

## Ep #308: Feeling Unappreciated



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Angela Kelly**

## Ep #308: Feeling Unappreciated

Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 308.

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. Hello, my empowered principals. How are you today? Welcome to the podcast. Happy Tuesday. So glad you're here. Really appreciate it. I was reading an article, and I think it was an Edutopia or something like that. It was talking about the value of podcasts for school leaders, and that they considered podcasts to be professional development. Isn't that crazy?

So you're listening to this podcast, getting professional development for free every single week. I just think it's awesome. I think it's an honor to be a podcaster. I'm so happy I have been producing this podcast for the last five years now, I think it's been. We're just rolling right along. So much to talk about.

Today we're going to talk about feeling unappreciated. I have been hosting professional development trainings for schools. I've been talking with teachers and support staff and district leaders and site leaders. One of the common themes across the board, no matter what position people are serving in our schools, is that they're coming to me kind of on the sidelines or privately saying I feel so unappreciated.

I feel like people are taking advantage of me. I feel like I'm doing all of these amazing things for them. I'm going the extra mile, I put in time, effort, energy, special attention and focus on making sure everything's just right, and that they have what they need. I'm working so hard. Or the teachers are saying we're working so hard in our classrooms, and we just don't feel appreciated by our principal. Principals aren't feeling appreciated by the

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teachers. Secretary and support staff aren't feeling appreciated by anybody.

So what's going on? I've been digging down into this concept of appreciation, feeling appreciated, and feeling unappreciated. What's happening across the board because it's happening across our nation in all different kinds of schools. I'm hearing it from all different kinds of school leaders and educators. I want to help you understand what appreciation is.

So I was coaching with a client today, and we were talking about a support staff member at her school who doesn't feel appreciated. When this person doesn't feel appreciated, her reaction to the unappreciation that she's experiencing, that she's feeling, that she's thinking I'm not appreciated and feeling unappreciated. She snaps at people. She's sarcastic with people. She complains or she blames or she vents, or she lets people know how she feels unappreciated.

A lot of us do this. We all do this, as humans. That we all feel underappreciated or unappreciated at some point, and we react to that unappreciation. So I want to talk about how you can feel appreciated, even when other people aren't sprinkling appreciation upon you. When you are out doing your thing, doing your work, showing up for your team or staff members, and you don't hear or see or feel an appreciation back from them.

I want to show you what's going on. Okay. So if we break all of this down, appreciation is an emotion. I feel appreciated. I am appreciated. People appreciate me. You see, there are thoughts about the feeling of appreciation, whether you have it or whether you don't. Whether people are acting on it and saying it and appreciating you back or not. So I want you to think about this.

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When you're feeling the emotion of appreciated, what's happening? How do you know you are being appreciated? What is going on around you? Is it that other people are telling you they appreciate you? Are they taking actions that communicate they appreciate you? Are they gifting you with things? Are they doing acts of service back to you?

What is the tangible physical representation of appreciation for you? It's different for everybody. So you have to define what appreciation looks and feels like for you. What is appreciation for you? How do you know you have it? How do you feel when you have it inside your body? What does it look like externally for you?

Now, some of the people I've been working with would say I need teachers to say it. I need teachers to give back in some way. I'm putting forth time, effort, and energy. I want them to give time, effort, and energy back in return for me to feel appreciated. I need to feel balance with the appreciation.

Okay, so you can notice, or it might be teachers saying, we need our principal to come in our classrooms and tell us what a good job we're doing. We need our principal to have our back when a parent's upset. We need our principal to plan really good staff meetings so she shows an appreciation of our time. Things like that, okay.

People are having thoughts that either generate I feel appreciated, or thoughts that generate I do not feel appreciated. Appreciation is a feeling that you feel based on how you're thinking. We have to separate it out from the other people. People don't make us feel appreciated. Our thoughts about the people make us feel appreciated. Our thoughts about what they do and say towards us, or the lack of what they say and do towards us, determines in our own mind. We make it mean they either appreciate us or they don't.

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Okay, so just notice that. That people's behavior does not equal that you feel appreciated. Here's how we know. Someone could be loving on you. They could be doting on you. They could tell you every day how much they appreciate you. But if you're listening to one person say they appreciate you and 19 people aren't, you're going to focus on the 19 people who don't appreciate you. You could be like yeah, that one person does, but these 19 people don't.

Here's what I've come to learn about appreciation. There is no amount of words or actions. There's no amount of reassurance that another person can provide for us that will give us the feeling of appreciation if we don't receive the appreciation, if we don't look for the appreciation. But most importantly, and this is really the answer to it all, if we don't appreciate ourselves.

If we don't say to ourselves I appreciate the time and effort and energy you're putting into your school. I see you working hard. I know you're giving everything to everyone. I know it. I see you. I validate you. I appreciate your effort, Angela. You're doing a great job.

How many times does our brain offer that story to us? That appreciation for ourselves. My brain never does that unless I ask it to, unless I invite it to. I have to create my own appreciation for me, for my energy, for my time, for my effort, for my success. I have to celebrate and honor and appreciate myself first.

When I'm full of appreciation in my body, when I see yeah, I'm proud of myself. I appreciate all that I've done and how I'm showing up for my teachers and support staff. Then we come into our schools with our appreciation bucket already filled. Then we can plant appreciation seeds from our bucket.

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I was talking with my client, and this support staff person has such little appreciation of herself. We could see that through coaching this. This poor person doesn't have the means or the tools or the awareness to generate appreciation for herself. So as the principal, and as the one having a coach, my client is able to fill her bucket personally with appreciation herself and then go into her school and plant seeds for this support staff person to start to feel appreciated because she doesn't have the means to do it herself.

So we're going to appreciate on them, give them a little TLC, some compassion, love because we know they just don't have the skills or the knowledge or the awareness in how to create appreciation for themselves. So they're expecting it from other people.

But the problem with expecting other people to tell us that they appreciate us, us waiting around for them to tell us, it disempowers us. Now we're sitting around depending on other people to fill our appreciation bucket. That's another burden on them. They feel less appreciated when we're waiting around expecting them to tell us how much they appreciate us. Versus us just knowing and giving ourselves credit for showing up and loving on them and going the extra mile for our staff. We already know that. We don't need them to tell us that. We just do it.

Here's the thing. If you're starting to feel resentful, if you're feeling like I'm going the extra mile, it's not being acknowledged or recognized. I don't feel appreciated then stop doing it. You don't have to go the extra mile if the result of going the extra mile makes you frustrated and resentful. Just don't do it.

One of two things will happen. When you stop doing things for people because you are exhausted and resentful. You're kind of blaming them for not being appreciative. If you just drop that and stop doing it, they're either going to never notice, meaning you didn't need to do it in the first place because it wasn't appreciated and it wasn't acknowledged on their end.

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Or they're going to very highly be aware that you're no longer doing it and ask you what happened? Why aren't you doing this thing anymore? What's going on? Because they did appreciate it. They did actually appreciate it. They just didn't acknowledge it or say it. You don't have to go the extra mile all of the time. You can if you want to because it delights you and because you appreciate yourself for showing up in that way.

So what do you do if your teachers are complaining that they are not appreciated? They're saying you don't appreciate us, or you're not doing this, or you're not doing that. There's something they're thinking, they're having the thought that you need to do or say something for them to feel better, for them to feel appreciated.

We cannot change another person's thoughts. We can sprinkle some pixie dust of appreciation. We can plant seeds of appreciation. We can show up as the leader who consciously and intentionally plants appreciation seeds with every person on the campus. I appreciate the fact that you handled that parent and got them scheduled on my calendar so that I didn't have to deal with them. Thank you so much for that. Appreciate that.

Kindergarten, thank you for spending a full day with 30 kids on Halloween. I'm recording this on Halloween, by the way. So it's on my mind. I'm sending all the loves and prayers out to all of our educators today who are, I know this will be post due, but I always think of you on this day because the enthusiasm and excitement and energy on Halloween day with the candy and the costumes and all the things. It's just a wild time at school. So enjoy. Have fun. May you be well. May everybody be safe. I hope you made it through the day.

But we want to thank, thank our kinders. Those teachers put in so much time and effort just preparing and training children how to be little students on campus for the first time ever. You can thank your fifth grade teachers for putting up with the funny things that fifth graders do. The BO. The deo

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for the BO, I used to say. We've got to get the deodorant for the body odor up here in fifth grade. These kids be sweating and stinking. Deo for the BO. We would joke about that. Thank you for putting up with that. Thank you for taking the kids out to get some energy out.

Little tiny things. Little tiny seeds you can plant where you can appreciate on your custodian, on your nurse, on your tech support, on your instructional coach, on your behavior specialist, on your secretary, your attendance clerk. Whoever you work with love on them and appreciate them, and they will reflect back to you the appreciation that you crave.

Appreciation begets appreciation. When you decide to appreciate yourself and you're feeling good and you don't need anybody else to tell it to you, what happens is you start going out and spreading the love with your staff, and they shine it right back your way. Okay? Appreciation is definitely an internal job. It reflects. It's a mirror. It's a bright light that shines. When you come in shining this bright light, it reflects right back to you.

That is how you create a culture of empowered appreciation where you give yourself appreciation, and you model for teachers to give themselves appreciation. You talk about how to generate appreciation, and you put that light into your campus and into your world.

One last comment. When people are saying children aren't being appreciative, or children, students are not being respectful is another way they might label it. You want to separate out behavior, words and actions, that's behavior. Behaviors from labeling the behaviors as an appreciation or disrespect. There are words and actions that students do. Then there are interpretations, labels, perceptions that we paste on to the behaviors. We want to separate those out.

Here's what I'm making the behaviors mean. Here's what I think they mean. This is why I think they mean this. Not to say they're not true, but you want



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to separate out what you think it means versus just what are the actions I'm observing? What are the words that I'm hearing? Separate those out, you can do this with adults too, by the way.

But separate out labels from behaviors. Then once the behavior is separate, you can focus in on it and study it. Why would a child behave this way? What thoughts and feelings might they be having? Children have STEAR cycles just like us. Their actions are a reflection of their thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and they're projected out into how they behave. The words they say and the things they do are just all a reflection of thoughts and feelings.

So what misunderstandings might this child be having? What is a more appropriate way that we can express how we're feeling? Teach that to the child. When you're feeling upset or angry or frustrated or unheard, here's how you can handle that. Then we don't expect perfection because the little humans, they don't have the skills, and even the big humans don't have the skills all the time, right? That's why we're here.

In the Empowered Principal® Collaborative, we're coaching on this stuff every single week. This is why we're talking about it on the podcast every single week. Because these are not the skills that we learn in our programs to be administrators. But we need them. They're the most important thing we do. All right.

So I want to say to you, I do appreciate you. I appreciate you showing up every single day for your staff and students, for your campus, for your community. Loving on them, giving them all you've got. Know when it's time to appreciate yourself, when it's time to appreciate your staff, and when it's time to give yourself a break from overextending.

When you feel start to feel resentful, and that people are not appreciating you, it might be the signal that you need to take a step back and get a little

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bit of rest and take a little bit of a break. You don't have to go the extra mile every single day. All right, my friends have an amazing week. Talk to you next week. Take good care. Bye.

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](https://angelakellycoaching.com/work-with-me) to learn more and join. I'll see you inside of the Empowered Principal® Collaborative.

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