

# Ep #316: Mid-Year Reboot: Generating Momentum



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Angela Kelly**

## Ep #316: Mid-Year Reboot: Generating Momentum

Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 316.

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 principals. Happy Tuesday. Welcome to the podcast. We've got a special treat for you. This is session three, week three of the mid-year reboot for school leaders. This is my favorite session of all of them. It's about creating, generating momentum, where momentum comes from, what it is, how you create it, how it swells up inside of you, what to do with that energy of momentum, and then how to maintain it.

So what I love about momentum is that it's the fuel through which we do everything in our lives and in our careers. Whether you're at home or at school, momentum is required. You know that feeling. There's days where you have really high momentum, high productivity, high energy, and you're on a really high vibe. It feels so great.

Then you have days where you have lower momentum, lower energy, lower vibes. Those days aren't a problem. They are actually an essential part of the equation to success and to accomplishment. I teach, in this course on the mid-year reboot, how to generate momentum when you're feeling stuck or when you're feeling stagnant. So enjoy this clip from the mid-year reboot on momentum.

So we're going to talk about goals today. But I'm going to teach goals in a way that might feel very different than you're used to talking about goals. Because when I know, for me at least, when I was in school leadership, when I spoke about goals and when I was taught to create goals and achieve goals, they were the SMART goals.

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I don't really always remember what it stands. Specific, measurable, actionable, I think, relatable, reliable. I don't know. Do you remember SMART goals? Maybe they're still a thing. I think SMART goals work when you're in very masculine energy.

Remember, I talked yesterday, for those of you who watched it, I talked about doing energy and believing energy, masculine energy, feminine energy, and that has nothing to do with gender, by the way, at all. It's not men, women, they. It is just doing energy forcing, driving, controlling accomplishment, and we need this part of us. Then there's the believing energy, the trust, the faith, the ease, the flow, the softness, the respect, the empowerment. All of that has to work in combination together, in balance.

So these goals over here, there's a doing that comes with them. I was taught that goals we're all doing. Set the goal, do, do, do, do, do to death, do to yourself to death until you reach it. Then when you reach it, yay for a hot minute. A little celebration. It's temporary. Your happiness is temporary there. Then it's like okay and the next goal. I have to hit the goal. I have to work my buns off. Really focus and grind and grit and hustle until you get that goal. Oh, I got the goal. Okay, next, what's next? I gotta do it again. Oh, got the goal.

So, goal setting in the way that we were taught is pain, pain, pain, pain, minute of happiness, achieved it. Pain, pain, pain, pain, minute of happiness, achieved it. So we get hits of temporary achievement. Then we wonder why we don't feel fulfilled. It's because all of this for a temporary hit of happiness. All this pain, temporary hit of happiness. I'm going to teach you a different way to talk about goals.

On the flip side, we don't want to not have any goals and just be like I'm going to sit here and manifest and trust that everybody's doing everything, and I don't need to do anything, and everything could just be ease and flow. It will just all happen, and everybody's going to get 80% or more

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proficiency. That's it. I'm just going to sit here and wait to receive the abundance of proficiency.

Believing alone isn't enough. Doing alone isn't enough. Goals happen when we come together, our doing and our believing. So the goal is just a target that you create that is made up. It's nebulous. You just create it to give your body and brain something to engage together, to collaborate on and focus on. It gives it a target.

So having the goal is important because it gives you a direction. It gives you a framework, and it provides a container. It's like oh, this is where we're all going. It paints the vision. The goal is what paints the vision for other people. So when you're articulating what your school vision is, this is where I'm trying to go. This is where I want us to be. When you have the goal, it paints the vision. It gives them something tangible to latch on to.

But goals are also what bring up a whole lot of mind drama. My gosh, if I don't reach the goal. Oh my gosh, if we don't reach it. What if we miss? What if we don't? What's going to happen? What's going to happen to me? What's going to happen to my teachers? What's going to happen to my kids? They're going to fail in life if they don't pass this state assessment. We failed them. Life is over. For teachers, for students. It's very dramatic, right?

We just feel like life is over if we miss the target. That's where your brain offers you tons of doubt and confusion, overwhelm, you kind of spin out, exhaustion, discouragement. It feels so messy. Here's what I'd like to offer when it comes to goals and reframing the way you think about goals.

The reason that goals, we feel resistance to them. I would say that's how I would describe it. When I have a goal, I'm like ugh. Or I feel pressure, or I just feel doubt. That's never going to happen. The reason that happens is

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that because the minute we set the goal, we don't believe it'll happen. It freaks us out because we're under pressure.

The reason all of that happens is because we believe that once we set the goal, there's a time limit that we need to achieve it. We start the timer. Go faster, harder, longer, stronger, bigger, better. Go, go, go, do, do, do, do, do, do, do. We focus on the gap of where we're at and the goal, and we look at all of this hard work. We think about all how painful this hard work is. Oh, we're still not at the goal. Oh, we're still not at the goal.

Versus flipping it to this part being the goal, not this part. The journey being the goal. Because, my friends, the truth about school leadership, the truth about education ever is life-long learning. It's who we become over the expansion of our entire lives. The experience, the educational experience that students have over the course of their entire educational experience. Not this one moment or this one lesson or this one day or this one grade level. The entire capacity of their experience.

Once we see that the goal is the journey, and that they don't need to get everything from this one teacher in this one lesson in this one moment. That there is a process and a progress and that the journey is the goal. There are milestones along the way that we use as targets to give our brains some tangibility to the journey. We're not just aimlessly wandering, have no idea where we're going or why we're going and where we're trying to get to.

The goals are just the milestone markers that we're like okay, let's say you're driving cross country. I live in California. My son lives in Nashville. Just moved there in August. I have to know that if I'm going to take a road trip from San Jose, California, which is where I live, to Nashville, Tennessee, which is where he lives, I need to know that I'm going to Nashville. I'm not going to New York City. I'm not going to Chicago. I'm not going to Dallas. I'm going to Nashville.

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I know I'm going to get Nashville whether I fly direct, or I fly and I have a leg in Dallas or Chicago. I land there temporarily, but then I get to Nashville. Or if I take a bus, and we stop 10 stops along the way. Or I take the train, or I drive myself, and I stop in, I don't know. Where did we go? We went to Las Vegas. We went to Santa Fe. We went to Oklahoma City, and then we went into Nashville.

We never doubted we were going to get to Nashville. We did not sit in the car along the way to Nashville biting our nails and fretting worrying if we were going to get there. In fact, we actually took detours along the way. We met. He drove from LA to Vegas because he had never been to Vegas as an adult. I flew in from San Jose to Vegas.

We took a detour. We actually took longer on our journey to Nashville to go have fun along the way, to play for a night in Vegas. Then we drove from Vegas, and it was a long drive to Santa Fe. We went an hour out of our way. We could have stayed in Albuquerque, the big city of Albuquerque, but we wanted to see Santa Fe because we heard these beautiful things about it. A friend of ours said there's an amazing Mexican restaurant. You should go.

So we drove an extra 45 minutes each way out of our way to stay in Santa Fe. We actually made our trip longer. Why? Because of the enjoyment along the way, the enjoyment of the journey. Once we got to Nashville, we knew we had a lifetime to spend there if we wanted to. If he's going to stay there the rest of his life, I can go do things in Nashville forever. I can fly there. I can take a short journey, very direct, and get there, or I can play along the way.

Either way, it doesn't matter. It's just as fun to fly direct as it is to road trip and go see places I've never seen or ever even heard of before that I may never see again in my life. We took a detour just so we could drive on the

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old original Route 66. We saw these darling little towns that were all decorated in Route 66 gear. The journey is the goal.

What I remember about moving my son from LA to Nashville was not crossing the border into Nashville. I do remember that because it was dumping rain. We were like wow, where did this come from? It was a milestone moment. My son moved out of California all the way across the country to Nashville. It was a big deal, but it's not what I remember the most.

What I remember the most is how much fun we had in the car along the way, the conversations we had, the music we listened to, the comedians we listened to, the stories we told one another, the little towns that we didn't even plan on or anticipate. The journey is the goal. You get to put as many pit stops for fun and pleasure and rest in that journey as you want. In fact, the more the better. You're always going to get to Nashville. Now sometimes you need to get to Nashville.

Here's what your brain is offering. I have to get to Nashville in two hours. Right now because I'm here, and I don't want to be here. I want to be there immediately. I can't be happy here until I get to here. But I need to get there as soon as possible. Put me on a bullet train, put me on a 747. Get me there ASAP. No, do not pass go. Do not collect \$200. Go directly to Nashville, whatever it takes.

First of all, you cannot get to Nashville in two hours. Maybe by supersonic jet. I don't even know. I'm sure it's possible in somewhere in the world to get to Nashville in two hours, but it's not possible by commercial airline because the distance required to get there takes time in our current world. In the current realm of possibilities, in the current conditions of the commercial airline industry, even if I were to fly directly, a straight b-line from A to B, the fastest possible is, I think it's three or four hours. Closer to four. Lapse of time, not including time zones and all that jazz.

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I can get there in two hours if I were going backwards, I guess. Like he could probably get to me in technically two hours if he flies four, but time zone wise it's two. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about the actual span of time it takes to get there.

I'm not going to throw a tantrum at the universe because it takes four hours currently for my body to move from San Jose to Nashville. I'm going to delight in the fact I have a direct flight. I have a first class seat or a comfortable seat.

Maybe I have a window seat, and I love looking out the window. Or I have an aisle seat, and I love having the flexibility to get up and stretch. Or I'm just grateful to have the middle seat because I'm on a plane going to see my beloved son, and I cannot wait to see him in Nashville.

There's gratitude no matter what seat you are on the plane, what plane you're taking, how many stops it is. But if you go direct, you can enjoy the experience and the journey, or you can be grouchy, pouty, sitting in the middle seat. These guys are in my space. They ran out of Diet Coke. Or they have Pepsi, not Coke. They don't even have any snacks. What is this madness, right?

We can go into that and hate the journey. Then we get to the destination, and we're all huffy and puffy. They didn't even have any Diet Coke. Totally ran out of snacks. I was in the back in the middle. Two people like hugging my armrests.

Now my son's like girl, why are you all puffy? You're huffy and puffy, right? You're here. You made it. Yeah, but. Do you see what I'm saying? The journey's the goal. If you were to focus on the journey, where you're at. You know one day, you're going to look back with admiration for your first year of school leadership.



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I look back at my cute little self that first year, I was like dang girl. That was a moment. So proud of you. But you know what? You showed up. Look at what you did accomplish. You created some really strong connections with your secretaries, with your parent community.

You established a school site council. They didn't even have one. This was a brand new school. They had nothing. The foundations that I had to put in place the first two years at that school. They had no site council, no ELAC. They had no like site level committees.

I created that with the connections I made with people. I created friendships with the instructional coaches. I built relationships with some of the teachers, but not all of them. Why? I was in fight or flight my first year. So I didn't walk in and create a perfect environment, a perfect culture. But I did a lot in two years' time at that school.

I look back, and I'm so grateful that I stuck it out. I felt the hard feels. I hired a coach. Actually, I got certified as a life coach with Martha Beck back in that time. My second year as a school leader, I took her January 2012 course on life coach certification. I took it because my life felt like a big hot mess. I didn't want to be a life coach. I just wanted to learn how to life coach myself. Like project number one here. Take care of me.

Guess what? When I did that, I attracted a love in my life. I attracted better parenting energy. I calmed down. I stopped overworking. My school was not perfect. It was in its second year. It was still a baby. But I got promoted to go back to my home school, my little school that was a choice program within the district that had grown so big it needed its own campus.

So I got to be the founding father, founding mother, and establish that school. In doing so, was it perfect? I think about our founding fathers, if you've ever watched Hamilton. Was their intention like we aren't successful

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until the country's perfect? No, it was the journey in creating freedom and independence as a nation, to create the process of democracy.

Did they get to feel the level of freedom that we have right now? No. But they founded it. They created the foundation. That's what you're doing as a new school leader. That's what you're doing as a veteran leader. You're building foundations. Every goal you want, it's the foundation for the next goal.

So when we focus on the journey, we give ourselves permission to celebrate all along the way. We can go to Vegas and Santa For example. We can go to any place we want. It doesn't even have to be on the route. You can take a total detour. You can go hours out of the way to go see that place you want to see and have fun in that moment and then come back.

When you focus on the journey, the shift becomes who are we becoming as a leader? Who are we becoming as a school? Who are we becoming as a school community? The focus becomes the journey. Who we are becoming in the becoming of the school that hits these kinds of goals versus I need to hit this goal in order to like feel good about myself. I need to hit this goal to validate that I'm a good school leader.

I need to hit this goal so my boss will approve of me and pat me on the back. I'm going to grind my way to that one moment where I get validated. Yay. We made 80% proficiency. I'm a state of California Distinguished School award. Then what? If that's the goal, the day after you accomplish those goals, life feels very empty. Pain, pain, pain, hit of happiness. Now we're even more despair because like the happiness is gone. Now we've got to go through all this other pain to get another hit.

Here's the other thing about goals. When we think of the achievement, the arrival at that goal as the accomplishment, what happens is you don't want to hit the goal one time. You're not like I want my school to hit 80%

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proficiency so that I hit it one time and we say well, we did that. Whatever happens next, I don't know. Good luck kids.

No, in the becoming of, in the journey, in the detours, and in the time that it takes to get to the goal, that goal comes with us. It integrates. We are now a school. We are now a school community that consistently performs at around 80% or above. The above is your next journey. 81 becomes the journey.

You can celebrate 81% because not only are you performing an 80%, now you're performing 81%. Then 81% feels really big because the closer you get to perfection, right 100%, which isn't real. But the closer you get, like the journey might be harder, even though it's very short. 80 to 81, it might be short, but it might be dense. It might require more time to get from 80 to 81 than it does to go from 62 to 80. Why? Momentum. 80 to 81 might happen in one year's time. Because why? Momentum.

But when we get to 80, we're like oh, we made it. We've energetically dropped the momentum. We're like woo, we made that. That was so hard. I've got to take a break. We can't keep up this 80% business. That was painful. Then we subconsciously lower our energy, we don't maintain the energy because it wasn't sustainable ever. It wasn't ever going to be sustainable.

So when you have goals as the prize, it's the booby prize, as my coach would say. That one hit wonder, the one-time hit, the temporary dopamine hit that you get from getting the prize, getting the award, getting the pat on the back, getting the external validation. That's temporary happiness. It's one hit wonder.

But when the journey is the goal, when it's like oh, we saw Santa Fe. Oh, we saw Las Vegas. Oh my gosh, we saw this cute little town on Route 66. I

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never would have even seen that coming. That was cool. Oh my gosh, we drove through Memphis.

I so badly wanted to stop in Memphis. I just really love the music scene, the blues scene, and I've never been to Memphis. We decided not to stop in Memphis this time, but it's only three hours away. Here's the thing. In the moment I felt like oh my gosh, we're passing through. I'm missing an opportunity.

Alex said no, you're not. It's three hours away. We can drive to Memphis. We can make a weekend of it. If you want to come and play, we'll go to Memphis, just drive there. I was like oh, you can go back and play? You kind of pick up the sticks, pick up the pieces that you missed the first time. Okay? It's about the journey. It's not a one and done. Goals aren't one and done.

Like this has literally come into my mindset very recently. I'm like oh, gosh. You'll see this with yourself. You'll hear this in a like oh, this resonates. It makes so much sense. Feels really true for me. Then you forget it. You'll have a new goal, and you'll fixate on the goal. You're like, oh my gosh. I see it now. I was fixating on the goal. I was thinking that landing the new job was the goal. No, the journey to get that offer was the goal.

Now you're the person who gets the offer. But getting the offer is just the beginning. Now you have another journey. It's called being the school leader. So what's the goal there? Oh, the goal there is pick a goal, 80% proficiency. My kindergarten team works together. Like your brain has all these new goals. But they're one hit wonders, and we get focused. Oh my gosh, like that kindergarten team's not working together. I'm going to get in there and fix it.

That's where we get into scarcity, lack, insufficiency because we're thinking they aren't empowered enough to figure this out. They don't have the skills.

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I need to show them my way's the right way. This is how they should collaborate. This is how it should look. We get hyper focused on it being the right way and my way, and it should look like this. It should be like this. It should already be happening right now. Oops, we went back into the goal being the outcome versus the journey.

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