



Podcast Episode 217
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“The Anatomy of Principles (and How to Use Them to Get What You Want)”

David Loy: Hi and welcome to *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews, I’m your host David Loy. and I am thrilled, excited, mesmerized to be here once again Andy, with you. We always have a blast doing this. I wanted you to tell, you know, a lot of times we start off just by talking or chatting or whatever, and you say something funny and we laugh or whatever. But you told me that something happened to you and that it was really funny, no, you said it was a great story.

Andy Andrews: I can’t believe you ain’t heard it.

David: I had not heard it so I want you to tell this to me for the first time while everybody else is here, for the first time as well.

Andy: Well you know, last weekend, Polly, Austin, Adam and I were up here, in Nashville, at uncle Bob’s. You know, they call Robert uncle Bob. And so I forget where we were even going but we were coming back from where ever we were, had been going. And it was right at dark and it was a fair amount of traffic, two-lane road, here in Franklin. And all of a sudden, you know how you see like roadkill, you see dead animal on the road?

David: Yes.

Andy: Well, right there in the headlights, it’s already dead, but there’s traffic coming the other way and Robert somehow cannot avoid this with his tire. And

so he hits it with his tire and right about the time we all realize, it's a skunk. And he hits it with his tire. Alright now let me just tell you something. I've never smelled anything like this. And it somehow must have slung up under the car because within about 15 or 30 seconds, it was coming through the car. Polly and the boys were yelling, I'm laughing. And Robert's like, what, what, you know how he is. So we're rolling down the windows. Ok, that just makes it worse. Oh, it is unbelievable. And so all the way home, we're laughing but it's getting worse and worse. And so we're thinking. Yeah, it must have somehow, I mean, it had some stuff still in him and you squeezed it out of him, you slung it up on undercarriage of the car.

Well, so we said, you cannot park in your garage. You have to park outside, you can't park in your garage. So he didn't park in the garage. Well later that night Austin and I come outside and man, the entire car port, I mean, the entire, I mean, out into the yard, you can smell it, it's just unbelievable. And so the next day, Robert and Adam go to have this special car wash done that washes underneath the car and everything, like a two-hour car wash. Well guess what? It doesn't work. It didn't work. He comes back and I'm like, buddy, sorry, you still can't park in the garage. I mean, it was unbelievable. So I cannot believe he didn't tell you this.

David: Well of course he didn't tell us because he was probably, he didn't want to re-live the shame that you guys gave him.

Andy: Oh my gosh, it was unbelievable.

David: Of course it would happen to him with you in the car. It could've happened any other time and nobody would know.

Andy: This was the skunk's revenge. Man, I mean, one car hit him and the next one he got.

David: Oh that's terrible. Well that's kind of fitting for Robert ever now and then. He's happy all the time, was he happy in the midst of all of that?

Andy: Oh sure he was.

David: There you go. He chooses to be grateful. But that skunk wasn't very grateful. Alright, that's really funny, I'm going to have to talk to him about that soon. Alright Andy let's get into today's question. This is another great email that came in from Dale and it's a topic for those of you who listen regularly, this is a topic that Andy has covered several different times. But we've gotten some follow up questions, some clarification questions, and Andy if nothing else that tells me that this is hitting home with a lot of people.

Andy: This is a tough thing, you told me a few minutes ago what this is about, and so I don't know the specific question but this is something that the people really deal with, we all do.

David: Absolutely. And most likely you know somebody else who's probably struggling with some of these things as well. So let me read the question from Dale and Andy we will get your thoughts on it. Hello Andy, I have read most of your books, some of them multiple times, and I tell my friends to do likewise. I would like you to provide some additional perspective on this concept of principles. I struggle with accepting principles at times and I'm assuming that others do as well. So my first question is, how do I go about identifying a principle, how do I know if a statement that is true and works every time, or if it's just a platitude. And then once that I've determined that that belief or statement is a

principle, how do I convince myself that it actually works. I suppose the real issue Andy is, how do I overcome doubt? I've heard many people ask on the podcast, how to increase their level of belief and I've heard you reply that what we read and watch and those whom we choose to spend time with, what we choose to think about and what we choose not to think about, can all impact our level of belief. And I've also heard you say, a person cannot achieve beyond what they believe. But I'm still struggling to follow. Any other thoughts?

Well, again Andy, I think this is not a clear-cut answer. I think it changes for everybody. So I guess first of all, let's start with how would you suggest somebody goes about identifying a principle?

Andy: Well a principle is something that works every time. A principle is foundational truth.

David: And the new ones I'm hearing in that and tell me if I'm wrong for Dale is that does not, belief doesn't come into play with a principle. I mean, you always use the principle of gravity. You don't have to believe in it for it to work.

Andy: Yeah, it just works. And so, you know principles, the truths in principles are self-evident. And if you remember that language, that's part of what our founding fathers said, we hold these truths to be self-evident. Another way that you can say, a nicer way to say that, that is the nice way of saying what they really meant, they said, we hold these truths to be self-evident but what they really meant, any moron knows this. And so principles are the kind of things that it's self-evident. You would be able to see very quickly that a principle is the bottom of the pool, right. We've talked about that before. It's the bottom of the pool, principle is the foundational truth. Principle is not just true, it is the truth. Things can be true and not be the truth.

And so this is where, I know Dale and some other people, you know, sometimes we have issues, we struggle with that, because we're sometimes trying to figure out, is this the truth or is this something that's just true. I'll give you an example. If you took a blind person who didn't have any idea what an elephant was like, and you said, ok, here's an elephant, so make your determinations. Well you know, if it's standing in the front and can the blind person like touch the trunk and held the trunk? He could say, an elephant is kind of like a snake, an anaconda, and he would not be wrong, right. He could hold on to a leg and say, an elephant is like a pole, like a tree trunk, and he would not be wrong. Or an elephant is like a wall, like a big wall and he would not be wrong. Everything he said would be true, it just wouldn't be the truth. It wouldn't be the bottom line, there is more to it, ok. And with a principle you've reached the bottom line, there's nothing, it's not something that's more to it or sometimes or on occasion or in certain instances. It's always true. And ok, here is a principle, it is true, it is a foundational truth, this is one of those things that is helpful if people understand it. And let me tell you what it is and then I'm going to tell you what some people are going to say.

The principle is, you have been created with a will that is stronger than your emotions, ok. That's a principle, that is foundational truth that is always true. Now some people will hear that and go, well now, wait a minute, I don't know if I believe that or not, I don't know if that's true for me, I don't know if that's true all the time. Yeah, it's true all the time. Now whether you decide to exercise that truth or not, whether you decide to live according to that principle or not, I mean, you can decide you're not gonna live with gravity either. And you can decide you can fly and you can jump off the cliff if you want to, ok. And you can decide, that no, your will is not stronger than your emotions and you can live like that too and you can just like jumping off the cliff and defy gravity, you can pile your life on the

rocks by not understanding that you have a will that's stronger than you emotions too. You can deny that but it's foundational truth, it's always true and because it's a foundational truth, because it's a principle, it's fairly easily provable, ok. Provable beyond a reasonable doubt, not a mathematical proof but provable.

And so somebody will say, well I don't know if my will is stronger than emotions. Let me ask you this, have you ever been in your house and something going on in the house or something going on in your office, man, you tell them, how many times we have to talk about this, I can't believe we're talking about this again da da daaa and then the phone rings and we go, hello. And so you immediately chose to act in opposition to your emotional state at that point. Your will, and curiously you choose to act civilly and happy, you choose to act that way immediately for somebody you didn't even know who was on the phone. And yet most of us say we cannot act that way with certain people in our lives, like our family, who are, evidently, obviously more important than somebody who's on the phone. So anyway, there you go, foundational.

David: Ok, so let's move on to the next portion of Dale's question. It goes on to say, I suppose the real issue is how do I overcome doubt? And I think Andy that's something that you hear a lot. I know you've talked about, people can only achieve what they're able to believe so how do they increase their level of belief and overcome that doubt?

Andy: Right, well number one thing is to be a student and a server of principle. Be a student because you can either harness them and use them or you can allow them to affect your life and you have no idea what is going on. But principles work whether you know them or not. So this is an important thing for people who are interested in principle and interested in living their lives according to principle. A lot of times people say, well you know, I'm fine where I am. Ok, look, there are

things going on in your life and you may think you're fine where you are but principles work whether you know them or not, you don't have to know the principle of gravity to have it affect your life, you don't have to understand it, you don't have to agree with it, you can just be an ignoramus and say, well I don't think that's right. Ok, well fine, you don't think it's right, fine, ok, but personally I would urge you to stay away from stairs and cliffs, you know. But here's the thing it works whether you know it or not. Like you've heard, ignorance to the law is not excuse. Ok, well ignorance of principle is no protection from the consequence of violating that principle, just because you didn't know it. And so the more you gain, the more wisdom you gain about principles and the more you understand them and the more that you, the more principles you allow in your life and understand, than the easier your life will become. And the easier it will be to have a level of belief about where you're going and what you want to do because of lining those things up.

David: Right, and I'm not telling everybody to go and do what you did, which is read 700 biographies and then find the commonalities between all of them and then write a book about it. But anyone who looks at the results of the process you went through or listens to you talk about that process can hear that, that was out of a desire for knowledge. You were seeking wisdom in that entire process. And in that process you identified these principles. Now these are not the only seven principles out there.

Andy: Sure, sure.

David: But that's a huge part Dale. I think the quest for knowledge, seeking wisdom, identifying those principles.

Andy: A constant search. You know, a constant search.

David: And this is not, you teaching or preaching at people, this is you talking with people. Because I know that you're still in the midst of that constant search. You have not reached some level where you say, I'm done searching.

Andy: No, if anything I'm, not frantic, but I am certainly anxiously, energetically searching. Because every time I uncover one and understand it and learn how to harness it, you know, life gets better, I can help more people, my family does better.

David: Absolutely. Well and I think that's where I'm encouraged in Dale's question, is the part where it says, that he's seeking out answers and continually trying to get clarification on these difficult issues of the mind. So I think that is whether it's realized or not, that's already a step in the right direction, it's asking questions, he's seeking wisdom. Look, we're certainly not saying that Andy is the only one that you should be reading but if you haven't read all of the books than that's a great place to start, but there's tons of others, what do you always say, if you're not reading?

Andy: Yeah, I mean, you ain't got to be reading my books but statistics say, you better read somebody's books.

David: Yes, absolutely.

Andy: I just urge you, find somebody who doesn't bore you to tears. I talk to people all the time that say, well I don't really like to read or I'm not a reader. And you know, I understand that but I don't accept it, ok. Because I look at that in a way that I think about what Jones said to me one time, Jones said, dude you need to stop listening to yourself and start talking to yourself. Stop listening to the same old crap you've been telling yourself for years and believing that that's who

you are, that's what you are, you're just that kind of person. And start talking to yourself about the kind of person you are becoming and what you're becoming and who you are. So I listen to people and go, well, I don't really like to read. Well let me just tell you something, that's not the bottom of the pool, that's not the foundational element in their life and yet something way up around the surface is controlling them, ok. Because I'll say, look, let me ask you this. Do you like to fish? And sometimes people will say, man no, not really. And I've done this with a whole audiences, you know people say, they don't like to read. Ok, how many of you don't like to fish? And there are bunch of people raising their hand. And I'll say, now wait a minute, you're telling me that you can be standing there on a dock, there on the pond and you got a six-year-old beside you, and that cork is kind of bobbing in the water. And the kid is going, oh something's after it, something's after it. And then all of a sudden that cork goes down and the kid says, pull, pull. And you pull and that pole bends over and that fish is splashing the kid, and he goes, oh it's huge, it's huge. And you're pulling and pulling and the kid's yelling. You tell me you don't like that? And people will say, well I like that, it's just, you know, if you're catching them. And I say, oh so what you're telling me is, you do like to fish but you don't like waiting. Ok, well I don't like waiting either. I mean, who wants to wait? Oh let's go out to a pond and sit for three hours and wait. Who wants to do that? But now you tell me you don't like fishing, ok.

So here's the thing, you tell me you don't like reading? Really? You're telling me that you've never read anything that made you laugh out loud, that you've never read anything that brought a tear in your eye? You're telling me you never read anything, you never read anything that you sent to every address on your email list? You never read anything that you send to your kids and said, you must read this? You never read anything that you saved? Really? Well no. Ok, then what you're really telling me is, that the two or three books that you tried to read were

boring? Ok, so just find somebody, find an author that doesn't bore you to tears. Ok, but the statistics about reading are the bottom of the pool. Because the statistics about reading said that people that read make more money than people who don't read, people who read have lower divorce rate than people who don't read. People who read get promoted in a higher rate, laid off at a lower rate, people who read, I mean, it's on and on and on. So the bottom of the pool, do you want to read? Well not necessarily. Ok, but do you wanna make better living for your family, do you wanna have a stronger marriage, do you? I mean, well, yeah, I want that, I just don't want to read. Ok. But you've got to figure out where you are before you figure out what you believe.

David: That's really good. And look, we've said from the beginning that this is not, I don't know, it's not an easy, I always get your phrasings mixed up, it's not, it is simple but it's not. Not necessarily easy.

Andy: But the simple you make it, the more likely it is to be easy. The simpler you make it, that's why I pray every day, God give me simple ways to explain complicated things that are confusing people. I want to have simple ways to explain these things, I want to simplify this. Because this is confusion, and when you're confused, you can't take advantage of principle. If you're confused about whether it's a principle or not, you're confused about the principle itself, I mean, then you ain't got a prayer harnessing it.

David: That's right. And that's why we're here, we're here to have conversations. And Dale it's an ongoing conversation. This is not one and done, this is not send your question in and Andy provides the end all be all answer and then that topic is done, never be discussed again. This is an ongoing conversation. So to anyone out there, Dale included, what's confusing you, right now? What are you

struggling with, what do you want clarification on, what do you want to engage in conversation about?

Andy: Whatever it is, I can guarantee you, I am either confused about it right at this point or I have been in the past.

David: And either way, you always have an opinion, that's for sure.

Andy: And it's not, you know, I do have opinions. We want to get past opinions into the truth.

David: Yes, finding the bottom of the pool.

Andy: I had somebody tell me the other day, they were talking to me about political issue and I look at them and they were very sincere, but I got to tell you, they were sincerely wrong, ok. So I said to this person, I said, you know what? I respect your right to voice whatever you wish to voice but you want to be careful with what you say, because if you are so far off base that you appear to be an idiot, there's a lot of people that are going to give you a lot less power in their lives, ok. And so this person said to me, and I think this is an important distinction to make that most people do not make. This person said to me, we live in America and I'm entitled to my own opinion. And I said, you are absolutely right, you are entitled to your own opinion. However, you are not entitled to your own facts. There are some things that are right and wrong. There are some things that are correct and incorrect. There are some things that are the truth and some things that are a lie. And just because you believe a lie, does not make it the truth.

David: That's right. So we're on a search for the truth for the bottom of the pool, the foundational issues here. Andy thanks for your thoughts, Dale thanks for a

great question. We can keep going on this for while. We'd love to hear your questions, what other issues or confusing topics are you facing today. Send us an email at intheloop@andyandrews.com. Or call and leave a voicemail, 1800 726 2639, that's 1800 726 Andy. And tell us your name, where you're calling from and your question. We will be excited to address that on a future episode. Andy thanks again for your time, we'll talk to you next week.

Andy: Absolutely. Please tell your friends, tell your neighbors, get them involved. And make sure that their email address is on there so that they get this email into their inbox on Saturday morning just like you do.

David: There you go.

Would you like to run something by Andy? Contact us and your question might be featured on the show!

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