

Ep #263: Creating Conviction



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With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 263.

Welcome to *The Empowered Principal™ Podcast*, a not so typical educational resource that will teach you how to gain control of your career and get emotionally fit to lead your school and your life with joy by refining your most powerful tool, your mind. Here's your host certified life coach Angela Kelly Robeck.

Hello, my empowered leaders. Happy Tuesday. For those of you who are new, welcome to the podcast. We're so happy you're here. All right. First of all, I want to invite each and every one of you to the midyear reboot series of the Empowered Principal™ program.

So if you haven't joined us yet, I am hosting a four part series throughout the month of January where we are leveraging the energy of the new calendar here. So we want to leverage this New Year vibe and all the resolution vibes you got going on. But we're using it to reboot ourselves midyear of the school year. Okay.

Last week, I covered how to create awareness and acknowledge yourself as a leader so that you can navigate all the demands of the job, and process the emotions that come your way as a school leader. I want you to be able to process those emotions in a way that allows you to feel what you're feeling and be honest about that and be human about that so that you can allow those feelings to be present, process them all the way through, so that you have the space to hold space for other people.

When you're working with other people and they're having big emotions and they're having a reaction, you want to have the capacity to handle that. If you aren't managing your emotions, you can't help other people manage theirs. So that's what we talked about last week. If you didn't yet register, don't worry. You'll get access to that replay when you register because when you register for one, you have access to all four. So I want you to

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think about how much time you spend handling how other people feel. It's the majority of your day, right. That is what we talked about last week.

This week, we're talking about leadership alignment, and where you want to take your school. You'll learn how to clarify your school vision based on what you value as a leader to make implementing your vision simple, easy, and doable. We cut out all the fluff and make it so simple that you just can't fail at implementing it. That's the whole purpose.

We don't want to set a vision that's complicated and cumbersome and tedious and boring, and we don't really believe it'll ever happen. What's the point of that? We want to create when we actually do believe in. I'm going to talk more about that today on the podcast.

But I want to invite you to the midyear reboot for school leaders. You will learn how to get aligned and acknowledge where you're at and where you want to go. We're also going to talk about how to generate momentum and how to overcome obstacles. So you absolutely need to be there. This is all of my work combined in a way that I have never taught it before. It's the best version of my work. I'm so proud of it. I'm so excited for you to be there.

So, get on over. There are three ways to access the registration link. Number one, simply follow me on social media. I'm on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. You can look up Angela Kelly Coaching. You can search the *Empowered Principal™ Podcast*. You can hashtag the *Empowered Principal™ Podcast*. You'll find me not to worry, okay. Angela Kelly Coaching.

Number two, join the Empowered Principal™ Facebook group. If you're not in that group and you're on Facebook, there's no reason not to be in it. Number one, it's free. Two, you get lots of bonus content. I am in there on a regular basis, commenting, adding value, adding content. My latest and

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greatest ideas I posted there first because you guys are opting in, and I want you to have the best of the best as soon as possible. So get into that group ASAP.

Then number three is my email list. Again, you get lots of bonus content. I send out my resources to my audience. You always get first dibs at webinars and trainings and when coaching is available. You get all of that through the email list. I definitely send out an email at least once a week, sometimes more. I always will send you podcast episodes and ideas and ways you can implement the podcast material into your repertoire as a school leader.

So we're also going to add the registration link in the show notes of this podcast. So don't worry if you'd missed last week, that's not a problem. Come on in anyway. You'll have access to the replay, not a problem. Okay. Let's dive in.

Today, I'm going to talk about creating conviction. Conviction within yourself so that you can create conviction with your team. We talk a lot about the emotion of commitment. I've talked a lot about the emotion of commitment, and I love being committed. Feeling committed to something feels very powerful. But I've been thinking about this because a lot of my clients, or people who call and do a consult with me, on a scale of one to 10, they'll say I'm a 10. I'm committed at the 10 level. I couldn't be more committed.

But what I find is that commitment can waver. It waivers based on our thoughts. It waivers based on situations and the circumstances at hand. I feel like we're committed until we're not right. So committed is lovely as long as you're committed, right? But take the new year, for example. Here it is the second week of January. A lot of us had new year's resolutions about a particular goal that we wanted to achieve. Working out, drinking more

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water, losing weight, getting more sleep, being more present, commitment to our relationships, whatever it is, right?

On January 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, you feel really committed. Maybe you were getting to the gym. Then on the 5th, you went out for happy hour. You got invited. You're excited. Went to happy hour, and you skip the gym. No big deal. But then on Saturday, maybe you really needed to sleep in. Then you had stuff going on Saturday. Then on Sunday, maybe you had a church event or a work event or a family event, something that threw you off.

Now all of a sudden your brains like okay, I worked out for a couple days, but then I had all these days off. Am I really committed? Now I'm thinking maybe I don't have time. Maybe I'm not that committed. Maybe I'm so busy. I gotta get all this work done. I need some sleep. I have too many commitments. So I'm not going to be committed to working out and losing weight and drinking more water or whatever. Right? Okay.

I say that because we've all been there. Every human on the planet has had some kind of commitment to themselves. But conviction, on the other hand, is a level of commitment that does not waver. Conviction is when we are living in 100% belief, regardless of the circumstances, regardless of the evidence that we have. You can have no business believing in something but you believe it to your core. Even though you can't see it, feel it, touch it, even though it hasn't happened yet.

You can be convicted to a belief, even though you can't see it. Many people are very convicted to their religion or to their spirituality. It's not something that's tangible. They don't have proof or evidence, but they're convicted without a doubt, 100% full belief, okay. Conviction is when you believe something to your core. It's when you feel it in your bones and in your gut. It's very visceral. It's as though you can't imagine believing in anything else. Like it's just not possible to think that it's not true. Conviction is simply who you are.

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In our work as school leaders, we want to create compelling and implementable, is that a word implementable, school visions. We want our conviction to our vision, and we need that conviction. Here's why. That conviction has to rise above all obstacles, all challenges. It has to stand vigilant through the failures and the disappointments and the setbacks. Your conviction is the backbone to what you do and why you do it.

I can tell. When I work with principals, I can tell when a principal is convicted to their mission and vision. The way I know that is how that principal feels when they're facing a challenge or obstacle. They're not defeated by it. They're even more determined to figure out a solution. They jump on a call with me, and they're like I have this obstacle. Let's go. Let's figure it out. I don't want it to be in my way, I have this challenge. Or I've had a setback. I want to process the disappointment so that I can clean up my brain and create space to keep moving forward. That's a person who's convicted right.

I can also tell by what a principal shares in their coaching session about the daily functions of their school and how they should up energetically and approach the day. Principals who are convicted live their vision. They know what they value and why. They act on those values. They live the value. If they value connection and relationships, for example, they talk about who they've been meeting with and how they've connected and the relationships they've built and the fun that they've had and the things that they're doing to get into classrooms and make sure they're checking in on teachers, whatever it is, right. Or parents, all of it.

If they value work life balance, I have a lot of people who come to me and say like, I'm overworking. I've got kids at home or family and my partner and everybody thinks I'm overworking. I want to learn how to create balance in my life. So if you're a parent, or a spouse, or a partner who wants to create, get your work done, but also have plenty of energy and time.

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The way I know that's happening is that people who are convicted to creating work life balance, they create a schedule that ensures that they leave work on time. They have their schedule set in a way that allows them to get what they need done at work and still have energy for their families in the evening. They're not working all their nights, all their weekends, and all their breaks. They are convicted. They want to live the experience of work life balance.

Principals who aren't fully convicted, they just want those things. They hope for those things they wish for those things. They want a collaborative culture, a high functioning school, and work life balance, and they want to feel good and successful. But they don't truly believe that they can be successful, or that it's possible to feel better, or it's possible to have balance, or it's possible to get more done or create those results or achieve that goal.

They can see the gap between them and what they want versus taking the action of living into the having of that goal and in the pursuit of that goal, from the conviction. Like conviction is an emotion. So it's energy, right. When we're in conviction, that energetic feeling convicted, we live it, and that energy goes out into how we show up. We believe that we're going to achieve the goal. So we show up in a very different way when we believe that we are going to achieve something versus not going to achieve something. Okay.

When you're sold on what's possible for you and your staff and your students, you're so convicted to your vision that there's nothing or no one who can rock you from that vision. You are grounded. You are tethered with conviction so that even when somebody does something or says something or challenges come up or obstacles are faced or you failed, you don't change the vision.

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You don't uncommit to that vision. You stay convicted. Even if you have to process painful emotion or sadness or disappointment or regret, or you have to rework a failure that you've had. It doesn't rock you from the conviction. There's no one that can take you away from that vision.

Number two, when you're so sold you can sell other people on that vision with ease. It isn't a problem. It doesn't even compute that it's hard work to sell a vision that you're so convicted to. Because you just believe in it so much that you can't help but talk about it and encourage people and show them how it's valuable to them and show them how to make life easier for them and how they can achieve their goals through this vision. You just are out there living it and doing it and being the example of what is possible. Okay.

I want this for each and every principal on the planet. I want this for you. I want you to be convicted to your goals, to your dreams, to your desires, to what you want most out of life, out of your career. I want you to have it. This is how you have it. You convict to the goal. Against all odds when everything feels impossible, you believe anyway just because. Just because you want to, because you can, because you can choose to believe no matter what.

I want you to feel what it's like to believe without a doubt that you can have everything you've ever wanted, professionally and personally. To experience school leadership in a way that you desire, to achieve success however you define that for yourself. I want to disrupt the industry mindset of accepting uncertainty and failures and mediocracy.

There are trains of thought in education that focus on what's not working versus what is working. We talk about the gap versus talking about the gain. We worry more about test scores than we do emotional regulation. My coaching program is changing this. We focus intentionally on emotional

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regulation because no one's teaching it, and it's the one thing of anything we need to teach people how to do, little humans and adult humans alike.

We need to teach emotional regulation because you cannot expect students who do not know what to do with their emotions, you can't expect them to focus and learn. Most adults don't know how to manage their emotions. This is why you're spending time doing what you're doing and being frustrated that people can't handle themselves. No one's taught them. I'm changing that. I'm disrupting that mindset. We're going to be emotionally regulated, emotionally mature.

We're going to give you tools to teach you how to do it so that you can teach others how to do it so that teachers can teach children how to do it. Imagine a school where the people on your campus have emotional regulation tools. Imagine that. How would you spend your day? It would be completely different. I want you to brainstorm. I want you to imagine and visualize, create a vision of a school with fully functioning, emotionally responsible, and regulated children and adults.

That, to me, is a miracle come true. I am convicted to making that happen for you and your school. Look, when I say the word disrupt, I don't want you to get freaked out by that. I want to invite you to disrupt the way we lead our schools by learning how to create conviction. Don't be afraid of being a disrupter. You're not disrupting in a bad way. I'm not talking about being disruptive in a way that gets you in trouble, or get you fired, or gets you eight-balled and nobody wants to hire you ever again.

I'm talking about disrupting the system in a good way, a healthy way, for the greater good of you and your staff and your students. Our goal over here at the Empowered Principal™ program is to disrupt the status quo that's creating lackluster results, and we do that with conviction. You want to disrupt the gap that's been prevailing for decades. You do that with conviction.

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I have a story for you. I have a client who has created a very strong vision for her school. In the past, she believed that the district didn't care about her school as much as they cared about other schools. She thought that they were more interested in the higher performing schools than in her school.

She was in one of the lower performing schools in the district, as you can imagine. It's basically she's working for the lower income school, the neighborhood that's not affluent, the neighborhood that's brown and black. The neighborhood school that people consider to be the low school, the bad school, the failure school, and she's in there, and she's working it with conviction.

But she had this prevailing thought that the district admins didn't care. They even told her well, you're clear across town. We don't get over there very often. You're doing fine. They actually were spending more time with the high performing schools than her school. Okay. So she hired me, and within 16 weeks, okay, she created a vision, she rolled it out, and she decided with conviction to be the best version of herself as a principal regardless of the level of support she was receiving from her district.

Here's what ended up happening. Actually, this just happened last week. Her assistant superintendent stopped by her school, unexpectedly, unannounced to talk with her about her vision and how it's working and her intervention program, in which my client was first of all, she was shocked. Second of all, she was tickled pink, and she wanted to make some adjustments to her intervention schedule to accommodate her upper classroom needs.

The beautiful thing about this situation is that my client just decided to be convicted to her vision and to make it happen no matter what. What ended up happening is that her conviction, her goals, her desire superseded her district office. It's almost like it got their attention. They started noticing her.

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They started feeling her energy and the energy of the school and how convicted they all were becoming to their goals.

It attracted the assistant supe to come over and talk with her about it, and to give her permission to move forward, to change her intervention schedule, and to allow her to roll that vision out. They noticed her because of her conviction to her vision. It's so powerful, and conviction doesn't happen after you achieve a goal or create evidence to build up your conviction. You don't get the goal and then feel convicted. You don't have evidence before you feel convicted.

Conviction is what happens in your mind. It's an emotion you create based on the way you think and what you believe in. You decide to feel convicted, which means you're committed above all else 100%. That conviction, that emotion, is how you feel the actions required to achieve the goals you want. You're going to have to believe thoughts about your goal ahead of achieving it.

You have to believe that the goal is possible to achieve no matter how many people tell you it's not, no matter how many times they say that's impossible, no matter how many people tell you that's never been done before or that can't be done. It doesn't matter what other people think. It only matters what you think.

You have to believe that where you're at and who you are right now is exactly where you need to be. That you don't need more information or more knowledge or more encouragement or more support, or you don't need to be better, or you don't need to be doing more. It's not about your action line. It's about your thought line, your thinking line, your belief line, your conviction line.

You have to believe that other people totally want the same vision. They want to buy into what you have to offer them in your vision because your

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vision is their vision. You have the vision that they want. You have to believe that. All you need to do is share that vision with them in order for them to want to follow you.

What would it feel like to believe that you can achieve your goals and results faster simply by being convicted to them? I'm not talking about taking any more action, nothing more added to the plate. The one thing, what if the only difference between success and not success and achievement and non-achievement is conviction, is just believing that you can, believing that you will. No more added to the plate. You're not doing anything differently.

But what kind of energy would you show up with every day if you believed we're at the goal, we're achieving the goal. It's a done deal. It's happening. You're gonna show up very differently than sitting in disbelief and being discouraged and being defeated. That does not get you to the goal. You have a vision so that you can believe in that vision with such conviction that no one can shake you, and no one can doubt you. That conviction, that emotion, is the path to the achievement of the vision.

Try this belief on, try this on for size. Selling my vision to my staff and community results in people buying into that vision. I think it's so funny people are like well, people aren't buying into my vision or I don't have buy in. I'm supposed to create buy in. Well, you cannot create buy in if you don't give them an offer, if you don't give them something to buy into. You have to tell them. Here's my vision. Here's why it helps you. Here's why it's better for kids. Here's why it's better for you. Here's how it's easier for you. You've got to sell them on it. You've got to be sold.

If you're convicted to this is what students need and teachers need, and this is how we're going to make it happen, they will buy into that energy. Okay. Conviction is all about the trust triad. Trusting yourself, trusting that others will buy into what you want, and that what you want is what they

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want. They have to trust that your vision is the right vision. They only trust your vision if you trust it. You can't create a vision and not trust it. Conviction is all about choosing to believe in something that you're working to create and then having the faith that it's possible to reach the goal.

Let's talk about some of the thought obstacles that get in your way when it comes to feeling completely convicted to your vision. Here are some thoughts, I call them obstacle thoughts, that will deter you from conviction. I'm not clear on my vision. I'm new. I'm learning. I need to know more. Teachers don't want the same vision as me. It's too much effort to have a vision. The vision isn't possible anyway. So why try? It's not compelling enough. I don't know how to sell it. I don't know how to get buy in. Basically you're saying like I don't see the value in it. So how can I sell the value to others? Okay.

Here are the thoughts to counter these obstacle thoughts. I'm getting clearer every day. I can be new and be in the mode of learning and still lead my staff. All of you, if you're new, if you're a new principal one to three years in, and you're having the thought but I'm new. I don't know. I'm learning. I'm in the middle of learning. That's okay. You can be in a learning curve and still lead your school. They know you're learning. You're always learning. We're continuous learners over here, right.

I want you also to believe that teachers do want the same vision. They do want it. How is that true? They want what you want. They want successful kids, emotionally regulated kids. They want a well-functioning campus. They want a principal who leads. They want success. They want children to learn and grow and evolve into wonderful human beings. You guys really do want the same thing. Sell yourself on how that's true. It is worth the effort.

Here's why. What's the cost of not putting in the effort? The cost of not putting in the effort is a lack of results. Goal achievement isn't solely about

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taking more action and working harder. It's about up leveling your belief and what you think is possible. Do believe it's possible. Everything was impossible until it became possible. Your impossible goal, the thing you think is impossible, it is actually inevitable when you're convicted, when you keep trying, when you don't give up, when you don't stop believing. Oh, that's a Journey song, right?

Anyway, I digress. I want you to keep in mind that many times as we're making progress, we tend to move the goal further away. We don't acknowledge the progress that we've made before we extend into our next goal. I found myself doing this is, which is why I'm bringing it up right now. I found myself saying this is my goal. Then I would get close to it, and then I would move the goal before I actually achieved it. I would be like at 90%, and then I would move it. Then I'd get close and I'd move it. Never was I stopping to acknowledge the achievement of the goal. I was just extending the goal, always out of reach. That's a terrible idea. I don't recommend it.

Number one, you never get to celebrate the success. Number two, you always feel like the goal is out of reach because you keep putting it out of reach. We constantly change the goal. This is why goal achievement feels impossible. We actually do achieve our goals, but we move the new goal further out. Then we think oh, this is harder.

So like, for example, let's say your original goal was to go from 50%, proficient to 60%. Then you get to like 58, and you're like well of course 60 is going to happen, but now we want 70. You don't celebrate the 68 or the 58. Then crossing the finish line, maybe you get 62 the next year, but you're not thinking about the celebration of crossing the 60% line. You're already thinking about the 70% line, and you're already worried about the 70% line. How am I going to get to 70%?

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No, you've got to stick with the same goal. 60% was the goal. Hip, hip hooray, celebrate, throw a party, do whatever you need to do to really acknowledge yourselves and be in the having of achieved that goal.

This is something I'm learning with myself. I don't want to create a new goal until I've celebrated and acknowledged the first goal so that I can stay in belief that achieving goals as possible. It becomes very compelling when we understand how to do this, how to create conviction within ourselves. We have to think about our teachers and our district administrators as well.

What is in our vision for them? What thoughts would make them feel as convicted as us? People don't feel convicted when they have objections that block them from getting on board. So think about your objections to your conviction, and then think about what other people's objections might be. What do you think they have? What objections about them do you have?

So our own objections are typically reflected in what we think about other people. They're not doing this or they're not doing that. We have judgments. We have thoughts. Really, that's just our own objections coming to the surface. So just be aware of those. Why don't teachers follow your lead? Why aren't they convicted? What do you think is causing that? Those thoughts are what hold you back from selling that vision with conviction.

What if you believe that every teacher on your staff was already on board? If you walked into your school and said, my staff's on board. Everybody's on board. How would you show up? How would you approach them? How would you engage and interact with them if they were already on board? If you didn't have to convince them, they're just sold 100%. They're convicted. Now what? What are you going to do when everybody's convicted? Just be that version of yourself now. Think about that.

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What would your process be? What would you do? What would you say? How would you show up? What if you believe the thought I've got nothing to lose? What would your plan be if you were so convicted that you have nothing to lose? What would your vision look like? What would your three month plan look like? What would your weekly plan look like? Okay. What would your life and leadership legacy plan look like? Okay.

Let's be realistic. There are teachers who aren't as readily on board as others. I get it. That's the truth of the matter, but what if all they needed was a little more nurturing, a little extra time, a little more explanation, a little more information to understand the value of that vision for them so that they can be convicted. Look, everybody wants to feel convicted to their work, to their career, to their passion, to their vocation. Teachers want to feel convicted. It's a very empowering feeling. Sometimes you have to nurture that and bring them along. It's not every teacher is just going to buy blindly into your vision, okay?

But your job your work is to bring everybody along and nurture them and remind them and encourage them and support them until they're ready, and they do see the value. When you over deliver to your teachers, even the ones who are being sticklers or taking more time, you've got to make sure you're loving on them just as hard as you love your favorites.

It's like a classroom. There are kids who are harder to love, harder to work with. I get that. Teachers harder to love, harder to work with. I get that. Your job is to find a way to love them anyway, to find a way to nurture them anyway because you're convicted to the vision. Do hear it? Do you get it? It's so powerful. We're going to be talking about this throughout the month of January in the reboot series all throughout January.

So join us, get on board. I want you to spend this week imagining what it would feel like to believe in every single person on your campus, including yourself. What energy level would you show up with if you believed that

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your vision is already in motion? It's already working. People are already on board. They already love you just as you are. You are doing it right.

What if you really believed all of that with conviction? How amazing would your school leadership experience be? It'd be a game changer. Let's do this. Let's go. I will see you at the midyear reboot for school leaders. I love you all. Have an amazing week. I'll talk to you next week. Take care. Bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal™ Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit angelakellycoaching.com where you can sign up for weekly updates and learn more about the tools that will help you become an emotionally fit school leader.