

## Episode 67 – What Makes An Apology Real?

### *Barb Knows Best*

#### Episode Transcripts

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:12] Hello, everyone. Hello, friends. Welcome back to Barb Knows Best, the podcast. I am your co-host, Michelle Maros, and I am here with my mom, Barb, who hopefully today will know some things that are best. Hello, Barb.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:27] Definitely I will. Hello, everyone. Especially because we're talking about one of my favorite topics.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:32] You know, the topic that we're talking about today is one that is interesting, I guess, as always. But there's an aspect of this topic that I often say to you of like. That I don't know...That frustrates me. This is a common frustration topic between the two of us. And I have a sneaking suspicion that many of you mother, daughters or and any relationship really might kind of struggle with this.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:01:04] Yeah, definitely not just mother daughters. You're right, Michelle. I think it's really we get so many DMS, as you all know, a lot of what we talk about are suggestions because we read all of your comments, we read all of your suggestions and the DMS or the comments that you make on our posts or that you send through the the podcast. We read all of it. And so this is one that's up for a lot of people because I think it's, it's so misunderstood. We think that it's a common thing and that everybody knows what it is. But when you drill down and you really start talking about it, it has so many layers to it and people have so many different ideas of what it is that it's really blown my mind over the years, listening to your comments and reading everything. But also in my own experiences, which is what Michelle and I share every single week on this podcast. So I'm excited to talk about this one and I can't wait to really hear what all you have to say. So please, you know, we ask you to do that. If you feel called to do it, let us know what you think, because I'm curious about what all of you think about this particular topic. So What is it? Michelle

**Michelle Maros:** [00:02:07] Yeah so, we often talk about the importance of communication on this podcast, as you know, and I think as we drill down into what that looks like, this is an aspect

of communication and relationships that I think tends to be problematic for so many people and where so many people get tripped up or have issues or, you know. It's just a problem area and. It's just I love talking about it. So today we're going to talk about the art of the apology.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:02:41] Yes.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:02:42] And like what makes a real apology and what is a fake apology and what's a meaningful apology? And on both sides of the equation, how to look for a real apology from someone that you feel has done you wrong, but also how to give an apology that's really meaningful for someone that can actually take a step towards mending a situation.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:03:07] I love that you said that. If I could just interject because I think another couple of words we could use for it. Apologies that are useful, that are helpful and that actually move the relationship, move the conversation and address whatever is happening in the relationship. I think too often there's so much misunderstanding and so much not knowing what one person thinks an apology is and what another person thinks. There's just so it's so vague and so unclear. And I guess in my mind, how can an apology be vague and unclear? But it is. I think that is the truth of it, why we're having this whole episode on apologies. But I think the point of this episode is that hopefully by the end of this talk, this conversation that we're going to be having, it will be really clear how an apology can be useful, how it can be helpful, because I think at the end of the day, we're all trying to move our lives and our relationships forward.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:04:03] Well. And when I was sitting with myself thinking about this topic, I feel that when it comes to apologies or probably with most things in life, it just seems very transactional and robotic. You know, I think we were taught as kids, you do something wrong, you say you're sorry, you move on. And how often do we take the time to kind of lean back in a situation where if we've done something wrong, we think about why it was wrong and what it did to the other person or the feelings that it brought up and what what could be said or done to actually make the amends. You know, and we're going to get into this. I don't necessarily need a I'm sorry if you said something and you said I'm sorry, like and I don't feel like you mean it or that it was actually rooted in. Thought and care. It doesn't do anything for me. And so but I think we sometimes let ourselves off the hook of saying, Well, I said, I'm sorry. You know, and

it's kind of that robotic, you know, autopilot behavior that we all fall into where, you know, it's we we do something, we tick this box and then it's over and we move on. And going off of that, I think that's kind of how many of us get stuck in resentment and tricky dynamics and relationships because something could have gone wrong. You can just do the I'm sorry, I don't really feel it from you, but, you know, you said the thing that you're supposed to say, but it's not really resolved. And then, you know, it kind of breeds more resentment and harsh feelings because like. Just the simple act of saying it sometimes isn't enough or isn't what's meaningful.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:05:53] Well, because you and I always say, I know there have been times when I've told you I'm sorry. And you say and we laugh about it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:06:01] This was the thing. This is what I was talking about.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:06:02] And we laugh about it. And every time I might say to Michelle, I'm sorry. She'll say, No, you're not. Apologies mean change behavior. Have you decided to change your behavior?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:06:10] Well, I guess not to bury the lead, but for me, the real apology is change behavior.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:06:15] No, I mean, I think that is the lead. That is really the essence of an apology. And I think we we too often as human beings, exactly what you said Michelle so beautifully. We too often. Okay. You said I'm sorry. I don't know if I believe you, but let's just move on. We don't want to have the fight or we don't want to have the conversation or we don't even really quite know what it is. We want the behavior to change, but we don't know how to express it or we don't know exactly what it looks like for you to change your behavior. Or if we do know what it looks like, we're scared to ask for it. Maybe because then the other person can say, Well, I'm not going to do that, which is what my case has been for a lot of years.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:06:53] Yeah, you don't want to be difficult or needy or like keeping a difficult situation alive.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:06:58] Or when you do step up and ask for something that you need, which you all know, I'm almost through my divorce. It's going to happen soon.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:07:06] Maybe you'll do a divorce episode when it's done.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:07:08] Definitely. But I think when you actually step up and ask for what you need and what you mean, it it does cause ripples. It does cause chaos. It does cause a rift. It can cause like someone saying, well, wait a minute, I don't know if I want that. And then you have to decide, is it important enough for you to stand firm in your in your truth or in your alignment or in what it is you believe? So I think that's why this episode is going to be so powerful because it's really hard to ask for what you need in an apology. And I think that because when you do and I think for fear, if you ask for what you need, you may have the answer, come back and say, Well, I can't give that to you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:07:52] Yeah. And. Well, people like things easy. People don't want to get wrapped up into. You know the extra steps.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:08:05] Because for fear. They don't know what the outcome is going to be. And it could be bad. I mean, you know, we know what we're dealing with in relationships for the most part. We know that intuitive knowing inside.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:08:14] But I think so many people feel like if they're. Willing and open enough to just say I'm sorry. They feel like that should be enough. So if you come back and say. Uh, that doesn't really cut it for me. Or I need more from you. Or I would really like for you to do this or whatever they're going. I'd be like, You're asking for too much. You're so difficult. Why can't you just accept that I said, I'm sorry. Like, that's the whole thing.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:08:42] You just led perfectly into something that really, really bothers me a lot.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:08:46] Yippee Let's hear it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:08:48] Exactly what you said. How many people say, I'm sorry you feel this way?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:08:53] Is that what I just said?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:08:54] Well, kind of. I mean, I'm going to lead into it. No, what you're saying. Okay. Just that we should be satisfied with it. I'm sorry. And so if let's say someone says to me, I'm sorry, and I say, but I'm really disappointed and I'm really hurt, could we talk more about it? And the other person says, Well, I'm really sorry you feel this way, because I think most people coming at us think that the I'm sorry should be enough. And so if you actually give your feelings about it, if you actually say thank you for saying I'm sorry, could we just talk about this a little bit more? Because I have a lot of feelings and emotions about it. I have found in my experiences over the past decades that sometimes people will come back at me and say, I'm really sorry you feel this way. Like wasn't I'm sorry enough. And so I think where I really have started to look at this is when someone says that to me, I'm sorry you feel this way. For me, it really says they're they're actually expressing disappointment in the reaction that I'm having to their apology. And what I feel about that one. They're expressing disappointment to my feelings. It's like my feelings aren't valid. My feelings aren't good enough. You're not able to be open. Instead of saying that, they could say, Oh, wow, let's talk about that. What are you feeling? Oh, I meant the I'm sorry, because I really, truly am sorry, but I really want to know how you're feeling instead of the person not taking responsibility for the hurt or the harm they've caused and said something like, Sorry you feel this way. And I think that for me it always says, Oh, they're expressing an attitude or a feeling that I should be grateful that they actually even apologized.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:10:35] Well, the common. I'm sorry you feel that way. Apology isn't even really apology when you. I don't know. Maybe in another life or in another time, I'll go into, like, studying words and and how they really matter. Because I think if we drill down into those words, I'm sorry you feel that way. There is no accountability in that sentence for that person's behavior. It's placing the blame back on you. It's not taking any responsibility for whatever is being whatever action was done. They're just saying, look, it's your problem. There you go. It's your problem that you couldn't handle whatever it was or that you had a bad reaction. And it's not even really showing any remorse on the on the apologists end of their behavior. They're just it's like a trick. They're just saying, sorry, you hear the word and they're hoping that it's

going to be enough. But I'm sorry you feel that way, isn't even apology. It's a blame and it's a deflection. But for whatever reason, so many of us have picked that up in our vocabulary as something that's valid to say and. I guess we can talk about this as we get further into the episode of what real Apologies sound like. But I think there's ways of recrafting that sentence where it's actually helpful and meaningful and actually apologetic.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:12:03] I love that. Michelle That's exactly what I'm saying. I think it's it's become too ingrained in us when someone says, I'm sorry, that that's okay, that should be the end of it and it's really not the end of it, especially if the behavior hasn't changed. I mean, how often are we saying I'm sorry for the same thing over and over again? So I think it's really important. I mean, you could add so many things. It's okay to say, I'm sorry you feel this way. I, I want to make it better. What can I do? Because I'm not quite understanding. It's okay if you add a lot of other words after that, because I get it. I you know, sometimes if someone says something, I'm like, Oh, wow, I see how you're feeling. I'm really sorry that you feel this way. Let's talk. Because I don't really understand or it's not resonating for me, especially, you know, when we're looking at male and female relationships. Oops. That let's just let's just admit it. You know, sometimes the, the genders, you know, have different opinions of what we feel or we're like on different planets sometimes of what we're feeling. And so the other person might not understand how we're feeling and might be shocked. Let's just give a little bit of the benefit of the doubt there that doesn't always mean because nothing we say is all or nothing. There is always a gray, as you talk about a lot Michelle. So let's give the benefit of the doubt. When someone says, I'm sorry you feel this way, but there has to be more words after that. There has to be. Wow, I never imagined that. Let's talk. Give me more information. Let's let's have a whole conversation about it, because I don't really I want to be able to do everything that I can to help you not feel this way.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:13:33] Well, I think the easy fix in that sentence is I'm sorry that my actions made you feel that way.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:13:40] Yes. Taking responsibility.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:13:44] And then whatever you just said, let's talk. But it's bringing it back to the person that did something wrong.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:13:53] So I just have to interrupt. I love what you just said. You are you are the queen of words. Honestly, this would be a whole episode and a book. Michelle Honestly.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:14:03] This is a whole episode.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:14:04] No, I mean, this could be a book. You're you. You are right. All that has to be inserted in that one sentence is I'm sorry my actions like taking accountability and saying these are my actions that I'm sorry for. Yeah. So beautiful, sweetie.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:14:20] Thank you.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:14:20] Your next book.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:14:21] Okay. I know I have to get through the first one, and then the next. And then the one that you want to write. And then the one that the other person wants to write.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:14:27] I know that you're working on one, but truly, truly, you just blew my mind with that. You're right there. Maybe it doesn't have to have 2 or 3 other sentences afterwards. Just reimagine that first sentence.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:14:39] Yes. Beautiful. Thank you. So rewinding a little bit, you know, when I think about this podcast and why we did it and why we started it. And what our whole intention is obviously, to kind of have these important living room conversations with you all and based on our own experiences, but also to kind of nudge us all and help us to become more mindful and thoughtful and slow down a bit so that we can really be intentional with our thoughts, our actions and our words. And like we so often say, really love our lives from the inside out. And I've been thinking about this a lot lately in life in so many areas, but because we're talking about apologies, this fits too, of how often do we go into autopilot in life and just do the things that we think we need to do without actually stopping and thinking about it and really contemplating what is the right thing to do. We're so sped up about ticking the boxes and just fixing things left and right without really taking the necessary time and space to. Even think

about what what it is that you did wrong or why it was wrong or what harm it was caused, and what you could do to make it better.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:16:05] We're just like, we're so quick. I just. Oh, I need to say I'm sorry so that I can move on with it. And I've just noticed so much lately in my life personally. As we know, going through so many difficult aspects of family and relationships and change. I just I value so much in my life when people. Are creative with how they approach solutions to situations. And I don't want the. Cookie cutter. I'm sorry. Let's move on. Or I'm sorry that you feel that way. And I feel like I've been making a conscientious effort to really think about what I can do and say in those situations. And I really feel like that's the conversation I want to have today of. You know, what does it mean to owe someone an apology? And how do you craft an apology? And then getting into, of course, like what isn't an apology and those things that really trigger us and like and then, of course, what we can do after the apology because life is too transactional. It's this this done it's like all equations. And I think like, let's make our our own equations.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:17:27] Because there's a lot of layers. We talk a lot about peeling the, the layers of the onion back on the inside, but there's also a lot of layers on the outside. You're right, it's not just A11 and done type of thing most of the time. I think one of the things I want to say about what you said that I've been looking at a lot is I've been trying not to use the words right or wrong. In my in my vocabulary talking about words. Right. Because there's no such thing, really. I mean, their opinions, their thoughts, their behaviors or whatever it is. But when you say to someone, you're right, I'm wrong, or if we have this, if we go into a conversation or a really difficult conversation with another person feeling that we're right and they're wrong, and how are we going to do it? I just feel like right and wrong is not good. So I've been using for right, I've been using helpful, useful. Those are my two words. This is helpful. This is useful. Let me express to you something helpful. Let me tell you how I feel or what's happening for me. And then this is what I need or what I'm thinking. Like I think I think when we use the words right and wrong, it automatically triggers people. It automatically puts us on guard or on a defensive or on a, Oh, wow, she's going to tell me or he's going to tell me that I'm wrong, or they're going to tell me that I'm wrong or right.



**Barb Schmidt:** [00:18:38] So I've been not using those two words. I think that they cause so much. Actually, what I think they do is they put up a wall. I think you already step into a conversation with a wall when I say, you know what, I want to tell you what you did was wrong or I feel like I'm right in what? And we say it so off the cuff, like you're talking about saying I'm sorry, off the cuff. I think we say it without even thinking about it. I know that I do. And I've really been mindful of when I use the words right and wrong. So I just wanted to say that because I feel. That we don't get to the layers of the peeling back what's happening? So when someone owes us an apology or we owe another person an apology and this has been really. Fortified for me over the past decades because I went into treatment for bulimia. And so I was in a 12 step treatment program. And one of the major steps of treatment is making amends. So I spent an enormous amount of time in treatment. And then for the past 38 years since treatment, looking at what does making an amend. So I think I would almost like to suggest in this episode that maybe we don't even use the word sorry anymore.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:19:52] Love it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:19:52] I want to make an amend to you because that actually evokes change of behavior. I think you're right. Michelle sorry is so benign right now, everybody. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. And if we're not used to hearing an I'm sorry from someone, we'll love it. Even if it doesn't mean any change behavior or anything like that. I know that was the case for me for many, many, many years. If someone just said they were sorry, I was so happy because I felt like, oh, they're acknowledging it. I had all this story in my head. They're acknowledging I'm right. They're acknowledging I've been hurt without me even saying any of those things, without me saying, I just want to I just want to share with you how it's affected me feelings wise, how your how the behavior has affected me. So you're right. Because when you say I'm sorry and you're grateful for the apology, without anything after that, it shuts down communication, it shuts down everything. And I feel like for me, it shut me down as well. So I'm really starting to use the word amend. I want to make an amends to you. Because this is what I did and this is how I'm going to do it differently. This is how I'm going to change my behavior.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:20:57] I do think that's an interesting distinction to make between saying sorry and making an amends, because I think a sorry or an apology is like the baseline. Like that's the starting point of acknowledgment. I guess you have to start somewhere when going

down this road of taking responsibility for your actions. And the sorry part is really just like, Oh, okay, I actually did do something that was harmful or hurtful or not useful and I need to. Start on the path of fixing it, but just saying sorry. Is not fixing it. It's just like opening the door. But like not welcoming the other person in.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:21:47] Well, and I think too, I love that Michelle. I think too what I've experienced and what because I've done a very, very, very deep dive the past couple of years into my own relationship with myself and my own my own. Where did I. Where could I have done something more useful or more helpful? Or differently? Where could I have done something differently? And what I've noticed with me and I said this to you when I came back from my one month long retreat, which I'm going to talk about soon. I promise you guys I will talk about this.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:22:16] Every time we come to record.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:22:18] I know.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:22:18] Not yet, I will. Not yet, but soon I will. So hopefully soon.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:22:21] Well, I have so much to share and I need to get it organized, I think, in my brain. But what I want to say when I came back, what was one of the first things I said to you when I came back from that month long retreat? I said, Michelle, I really want to sit down and talk with you because what I realize is I've been instead of dealing with what's happening in the moment sometimes because being on a month long retreat, especially given the one that I went to, when I explain it all to you, you really are living in the moment when people say be present. I learned how to actually be present. It was so incredible. But what I want to say is one of the things I said to you is I was withholding information or saying little white lies to make it easier because I didn't want to get into the trauma or the drama or the chaos of what the truth might bring up in the moment. Even though it was benign, it was so silly. And so I think what happens when we do that and where I'm going here with this is I think what happens when we say a little white lie.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:23:19] Well, let me just tell her whatever. It's not really important. It's not a really big deal. But let me just say this so we can keep moving on. I think that gets wrapped up sometimes in major apologies that need to be had. And we just think, Oh, you know, I am really sorry. Let me just say this so we can move on. I think the idea of moving on is become to front and center and we're not really looking at what the root of the whole situation is. And so I think it piggybacking on what you just said earlier, the idea just to move on, sometimes it becomes too important for people, both people the one apologizing, the one that's accepting the, quote, apology. Okay. Let's just move on. We don't want to have this drama right now. And instead of just being open and saying, hey, you know, I did this, you did this, let's what do we need to do to actually change something here so we can move on going forward instead of having this all get recreated again in some different version or some different form?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:24:21] Well, and I also think that that's like an avoidance tactic because so often we talk about not wanting to feel our feelings, just saying sorry and moving on. You kind of can bypass the hurt or taking the responsibility. And those are all difficult things to do and feel. And a lot of us don't want to feel that. So if we can just say, I'm sorry, let's move on. Let's start over.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:24:42] Let's begin again.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:24:44] I'm looking at her because that's a common one that we say.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:24:47] It's a big deal for me because I think it gets complicated. One of the things I teach that I love so much that has changed my life, maybe that could be an episode is that every moment, every moment of every day we have the opportunity to to just stop whatever's going on, whatever the mind is telling us, whatever chaos, whatever. Drama. Whatever anger, whatever resentment, whatever fear, whatever, all the things, whatever's happening, we have the ability to just say, stop and just sit for a second and feel our feelings in the moment, not later. Not trying to not really bypassing the moment because the moment is where we actually feel the feelings and we have the possibility and the opportunity of knowing what's causing it or what is percolating inside of us that's allowing us to feel this way. It's really the moment that gives us all those opportunities. So I'm really big on if I'm feeling something. I want to take a pause and I want to feel the feelings and understand what's happening for me.

And then take a few deep breaths so that I can get in touch with how I'm feeling and have that that body sense of how I'm feeling. And then move into the next minute or the next moment or the next chapter of what's happening in my life that day.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:26:06] So. But you're right. Michelle We can also say we don't want to deal with this. Come on, life is too short. Let's move on. And so it's very tricky. That's the word I think I want to use. Life is tricky. The mind is tricky. I mean, we're dealing with a tricky customer in that mind that's constantly trying to tell us, Oh, come on, Barbara. Life is so short. Do you really want to spend the next half hour discussing this? He said he's sorry. She said that she's sorry. They said that they're sorry. I mean, all those things. Do we really want to spend our time and our precious life doing this? And so I think it's really important to know how we feel. And sometimes the answer is yes. It is very important in this moment to spend our precious time discussing it. Sometimes it isn't. So we really have to be as we talk all the time, Michelle the scientists of our own life. We really have to be so in tune with ourselves. Like, Yeah, you know what? It is important to talk about this right now. I would really love it if we could do that. And if the timing isn't right right now, let's let's plan a time for later.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:27:09] And speaking of later, let's take a break. And we're back. The later is very quick for us.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:16] That's wonderful.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:27:17] So as you were talking and going into that, I was thinking really deeply about going back to the difference between amends and apology. An apology is really just words and amends are the actions. And you need both, obviously. But what's really going to move the needle in making change and helping people feel complete in a toxic situation are the actions.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:42] And it doesn't even have to be toxic or whatever.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:27:45] Or Whatever. Sorry I know toxic is kind of overused.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:47] Toxic is overused. It could be harmful. It could be not useful. It could be not helpful. I mean, I think that I'm trying. Really? I'm trying. I'm trying really hard lately to not go to an extreme when you're a recovering addict. I'm a recovering from bulimia for 38 years.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:28:05] Capital-b bulimia.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:28:07] Is you tend to go to extremes. And I think our world today is tending to go to extremes, it feels like to me. So I think we need to find some place in the middle. So what is the middle ground is exactly what you said. We need the apology. Oh, wow. Wait a minute. I'm sorry. And then we also need. What can I do to make a difference? What can I do to change my behavior? What? I'm open. I'm receptive. I'm here. What can I do? Let's talk about what I can do. Please tell me more. And I think. Has anyone ever said to you Michelle this? I was thinking about this recently. Has anyone ever said to you when you say that your feelings were hurt? Oh, please tell me more. I'd love to know more. I loved it because I don't. I'm sorry that I hurt your feelings. Please tell me more. I don't ever want to do that again. And I want to learn. Or I want to grow.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:28:58] Be annoying about it

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:28:59] Isn't that the ideal, though?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:29:01] Yeah.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:29:02] So you're right. Michelle. We started this episode saying it's accepting apologies and giving them. So wouldn't it be kind of cool? I'm giving this as an example of something that we could all try. When someone says, You really hurt my feelings or I'm feeling alone or I'm feeling whatever it is, I'm feeling scared. What if someone said that to you and someone you love and that you're in a deep relationship with? And you said, Tell me more. I would love to know how I can be here for you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:29:33] That's very lovely. I just wanted to explain one thing. When I said capital B bulimia, because I know that that was random. She and I have a joke. This is an insight

into my mom's mind. And I know you all love to know everything that you can about her. She capitalizes random words in her writing, and it's hilarious for no rhyme or reason. And so she sent me a document talking about her story and. And she capitalized random words. I'm like, is there a purpose? And there probably is subconsciously, but capital B, bulimia. And I was like, that's that's who she is.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:08] I think I'm laughing, too, because it is funny because I don't I was not aware of that.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:13] And her writing is fascinating. It should be studied.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:17] I was not aware of that until you recently said that to me. And I yeah, I'm sure there's some motive or some reason or some purpose or some underlying something, probably because bulimia was a major part of my life for so many years. And I owe a lot of... actually my age. I owe a lot of my recovery, obviously, but I owe a lot of my wellness to the fact that I was able to go into treatment 38 years ago. So maybe me capitalizing the B and believe was like, whoa, this is a big deal. Michelle you pay attention to this word.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:54] It's so funny.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:55] It is funny.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:56] So anyways, I hate to digress, but I didn't want people to be like, What are they talking about?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:31:01] No, I'm glad you did that. And you're right. We could have a whole episode on why I capitalize certain words, but.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:31:05] A whole episode of like the Interrogation of of Barb, what it's like to be with Barb every day.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:31:12] I do want to say what is so cool when you can really. When you have people in your life that you could actually be this way with and Michelle is this Michelle

obviously is that person for me for sure. Like 1,000,000%. But I have other people in my life that are like that too. I have I have a really dear friend that always says to me, I just want to know how your mind works. Your mind fascinates me.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:31:33] I say that to you as well.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:31:34] So it is cool. So anyway, I think we're I think we're really hitting to the. Like the real purpose of this conversation about apologies. Because there was one more thing I wanted to say that I've heard often in my life. When I was in a relationship with someone and I've been in relationship with several people in my life for very long periods of time that liked to tell jokes that are constantly telling jokes. And for the most part, most of the jokes that are being told, I do not I'm not okay with them. I just they feel hurtful. Not for me necessarily. They're not telling jokes that make me hurt. It's more about other people or it's more about, you know, not thinking that a joke at someone else's expense is okay. And it can run the gamut of civil rights, any kind of rights, you know, any kind of human rights. I mean, it's just....

**Michelle Maros:** [00:32:37] Having someone at the butt of a joke.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:32:38] Thank you, Michelle having someone at the butt of a joke. So and more often than not, I would say 90% of the time, whenever there's been a person in my sphere that's that says a joke like that. And I said, I don't really think that that's funny, that kind of hurts my feelings a little bit because I don't feel that way. And I don't think it's good that we say things like that. Most of the time I'm met with, You're too sensitive. You are way too sensitive. What is the matter with you? Everybody gets a joke. It's just a joke. Everybody is okay with this. What's the matter? Basically, what's the matter with you? You're too sensitive. And what I want to say about that is as I've looked deeper into it. Is. I want to just say, if you are like me and you, you get this happening to you in your life with with people and with relationships, Here's how I feel about it. Someone saying that you're too sensitive. It's just a joke. Belittles your feelings, Belittles how you feel like something is wrong with you. What is the matter with you? Belittles your feelings and truly then invalidates your feelings and then literally gaslights you. And I know gaslighting has become a real popular word as well, but literally gaslight you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:33:52] A whole episode about it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:33:53] Because it's trivializing your feelings. So basically you're being chopped up and just just basically sat in your place and said, Shut up, you're wrong. That's how that's how I've kind of interpreted this. And because I've been really diving deep into this, because I can't even express to you how it makes me feel when a joke is told like that when I'm sitting in the chair and everyone else around me is laughing, I really have visceral reactions. And so many of the times I've been I've been thinking to shut up, Barb. But when I do speak up, this is what happens. You're too sensitive. And so I've really been, as I said, diving deep into this. I want you all to see if this fits for you, if this is what is fit for me. And so now I no longer tolerate it. If it happens, I'll say, I don't appreciate this joke. It's making me feel this way. Could we move on? Could we not do this anymore? And if they don't like it, it's fine. I really I'm not trying to change other people because we know that we cannot change other people. But I'm trying to stand up for what I believe in and what makes me feel unbelievably uncomfortable. Because what I also realized in those moments, I'm checked out. I could give a damn what they're talking about for the rest of the night or for the rest of the day or for the rest of the event.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:35:14] I'm so checked out because I'm so not okay with what's happening and see if this fits for all of you. So I've left the present moment. So why am I wasting my precious moment in time there? It's like a real snowball effect that I think we have to start becoming aware of, of how it affects our energy and our mood and our beliefs about ourselves. And for me, I feel like what I have done in the past, what I no longer will do is I'm giving up in that moment what I value the most, what I believe the most, what makes me who I am, what I'm in alignment with, what my highest and truest ideals are about humans or about people or about things. So I just wanted to say that because it's been a really big thing and I've really done a lot of searching, soul searching. Uh, so I think we need to learn to validate another person's emotional experience. And I don't care if the whole table or the whole event or the whole people think it's funny when you're in a relationship with someone that loves you and you love them. I believe that person could say, Oh, wow, I truly am sorry that affected those feelings in you. I'm sorry.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:36:26] I don't think that this is okay, then. Like your feelings are that important or it validates you in that moment. I think it goes a long way. And you've said this so many times, Michelle in our conversations and I'm sure you've said it in your writings, it goes a



long way in relationships and helping people feel seen and heard. Don't we all want to feel seen, heard, appreciated, all the things.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:36:52] Understood.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:36:52] And so and sometimes we can't like the people that are saying that they're not going to understand me. So I've kind of shifted that. I've kind of been shifting that word a little bit to not that it's not important word, but I think that we have to be understood might not be possible sometimes because I don't know, I'm thinking of certain incidences. I don't know if the people in these incidents could understand me, but they could see me. And I could feel heard and they could say, Wow, we value you enough that let's talk about something else. Let's change the subject. I'm sorry we hurt your feelings. And that's what you're saying. Michelle apology means. I'm sorry I hurt your feelings. This is the change behavior. We are not going to talk about this anymore. We are not going to laugh about it anymore. We are not going to ask you what's the matter with you? It's just a joke.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:37:43] Well, that really is the crux of the whole thing of relationships and all of these things that we're talking about when it comes to apologies are built on the foundation and relationships that you care about people in your life and they care about you and they want you to feel all of those things that you just said, you know, seen, loved, cared for, and you feel the same about them. And so I think that if that's not there, people won't care about really making amends or being apologetic or changing their behavior because. It doesn't matter to them. And that's obviously an entirely different conversation to be had of, you know, who are your people and who aren't.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:38:32] And I think you said it earlier, words are important. Words are very, very important. So that starts with the words like, I'm sorry, the words I like what you said, the I'm sorry. And then the amends starts with the words. But actions actually show us who people are.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:38:49] And I will say, though. The how you know who your people are are the ones who will apologize and be aware of that and change their behavior.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:39:00] And take an action and actually take a meaningful action that shows that, wow, I really do care about you. I'm sorry.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:39:07] Because I think about to when I'm.....

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:39:09] I was just going to just say I'm sorry because I want to just add this little caveat. They may not agree with me. I'm not asking people to agree. I'm not trying to change you. And I think I was back in the day, I think because I didn't see change, because it was so convoluted with how you do all apologies or how you feel, how you acknowledge other people's feelings. I think I got so angry inside of me. And I think that's what happens if you don't get your needs met in that particular moment. I want you to change. I don't like it that you think this way. I don't like it your way. Now the the the new and improved Barb. You know, as I've gone through this the past couple of years, like I don't necessarily want to change you. I just want you to acknowledge how it's making me feel and that it not happen with me, you know, because we can't. You know, when I think we say change behavior, it's a very tricky it's all tricky. It's all tricky. We can't change other people. But I think if we can if people can be kind and acknowledge that this is not okay for the person that I love so much and they change their behavior, that's enough. That's enough in that moment, that's enough. That's enough. Maybe in every moment. But that's enough. We can't ask for the whole bridge to be rebuilt. I think we can only take one step at a time. And that would be enough for me. Wow. You acknowledged how I feel. It's not okay. And you are willing to to say, let's change. I'm going to change my behavior and will not be this way. Especially in your presence. So.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:40:40] And going back to knowing who your people are, we talk about that often. For me, it's really become I've noticed I value so much people in my life who can apologize and really take. Okay, since we're not using that word, take responsibility for their actions without even me needing to say it like they can recognize if they've done something wrong. And.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:41:03] You gave me a look. No, because I know. Go ahead. No, go ahead.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:41:07] Like, I love it when people are like, you know, I'm really sorry I did that without getting down the road of being like, You owe me an apology. I love it. I feel like the

safest and most comfortable and aligned when I'm in relationships with people where it's like we're in this ebb and flow of like, communication in that way of, Oh, I realized I did this, I said this, and, you know, it made me feel weird. And that might have hurt your feelings. And I'm sorry. You know, I just I love it when people can recognize the harmful behaviors and be proactive about taking responsibility or not try and avoid or skirt around things.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:41:55] I love that. I just want to make sure that we're also. Being real and that most people don't. And we can't expect people to read our minds. But I love that. Michelle You're right.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:06] I wasn't saying read your minds, but like I can if I say something and you kind of. Shift your body language or make a face or kind of change your tone. I can be like, Oh, did I? Was that not okay for you? I noticed. Something wrong?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:21] Yeah. You're talking about us. I agree. We should. We are in. So No.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:25] We have friends and colleagues...

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:26] Yes, we do. No, you're right. I want to be sure that people don't get the wrong impression that people are not mind readers. And so if you're in a relationship and you're not, I think if you're in a relationship with someone, you have to start by expressing your needs. But you're right, then it can evolve into that. The person gets the hit inside them. Wow, I can sense that I said something that wasn't okay. Let me backtrack and let me say something. I agree with you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:51] Okay, fine, fine. I love people who aren't afraid of taking responsibility for their actions.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:55] Michelle. I love it. I love what you said.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:57] I love responsibility and ownership because I feel like that's life. Like we're all making choices and saying things and doing things every moment of every day

and sometimes we do things that we wish we hadn't. But like, just taking ownership and responsibility for things is just so. Attractive to me in life.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:43:22] Michelle I agree with you. I think that's beautiful. And I think that it's so important to I think what I want to say mostly is it's so important to understand that the words because, you know, this is such a great conversation I've got my brain is going crazy because words do matter. I was just thinking, what what just came into my consciousness right now was how often do we say, let's just forget about it, Let's just forget about it. I'm so sorry that this happened. I won't do it again. Let's just forget about it. And the answer is no. We we if we think as human beings, we can just forget about things that have hurt us. We can't. We can. We can pretend that we can in our minds, but it lives in our bodies. And I'm only speaking from my own experience. It lives in the body when when something has hurt me and someone says, I'm sorry, let's just forget about it and move forward. And if I say, okay, you're right. Okay. Oh, you know, you're being kind, you're being loving, or whatever it is that's happening in the moment, can you actually really forget about it and move forward? No. It comes up sideways somewhere else in life, and most of the time it usually took me by surprise. I would be like, really angry about something. And I'm thinking, why am I so angry? I don't even know why I'm angry.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:44:33] And you and I've had this happen, You know, you're so angry or I've said to you, you're so angry. And oftentimes, whenever we're angry and neither one of us know why the other person is angry because we talk so much, it's usually coming out sideways from somewhere else. So I think we have to always understand we can't forget about it. We actually need to say how will things look differently moving forward? And I think that was the whole idea about that idea about jokes and stuff. Yes. I'm not expecting the other people to change if they think these jokes are funny and they're fine and that's who they are. I mean, you know, we're talking about decades and decades and decades of people living on the planet that have different ideas about what's funny and what isn't. I can only say what hurts my feelings or what I don't think is funny. And for them to say to me, I will not do that to you again is enough. Yeah, that's what it looks like. Moving forward, that I won't have to be at a table in a conversation and have these kinds of jokes come at me that are not okay for me and that really make me feel uncomfortable. And I think I also Michelle made a kind of a mental list of some things that I thought we could..that's quick.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:45:41] Because I was just going to say I was that takes us into a quick overview of like, what an apology isn't.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:45:47] Oh, yes. That's where I'm going.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:45:49] I know. I know Barbara. Do you want to do it, then?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:45:54] Well, I just had a little. No, we can go back and forth. This idea. We already talked about it. I'm sorry you feel that way is not an apology.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:46:00] And also starting an apology. I'm sorry, but.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:46:04] Using the word but yes.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:46:08] I was watching a TV show and the guy kept saying, I'm sorry, but I'm sorry, but and then they did this whole montage of him saying, I'm sorry, but And it's like. Watching the people. He was saying, I'm sorry to I'm sorry, but they were not okay with it. It didn't make them feel. Um. Good. So I'm sorry, but. Is again really just an avoidance.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:46:36] And I apologize if what happened upset you. So we already we've spent the whole episode talking about that. That's not taking responsibility. I apologize if what happened upset you? And then that kind of moves on. Usually when something is said to me like that, then the next sentence usually is, I already said, I'm sorry, let's move on. What more do you want from me?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:47:06] I hate that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:47:07] Well, it's not an apology. We're just I think what we're trying to show in this episode is if you're left feeling unsettled when someone that you're close to has apologized, this could be part of the reason why in just for you as the scientist in your own life experiment, just to start paying attention and noticing how you feel and what's left unsaid and what's left undone and what is not quite settling for you. Because if you're not settled, see, I

have to really keep emphasizing this because I've been really looking at this the past year, especially. I mean, for decades I've looked at it, but really honed in on it. This past year. I know how I'm feeling all the time. I just negate it all the time or I override it or I say, okay, let's just move on. And that's the next one. When someone says, I apologize, let's just forget about it. You know those these are not apologies unless there's more words to it. You know, I'm sorry if you took that the wrong way. What the heck is that? How many times have I said, Oh, thank you? I did take it the wrong way. Thank you for knowing that I took it the wrong way. I mean, I've done that before. I don't know if any of you can relate. I've done that before. I've actually thought, Well, this is really nice of them. I did take it the wrong way. Thank you for noticing that I took it the wrong way because in my mind I'm thinking that they're apologizing for saying something that could be taken the wrong way, that it was that it was hurtful, it was harmful.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:48:35] But no, I let them off the hook because I was just grateful that they acknowledged that that it was it could be taken the wrong way. Isn't that a weird dynamic that happens in us sometimes? I'm just really trying to help you see. Yes, we can think that. That's so good. Wow. I did take it the wrong way. Thank you for acknowledging that, but I took it the wrong way because you said it the wrong. You said it in such a way that was harmful. That's why I think right and wrong are very tricky. And then I regret that that happened. And I think that's a tricky thing because you can regret it. But then I regret that that happened. It has to be followed up with. What is it going to look like now differently? Because regret can be a very deep, sincere apology. I regret this deeply. Okay. If you regret that this happened, what then is going to be the change behavior? What is the acknowledgment of what happened? Like, what is it that you regret? Like having a conversation? It's not enough. I regret that that happened. I heard that a million times. I regret that that happened because most of the time it meant I regret that you took it that way.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:49:41] Well, it's also just another way to say I'm sorry. You know, it's the words, not the actions.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:49:49] And then the big one...

**Michelle Maros:** [00:49:52] Wow you have a long list. I don't know where you got this list.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:49:54] I've been diving deep into this because I feel like I feel like and I'm going to get really vulnerable here. I feel like part of my relationship issues have been I'm just grateful that someone says they're sorry. Yeah, and that's pretty sad. It's pretty sad that you're in a relationship and you're just grateful that someone even acknowledges and says, I'm sorry. So I've really been diving deep into what the issues, what is up for me and why it's not been enough and what has caused me to ruminate internally about things or why I've gone off the handle with you, Michelle or a coworker or a friend or like just I believe strongly that when we don't deal with what's happening on the inside, it comes out sideways somewhere else. Road rage is the perfect example. I don't have road rage, but I have a bridge demon and I'm a time demon. And all those things that we've talked about, all that comes out because. I believe that I've settled for something that isn't settling inside of me. So this one. I apologize if you. Have you heard that one before? You're giving me a look, so maybe you haven't heard that one.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:51:04] I'm trying to think about an example of what..

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:51:06] I apologize. But if you just wouldn't do this, it wouldn't be a problem. I apologize, but if you could just, you know, be a little bit more thoughtful when you walk in the door or whatever it is. So really what I've looked at this one is you're apologizing because you've gone off the handle about something else like I remember hearing. I apologize. But if you would just be more thoughtful when you walk in the door and not let the door slam or something like that, you know, if someone screams at you or yells at you or is rude to you or it calls you a name, you know, calling people names is my number one trigger. So I've been called names. And so even as an adult, I've been called very nasty names. So when someone calls you a name and then they and then you're hurt and they say, Well, I'm really sorry that but if you would just not slam that door, this wouldn't happen. You're the problem. Yeah.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:52:00] That's a bad one.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:52:00] So those are my lists. That's my kind of a list of just to start, really. It's a list just for all of you to think about what I've been thinking about. If you want a little glimpse into my own mind and my own sphere, what I've been thinking of, what do I need to do differently? So I think for me, this episode is yes, other people need to do things differently or change behavior is an apology. All the things we've said amends. But really it starts with us.

What do we need to do differently? How do we need to process what's happening in our relationships and what do we need to say and advocate for ourselves?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:52:34] And as I was listening to you talk about that, I think when you were sharing so vulnerably about situations within yourself, it's. That we really have to remember that we're worthy enough to get to have our needs met in that way. You know, we're worthy enough to have relationships with people who will do more than just say, I'm sorry, but if you would stop, blah, blah, blah, blah, I wouldn't have to resort to this kind of behavior or you're the problem kind of thing. You know, we're worthy of loving and kind and compassionate relationships with people who will make mistakes but will also take responsibility for them. And we don't have to settle for the bare minimum in those relationships, you know. Kind of going full circle. The simple act of just saying I'm sorry is the baseline. It's like what we do and say after that is what really matters. And I think it's important to note, like what is in a real a real apology. A real apology doesn't make excuses or try to justify. And it should involve taking responsibility and recognizing the behavior and trying to change it. And a real apology. And the path to making an amends is not quick. It's a whole journey and it involves conversations and sometimes they're long and annoying. But, you know, if you truly care about people. You're open to doing it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:54:20] I love what you just said. This is not a quick fix. You're right. And there will be a lot of conversations and a lot of missteps and a lot of reminding the other person. And and it works both ways. As we said in the beginning of this episode, it's not just another person apologizing to us. It's if this is what we want, we actually have to to give it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:54:42] Both of these things are both ways. These are ways to show that you want to make amends and also what to look for when when people really are trying to make amends with you. Both sides of the street are important.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:54:55] Thank you for this episode. This was, yeah, I feel really energized.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:55:01] It's a good one, I really like diving into this kind of conversation.



**Barb Schmidt:** [00:55:06] I think it's, we both, and I'm going to speak for myself, but it's very important. I think these for me, what I've discovered, especially this past year, but what's really been uncovering and what I've discovered is like this is at the root of a lot like, what do I value? What do? And when I when I talk about the retreat. And I'll just end with this, that one of the most important things in life, what I've realized in the past couple of months is what do I value? What is non-negotiable for me and what do I value? And because I think at the end of the day and at the core of our existence, if we absolutely value something that is non-negotiable, but we're constantly allowing the slippage of it or the sliding of it and all that, it's going to have an effect on us from the inside out. And I've seen that with myself. So I just want to put that out there. And I love all of you so very much. Michelle. I love you so much. It's really wonderful to have this conversation with you, and I hope that this helped all of you kind of start opening the door to understanding who you are and what you want in terms of a relationship of a two way street of of apologizing and understanding. Because we're not perfect. We're going to be making mistakes all the time. I think that's why I feel like this episode is so important. We're always making mistakes. And so as long as we can just acknowledge that and be okay with the idea that we're not perfect, but then how can we start to grow and learn and become a better version of who we already are.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:43] Absolutely. That is the whole point. You know, we try not to ever make a mistake, but it's not possible. And so, okay, what do we do when we make these mistakes?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:52] It's this mistakes help us grow.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:55] Of course we learn from it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:55] I love what you just learn from it. Exactly. I love what you just said. I've no longer like I'm a perfectionist. I'm a type A personality and I'm a perfectionist. So I no longer have that adage that I can't make a mistake here. I'm almost no more receptive, more open, more curious. And if I make a mistake, I'm going to be the first one to own it. And then and look at how can I change? How can I learn? How can I grow? So I think that's where I think, gosh, I could go into a whole nother episode with that. But that's where I think it's helped me see the difference of what I need from apologies or what I need from mistakes that are made or

things that have happened, because I'm allowing myself the grace of I'm going to make lots of mistakes, but I'm also going to own it and see where I need to change and what I need to do differently.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:57:41] You know, it just, it feels so much better to live like that, you know. We'll talk about this at some point, I'm sure. But I've made a lot of really big mistakes in life and. One in particular where when I did it, I was so hard on myself because I had held myself to this standard of like, I could never be a person that would make that kind of mistake. And. That like kind of self lashing made it so much worse. And when I started to settle into taking accountability for that mistake. You know, rather than ruminating in the Oh my God, I can't believe I did this. I'm such a bad person. I never thought I would be this person and just leaning into acceptance and what I can do to move forward. It just really made the situation feel so much better and so letting yourself off the hook for being perfect and setting yourself up into these standards. I mean, obviously not. You know, just letting yourself, like, go off the rails. But accepting and leaning into it and in taking accountability and owning it. Yeah. Like you said, is everything.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:58:59] Have we done an episode on mistakes?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:59:03] I don't know. Maybe we can do it. Add it to the list.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:59:06] Add it to the list with the retreat. Thank you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:59:08] It's just a really interesting reframe because. Yeah, we'll get into it. Anyways, thank you for that. Thank you for sharing and being vulnerable with us. Thank you. Um, really good chat and let us know, listeners and friends, what you think of this. And if you'd like us to dive into anything else or if anything needs more clarification because I really love this topic and I do think it often gets confused or misconstrued. So please, please, please let us know. And the best way to let us know is to make sure that you are staying in touch with us on social media. At Peaceful\_Barb, at Michelle Maros, at Barb Knows Best Pod. That is where you can ask us questions, ask for clarification and send in podcast topic requests. If you haven't yet, make sure you're liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts. Apple, Google, Spotify. Of course, that's how you can stay up to date with all of our new episodes and

new offerings. You know, we're always like, we talk about evolving and growing and and changing. So lots of fun stuff to come on. Barb Knows Best the podcast. And finally, if you haven't yet, please give us a five star review on iTunes or Apple and leave a review that does help us so much and we really appreciate it. And we do read them. So they put smiles on our faces. Thank you so much again for listening. Thank you, Mom, for being you. And we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.