

**Episode 68- Steps to Starting Again**  
***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 yet again, I am here with my mom, Peaceful Barb, and I am thrilled to be in conversation with you today again, Mom. Hi. Welcome.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:30] Hi, Michelle. Hi, dear friends. It's good to be here.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:33] How are you doing today?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:34] I'm doing great. I'm a little bit tired. A little bit. It's been as we've been winding down a lot of our in-person work for the season. It's been really, really good. It's been I mean, I really love obviously I love the work that we do. But it's time for a little break and a little pause in the in-person thing. So I'm feeling great. Excited as always about our topic today.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:01:00] Yeah. So in the spirit of seasonal shifts and you know, depending on where you live, obviously the seasons are different. But here in the US we are winding down spring heading into summer. But you know, schools are ending, graduations are happening, lots of ends of chapters and beginnings of new ones. And I know we often think about clean slates and fresh starts at the new year, obviously New year, new chapter, you know, what do you want to create? But I also love to kind of sync with the seasons and sync with the natural flow of life when also thinking about new chapters and. Exactly what you said about we're winding down this season of our in-person work here locally and going into the summer where we have a different cadence of our lives. It's interesting to think about that for all of us, of what it means to take new new steps and start new chapters and, you know, make changes maybe that we're looking to make. So this week, I really wanted to dive into the whole concept of starting over new beginnings, how to take the first step and really how to push through some of that fear or anxiety or. Getting stuck in the comfort zones that keep us maybe from doing the things that we want to do to make changes.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:02:44] I just first I want to say Michelle, You've always been like this. Even from a little girl. There's always been something special and magical about you in the change of

seasons. And I think it's so beautiful what you just said. It's actually, you're right. A natural pause that the universe, that the environment that life is giving us to take stock or to take note or to reflect. I'm personally I'm a person that loves to reflect every single day. It's part of my practice. And I think we don't reflect enough and we don't pause enough, which we talk about on this podcast quite often. So I just love it that I look forward to you and I having conversations like this and you coming to me saying, Mom, you know, winter is starting, Mom, summer is starting. You naturally were born that way to, to really take a pause and to look at the seasons that are coming. So I just wanted to say that I really love that. And I think today's episode is very, very important because I really been thinking about my own life and we've talked about this on the podcast and episodes that I'm going through a divorce and it's almost final and I'll get into more detail about that at some other point. But that is a natural change. I mean, that is I've been forced to look at change for the past year, year and a half. But what I love about this is everything changes all the time. And so your innate ability to be able to pause and really honor the change of the seasons, I think is a real blessing. It's been a very big blessing in my life. And I think it's a big, big blessing and a nice topic in this episode. So thank you. I really love it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:04:22] You know? Obviously, probably in every episode we talk about the power of slowing down and being aware and and mindful of life. And it's easy to live life in autopilot where we're just going. And it it can be easy, especially when you're not in living in a school system of a calendar of really recognizing, you know, seasons in that way, I, I noticed I really had to shift my awareness once I left school because. You are so, so aware of seasons. Summer, you're free. You know, winter break, spring break. It's just more in your face.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:05:03] Could I also interject? Also living in Florida.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:05:06] Also, living in a place where you don't really see a lot of shift in weather, can make you feel like you are in a flat line of infinite. Nothingness.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:05:19] Well, like, life is just going and going and going.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:05:21] There's no change. How would you ever know that the time is passing except for the fact that the sun goes up and the sun goes down? But now I lost my whole train of thought. It's okay. So. It's important to to cultivate that awareness of the the

shifts of the seasons, because otherwise it can feel like we get stuck in ruts or routines or make us feel like nothing ever changes. But as we know, the only constant in life is change. So if you're feeling like, Oh. You know, we're almost halfway through a year. Life isn't where I wanted it to be. I haven't accomplished some of the things that I was really hoping to. I'm not feeling the way that I really wanted to feel this year. There's underlying things that I really want to work on that I haven't really gotten to. You know, take this time in this change of seasons and, you know, the nudge from nature to reflect and see, okay. There's always there's always opportunity for me to change or to start over or to choose something differently. But how lucky are we that we get this nudge right now from nature of the changing of the seasons, of a shift in energy of. Okay, This is a perfect time to do it and this is the perfect time to start over. You don't have to wait for a new calendar year or someone giving you permission to do so. You can give yourself permission right now.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:06:57] I love that so much. Michelle Because really what you're saying is that we have the opportunity to always start over and always begin again if we need to. Every moment. Really. When you think about mindfulness and meditation and the things that we talk about and practice in our own lives, we really always have the moment. We just have to do it. And that's why I love this quote by Elizabeth Gilbert So much. So much, So much. She says, If it's time to start over, then it's time to start over. If you aren't where you plan to be, then it's time to make a new plan. It's like, okay, Elizabeth Gilbert I love that because it's really what you're saying is genius. And I really, really, really love what you said, that let's have the opportunity here to be in alignment with nature is giving us this nudge. How lucky are we? I just love the way you said that. Michelle. It is so beautiful about looking at life with gratitude. And I think when we get into a feeling of gratitude, then the other thing that you talk about a lot when it comes to the changing of the seasons, you've said this to me often that it brings up feelings of optimism for you. It brings up different feelings of hope and excitement. And I remember one time you said to me, and I think you wrote about this in the blog, that all this stuff bubbles up to the surface for you because it's actually in your consciousness and awareness and life and nature has given you this nudge, like you said, so that you can actually get excited about a new change or a new step that you want to take.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:08:29] We're not talking about major life changes all the time. I'm talking about my divorce, but we're talking about any little step that you want to take that you might

be feeling held back from. And I also wanted to add one more thing. When you were saying what sometimes why this is so important and why this is affecting me so much for us to have this conversation is this a year and a half or so of 2022 and a little bit into 2023 the feelings that I've had often are of overwhelm. And I think when I'm feeling overwhelmed, I've noticed this about myself. If I don't take a pause, if I don't interject a pause here, I can feel like life is just one straight line constantly going. So I also love the fact that we're moving into new seasons and just that this is a real natural pause and the ability to be able to take notice and reflect on your life and see where where can I take the one tiny step that will help me in the right direction, which is what I've been doing one little baby step at a time here in 2023. As this divorce process winds down, I no longer feel the sense of the major overwhelm that I was feeling. And I think it's because I'm taking the pause more often. And I want to thank you for introducing this idea of taking a pause, that there's a natural pause that life is giving us and how blessed we are to actually notice it and join.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:09:55] Absolutely. And I think there's oftentimes a conversation about like living, living life and living in the flow of life, finding your flow, finding like that natural rhythm of your life where things feel not effortless. Because I don't think that that's realistic, but feeling like you're moving within your own timing, within the own pace of life and. I know how frustrating it can feel when you're feeling like you're working against life or when you're feeling like you're stuck and you're just kind of butting heads with your own flow and it doesn't feel good. It makes you feel like you're doing something wrong or that you've made the wrong choices or that life is working against you somehow. And first of all, I want to say that life is not working against you. And if you feel like you're butting heads with the timing of your life, that's probably an invitation to, like you said, get into a pause and. And sit with yourself to figure out what what is it trying to tell you, but also going back to the seasonal shifts. I think that if you feel like you're having a hard time getting into a flow of life, you know, starting to sync up with the seasons is a really. Beautiful and easy way to kind of get into it because. It's. The world. It's the natural timing of the world around us. And. I think that. If you allow yourself to start to feel the feelings that arrive for us when season shifts, it can help propel you and make you feel motivated and inspired and optimistic about whatever new chapter is to come.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:11:51] Yes, I love it. Michelle And the fastest way to change your life is to change your thinking. And what you're asking us to do is to change our thinking, to really get

into this flow. Because there's another thing. When you and I were talking about this, another thing you said that really stuck with me is that nature's natural changes show us that it's never too late to begin again, to make changes, to start anew. All the things that you've been saying. And I just love that, this is such a beautiful coming together if we allow it and if we're open to it, if we could actually start to see this differently. If you are stuck, if you are feeling like life is just going, going, going, and I don't really have a say, I don't know if I've talked about this much on these episodes, but freedom is a huge, like is a huge, thing in my life. Freedom is probably, I would say just about everything for me. So that idea of feeling free and sometimes we don't feel free because we don't feel like we have a choice.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:12:49] We don't feel like we can make a change. We don't feel like we can do this and we're just kind of stuck. We're in this and I don't know what I can do differently. And the idea you're asking us to do Michelle this invitation is to feel like you're in motion with life. Okay? Life is bringing us a new season. It's never too late to begin again. This is a natural part of human condition. The human life, with all the things that we're going through, how can we actually change our thinking a little bit and be open just a little bit and receptive to nature's call of showing us that we can take a pause here and do something differently or take that first step that we really want to take. Or the other thing that I think you talk about a lot is connecting with ourselves, obviously sitting in some quiet and connecting, but connecting and gaining clarity I think is a big one. The idea of get clear, what do you want and what would that first step look like?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:13:47] Yeah. So in the spirit of that, you know, okay, we're all living life. We want to start a new chapter. We want to have a new beginning. We want to feel like. You know, we have some sort of control over the our life's path. And of course, we know that there's very little that we can control in life. We can obviously control our reactions to the things that happen to us and how we respond to life in every given moment. But we can't control the external world. But as human beings, we want to feel like we have control or say over something. So if we're feeling like a sense of frustration or staleness or feeling too stagnant or that life isn't really moving in the direction that you want it to, you know, take note of those feelings because. Like you always say, Mom, when you take the space and are slowing down enough to be able to recognize the feelings that you're feeling in any given moment, you can start to understand the signals that like your life or your body or your mind or your soul or

whatever is trying to tell you. So if you're constantly feeling frustrated, I mean, there is a period of my life where I felt like I was living in Groundhog Day. I was perpetually frustrated. I felt like life was just going over and over and over again the same. Everything was the same. Nothing ever changed. And that, like my life was just this endless loop of, like, sameness and. I was really like. Hard on myself for feeling that way and like, frustrated and a little like victimy. And woe is me. And why is my life like this? No one else feels this way.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:15:43] Like what? What did I do wrong? You know, all of those feelings. And yeah, I had to feel that. I had to let it out. I probably lived there a little too long because I'm about to say that you should try not to live there for a long period of time. But when you can get through the feelings and start to think to yourself, okay, I keep feeling this way. I can't keep going to my mom and saying that why is my life Groundhog Day and nothing ever changes. I have to be the one to now initiate change if something's not happening for me. And I think that's how we can start to feel like we have control when we're getting signals from life that we want to change something. But nothing is really moving in the direction that we want it to. It becomes the onus becomes to us to do something, to get a different path forward, a different momentum or like a different energy in our lives. And I think that's where a lot of us get stuck. We feel those feelings of frustration and annoyance and whatever. We know that something needs to happen, but. We don't necessarily know what we want to do or how we want to do it, or we're afraid of making a change or we're so comfortable in the Groundhog Day, which is where I was, that we're like, Well, I know this, so let's just stay in it. So I think. I would like to get into what we can do when we feel like we know we want to make a change, but we're like kind of spinning our wheels in that period of where do I go from here?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:17:20] And one of the ways I want to share of how I got out of my feelings of overwhelm in all of 2022 is being intentional. For me, what I realized because I love what you just said, Michelle this idea of Groundhog Day, because you did, you'd come to me often. You know, I feel like every day is the same. Mom. Nothing ever changes. And am I just stuck here? Is this my life? And so the idea of being intentional, I think it's it's actually taking a pause and noticing and getting clear on what you want. But it's also if that's even hard to do, like, I don't know what I want or I remember you used to say that a lot too. And everybody I know, I'm not exactly sure what I want and we're not talking about. I just want to make it clear we're not really talking about upending your life right now. No, no, no, no. This is just. Okay. This season is

is asking me and inviting me to look at where in my life can I be more intentional, Where can I actually feel like I'm making a difference in what's happening in the day that's serving my highest and greatest good or my ideals or my greatest goals or aspirations for my life, like what matters most to me. So I think being intentional for me was really huge when I came into 2023.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:18:38] That idea what, what, what, what are my highest ideals? What are my aspirations for my life and how can I start to be more intentional about what I want? Because what it did for me is it gave me my power back. Because you're right, we cannot control anything in the external world. And we all know that even though we try to do that all the time, but we can't control anything out there. And so when we don't feel like we can control anything within ourselves either when we feel like we're at the mercy, like you said, being a victim or feeling at the mercy or nothing ever changes. This just must be my lot in life or whatever it is. It's so vital to get some power back, to start feeling better about your life, or start feeling like I can take that first step. Or I can sit with myself for a couple of minutes and get clear what could I do? And so I think being intentional and understanding that just having the intentions of what I want to do, what is important to me huge shifts inside of you and you start to feel like, I got this, Oh, this is different. I feel I feel my power back. I feel like I do have a sense of control because where I do have the control are in my choices.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:19:49] Yeah. Let's take a break. And we're back. I love that. I love feeling like there's things that we can do or adopt or understand to make us feel like we have more of a say in life. I think so many of us feel so out of control in life and not because there's something wrong with us. Life is just extremely chaotic all the time. There's always so much going on around us and so many difficult things happening around us, especially in the year of our Lord, 2023. It's, you know, crazy and it's easy to feel wrapped up in the crazy. And so. The fact that we can. You know, zoom out. Zoom out of the external world and zoom into our own lives and ourselves and think about how we want to show up in life, how we intend to move through life. Is exciting to me because at least at least we have that, you know, we might not have much, but we've got something.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:21:05] You know, I was going to share something kind of radical, actually, the way I got the way I got to this being intentional is being on that retreat, which I'm also going to talk about at some point.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:21:17] We're waiting.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:21:18] Being intentional. How I got there was. During one of our sessions, one of the teachers talked about giving up and letting go and getting not getting rid of. That's not the right word, but letting go and giving up on everything, you know, just letting it all go. And he didn't mean like letting it all go, walking out and just letting it all go. What he meant was in the mind and the thinking process and the mind ruminating about what's not going right. What can I control? Why does someone dress better than I do the comparing and the fixing and the planning and all the things that we're constantly doing in our minds. He said, Let all everything go except and I think I talked about this on one of our episodes already because it's been so powerful for me. Let everything go except your what matters most to you. Let everything go. But your deepest values, really. What are your values? What are your deepest aspirations for life, your goal goals, if you want to call it that. I like the word aspirations and intentions and values so that helped me start to become more intentional. Like stop trying to fix everybody. Stop trying to control everyone. Stop trying to compare yourself to everyone and really start looking at and stop judging all the things we do.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:22:33] We're constantly the mind is keeping us from living our lives. Like you're talking about Michelle and understanding that we actually can get into the flow of life where even though it's hard out there, we feel like we're making progress. Because I think what I heard you saying, what I love so much, what I got to hit on was that, yes, life is hard out there. It's chaotic. It's a mess all the time. And so in order for us to feel like we're actually moving a little bit forward every single day, we have to get into the flow because otherwise we're going to get worn out and stop and we don't want to really stop. We want to pause, but we don't want to stop living our lives. So I love this idea of intentions and aspirations and our values instead of goals, because goals seem a little bit too heavy for me. Yeah. And that's how I really moved into this space of feeling like I have a sense of control. And have my own power. And these are actually the things that I can do something about.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:23:30] Yeah, I think that's a really important point to make. And, you know, we we talked about tapping into your values in an episode really, really early on in the show. We can put it in the notes to link to it, to go back and listen. But I think it's worth



reexamining that because as you were saying that and talking about releasing everything except for the things that you value, if you can really take inventory of the things in your life that take up so much mental energy, physical energy, emotional energy that aren't in aligned with your values and really conscientiously try to release them. You're giving yourself so much space in all of the ways to do the things that you want to do. And really releasing yourself from like expectations or comparisons like you were saying so that you can live more in that flow of life. And it's easy to lose sight of the things that you truly value, I think, because. It's easy to get distracted and influenced by life around us we can think that we value. You know, this might sound very vain, but like what came into my mind when you were saying that talking about values is like, sometimes I get too wrapped up in, like, my outfits.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:24:54] Especially when I'm packing for a trip. I get so heady and put so much value in that I have to, like curate the perfect set of outfits for a trip that I get so stressed and overwhelmed before a trip that it almost makes me feel like I don't want to go. And then when I'm there. I hate everything that I've put together, and I almost let it take away from my experiences in the moment. And I know this might sound weird, but it really came to me recently. I'm like, Why am I letting clothes affect? Things that are really exciting for me because somehow I've gotten wrapped up in the I have to look a certain way whenever I go somewhere for a certain reason. And do I value that? No. I like to put together cute outfits, but that's not like the be all end all of my life. I like to just be comfortable, you know, daily. So when I when you were saying that, it made me really realize that. I need to shift my focus out of that into what do I value and releasing myself from that weird loop of like expectations about clothes.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:26:10] And I think what's so important about what you just said, I just love you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:26:14] We had a conversation about this on our trip because.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:26:15] What's so important about what you just said is what you're really saying. And what we discovered is that you're placing your joy and your fun in what you're looking what you're wearing. And what you discovered is when you get to where you're going and you don't like anything that you packed, you realize, well, the joy and the fun is not in what I'm wearing. That's not going to bring me all the joy and the fun that I'm looking for in this trip

or this life or whatever it is we're going to do. The joy and the fun is being with the people that we were with in Italy and being and going out and enjoying all the things that we enjoyed there. And we didn't give another thought about what the heck we were wearing. So I think sometimes we get lost in thinking what what is actually going to bring us joy and fun. And I also wanted to say that....

**Michelle Maros:** [00:27:01] Can I just say something really quickly? It's just looking for the things that are robbing you of the joy in the moment or that are taking you out of the moment for literally no reason. And. On that trip for us, clothes was like...

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:14] We both we both fell into that loop.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:27:16] We brought weird clothes that didn't feel good and we were uncomfortable. And, you know, it's like, why do we do that? So, I mean, I know that that's not like a life changing revelation, but.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:26] It kind of is Michelle.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:27:28] I mean it is, but like, you know, we're talking about clothes, but where are those things in life that you're engaging in but it's really it's not serving you.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:39] And I think you just said something that's really important. Those little things that seem so insignificant are the big things that can shift you inside. Any time we develop insight and awareness to what's happening to us, especially if it's taking away our joy or our ability to really live our lives to the fullest that we want to do. Every time we have an insight or an awareness of that, I believe a huge shift happens inside. So I don't think it's a little thing. I think it's so important. It's almost when you were talking, I was thinking about this. The reason I'm so really into intentions and aspirations and values right now because it shifted my whole line of thinking and my whole being is because when we can name it like one of my two two of my intentions in my life, I, I deeply feel this way. And I really actually named it for myself and called it out as this is an intention for my life is kindness. Is kindness. And the other one truly, truly, truly is. I want to stop thinking that I'm right. I don't want to go into conversations

anymore that I'm right. And I've got to convince people that I'm right, that whole idea of my opinion and stuff. So I've really, since I've named those two for me in 2023, they come up.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:29:00] It's kind of like we talk about when you name something or when you repeat something or when you have the repetition of something, it just comes up. And I don't want to say it saves you, but it comes up to remind you. So it's come up for me to remind me. So if I find myself being unkind, I'm aware of it instantly and I go back and make an amends or I go shift my thinking. Because most of the time some some of the unkindness is in my thinking, not in my actions, which is a whole other episode one day. I think we live in our thoughts. We may not be acting on them, but the thoughts are ruling our lives. So that's a whole other episode. But so I just think it's really important to name it and have it for you and own it and that intention or that value. So I love it. I love this conversation because I really think it's getting at the root of what's causing most of us. I know for me. Not to live in the joy of the moment or being where my feet are. And you said it so beautifully that you recognized that. You having the perfectly curated outfits to go to Italy was taking your joy and your fun.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:10] Yeah, I mean, we had such a funny conversation about that when we were in Italy. Speaking of Italy, we have something very exciting that we're going to share sometime very soon about Italy. So marinate in that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:22] Great plans in the works.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:24] But I just remembered

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:25] Didn't Elizabeth Gilbert Say that, uh, make a new plan. We're making a we're making a great new plan.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:29] Um, I picture us walking down the streets in Rome. Beautiful spring day in Rome. And you and I both hated our outfits you were struggling with, like your shirt. You didn't like that it was riding up, and you were getting annoyed that it kept riding up as we were walking down the streets. And I didn't like the way my pants fit. And like, I think we talked about it for a whole few blocks, walking down Rome, down the streets in Rome, and like it hit me later. I'm like, Can you believe, to myself, I don't think I've said this to you yet, but can you

believe that? Like we would spend our energy in Rome? Like. Being so annoyed about our clothes.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:31:10] And then do you remember what happened then when you said you did say something similar to that? We started laughing. See, this is the whole point of life. It's funny. It's not to be beating ourselves up or saying, Oh my gosh, what is wrong with us? We're in Rome and how could we possibly be thinking these little trivial, mundane things? Of course we do. We're human beings. It's so cool. I get the most ecstatic and excited in life when I learn something. When I discover something about myself, I get it is my greatest joy in life, I think, or one of my top joys in life I love to discover. Because if we can't laugh at ourselves and. I always say, take the life that you're living seriously, but never take yourself so seriously. We are not perfect. We will never be perfect. And I just think that was so funny and we laughed so hard that night in the hotel room. I don't know if you remember. We were just like, Can you believe us? And then when? Then when the trip's over and we're packing all these things up in the suitcase, we had another big laugh like, Oh, my gosh, I think now I might have learned something.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:32:09] Maybe, maybe not to take so many things or whatever it was. Even though we took a lot of things, we still only ever take a carry on because we didn't check a bag. When we went over to Italy. So it's pretty cool that we had everything and we had everything in a carry on, but we didn't like any of it. It was funny. So I think it's I really feel strongly about. Being open and receptive to being the scientist of your life and never taking yourself so seriously that you can't laugh about it so that you don't ruminate about it and think something's wrong with you. Yeah, there truly is nothing wrong with us. We just have to learn what's holding us back. And for me, I just want to learn to be a better version of who I already am. And I think oftentimes we're not capable of doing that because we're so stuck and we're not really tapping into who we actually are. Another whole episode, but.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:33:05] Yeah, that lesson really shifted a lot for me. And I do like to learn new things about myself and about life and just finding ways to like. Somehow lessen the burden of life and. You know, when you get those little aha moments. That's exciting.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:33:28] What you just said is just genius. Michelle. You know what it made me think of? When we give ourselves time, when we can pause, which is what we did. When you give ourselves time to think about what would we like to see happen? Like, how would we want that scenario to look while we're walking in the streets of Italy or anywhere walking in the streets of Boca Raton, Florida? When you give yourself that pause like we did, you just said it, that it really shifted, really changed things for you. Because I think when we give ourselves that pause and really think and talk it out loud, if you've got another person, you can talk it out loud, too, or talk it out loud to yourself. We can actually. Identify what we would like to see happen instead of it just being some random thing and then we can start to get, I believe when we do that, which is what's happening for you and for me. But I think it's happening really beautifully for you. We start to get insights on how to make it happen. We know what that next first step is going to be. We know what we need to do. So if you're feeling like you're clear on what you need to do, maybe start to think about what you would like to see happen for your life in the smallest of ways. Like Michelle's talking about. She's thinking, what do I want to see happen when it comes to packing for a trip the next time? Would you have a trip coming up? So it'll be very. Uh, it'll be your practice to see how this one goes. Yeah.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:34:45] An interesting thing. And I don't know if you guys even care about this, but what I've noticed about packing, maybe we'll do a whole Barb's tips for travel. But, like, for whatever reason, my mind shifts into, Oh, I'm going somewhere new, so I need to, like, pack special stuff that I never wear and make it different and fun. And then I end up packing, like, the weirdest stuff that I probably don't wear at home for a reason. And so I get there to where I'm going with all this weird stuff that I never wear and it doesn't go and it doesn't feel comfortable. And then I'm stuck with stuff that makes me feel not like myself. And it's like. Maybe. What is the psychology behind like behind that? Why can't I just take me and my my norm on vacations? Why do I feel like it has to be special? I don't know. Well, anyways, that's for another conversation.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:35:36] When I do the episodes on my my 30 day retreat, we'll make that part of one of the episodes because I do have a lot of insights that I gained. I've been not checking a bag now for decades. Oh gosh. But to go on a 30 day trip and not check a bag was very interesting, to say the least. So I think it would be interesting. It'd be fun to make that part of it. So let's get back.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:36:01] So all of this was stemmed from the the real importance of tapping into values and what do you value and how do you want to feel and if you're feeling stuck or that you want to make a change, what is it that you're trying to like? Where are you now and where do you want to go to if you're feeling, you know, stagnant and you want to feel more freedom? Like what? Really identifying the feelings and where you want to go and and really connecting with yourself to get that clarity and to tap into your values. Because I think sometimes when it comes to life change. A. We think we have to literally flip our lives upside down in order to experience some sort of result, which is truly not how it works. And B, we think that we have to have this like super clear vision for the rest of our lives. Where do you see yourself in ten years? Vision for what we think everything should look like. And that's also a spot where I used to get really stuck when trying to chart the course of my life or make choices that were going to take me towards the things that I wanted or to goals or aspirations, it would feel really hard for me to tap into those long term, large scale visions of my life because sometimes I couldn't really see past this week or this month or this year, depending on what I was going through. And so if you're someone that feels like you get stuck in that unknowing or like blocked vision, I think going back to that episode that we did about values and asking yourself the important questions about what you value will give you some of the answers to some of those questions to help you feel like you know what to do. You know, values can say, I value creativity or I value flexibility or I value stillness or I value kindness, you know, whatever.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:38:05] Whatever it is.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:38:05] So if you can tap into that, okay, If I value, you know, stillness, am I creating time in my life for stillness? You know? So I think that could be helpful for basically anybody who feels like they can't even really identify the vision.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:38:24] And I think that's why one of the things that I think we did do an episode on this, but I know we've used this quote a lot, and I think it's why we do use it a lot. Martin Luther King Jr's quote. Yeah, you don't have to..

**Michelle Maros:** [00:38:36] I think we have used that in like every other episode.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:38:37] Because it's so true. You probably can't always see the whole staircase and you don't have to see the whole staircase. You just need to see the first step. The light is shining on that first step for you to take. That's why I believe for me it's really important. And I know that we've mentioned this before, that the number one regret of the dying is I didn't live the life that I wanted to live. So for me, I don't know what the end result of my life is going to be, but I know that I'm working and I'm setting the intention that I'm going to have my values. I'm going to have my intention of what I want my life to look like. So if kindness is one of them, let's just say, or if not always feeling like I have to enter a conversation and be right. If those are some of the things, then I know that the end result is going to be that I'm living the life that I want. I don't know what the material thing at the end of that staircase or at the end of that life is going to be. But I know the intention and the the feeling from the inside out is going to be I'm living the life that I want. So I think that's what you're saying. Michelle, which is really beautiful way to look at it, that you might not know what you want the end goal to be, but we all know what we value. So really get deep into what do you value? What are the 1 or 2 major things you value and just play with it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:39:57] And how you want to feel.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:39:58] Yeah, and how you want to feel. You talked about this a lot. How do you want to feel and just play with it for a little bit? Say, okay, this is what I, this is what how I want to feel. And these are the couple things that I value. These I can really identify and name these and see if that plays a role in the choices that you make and setting the intention that these are the things that you want to to that you value.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:40:20] So, yeah, after you kind of connect with yourself for clarity and tapping into your values and how you want to feel, I really like to. Um. Seek inspiration from from the external sometimes and not in a way that it's like influencing me to take me out of myself. But I love to see and and really view and witness the things that I want so that I can know it's possible. So, like, what inspires you? And where can you find that optimism from the external if you're having difficulties? Bringing it about inside. I love to, I get a lot of inspiration when I read stories about people who have similar difficulties and how they got through it, because then I can see, okay, I'm going through something similar and they found a way so I

can find a way. You like to do that a lot with your reading for inspiration, reading from really powerful and historic people and how they manage life is one of the tenets of your practice.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:41:36] That's one of my favorite things, and I love what you're just saying. How do you find inspirational, positive ways to motivate you to enthuse you?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:41:44] Yeah. And I think it's sometimes we can get so insular and just focused on ourselves and it's like, how can you get yourself out of yourself to zoom out now and remind you of like, life that's around you and, you know, kind of. Reset your mind when you're just so you know, tunnel vision about what you need to change. Switching it up, doing something inspiring, going out in nature, finding ways to lift your spirits in a positive way that can spark some of that creativity about what a next step could be.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:26] And you're really just saying something small, like you don't have to read a whole book. Just read. I mean, I'm a huge poet. I mean, not a poet. I mean,

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:34] Excuse me. You could be a poet.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:36] I'm not a poet. You know, I'm a huge fan of poetry. I love, love, love poetry.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:41] I was reading something that you wrote that you sent to me last night to edit. Yeah. And I know we mentioned this I think in a past episode that you capitalize random words in your writing.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:52] I do.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:52] And you did it again in this. And, you know, maybe you are a poet just because you're just like. You have your own style.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:59] I have my own style, but I do love poetry. And so just reading a poem sometimes can inspire me. But what I wanted to share about nature, because it is a huge one for me as well. I want to share a story about you. Michelle When you were living in New York



for about five years, you would call me. And you would say, Hi, What are you doing, Mom? And we would talk for a little bit. I said, Oh, where are you, honey? And you said, I'm in Central Park. And I said, Oh, that's fantastic. And I remember you. We had so many conversations about it was your it was kind of like your pause time or your escape time away from the city. You were so grateful that you were in walking distance of such a beautiful park and a beautiful place of nature in the midst of probably the most busy and chaotic city, certainly in the United States, but in the world. So I would always get off the phone with you and I would think, wow, you're just really extraordinary Michelle know, because I think you listen to what you need in the moment and you knew that what you needed was New York was a little you loved it, but New York was a little chaotic and a lot of noise and a lot of things going on.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:44:04] And you knew that there were times where you needed to take a pause and be someplace that was energizing. And so I think that that's what you're saying, finding that one place where you could go in a in a quick moment. So really plan it. Oh, I really love to go here. So I'll go walk over there. I love to walk on the beach. So I will walk. I will walk, you know, a block away across the street and go to the beach. I used to take my dog Ellie there all the time. So if I need a if I need a moment, I love to go out in nature and go read something inspiring. So I think that that's an easy, easy way to start.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:44:42] Yeah. And if you can't like, physically go somewhere, you know, even and again, this might sound. Like the opposite of what I'm trying to say. But if you create your Instagram feed or social media feed with things that actually make you happy, like, you know, tiny animals or art or poetry, you know, and not stuff that frustrates you even just going online for a few minutes and engaging in things that are inspiring on the internet to you. But being intentional about it. So finding inspiration wherever we can is a great way to keep us motivated and optimistic.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:45:25] And it helps you get out of your routine.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:45:27] Well that was going to be the next thing.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:45:28] I think it breaks up the routine that you're just.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:45:30] Going to say. It's if you're feeling called to make changes and you're not quite sure how. The tiniest changes of your routine. Can make a huge difference, even like taking a different route to work or going to a different Starbucks for your morning coffee or. You know, having a different lunch or. Anything like that that's small, but that you're you're changing the grooves in your brain. You know, you're so used to doing the same thing over again. You turn left here, you turn right there, you're done. That can make you feel like you're seeing life through a new lens can really help you feel and embrace that sense of newness. And that doesn't require any change. It just has to require intention to. You know, take a different route or make a different choice or. Yeah. Do something small that's different to get you out of your routine.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:46:43] You said that word, intention and everything is about intention when you can start being intentional. I love that. Michelle You also said earlier when we were talking about this, I think kind of an alignment a little bit maybe with the with the trip to Italy, too. We were in we were in this whole groove of this conversation. What you were saying to me is just your shift or this this new insight can bring in new energy and what you're talking about, this new energy comes in the smallest of forms. We're not talking about these great big, huge, monumental shifts. It's like these little things can cause us to have this new energy. And what I love about new energy is it opens up the curious part of me because I think curiosity in my meditation all the time. I always I always want to be open to whatever the moment is going to bring me. I want to always be tapping into my curious side. We all have curious sides, but we don't think about intentionally tapping into the curiosity of our lives or the curiosity of ourselves, or how am I going to meet this present moment? I'm curious. How am I going to how am I going to be when I come meet Michelle to do this podcast recording? So just really tapping into that curious part. I think gives us a sense of all the things that you're talking about hope and new energy and feeling of not being stuck. And then for me, always gives me a sense of that's what I can control. That's where my power is.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:48:10] Totally. I love to feel curiously excited, Optimistic, like excited optimism and curiosity. Yeah. What you just said. I love it. Yeah, it is small, small steps.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:48:29] You just said it. I love it. Curious optimism.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:48:33] There's optimism.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:48:35] Yeah, I love it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:48:37] So, yeah, then that leads us to how can we take the really small steps that we want to take that can lead to the big change, but it's not taking like a leap. That feels scary, but small aligned actions that feel good. And what are those identifying them and then starting to do it. Taking one action a day or you know, being intentional with with your actions is is really the name of the game.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:49:08] And I think give up judging, give up judging. I'll give you another quote because I think we're so often quick to judge, oh, this was good. This was bad. Oh, this didn't work. Oh, I knew I wasn't I knew I didn't know what the heck I was doing. Oh, I knew. You know, we're so quick to judge whatever we're doing instead of just being and allowing it to unfold or allowing it to play out. And one of my favorite teachers. Uh, one of my favorite books of hers. Is when things Fall apart by Pema Chodron. She says this and this. This really kind of shifted my life and gave me some new insights into disappointments and judging things, bad or good? She says this When there's a big disappointment, we don't know if that's the end of the story. It may just be the beginning of a great adventure.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:49:54] I love that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:49:55] It's so. It's so true and so simple. So really give up judging. Don't be so quick to judge and just kind of allow yourself to settle into that first step or that first step that maybe you're afraid to take or that you don't want to take because you don't know where it's going to go or you don't think you're capable or you don't think you're ready or whatever, whatever the mind is telling you, do the opposite. Let your heart be the guide in this whole thing, I think. Let let your heart be the boss.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:50:25] Absolutely. And lastly, we say this often, but it's just to remember to trust the timing of your life, trust the timing of your life's path, like trust your own cadence and and really embrace whatever it is that is the story of your life. You know, it's so easy to get frustrated by the slowness or the fastness of life. It's easy to compare ourselves to other people

and their life paths and things that are happening for them and that we feel like aren't happening for us. But one of the best shifts that I've been able to make for myself is just rather than comparing my life to other people's life, it's to embrace my own life story. Knowing that none of us know how our stories are going to unfold or end, but it's mine for a reason. And why would I want it to be like anybody else's? Or. Um, change to fit into somebody else's mold. And so if I can embrace my timing, the ups and downs, the challenges, the difficulties, knowing that they're for me, I can kind of lean back into knowing that. I can't mess it up. And that kind of lets me off the hook sometimes of feeling like I'm doing it wrong.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:52:06] That's beautiful. Michelle. Thank you. And I think for me, I'd also add for me what's happened. Of course, you're always talking about trusting the timing of your life. And I think it's just really a beautiful way that you have incorporated that into your. Life process. Really, it's one of your it's really one of your practices. Trusting you've really allowed yourself to become a student of the word trust. And trust has been a very difficult word for me my whole life. But it's so I think what I want to say to everyone is, do you have any other choice if you're looking to live a happy, joyful life? I certainly didn't think after 33 years of marriage that I would be getting divorced at 66 years old. But do I? I mean, it's it's what's happening, right? So when you can embrace and trusting the timing and believe that. Everything. The universe, God, Spirit, whatever your feeling called inside to believe is your energy force within you is in alignment with you, and life is working for you, as you said. And that we can trust this because the alternative to not trusting it is misery is suffering. And I think that one of the things that we do is we are going to have suffering in our lives, but we don't have to add to it. We don't have to pile on to it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:32] Exactly.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:32] And that's what I've learned the most in this, that I am getting divorced. I am 66 years old and trusting. That has opened up a whole new curiosity and a possibility for me of what's next. And it's never too late to start again. And it's never we're always pausing and beginning again all throughout life. And this is just a major episode, but it's the same. It's the same as any other episode that happens in life. So I think trust is huge. One of your one of my your favorite words that I use. I think trust is a big thing. And if you if you're having trouble trusting like I have and I still have to remind myself sometimes about trust. It's

maybe just play with it a little bit and see what's the alternative. You gain your power when you actually can trust and it opens you up to more curiosity and more possibilities and opportunities. But it's not easy. None of this is easy.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:54:29] No, trust is not easy. And I think for me, it was really hard for me to get there. But to your point, the alternative is to be frustrated all the time and to add to your own misery and to make yourself and to fight against your own life. You know, I think I say trust your timing and trust the timing of your life so often, because I've really had to because otherwise I think I would be like. You know, deeply unhappy and probably off my rocker because some things haven't unfolded like I thought that they would or that they should or that life or society says that it should. And I can if I let myself engage in that story. I. I don't like the person that I become. But if I engage in the my timeline is my timeline. Things unfold for me. How lucky am I that I have my own life path that is filled with infinite possibilities that feels better. But again, trust is hard. We we recently. I had a lovely weekend retreat with James Finley, one of your favorite teachers, and he always makes me feel very contemplative. But he said faith is an obscure certainty in our heart. And I feel like. That to me is like trust.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:01] Would you repeat that again?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:03] Faith. So like, faith and trust kind of go hand in hand. Faith is an obscure certainty in our heart. And for me, that's what trust your timing means. It's like knowing deep down that everything is going to be okay, whatever that looks like. And having that certainty and being open to and allowing of however it is that you're going to get there.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:34] Wow, that's a beautiful way to end this Michelle this conversation that is...I'm speechless.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:38] Finley brings it out of us.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:40] I'm speechless.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:41] He's going to be coming on the podcast, so get excited.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:43] I'm very excited.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:44] That will be a very introspective, deep, reflective episode. Yeah.  
Um.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:53] Well, thank you, honey. This has been a wonderful conversation, and I really feel. I feel inspired, and I feel very. Grateful, really grateful to be your mom and to be able to have this ability to talk with you on a podcast every week. But I really feel grateful that. That we get to connect with so many people around the world. And I just feel grateful to have this. That I'm here being able to do this. So I have to trust my life because look. Look where I am. So maybe. Right, Maybe think for a minute where you are. And I think that. I'm not. I think I know that settling into the present moment. And being comfortable in the moment knowing that it has what it needs for you. And one of the things I've been saying to Michelle lately, and I've thought about this a lot my whole life and I try to put a funny spin on things sometimes because I really feel like bringing out the laughter sometimes in some of these heavy things can be just what we need is kind of the antidote to the suffering that we cause upon ourselves. And I said this to you recently. I said, Life can be messy at times and we won't always get what we think we want.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:58:08] Or like you just said, the whole picture of what you thought your life was going to be is not what you thought. And I think for me, thinking about life being messy at times brings kind of a little chuckle to me a little bit. I don't know why. Just that word messy because it seems so insignificant. Like my room is messy, but life comparing life to being messy to me is like an oxymoron. Like life is huge and messy is just like this little thing. The pillows in the wrong place on the sofa. But putting those two together brings. It brings a sense of contentment inside of me that life can be messy at times. And lately it feels like it's messy a lot. And maybe some of you are feeling that way. And we won't always get what we think that we want. So allowing ourselves to be in the flow of life, accepting and trusting your timing and accepting and trusting the present moment as it unfolds for us is key to end our suffering and be able to notice those insights of joy. Yeah. Thank you, everyone. I love you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:59:10] Thank you. I love you. I love this conversation. And I hope that if you're listening to this and you are feeling, I don't know, uninspired or rejected or stuck,

hopefully this will help you. But just, you know, leaving you with some nice little affirmations to help you along the way. Like my favorite is I trust the timing of my life. I love to watch my life unfold in each moment. I'm worthy of the good things coming to me. I'm strong, capable and ready to take on this chapter of my life. I always feel loved, supported and valued, and I love my life and I'm grateful for each new opportunity. So marinate in those if you're. Feeling if you resonate with this conversation and let us know. You know what works for you. Great. Love it. Love it. So thanks so much again for listening and being a part of the community and always being such a supportive group of people on the internet. We don't take your time and your support for granted, and it means so much to us to be able to share these conversations with you all every single week. If you haven't yet, please make sure you're liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts Apple, Google, Spotify so that you can stay up to date with each new episode as they launch. Make sure you're connected with us on social media at Peaceful\_Barb, at Michelle Maros, at Barb Knows Best Pod. As you know, that's the best way to ask us questions. Send us podcast topic requests and. Keep up with us every day. And lastly, if you haven't yet and you're enjoying the podcast, please give us a five star rating on iTunes or Spotify and leave us a review. That really helps the show. It helps us, helps everything. Just positive stuff to add into the world. So go ahead and do that when you get the chance. We would appreciate it. Thanks so much again for listening. Thank you, Mom. And we'll chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.