

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 251.

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 the podcast. Hope you guys are having a great week. I am loving it. Coaching my face off all day long for all the new leaders out there. I'm so excited. If you want to coach, let's go. What are you waiting for? It's October. This is the month. This month is hard. I feel like October is the grind. You've been pushing nonstop since July, August, September, and you hit October, and you are exhausted. So I've got a juicy podcast for you today I'm going to dive right in.

Today, I'm going to talk about 15 common mistakes that I see leaders making. I'm going to highlight them for you so that you can be aware if you are doing them, or when they do come up, you can try to avoid making these mistakes. Because these are the most common mistakes that I see across the board in school leadership, particularly new school leaders.

So new leaders listen up, you're going to make mistakes. That's not the point. We're not trying to avoid all mistakes, you have to allow yourself to be new. That's not the goal is to circumvent being new. The goal here is just to create awareness. Oh, this is what's coming up. Because the reason we make mistakes is from lack of awareness, right? Lack of knowledge or lack of reflection. The other half of the time, the reason we make mistakes is because we are human, and that is part of the process.

So as I'm saying these 20 mistakes, maybe there's going to be end up being 20. I listed 15. Let's see where my brain goes. Okay. As you're

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

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

thinking about these mistakes, and if you have the thought, if you have that feeling of oh gosh, that's me, I've done that. It's okay. Of course you did it, you're human. It's very common. That means lots of people have made the same mistakes. But I'm here to tell you to look out for them, and notice if they're happening to you, or if they pop up, you can listen back to this podcast and solve them for yourself. Okay.

Problem number one, over reading, over consuming, constantly researching, collaborating, spending a lot of time consuming information and content is being driven from the thought that you need more information to make a decision or to move forward. Or that you have to prove yourself, right. So you need to back yourself up with research.

I see a lot of people spending a lot of time over consuming content, reading books, listening to podcasts. As great as this podcast is, if that's all you do all day and you're not taking action in your job to try and figure some things out for yourself, you aren't going to be successful.

When I talk to clients and I talk to people in the Facebook community on how they're trying to solve problems, most of the time what's happening is they're researching solutions. They're using research based information. They're collaborating, meaning they're asking other people their questions, their opinions. They're consuming content, or they're over reading books, or they're going to conference after conference looking for the answers. Okay?

What I invite you to do is to limit that consumption. Notice how much time you're spending consuming. Ask yourself what is my opinion? What do I think? What do I know? What do I have to contribute? I want you to value your brilliance. Because when you go out and you think that you have to find the answer outside of you, you are going to perpetuate the belief that you can't trust yourself, your own decisions, your own ideas, your own thoughts, your own theories.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

At the end of the day, becoming a leader is about building up your trust. Your trust in yourself and your decisions, in your vision. Over consuming is really just a signal to me that there is a lack of trust, a lack of belief in oneself. Okay, that's number one.

Mistake number two is not constraining your focus, your actions, your priorities. Many leaders jump into the school year thinking they're going to do it all. They're going to fix all the problems. They're going to do all of the work. They're going to learn everything all at once. You think you need to know all of the answers. You think you need to be good. You think you should not have to be new and not know. You think you should have to skip to the part where I do know because I'm the leader now. No, that creates a problem. That creates overwhelm. Overwhelm results in less productivity and more distraction. I want you to hear that.

When you are believing that you should do it all and fix it all and be everywhere and be everything to everybody. You are going to be overwhelmed and exhausted. You're going to overwork, overexert, overschedule. You will burn out mentally, physically, emotionally. You will think that something's gone wrong. No, the only thing that's gone wrong is you tried to do too much.

The solution to this is to learn the art of prioritization and to coach yourself on sticking with that one priority. I just coached a client today on it. We were talking about choosing one focus for her school, and she chose relationships. The way you stay committed to your decision and the way that you believe that you made the best decision possible for your school is by grounding yourself in all the reasons why you chose that decision in the first place. Why are relationships the best? Why are they best for kids? Why are they best for teachers? Why are they best for the school community? How is it best for you?

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

You want to start believing that you make amazing decisions. You make the right decisions, and they are the best decisions. When you fail to constrain yourself, you start to doubt that you're making good decisions because you're not really making decisions. You're not really prioritizing anything. You're not having to decide between focusing on this or that. That is a mistake. It's going to create overwhelm, which is going to put you in a negative spin cycle. You're going to actually decrease your productivity. Okay.

Number three, being resistant to being new. I just mentioned this. When we are new at something. What I mean by being new is we're in the learning curve of how to do the job, or how to solve a problem, or how to acquire a skill. What happens is we don't like the discomfort of the learning curve. We don't like to be new. It feels awkward. It feels clunky. It feels messy. It feels hard. It feels like it's taking too much time. We think we should be further along. We should know more.

So my question to you is, why shouldn't you be new? Why do you think you should circumvent being new? Why is it a problem to be new? Then you're going to list that down, and I'm going to ask you why is that a problem? I call it the five why's. Keep digging down. Why is being new a problem? It's not a problem at all, you'll find out. The only problem with being new are the emotions that you experience when you're learning something new, or you have taken on a new position.

What do you think you should know? What do you think you should be doing? Where is the gap between where you're at now and where you think you should be? Allow yourself to be new. Allow yourself to be on the learning curve process. Eventually, you won't be new. You'll have figured it out. Okay.

Number four, not evaluating or reflecting. Now, a lot of my new leaders feel so overwhelmed, and they feel so overscheduled. They don't feel like they

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

have time to slow down and reflect and evaluate. This is a mistake. Because when we don't evaluate, we can't come up with better ideas, better solutions. Okay.

So the reasons most school leaders say they don't evaluate is they don't have the time. I think that's the surface level. I'm too busy. There's other priorities. It's kind of tedious. I don't like it. The deeper reason is they don't want to because they don't want to see the results they've created. They don't want to look in the eyeballs. Their fails. They don't want to see it for themselves. They don't want to take ownership of that result, or how they feel about that result. Okay.

So my solution to this when people don't want to reflect. Number one we just build the time in. So there's no time excuse for the brain to fall back on and say well, I just don't have the time. Then when we have the time, if time couldn't be the reason why we don't reflect and evaluate our results then we get into the messiness of ah, I don't like the results I see. I don't like what's coming up. I don't like that I didn't achieve this, or I wasn't able to figure that out, or I didn't commit and stick to my plan.

But once we're willing to feel that disappointment or discouragement, then we get past that. We are allowing ourselves to say okay, why did that happen? What can I learn? What's holding me back? What are the obstacles in my way? What are the pitfalls that I fell into? How do I get out of this pitfall and make a solution so that I can be more successful on my next attempt? Okay.

One of the ways I get clients to very quickly switch out of not reflecting is asking them what is the cost of not reflecting? Right? You've got to sell yourself on the value of reflection. What is the purpose of it? Why is it important? Why is it better for you? Why is it worth the time investment to reflect?

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

That's kind of like people who don't want to look at their finances. They don't want to look at the checkbook or they don't want to get online and look at their bank accounts because they're afraid they might see a low number or a negative number. Then they will feel panic, or they will feel terrible, or they'll feel guilty that they overspent. They'll feel bad they didn't budget themselves better, or they didn't stick to their budget plan, okay? So they avoid it to avoid feeling that feeling.

But the feeling's there. It's just dormant, waiting. It's in the background. Because anytime you think about your bank account, you feel that feeling right? Looking at the numbers, at the data, at the actual results you created, there is a cost to not doing that. It means more overspending, more debt, more negative numbers on the screen.

Versus I'm willing to feel the feels and look at it, but ask myself what decisions did I make to create this result? What actions did I take? Not that they're a problem, but I want to adjust that. I want to get out of this pattern of overspending. The only way to get out of is to study it, to explore it.

Same thing with school leadership. If we feel we're in a pattern that's not creating a result we want, the simple solution is to reflect and evaluate what we think works, what we think isn't working, and what our theory is for next steps. That's it. It's that simple. It doesn't have to feel that terrible.

Which leads me to number five. I love this concept. I'm going to be doing an entire podcast on this. I call it leadership entitlement. So our brain might have a thought when we step into the leadership role that goes something like this.

Now that I am the school leader, now that I have positional authority, I don't need to expose myself to feedback. I don't want to know what teachers think of me because I'm their boss. I had years of my boss telling me what they thought of me. Now I don't want that. Like, I don't want to go to that

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

place. I shouldn't have to do something anymore because now I'm in principle. Okay.

I warn you, do not hide behind the title or the position. I'm not just talking about oh, I don't want to do yard duty anymore because that was a teacher's job. Well, I'm talking about this too. If you think oh just the teacher should do the job. I shouldn't do it.

Number one, be willing to do anything you ask of somebody you lead. That is maybe a philosophy or a principle you want to live by, but it serves you well when you're willing to do anything you ask of your team. Okay, there's that first layer that oh I shouldn't have to because I'm the principal. Notice if that comes up for you. Then you want to check that and see where that's coming from. Okay.

Number two, most of you are very servant based leaders, but there is some entitlement that comes in with the job. I did it. Everybody I know has done it. It's very subconscious. It's just like oh, I don't want to have to go sub. I have other things to do. My job is more important than going and subbing versus being like something's the most important thing I can do. Kids need me. That teacher needs me. They have an emergency. I'm there. My work can wait. It'll be okay.

Do you see the difference? Not that your job isn't important, but subbing is also important, and subbing equals your job. There's a difference, right? So, notice where leadership entitlement is coming up. I'm going to do a full podcast on this because I'm super passionate about it. It's something that came to my attention recently, and I saw it. I'm like oh, I see where I did that. I want to help other people avoid this.

But the deeper reason that we hide behind our title or our position is that we don't want to experience the discomfort of reflection and failure. When we do that we lack agency or control over our results. So be very careful

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

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

about leadership entitlement. It's very sneaky. Okay, more on that in another podcast.

Let's move on to number six. Number six is avoiding your three month plan. Avoiding planning it in the first place then avoiding looking at it or using it as your guide for the next 90 days. Okay. So many of you put the work in to create the plan. Then when I asked you, is it on the plan? You're like uh, I don't know. I haven't looked at it lately. Okay. We all do it. I do it. My coach just called me out. What's your three? We have a three year plan. I said oh my gosh, I haven't looked at it for a month or two. I have to go back right.

We have to put it into our calendar to remind ourselves because the brain is going to conveniently forget that you have a plan because it's going to want to just do the fun thing or the easy thing or the next shiny object thing, right? When you think you don't have time to create a plan, what you're saying is I don't value my future time. I don't value my future enough to take time in my present moment to plan out my future. But the problem with this, it creates inconsistency and a lack of accomplishment.

So you've got to sell yourself on why this is a valuable use of your time. Why you want to create a plan and check in on it, and use it as a tool to help make your job easier. Okay. All of you who come to me, one of the things you say is I need more time. There's too much to do and not enough time. I agree. One of the solutions that we come up with is intentionally planning our time so that we feel like we can put in the things we can't get to without planning. When we put them in the plan, then we have to coach ourselves on how to honor them. Right.

Okay, turning the page. I actually just took notes. Normally I type up an outline. But this time, I just wrote it in my journal because I was on a rampage. Number seven, not mapping out your vision clearly. I have been working with so many school leaders since about July, we started working on visions for their school year, okay.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

You're now listening to this in the middle of October. If you feel confused, you feel like you're lacking vision or you're lacking clarity on where you're headed or you feel you're off track, perfect time to sign up for coaching, okay. Because when you don't map out the vision clearly for yourself, and you're not sure about the details and you don't really know the how and you haven't developed any theories on what might get you from point A to B. You don't take the time because you're too busy, and it's not that urgent, right?

Your vision is one of those things that is in the quadrant of important but non urgent. It's not calling you on the phone. It's not ringing the fire bell. It's not a parent knocking at your door, right? Your vision is just sitting there very quietly in your brain waiting for you to pay attention to it.

So what happens is we have the thought like we don't have time, or it's going to be hard, or I don't really know. I'm very confused. I don't know how to create a vision. When you avoid it because you think it's hard or you don't have time, what happens is you don't have a vision. You have no path in front of you. There's no roadmap. There's no track. You can't get off track if you don't even have a track, right.

The reason this is a problem is because when you don't clearly have a vision and you haven't taken time to establish one, you cannot articulate and communicate and lead your team effectively because you don't have a plan at all, a roadmap, plan, vision, track, whatever. You don't have any of it. You're just out there forging ahead trying to figure out what the vision is.

It's like you're trying to arrive at a place you don't know you're going. You have a destination, but you don't know where it is or how to get there. The three month plan and creating the vision helps you do that. Okay? It makes your job easier. It makes communicating and leading your team so much easier.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

Okay, number eight people versus work. We have an all or none thinking in our brain. That's what our brain does. It likes to believe it's all good or all bad. It's right or it's wrong. It's left or it's right. It's this or it's that. Okay. So one of the things I talk with people about is the idea of being people focused versus work focused.

What happens is my people-people, people who like to spend time out connecting and building relationships and being out on campus, they will come to me and say like climate is great. Teachers are great. Everyone's getting along. Things are humming, but I'm not getting to my work. Because they're spending all their time on the people end, and less time on the work end.

Then my worker bees, who love to work and work and work and be productive and get stuff done, they feel annoyed when people want to speak with them and want to connect with them and communicate and collaborate and talk and hang out. So it tends to be I've got the people-people and then I've got the worker bees. What I want to offer is that it's not either all people are all getting the work done, okay? We want to balance by scheduling in both.

So if you're a worker bee, part of your job is to put in time for connection, Time out on campus. Time checking in with teachers. Time out saying hello at dismissal or goodbye at dismissal and welcoming kids in the morning. You want to create time in your day by putting it on your calendar to go mingle with the people.

People-people, same goes for you. You've got to schedule time on your calendar to sit your buns in the office, door closed, where nobody can distract you or come say hi and let you go do the fun thing, which is hanging out with people. You got to practice the art of sitting down, closing your door, not being distracted, and being okay with the discomfort that you feel when you close your door.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

I was just coaching somebody on this about open door policy. You have an office for a reason. That office is in that space for you to work. It's okay for you to sit in your office and close your door and get some things done. You want to put both on the calendar, okay. People and work. It's the land of and my friends.

Okay, number nine, relying on a very small number of people. When you move from a teaching position to a leadership position, you are scaling your impact. You are scaling who you are as a person in education. You went from working with maybe a grade level of three or four people and a classroom of 25 with 25 sets of parents to maybe 25 teachers or 50 teachers, hundreds of kids, thousands of parents, and you're still trying to approach your job with the same amount of people and resources that you did as a teacher. Okay. So relying on that a very small number of people.

The reason we do that, basically, it's a trust issue, right? We only trust a very small group of people. We're afraid to say anything, especially when become a leader. We don't want to offend or say anything that's going to create a problem out in the world. So we stay safe. We play small, and we keep that circle of trust, very, very small. But the problem is, it doesn't expand your capacity to lead and to delegate and to collaborate with more and more people.

Now, why is that a problem? When you can't delegate, you can't scale, your impact and your influence and your legacy as a school leader. Okay. So we have to be willing to delegate. That means trusting people. It means expanding our circle. Who else might be able to do this job? Who else can I trust? Who else has the skill set? Okay. When we collaborate, it's about growing our capacity to work with different kinds of personalities and different kinds of people and listening to different ideas other than our own.

So we tend to hang out with people who think like us and believe the same things we do. That's why we trust them. We want to put ourselves out there

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

and expand the number of people we engage with so that we can be challenged. Not that you have to change your mind, but you want to be exposed to what's out there because the more you understand a broader width of people, the greater your capacity is to lead different kinds of people, okay? So don't keep your circle too small. Don't limit yourself in the number of people you are willing to delegate to, willing to trust, willing to engage with and interact with.

Okay, problem number 10. I love this one. It's called the X Factor. This is my unicorn theory. This is when you think that somebody else has the magic touch. They are the unicorn. They are the special snowflake. They are the fairy. They are the reason why they're so much better than you, why they're so much more successful, and why you can't have what they have.

So if you listen to my podcast and my clients are on telling you all of the amazing things they've created as a result of coaching, and you're thinking to yourself well, that's good for them. They must be special. They must be different. They must have more resources. They probably have more money than me. They can afford a coach and I can't. Or they must have something that I don't. Whenever you're thinking that somebody else out there has it better than you or has something that you want, but you don't think you can have it, or that you just are inherently not as good enough.

Trust me, I struggle with this, right. As a coach, I struggle with this. My brain wants to compare and despair. The people who've been in coaching for about as long as I have. There's people making millions of dollars or having millions of clients, and I'm sitting here because I'm choosing to be very intentional about who I coach and how I coach. I keep my systems very tight to ensure 100% success.

For now, that for me means one on one coaching. I personally believe this is the magic sauce and education. Because when I can talk with you one

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

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

on one, we can solve a lot of problems in a very short amount of time because I'm not trying to blanket solve one problem for everybody.

Now, as my business scales, mark my word, one on one coaching is not going to be available with me forever. Because as this podcast, and it's gaining incredible speed, incredible amount of traction with school leaders, which I'm so grateful for. Eventually, I'm going to have to scale. I'm going to have to uplevel, just like I'm asking you to do. So this is what I say. There's nobody out there that has it better than you or magic, or they're not a unicorn. They just think differently. They have different thoughts because thoughts create results.

One of the ways you can look at this is okay, what do you think that person has that you don't have? Do they have more money? Do they have more time? Do they have more energy? Are they better looking? Did they have a better background? Do they have a different certificate? Like what is it about a school principal that you admire that you think they have, and you don't. Look for that gap. What do you think that gap is? Okay.

Once you find it, then you have to think to yourself okay, if it couldn't be that, if I couldn't blame that as the reason why I don't have what they have, then what? What you'll find out when you explore this. So for example, let's say you're listening to one of my clients, and you're like oh, it sounds like they have the perfect work life balance. They're getting more done in less time. Their scores went up. They're successful. They have great relationships with their staff. They are loving their job, and you're like you can't even imagine being in that space.

What do you think that person has that you don't? Make a list. Whatever that list is, throw it out and say okay, if I couldn't blame these things, then what? What you will find is that those people are willing to feel a feeling that you aren't.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

So, for example, if you want a coach, and you can't have a coach because you don't have the money, the difference between you and them is the principal who felt afraid to invest in herself but allowed the fear to be present and said yes anyway. She was willing to feel the fear of investing in herself but did it anyway. She was willing to feel that fear, okay? People who don't have a coach, but want one desperately, but they hold on to the thought it's the money that's the problem. They're not willing to feel that fear of investment and believe in themselves and trust in themselves to come and get the results that they want. They're not willing to feel those feels.

Another example. I know one of my clients really talks about her work life balance, how that's all changed for her. If you feel like there's no way I could stop overworking. Like that person must not have kids, or that person must hire housekeeping or have a nanny or that person must whatever. Like if you think they have something, a resource that you don't have, what would it be like if that weren't the case? That person was willing to constrain their schedule. It's not that they threw a bunch of resources to solve their problems.

They were willing to feel the discomfort of saying nope, I'm sorry. I've got to go home by 4:00 today. I've got to pick up my kids. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm gonna have to miss that meeting because my son is graduating this afternoon and I'm going to that, or whatever, right? Like they're willing to constrain. So if it's work life balance or after, the feeling of constraint is very uncomfortable. You have to be willing to feel that. The only difference between what you want and where you're at right now is there are feelings in between there and here that you're not willing to yet feel. So lean into that. Okay, that's a big one.

Number 11. Compare and despair. We were just talking about that. If you are leaning into the unicorn theory thinking everybody has it better than you or everybody has an easier than you, you are comparing and despairing. Instead of comparing and despairing, let's try on this. Curious to learn.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

There is a difference between looking at somebody and thinking they have it better than you or they had it easier than you or they have some resource that you don't have available to you versus thinking they are on to something. I'm curious to know what they are thinking and how they're feeling?

What actions are being driven by those thoughts. I want to know their STEAR cycle. What does a person who has a coach and finds a way to pay for coaching? What are they thinking and feeling? I'm resourceful. I've got access to money. This is worth it. This is valuable. This is going to make my life so much better. What are they thinking? How are they feeling? Right?

Think about people when you look, and you see them. I don't know. Maybe they are going home on time, and you're taking home a bunch of work at night. You're thinking how are they able to get so much done in less time? Your brains like well, they obviously aren't getting as much done, or they have more resources to help to get it done. Okay, that's compare and despair.

Curious to learn is, what are they doing that's allowing them to go home at four? How are they good at their job and going home at four? I'm dying to know. When you get into curiousness, then you stop comparing yourself and feeling worse about yourself and telling yourself it's not possible for you. You're thinking if they can do it, I can do it.

I'm curious to know because here's the truth success leaves clues. Why not pick the clues up? If somebody's doing what you want to be doing or somebody's succeeding at something you want to succeed at, study them, and get curious about what they're thinking and how they're feeling that's driving the actions they're taking to create that result. Okay.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

All right. Number 12. Hiding when you're struggling. I'm gonna raise my hand because I'm super guilty of this. When I am struggling, I tend to hide. I don't want people to see me struggling. I feel embarrassed. I feel ashamed. I feel guilty. I have all the yucky feels. So I tend to hide. My coach is onto me and will call me out, which I'm so grateful for, or just bring it to my awareness. Do you realize you haven't raised your hand for coaching in the last three weeks? Oops, I didn't even have an intention to come with coaching because I was so ashamed. Let's talk it out.

Now. We're told in school leadership to fake it till we make. It doesn't work in the long run. We don't want to let people know that we don't know. So we pretend to fake it. I don't believe this works. It didn't work for me. Like, there's a point. You can fake some things, but I found that it wasn't super helpful for me to pretend I knew things I didn't know.

I just found it so much easier and actually just more transparent. It felt honest to me. It felt aligned to me to say I have no idea. That's a great question. I'm brand new this year. Let me go ask someone and figure that out. Or let me get back to you. I just found it way easier. Sometimes I would just tell people like I'm so nervous right now. Because I'm not sure what to say or how to say it, and here's my intention. I would just like deflate the fake into authenticity. People loved me for that. I just did it because it felt easier to me. It felt more aligned to me. So I didn't think faking it was great.

Sometimes we don't want to ask for support or help because we're afraid of what people will think if we get support or help. If we have to ask the same question multiple times, they're gonna think you don't get it or you're not a fast learner. Something like that.

What is the solution? Be authentic, be transparent. Let them know how you're feeling. Let them know you're new. Let them know you're stumbling. I love this about being new. It's like hey, guys, I honestly don't know. I'm super nervous. I'm super excited, and I have no idea. Let me go ask.

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

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

They'll be like okay. People don't expect you to have all the answers. They expect you to respond to them honestly, and to help them find a way to get the answer whether that's through you or somebody else. Okay.

So what is the solution? Get a coach, utilize the people around you. Utilize your resources, it's okay, especially when you're new. Tap those resources, pull all the levers you can to get all the help you need. Okay, be willing to feel new.

Okay, number 13. What we make asking for help mean. This leads in, right? So we hide because we're struggling because we're embarrassed, but we don't want to ask for the help because dot, dot, dot, we make it mean that we're weak or incapable. We think we're not smart enough to figure it out. That we're incompetent. The weakness comes from the thought I should be able to. Now that I'm the leader, I should be able to figure this out. I should know more. I should have known this before. Right?

But the problem is that slows our growth and progress when we're not willing to ask for help, or we're making it mean that we're weak or incapable or incompetent. It prolongs our pain and suffering. It prolongs the feeling of being brand new. Okay? So the solution is find the value in it. List all the reasons why asking for help is better, faster, easier, more productive than not asking for the help.

Okay, number 14, resisting and avoiding feedback as a leader. This is what I was talking about hiding behind the positional authority of your job, the title of your job. We tend to do this because quite honestly negative feedback hurts. It stings, right?

We make that feedback mean something about us, that we're inherently wrong, or we're bad, or we made a mistake, or we failed, or people don't like us, or we're being rejected. We make it mean something so significant that our brain goes into fight or flight. We either defend or we shut down.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

The problem is that we never grow. We never evolve, and we can't give what we don't receive. You cannot give feedback if you're not willing to receive it. Okay.

So the solution to this is to explore why feedback is challenging for you personally, and why it's valuable to go there anyway. It's not to say it won't sting or feel bad, but that's not the goal. The goal isn't to avoid negative emotion. The goal is to lean into it so we can find the truth.

One thing I love to do that helps me take feedback from anybody, my husband, my coach, my friends, my family, myself is I just consider that feedback an opinion. I'm like okay, my boss has the opinion that I should be spending more time in classrooms. What do I think about his opinion? What is my opinion of their opinion? I have to ask myself do I agree, yes or No? If I do, it's like okay, I'll take that feedback. I agree with it. Now, how do I put that into my calendar? How do I adjust my three month plan?

But if I'm like you know what? I think he doesn't realize how much I'm in classrooms. I'm going to document here are the times I've been in the classrooms. I think this is a good balance of how long I've been in classrooms. I'm good with it. You have to ask yourself what is my opinion of their opinion? It makes receiving feedback way easier. You've got to think about that on the flip end. I'm gonna do a whole other podcast on feedback because it's such a big deal, giving it and receiving it, but just know your ability to receive it impacts your ability to be able to give it. You can't give it if you don't receive it. Okay?

Number 15. This is the last one. We're almost on the homestretch here. Assuming we know people's intent or reasons. This is a human mistake. It's not a principal mistake. Okay? The reason we assume. We make assumptions without even realize we're doing it because our brain is wired to create a story about somebody's words or actions. So, and we tend to act on them at a subconscious level.

Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

So if somebody says something to us, our brain immediately is like this is what it means. This is what they're saying about me. We start to make assumptions about who they are or what they must be thinking or how they must be feeling or why they did something. But the problem is this, we can never, never truly know.

We can't possibly know the reality of all the details that went into that person's actions. We weren't there. We weren't in their brain. We don't know everything. We tend to assume incorrectly. We only have aspects or pieces to the puzzle. We make assumptions on some of the pieces but not all of them. We find out, sadly, we create an unintended result where we respond or react to somebody. We're incorrect in our assumption. Now we have another problem on our hands. Okay.

So the solution to this is to stay curious, to be transparent with yourself. Ask yourself to tell you the difference between what are the facts of this situation and what's the story my brain is creating? What actually happened? What words were said? Put them onto paper. Make them a sentence on a piece of paper. That is different than all of your opinions about the statement that was set. Okay?

We have to spend a lot of time on this because we teach people, right? Fact, opinion, we teach this in class. We teach this in school. You have to do it to yourself. What are the facts? What is my opinion of them? What are my thoughts? What is the story my brain is creating? Let's break that down. What am I making the story mean about me and about them? That is the solution to our assumptions. We want to slow our roll and just dig out the facts.

Okay, so those are the 15 mistakes I see. I'm adding a bonus because it just popped into my head, and I have to say it. Number 16 is contemplating quitting. I feel like this is the most heartbreaking mistake. Makes me want to cry just thinking about it, but it popped in my head, and I have to say it.

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Ep #251: Top 15 Mistakes School Leaders Make

When I hear school leaders so discouraged or they reach out to me for a consult, and they are suffering so immensely. They want to want the job, but they're suffering in it. They think they're not good enough or that they should quit, and that they're not cut out for school leadership. They have this story about they just don't have what it takes. It really breaks my heart because I'm telling you we need you. Kids need you. You need you. You were called into this position for a reason. It's to build your capacity to expand what is possible for yourself.

So I leave you with this. What if quitting wasn't an option? If you could not quit your job, if you had to stay in this position, then what? Then how would you approach it? How would you think about it? How would you feel about it? How would you show up? How do you want to think and feel if quitting isn't an option? When you do this, you remove the option of quitting, what happens is your brain gets to work solving for the reasons you would want to quit in the first place. It's not quitting. That's the decision you need to make.

What you need to think about is what's creating the urge to quit? What's happening? What feelings, what thoughts, and how do we alter and adjust that? Okay. I promise you. You were cut out for this. You can do this. Anybody can do this. There's no unicorns out there. There are no X factors. There are no special circumstances. There's you and your willingness to feel the feels required to expand your capacity to be an empowered principal. Have an amazing week. I will talk to you next week. Take care. Bye.

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