

# Ep #444: Leadership Clarity: Finding Your Compass



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

## Ep #444: Leadership Clarity: Finding Your Compass

Hello, empowered principals. Welcome to episode 444.

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.

Well, hello, my empowered principals. Happy Tuesday. Welcome to this week's podcast. What a special podcast, 444, here at the end of June. 444 episodes of *The Empowered Principal® Podcast*. That is incredible. I am so proud of this moment. 444 weeks we have been together. That is absolutely incredible. I am so honored to be here with you. I am delighted that you have chosen to participate and to engage and listen to *The Empowered Principal® Podcast*.

I honestly feel from my entire heart and mind, body and soul that this podcast is truly a masterpiece. It is a masterclass in being human, in being human as a school leader, in exploring and studying human development, personal development, professional development, the study of education, teaching, learning, and leading. This is the study of it. Everything that I share with you on this podcast is to me a masterclass in life.

It is what I've learned personally and professionally as a person, as a leader who is developing and still continuing to develop, still continuing to study myself, how I engage with myself, how I treat myself, my identity, my interactions with other people, my thoughts about them, how I engage with the world. All of life is involved in school leadership. So, we are school leadership, school leadership is us, and this podcast aims to look through every single lens that is possible to study every single angle of our work, our lives, our impact, the legacy that we are leaving. As educators, we are a public servant. We are in the business of public service to develop the humans.

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And this podcast, I give you everything. And it's yours for the taking. It's yours for you to study it or not, for you to even consider it or not, for you to apply it and implement it or not, for you to study this work or not. I believe if we were to study this work, embody this work, that we would truly empower ourselves, our staff, our students, which would empower the greater good for us as leaders, for those we lead, for them, and for the greater good.

So today, we're going to talk about leadership clarity. And for those of you who are angel number people, you do not have to be one to listen to this podcast, but 444 is about clarity. And so, I want to talk about leadership clarity today. Leadership, as you know very very well, whether you're leading a classroom, leading your household, leading a school, leading a district, your leadership position in your life and in your career involves making many many decisions, many of which have complicated circumstances.

And when we are making decisions in order to decide what approach we want to take, what actions, how we want to communicate, the way we want to interact or handle situations, the energetics we want to use as the fuel for our decisions and actions, when we are faced with these multiple decisions, we aim for clarity. We desire a sense of clarity. We want to feel clarity in our body before we're making a decision or as we're making a decision.

So what is clarity? What does it really mean? So the dictionary says that clarity is freedom from ambiguity, freedom. Clarity is freedom from cloudiness, from not understanding, not knowing. So it's lucidity. It is understanding, having a clearness in our minds, a clearness in our bodies, knowingness inside how we feel. There is a certainty, a knowingness, a trust and faith. There is direction.

When you feel clear, your compass is pointing in a direction, and therefore, you can make a decision. It says go west, we're going west. Go north, go north. Turn back south, going south. There's a transparency with clarity.

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There's no fog in the way. It's transparent. It's clear. There's truth. And with clarity, there is a sense of precision, of focus, where you're lasering in, you're not whack-a-moling. You're looking at this one thing, you're going in this one direction.

So clarity, in my own words, is the freedom of understanding something, knowing the truth as you see it, trusting that truth, and then making a decision that focuses your energy and attention and actions. So I want you to think of a time that you've had clarity, any circumstance, any situation. Sometimes when I have felt clarity, it's just a feeling I have. It's a knowingness. It's instant. You just know it's the way to go. It's a gut feeling. It's an intuition. You feel very called to it. You feel compelled to move in a certain direction, even if it's not clearly making sense to you, it feels clear.

It feels certain, so you will go for it, even when it doesn't even make sense to you or other people. People are like, "What are you doing? That's crazy." When I quit my very high paying job with beautiful, incredible benefit package, I got grandfathered in. My benefits package was out of this world. My pay was incredible. I was making very high pay in the most expensive area in the nation, right, one of the most expensive areas. And for me to resign and start this business from scratch, I had no business doing this. I had no idea what I was doing. I felt so compelled, so clear.

It was a gut feeling. It was something beyond me that just said, go in this direction. It was an internal compass guiding me. And everyone was like, "What in the heck are you doing?" And I said, "I don't know, I have to do this." It doesn't even make sense. None of it made sense. But you don't wait for more clarity or more direction. You're not sitting around waiting for more. It's just a solid hit of clarity where nothing more is needed. You just know more of anything is required. You just go. There's that kind of clarity where it's like a moment of like lightning bolt, compelling for certain that you have to do the thing.

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And then other times you realize, I have a decision to make and I would like some clarity on this before I make this decision or before I take a certain action. And when we're in that moment, oftentimes we want that clarity to come right now, right away in this very moment, because, hey, we've got a decision to make. We want to make it now. We want to keep moving. We want to do momentum. We want to hustle, grind. Let's go.

And the reason we feel that urgency is because oftentimes we feel a lot of pressure to stay in that big masculine energy where we're doing and we're hustling and we're grinding and we're in boss vibes. And there is obviously in leadership, there's a lot of doing that is required. We can't just sit in our office and feel good and eat strawberries all day. We have to do, right? We feel a lot of pressure to take action in this moment.

So what we try to do is we try to force clarity. Trust me, I've done this a million times and I've watched every single one of my clients at some point in their career try to force clarity as well. We create pros and cons. We call other people. We talk to them. We get their opinions. We get their perspective. We try to get insight. We research the heck out of things. We're online googling all the things.

And then if that doesn't help, we're like, I just got to ask for it. I might even beg for it. I might even pray for it. Just tell me what to do. Tell me the right decision. Please help me. Someone out there, universe, I'm calling you. I've gotten the help hotline. We try to force it, and then when we can't, we kind of beg for it.

But we crave the clarity. And why do we crave the clarity? Because it feels really good. When you're clear on something, when a decision feels super clear, or an action you need to take is just like a no-brainer, that's the action I got to take, even when you don't want to take it, but you know it's the right one, you just know it's the right one because certainty feels good. It feels aligned. It feels authentic. It feels right. It feels like the right thing to do.

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And we want that feeling of clarity before we make the decision. We want to feel clear and then make the decision, because when we feel clarity, if we have like this bolt of clarity before we decide or act, it adds another emotion into the mix. We feel certain, we feel safe, we feel assured, which is confident. So on top of clarity, we feel this confidence. We feel safety, at the end of the day. It feels safe to make the decision. It feels safe to take the action because we feel so certain. We feel so much confidence in the decision because of the clarity.

Yet, we don't often want to allow the time that clarity sometimes requires. And that's because we do not enjoy the actions required when clarity needs time, and we don't like the discomfort that comes up with the actions required, the action of seeking clarity.

So what does that mean? It means seeking understanding, seeking the knowingness, seeking certainty, seeking which direction to go. It's the action of listening internally, the action of waiting for clarity, the action of exercising patience, which at least for me is very difficult. But it's the action of actually slowing ourselves down. And we don't slow down, school leaders, do we? We speed up. We go faster, harder, longer, more.

And this requires us to slow down, listen, wait, be patient, and trust. We resist this part of the clarity process because we feel the urgency to decide and act because we feel the pressure to arrive at the outcome or achieve the goal as fast as possible. We think there's a problem when we have to wait for clarity. We sense problems. We sense that we might be in danger in some way if we wait. Something bad will happen if we wait, if we pause, if we don't decide in the second or take action in this moment.

So in response to that, we try to force clarity. And you've tried this before. Sometimes it comes when we force it. Sometimes we just like get tired of trying to force it and we just go with our gut anyway. Clarity doesn't usually come when we're trying to force it, though, does it? Forcing it actually makes us more confused, more overwhelmed, more uncertain, and then

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we're feeling like we're in a pickle. So what is the solution to this? It's the opposite of the urge. It's to really slow yourself down.

In the fast-paced world of school leadership, it's stopping, pausing, slowing down, slowing your breathing, regulating your physical body, regulating from within, reminding yourself, I'm okay. We're okay. We've got this. We can handle this. I can hold space for this period of time. I can be patient. I can wait. I know clarity is coming. I'm going to give it some time. I don't need to act or decide in this very moment. I am open to receiving clarity. We let our compass know we are listening. We are tuned in. We're allowing it the opportunity to speak to us.

And once we kind of claim that we're open to receiving this clarity, you can shift gears. Take a break. Take a walk. Do something else. Just be present and keep moving forward with the things that you already know. You already have clarity on.

So here's the thing, this is like the chicken or the egg scenario. Do you wait until you have absolute clarity on every single thing? Or do you take action? And in that action, clarity becomes present and clarity evolves and presents itself to you as you're moving forward. So do you take action and then it becomes clear? Or do you wait for clarity and then take the action? And my experience is that we do both.

When there is a decision to be made and its impact involves us, them, the greater good, like a big decision, and it has a larger impact, then we want to allow time for clarity to evolve. Meanwhile, we also continue taking action on things that we already are in alignment with, that we already trust, that we already know is the right thing for us to do, that we're on the right path.

So there's this balance of having faith that you're on the right path, taking action for the things you know and you have clarity on, and then anchoring yourself in that trust while you wait, while you expand your capacity for patience to listen and tune in and trust that internal guide and trust it will come to the surface.

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Because the truth is, your internal compass is always clear. It's just that we tune in and out of it. It's like a radio station. When we're tuned in, it comes in very clear. But sometimes we're running around and then we get out of range and the, you know, we can't hear the radio and it gets staticky and there's no clarity. We can't hear what's being said. And then we need to stop, slow down, fix the antennas, get back into a reception zone, and turn up the volume, and then listen for what's actually being said. So sometimes it just takes some time for us to slow down, tune in, hear what's being said, and really listen to what's being said and then to trust it.

So I would be curious to know, in what areas of your leadership feel very clear and you're just on it? Make a list. What are the things? Where do you feel super clear? This feels true. This feels true. This feels aligned. This feels right. I'm on the right path here. And then where are you a little less certain, a little less clear? And can you invite clarity into those larger decisions, those more complicated or bigger actions that you need to take? I'd love to hear.

Allow yourself time to generate clarity while also taking actions on the things you know are clear. Try that. Let me know how it goes. Have a beautiful week. I love you guys. Take good care of yourselves. Talk to you soon. See you next 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](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.