols still in place and we can't hug and touch and high five and be in close quarters with all of our colleagues and our teachers and our friends and our staff. We are actually sad. We are grieving the loss of human life. The loss of parents, the loss of students, the loss of colleagues, the loss of friends, the loss of family members.

We are in a period of mourning, and it's not over yet. We don't want to be in this depth of sadness, but that's where we're at. We're aching to take off the masks and stand side by side one another and gather in large groups. So what's happening is we are mourning the loss of our expectations for the school year.

With that said. If you want to tap into some joy and some enjoyment of your school year, what you have to do is drop the resistance to the reality that COVID isn't over just yet. It will be some day, but I can't tell you when. None of us can. Dr. Fauci cannot tell you when this will be over. We have to allow ourselves the experience of disappointment and sadness and grief. Invite these feelings in. Let them in. Let them resonate in your body. Let them vibrate. Feel the sadness, feel the disappointment, feel the grief. Let our mind think about all the things that are causing the disappointment and the sadness and the grief, and allow you to let it all go.

Now you might need to do this more than once. You might have to do it on a regular basis until your mind is ready to release its grip on what it thinks should be happening versus accepting and allowing what is happening. Once you're able to allow that disappointment and sadness to be present,

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the anger and frustration start to melt away. This is what allows you to shift into a more positive focus and enjoy the year even during a pandemic

I want to invite you into the Empowered Principal Program to learn tools and strategies for handling anything that comes your way, including a long term pandemic. Now is the time to embrace this school year and make it your best one ever. It is possible, even during the pandemic. To schedule a consult with me, simply go to the show notes and click on the provided link for the empowered principal one on one coaching program.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit 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.