

Ep #361: Equal Value but Different



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 361.

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. And for those of you in the United States, Happy Thanksgiving Week. Hopefully, you are off for the week, but if not, hopefully you'll be off by tomorrow or Thursday. I wish you rest, relaxation, pleasure, fun, sleep, whatever it is you need, a beautiful Thanksgiving celebration.

Set the intention to enjoy whatever Thanksgiving festivities that you are planning to attend or to host if you celebrate the holiday of Thanksgiving here in the United States. I'm thinking of you all, so grateful for you, so happy for you, just so appreciative of the work that you do, education, the gifts that we have to offer our kids, and I have so much intense gratitude for the gift of coaching.

I have never been in a group like the Empowered Principal Collaborative. The energy in this group, the wisdom that these principals are sharing, the insights, the breakthroughs, the transformations, the aha moments that are being witnessed in this group. It's phenomenal. And I hope that if you're not in EPC now that you consider joining us one of these days because the breakthroughs I'm seeing are absolutely incredible and I've never seen so much happiness and joy and fun and excitement, energy. It's really got an incredible vibe.

I feel so good being in this group. I'm the coach, but everyone is coaching, everyone's contributing, everyone's having conversation and uplifting one another, and it's like anything else I've ever experienced as a school leader,

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so I hope that you consider joining us when the doors open again, which will be coming up in 2025, and put it on your calendars. I will keep you all posted.

In this week of Thanksgiving, I want to share a concept that helped me as a school leader and it's really evolved the way I think in my personal life and I'd like to invite you to consider this concept and apply it at work and then at home because I think and feel so differently than I used to. I feel like this concept is in contrast to the work we do when we compare and despair.

So when we are comparing and despairing, we're looking at our colleagues or other schools and their scores or our colleagues and what they're doing or our fellow teachers, what our teachers are doing versus what other teachers are doing, or the scores, or district office, what they're doing, what they're not doing, or we get on Instagram, or Pinterest, or Facebook, or pick a platform, and there's people out there doing the million things. We're comparing our experience to theirs. We're interpreting their experience, and then we are feeling bad about ourselves.

Or at school, we're comparing who's contributing the most. We're looking at who's doing it right, who's doing it wrong, who's contributing this amount, who's not contributing, who's adding value, who's not adding value, like what positions are more important, what's the priority than others, right?

I want to offer this. I believe that every human on this planet comes inherently worthy of love, appreciation, contribution. Everyone on this planet has something of value to offer. Everybody deserves empowerment. Everybody deserves a chance. Everyone has capacity and ability. Does everybody tap into that potential? No.

We, as empowered principals, create awareness that we have the opportunity and the invitation to tap into that potential. Some people don't even have the awareness. They're too busy comparing and despairing.

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They're too busy focusing on what isn't working or why they can't or all the excuses or all the reasons as to why they don't feel good. They don't feel the way they want to feel. They don't accomplish what they want to accomplish. They don't have what they want to have. They don't experience what they want to experience.

It's not that they're not worthy or they don't have value to offer or that they're not capable or that they have something inherently broken or wrong with them. It's simply the thought that I don't have value to offer, I don't have worth to give, I don't have the ability to create influence and impact.

Something I realized when I was in school leadership is that every person on the campus, and I mean every person, is contributing value. Every single person. They have the potential to create a lot of value. Our job, should we choose to accept it our mission is to help them see their value, to feel their value, to contribute their value through inspiration, through feeling good, through creating an identity of value, that we all contribute value, we all are valuable. Here's the most concrete example I can provide.

You, as the school leader, people might view you as the leader of your school as the most important role. It's the most valuable role. And then everything below you, like subordinates, they contribute value but less value. Right? So like, it's you and then it's your assistant principal or your office staff and then it's your teachers rank high up there, and then perhaps your instructional coach, and then maybe it's your special ed team, and then maybe it's your intervention teachers, and then it's your behavioral specialist, your support staff, your paraprofessionals, and then, you know, custodian bus drivers.

We think in hierarchy because our world is set up in hierarchy. I want to offer that it's not a hierarchy. It's different types of value but equal, shoulder to shoulder, side by side, hand in hand. That what we contribute is of equal value but different.

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Here's what I mean. What I contribute as a principal has significant value, but so does the teacher in the classroom. You take the teacher out of the equation, we have less value as a school. We want to value the value. We want to value the person who's providing the value. When you are out a teacher and you don't have a sub, you feel the impact. There is a loss of value that happens. We very much value having our teachers in the classroom, and we very much value having a substitute when our teachers, who are human, need to take a day off, or they're sick, or they're going to a wedding. We need to value the position and the person in the position equally. It's not more or less valuable. It's different value, but equal.

Empowerment. They bring empowerment, they bring value, they bring power to the room, to the campus, to the school, to our mission. Same is true with paraprofessionals. When you don't have a paraprofessional, teachers are going to let you hear about that because of the value it provides to the teacher, the student, the classroom. Same with our custodians.

You lose a custodian, you're without a custodian, and you're the one cleaning up the trash and the vomit and the broken glass and unplugging toilets that kids have shoved paper towels down or cleaning up lunch, you know, milk spills. You value the person's contribution. It has tremendous value because of the impact it has on you to be able to create your value, your impact.

I want you to think about every adult on that campus and the value that they provide by being in that role and offering the service they're offering. Without custodians, what would life be like? Without bus drivers, without technicians, without maintenance, without our technology staff, without our instructional coaches, without our speech teacher, our resource teacher, or our behavior specialist, the nurses, the counselors, your attendance clerk, your office staff, your assistants.

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And furthermore, at the district office, Sometimes we're like, what are they doing up there? Not doing anything valuable. They're sitting around. They're not working hard like us. I used to think that, so I could say it out loud. And then I realized, equal value but different. It looks different. It sounds different. It feels different. But it's of equal value. That's what makes the school go round. That's what contributes to the mission, the greater cause. For us, for them, for the greater good.

So, as you're celebrating and giving thanks for all the amazingness in your life, consider the value and give gratitude and appreciation for every single person on that campus. You don't need to do more. You can just feel it, feel the appreciation, smile at them, say something to them, wink at them, let them know, tell them the value. You don't have to buy them gifts or, you know, go out of your way and spend tons of effort, time, or energy or money, you want to just express your appreciation, express the gratitude, acknowledge the value that they are providing to you, to the school, for the staff, for the students, for the greater good.

When your support staff feels just as empowered and just as valuable as the teachers, can you imagine how much they're gonna show up if they feel so valued as a custodian, as a bus driver? I used to run sodas out on hot days or bottles of water out on hot days for the bus drivers.

That one act of kindness, that one appreciation, or I just would chat with them. I can't imagine this day, the kids are wild, just letting you know have a good one or good luck or what's coming up like how would that field trip go? Little minutes of connection can remind them of their value. It's easy to feel unvaluable when nobody's watching or paying attention and yes it is our job to know our own value, but as leaders, we have to know our own value but know that everybody around us is equally valuable. Just it looks different, it feels different, it shows up differently in a different context.

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And then, what I have learned more recently is I can apply this in my personal life with friendships, with family members, relationships, equal value, but it looks different. I can appreciate the differences in approaches and opinions and in personal values when I understand that it's equal but different, but it's no less valuable than what I believe in, or it's no less valuable than my way of doing things, or the reverse. I'm no less valuable. Like if someone tells me like you're doing it wrong and it's like no my way isn't less valuable. It's just different equal value but different

Try that on Happy Thanksgiving. Enjoy your holiday. Enjoy your celebrations. Take time for yourself. Make this about pleasure, rest relaxation and fun. I love you all, have an amazing week and I'll talk to you next week. See you soon. 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.