

# Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Angela Kelly**

## Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal

Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 302.

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. Hey, if you're a new listener, we are so happy you're here. Welcome. Please leave a five star review if you'd like to let us know what you want to hear, what you love about the podcast. We would love to hear from you. That's our only way of knowing who's out there listening to *The Empowered Principal® Podcast*. We are here for you and to support you.

Today I have a very special guest. Her name is Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal. She is a certified life coach, just like me. She's a dear colleague and friend of mine, but she's also a pediatrician. She specializes in coaching brown women who feel like they have it all, but they still aren't happy. They don't feel quite fulfilled. Even though they've been chasing all of the things in their professional career, in their personal life. They're wondering where's my joy, happiness, fulfillment? Where's my success in terms of my fulfillment?

So she helps women advocate for themselves. This work speaks to me because many school leaders are female. Many school leaders are female leaders of color. Her work, my friend Payal's work, is so powerful and so influential, I just had to ask her to be on the podcast. So what we agreed to do was record one podcast and serve both communities.

So enjoy this show. This is a very special episode. We decided to have a part two because we have so much more we want to talk about. I really

## Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal

hope that you gain some insight and wisdom from Payal's brilliance. Enjoy the show.

Dr. Payal: Hello, everyone. I have a lovely guest today. I know, right? We've been having so many fun guests who know so many amazing things. They're so inspiring. Today, my good friend Angela is a school principal formally and now she coaches leaders. I'm going to let her introduce and explain that much better than I can. So Angela, tell me all about you.

Angela: Thank you Payal. I am so happy to be here with you and your audience today. For those of you who are new to me, my name is Angela Kelly Robeck. I'm a former teacher, principal, district leader turned life and leadership coach for school leaders. So what I do is I help site and district leaders navigate the mental and emotional demands of school leadership. I've been doing this for about the past seven years.

Really, my business exploded during COVID when we had to pivot and when we had to work from home, go hybrid, and we had to learn how to lead individuals from a distance. So we have been working on that. Then bringing kids back to school has been at a whole 'nother journey. I just delight in empowering school leaders.

So I have a podcast called *The Empowered Principal® Podcast*. I deeply believe my mission in life is to empower as many school leaders as possible and to empower aspiring leaders to come into these positions and change the way that we approach school leadership.

Dr. Payal: That's so fun. You said back to school, and I was like yeah, that's right. Back to school has been rough for so many people. I never think about it, what it's like for the teachers, the leaders like in the school because I'm just in mom anxiety mode usually. It's like what do we need?

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

To be honest, like I struggle more with like the social stuff, right? So not for me, but from one of my kids. Like, each child is so different. I'm so amazed with the amount of work that goes into understanding and seeing each child as an individual. So yeah, thank you for all the work.

It's almost like I feel like thank you for your service. I almost want to say this. It's even during COVID I was like I could never do this if I had to because it's not for me. It requires patience, perseverance, and also I think it's fun because I do have those things for other parts. Like I kind of went to medical school.

Angela: You kind of did a thing.

Dr. Payal: I kind of did a thing. I kind of did a fellowship. I kind of like own this business. So yeah, tell me what got you into doing this work. Like what was the before and what does the after look like?

Angela: Oh wow. So the five second version of this was that I was not a great school leader. I really struggled. I went from being a great teacher, a great instructional coach, and got tapped on the shoulder. They said, "You're such a great teacher leader. We want you to get your admin credential and be a leader."

So I took my marching orders. I went through the admin program, got certified. I got hired the very next year as a brand new principal at a brand new school. So I was not just a new leader, I was opening an entire new school with really very little direction, construction going on. It was a brand new school site. I was a mess. I was a single mom at the time trying to raise a middle schooler on my own, trying to open a brand new school on my own while being a brand new leader. Life just felt like it was falling apart.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

I struggled and struggled emotionally, mentally, physically. I did have a coach, her name is Fran. I always shout out to her. She was amazing. She really was my lifeline. I would have quit for sure. But over the course of time, I felt like I think many of your leaders and audience feels, Payal, where they have the job. They've got the title. They've worked their way up. They're getting the paycheck. Like I was so proud of myself for making over six figures as a woman.

I felt so lost, so empty, so deflated, overwhelmed, exhausted. I had it on the outside, but I didn't have it on the inside. I did not know how to fulfill that part of me without thinking that I had to fill everybody else up around me. For me to be successful, my teachers had to be happy. My secretary had to be happy, student body, parent body, community, my district. People pleasing codependency 101. Like externalizing my own emotions to other people, totally unaware.

Then there was a catalytic event in my family that made me stop and say no, I cannot go through life on like autopilot and kind of this empty numbness. That just like robotic, getting up, going through the motions of my life and my day. I was just like there was a scream inside of me that said no. I started researching, researching. I found a life coach. I was like I don't know what a life coach is, but my life's a mess. So clearly, I need one.

I hired Dr. Martha Beck. I got certified with Martha Beck back in 2012. Then I just kept on the life coach train, like following kind of out in the outskirts. Then I found Brooke Castillo in 2015. She was offering the Life Coach School, getting certified as a life coach. I was like that would be cool, but I wasn't going to get certified to be a business owner. I was going to get certified to bring the tools into my school. That's what I did.

I got certified in the spring of 2015. I was a school principal for two more years. Then I got up into the district, I was promoted into the district office

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

for a year. That is when I saw it. My job at the district office was to go to all the schools and work with my peers, my principal colleagues, and help them set up RTI programs, which is Response to Intervention.

They'd close their door, and they would start to cry and just like tell me all the things. Nothing to do with intervention. I was like holy cow. We've all been sitting in our offices suffering in silence, crying, but then coming out with a smile on our face and shoulders back. We love our jobs, right? That's when it hit me.

All year I was going around school after school after school. I thought there's something missing here. We need to figure this out. So I started teaching them my coaching tools. Then my one on one life coach said, "I think you're onto something here. You have a bigger calling. Are you courageous enough to take the leap?" I did it. I was scared to death, but I did it.

Dr. Payal: Yeah, you did. Yeah, you did. You're killing it.

Angela: Yeah. I did a thing.

Dr. Payal: You did. So Angela is very humble. She is not actually sharing how amazing she is. She's like, I fell in love with her as soon as I met her. We have a lot of fun stories to tell. But I want to go back to this whole leadership thing. She is talking to you guys about like how it is to be a leader in education. Everything that you said, Angela, we could replace a profession, and it's the same story for so many women, right? Maybe men, but we're here talking about women, right?

So for so many women, right? I want to say that I felt that way in medicine. I know people who felt that way in finance and tech, all these different careers, in business, where you're just giving, giving, giving, giving all the

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

time, and you're making sure everyone else is okay. We never stop to think like at what cost?

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: Right? At what cost? I want to say even as like a mom, right?

Angela: Oh for sure.

Dr. Payal: Right? Like, and this is something, I didn't know this before when my kids were younger. But like you said, sometimes you need a catalyst. Right? For me, my catalyst was not burnout at work. My catalyst was burnout in my personal relationships. As soon as that happened, I was now able to look at my life kind of from like a third party, like from above. I see you nodding your head because I think we've all had this moment.

Angela: Yes. Yes.

Dr. Payal: I think my clients will be nodding their head and her clients are nodding their head right now too because we all have these moments. Where we're like wait, we can't keep going like this because it's not sustainable. Right?

Angela: No, it's not. There is nothing left to give. There is literally nothing left to give. Yet still, we still think we haven't done enough. That's when I realized at what point is enough, enough? The more you give, the more you feel you need to give. The more you actually tell people yeah, I'll just keep giving. Come and ask me for more. That's why we create this codependent relationship as leaders with our staff. We need them to need us for us to feel good about ourselves. Then there's just like an empty hole in the bucket.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Dr. Payal: Also, the more we give the more people expect.

Angela: We train them to expect from us, right?

Dr. Payal: So I have, because yesterday was a big coaching day. One of the themes was like I can't change what I'm doing because people are expecting me to do what I've always done. It's not going to work out. Our relationship won't work out, this career won't work out if I don't keep giving what I said I would be giving before or continue to give. They only think this because you told them that this is okay.

Angela: Right. I think one of the hardest questions we have to ask ourselves as leaders if there is something bugging you like interruptions or the way people are treating you or the way that what they're expecting of you is why am I allowing this? Like when you ask yourself that, you want to do it with a gentle heart because you're not intentionally allowing people to walk over you.

You don't want to like flip around and then be angry and resentful, which is what we do when we're in reaction to those emotions. We want to understand no, there is a reason why we're allowing this. Most often it comes down to like well, we were told that this is how we should be. Ladies should be kind and humble and giving and be people pleasers.

There's a belief system driving those actions and feelings. We just want to like explore that internally and say why are we allowing this? How do I want to be treated? What would that look like if I were showing up as the leader who like taught people how to interact with me in a way that felt good for me and for them?

Dr. Payal: Yeah, so there's two things that came up for me when you were saying that. One is a lot of the women that I come across in my own



## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

journey, a lot of it has to do with like well if I'm the common denominator in this, of course, I come from a science background. If I'm the common denominator in all these situations, what is it about me that I'm allowing this? One of the things that is so subconscious is culture?

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: Family and conditioning.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: Right? You could be from any kind of family. Like I know I mostly coach women of color and brown women, but I've had women come to me, and they're like Greek, or they're Italian. They're like dude, in my house it was the same way. The girls did this, the boys did that, right? I think that we don't know that this is what's going on until we look at it from the outside lens.

That's where like coaches come in very handy because I never knew my own conditioning until my coach pointed out to me and saying huh, but why do you think that you have to do that? I'm like, I don't know. Everyone's always done it that way. Right?

Angela: Yeah.

Dr. Payal: I'm sure your folks do the same thing too.

Angela: Yeah. You don't know what you don't know. That's the beauty coaching. I feel like the before and after with coaching. The biggest gift has just been awareness. It creates awareness. It separates you from your thoughts. It separates you from those belief systems, whether they were

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

from your family or from society or your church or anything, place of worship.

We have all of these belief systems that have kind of been. We were like a blank slate, and we had operating systems put into our brains, but we've never updated them. We've never upgraded them. So we just have to go in and say why is it short circuiting? Oh, I have an old operating system. I'm operating from an old belief system that is women do the dishes and men sit around and drink whiskey, or whatever. Whatever men do.

But in these, in our families and traditions, and they can be from any family, any culture, but there are belief systems instilled. I think particularly for women leaders, and this is one of the reasons I reached out to speak with you is that women leaders and women leaders of color tend to feel less heard, less seen, and less taken seriously as a leader. That's one of your strengths that I wanted to bring.

I know we're doing this podcast for your audience and for mine because they overlap so much. But one of your brilliance, like the brilliance I want you to share with my leaders, is what is your thoughts on people who are leaders, women leaders of color, who don't feel that they're taken as seriously or on the same playing field as their fellow leaders, as their peers?

Dr. Payal: Yeah, I think this was probably one of the reasons that I wanted to, what did you say, upgrade my operating system? Oh, god, that was so good. The way I describe it is you have this like awakening that happens, right? This is kind of my way. But for me actually this is, I don't know if I ever told you this, but like, in medicine, so I'm a pediatrician. I did general pediatrics for like 15 years, but I worked for different people.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

In between, I took a break to be on maternity leave. Then like, we were moving, and I really was the only caretaker for my kids. So I decided, God forbid, I want to breastfeed. You know as a pediatrician, I want to breastfeed. So I took this time off. It was very rough. My previous boss didn't like that I didn't want to come back right away and things like that. So it became a two year leave. I had two different kids.

I had both my kids and breastfed them. So when I started, I applied for a new job at a big corporation. The leadership was white, but the department's mostly women, right? I interviewed for this job and for months, crickets. I don't hear anything back. In the meantime, my husband interviews and gets a job within 72 hours.

Angela: Whoa.

Dr. Payal: Right. So he's a specialist whatever, right. So, there's a story about pediatricians being a dime a dozen. Whatever. So looking back on it, like this is what I got informally was well, why don't you just go back to work? Why don't you just have your mom watch your kids like mine did? Oh, you don't really need it because you have, your husband is making money. Right?

In that moment, I don't know if this was me or this was just me being a woman of color, I like shut down. They're like what we're going to offer you is like, and I'll say it to your audience, kind of like a substitute teacher but we call it per diem. This is what we're going to give you. Right. As a physician, I was given \$100 an hour to see yeah, 100%.

Angela: What? You could go teach for that.

Dr. Payal: Yeah, the nurses were like doc, dude, like, you're an amazing doctor. You see four or five patients an hour. You cannot be making what

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

we make. This is like ridiculous. After a couple of years, right, so I asked. I'm like I do a great job. Like, everyone loves me. I'd like to have a raise. They're like nope. This is what we give. This is standard. This is how it's going to be.

So it was still leadership, I felt like, was yes, they were women, but they didn't understand my culture. Part of it was yes. Did I have to do the things I did? No, but I struggled because what I saw was a lot of pressure to do the things right as a mom too. To give women grace because of their varied background I think is not even a thing like until maybe now we're getting a little bit more open with that.

So I was like fine, I gotta change something about me. That's when I did a fellowship in integrative medicine, but it was not really with the intention of like oh, let me find a new passion even if I love it now. It was like let me say screw you guys. Right?

As a woman of color though, like Angela, what I want to say is like looking back on it, I could have fought in that moment, and I didn't, right, because I felt like no one's going to listen. I would be perceived as the pushy like forceful, aggressive alpha. I have this whole podcast about Alpha women.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: I'm not naturally like that. You know me.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: But they were actually more aggressive than I was but because I was at that mercy. So I felt like I was stuck.

## Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal

Angela: Yeah, yeah.

DR. PAYAL: This is like an example of like what happened in my career, which I'm so grateful to all that stuff happened because I would have never found A, my integrative pediatric practice, which I love, and also my coaching business. So going back to how did it feel to be a woman of color?

When I started in the coaching space, barely anyone looked like me. I don't even remember. No one in the leadership looked like me. Right? So like all our coaches. Angela knows all my coaches. Everyone's white. So I was constantly getting coached, but I couldn't explain my conditioning. Right?

I think that there's people who want to know, and you can tell me. So people who want to know and who want to understand hey where is this coming from? Also, I can't get it because I haven't been in that situation. Right? It was actually our coach Brooke, who I was very good at raising my hand and getting coaching. Angela knows because my biggest thing was because it's like what's the worst that could happen? Like, I've already hit rock bottom.

My coach, she was the one who's in front of, I don't know, there's probably like tens of thousands of people on this call. She's like, "Payal, who better to coach women of color than you?" It's interesting that I kind of needed her validation as a like white woman to be like oh, this is what I need to do. Over time, I have found my voice.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: So much so, and Angela knows, that I was on stage as the first Asian woman to speak on a stage with 2,500 life coaches. Guys, it was scary, and I probably talk to you guys about this before. But guess what?

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Everyone listened. That happened because of me. That happened because of what I did. I want to say thank you to my coaches, but also like thank you to me for showing up and doing this.

So to your audience, Angela, I want to say when we stay quiet, we're never going to get heard. Of course you're not going to get heard. People don't even know we have a voice. So it's our job to seek help, our job to build a community and support to be able to find our voice.

Angela: What was the thought shift that gave you the courage to speak up and to be seen and to be heard? What was the, Can you identify that?

Dr. Payal: Yeah. So what comes to mind is like I think it's a very simple one, but it's like, it's my turn now.

Angela: Yes. You know what's so funny? We're totally going off, I mean, not that we had a script to begin with. I have been getting coached on that same thought. It's my turn now. I think it is such an empowering thought. Because women, and I'm imagining, I'm not a woman of color, but I have many friends who share their stories with me.

Women of color who are leaders, we don't feel like it's our turn. We always feel like it's our staff's turn, the student's turn. It's our job to please our district and our officials and the school boards and the state with our test scores and round and round and we go, but we never think it's our turn. Because as a leader, you're told leaders eat last. I think there's a book out there. Leaders eat last. Nothing wrong with that, but when do we eat?

Dr. Payal: Yeah, but if leaders eat last then you don't have the energy to do the work. So it's kind of like when you get on an airplane, and they're like put the oxygen mask on yourself first before you put it on your child, right?

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Like, I really have been working on that, taking care of me. So that's why, funny story guys.

I invited myself to a trip that Angela was going on to Miami. It was funny. This was the same time that, the same I did the talk in front of the 2,500 life coaches. It was like our mastermind that we get together. She and two of our other friends, well, actually the three of them were friends. I kind of was not their friend at that point.

Angela: You were just new to the group.

Dr. Payal: Yeah, I was an acquaintance. I went up to them, to the three white ladies who I love and adore, but they didn't know that. I was like they're talking about like oh, we're going to go to Miami before we go to some other event for their business coach. I was like can I come? They're like.

Angela: What was the answer?

Dr. Payal: Yeah, sure.

Angela: We had the best time.

Dr. Payal: It's like, and I think like our friend Olivia, and we'll give her shout out.

Angela: Yeah.

Dr. Payal: She said to me. She's like, "Payal, I invited a lot of people, women of color, like all kinds of coaches, right? You invited yourself, and you didn't make any excuses."

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: This was an add on, right. So I was already going to be away for I think it was six days or something.

Angela: Oh, my gosh, that's right. You had a wedding or something, right?

Dr. Payal: No, it was just. Afterwards. Oh, I was going to a bridal shower. Oh, yeah, I was gone for like 10 days from my kids. This is the first time I've done this, and it's been so long, but I showed the people around me that I need to put my oxygen mask on first. That I need to feed myself, my soul first.

That trip was so amazing for me because one, I advocated for myself. I allowed to receive all the love and support from these women. Honestly this is what I want to tell of you guys. Like what's the worst that can happen? They could have just said no, we're not interested in traveling with you. Okay, fine.

I would have felt upset. Be like okay, I guess it's because they don't like me. Or you could have this opportunity. So this is for everybody. I don't even care what you guys do for a living. Like, what's the worst that could happen?

Angela: Yeah, yeah. Here's the thing. What's interesting is when you're thinking they're going to reject me, or they're not going to invite me, you either don't ask, or you ask but you ask in a way that feels super awkward. But you didn't think that at all. You thought these guys are fun. I want to be a part of the fun. I'm an equal coach here. Like, I want to be a peer in this group. We received that.



## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

This is I guess what I'm trying to say is like we had zero intentions of leaving anybody out, regardless of who they were or the color of their skin. We were like the more the merrier. But we found it fascinating that only three of us were going. Then you just were like I want to go. We're like yes. These are the kind of people we want. We want to hang out with yes people. You know, who ended up showing up? Maggie.

Dr. Payal: Yeah, that's true too. I think that some of the people who like maybe wanted to come and didn't come. The reasons they gave, this is what Olivia was saying, was because oh my children. I can't be away so long. I have kids the same age or whatever. Right?

I think this was kind of fun for I think her and everyone else to see that I made it work. Not necessarily only made it work, like I excelled at it because I came back so refreshed. I was so giving before. This is something I want to say to all you mamas, right? Like, it's not selfish. It's actually the opposite. If you love on yourself, that's the only way you can love on other people.

As a leader, if you love on yourself, that's the only way you can love on everyone who works with you, around you, for you. Like I don't see any other way. As a coach, Angela like the two of us, like if we don't get coached, we don't love on ourselves. Then how can we be good coaches?

Our other friend who we traveled with, Charlotte, she's my coach right now like in our business group or small group, and she has taught me about self-love practice. So just a shout out to Charlotte that yes. I did my five minute like self-love meditation. I did like a 20 minute like bar in the morning. Everything has changed for me now that I understand me first in a good way.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Angela: Yes. Okay, here's the ringer question. You've been taking care of yourself first. Talk about the mom guilt, and talk about the positive impact on your children because you do this right. Because I think a lot of moms, there's a lot of leaders who are also mothers, and they feel guilty because they think they're overworking and they're ignoring their children. Their children are going to be scarred for life if, heaven forbid, they went out after work to go to the gym or to catch a coffee with a friend.

They feel like I've already been gone ten hours. Another hour is just too much. But what is the net positive gain, not just for you. Like yes, it fills you up. That's amazing. We want to focus on ourselves. But what's the net positive for the kids?

Dr. Payal: So I want to say that, I'm going to talk about gender. So I'm a boy mom.

Angela: Okay.

Dr. Payal: Being a boy mom, I want my boys to see women in a role that's outside of a nurturer and caretaker.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: Right? I tell them all the time like I was a doctor before your dad was a doctor, right? Like I tell them all the time. Like he was still in training, and mom was the one who was doing all these things. Because right now they're seeing like how I do all these things for them. Also, when I go away, then they get to value all the things that I do so seamlessly. It's not even the things that I do as much as the way I make them feel.

Angela: Yeah.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Dr. Payal: Right. Because they don't feel that same way when I'm not there. They feel other things. That's not a problem. But what they feel, safety and comfort with me, is so unique. I want for them to see that and see that difference.

The other thing is if you have little girls, and I've always wanted a little girl. It didn't happen. It's okay. I'm over it. I can get myself ready now. But to be an example, right. To be an example to them. I think that we are doing much better by kind of setting the stage for both of them, right, like on both sides.

What is the benefit to my kids when I do these things? I tell them explicitly hey, mommy is going to work. This is what mommy's work looks like. When mommy goes to work, we get to do things right. So we went to Turks and Caicos, I think it was like three years ago. Not Turks Caicos, St. Thomas.

I paid for like a lot of the stuff, right? Not their cardiologist dad, but he paid for like the flight to go there. But because I was going to work from there, I was going to write things off. I told them. I said mommy's coaching work paid for you guys to be in the turquoise water for eight hours a day.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: Right. So they understand this mom doing this work, there's so many benefits that we get to enjoy. When mom comes back from a trip, there's so much joy between us. Like we call ourselves the Three Musketeers. We're so happy to see each other.

I step away from my phone. I step away from my computer, and I sit with them. In bed we cuddle, and I like to close out the day with what was your sunshine? What was your cloud? What do you want to pray about? Like with each kid separately.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

I tell him like okay. While I was gone, talk to me. How did you feel? What do you want to tell me? Then I tell them about my trip and say this is how I felt. We all need to fill our buckets. I think in school, you guys are doing good job about talking about filling your buckets like your own work.

Angela: We're getting there.

Dr. Payal: Our school's great.

Angela: That's wonderful.

Dr. Payal: Our school is so good at it.

Angela: I'm happy to hear that. It's not true in every school, but there is an awareness that has been created after post COVID because the emotional tsunami that has hit our schools is significant.

Dr. Payal: Maybe I live in a different neighborhood where it's like more bougie and liberal. But like I love it because they're like oh, so you had to fill your bucket.

Angela: Yeah. Yeah. It is. What I love about what you said about your kids is that you're modeling for them the script or the story that you would like to impart on them, which is more equality between men and women, moms and dads. Also like that independence that comes with it's my job to go take care of me.

When you leave your kids, and maybe they struggle or they're sad, but it's giving them the gift of struggle so that they know they can handle their own emotions. They can take care of themselves for that little bit of time that

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

mom's gone. I really see now how maybe past roles as women we needed to be needed to feel good.

Dr. Payal: Yeah.

Angela: As moms, we needed our kids to need us. Then when they grew up, because I have a 24 year old. Okay. So on the I'm on the other end here. I'm noticing one thing that I did right was, in education, it's called gradual release of responsibility. Where it's like the teacher does it first and then we're going to do it together. Then I'm going to let you have a try at it. I'm still here for you. Then you're going to gradually be independent.

I learned that concept as a teacher and then I applied it as a parent. So that by the time my son was 18, he was pretty independent then. He's been an independent adult, but still comes back for questions. Like, "Mom, I don't understand this tax thing or insurance thing or whatever." But I don't need him to need me to feel complete and whole. He doesn't need to feel like he has to make me feel good about me as a parent, right?

Dr. Payal: That is so good that you did that. I'm like in awe because this is exactly where I want to take my parenting and my relationship with my kids. That they're not dependent on me.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: Yeah. Because if they're dependent on me then they can't create that joy independence for themselves. Which, how does that feel that you need someone or something outside of you to create that? We know because we've done it our whole life. So now, we're like oh, we've tasted freedom. We've tasted opportunity. Amazing for the kids. Like your clients, my clients, because the ripple effect is then their families, their children,

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

their workplaces, like whoever they influence are all getting a little bit of what we started.

Angela: Yes. I think that taste that you speak of is awareness. Like you taste the awareness of oh, there is no amount of emotional reassurance that you can provide to another human on the planet that is going to make them feel better if they think it's your job.

I think one of the uncouplings that we need to do as leaders is we do not have responsibility for people's thoughts, feelings, and actions. Right? We can listen to their thoughts. We can have empathy for their emotions and hold space for those emotions. We can observe and respond to their behaviors, their actions, and decisions, but we didn't make them think a certain way. We don't control how they feel. We certainly don't control their behavior.

That's lesson 101 in leadership is we think it's our job to like fix all the things and control all the people and make them do the things that our bosses want them to do. No, the opposite. We empower them. You have permission to be responsible for your own emotions. Yes, you can have hard conversations with your colleague. I encourage you and facilitate you, but it's not my job to fix two adult conversations, right?

Like uncoupling what we think leadership is and how we define it, especially with the feminine nurturing side of us as women that wants to hold and fix and make everyone feel better and have this amazing culture all of the time. It's stepping back from that and saying oh, the more I take care of my emotional, mental, and physical needs, I'm modeling that. I'm giving you permission to take back control of your mental, physical, and emotional needs. That's what makes us independent. That's what creates freedom. I think that is the secret sauce to any leadership position.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Dr. Payal: That's so good. I mean, we're going to end on that note. I feel like the two of us can have like a series going on with all the things I want to talk about. We probably will have another podcast.

Angela: Yeah, let's do this.

Dr. Payal: I think this is so good. It affects all women in all different areas. Like in their career, in their relationships, like all the ways. But thank you so much, Angela.

Angela: Oh, thank you.

Dr. Payal: Thanks for reaching out.

Angela: Yeah, well it's so funny. Okay, we've got to tell this story to end this with. So I reached out to Payal. I'm like you are such an inspiration to me. I follow her. Of course, she's my good friend. I follow her work. I was like oh, she said something that like resonated with me. I'm like I've got to have her on my podcast. So I reached out to her. I think, correct me if I'm wrong Payal, but I think you thought I was asking can I be on your podcast?

Dr. Payal: Yes.

Angela: Because then you were like wait a minute. Do you have a podcast? I was like girl.

Dr. Payal: That is so funny.

Angela: Okay, today, as we record this, my 300th episode dropped.

Dr. Payal: Oh, my God. You are amazing.

## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Angela: Guess what it's on? Guest the topic. Your emotions are valid. There you go.

Dr. Payal: There you go. Boom. That is so funny. Yeah. So I was probably reading your text messages while it was Uber momming. So I was like yeah, sure. I think you're like oh, I want to be on your podcast. So I think this conversation, yes, is very funny. Guys, there's going to be a part two for sure.

Angela: For sure.

Dr. Payal: This could go on forever. I like to keep the episodes like this length.

Angela: Yeah, no. Keep them short and sweet. It's like commute.

Dr. Payal: Commutable podcasting.

Angela: Yes.

Dr. Payal: We're going to term that. But thank you so much Angela. If you want to follow her, reach out to her, have any like contact info, like I'm going to put it in the show notes.

Angela: Yeah, I'll send you everything.

Dr. Payal: Then we'll do all the things. Okay. Thanks, Angela.

Angela: All right, thanks, Payal. So good to see your face. Love you.



## **Ep #302: Women Leaders: Be Seen, Heard, and Taken Seriously with Dr. Payal Patel Ghayal**

Hey there empowered principal. If you enjoyed the content in this podcast, I invite you to join the Empowered Principal® Collaborative. It's my latest offer for aspiring and current school leaders who want to experience exceptional impact and enjoy the school leadership experience.

Look, you don't have to overwork and overexert to be a successful school leader. You'll be mentored weekly and surrounded by supportive likeminded colleagues who truly understand what it means to be a school leader. So join us today and become a member of the only certified life and leadership coaching program for school leaders in the country. Just head on over to [angelakellycoaching.com/work-with-me](http://angelakellycoaching.com/work-with-me) to learn more and join. I'll see you inside of the Empowered Principal® Collaborative.

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](http://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.