

# Holiday Bonus: When Someone Bugs You



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With Your Host

**Angela Kelly**

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## Holiday Bonus: When Someone Bugs You

Hello empowered principals. Welcome to holiday bonus episode of the *Empowered Principal* podcast.

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 everybody. I have decided to drop an extra bonus holiday special as a gift for you all. I originally recorded this podcast with the intention of having it drop the last week of December, but because I'm offering the mid-year reboot, I wanted to include that as well just to set you up for what's coming in January. So I wanted to offer the reboot overview, but I still wanted you to have this bonus episode.

So this episode is for you. It's to help you through the holidays when we have that one person that triggers us. There are people at work. There are people in our personal lives, our families, friends who trigger us. You want to be able to know what to do when somebody bugs you. If somebody in your life bugs you, this is the episode for you. Enjoy the bonus material.

Hello my empowered leaders. Happy Tuesday, happy holidays, and happy end of 2021. I hope you are celebrating with your family and friends. And you're resting, having fun, planning out your activities so that work isn't creeping into your holiday season. And that you are really reflecting on the year. What went well? What didn't go so well? What do you want to do differently for 2023, 2022, sorry. I'm jumping ahead. I'm just so excited that 2020 and 2021 are over. I'm looking forward to 2022. I hope you are too.

I'm going to do a really quick podcast to wrap up the calendar year, and to offer you some support during the holidays. This topic came up while I was

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coaching one of my clients. Actually, it's happened with all of my clients at some point in their coaching history with me, but I want to offer it to you as more of a personal tool and strategy. Then when you get back into your school campuses, you can apply it to your work colleagues, people that you work with.

So really this is about people who bug you. So there's always somebody in our lives who trigger us. There's that one person that we get triggered by that bothers us, that just irritates us. That makes our skin crawl, annoys us. There's other things, right?

I remember thinking to myself like I get along with everybody. What is it about that person that bothers me? Why can't I get along with that person? My brain was making it mean something very dramatic about that other human who was bothering me.

So this person could be somebody in your family. It could be that person that's in your circle of friends, that guy or gal that just grates on you every time you get together. Maybe it's a staff member at work that's spinning in your mind, and every time you have to work with them or engage with them you just feel annoyed, okay?

I want to start out by saying that there's a reason that there's always somebody in our life who seems to capture our attention not to our liking, right. There are people who we love in our life who capture our attention, and we love them and adore them and admire them and want to be with them. Can't wait to see them. That's how I feel about my son. I love him so much. Like I think about him all the time.

This is not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the other end of the spectrum where this person is capturing your attention but in a negative way where you feel negative emotions about them. It's like the train wreck

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you can't stop looking at. You can't stand the person. You don't want to be around them.

Every time you walk in the room you roll your eyes or you internally lurch, right. Yet their behavior, their words, their actions, the way they show up, the way they present themselves energetically. It captures your attention and it consumes your time and energy. You think about them. You notice them. You're bothered by them. They are inside of your head and your body, and you feel them when they're around or when you think about them.

So what's going on? Why are there people in our lives that trigger us like this and create this tension within our bodies and our minds? I'm going to cut straight to the chase. I'm going to tell you exactly what's going on, and your mind is not going to like what it hears. Hear me out. See this podcast all the way through to the end. If you want support, I've got your back. Okay? Here's what's going on.

The person who's getting your attention is on your radar on purpose. There is a reason they bother you so much. They are capturing your attention as a signal that you have some thoughts that need exposing. You have some internal work that needs to be done. That person who comes into your sphere, into your space is there for you to learn something about you. They are your curriculum.

This is what I always tell my clients and my students in the mastermind. The person who bothers you the most is your curriculum. They are there for you to learn the thoughts you have about them, the thoughts you have about yourself in relation to them, and how to adjust your thinking and your approach in order for them not to be a problem for you. Okay?

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You won't like hearing this because typically when somebody bothers you, it's because you despise the way they act or show up. You resist them. Our brain is locked up in judging them and rejecting them. We want to reject them. We want to judge them. It feels good to talk about them in a negative way because we're right and they're wrong.

So here's what you can do. Number one, as hard as this may sound to you, the story you have in your brain about that person is simply an opinion. It is not the news. It's not the facts. When somebody bothers us, our brain comes up with a story as to why they're wrong and we're right. Of course, our brain loves to be right. We love to be right. It feels good to be right. We like to be justified, self-righteous. We like to be on point. I got it.

In doing so, in creating the story, it also justifies our behavior. The way we talk to them, the way we think about them, the way we feel about them, the way we engage with them and show up when we are around them. The way we act. So it justifies our behavior and it condemns their behavior.

So if you were to describe the person you dislike to me, your brain is going to offer all of the negative things about them. When you explain somebody that you don't like, you go in all of the reasons that you don't like them. All of the things they do that are wrong, all of the ways in which they're a horrible person, all of the ways in which they don't do what they say. They're hypocrites, right.

This process is called confirmation bias. It's when our brain focuses in only on the things, the aspects, of that person that we deem as not good. So that we can affirm our belief about them. Try this out. Think of a person you don't like, and just take a piece of notepaper and write down everything. You don't have to put their name on it. Write down everything you think about them. Just tell me all the things on the paper. They're this. They're

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that. You're going to list all of the reasons why you don't like them and why you are right in not liking them.

What you're doing to see is a list of opinions. Take out all of the sentences that aren't opinions and see if there's any facts left. What you'll find is typically there are very few facts actually listed because the facts don't tend to support our belief.

So for example, let's say you're at home and it's the holidays. You've been spending time with your family. One of your siblings is grating on you, bothering you. When you describe your sibling, you're going to say, "She's rude. She's bossy. She's so opinionated. She's judgmental. She's condescending." None of those are hard facts. Those are your opinion of her and her behaviors.

You might say to me, "Well, but I'm justified because she did this and she did that." But her actions, the things that she does and says, those are separate from your opinion of those actions. So the facts might be she's a woman. She lives in Boston. She comes home twice a year. She has two kids. She's a CEO of a bank. Those are very flat. They're neutral. They don't generate energy and drama around the belief system that you have about her.

So there are facts about your sister, let's just say, or your brother or whatever. Then there are opinions about them. Same is true at work. There are teachers you love and you have lots of opinions about those teachers, and they are all good opinions. They're all amazing. They feel good to think. Then you have teachers that bother you. You have opinions about them, and those opinions tend to be on the negative end.

So what your brain does, this is where the confirmation bias comes in. The teachers you love, you zone in on all the things you love about them. The

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teachers you don't love, you zone in on all the things that they're doing wrong. Okay? Just notice this.

Now your brain's not wrong for having an opinion about somebody. That's what brain's do. When you look at the facts versus the opinions, the facts don't paint the same image as the opinions do, right. The opinions are much more colorful, much more vibrant. The facts are just the facts. They are like neutral tones of paint whereas the opinions are very colorful in all spectrums of color, right. So your brain's not wrong for doing this. This is just what it's wired to do.

The reason I bring it up is that I want you to notice it. Notice the difference between the facts of the situation or the person and the opinions that you have about them. That even their actions are neutral. It's what your brain makes the actions mean.

Now I'm not saying that they're—You can decide that you see them. If somebody were to hurt somebody, you can have an opinion about that and say I like my reason for my opinion. I'm sticking to it. That's fine. I just want you to notice the difference between facts and opinion when you're working with somebody that bothers you or you're engaged with somebody that bothers you because your thoughts and opinions about them are what's creating that gut reaction, that annoyance, those negative feelings inside of you.

That's what's interesting. You're the one who experiences the negative emotion when you're thinking about somebody you don't like. They don't have any emotional reaction because they're off doing their thing. They're not inside your body experiencing that emotion. So just notice. You are creating that emotion for yourself when you're thinking about them. When you're so caught up in how much somebody bugs you, you spend your

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time, your energy, your efforts thinking about them, feeling negative about them. Then you spin out in your brain about them. It's so fascinating, right?

So the other thing I want to offer you is that we have these little mini-handbooks inside of our brain for all the people in our lives. Our master coach Brooke calls this a mental manual where you have manuals, little workbooks inside your brain. This is how my wife should behave. This is how my husband should behave. This is how my kids should behave. This is how teachers should behave. This is how parents should behave. Students, all of it. In-laws, traffic out in the world, the people at the airport.

We all have thoughts about how people should behave. Those are called manuals. It's wanting people to behave in a certain way, in a way that we think is best and that we believe is the right way to do things. It's expecting others to think and feel and act in the way we want them to and in the same way we do. We tend to want people to believe the same things, right?

So keep that in mind. Do you want people telling you how to think and how to feel and how to behave? If not, maybe consider that other people don't want you doing that to them, okay. I laugh at this because we all do it and it's so hard not to do. Just being aware of it's like, "Oh, there I go. I'm thinking my mother-in-law shouldn't be coming into my house and rearranging my drawers in my kitchen."

One of my girlfriends came home a couple months ago and we had a great weekend together. She was telling me this happened to her. Her mother-in-law, as lovely as she is, came into her house and day by day was rearranging all of her kitchen cabinets thinking that she was being helpful. My friend's thought was she shouldn't be doing that. She told her to stop doing that, which is creating a boundary which is fine. The mother-in-law was like, "Oh, I thought I should be doing that." Right? You see how it goes?



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Anyways just keep in mind we all have these manuals. Notice when the person who's bothering you is rubbing up against that manual not doing it the way that they should be in your mind and notice that, okay?

The one last thing I'm going to say about people us is the hardest pill to swallow. That is this. The stories that we create about people in our mind is in an effort to not see the attribute we despise of them within ourselves. This is a really hard one for me. I was coached a while back.

A few years ago I was coached on a family member that I was really struggling with. Couldn't see eye to eye. Couldn't find the commonalities. I just, I couldn't go there. Part of it was a protection mechanism, part of it was childhood trauma, and part of it was just my unwillingness to go to the space where I could just let this person be human and try to understand them from a neutral standpoint. I really had a hard time.

But I will say that once I stopped being so certain that I was living a better life and that I was doing it better and that this person wasn't all bad or all wrong, I was able to lean into the truth, which was we're both 50/50. There are things about that human that are amazing and wonderful. I had to look at myself and say those traits that I so zone in on and criticize and am really harsh about, I also inhibit those characteristics. They are a part of me as well. The reason I know this is because I wouldn't be so zoned in on them if I didn't need to work on them myself.

So people on the exterior become a window into our interior. Who we are and who we want to become, those people who bother us, they are a gift. They are our curriculum. They are a window into who we are currently being and the parts of us that we're hiding or pushing down, that we're not willing to expose or admit to ourselves. Sometimes we are rude. Sometimes we are condescending. Sometimes we are judgmental. Sometimes we are being selfish.

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Once you can lean into the truth of all of us do all of these things at some of the time, then you can start to build a healthier relationship not just with that person but with yourself. It all will come back to where can I forgive myself for the times I'm not doing it wrong or I'm being wrong or I'm being miserable to somebody else or I'm being snippy. How can I forgive myself for the 50/50 of my life where I'm not all good or all bad, I'm both? I can forgive myself because that allows me to forgive that person.

Oh sometimes people are rude. Sometimes people are condescending. Sometimes people say one thing and do another. Sometimes people call us out and then do the very same thing themselves. That's what we're doing when we're judging and we're using our manual against them. We're thinking that we are right and we know what's best and we know how they should be.

So for anybody in your life right now whether it's at work or at home who's bothering you, I want you to write down all of the reasons and just notice where do I see this within myself. Am I willing to go to that space where I can forgive myself so I can forgive them?

Happy holidays. Happy New Year. This is my end of the year gift to you. It's an amazing process. When you work through this, you will be so free and light and happy that you are able to not only forgive other people but more importantly forgive yourself. I love you all. Have an amazing week. I'll see you in 2022. Bye.

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