

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 201.

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 my empowered leaders. Happy Tuesday. Welcome to November. I really hope you enjoyed last week's podcast on the 200th episode with the Empowered Principal mastermind students. They are phenomenal and amazing and have so much insight. I really hope you enjoyed listening to all that they had to share and offer to you.

I'm inviting each and every one of you to become an Empowered Principal member. You can sign up to have one-on-one coaching with me directly. After that experience, you can upgrade to the Empowered Principal Mastermind where you can join likeminded school leaders.

You can collaborate and support one another in your leadership goals and your lifestyle goals so that you can have these really deep and enriching conversations with colleagues who think like you think, who have goals like you have. And who contribute to the value of education and school leadership in a way that is blowing the minds of superintendents and other school leaders and teachers, parents.

These people in my mastermind group. These are my early adopters, and they are doing so many amazing things. I invite you to be a part of doing the same.

So for this podcast, this is going to be a short and sweet podcast because I'm going to invite you into the Empowered Principal Facebook group.

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

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

We've got a few hundred people over there. I've decided to create a monthly challenge or a monthly theme that we're working on for the month.

So the month of November is going to be the 50:50 Challenge. So you'll want to be in the group. You'll watch the video. I just recorded a Facebook live in the group about the 50:50 Challenge and why we're doing it. I'm going to talk about it here today so that you can get started.

Now if you're hearing this and it's already the middle of November, don't worry. This podcast might not even come out until the middle of November. I'm trying to get it first thing in November, but if not no worries. Jump in.

Here's the deal. I'm going to talk to you about the 50:50 Challenge. I'm going to talk to you about why we're doing the 50:50 Challenge and how to do the 50:50 Challenge, the benefits of it. And it doesn't matter if you join in halfway. What matters then is that you're trying out this concept and you're trying it on and playing with it and noticing how it impacts the way you lead and the way you feel about how you lead.

Okay. So let me dive into it very quickly. The 50:50 Challenge, I really need to acknowledge one of my empowered principals out there. Her name is Julie Wagee. She is a principal who has been in the Empowered Principal program since the summer. She joined the Summer of Fun challenge that I offered to school leaders back in June and July. She won. She posted a bunch, and she was very active in it. She won a free coaching package with me.

So she coached with me for a month. So I know her personally. Her post on another Facebook principal page caught my attention. It really inspired me to try and offer support and solutions to all school leaders. So Julie, thank you for inspiring this.

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

I am honored to offer this to you as a challenge, and in a good way in the sense that there are lots of things that go wrong in school leadership. There are lots of things that feel hard, and they feel insurmountable. They feel heartbreaking. They crush your spirits sometimes. They crush your fatigue, your physical energy, your mental energy, your emotional energy.

I want to offer this 50:50 Challenge as a concept for you to create the feeling of balance in your life, in your profession. It's a very simple concept. It was taught to me by my master coach Brooke Castillo. It's really helped me see how life is meant to be 50:50. It's meant to be both positive and negative. It's meant to be good and bad, easy and hard, fun and not fun. It's meant to be challenging and it's meant to be with ease.

So most people's brains focus on the bad, the hard, the upsetting. What's annoying, what's frustrating, what isn't working, what we don't have, what we can't do. It goes to the negative. It feels bad for us. It complains. It kind of whines. It has a little self-pity in there. It actually commiserates with itself.

So once something bad has happened, you had a bad day or a bad thing happened or a bad week, your brain's like looking for all of the reasons why this job is hard. Why it's not fun, why it's too challenging, why it never feels good, how hard it is. Every time something happens that your brain doesn't like, it's going to list it on the list and say, "Hey, see, I told you. This has been a bad day or a bad week or a bad school year."

Our brains are wired to do that. It's called confirmation bias. It goes out into the world and it's like, "I believe I'm having a bad day. Therefore I'm going to ensure that my belief is correct. I'm going to collect evidence to show how bad it is. Right?"

Now it's not a problem except that when we don't manage it, when we don't acknowledge that there's good with the bad, it can feel out of control. It can feel like life is happening to us. It can feel like we don't have agency to

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

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

change it. We don't have the influence or impact within our own control to change it. That's the problem. The problem is not that bad days happen. The problem is that we think we don't have control over how we feel about bad days because we think the solution is to not have them, to eliminate them. That's not the goal.

So the challenge that I'm offering in the group is not an exercise in positive thinking or looking for the silver lining or ignoring the bad, pretending it's not there. Or just generating a lot of gratitude. Look, hey, there is nothing wrong with gratitude. I highly promote it. I highly encourage it because it's a highly powerful emotion to lead your life and your school with.

This isn't an exercise in just positive thinking or being a Pollyanna. What this exercise is about is training your brain to give equal airtime to the 50:50 balance of your work. You want to learn how to do this because this exercise helps you neutralize the high and low emotional cycle that we get into. It helps you not be at the mercy of your emotions or of the hard parts of this work.

The goal here is to create awareness of the emotions that you're feeling and notice how there really is a 50:50 balance to the day or the week or the school year or the job. A lot of times we blame the position or the job, the work we do within this job as the problem. Here's the truth. We are not supposed to be happy all the time. We're not supposed to only feel positive emotions. I know this kind of is a downer. It's not the truth we want to hear.

I invite you to embrace it, and here's why. Things are not supposed to go as planned. We want to tell our brain the truth. Because when we do then we get to say oh, this is the part where I thought it was going to work out but it's not. It should have gone smoother, but it didn't. I had this planned, and I got interrupted. It's not going the way we wanted. It's not going the way we planned.

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

The pain of this job, this career, that pain point we feel is the resistance to the bad day. We have the belief this shouldn't be happening. This shouldn't be taking so long. This shouldn't have gone this way. I had this planned, and this happened instead. That person shouldn't be mad. This person shouldn't be yelling at me. This person should have done their work.

When we get into that and we resist the truth of what is, it feels worse. On top of that, our brain looks for all the ways in which it is worse. Then we kind of spin out in what I call the overwhelm cycle. It's like a rollercoaster. You're on the highs of the good days and the lows of the bad days, and you're not driving the rollercoaster. You're just sitting in the backseat letting the rollercoaster take you wherever it takes you.

What I want to teach you is how to get in the driver train of that roller coaster and notice. It's not that you're just avoiding the rollercoaster. What's happening is you are acknowledging the ups and downs. You're having fun when it's an up and you're having fun when it's a down noticing that it's all a part of the ride.

So the goal isn't to avoid negative days or bad days or hard days. The goal is to embrace that it's not an all or none game that we're playing here. It's 50:50. Sometimes we win. Sometimes we lose. There's good. There's bad. Sometimes it's great. Sometimes it's awful.

In this realization, it makes the bad days better because this is the part where we say, "Oh this is the 50:50. This is the half of my experience that doesn't feel good. But I can handle that. It is overwhelming. This is hard. I'm thinking that it shouldn't be, but this is the part where it is hard. This is the part where I'm not sure what to do. This is the part where I spill my lunch on the floor. This is the part where we have to quarantine kids for COVID. I don't like this part." You can just feel the disappointment or feel the annoyance or feel the frustration.

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

Now what's going to happen when you take this challenge is that you're going to have resistance to it. Your brain is not going to want to do it. Here's why. Your brain is going to tell you this is dumb. I don't have time for this. This is silly. This won't work. This has no value. This isn't making me a better school leader. Why would I spend time on this?

The brain wants it to be true that it should be happy all the time. That you shouldn't experience bad days. That you shouldn't have the 50:50. It wants to argue this, okay.

It's going to complain about the hard days because here's why. You get some benefit. When you complain or you tell people and you commiserate your story, number one people give you lots of love. You get comforted and you get to feel better. Two, people say, "Yeah, like I get it. I had the same thing." Then you feel like oh I'm not in this alone. I'm a part of the tribe. I'm a part of the group where this is really hard and we're all in this together. That feels good.

There's nothing wrong with doing that other than you are reinforcing the belief that it's all or none or that it shouldn't be the way that it is. This is when we get caught in the overwhelm cycle because the goal here is to feel in control, is to feel the balance of the 50:50. To be like, "Oh, those good days. Those are amazing. Guess what? The bad days, I'm learning and growing too. I'm going to take them all. I'm inviting them all in."

So we are going to spend the next 30 days throughout the month of November in the Empowered Principal Facebook group inviting ourselves to create emotional balance in our workday. So that we can feel more in control of our emotions, our physical fatigue, our mental fatigue, our ability to hold space for other humans and ourselves. The grace of failing and trying again. Learning from the hard days, making something meaningful even though it's hard.

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

We're going to challenge ourselves to experience each day mentally, emotionally, and physically. Manage the way we use our time and where we put in our effort and to notice that our thoughts create our emotions.

So you will feel resistance to this because your brain is not going to want to do this. Here's why. It wants you to stay in the story because it believes if it stays in the story where it's happening to me and I don't have any control, the brain doesn't have to take any responsibility and ownership of managing the mind and managing the emotions that come with it. It gets to continue believing that life just happens to you.

Look, I get it. I do this too. All of our brains do this. I don't want to be a human who feels like life only happens to me and that I have no control over it. I want to feel in control even when I'm feeling a negative emotion. I want to offer the same for you. We don't want to use our brains against ourselves.

So your brain is going to default to the negative. That's okay. It's not to beat ourselves up. It's not to say we aren't capable of doing this. I'm sharing the obstacles ahead of time so that you can come up with solutions. So if you feel resistance to this challenge or you don't want to post every day or you don't want people to see your business, you want to coach yourself on that.

Tell yourself, "What do I want more? Do I want to feel in control over my experience as a school leader or do I want to believe it's happening to me? Which do I want more? What am I willing to feel in order to feel I have more control or to be more in control of my time and my energy." There will be some discomfort. That's okay. There's growth in that discomfort.

So there's the solution to the obstacle. Your brain's going to say, "I don't have time. I don't want to do this. This is silly. Doesn't make sense." The solution is to acknowledge that. Yeah, sometimes you're going to fail. You're going to get on that high low rollercoaster. You're going to indulge in

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

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

commiserating or complaining or whining or whatever, feel sorry for yourself. You're going to question how much I can take and blaming other people for your feelings. That's all okay. That's a part of the human experience.

The goal's not to avoid that roller coaster experience. The goal is to notice when you're on it and gently remind yourself that you can step off at any time and that you can get back into the driver's seat. You can take a break, right.

So here's the challenge in summary. Join the Facebook group first of all. Introduce yourself. I want to know who you are and where you're leading and what you're leading and what you love about your job and what's hard. So tell me all the things. So join the group. Introduce yourself.

For 30 days you're going to post the lows, the hard parts, the problems you face or what was hard or what was frustrating, and you're going to post your highs. You're going to post the solutions you created. You're going to post what was fun or easy. You're going to post the lessons you learned.

So, for example, if you dropped your lunch on the floor and you were super bummed because it was your favorite leftovers of all time, maybe the joy was that you got to take yourself out for lunch. You got to go through a drive thru and treat yourself to a burrito or McDonalds or whatever.

Maybe you had a really difficult CPS call you had to make. But maybe the upside was that you gave yourself 30 minutes to go into the kindergarten rooms and feel all the love from the five year old. Enjoy and embrace the beauty of childhood, and looking at your loving caring teachers and saying, "For every CPS call I make, for every hard painful phone call I have to make about a person who maybe isn't treating a child with respect, I get to work with amazing humans who do love kids."

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

Sometimes the low and the high won't correlate, and that's okay. Maybe you've got five things that were just terrible, and maybe your highlights are things like I didn't run out of gas today. I remembered to bring my lunch today. I was able to get my newsletter done and turned in on time. They don't have to be in direct correlation. You just want to train your brain for every negative, which is fine. You want to allow the negative. You're also going to consciously and intentionally seek out the positive.

Do this for 30 days, and your brain will start doing it on your own. You're going to train your brain. This is going to feel hard. It's going to feel like a challenge. That's not a problem. Let it. Doing this for 30 days means you're going to feel more balanced and more in control of your life, of your career, of your time, of your energy. Your lows will not feel so low, and the highs won't feel so far apart because you're going to be able to neutralize all of it.

You're not going to be riding this roller coaster of seeking out all the highs and feeling terrible on all the lows. You're going to teach yourself how to allow and process any emotion. Ultimately this gives you so much power and control over your work and your life. It's the most valuable use of your time because it empowers you.

That is the goal of the Empowered Principal program. I want you to feel completely empowered as a leader, as a parent, as a spouse, as a partner, as a friend in all the arenas of your life. I want you to believe you have control and agency over the results you create in your life, the feelings you feel, the thoughts you think. Just all of it.

This is the practice. It's small. It's simple. Your brain will resist it. I invite you into the Facebook group so I can coach you through the resistance. If you didn't post one day, you want to ask yourself why? What was going on for me? Did I think I didn't have time, or did I just not feel like it? Was I feeling too overwhelmed by my day? What was it?

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

Here's the best part. For those of you who post five days or more per week, it doesn't have to be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. It just has to be five days from a Monday to a Monday. So maybe you post on the weekend. Doesn't matter. For those people who post five out of seven days, you're going to be entered into a drawing for one free month of coaching sessions with me.

That is four 30 minute one-on-one sessions with me personally. This is an \$800 value my friends for free. I'm giving you my most precious asset, which is my time, because I believe so deeply in the power of coaching. I want you to feel and experience the value.

This isn't just about the money that the coaching sessions are worth. This is about the lifetime value, the lifetime results that you create from understanding how to use this tool, how to empower yourself, and how to see the 50:50 balance. That is priceless my friends. If you're able to do this with your career, you're going to be able to do it in your relationships. You're going to be able to do it with your relationship with money and with time and with your physical body, with your mental and emotional energy. You're going to change the trajectory of your experience in this lifetime.

I'm all about living to the fullest, living as big as possible, experiencing as much as possible. I'm welcoming in all the hard stuff. The challenging stuff, the hard things in life, bring it on. I want it all.

If you don't believe me, you can ask people in the group who've coached with me. You can ask James or Julie or Amy or all of the other people who've coached with me in the past or who are coaching with me now or who are excited to coach with me in the future. These folks have experienced coaching and they've changed the way that they experience school leadership because of the coaching they've done with themselves and with me.

Ep #201: The 50:50 Challenge

So join the group. Start posting away. Do five days a week so you can be in the drawing. You can earn four free sessions with me to change the way you feel and experience school leadership for life. Imagine the lifetime value of being able to be in control of that experience. It's pretty phenomenal. I love you guys. Happy Tuesday. I'll talk to you next week. Happy November. Take care. Bye.

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.