

Ep #235: The Value of FUN 2.0



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 235.

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 this week's version of the podcast. I'm so excited. I am sharing an episode I did a year ago called the value of fun. With summer approaching, it's such a good time to reflect on the amount of fun you are creating in your life.

Fun is not something most people prioritize planning. Most people don't, right? Some people do, but most of us school leaders, we're not putting fun on the calendar. Now we're planning fun things for other people, for our staff and our students and our school community, or even our own kids at home, but we're not prioritizing the value of fun in our own lives.

Part of the reason that we feel burnt out as school leaders is that we vastly underestimate the importance and the value of taking breaks and having fun built into our week. We write fun off as not important and not productive, and I'm here to suggest that it is a highly valuable and productive use of your time as a school leader.

Having fun brings perspective and levity to our work. It reminds us that this work is serious and it's funny. It reminds us that it's important but that it's not the only part of life that we want to experience. When you can't see the humor in the work we do, you feel so weighed down by it. Having fun is essential to your sustainability as a school leader. The reason school leaders burnt out is that they lack perspective. They refuse to take breaks, and they don't see the value of having fun.

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So this podcast reprise is just what the doctor ordered for most of you. The episode was recorded in 2021 while we were still dealing in the pandemic. So you will hear reference to that. I also reference the Summer of Fun Challenge in the Empowered Principal™ Facebook group, and I want you to know we are doing the Summer of Fun Challenge again this year for the third year, but I've structured it a little bit differently this time. So be sure to join the Facebook page and participate in creating your version of Summer of Fun. And now, onto the show.

Okay, I'm diving right in because I'm super passionate about this, and because my podcast is due today. Nevertheless, we are talking about value. This month in the month of June I am encouraging you to dive into yourself, into your mind, into thinking, into possibility, and talking about the value of your life, the value of your career, the value of you as a school leader.

I'm sharing with you ideas and thoughts and new belief systems and possibilities in terms of what is the value that you're creating in the world, that you're contributing to the world, and that you're receiving. What does it all mean in terms of being human and being a person on this planet, right? I'm going meta here. I'm going really big, but I'm bringing it down to something that's simple, easy, and doable.

I want to invite you right now while I'm thinking about it to the Empowered Principal™ Facebook group. We are having the most fun summer ever. So I started this idea last year. We are doing the summer of fun challenge where I am offering different opportunities and ways for you to have fun in your summer, especially since you didn't have a summer last year with COVID. This summer you're going to double down, and we're going to be very intentional about our fun.

People who post get entered into a drawing. There is a weekly prize for people who are out having fun, challenging themselves to have fun with

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themselves, with other people in their community, traveling. Whatever is fun to you. At the deeper level, I'm teaching and I'm coaching people on the value of fun, what it creates for you in your life. How it's a benefit to not just you, not just to your own heart, mind, body, and soul, but to the people around you, to your career, to your school, to your students. All of it.

This goes much deeper than just putting some fun on your calendar. It really comes down to how you create and plan and design your life with intention. This is some serious work here we're having when we're having fun. So today this is what we're talking about.

So let's dive in. I want to start with the definition of value because I'm going to be using the word a lot in the upcoming episodes. I want your brain to really grasp at a deeper level and understand what I mean when I say value. In our society, for the most part, what we think about when we say the word value is we immediately go to financial worth. Like the financial cost of something or the financial value of something.

If you slow yourself down and really ask yourself the question what is the definition of value, it's so much more than that. I looked it up, and I googled it on the thesaurus. Like what are all the meanings of value? What are all the nuances of value? What does it mean when we talk about value? The words that stuck out to me were things like advantage, worth, benefit, importance, power, meaning, purpose, quality, significance, condition, desirability, goodness, merit, substance, usefulness.

I want you to go through each and every one of those words and think about it in relation to your career and your life, and the experience that you are having as a school leader on this planet, right? When you think about the value, and you're thinking about it in terms of creating advantage, advantages for yourself, for your family, for your students, for your staff.

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What about the worth? What is it worth to you to have access to understand how to create value in your life? How to be the most valuable person when you go to hire somebody, or you want to be the person who's hired. When you think about going for that next level job, you want to be the most valuable candidate that they have to choose from. What is knowing how to do that worth to you? What is the benefit of figuring out how to be a great school leader, how to reduce your stress, how to show up at work with enthusiasm and excitement and not taking it so seriously?

What is the importance of solving problems and figuring out solutions with ease? Coming from a space of flow and creativity, coming from the understanding of having the trust and the courage and the willingness to think outside of the box. To be the leader who speaks up. What is the worth of having power in your life? Having agency over your decisions. Being able to decide who you are, who you want to become, and how you're going to get there. Not because somebody else is telling you, but because you have full control and power and agency over your life. How valuable is that?

Is it worth the money to spend on yourself to figure these things out? What is the benefit of our lives? What is the value of our lives? What is the meaning of being a school leader? What is the meaning of education? What is the purpose of learning and growing? Why are we doing all of this in the first place? What about the quality of your life? What is the value of increasing the quality of your life and feeling like you have the control and the wherewithal to know how to increase the quality of your life? Right?

When we only think about value as an exchange of money, which I'm going to talk about in a minute. It is true. Money is a top asset. Don't get me wrong. I love me some money. I charge for my business because I believe in the value of it, and I know the service I'm providing. I want all y'all to make a lot of money in your lifetimes, but we're not just working for the sake of collecting money. That money goes to what we value in exchange,

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right? We provide a service to our school districts and to our schools. In exchange for that service, that value that you're providing, you receive a paycheck, right? So there's an exchange of value there.

I want to really dive in deep about what value is, what it isn't. Why we cling to some that we think is more valuable than others. We think that money is the most important valuable thing that we can ever, ever have. Then there's time. We feel like time is an asset. It is a value that we want. To have as much time as possible, to have as much money as possible. I'm going to push you and say those two things are irrelevant if your mind is not your top value.

Your mind is what creates the experience of your life. The value of your mind is what you want to enhance in order to increase your value. You will get more time and money when you increase the value of your mind, hands down. But more for that on another podcast. I digress.

I want to talk about value so deeply. I want to sell you on the value of you, sell you on the value of improving your life and your career from the standpoint of knowing how to do that. Meaning knowing how to create value, right? So when we discuss creating value as a school leader, I want you to think of it this way. I'm going to dive into this whole money thing because this really trips us up as school leaders.

When you think about the value that you're providing to your district, you really think about the work I'm offering, the things I wake up and go do each day at my school. Create the master calendar, hire teachers, monitor the teachers, monitor the students, deal with parents, create systems, overview the test scores, all those things you do on the daily. You provide a service, a value, to your district, right?

You think, "Okay. This is the amount of work I'm providing to you. In exchange, what I want, I want to be paid for my services. I expect a certain

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amount of money as a school leader in exchange for the value I'm providing to the district." That is why when you go from teaching to a principalship, your brain expects you to make more money. Because in your opinion, you're providing a greater value of service. You've up leveled the amount of value you're providing therefore you expect more in exchange, right?

So our society has come to believe to its own detriment that the very most important value or purpose of our life or meaning or significance in our life is to work in exchange for money. That money is the most important value or asset that we could ever have.

Now think about this. Money was created by humans as an easier way to exchange value. Because back in the day we used to barter for goods before we had money, right? Somebody was a person who had chickens. Another guy down the street was a person who had cows. Then maybe somebody in town was a blacksmith, and another person was a cobbler. Everybody would— "Here's a couple chickens for a pair of shoes. Or a cow is more valuable than a chicken. So I get 10 chickens for one cow." Or the blacksmith would give a tool for a pair of shoes to the cobbler.

People were trying to decide the value of their craft, the value of what they had to offer to one another. Eventually somebody said look. Let's create this like kind of fake system, this false system of money like with paper and coins. That will be an easier way. You don't have to carry your chickens around town to go give value to people, right? You can say here's \$10. I want a pair of shoes. Or here's \$20. I would like to buy a cow. I don't know what they did back then, but you get the point where money was created by our minds as an easier more adaptable exchange of value. So understand that.

So when I talk about value, I'm really talking about what's important to you. What you personally value. Meaning like what's meaningful and purposeful

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to you, what is the greatest benefit to you. Everybody has a different opinion of what value is and what they do value, right? I want you to be thinking about yourself as you have worth and value to provide. In exchange for that, you get things like money. Or when you get a lot of money, then you can buy your time, right? You can buy services that help you expand your time. When you have more time, you create more value and then you make more money.

So what I'm trying to say in summary before I get talking about today's topic is when you increase your value, and you understand what you value and why you value it and the value that you have to offer. When you up level that, in exchange for that value y'all make more money. I want you making more money as educators.

We have to stop the madness that educators don't make money. We have to stop this sob story and keep telling ourselves that we're in a business that doesn't make money. Education has money. It actually is a for profit business. You have a lot to offer, and you deserve to be paid for your worth. In order to increase your worth, we're going to talk about how you increase the value that you offer.

Now, that was a long winded segment because I'm so fired up about this. Here's why I'm fired up. I have had consult after consult after consult with principals who desperately want to feel better, and they want to create worth in their life that isn't just around school and work. You guys are exhausted. You've taught through a pandemic. You've led school through a pandemic. Now you're looking at like, "What's the whole point here? There's got to be more to life than working myself to the bone."

So you call me, and you get on the phone, and you want to change your life. You want to be more bold. You want to create change. You want to have more work life balance. Then we start talking about working together. The minute that you think about having to pay me money, it stops.

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Not because you don't want to pay me. You want to pay me. I have a lot of value to offer, and I can help you change your entire life. I know that with all of my being down to my bones. I know the value I have to offer. What I'm offering and how I'm offering it, I'm definitely overdelivering. Definitely providing results that are way above and beyond what people see as an exchange of value.

What happens is we've been taught that we can't buy something for ourselves. We can't spend money on ourselves or invest in ourselves. Either we feel guilty about it because it should be going to the kids, or it should be going to the mortgage, or it should be going to vacation. What we do instead of increasing our value to create more money in our lives, we save the money, we hoard the money, or we spend the money on the other things for temporary enjoyment. Versus investing in ourselves in a way that allows us to create as much value as we want as school leaders, right?

Some of you out there can barely imagine becoming a principal of a bigger school or an assistant superintendent or a superintendent. But what if it's even bigger than that? What if you could be even bigger than that? In addition to being a superintendent, you're also a bestselling author. Or you're a keynote speaker, or you have a podcast, or you present at conferences. You can be so much more when you start opening the portal of possibility into your brain about the value that you can create in the world.

All this to say let's get down to what creates value. This is my favorite part because what creates value is what you believe about yourself and your life and the possibilities that you create. Today I'm going to talk about the value of fun. What? I'm not joking here. I am truly not joking. I have been studying this myself because I tend to be a serious person. I tend to be a very contemplative, very visionary. I reflect in my past and focus on my future, but when it's in the moment I tend to be very grinded out, hustle, grit, push

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through, productive. I thrive on that dopamine hit of productivity. I get to be very serious in my head.

I decided at the age of 50 that I was no longer going to be just the employee in my own business. I am my own boss and my own employee that grinds and works 10 hours a day. I love this work, and so it's hard for me to stop working because it is fun for me, but I also have to allow myself to have other kinds of fun. This is what I am going to push you. You might love your job, and you might think it's so much fun. That's our brain's sneaky way of making us work and work and work because we want to tell ourselves, "Oh this is fun. Yes, it's fun. You need a break. You need to do other things. You need rest and respite."

So I'm going to talk about what the value is of fun in your life and how it impacts of course your personal life, but more importantly your professional life because that will sell you on the value. So if you look at fun in the big context of your life, the lifetime value of fun is really the expression of freedom and joy and happiness. The amount of moments in your life that feel like freedom and joy and happiness.

Fun is the spice of life. That's what I think. It's what makes our lives worth living to have fun. Fun is an experience that we feel and that we have based on what we're thinking about what we're doing. It's an emotion that we feel. Or we label something as fun. We identify something as fun. Or the result is that we're having fun, right, depending on where you put it in the model in the steer cycle.

But humans, I want you to hear this. Humans were put on planet Earth to experience fun, joy, pleasure, happiness, freedom, expansiveness, love, and abundance. We are supposed to have these moments in our lives. If we weren't, they wouldn't be available to us. So the fact that we have been conditioned over time to think that that's fun and games is a waste of time. It's not productive. There is no value in it. It's not valuable, right, meaning

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it's wasteful or it's not purposeful or it has no meaning. To think that that's not true can't be possible. It wouldn't be available to us if it weren't a possibility.

So I like to push the envelope and question and challenge the status quo and say, "Hey, wait a minute. We should be having fun. This shouldn't be as hard as we're making it. We should want more than just hoarding money and making more money and giving our time away to everybody around us except for us.

So what is the physical value of fun? You guys have done the research. You know this intellectually, but we don't do it anyways. I'm going to say it just to remind you. The physical value of fun, now I'm talking about your physical wellbeing. I'm talking about your physical wellbeing, your mental wellbeing, your emotional wellbeing.

Right now your physical wellbeing is that when you have fun, whatever you perceive as fun, it lowers your cortisol. That's the stress hormone that creates all kinds of havoc in your body, right? It increases your weight. You have more dis-ease. I like to say it's disease, right. You have heart problems, liver problems, lung problems. All the things, right? Maybe your skin flares up or you have back pain. All of that stress creates physical pain in the body.

When you have fun, your pain feels less, your weight gets in check. There's less room or time for buffering. When you're out having fun, you're not overeating. When you're out having true fun, you're not sitting at home drinking cause you're bored, or you're frustrated, or you're stressed. So when you're out having fun, the body is in repair mode. It's actually repairing itself. It's not getting sick. It's reduced pain because the dopamine hits you're getting from having fun, it minimizes the pain that you experience in your body. It increases serotonin, which regulates your basic body processes.

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So whatever's going on in your body, it goes more smoothly. I'm not a doctor here. So please don't quote me on all this. This is just research that I've read to share with you so that you don't have to go read the research. Obviously, you get better sleep when you've had fun, and your stress just lowers in general. You know that stress manifests itself physically, and fun is the opposite of stress. When you're having fun, you're not feeling stressed. So the body gets respite of stress.

Now mental value of fun. Your mental wellbeing is critical to your success as a school leader. When you have fun and you lower that stress and you're giving yourself a break from that work, what happens is you're allowing your brain to think more creatively, more clearly. You're kind of cleaning house up there. You're not thinking about work. You're not thinking about those problems. You're out enjoying yourself which refuels your mental capacity in space to be more creative and to be in flow.

Also, there are studies that show that the mental value of fun includes an improved memory and concentration. You have more sharpness when you let yourself have fun. I think that's pretty cool. Because as a school leader, you have to have a sharp mind. You have to have a great memory. You have to be able to concentrate.

When you haven't had any fun in months upon months upon months, you're overwhelmed. You're exhausted. You feel confused at times. It just feels like too much, and you just shut down. Your brain doesn't have the capacity to solve problems and be creative and come up with fun solutions because it hasn't had any fun in days, weeks, and months.

Now, emotional value of fun. Emotionally your bucket fills. We've all heard the whole bucket expression. Gosh, I can't remember who did fill your bucket. I want to say like Tim somebody, but I can't remember. But like that whole series that came out. It's really good information. We do need to fill our buckets. We need to fill one another's buckets.

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Filling your bucket emotionally gives you the capacity to cope when things are hard, and it also expands your capacity to feel emotion on the emotional scale, right? Like the capacity to which you feel joy and happiness expands the capacity to which you can cope with the negative emotion. It's like a rubber band, right? You can stretch the emotional bandwidth, but it has to go in both directions. You can't just feel the joy without experiencing some pain. But you don't just sit in pain without allowing yourself to feel the joy. So you expand your capacity to feel at deeper and deeper levels.

When you do this and when you understand how your emotions work and that you do have the capacity to feel any emotion offered to you on this planet, then that increases your connection with yourself and others and allows you to hold space for other people's emotions. So when you go have fun and you kind of fill up that bucket and clean out the mental space and improve your physical space. Mentally, physically, and emotionally when you're filled up and ready to go, that gives you the capacity as a leader to be able to show up in a bigger way for your staff and students.

Do you hear this? Think about a school leader who is emotionally fulfilled, who is mentally clean, clear, crisp, and ready to go. Who's physically rested, who physically has time to play and exercise and walk and sleep and enjoy themselves. When your mind, body, and soul are ready to go, then you offer more value.

So the professional value of fun is that when you're ready to go, it improves your ability to learn. So school leaders who are new out there. When you are all pulled together, you are more open and available for learning. Which means you're more available to receive learning and to give learning, and you're more available to other people.

Another fun fact that I saw about the professional value of fun is that it makes you more likeable. When you think about people in your life who are

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really fun, like they tend to be silly and have fun and they tell jokes. They have this energy about them that you would define as fun. They're more likeable. You want to be around those people.

As a school leader, you want to be as attractive as possible. You want people to want to follow your lead. You want them to like you, know you, trust you. When you're more fun and you're having more fun and you're not being so serious and stern and harsh on people, it makes you likeable. Which in exchange makes you more impactful, influential, which creates more legacy.

So think about that. When you're out having fun and you're filling up your own buckets and you're having more fun professionally, you are more liked as a leader. Your increase in your career satisfaction is evident.

When you're working hard, and you have bad days. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying we're just going to sugarcoat work and make everything fun. I'm also saying that when we have bad days, but you have something fun to look forward to, you can gain perspective, right? This isn't going to last forever. This is a moment in time. We are looking at a situation now that feels very harsh, but what we know is in the bigger picture. We shall too pass through this, and we will get through this.

So your career feels more satisfying. Your life feels more satisfying. Your employee retention. When you're having fun and they're having fun, even when the work is hard that you know you've got support and connection and one another's back and you're having fun even through the hard stuff. Everybody gets more creative. You have a greater impact and contribution to your career overall. When you do that, that equates to more financial value, which is what I talked about earlier.

Because when you're feeling like a fun person and you have lots of fun in your life and you give yourself lots of time to rest and recover, you are more

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productive. You are more creative. You are more visionary. You believe in more possibilities, and you are much more connected with your fellow humans.

Let's talk about how having fun increases your asset of time. I know school leaders think there's not enough time. Too much to do and not enough time. But when you start to schedule fun into your calendar and make it intentional and choose that you're going to stop working and having fun or you're going to imbed fun into your day. When you are feeling better from all these benefits of having fun, all the value that you're creating from fun, you make decisions faster with more clarity and confidence.

The faster you are able to make decisions, the more you get done in less time. You have more energy to get to work physically, mentally, emotionally. You're not sitting there spinning out in an emotional drama or you're not over thinking something. Then that has you stalled in action. You're able to think clearly, make decisions, run with it. If it's not the right decision, you just make a new decision, right? There's no wrong decision. You just keep adjusting your decision until it works.

So the more time you're doing that where you're busy in action, you're busy in making decisions and following through on them the less time you're spinning out in confusion and worry and doubt and fear. You're less focused on telling yourself the story about there's not enough time.

Like, "Oh god. There's too much to do. I don't have enough time." You're less focused on that because everything's already scheduled in. You do have time for a walk. You do have time to eat a healthy lunch. You do have time to work out after work. You do have time to go be with your kids. You do have time because it's on the calendar. Because you've intentionally scheduled your fun throughout the day.

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When you have it on the calendar, that means you're looking forward to it. So what's really cool is when you know you have something fun after work, isn't the workday in and of itself just feeling better because you're anticipating the fun you're going to have?

I know when I would plan a weekend trip getaway and it was Friday, my Friday was 10 times more fun even if it was like a horrendously crazy day because I would think to myself, "I'm going to be present here, but at the end of this I'm going to Tahoe. I'm going to spend 48 hours in mountain bliss breathing in fresh air, taking hikes, having fun with my friends." That made the day itself feel even better. So it's really important to put fun on your calendar.

Finally, fun demands prioritization on your calendar. So what I mean by that is fun creates time for yourself because when you put fun on your calendar, that means the other stuff has to get done around that fun time. So for example, if you're leaving at 4:00 p.m. on Friday because you're going on a weekend trip, and you've got a big project due. If you put it into the calendar in advance, then you backwards plan your schedule to ensure that project that's due gets done in time so that you can go have that fun.

But if you don't put the fun on the calendar, what ends up happening is you procrastinate and you push, and then you talk yourself out of the fun because you say to yourself, "I've got to get this project done. It's due on Monday. So now I've got to work on the weekend, and I can't go have my fun."

No. You put the fun on the calendar first, and the other stuff works around it. It forces you. It demands that you prioritize your time and really look at how you're spending your time at work so the things that you have to get done as the priority get done first, and the other stuff gets delegated or it doesn't get done. You see that?

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All right. So why don't we have fun? If we know all of the benefit, the value of having fun, and how value creates more time, more money, more energy physically, mentally, and emotionally. Just a bigger capacity to lead and to live, why don't we do it? What's stopping us, preventing us from doing it? I'm going to tell you four obstacles.

Number one, other people's opinions. We think that other people will judge us or criticize us for having fun. They're going to say, "You're not committed enough. Or she's not committed enough. Or he's not a good leader. Or they're not taking it seriously. They obviously don't care about their job. They lack the skillset. They're just hiding." We worry about what other people think.

Now, that feels very real, and it feels very scary. You know what? It could be true. People judge. That's what they do. Trying to prevent it from happening is just putting us in a spinout. They're going to say what they're going to say, but you're designing your life. At the end of your life, do you want to have had fun and let other people be upset that you're having fun and they're not? Or do you want to be stifled and not scheduling your fun and not having any fun and flatlining your life and playing small because other people will be thinking that you're such a hard worker. You're so committed and dedicated.

On your deathbed, what matters more? What do you value more? What's more worth your life? Having some fun and energy and enthusiasm? Looking forward to things, experiencing the life that you want to experience. I'm not saying don't do your job. I'm saying have fun while you're doing it, and make sure you have fun outside of doing it. It's not the only thing that's fun.

Other people's opinions do not have a say in your fun. They're not invited to the fun. Other people's opinions are just party poopers in your head

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telling you not to have fun. They're not invited. They're not welcome. End that story.

Number two, our brains have been conditioned. We feel a lot of pressure and guilt and doubt and disbelief and responsibility when it comes to work. We don't think that fun is supposed to be a part of it. We think that work should come first. Work is more important. Hustle is the only solution. Hard work pays off. Hard work is more respectable. Right? Working really hard or working longer hours or being the first one in or the last one out means you're the most committed. Good employees put in major hours. Good employees put their work first.

We're conditioned to believe that. Not even with other people's thoughts. Our own thoughts tell us that. We buy into that story. So that's why we buy into other people's opinions is because we believe it too. So we have to question ourselves. Is this true? Work should always come first.

I just had a family medical emergency, and I had two consults scheduled. My brain wanted to say like, "Do the consult first and then go to the hospital." No, no. Angela, no. Those two consults, if those people are loving and they really want coaching, they will wait for me to reschedule those consults. My job is to live my life with the people I love the most and go to ICU and be with my loved one.

Work does not always come first. What is the value of your life in terms of those experiences? How do you want to make decisions when you're coming from this place of what do you value most? It was not fun going to the hospital, at all. But I tell you what. Had I tried to do the consults, I would not have been in a clean space. Those people would not have had the best experience possible. I wouldn't have signed them.

So it's important to understand that work doesn't always come first. Work is not always the most important thing. At the end of the day, what is? I want

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you to answer this question. What is the most important thing in your life? What do you value most? Do you value having a lot of money in your bank account? Do you value having title, status, and power and position authority as a school principal?

Or do you value spending time with your own kids, spending time with your spouse, going on hikes, going out on dates if you're single? Mingling with your friends, taking trips, exploring the latest and greatest restaurants or coffee shops, going wine tasting. I don't know. Whatever it is you love to do, what is more valuable?

Work, yes. We love the work because we're contributing to the greater good, but there's more than just work. Working hard, overworking, exerting ourselves to exhaustion. How is that providing value? If it is providing value, what's the long term impact of that? Does that create the extended version of what you want to experience in your life?

Number three. Sometimes we don't have fun purely from a lack of awareness. We just don't realize the number of hours we work. We're in such a rhythm or a routine we don't really realize how hard we're working. Number two, we forget all the times that we've been working. Like we kind of dismiss it and we dismiss fun. We kind of think fun isn't valuable. So we don't schedule it in, and we don't prioritize it because we haven't slowed ourselves down to create awareness about the slower, deeper value of fun.

Number four. Fear of trying or experimenting with this. I find this to be the hardest hurdle for people to cross. I can create awareness. I can help you understand the value. I can even sell you on the value. But where we get tripped up the most is we're afraid to try the theory. So I've just shared with you the theory that fun creates value in your life and that fun is of value. It's of mental value, physical value, emotional value, financial value, time value, professional value, life value.

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There's so much value to fun, and yet I guarantee you for many of you your brain is saying, "But I'm afraid. What if I do that? It can't be possible. It can't be true." Because all of our lives we've been taught to work hard. That work comes first.

So we're afraid to try because we're afraid we'll lose our jobs. We're afraid people are going to criticize and judge us. We're afraid it's not going to work. We're afraid that we're going to try it, and then it won't work. We're also afraid that if we do try it and we love it that it's going to be this all or none thinking where we just like dive into the pool of fun, and we never go back to work. We turn in our resignation forms, and we run to Tahiti, right? We think that if we have a taste of fun, we'll never want to come back. That we will never get anything done and not create the results we want professionally.

Let me tell you something. I feel all of these same things you feel. It scares me to think like oh if I step away from coaching to go be present with my family during this emergency crisis, that my followers are going to be waiting for me. I think about the end of the school year and all the struggles and all the pain. Like if I'm not here for you guys, what will that mean? Oh my goodness. People will stop following me. Like I have the same thoughts as well.

But here's what I know to be true. The people out there who love this work and love the coaching and love the podcast, they will be rooting for me and waiting for me in my authenticity, in my pain, in my suffering, in my grief of this experience that I'm going through right now while also showing up to the best of my capacity.

So what I know to be true is that experimenting with this theory and trying it out, the worst thing that can happen is it doesn't work, and you can go back to the grind. You can go back to not having fun and not valuing your life, your experiences, and the amount of fun that you want to create in your life.

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

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You can always go back to the state quo. But trying it, the only downside is that it doesn't work. The upside is that it does work.

I want you to think about what if this is true? What if having fun does make you a better school leader? What if it does mean that you work less hours and you get more done? What if it does mean it creates more financial wealth? Then is it worth it? Then would you do it? Then would you sing these praises of fun in your life? I'm telling you this. When I coach people and they don't believe they can slow down and have some fun and create self-care, what they're saying to me is they don't value their experience enough. They don't see the value.

I'm here to tell you that I will stand by you, side by side to help you start having more fun and to experiment and to play. You can just dip your toe in the water, right? Have a little bit of fun, a little bit of joy, a little bit less time at work just to see what happens. It will start to feel like magic because the same things get done. You get them done with a greater enthusiasm and a greater capacity, and you just feel like life is more fun. You're like, "What's happening?" You basically said to the universe, "I value fun as much as I value my work. Fun is a part of my work. Fun is a part of my life. It is equally important. It's of equal value."

So your time and your money and your brain are your top three assets. When those three things are equal, you're willing to exchange money for time, time for money. You're willing to put money into your brain and time into your brain to learn and to grow and to build your content, and to build your portal of possibility as to what your life can be, the experience you can have. Then you start to see how you create value as a school leader when you combine all of it into one big package.

So let's break it back down. How do you simply start to have more fun? Number one, you create awareness. What does fun look like to you? Fun is

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different for every human. So take stock. Notice what feels like fun, what doesn't feel like fun. Be honest with yourself.

If you don't like going to little kid birthday parties like I didn't, and you keep going to little kid birthday parties and sitting there miserable, of course you're going to come home and have a glass of wine because you're like, "Ugh that was awful." Don't do it. Ask your husband to take them or ask your spouse to take them or your partner. Or ask a friend. Like, "Hey, are you going to that birthday party? Can you do this? I just need an hour to myself. I'll trade you." At least you can go to half the parties, right?

So find out what is fun for you. Write it down. What feels like fun in this moment? Different times call for different kinds of fun. Sometimes fun is going to bed at 7:00. Sometimes fun is waking up early and watching the sunrise. Sometimes fun is sitting down with a book and a cup of tea. Sometimes fun is planning a big adventure. Going to Cabo. That's what my family's doing in July. My husband and I and a few other sets of friends, we're going to Cabo. I've never been. I've always wanted to go, and I'm off to the races.

Decide what looks like fun for you. Notice when fun feels easy and when fun feels wrong. Like it feels naughty or overly decadent. Just notice the kinds of fun that you want to have but your brain is telling you no. Notice when you're calling things fun that are really work. I mean you're working and calling it fun or you're going to things like birthday parties or hosting events or volunteering for the PTA, which you're telling yourself are fun but they're really just different kinds of work. Okay.

Then notice when you're having too little fun, too much fun, and the ideal balance of fun. It's like the three little bears, the porridge, right? Too much, too hot, too cold, just right. Just play and experiment and look to see when you're having fun.

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Then finally we want to expand your capacity to have fun. We want to slowly, very slowly, over the course of the summer. Which is why I'm inviting you to the eight weeks of summer fun. We're already in it. Let's go. Join up, get your friends, let's go. We want to slowly expand your capacity to have more and more fun. We're going to add fun to your calendar. We can do it in little increments. We're going to vary the kinds of fun that you have, and then overtime increase the quantity and the duration of your fun. Then we're going to find ways to make the not so fun things even more fun.

So last week was week one as I'm thinking about recording this. So this is week two that you're in. So last week was having fun with yourself. This week in the Empowered Principal™ Facebook group we're talking about having fun with others, and the value of creating fun with other people. Spending time with them, creating connections, being present, and holding space for other people. Not just thinking about ourselves, thinking about them but in a way that's fun. Trying a variety of people and places and things to do and having somebody else to have fun with gives us the courage to try new things.

Week three we're going to talk about fun within our community. How to explore what's in our own backyard, how to volunteer, explore a new area of town, research events. Maybe we're starting to branch out now that COVID's releasing its ugly grip on us.

Then week four is going to be decadent fun. I'm going to be talking about fun that feels like a guilty pleasure, fun that you wouldn't normally do. Fun that's just because. That's who cares fun. That's no regrets fun. Just for pleasure fun, and just because I want to fun. We're going to talk about all that kind of fun. What you would really, really do. We're going to dive deep into your heart and ask her or him what feels most like fun. Why do I think it's naughty? Why shouldn't I do it? We're going to explore why we don't have fun.

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Sorry this was a long podcast. Lots of passion in this, but this is it my empowered leaders. If we can't tap into the value of fun, we can't tap into being a great leader. We can't tap into the value of our lives. This is what it's all about. Please, join us in the Empowered Principal™ group. Come have fun with us. Explore the obstacles, the fears, the doubts, the worries, the confusion about fun, the value. The value of your life, the value of taking ownership of who you want to become not just as a leader but as a human on this planet. Okay?

With so much love and gratitude, I wish you well. Have a great week. Come have fun with us, and I'll see you next week. Take care. Bye, bye.

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