

Ep #370: Embracing Change



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 370.

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.

Hello, empowered principals. Happy Tuesday! Welcome to the podcast. I've got a short and sweet one for you today. I'm going to talk about how to love change. Because nobody loves change, but yet change is a constant. So, why not embrace it? We're going to talk about how you as a school leader can learn to love change and embrace it and help others do the same.

Because what we do as school leaders is we spend a lot of energy trying to create calm and consistent schools. And teachers try to spend a lot of energy and time creating a calm and consistent classroom. Calm and consistent feels amazing to our brains. We love calm. We love consistent. And look, it is very important to have routines and habits so that the brain can trust and relax into the knowing of what to expect and what's to come. So creating calm and consistency is a beautiful goal. It's one of my goals, personally and professionally.

But what I have noticed in my own life and with my clients is that any goal, even calm and consistency, too much of a good thing is not a good thing. I want you to imagine a world, a school, a life, where everything is calm and consistent. No changes, no surprises, no spontaneity, no dips, no twists, no turns, no change. Just imagine a world that stagnant, that calm, that consistent, that safe. At best, a world like that would be very boring. But at its worst, it's stagnant. It's actually death. Stagnancy is death.

When everything's completely consistent, completely calm, completely expected, completely certain, and there's no change, that is the start of

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decline. Everything on this planet was designed to experience change. The planet, as we speak, as you're listening to this podcast, is changing. The universe is changing. The stars, the sun, all of existence is changing as we stand here on planet Earth. It's changing all around us, everything. Our bodies, changing. Our children's bodies, changing. Our school, changing. All of it. And yet our human brain wants to hold on to the belief that calm and consistency is the happiest place on earth, the safest place on earth. So we're gonna play a little game.

What if for 5 minutes, for the next 5 to 10 minutes that you're with me on this podcast, let's just pretend that we decided that calm and consistent is not the only goal in life or with our schools. Let's say it's not even the main goal, the primary goal. And what if it wasn't the goal at all? What if we threw that goal out the window? What if change was the goal? What if the goal was to be different, new, innovative, unknown, creative? What if change was the goal, what about you would be different? What about your life would be different? What about your school would be different? And what about your leadership would be different?

If change was the goal, what about you would be the same? What about your life would be the same? What about your school and your leadership would be the same? Change doesn't mean everything goes out the window. Change means different, but it also means the same. Change doesn't happen all at once. Like, your child doesn't grow up developmentally, and they don't get all their teeth at the same time. They don't learn all of the letters and the sounds at the same time. They don't learn to read all at once. It compounds. The change is slow and consistent and calm and it builds on itself over time, day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year.

So we don't have to fear change. It isn't as inconsistent and chaotic as we think it will be. There is a pattern and a rhythm to change.

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When you think about how rivers have evolved the landscape, the planet, over centuries, thousands of years, perhaps, and how this earth has evolved and changed, you're talking millions of years. When you think of it that way, it took a very long time to create those changes, time to embrace the change and to be able to get used to that change, to get comfortable with the change. And it just kept slowly eroding. Like I'm picturing the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River, and I'm assuming that's how it was created but I know there's more recent theories, but any river that's evolved the landscape, it happened over time. Sometimes it happened in a storm and lots of change happened rapidly and it was messy and chaotic. And then other times it was just that trickle of a stream slowly, gently moving, changing over the course of time. But I want you to ask yourself, for this coming school year, how would it feel for change to be the goal?

How would you feel if you celebrated every time you made a change? A small change, a tiny change, or a big change? What if change equaled winning? And that change meant you were living. And that change was the solution to success. And that change means having fun. And that change is a part of evolution. What if change was a part of the equation to everything that we want?

And as I've shared with you guys, I'm pretty transparent about my life. Like my life is going through some significant changes. And I will be sharing more of those changes as the podcast comes out, as these events start to unfold in my life. Got a couple of big changes happening more recently, and I've got some upcoming changes within the course of next year that are coming up in my life, I can't wait to share with you. But the plans are still in the works. They're still tentative. So until I know a little bit more detail, I will hold off sharing them.

But life is all about change. It's about evolving who we are, who we think we are, who we think we can be, what we prioritize, how we spend our time, how we spend our energy, and how we choose to believe in

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ourselves, in what's possible, in the experiences we want to have and create.

Sometimes change is very subtle, but a lot of times change feels abrupt. This has happened to me in my life over the last year. And at first, I was very resistant to the change. I wanted a calm and consistent life. I wanted to stay in my happy place. Everything was curated. Everything had been designed to be efficient and effective and calm, routined, planned, scheduled, all of that.

I think there's something brilliant about creating that type of life and I didn't want to disrupt the stagnancy that I had developed in my life because it was so efficient and I felt productive and I liked the certainty of knowing what to expect. But life is meant to evolve and to change. No matter how hard you try to make it consistent, we are designed as human beings to experience change.

And so when resisting the change didn't scare the change away in my life, then I detested it. I was upset and frustrated and angry and I wanted to control it and take it back to being not chaotic, to being stagnant and calm and consistent.

But I couldn't do it because life is meant to evolve and change. And so what I finally did was sank into it. I let myself feel the fear of the unknown, the despair of the uncertainty, and the grief of letting go of my need for calm and consistency in my life 100% of the time. And I sat with the feelings that came up, all the fear, all of the uncertainty, and I just asked them. I asked my emotions, what do you want me to know? And you know what? They told me.

And sometimes along this past year, I have been very open to what they had to say. And other times I wasn't as open. But one significant aspect that I want to share with you is that I never stopped showing up to feel

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those feelings and to ask them what they wanted me to know. I did not stop asking myself questions. I didn't hide from my feelings. I didn't buffer them. I didn't push them away or resist them. I didn't stop exploring the emotions and the thoughts that I was having.

I showed up every day for myself. I showed up in my life. I showed up in my business. I showed up as a coach. I showed up in my pain and in my grief and in my attachment. And I asked it, what does it want me to know? And in that showing up, I was able to see how change was not the enemy. I wasn't a victim to change. It wasn't the villain in my story, and it wasn't taking anything away from me. Change ended up being the solution. It was the hero in my story. It was adding something into my life. It was offering me solutions, evolution. It was offering me exactly what I wanted. The only thing holding me back was the fear of the change when right here on a platter it was offering me everything I've said I've always wanted.

So I wanna offer this to you. Change isn't a problem and change isn't bad. No change is the problem. No change is stagnant. It's stinky. It's stuck. When you think of something that's stagnant, I think of like stagnant water or a trash bin that's been sitting there untouched for weeks. It stinks. It's sticky. It's stuck. If you're not changing, you aren't living. And if you're not living, you're slowly dying.

Change is life. Change is fun. Change is supposed to happen. And look, as school leaders, we ask our teachers to change. We ask our students to change. Change is embraced when we embrace it as leaders. So sell yourself on why change is the best decision or choice you could ever make. How does it change or enhance the quality of your life? How does it expand your experiences? How does it increase your capacity to have impact and contribute?

Embracing change doesn't mean changing everything at once and creating a bunch of chaos in your life. Embracing change means accepting the truth

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of it. It's a universal fact, at least in our humanly experience, in our realm of possibility, what we do know about life and about the planet and about the universe is that it's changing and that change is constantly in motion. Embracing it allows you to manage it, to take the wheel, to steer it and control how often and when and how hard you push on the gas. And when you tap on the brakes, you do have control over the pace of the change.

Sometimes it doesn't feel like that because things around you are changing, but you get to decide how much you engage with that change or how little you engage with it. You can have control over your level of engagement. If something in your life is changing, another person is changing, your job is changing, the district's changing, kids are moving or changing, anything in your life, when all of this change is happening around you, you still have control over how you think and feel about it.

So I invite you that change is just change, it's neutral. And you can decide that change is for the better, change is for the sake of evolution, and that we are school leaders who embrace change by loving it. We create change by inviting it in and I want to invite you to join us in EPC, which is the Empowered Principal Collaborative. It's my group coaching program where it is safe to embrace change because we celebrate it, we honor it, we love it, and we leverage change to our advantage.

A brand new calendar year and for us, the mid-year reboot gives us six months to create change that we want to see within ourselves and with our schools. There is so much time, you have so much time, so much energy to make the changes that you wish to experience for yourself.

So come on in to EPC, doors are open in January. I invite you in, we would love to have you. I'll see you there. And if you have any questions and you wanna talk to me personally about EPC, if you have any questions or concerns, you can simply schedule a 15-minute Q&A with me. I'll jump on the phone with you and I will answer any questions that you have.

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Embracing change and loving it, having fun with it, and not making it mean that something's gone wrong is exactly what empowered principals embrace. So come on in, we'd love to see you. I'll talk to you guys real soon. Take care, Have a great week. 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.