

## Ep #311: Dad Principals



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With Your Host

**Angela Kelly**

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 311.

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. This episode is specifically going out to all of the dad principals. All of you gentlemen out there who are school leaders and fathers at home. I just got off a coaching call with a client of mine who's a father of three. He was on a break. He had taken some time from work. I think they had a three-day weekend or a long break. They were on a break. He said, "I don't know what to coach on today because I'm on break, and I don't feel like there's any problems to solve." I said it's a perfect time to coach. Here's what came up.

Because he had space in his mind, to think about something outside of school outside the surface of putting out fires and just getting through the day and the week, we actually had time to go below the surface and talk about what it feels like to be a dad and a spouse and a school leader, but to also have individual desires.

To have desires within you that are compelling you and calling you to go play and have fun and do those things that bring you joy, but the brain is saying you don't have time for that. You're a school leader, you're a spouse, you're a dad. You can't possibly do all of the things. You can't do what you want to do because you're full. Your bucket is full of all the responsibilities.

I have coached on this so many times with other male clients who are fathers who want and need to fill their own bucket but feel like they don't have permission or there isn't time because family and work are the priorities. I first just want to acknowledge you because you do value your

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family. You value your relationship with your spouse and your children, and you highly value serving your school community. Those are all honorable things, and I want to validate them and acknowledge them.

I want to offer some coaching that I gave for this client, but I've given it to many other past clients who I've worked with who are men who really wanted to figure out how they can have some individual joy and time to themselves while they're busy running a school and supporting a family and providing for their children and their spouse.

Okay. So when your brain offers you that there's something in your heart you want to do, but you feel like you can't, your brain is going to say too much to do, not enough time. That can't be the priority. I want you to consider a couple of things. There's a Byron Katie question in the work that she teaches, and the question simply says this. Is it absolutely true? I know your brain feels like it's true.

So what I did was I asked my client if nothing else mattered, if there were no obligations, responsibilities, if nobody's opinion matters, if you didn't care what people thought about you, what would you do with your time? He responded here are the things I would do with my time but duh, duh, duh. Then his brain came in and said, "But I would never do that. That's irresponsible. I need to provide for my family."

I said we're not making any decisions here. We're just exploring fun in your mind and in your body. We don't have to put it on paper. We don't have to put it on the calendar just yet. So I said what's in the way between you and this thing you want to do? All of the obstacles come out.

"Well, I don't even know how that would work mathematically. I mean, I'm at work this many hours, and we have three children. One of our children has additional needs. My wife needs support, and she's really busy, and I'm really busy." All of the things, right.

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Number one, yes, those things are all true, and is it absolutely true that there's no time left for you to fulfill your internal joy? So I asked. When are you getting to these things that you enjoy? The answer was like well, basically summer break and the other breaks during the year, and then maybe a three-day weekend, but they weren't happening between the breaks. So it wasn't happening on a regular weekend, and it wasn't happening at all during the week.

So I asked what if it were possible to schedule in time for you to do the things that you love without making it a loss for your family or your spouse? So what I mean by that is, is there a way that you can talk to your spouse and create a win-win where you let her know what you feel and what you're wanting to do and ask her what is it you would do if nothing else mattered? What would fill your bucket?

Coming together with how can we create a schedule where maybe one week you do a little bit and maybe the next week, I go and do a little bit. At least twice a month, we have some time away from parenting, away from household responsibilities, where I get to do what I want for one evening, you get to do what you want for one evening. Then the rest of the time can be family time. What would it feel like?

My client said, "Oh my gosh, I'd never thought of that before. My conversation with him was you can make this a win-win-win. You can carve out time. Once you think it's possible, you can start to open up your mind and carve out time.

Like, what would it look like if you did something one night one week, your wife did something one night the next week, and then you did something, and then she did something? So one night a week, one of you was away. Which means on your night off, you're going to do what you love. The other person is with the kids by themselves. Then vice versa the next week.

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Then I said once you have a plan and you've established this, and everybody's on board, you can communicate with the kids so nobody's thrown off guard. I'm just going to make up a schedule. So on Wednesday nights, mom goes out one week with her friends. Dad goes into the workshop on the next week. So on Wednesdays, you either have mom to yourself or you have dad to yourself.

Here's what we're going to do to make it fun for you. On the nights that mom's out, dad isn't going to cook. We're going to order in, or we're going to make breakfast instead of dinner. We're going to have fun. We're going to have game night, or we're going to watch a special show. Make those memories and moments with your child fun.

So it's not like oh, my wife is out tonight. Now I've got the kids and super stressful, and this isn't going to be fun. You make it a win-win-win. So your night away is filling your bucket. The night away for her is filling her bucket. But each individual night with the kids, you guys get to come up with special memories by changing up the routine, maybe having a different dinner that they normally wouldn't have, or letting them pick a game to play, like a board game or cards or whatever your family does.

Or taking a walk, getting outside, playing with the dog, getting to watch a special show. Making that night special that's just dad and kid time and then it's just mom and kid time. You guys get to decide whatever your family deems as fun. That's not the point. What matters is, it is possible for you to still be an individual even though you're running a school and in a marriage or relationship and partnership, right.

So I just wanted to offer this because I think we feel trapped because we feel so busy being a school leader and so busy being a parent that we are afraid to ask our spouse. Because if we were to go and say hey, I need some time off during the week without considering what they might need or without creating a win-win environment where they get the same thing that

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you're getting. Now it's not just an exclusive ask, it's a mutual ask. How can you get away? How can I get away? So that we can come in being better parents with our children.

I've noticed that my male clients have a very hard time asking or bringing this up with their spouse because they already respect their wives. They trust and love that they are showing up and doing all the things. They already have the thought like my wife is doing so much already. The thought of asking her to let me have a night off every other week just feels like too much. But it might not be as big of an ask if she gets the same in return.

Because she wants you to be happy because you come back fulfilled and refreshed. You want her to go do the same. If that means one night a week where mom's out or dad's out, and that makes everything better for family, that's the grand slam. That is making memories with the kids, having time alone with dad, having time alone with mom, and you both getting the individual soul fuel that you need to make this life fully balanced and full of fun.

So I bring this up right before the holidays so that you can spend your time thinking about what could life look like for the second half of the year if we were to believe that balance is possible.

I want to invite you all into the Empowered Principal® Collaborative where we're going to be talking about all of life and how to balance it, how to be the leader you want, manage your time you want, plan the way you want, balance life the way you want. Emotional regulation, relationships, communication, all of the levels of mastery we talk about in EPC to get you living the life as a leader and in your personal life, the life that you want.

All right, my friends, have a beautiful holiday season with your families. Please consider that you matter. That if your soul is calling you to do

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something for pleasure and fun and joy and pride and accomplishment, listen to that little whisper and see how you can make it fit into the life that you want. Have an amazing week, and I'll talk to you guys next week. Take good 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](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.