

Episode 17 – Why Multitasking Isn't It- Part 1
Barb Knows Best
Transcripts

Michelle Maros: [00:00:14] Hello everyone and welcome back to Barb Knows Best, the podcast. It's a beautiful day and I'm sitting here with my beautiful mother, Peaceful Barb. Hello.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:25] Hi Michelle,

Michelle Maros: [00:00:25] Hi, Mom.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:28] How are you today?

Michelle Maros: [00:00:29] I am doing just great. How are you?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:31] Really good. Thank you for asking.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:33] We are not, um just out of a downpour. So that's a plus.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:39] From last week? Yeah. Yeah, it was wild. Good. I wonder how I hope all of you out there are doing really well today.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:45] Yeah, we do. We had some.... We've got a lot of fun things to talk about this week. Yeah, as always. And I'm so happy to be here with you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:56] Me, too. I'm really, really looking forward. I look forward to this recording day I'm doing. So I really enjoying this. And this this particular topic today happens to be one that I feel like I've done a tremendous amount of time studying, researching, practicing, and have a lot to share with how it has impacted my life for the past roughly 38 years now.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:22] It's actually funny that we haven't yet talked about this topic yet, because when I think of you and I think of things that are important to you, this topic is like top of the list. And when I think about my life growing up and and just things that you instilled in

me, this is at the top of the list. And so when we were talking about what we wanted to go over this week, I was like, Hello, we haven't done this yet. Yeah, we gotta. and well here we are.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:52] Yeah, it's certainly the foundation of a meditation practice.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:56] I think it's become so deep seated that we forget that it's a topic to talk about. Honestly.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:01] I agree with you and I think why it's come up so much for me in this past week and you know, I've talked about it a lot, is that we're all so anxious and distracted and impatient and there's so many things happening around us in the world and our families and our workplaces, everything. There's just so much happening and the mind is going so fast. Yeah, and life seems to be going so fast. Everyone says to me, Wow, I can't believe how fast life is going. But if we really think about that statement, life is not going any faster. There's still 24 hours in a day. There's still 365 days a year. I mean, like life is still going true.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:38] I'm guilty of that. I almost every day say, wow, what is time? Where is time going? Time is going by so fast. But you're right.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:46] Everyone says it, though, so you're not alone. We're all feeling that way. So I love today that we're going to talk about the mind and talk about one point out of tension and distractions and.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:58] Being present.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:58] Being present and the idea that really when our mind gets distracted, which seemingly is all the time, that's why time feels like it's going so fast. That's why. Because the mind can't grasp all the things that we're trying to think about at one time. So it just feels like it's out of control. And so the speed is really fast.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:16] The Monkey mind like you like to say.

Barb Schmidt: [00:03:18] That's a good place to start actually, because that is on my mind. Like that was the first thing that I was thinking about.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:22] Am I reading your mind?

Barb Schmidt: [00:03:24] You are reading my mind.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:24] Have we gotten to that point? Yes!

Barb Schmidt: [00:03:26] I told you that you're very, very, very intuitive. Yeah, I was thinking about that right as we were sitting down and put the headsets on. I thought, you know, I learned that in treatment and I learned that at A.A. The Monkey Mind. And of course, the monkey mind is just that. It's a mind that is constantly jumping from one thing to the next to the next to the next to the next. And if you're an addict, you certainly understand the idea of a monkey mind because your mind can be focused on a job, and then all of a sudden it wants a drink or all of a sudden it wants to eat or it wants to do a drug or whatever it is. So but I think the monkey mind is something that we can all relate to. And it really, I think, has been exaggerated and and really brought to light, I think, for everyone since the pandemic, of course. But then just in general with social media and and the technology and all the things that are happening so.

Michelle Maros: [00:04:16] Well, it's interesting because growing up, you would talk to me about the monkey mind and the importance of being focused and and being present to the thing that you're doing. But I feel like as time has passed and as we've evolved into different phases of life technologies, technologically speaking, we're always being pushed into the direction of splitting our attention and engaging the monkey mind as if that that's something better.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:50] Yeah, we're praised for it. I mean, certainly workplaces, you know, want you to be able to do several things at one time. Um, but I think research now that's one of the beautiful things about if we last long enough, there are researchers that have studied the mind obviously in the brain, and it's been proven that the mind cannot. Think of two things at one time it can split its attention, and many of us are probably trying to do two, three, four,

five, six things at one time so it can split its attention, but it cannot do more than one thing at a time. And I think that the greatest thing to think about that is if you're focusing your attention on one thing, that focused attention will lead to the success and the productivity and the happiness and all the things that we desire. But the minute we split that attention, then the brain has to split and it just can't do that. So it can't stay. It can't stay where you want it to stay or it can't do what it is you're trying to do to attain that goal or that dream or that vision that you have for your life, because you've now flooded the mind with other things that are that are drawing attention away from that one thing that you really want in your life.

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:55] So I think that's the monkey mind if we close up that conversation a little bit about the monkey mind is really think about it this way that just think of that little monkey and your mind and it's jumping around from so many different things that's trying to get your attention. And I think one of the biggest benefits of being mindful remember the quote, we use several episodes that go being where your feet are, being mindful. It's that idea of being mindful, being focused on what it is you truly, truly want that enriches every other aspect of your life. I think that could be the foundation of what this whole episode could be about, like how do we enrich every aspect of our life mentally, physically, energetically, spiritually? And how does it do that? In my opinion, how it does that is it helps you make better choices when we can actually be focused on one thing at a time. We are capable then of taking the next right action or taking the next choice that's going to take us where we're trying to go.

Michelle Maros: [00:06:57] Which is huge. But I think it's important.

Barb Schmidt: [00:06:59] It's everything. Yeah, you're right. It's everything.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:02] It's everything. But I think talking about this in this way of what does it even mean to be present and how do we train our minds? Because I keep thinking about about the how which we're going to talk about. But we are constantly being tested and pulled in so many different directions. And it does feel like a training, like you have to conscientiously work at it to get yourself into this place. And a lot of us, I think, don't even want to because we can so easily multitask in our minds. You know, I even think and I mean, this might not be great to say because we're recording a podcast, but, you know, going for a walk and listening to a podcast that's splitting your energy in your presence. You know how often I think if we start to

really take an honest inventory of our lives, how often do we spend our time doing one thing at a time? And it's interesting because I feel like lately the one place that I can I really have to do one thing at a time is record this podcast with you. Like, I can't be sending an email while we're, we're doing this or checking checking texts or things like that. Like this is one of the one places where you absolutely have to be present.

Michelle Maros: [00:08:24] But so many aspects of our lives pull us in so many different directions. And it's really, really hard sometimes to keep yourself in that one lane at a time. And even remembering that it's important to be present. So I think if we could talk about first, just like Y which I know you did with the monkey mind, but like. You know, society seems like it's evolved so much into a place where doing many things at once, like going for a walk and listening to a podcast, listening to the podcast in the car. We can talk about my experience with growing up in the car, but, you know, checking your emails at the light stoplight when you're driving. Like it's almost like we've gotten to a place as a society where it feels like you can never be wasting any time. And I know that time is our precious resource. And, you know, it's our energy, but I really think and I really hope within this episode that we can start to unpack and reframe how we look at our time and how we look at what is wasted time and why slowing down and doing one thing at a time is actually a honorable way to honor your time.

Barb Schmidt: [00:09:47] Exactly. Because if time is our most precious resource. The next sentence should be. So we want to give it all of our attention. And so I think that goes back to what I started saying earlier, is that one of the greatest benefits of being present or being focusing on one thing at a time or doing one thing at a time is that it enriches every aspect of our life. So what does that mean? So it means..

Michelle Maros: [00:10:13] I just I like it, but I would love to hear you unpack it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:17] Okay yes, so here's the thing. It's a myth. It's a huge myth to think that we can multitask and be truly successful at everything that we want in our lives. Something has to give because the mind cannot do that efficiently. Maybe it can a little bit, but it cannot do it efficiently in the long run.

Michelle Maros: [00:10:36] And you've always believed this innately, but studies have shown now that this is true.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:40] But it's true. Yeah, there are so many Stanford, so many institutions, University of Sussex, so many have done research on how trying to split our attention. And I don't think they're talking about walking and listening to a podcast.

Michelle Maros: [00:10:51] No I'm just saying...

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:52] No, let me just finish.

Michelle Maros: [00:10:53] Because we pack it in.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:54] It's kind of like, see, I always relate everything back to addiction because that's where I got my start 38 years ago, I was going into treatment. It's a slippery slope. So I'm going to walk and listen to a podcast. So the mind already knows. I mean, the brain and the body and all that knows how to walk. So really you don't feel like you're splitting your attention when you're doing that, which makes sense. And they've done research on that. But what happens then is you're actually on a little slippery slope and now the brain will say, well, then I can also eat and walk and listen to a podcast. Or, you know, it'll add one more thing. It won't stop at just that one thing. And so I think that's the goal today for us, I think, is to help you start to see that, first of all, we've never been taught this. We truly have never been taught. So you said it beautifully. It's a training.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:42] Well, I only use..

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:42] So we have to train ourselves to do one thing at a time.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:45] And I only use that example because I do it. I'm not passing any judgment on anybody who multi tasks but..

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:52] No, let me just say we're talking about this today because I said to Michelle a few weeks ago, I realized the greatest cause of my anxiety lately or my stress or my

worry or any of the things that you want to say has been my attention has been divided. I've not I've not been diligent and practicing doing one thing at a time.

Michelle Maros: [00:12:14] And you are the queen of that. And so for you to notice that is huge because growing up you are always that was your rule to do one thing at a time. And I say the walking with the podcast because just like with everything else that we talk about, so much of where we can make these shifts is when we start to become aware and I start to take the inventory of my life and noticing, like you said, it's that slippery slope of letting in another task at the same time, like I used to just go for walks to walk. I didn't listen to anything. And so not that there's any judgment about it, but it's just noticing where I'm adding things in, when it might not even be necessary and just becoming present and aware to it. Because like you said, with one thing comes another thing. And then I can start to be walking and listening to the podcast and sending some emails as I'm walk, you know, it's just having that awareness to know when we're really packing things into a moment unnecessarily because. It does shift how we perceive things and take things in and recognize things. And it this is a very benign example of a walk and listening and doing things. But think about other areas in our lives too. Driving, you know? Being on the phone while driving is a big thing. Even sending an email or doing work and trying to do other things like there's just every aspect of our lives requires our presence and it deserves our presence. But how often do we actually give it fully? And I think if we actually all each and every one of us start to think about every aspect of our lives, do we ever even give anything our full presence ever anymore? And I don't know, because there are so many things that are presented to us in every given moment.

Michelle Maros: [00:14:21] And I think unless we do start to train our minds like we've talked about, to actually say, okay, here you are in front of me and you want to talk. So I'm going to put everything away and look at you and talk to you or whatever the thing might be. It is not like you said in our second nature, in our nature to do that. So I don't know. It's just. It's fascinating for me to think about it on all of the different layers and levels. And I know many of you might think that. This is kind of silly because life has advanced to a way where it's kind of expected of us. But I just really wanted to open this conversation and just open our minds because to me, when I stop and think about all of these things and start to cut out rather than add in, I just feel so much better. And I feel like even walking in here to record the podcast, like I wasn't looking at my phone or trying to catch up on things and I noticed things around me. I

noticed a pretty statue. I noticed a pretty tree. And it's just like life is around us and happening to us. And when we constantly, like, clutter our minds with all of these things, we miss it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:15:31] And I think.

Michelle Maros: [00:15:32] Sorry, I don't know, I'm kind of going off, but going back to what I value, I value noticing things in life and like we talked about in our past episode, the tiny joys. So I just if I really value the tiny joys in life and noticing things like I can't be doing so many things at once basically.

Barb Schmidt: [00:15:49] And I think that's what I meant by it's a myth. You know, not only has research now shown that the mind can't do it, we actually we have bought into the myth that we have to do it because there isn't enough time and we won't get everything done. So I think to rewind that what we have to do is start to there is enough time because if we think about it, if we're distracted all the time and doing several things at one time, chances are we're making a mistake. Chances are we have to redo what we had to do. Or chances are someone's going.

Michelle Maros: [00:16:17] Yeah or you miss a turn.

Barb Schmidt: [00:16:18] You miss a turn or whatever it is. It's really that awareness that we talk about all the time is starting to become aware of how often when you're when you're distracted, which is really what it is and you're not concentrated on the one thing that you're doing, how often are you making a mistake? How often are you missing a turn? How often are you bored? I think when was the last time you made a phone call with someone and actually sat down and only listen to the person talking even if they're just on the telephone and not even with you? It is a powerful practice of really being able to train yourself because what starts to happen, especially if it's a phone call that I'm dreading, I'll never forget. Recently, like in the past pandemic years, I had to make a phone call that I was dreading, and so I sat down and made the phone call. Actually, by the end of the call I was like, Wow, I took a deep breath. That was not as bad as I thought it was going to be because I wasn't distracted, so my mind wasn't so amped up about all the other things that it was trying to think about. So life is more fun. Life is more beautiful, as you were just saying when we walked in to record this. But I also want to say one more thing. You brought this up it's not our second nature to be one point or to be

focused. I would like to phrase that in this way, because our first nature, we always talk about, oh, it's not oh, it's second nature for me to do that. Okay. But I like to think that a lot of the second nature things maybe are things that we need to look at..

Michelle Maros: [00:17:41] I don't even know what I meant by second nature.

Barb Schmidt: [00:17:42] We all say it. No, we all say it, Michelle. And I guess what I'm trying to say now is it is our first nature to be focused, to be concentrated, to be paying attention to what we're doing, because that is where time doesn't feel like it's going so fast. That's where we can have our patience. I had my patience sitting down listening to the person that I was on the phone with, and it could have been a really, a call that could get really derailed fast, but I was easily able to access my patients and be able to make the choices in the words that I was going to say because I wasn't distracted. So I just want to say that that it's so important. And I am I'm with you, Michelle. I'm feeling so energetically like amped up about this conversation because I really want it. I want people to try it. I want you to just kind of buy into this idea that it's a myth and then look at look at where you're spending your time and how you're spending your time. And can you just truly start to train yourself like if you're driving only drive. When Michelle was learning how to drive.

Michelle Maros: [00:18:47] Yeah, listen to this.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:49] I wouldn't let her. I asked her. I told her.

Michelle Maros: [00:18:51] No, not asked.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:52] I didn't even ask her. You're right.

Michelle Maros: [00:18:53] This was a rule.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:53] This was a rule. You cannot turn the radio on while you're driving because you're a brand new driver. I mean, I don't turn the radio on when I'm driving anyway, but you cannot turn the radio on when you're driving. Focus all of your attention on driving.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:05] This was a painful rule for me.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:06] But I have to give you so much. Oh, Michelle, you're just you were a dream. You were a dream daughter because I said, don't do it. And you didn't do it.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:16] Well.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:17] Um, well, you told me you didn't do it and all your friends told me wow you won't let your daughter..

Michelle Maros: [00:19:19] No. I didn't. But remember.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:22] Michelle listen to the radio.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:23] There was that one time. So I remember it's so funny because I, I did not like to break the rules. I didn't like getting in trouble. But anyways, being a teenager and driving and you know, everyone listen to the radio, you listen to music while you drive. And I felt so I felt that pull inside of wanting to not break the rules, but also wanting to be like everybody else. And so, you know, this was back in the early 2000s and my car had a it still had like a CD thing that popped out with all the disks that you could put in. And so if you had had the radio on, when you turn the car off, when you turn the car on, like the CD thing would pop out. And I had listened to the radio for whatever reason. And then you got into the car with me the next day and we turn the car on and the little CD thing popped out and I was caught. See, the thing is, whenever I did break the rules, I always got caught. Yeah, but it's just funny because, you know, there was no, no lying to myself that I was not being present with that, but I did. I think I'm a good driver and I do.

Barb Schmidt: [00:20:46] You're very focused driver.

Michelle Maros: [00:20:47] I do really credit you for instilling that in me early on. It was a foundation for sure.

Barb Schmidt: [00:20:54] And I think.

Michelle Maros: [00:20:55] Just even though I really like, you know, we get a lot of parents with young teens and they say, how do you do this? Or How do you do that? And how do you not how do you have such a good relationship? And at that period of time, I was like, You are so annoying. Yeah, this nobody else has to do this. This is what's wrong with you. So we we fought for sure.

Barb Schmidt: [00:21:17] Oh, absolutely. But what I want to say is everything that we're saying today doesn't first of all, there are no rules. I mean, really, there are the rules that you decide that you want to pay attention to. And they're the rules that you decide that you want to live your life by. So please take all of this in the intention that we're sharing it with you and that these are just experiences that led, they are all experiences that led both of us to understanding what what it means to be in the present moment, understanding what it means to really be successful and create the life that you want to create. And it all starts in the mind because everything starts in the mind. So play with this. We want you to be very playful and creative and fun with it. So if turning the radio off in the car is not something you can do, don't do it. Do something that is just your choice.

Michelle Maros: [00:22:09] This was your choice and this is your value for me.

Barb Schmidt: [00:22:12] So find some place in your life where you could start to play with it so that you can start to see some of the benefits that we're talking about. Like I'm an avid sports fan and I work with athletes, which I think we've mentioned before [Coach Barb] on episodes before. And so and I love working with athletes. I love working with people in general and I love people. So I remember using this quote with with one of the one of the practices that I gave the athletes that I was working with. And it's a Kobe Bryant quote. And he says, "I focus on one thing and one thing only that's trying to win as many championships as I can." And so if you listen to his whole interview with that quote, he goes into great detail that if his mind was distracted or he was off doing other things, he knew that he was not going to have the game and the performance that he was looking for and he could trace it back to, oh, this is, you know, I only scored 25 points instead of 50 or whatever it was. So it's really interesting when you start to think about when you decide to focus on one thing or when you decide to really give life in

the present moment your full attention, the people that you're with, the job that you're doing at all of that, instead of trying to solve everything at once and.

Barb Schmidt: [00:23:27] Out of the brain saying, Oh, my God, I've got to worry about this. I got to worry about this. I got to do this. I got to do this. Just doing that one thing for me. And this is why I noticed it and talk to you about it the other day. For me, there is a sudden decrease in stress and anxiety like automatic. When I stop and I say, Wait a minute, Barb, your mind is all over the place and you're trying to do three things at once because you think that you have to and that you can just stop. What is the one thing that you want to do at hand right now? Immediately you will start to feel a decrease in any kind of anxious thoughts or any kind of anxiety that you might be feeling, because it's a myth that you just we think that we have to do all those things at one time and we cannot.

Michelle Maros: [00:24:09] Well, athletes really get it because you have to be focused in your sport or in your craft to succeed. And what athletes want the most is to win. And in order to win, you have to be all in. You have your mind in the game and all of that stuff, or.

Barb Schmidt: [00:24:25] A concert pianist anyone

Michelle Maros: [00:24:27] Whatever craft it may be. But, you know, I think, too, I was just thinking about that Giannis quote that he had last season during the championship where he had struggled and he had came back and he said, "You can't worry about the past. You can't worry about the future. We're going to worry about right now. Today, that's all we can do." Yeah. And you know, when you look up being present quotes, athletes really come up because they they truly do get it. Yeah. When you have a goal, you have to focus on that goal because and I wanted to talk about this a little bit, too, it's like what what happens when we're not present and when we're not focused and when we do multitask too much? Not to be repetitive, but we are fed this ideal that if you can multitask, you can get more done. You can be a better a better worker, a better parent, a better friend, you know, like. It's like you said, it's a myth, but it's it's pushed on us quite often. And, you know, I love for people to really see what happens when we do some of these things or fall into some of these patterns or these habits because it it can be subtle, but it's real. Like when I'm distracted, I'm really forgetful. You know, if I'm on a call with someone and also sending an email and then I get off the call and you said, Oh, well,

what did you talk about? It's not the same. And so forgetfulness is a huge piece. Making errors is a huge a huge piece. And I just wanted I wanted you to share a little bit of like what what actually happens when we're not focused on one thing at a time and where does it show up in our lives and how does it affect us and all of the areas of our life?

Barb Schmidt: [00:26:24] Well, I love the example you just used, because think about it for a minute. I remember, you know, I used to when I was younger, I didn't think I forgot anything. I didn't you know, I just kept going, going, going and all of those things. But as I've gotten older and especially now in my sixties, 65, how many, I guess all of you listening, how many times have you gone upstairs or gone out to the garage or gone into the kitchen drawer to get something? And you walk into the kitchen, you forget what you went there for. And it happened to me all the time, especially in the early, early part or in the like in my mid forties and fifties. And I started thinking about like what is happening here? And so I really did. I did a deep dove into. Okay, Barbara, you're going upstairs to get your phone or whatever it is. You're going upstairs to get the dirty clothes to put them in the wash. And I made it a point to go upstairs. And when the mind got distracted and said, Oh, but wait a minute, go pick up this in this other room that you forgot to get yesterday? I didn't do that. No. I came up here to get my phone. I'll take the phone back downstairs where I wanted to do with it or whatever the thing was. And then I'll go back upstairs to get the other thing that distracted me. It sounds crazy.

Michelle Maros: [00:27:39] Well, that's why it's a training. It sounds so annoying but powerful.

Barb Schmidt: [00:27:40] It sounds annoying, but it's really powerful. Because what I've learned is I'm not I'm not forgetful because I'm getting old. I was forgetful because I was trying to think the brain was the monkey mind was constantly, oh, Barb, you're upstairs, so go do this, this and this, this, too. You forgot to do this. You forgot to turn the TV off or you forgot because so the mind is constantly wanting to do that because it's a monkey. And so not paying attention and you making the choice not to do that is powerful because you're starting the training, you're starting to recognize, well, I'm not forgetful. There is nothing wrong with me. I just actually need to be more focused. I need to be doing just the one thing that I went up there to do, because that's what the mind can do so beautifully. The mind is really good at. This is what it's doing. It's really good at wanting to stay on that one thing because that's remember, that's how we have our success and our our happiness and all the things that we're looking for. Because if

you think about it. This whole idea of I remember reading this quote. It just struck me. Tell me what you pay attention to. Tell me what you pay attention to and I'll tell you who you are.

Michelle Maros: [00:28:51] Hmm.

Barb Schmidt: [00:28:52] Because it's so interesting. And so I think we start to lose track of who we are, what we want, what brings us joy, like the tiny joys you're talking about. So it is so much more powerful than it seems on the surface, because if you just go beneath the surface just a little bit like we're talking today, you start to recognize if you're feeling like you're really forgetful, you're not forgetful. You're just trying to do too many things at one time and the anxiety takes over and the brain just really just shuts down.

Michelle Maros: [00:29:21] Well, and you just you really miss out on life. I think about I'm doing an inventory in my mind right now of of aspects where I tend to scatter my energy and, you know, I can be mindlessly eating while watching TV.

Barb Schmidt: [00:29:38] And before, you know, you've eaten the whole bag of chips or whatever it is. And we say to ourselves, Wow, how did I do that? What's the matter with me? How did I even do that?

Michelle Maros: [00:29:44] Did I even enjoy the bag of chips, you know? That's a big one for me and or being on my phone, you know. Going somewhere and sitting outside and having a coffee and then being on my phone the whole time and not really taking in the environment or even being on a trip and being on your phone and worrying about whatever is happening, you know? There's just so many aspects of life. Where another dynamic comes into play and then we miss out on what's actually happening. And we've said this already in this episode, but our presence is our most precious resource and our time is our most precious resource. And if we're not fully giving our own presence to our lives, then our lives are just going to pass us by and it will feel like we don't remember or it's all a blur because we've never fully given it all of us.

Barb Schmidt: [00:30:53] Yeah. Or we feel bored. I think boredom a lot of times when you say to yourself, I'm bored, I think it's because we're not present. We're not we're not actually absorbing absorbing what you're talking about in the moment. And so we're not actually there.

And so the mind is like so scattered that it doesn't even know what to do. And so it gets bored. I mean, you've got to find something that's going to stimulate me. And then you go find that one thing that's going to stimulate you, and then you get distracted into something else.

Michelle Maros: [00:31:21] I mean, have you ever had that moment where, like, you've driven and you got home and you're like trying to remember you driving and how you go out there. And you're like, Wait, yeah. Like, that's the epitome. And that's scary. I mean, obviously. Hopefully we're all being safe on the roads. But, you know, that's what we're talking about, that's what happens. Our minds split in two and we're driving and we're doing something else or we're thinking about something else, or we're on the phone, whatever it might be. And it's just really starting to notice those areas of our lives where it's very common to split our attention.

Barb Schmidt: [00:32:00] And I think the other thing that I want to share, what is really been up for me with this is the idea of impatience. I think every we get so many, so many DMS and so many messages about people being impatient, people being rude, people being driving crazy, all the things. And I think the idea of having a scattered mind and trying to do so many things at one time and feeling like time is going so fast, I don't have enough time and oh my gosh, I can't fit all of this stuff in is a problem. And I think that's what causes the impatience. I lost my temper the other day with you, Michelle, and with our other work colleague because I just I couldn't in my mind was on overload and trying to think about and sort out how is I going to do all the things that I felt like I needed to do and I felt like I was behind. And so I lost my my patience in that moment. And I think that's what we're talking about from the very beginning of this episode, that when you're doing one thing at a time, when you're actually focused and being present to what it is that you're doing, it does enrich every aspect of your life, your mental, your physical, your energy, all of it. And so there's that beautiful, beautiful. I remember reading this, oh, my gosh, at least 30 years ago, because I'm a huge poet fan. My mother loved poetry and I'm a huge Ralph Waldo Ralph Waldo Emerson fan. And he says, adopt the pace of nature. Her secret is patience.

Michelle Maros: [00:33:29] Wait. Can you repeat that?

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:29] Adopt the pace of nature. Her secret is patience.

Michelle Maros: [00:33:34] I love that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:35] It's beautiful, isn't it? And I mean, I'm a nature lover, and I love being outside. I love nothing better than to be outside. And so that spoke to me instantly 30 some years ago. But how I've also used that in my life adopt the pace of nature, adopt the pace of life, like be engaged in life. So it doesn't have to necessarily mean be in nature has to be in your first nature, which is being present in your life. And so that idea that if we could just adopt the pace of life and be fully present to to what we're doing in each moment, we will we will have the success and the happiness and the joy that we're looking for, because we will know what to do next if we're not feeling content or if we're feeling bored or for feeling like something isn't quite right.

Michelle Maros: [00:34:27] Yeah. And I think you and I talked about making this a two part episode because I think we have a whole other episode of the reasons why we do, do too many things at once. And there's so many and there's so many layers to that, so we can talk about that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:34:44] That'd be wonderful.

Michelle Maros: [00:34:45] In our next episode. Because getting to the root of that is incredibly important because I think there's so much there. But, I love what you said about adopting that piece of nature and just I don't know. Maybe it's been over these past couple of years of of the pandemic life of being more slowed down. But. I used to be someone who was so... I felt like the value was being at a fast pace, being busy doing things, going places, being with people, being booked and busy, you know, that whole thing. And I've really realized over these past couple of years that being slow and present and purposeful just feel so much better to me, but it's like I'm constantly in my mind. Battling that. Like, I got to do more. I got to be more. I got to produce more, be more productive. And then battling that and being like, no, like this is enough. Like being enough in this moment and giving my presence is enough. So it's like a monkey. It's like a tug of war inside my mind of of that societal influence of busy is better versus a deep knowing within me that slow is pro. It's just it's really interesting. Like I'd rather maybe in the grand scheme of life, you know, we talk about at the end of our lives when we

look back and think about what mattered, like maybe having less that I have quote unquote achieved but feeling like I was present to maybe quality over quantity and feeling like. I've given my few projects, my all or my my little sphere of social circle, my all. And I know it's really nuanced, but it's just been a huge revelation to me to kind of shift my. My goals in life, really from big to small, like macro to micro of so much, to really honoring and valuing what I have in this little sphere of my life.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:25] In this moment. Yeah. And I think let's be clear, because we're not necessarily talking about that. The body has to be slowed down when Michelle is talking about fast paced or busy is better. We're not talking about that you can't be doing things at a fast pace. We're talking about the mind being speeded up and being fast because let's be real.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:45] Well that's what we talked about in last episode, the overwhelm.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:47] Exactly. Let's be real. If you're an emergency room doctor, you are going at a fast pace, but your mind is fully present. So when we say fast paced and we're saying busy, we're not necessarily meaning that busy is bad. We're meaning if the mind is jumping around like a monkey and trying to make you think, Oh my gosh, I'm only sitting here eating my food. I have to be doing five other things while I'm doing this so I could be more productive with quotes around it. So I just want to make sure that you all understand that and you all are hearing us that it's, it's being more productive doesn't mean adding more things to your plate.

Michelle Maros: [00:38:22] Well, I think there's a difference in let's say you're an ER doctor that's moving fast because you have to versus, packing your schedule and never sitting still because you're avoiding feelings and you're afraid to sit still.

Barb Schmidt: [00:38:36] You won't feel productive if you're not constantly going. I think that's what you're trying to say.

Michelle Maros: [00:38:40] There's a difference.

Barb Schmidt: [00:38:41] Huge difference.

Michelle Maros: [00:38:42] I wrote a blog a long, long time ago that there's the difference between being conscious, conscientiously still or stagnant. And I think the reverse is true of being unconsciously busy versus mindfully busy and focused. I just it's nuanced, but I think it's just having that awareness like we always talk about.

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:07] Yeah, it kind of. What, what came up for me when you said that is I remember talking with someone a long time ago and she was telling me, she goes, Yeah. She says, I want to always feel like I'm busy. I want to always feel like I'm productive. And whenever I even do my to do list, I will add things to my to do list that I've already done so that I can cross them off the list. So it's the mind. It's so important to understand the distinction of the mind telling you that you have to be busy all the time. And I love what you said, Michelle, that busy is busy is being more productive. And it's not. It's productivity comes from really being focused and doing that one thing that you're doing so that you can literally check that off the list and then move into the next one thing that you're going to do and then move into the next one thing that you're going to do instead of trying.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:51] Because that saves everyone time.

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:52] It saves you time, especially. Yeah.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:56] Because you do it well and you do it with your all and so you don't have to do it again.

Barb Schmidt: [00:40:01] Yeah. You will feel more productive. You will feel more as you're saying, Michelle, you feel more productive when you're when you're doing and paying attention and focused on the things that are on your plate, instead of adding so many more things to your plate so that you can arbitrarily feel like you're more busy, so that you can feel like you're more productive. It's all an illusion. It's all myth. So if you look at it, you're really not more productive. You're really more stressed and more anxious than you when you started.

Michelle Maros: [00:40:28] And even if you're producing more, you're not present to it. So you can't even honor it or acknowledge it, really. I mean, obviously this is all from our own experience, but when I'm even writing more but it doesn't feel good.

Barb Schmidt: [00:40:43] I think what what the last thing that I would like to say on this subject is I would like to just ask everyone listening to this episode, maybe just to look at your life and find one area of your life where you could actually just do that one thing, just play with it. I would love it if you all.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:01] It will be a challenge.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:01] Yeah just play with it.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:02] Barb knows best challenge this week.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:04] Just try to find one area where you could actually just do that. One thing could be talking to a colleague. It could be sitting down having breakfast with your with your child. It could be whatever it is, finding that one place in your life where no matter what, you won't allow your mind to get distracted and go away from the present moment of what it is you're doing at that in that moment at hand.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:26] It's a perfect tangible takeaway. Yeah. Because we all can find one area in our lives to be focused because we're not asking you to revolutionize your life tomorrow.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:38] No we don't even want you to because it's not possible.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:41] But I want you to sustain it feels like, wow, it's so much. And where do I start?

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:46] Just one place.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:46] Find one place. Whether it's having breakfast in the morning and just or even any meal, focusing on your meal and not being on your phone or watching TV or reading the newspaper or even getting on the phone with someone, you know, just being with yourself and eating, which is uncomfortable. You know, the thing too is we we call it a training

because it's not always pleasant because we're just so not used to this way of living. And you're going to be sitting there being like, I hate this.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:14] It's very uncomfortable.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:16] Just like with everything else that we talk about, it's like taking your mind to the gym. And when you start going to the gym for the first time in a long time, it, it really sucks. Like, it's hard and it's painful and you get tired and you get, you know, whatever. So it could be eating or it could be driving, you know, try. Try your old learning to drive. Trick of not listening to anything while you're driving and putting your phone in the back seat.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:42] I used to put my phone in the trunk.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:43] She did? Hmm. So if there's nothing else she does, she is the queen of this.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:48] Drastic.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:49] Drastic measures at all costs. Or, you know, not listening to stuff like go for a walk and not listen to anything and just be present to nature. Just find something in one area and maybe try it for this week until next week's episode when we do a little follow up.

Barb Schmidt: [00:43:05] I just wanted to say something because what you said was so it is really uncomfortable to start. I just want to give that little caveat. It's really uncomfortable to start. I remember the first time I went out to lunch by myself and didn't want to be on my phone, didn't want to read a newspaper. I didn't want to do all the things this was years ago. And so to sit there and just eat at a restaurant by yourself without talking to anyone, without engage somewhere else, it's uncomfortable because we're not used to it. But what I wanted to say about that, Michelle, when you brought that up, was it's uncomfortable. But then when you do it and you train yourself to do it, it becomes so beautiful. It becomes so meaningful. So I'm going to watch This is Us. I'm a huge fan of This Is Us. I love that show so much. I love all the actors so much. And so when I watch TV, which is not a lot, but when I watch TV, don't do anything else, be present. So try that. I think that's a good place to start. Your favorite show

that you like to watch on TV or on the computer, wherever you're watching, wherever you're watching things these days, and try doing it without doing anything else, but just really being in the moment with the show. And I'm prepared to have my Kleenex to cry.

Michelle Maros: [00:44:19] Yeah, she's been a puddle over that show. Yeah, but yeah, I think just identifying an area in your life, it could be TV, it could be eating, it could be with your when you're with your kids, you're not you don't have your phone or whatever. Even the smallest thing brushing your teeth and, you know, being present to brushing your teeth, whatever it might be, it can be the smallest thing, but really try it for like this next week until we do our follow up next week and just notice how it feels, but then notice how it feels afterwards. When you're done, especially with eating, you actually can enjoy your meals when you're focused and present and feel that you're full or feel that you really loved, that whatever you just ate. And just like we'd say so often on this show, be the scientist of your own life and treat this like an experiment. Yeah. Like, what would happen if I started to do this in one area of my life? And how do I feel afterwards? Do I feel less tired and anxious by the end of the day because I was really present to this? Or do I feel more safe or confident and assured in myself because I was more focused while I was driving or I was more focused in my work or whatever it might be, just really start to be that scientist of your life and notice take in the data, pull out your journal if you want to and write about it. Because I just I really feel like. This is something that if we we made a more conscientious effort to do it in the small places, it'll start to seep into other areas of our lives and I think....

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:57] Definitely has a ripple effect.

Michelle Maros: [00:45:58] It'll have that ripple effect, but it'll really help us to feel better in so many aspects of our lives, which I think we're going to talk about in next week's episode of why and and the emotions around it and all of that. But I just really encourage everyone to find that one thing. So what are you going to do this week?

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:19] Well, I just wanted to say I love what you're saying, because I would love for you all to message us. You know, please send us a message

Michelle Maros: [00:46:25] Yeah we will post about this on social media.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:29] Yeah we definitely will.

Michelle Maros: [00:46:30] You go to that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:30] or wherever you go to the Podcast to write a question.

Michelle Maros: [00:46:32] Take the photo or share with us and then be present.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:35] Well, I think what's so cool is I think what you're going to find and it's what you were saying, Michel. I think you're going to find you're more confident, you're more patient, you're less stressed, you're feeling just a little bit better about life. You're a little bit more positive. It does have that ripple effect when you can feel really good. I know when I made that phone call during the pandemic that I knew was going to be difficult. And I kept putting it off and putting it off and putting it off. I literally felt like I could climb Mount Everest when I was done. I had such an adrenaline of confidence and wow, that was so much better. It just it does something inside of you when you're really present to what you're doing. It just does. It's. Magic.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:17] I love it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:17] I love it, too.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:18] So what is your thing gonna be this week, watching TV? You're gonna be present to TV.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:23] Well, I've been present to TV because I don't watch that much. And I'm, you know, watching basketball, the NBA tournament, and I'm watching This is Us.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:31] So side note, one of these days, we're going to get her to do another podcast of the Barb Sports Network. And I'm saying this here to manifest it. So putting it out there. But anyways, so what what is going to be your one thing.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:44] What's it going to be..umm

Michelle Maros: [00:47:45] For me? I'm going to focus on what I'm eating to be present to my eating.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:49] Beautiful

Michelle Maros: [00:47:49] And not mindlessly snacking or and this is not because of any sort of diet or weight thing. It's more about being present to my food and actually noticing what I'm taking in and what I'm eating and enjoying it. Just as a caveat, because I know that can be a trigger.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:06] Yeah. Um. I think for me this week, I am going to take one thing off of my schedule each day.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:20] You do that anyways.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:22] I know I'm trying to think of it. Because when I get distracted it's not good. I really know that about myself and I have to bring myself in.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:30] So something on your phone?

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:31] I've been doing a really good job here lately of, um, noticing when I'm.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:36] She's perfect. I am just kidding.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:37] No, I. No, not at all. I am not perfect at all. I just know how crazy I get if I get really distracted. Like I told you, I snapped at you and an hour colleague. So I just know that that is that is my first sign. So I have to think about this for a little bit. Go ahead and wrap us up a little bit and let me think about what is the what am I where am I needing to focus? Be more focused.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:01] All right. Well, when she decides, we will post on Instagram. And please, if you've made that commitment for this week in our little challenge, let us know and we'll do it all together. And next week, when we come back together, we can talk about it. Because we love to be the scientists of our own lives. So really, really excited to see how this goes for everyone and can't wait to hear about it and hear what you choose. And just we have our own little experiment. So I cannot wait. Thank you so much to everyone for listening to this episode and being with us and being a part of this challenge.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:41] I just thought of it.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:42] Oh, I knew she was. She was like, I'm done.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:45] When we're together, I'm not usually the one that's doing the driving. You are. [Yeah.] And so I'm on my phone like I'm sending a text message, I'm sending an email or I'm calling. I get things done. I get things done when you're driving.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:58] I'm driving Miss Daisy.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:58] And we drove all the way to Miami yesterday, and I was getting a lot of things done. I am going to put my phone away as if I were driving and pay attention to the road, pay attention to the things around me and pay attention to you.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:11] Just so you know, obviously we live in Florida and so often we're driving near the ocean and sometimes you miss it. Sometimes you say, oh, shoot. I miss the ocean.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:18] Yes. So that's my thing. I'm gonna put the phone away when I am in the passenger seat.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:23] And I'm going to be focused on food. Good. Love it. Wonderful. I can't wait to check back in about it. Yeah. All right. I feel better now that you've told us.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:31] Me too.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:32] All right. So. Thank you so much again to everyone for listening to this episode and being a part of this fabulous community. We love you all so, so much and can't wait to hear how being present works for you. So as always, please keep up with us and keep connected on social media at Barb knows best pod, at Peaceful_Barb and at Michelle Maros. Let us know how it's going for you and we'll connect there as always. Also make sure you're liked and subscribe to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts. Apple, Google, Spotify, leave us a review. Leave us a message that helps us so much and we greatly appreciate it. And as always, if you ever have any topic requests, please feel free to send them in because we're always wanting to know what's up for you and how we can be helpful and how Barb can give us her insights. Because as we know, Barb knows best. Talk to you next week. Bye.