

Episode 78 – Taking Back Your Power
Barb Knows Best™
Episode Transcripts

Michelle Maros: [00:00:12] Hello, everyone. Hi, friends. Welcome back to Barb Knows Best, the podcast. I'm your co-host, Michelle Maros, and I am here with Barb Schmidt, my mom, the Internet's mom, everyone's favorite who knows best. Hi, Mom.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:28] Hi, sweetie.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:30] How's it going being you today?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:32] It's going well. It is going well. How's it going? Being you today?

Michelle Maros: [00:00:36] It is going.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:37] It does feel like. I do want to just add one little quick thing. It When you ask how it feels being me, it doesn't if you if you know Florida, the summertime is usually very slow. It's so darn hot and it's usually very slow. There's not a lot going on. It's not our season. We have fewer people here. Doesn't mean we don't have still have a lot of people. And it just is a time when you hibernate. So those of you that live in the winter usually hibernate in the winter. So the summer really is our winter.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:06] We're summer hibernating Bears.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:08] Yeah. I mean, we are, we are. So we hibernate in our summer, not our winter. Because our winter is wild and crazy with tourists and the weather's nice and all of that. So. But for some reason the summer doesn't feel like that.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:21] I was hoping that that's where you were going because when you asked me how it was going being me, I was going to say that I feel like it's been kind of nonstop. And usually our summers are slower, even work wise, not even just Florida vibes. You know, our programing takes summer breaks and we usually it's planning and, you know, recalibrating and creative time. But I feel like every week lately has just been full to the brim with work stuff.

And I'm like, Yeah, what's happening here? I mean, it's all good. There's no complaints. But it's interesting to note the shift or the change in energy and the shift of it all.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:03] And this could be an episode one day Michelle to know how do you adapt, how do you adapt in a way that still serves you? Because we really need to hibernate and nourish ourselves this summer because we all know for us it really gears up, you know, end of September, beginning of October, and then it's nonstop all the way to the spring. So yeah, it's really been good to see what do I need and how do I need to, you know, cut back or, you know, stay home and or have some quiet time. So it's been interesting. Very interesting.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:37] Very interesting indeed. And that does kind of parlay us into today's episode very nicely. Because. Well for you over the past couple of years that you've discussed. Often on this show, you've had a lot of change in your life going through divorce, all of the emotional stuff that goes along with that. And you've had to pivot and kind of learn a new reality for yourself, which I know you'll go into in more detail at some point. But even like what you were just saying, with even smaller shifts in life of summertime, feeling busy and shifting that when you just said that you were having that awareness and how can we kind of roll with the punches of the shifts and what can we do to help ourselves when we feel like things are kind of out of sorts or different or we're not quite comfortable with like the energy of life. I feel like this week you had the perfect example of a powerful shift to help you. And that's what we're going to talk about today. Because I know this kind of sounds very cryptic, but. I feel like as an observer of you and your life, but also someone who is very familiar and personal with your life. Because of the stress and the change and the trauma and the drama of what your personal life has been, you necessarily haven't had the bandwidth to necessarily deal with excess drama or other people who are bringing complication to your life. So I feel like me and our team, our awesome team has kind of helped pick up.

Michelle Maros: [00:04:38] The pieces with, like, dealing with people and. I say all of this to say this week we're going to talk about how to really communicate and deal with difficult people, strong personalities, and really like the empowerment that comes when you yourself face head on the people that are pushing your buttons. And again, I say all of this because you've done that a lot this week. You're like, It's cool to watch you because you're gaining your inner power back and strength back and kind of coming back into yourself after really like you're a well,

you're a Scorpio, so you're like the phoenix rising from the ashes. And you even mentioned like you feel like you're coming back into yourself and really being your true self again after this very difficult process of divorce and everything that goes along with it. But you've had the strength now to face difficult people head on and really stand up for yourself in a way that I don't necessarily know that you were capable of maybe like six months or a year ago. And watching you do this and being very strong and confident within yourself to communicate with difficult people or not even difficult people, but just people in general. You get asked a lot of stuff all day, every day. And I know you didn't always have the energy to handle it, and now you do. And I just thought that it would be a cool conversation to kind of talk through how you work through this all, if that makes sense.

Barb Schmidt: [00:06:15] No, I understand what you're saying. You are on the front line of everything that I do and say and emotions and feelings and all of that. No, everything you said is right on. And just for all of you listening, the divorce is final, so I will be doing a whole maybe episode or two on that soon. But I also want to say, if you've listened to last week's episode, it kind of parlayed from last week's episode as well. So it's very I think what you were saying, Michelle, is that. Yes. And when Michelle says, I wasn't capable, I want to I want to define that for what she means and how I take it, because I think sometimes we can lose our self worth and self esteem if somebody says we're not capable.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:03] I didn't mean it like that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:04] That's what I'm going to say. I know you didn't. Oh, I didn't. You were right. I wasn't capable. And what she's meaning is that I didn't have the energy. I didn't have the bandwidth I didn't have. I am capable. But in these trying few years of this unwinding of my 33 year marriage, it's been very, very, very difficult. So I didn't always I wasn't able to always be the best me that I could be. I was the best me that I could be in the moment. And I just want everyone to know that that we're never everything all the time. We cannot be. So I am exactly who I am at any given moment and do have my values and all that. But I sometimes can't step up the way that I've been stepping up now. And the reason I want to say this will be a great conversation. It will be cool, but it will also be great, I think.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:53] Cool and great.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:54] Well, you said this would be a really cool thing to talk about and I think that's really neat because it what it has done is it's really shown me I've learned so much in this past week as well, things that I want to talk about, things that I'm going to put into this. The second book that I'm writing is that we we don't necessarily we don't necessarily lose ourselves, but we if we don't if we're going through trying traumatic, difficult times, we can only do our best.

Barb Schmidt: [00:08:20] So staying in your worthiness and staying knowing that you are doing your best every day is so important. And I would go to bed every night and that's another episode I want to record one day is reflection. I don't know if we've ever done a full on reflection because reflecting at the end of every day, I would say is my top three things that I do in my life for the past 38 years, it has saved me because when I reflect back, I look, Oh, this happened, this happened, this is how I responded. This is how I want to respond when I'm in my full self. So it's very interesting. This will be a great conversation. And I think that. For me, there have been two key elements that have happened. You're right. I feel like I have I am rising from the from the ashes. There have been two key elements, though, and one is my power. Yeah, like not allowing difficult people or difficult conversation, especially emotionally difficult. It's been an emotionally difficult, traumatic few years. And so the emotions, emotion, hard work energizes me. Difficult emotions and going through coming up against difficult people all the time emotionally wears me down. And so I think that's been the difference. When I am full on hard work, I can go on, as you call me, the Energizer Bunny, which we've been full on hard work all week this week.

Michelle Maros: [00:09:45] Not a sponsor but should be.

Barb Schmidt: [00:09:46] But when it's emotionally difficult. Yeah, I get drained pretty quickly and I've had a lot of emotionally difficult situations and people and I've had so many aha! Moments this week and last week of I hadn't how I can handle it as my best self and how I used to handle it. So yeah, let's get on with it. I'm so sorry. I'm not trying to, but it's really fascinating. We are truly and I know Michelle and I say this very often, we are truly the scientists of our lives. And our life is an experiment. We just truly are. It is the only thing that I can say is how I am rising from the ashes right now, to use Michelle's word, how I'm actually really

acknowledging my power now and truly not allowing other people's difficult emotions. Not like all those people disappeared. A lot of them are still here, but it doesn't bother me anymore.

Michelle Maros: [00:10:41] Right.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:41] And I say that with all humility. I just nope, not doing that. And I want to say because I know what I want and I know what I need to do. And I think sometimes when we're in traumatic, difficult situations, especially like a divorce, we don't really know what we want. Sometimes I don't know what. I don't know what to do. I don't know what I want and that's okay. But now I do.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:04] Yeah, and that's the subtle shift and the subtle difference. But I was going to clarify to what I was meaning and referring to. I never meant to imply that you weren't capable.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:15] I know, I know.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:16] No, no.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:16] But that's why I wanted to say it. I wanted people to understand that.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:18] Of course you didn't have the bandwidth. But what I also want to touch on in this episode is that. For me as well. Obviously, I'm your daughter, but also I'm a person who really struggles with confrontation and maybe rocking the boat and really speaking up for myself in a way that I know that the receiving end might not digest it well or receive it well. That's something that I still struggle with and I work on within myself, and I feel like it's been cool for me to have a front row seat to you being able to have the confidence and the assertiveness to speak up for what you want. You might be afraid, but you don't show fear. As an example of how to do it, because I really struggle with that. And now that you're in this new phase of life, being able to watch you do that and like pick up the phone and say to someone, Look, this doesn't work for me. This is what I need you to do. And not even batting an eye, if that person gives pushback, I would be like, okay, I'll call you back. Like it's just a struggle for me. So it's cool for me as your daughter and my mom, seeing you as like someone who's kind of

rising from the ashes, like you said, but also as just a person who struggles with that, being able to see. Okay. Look at her doing this. I can emulate this because she's showing me how to do it, which is why I wanted to talk about it today.

Barb Schmidt: [00:13:02] Well, in that particular situation that you're talking about. I had a lot of pushback from someone and I know this deeply and I think it's so powerful whenever we go into a situation where we know it could be confrontational and we know there could be pushback and we know that it could be a real struggle. We have to be able to protect our emotional energy. And I was not capable of doing that so well for the past several years. I am capable now because I don't go into a confrontational conversation at this point in my life thinking that I have to be right and thinking that I have to have my own way no matter what. And I accept the consequences if that person will not move. I'm not going to I'm not going to subject my emotional energy to that any longer. I'm going to just say, okay, fine, you can do it that way, but take me out. I'm out. I no longer want to be a part of it. So I wish you well and I'm done. And so that changes everything. Changes everything. Because first of all, I'm not using my emotional energy to try to convince someone that I'm right and this is the only way that it can happen. But I'm also showing the person that this is how I feel, this is what I want, this is what I can do.

Barb Schmidt: [00:14:20] And then now they get to make a choice and they can choose not to or they can choose to do it. It brings it into a situation where now we can have a conversation if that doesn't land right for you. But I'm just telling you, it doesn't land right for me either. So we need to find some middle ground or part ways and wish each other well, which is not easy. But when you start to recognize that your emotional energy and the work you're doing and the life you're leading is more important than trying to be right and convincing another person they have to do it your way. And I know that's difficult, especially if you're talking financially or especially if you're talking things that are really relevant to people's lives today. But sometimes it's like that. And this was a financial situation and it's just like that. I don't like it. I wish it hadn't gone down this way. But it did. And I'm not willing to give up my life and my energy and my emotions and my feelings about the work that I'm doing and how I want to live my life. And that's not to say I'm not going to get engaged one day again and do something crazy or get emotionally attached or emotionally invested, but trying not to be so attached where it has to be a certain way.

Michelle Maros: [00:15:38] Yeah. And lastly, before we dive in, I just wanted to say too, why I think this has been such a cool thing to witness is like. Well you let us use your life as like a science laboratory. And I feel like watching you go through something very difficult and seeing that you were you've been in a phase that I think is a bit more passive of like, I can't deal with this right now. I'll handle it later. I can't deal with this right now. I'll handle it later, which is an act of preservation and self care. Because you said your bandwidth was stretched and there were a lot of things that were being asked of you that you really could not add. I think for years you're like tagline was, I cannot add one more thing to my plate. And so a lot of things were pushed aside because you had to have the discernment to choose what was worth your energy and what wasn't. And a lot of things, you know, difficult people setting boundaries, handling certain situations might have not made the list, the short list of things that were worth your energy. And so I feel like now you're in the space of like, bring it on. Like what? I'm ready to tackle all of the things that this past season of my life prohibited me from really giving my full energy power and presence to. And it's also cool because I've always viewed you. I mean, you were always like a badass businesswoman for me growing up, like single mom vibes, entrepreneur vibes, do gooder vibes, always busy, always boss lady, all of this stuff. So I've always known you as a high achieving. Go getter. And so to watch you in this most recent season be so emotionally taxed that that part of you kind of went to sleep for a little bit because you had to deal with your personal life.

Michelle Maros: [00:17:50] I'm like and you and, and we can talk about this in another episode too, because I think there's more to it. But you and I would get into fights because I would sometimes take it out on you because I knew that that's not who you were. I'm like, You're not this passive person who can't handle things. You're Barb Schmidt. You're a badass, powerhouse lady, but you are like, This is where I am right now. And now seeing you kind of come back into that. Version of yourselves again, rising from the ashes, being able to handle this stuff in like a come at me kind of way is really cool. And also an example of like seasons of life highs and lows. Like life is not linear and we show up to life. Given what we're going through, if that also makes sense. So I'm like, it's cool for me again as your daughter, but also as a looking at your life like a like a scientist in a lab of. You know, parts of ourselves are never gone. They're just they might be dormant because of the circumstances that we're going through. And I don't think we ever lose parts of ourselves. They just might not be fully in play at a certain point of our lives. And

when season shifts or change comes, like different parts of ourselves are being called to the forefront. And I think it's a cool thing to remember that those other parts of our personality or our lives are always in there and they show up when they're being called.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:26] Beautifully said, Michelle. I really love that a lot. I think that you're right. We are who we are. And sometimes they're dormant and sometimes we are. We're not in a place to be able to notice that, Wow, this is who I really am. But it's the emotional anguish or the trauma or whatever it is that we're going through in our lives. That's that's really that's really keeping that at bay. And so I want to say that's why it's so important to be self aware. We talk about awareness a lot. Be self aware. Be humble, like when you and I would get into discussion stuff or we'd get into fights, as you said. I was really the first one and not not patting myself on the back, but I knew I was not in a place of regularity or whatever word. I don't like to use the word normal as much as possible, but I was the first one to say, You're right, I'm not in a great place. I mean, my dog was sick on top of everything else, and then my dog died. So I would say, you're right. I'm not in a great place. I need to I need to figure it out, and I will. And that's why I'm so grateful for you. Obviously massively grateful for you and our team. Our team has been so supportive. We are such a beautiful. Team of women who support each other. All the messages that we put, this is how we act with each other. It's so fantastic because no one has said to me, not even you, who knows me? When are you going to when are you going to shake out of this? When when can we actually step up and do all the massive work and all the great work that we actually can do? None of no one has said that to me.

Barb Schmidt: [00:21:05] In our team. It's kind of let it run its course. So I guess it's not a surprise now that I'm saying this. That summer, which is the time of hibernation for us, is just the way we are. I've lived in Florida 40 some years is is the time where I'm gaining my power back, even though we're busy. I think a lot of the busyness is me gathering up the pieces of me inside and saying, okay, this is who I am, I am powerful, I am this, I am that. I'm not going to try to have my own way all the time or think that, oh, my gosh, this is emotionally not not okay, and how am I going to deal with this? And a lot of stuff is still happening. There's a lot of disappointments and a lot of things happening. But it's like I don't feel the need because I'm more emotionally stable, if that makes sense, to overreact to minor inconveniences and to not overreact to major things. I'm actually taking a pause and acting instead of putting it on the back burner. I remember. That's exactly. Is that what you're going to talk about? Because that's

what got me kind of I have to credit you for getting me started on this path the past couple of weeks, and you can explain that why.

Barb Schmidt: [00:22:09] And the other thing I just wanted to say is when you're in a situation where I feel like I have been in. And it's not for being a victim or whatever. It's really for understanding and being aware and seeing it and owning it and saying, well, that's what's been happening. People can easily bully you, and I don't mean that they're beating you up or whatever, but it's I felt guilty a lot of times, like if I didn't in some of the work even that we were doing here, you know, trying to figure out some of the work, I was like, Oh God, I fall short. I know I need to be doing this or I know I need to be doing that, or I really don't want to do this particular thing anymore. I've got to tell these people that I don't want to do it anymore, and it's not because I don't love them and not because I don't like them. I just I don't want to do it anymore. I need a break. So it was just always that going around and around. So I let that drag on and on and on. And finally, when you get your power back and start gathering up the pieces of yourself that you haven't actually been using, it's like, it's okay know, I love you, I wish you well, but it just doesn't work for me right now. It doesn't work for me anymore or right now or whatever the situation is. And that's been very empowering and it's been very humbling to be okay with that.

Michelle Maros: [00:23:22] Love it. Let's take a quick break. And we're back. So all of that to lead into exactly what you were just saying, which. Is the power that you feel and the snowballing effect in a good way that you feel when you are able to face what life is asking of you head on rather than pushing it off. It's almost like it's against what we would think would be true. But. Being witness to it for you and even for me. There's so much empowerment that we gain when we face life head on. And you've been the perfect example of over these past few years, you know, having to push some certain situations or deal with things in the way that you would want to to the side and. You know, I think we think, oh, if I just deal with it later when I'm able to, then you'll feel like you've cleaned your plate. But I've noticed that when we push things to the side of, okay, I'll deal with that next week, or we can talk about that when things quiet down, which is a big line in our our realm. Not just you, all of us. We think that, okay, I'm giving myself space, but sometimes those things that kind of linger in purgatory often take up more of our mental energy than just. Pulling, ripping the Band-Aid and doing the thing. And like you said, you've become back into this space of wanting to be able to tackle things

head on and. All right, I'm going to send this email. I'm going to call this person. I'm going to write up this document. I'm going to start my book. And they're all very heavy lifts and very big tasks, but they're not taxing because you're actually using your power instead of being passive. And I feel like that's such a cool shift because I think as human beings we think, Oh, I'll get to it when I have the energy for it. But sometimes you get the energy when you just take the action.

Barb Schmidt: [00:25:49] That's really well said Michelle. I think it's like that.

Michelle Maros: [00:25:52] That exponential effect of like doing the one thing gives you the boost to do the next thing and the next thing you know is like, Wow, look at all the stuff I did. I feel so great.

Barb Schmidt: [00:26:05] Yeah that's Really well said because I think there's a really fine line, a really fine line between taking the pause. Before you answer, reply or do that and try to know what it is you want and what it is you're going to say. And then really just jumping in and taking hold of it and taking your power there and knowing what you want. So there's a there's kind of a blend that goes on there. And I think of all the things that you just said. And one of the things I really want to let everyone know listening to this today is that you have to really be gentle with yourself because I know this about me. I've been on a spiritual path. I've been meditating, I've been doing all this stuff, all this reflective work, all the things for almost 40 years. So I know this about me. But it didn't change it until now because I would say inside myself every night, going to bed when I would reflect, I would know, I've got to do this, I've got to do this. I just I know that I got to do this. Tomorrow's a new day. I know. Okay, I'll do it. I'll do it. But I never gave up on myself. I never called myself a lot of bad names. And what's the matter with you? And you really think that you've been practicing? You know, just all those things that we do. The mind is a tricky customer and likes to tell us where we're wrong and what we're doing that is not in our benefit and stuff. So I think having love and care for yourself, which was not easy these past few years, but also but knowing that, you know, some of those things we talk about, this too shall pass and yeah I will get it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:27:34] And knowing also I know about myself that I know when I'm in this phase, when I get into a place of taking some of my power and just knowing what I want and, and peeling off the list or going through lots of huge things in the past few weeks, I know that I

feel better. I know that I feel like, wow. Yes. And I think that's because I know I'm trusting myself and I know what I want, but I also have my emotional energy back. So it's just a kind of I don't know what you call it. It's like a puzzle and trying to sort it all out. And being just being gentle with yourself, knowing that I don't want to. I like that you always say Michelle life is not on a timeline. You know, because that was probably one of the things that was really agitating my mind and taking a lot of my energy. Oh, my gosh, Barb, you've got to you've got to start your book. You've got to end this situation that you've got to do this. You've got to do that. I just kept piling on to myself because I knew that I had a list of things that I needed to do. So I think it's really an experiment and, you know, things. And if you're not doing the things that you know you need to do or that you could be doing, just be gentle with yourself and say you'll do it. Trusting yourself that you'll do it. It'll all unfold in a way that you will be able to understand and handle.

Michelle Maros: [00:28:54] Yeah, I think that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:28:56] I'm not getting triggered right now. And I think that's the other thing. Whatever anyone says or does, especially if it's something that's not something that I want to do or not something that I like or not something that I care about. And I think that's really huge not to because I have it so enforced in me right now that my emotional sanity, energy awareness, care, love for my own life, love for the work that I'm doing, love for my team and the people that I'm with. Love for you is so much more important than me allowing another person to disrupt that. It's like, that's my greatest importance right now.

Michelle Maros: [00:29:33] Yeah.

Barb Schmidt: [00:29:34] So right now for this day and you know, I'm a recovering. Bulimic addict. I will say for this day, I'm not going to allow other people and you see that quote. Don't allow other people to upset your peace or whatever. That one quote is I think it's the Dalai Lama's quote. Don't allow other people to take your peace. Don't allow other people to upset your peace. That's how I feel. Because for me, peace is power is ease is strength. It's knowing what I want and what I don't want. And being able to say no. And being able to walk away, but also being able to say, you know what? I don't I'm not going to carry their baggage with it, though, and I'm not going to allow myself to feel any kind of resentment. I'm going to wish

them well. But they're not in my life anymore. Whatever's happening for you in the moment and whatever is happening for me in the moment, it's a very it's a very interesting path and it's such a beautiful path. And so when you're in that realm, like if you're feeling like you're in that realm, it's really fun and it's really powerful to know that that's who you are.

Michelle Maros: [00:30:40] Yeah. And I think that's what we talk about when we say alignment. It's not necessarily.

Barb Schmidt: [00:30:45] Yes.

Michelle Maros: [00:30:47] Um, one day you sit down and you figure out all the rules for your life, and you make all of these big changes because you're doing it for the sake of alignment. It's like. The things that bubble to the surface and are asking you to take an action on. Like are you going to take it so that you can feel more like yourself or are you going to push it away? It's like those are the things that bring you back into real alignment. And of course, knowing the things that you want and the boundaries that you need to have and what you value is important. But like life isn't like neat and tidy like that, where even though me, I would love to think of like I sit down in my journal, I write down the things that I value and I think about how I want to act within it. And then life all unfolds accordingly. In a perfect world, that would be true. But each day you're being presented with things that will test you or make you choose within what you think you value or call on you to take an action that might be uncomfortable. But for the sake of living within your values or being aligned. And I think the interesting thing is. Sometimes the thing that you're being asked to do in order to honor yourself or your values or your wishes or to be in alignment with who you really are is not always the most comfortable thing to do.

Michelle Maros: [00:32:16] Or it might be the more difficult thing to do. And I think that's where a lot of us can get stuck. I know that's where I get stuck a lot because that uncomfortable conversation or maybe the thought of disappointing, I'm kind of in a situation where I feel like. I have to make a big decision about something that is really important to me and I can talk about it more when probably the situation passes where I think I have to make a decision to disappoint someone, but for the sake of honoring my wants and wishes. And it's hard for me because I've been writing all of these stories in my mind of why I think the situation that I think I need to leave could be okay and could work out. But I also have to ask myself like. What?

What am I deeply being called to do? And that's like the inner battle of I could take the safe route and not rock the boat and it would probably end up fine, which is what I tell myself. But am I going to kind of go against. What maybe my inner self is telling me to do.

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:26] Yeah, I love that. I think.

Michelle Maros: [00:33:28] I don't know how I got to that,

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:29] But it's true.

Michelle Maros: [00:33:30] The right thing sometimes to do is a very uncomfortable thing to do.

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:36] And hard thing and I think owning that. No, I know how you got to that because you just brought me into a place of one of the things that I've been reflecting on a lot here lately. I'm a firm believer. Maybe it was because when I went through treatment and all of the therapy and all of the books that I've read, I mean, I'm just such a massive reader of self-help and love and understanding ourselves and, you know, continuing to forgive ourselves and others and trauma relief and all of that. I'm a firm believer that at the root of everything, that all the discomfort, all of the possible hate, all of the anger, at the root of all of that I'm a firm believer is fear inside of us. At the root of everything I believe is fear. And so knowing that as I've been going through these past few years, like I didn't it's what I wanted. And I didn't necessarily feel afraid. So I couldn't quite put my wrap my head around or couldn't quite put my finger on what what was what was actually being presented with fear underneath, like what was the thing. And what has really, really become clear to me is uncertainty. Uncertainty can be literally a a like a roadblock. And I think that's what you've been seeing me uncertainty like frozen, really frozen in time kind of and trying to and doing the work but still doing the work. And I think that's why I want you all to if you're if you're any of this resonates out of yourself because you're still doing the work, if you're a mother, if you're a worker, if you're any of those things, you're still doing the work. It's not like you're sitting in a closet with the door shut. My guess, you're listening to this podcast, you're still doing the work. So honor every little bit of the work that you're doing in this moment.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:21] Sometimes you just need to go sit in the closet.

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:22] Oh, for sure, I've done that before. So it's uncertainty because uncertainty, it's so it's so insidious because for me, I teach that and I've learned that and I've read so many books from beautiful teachers and spiritual masters and all of that on uncertainty that life is totally uncertain, which we all know. But uncertainty can be a good thing. It's okay for uncertainty because all the all the great things might unfold well, if you're in a place of trauma or you're in a place of real massive upheaval or life changing events and stuff, uncertainty is the last thing that you're going to think is okay. And I realized that about myself this past few years and this reflection. I've just been living in this realm of uncertainty. And then that's the fear. So it maybe didn't present to you that I was afraid, because I don't necessarily. Of course, we're all afraid from time to time, but I didn't actually feel those big, huge pangs of fear about getting divorced and about all the things that were happening. But I did I did get exasperated with feeling, with the feeling of uncertainty. Uncertainty. And now what? You're seeing me now as this rise from the ashes, I no longer feel uncertain. I feel I don't have certainty like. But I know what I want. I know what to say. I know what to do. May not end up the way I might like for it to. Chances are, you know, chances are half of what I want to do might not say 90%, but half of what I want to do might not. But that's okay. I can deal with that uncertainty because that's life. It was that mass of uncertainty like that was really freezing me. It was actually I felt like I couldn't take a step and I would take steps because I was working. I was doing all the things. So.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:15] You're living life.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:16] Yeah, I was living life. But I also felt frozen at the same time.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:21] Well, and that's such a great example of why it's important to really drill into your feelings, because I don't. I don't know. If I would have. From the outside looking in pegged you as as the underlying fear was uncertainty. Probably a lot of other things. But now that you have that information, that data that you've discovered in your laboratory of life, now you know how to tackle things in the way that you want to with that certainty or confidence or assuredness that you know what you want.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:57] Well, I think how uncertainty just to interrupt you for just a second. I think how it shows up and it shows up differently probably for all people. But for me, it shows up as I'm not going to do anything because I don't know if I can do it right or I don't know if it's going to be okay.

Michelle Maros: [00:38:12] Or that was our...

Barb Schmidt: [00:38:13] I don't know if it's going to be perfect

Michelle Maros: [00:38:14] that was our loop of life, which made me a little bonkers.

Barb Schmidt: [00:38:17] Uncertainty for me is. So I had a list of things that I needed to get done, but I was, I just was frozen in time about. I don't know what to say. I don't know what to do. I don't know if it's going to be okay. I just all the things my mind was constantly talking me out of doing anything. In some of these situations that I now have tackled, one by one, by one, by one by one the past couple of weeks. So it's it's so important to know what's happening for you. You know, that's why we say, how's it feel being you today, Michelle How does it feel being you today, Barb? Like, how does it feel? What? Like knowing what you know and understanding how fear, which is at the root of everything, as I said, shows up on any given day or any given season of your life or any given time period. So I was probably a little bit, but I think it grew and grew and grew and grew and grew. Maybe the pandemic also exacerbated it a little bit because life was so absolutely different at that time. But it was it's interesting for me to see how probably long I was living in some realm of uncertainty, more so than not.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:23] That's super interesting. And I think too, and I.

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:26] Wasn't okay with the uncertainty. I don't want to say uncertainty is life. I don't want to say that we can change that. We can't. We can only change our reaction or action.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:36] We engage with an uncertainty.

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:37] Exactly. And I was engaging with it very well. And I didn't even realize that that that was what it was.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:42] And what's also interesting, too, in this dynamic is that, like you were talking about and I've written a blog about it. Is like there's a difference between being still to take a space or to have a pause to connect with yourself and to understand and to get clear and to cultivate that certainty of what you want versus being stagnant of, like you said, being frozen and not being able to do anything and kind of passing things off because you're in a standstill. And I think both have a place in our lives because sometimes when you're in extremely traumatic situations and are triggered, you're frozen, like you said, and you have to be stagnant for your own preservation.

Barb Schmidt: [00:40:36] And sometimes we're just not sure. And we just sit back and be patient knowing that the answer will come yes.

Michelle Maros: [00:40:42] And I think that just noticing that there's a difference between like stillness to take pause and to reflect and stagnation to just like there's no choice to be made right now is just an interesting discernment and differentiation. And I think you've been in both and now you're like moving.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:00] And I think another thing I want to say about all this that's I'm feeling that I hope everyone can take from this is that. This is how you see the Silver linings Michelle You talk about this a lot in your work and in in your blogs and in all the writings that you do. This is how you this is how I I'm going to use the word I. This is how I have come to a place of, wow, I didn't just waste these past couple of years because I'm 66 years old, so it's not like I'm on the back end of life, not the front end. So I didn't waste these years. I'm so grateful. It's like this is how you can start to get a little taste of the gratitude. Of what? Me sitting here talking about being uncertain and frozen for a few years or just not really not really owning all the pieces of who I am. It's so I feel so exhilarated by it. And I think that's what's also cool for you. Like the exhilaration that I felt and the energy that I felt. It's been really beautiful. And but, but if I was beating myself up right now. Oh, my gosh, Barbara, you just wasted two, three years of your life. You're 66 years old. What the heck? Why didn't you see this before? You've been practicing all these things for decades and decades and decades and blah, blah, blah, all the

things. And just please don't ever do that. It that also blocks you from getting to a place of acceptance or awareness or Wow, I'm actually I wish I wish it hadn't happened.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:31] It's not like we want these things to happen to us. Of course I'm not wishing all these things to happen, but it did. And now I want to come out the other side and I don't have a slight bit of wow, I wasted these years being in living in this realm of uncertainty. So I just want I want you to if you could just be gentle. I think the worst thing we can do to ourselves and and I, you know, I've been through a lot of trauma. It's not like life is not ever been very, very easy, especially in the early days. But the worst thing we can ever do to our lives is to is to beat ourselves up. Why did I do this? Why didn't I see this sooner? Why did this happen to me? I'm not saying we don't reflect, but we have to have some sense. And this is kind of where I started the conversation, having some sense of detachment. Where we're actually not taking it personally to ourselves. We're not beating ourselves up like, what is the matter with me? Why didn't I know better? Why didn't I do better? How come I how come I didn't feel like I was uncertain two years ago or whatever it was? I think it's so very, very, very important to understand that beating yourself up, asking yourself, why did I do this? What's the matter with me is really not a good place to live. And it really will keep you from living that, you know, great, beautiful, successful, happy life that I think we're all here to do.

Michelle Maros: [00:43:58] Yeah, I totally agree. And I feel like I might have taken this conversation in a different place. I don't even know. Expecting?

Barb Schmidt: [00:44:04] No. Yeah, it's cool. I love it. I'm loving it.

Michelle Maros: [00:44:06] But I just think that it's so interesting to hear from your perspective of kind of what we mean when we say that life is filled with subtle shifts that can help you feel more powerful and. I think in this instance, being able to face your life head on has really given you that shift that you needed to kind of enter into this new chapter of your life. And so I wanted to just give some of these tangible examples of that for maybe any of you who are going through something similar or even just like me, seeing you, being able to pick up the I'm really bad at phone calls. I'm a millennial. I don't know. They just stress me out. Like I just I avoid them. And seeing you being able to pick up the phone and have a difficult conversation or

even just call Walgreens to get a prescription, I'm like, why is that so hard for me to do sometimes? You're looking at me funny, but it's just because.

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:07] You're you're not giving yourself enough credit. I know that it's difficult, but I think you you can you have a very I love the way you're able to talk with people. But anyway, I just I just.

Michelle Maros: [00:45:17] Being able because you have not been in this era of your life right now seeing you do it and just like got this done, got this done, got this done is like just very refreshing and energizing.

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:31] And it's been a dramatic change. I guess you're right.

Michelle Maros: [00:45:34] And so I think the whole wrap up point of this episode is to just like know that the power is within you always and you have the ability to do the hard things like Glennon, Doyle says you can do hard things. And sometimes doing the hard thing is the right thing and the thing that will make you feel better. And if you've been in a season of your life that maybe things have been still or stagnant and you're ready to kind of come back to life in whatever sense that that means for you, like. What what really got you on the path, which is what you said at the start of this episode is like make a list of all of the things that you have to do. I remember a few weeks ago we were sitting in your house and you were very overwhelmed. You were like, I have so much to do. It's just you were like Tasmanian devil spinning your wheels. And I'm like, okay, well, what do you have to do? And I think it was like, Well, I need to cancel a flight. Like, okay, well, let's.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:50] Well, you asked me for a piece of paper and a pen.

Michelle Maros: [00:46:52] And I'm going to get there. I'm like, okay, well, I think you can just log on to the airline right now and hit cancel. And you're like, Yeah, I know. I'm like, okay, so let's. Let's do it. I'm here. Go get your little computer and do it. And you're like, okay, I know, I know, but that's so easy. So like, I'll do it later. And I'm like, No, we're going to tackle this one task that's clearly causing you stress. So get your little computer out and log in to whatever airline and hit cancel. And so you did it and you're like, Yeah. That was Thank you. And I'm like,

okay, so what else? And you listed a couple of other very similarly minor things, but things that were clearly taking up a lot of your mental space. I'm like, All right, so let's get out a piece of paper and let's write down the list of all of the things that are taking up space in your brain that you feel like you need to tackle. And this is kind of the same thought process that I have about journaling is like if something is taking up space in your brain and it will not let it go, if it's, you know, a belief that you have about yourself or if it's a to do list, if you don't give that thing a home. I personally think physically pen to paper, writing it down, physically giving that thing a home.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:12] It will continue to perpetually take up space in your brain. So I took the pen and paper and you gave me a list and I made you a list of all of the things you gave those those things a home on that paper and we wrote down. When you are going to do them. And we made a cute little way for you to cross them off when they were done. We love organizing. Satisfactory. Situation. And I think that that really helped you and it really helped me. I love a to do list now, but it's like when you can and even that was taking an action because I think when you felt like you weren't just spinning your wheels, you took all of the things that were in your brain, put it down and could visualize it like, okay, this is all stuff that I can manage. I don't have to all do it right this very minute, but I can do it. And taking actions and being in your power of just doing the one thing and then the next thing and saying, okay, this thing is a good task for tomorrow, so I know what I'm going to do, that it just makes all of the difference and you're in your power, even if it's just simple things like canceling a flight.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:22] I love that. And that is exactly how this all started. It's very interesting to me to hear you repeat all of that back because it's very interesting to me to see and it makes me kind of laugh when I think about one of the things that had me frozen was going online and canceling a flight. You're right. It's it it can boil down into such mundane little things. And so that's how I think you can get tricked into beating yourself up. Because as I'm listening to you say that, I was laughing because I'm like, I really did do that. I thought it was a huge, monumental task to go online and cancel a flight. So it's very interesting what what can happen when you're in a situation of of uncertainty or trauma or just chaos. And I remember you saying a long time ago, your therapist said to you a long, long time ago.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:13] I was just going to say that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:14] Yeah. There's so much unnecessary stress around us.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:17] I was not going to say that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:17] Oh, well, you can say whatever you're going to say next, but just the idea of unnecessary stress. And I feel like I was loading on a lot of unnecessary stress over the past few years and it is what it is. And so as I think about closing out my part of our conversation today. The other thing that's coming up really big for me is. As I think back on it, I didn't realize that this is what was happening, but I think I had a lot more patience than I gave myself credit for. And patience is everything. You know, not buying into the thoughts that there's something wrong with you and this is never going to work out and it's never going to be okay. And oh my gosh, what am I going to do now? I never had those thoughts, obviously, but I never allowed those thoughts to I never carried those thoughts. I never allowed them to own who I am. I would always follow it up with. Yes. Yes, you will, Barb. Yes, you will, Barb. And that's a form of patience. I think so.

Barb Schmidt: [00:51:18] The other thing I'd love for you all to do is really be patient with yourself. Really, really be patient with your life knowing that the more the more you combat those negative thoughts in the mind that are telling you you can't. The more patient, the more you say, Yes, I can, Yes, I can. Yes, I will without a timeline necessarily. But it was important for me to do the timeline when you got that piece of paper and pen, because there were things that most of the things on the list could be done. I think not most, I would say because it was a long list, I would say probably ten of the things on the list we did that day while you were sitting with me and the rest of them. I did over time because they were a lot bigger situations. So just be patient with yourself. There's a there's a line in one of the passages of Saint Teresa of Avila. Her work is really special. I've read a lot of her books, Saint Teresa of Avila in Spain.

Michelle Maros: [00:52:11] We went on a retreat in Avila.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:12] We did. We went on a retreat in Avila.

Michelle Maros: [00:52:15] With James Finley, who will be coming on the podcast at some point.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:18] Yes. Yes. I mean, you all know, I think I've said this many times that I spent like a decade studying all the different traditions and religions. And there's a line in her passage that says patience obtains all things. And I remember reading that 35 years ago, 30 years ago, and it just I was I right now have goosebumps. I was like, what? Patience obtains all things. Because back then I never thought of myself as a very patient person. I was just a go, go, go. Doo doo doo person wanting to work and. And go. Patience obtains all things. I've lived with that my whole life now for the past 35 years. And I have to say, whenever I'm feeling down on myself or impatient with myself or feeling like I've I can't do this or whatever, that line of that passage comes to me. Barb. Patience obtains all things. It could mean just sitting down and reading a book, or it could mean just being okay with what is. Be where your feet are. Be okay with what is in this moment right now. Yeah. So thank you all. This was a great conversation.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:32] So fun.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:33] I enjoyed the conversation. I hope all of you guys did, too.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:37] Yeah. Thanks for sharing. As always, about your life and letting us all talk to each other about it. I do think it's. We all can be like models for each other in different seasons of our lives. And I feel like this new chapter for you is going to be really awesome. So I'm excited to be a witness to it. And I'm excited for you and for all of us and for all of you listening. So thank you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:54:07] You're welcome. I'm always happy to be here. And we did kind of digress, but I wanted to just put a plug. Also, you always talk about please, please send in your requests for what we're going to talk about. And just to tease it up, one of these episodes, probably in the next month or so, we've been we had one really beautiful special request. She did a long, paragraph or two for us, and it was really beautiful what she wrote. And we're going to do one on aging. Yeah, We read them and we really love that. You let us know what you think about the episodes that we do.

Michelle Maros: [00:54:46] Yeah I am excited to talk about aging.

Barb Schmidt: [00:54:48] Yeah, I love you. I love all of you so much.

Michelle Maros: [00:54:51] And we love you all. Thanks so much for listening and being a part of the community and being so supportive and wonderful and fabulous and all of the things we're so, so grateful. If you haven't yet, please make sure that you are liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts, Apple, Google, Spotify so that you're always up to date with all of the new episodes and it just helps us when you do that. So thanks in advance. Also, if you haven't yet, make sure you give us a five star rating on iTunes and Spotify and leave us a review that also means so much to us and we deeply, deeply appreciate it. Like my mom said, we love to get topic requests from you all, and the best way to do so is to make sure that you are following us on social media. At Peaceful_Barb, at Michelle Maros, at Barb Knows Best Pod. You can send us a DM and let us know what's on your mind. Have questions about an episode. You know all the things. Send us a message there. That's the best way to do so. Lastly, we still have some merch for sale, so if you want some Barb knows best Pod merch, check out the link in the show notes and grab one for you and a friend. Thank you so much again for listening. Thank you, Mom. And we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.