

Episode 96 – Survival Mode
Barb Knows Best™
Episode Transcripts

Michelle Maros: [00:00:13] Hi, everyone. Hi, friends. Welcome back to Barb Knows Best the podcast. I am your co-host Michelle Maros and I, as per usual, am sitting across the table from my mom, Barb. Hey, mom.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:26] Hi, Michelle. Hi, everyone.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:28] How's it going being you today?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:30] I'm a little bit tired and feeling a little bit stretched. I don't know how all of you listening are feeling. We're in the middle of the season and coming to the end of the year, and sometimes that can bring up a lot.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:43] Yeah. If you're listening to this episode in real time, we are in the thick of the holidays. Fa la la la la.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:51] But I'm doing my most favorite thing of the week. And that's sitting across the table talking to you.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:56] Sure about that?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:57] Yes. Absolutely sure. And talking to all of our beautiful community.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:02] I say that because we are. We're struggling today.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:08] It's a very, you know, it can be very intense. And that's why I think this topic today is going to be very relatable. I just feel it. I've had many messages from people and I think you have too. You've talked about a few people that you've received messages from on Instagram, and so I think it's going to be a very potent topic for everyone and hopefully not hopefully. And I know that we will have a great conversation and and give you some tips.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:37] Tips and tricks.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:38] Tips and tools. Tips and tricks and tools.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:42] Tips. Tricks. Tools. Tangible takeaways.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:44] Yes, all the ts.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:46] We're so talented.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:47] So?

Michelle Maros: [00:01:48] So. Yes, as we start to ease into the thick of the holidays. Come to the close of this calendar year. We have so much going on, so many expectations, responsibilities. We feel so much pressure to show up in a certain way, to be everything for everyone. Just it's a lot. There's a lot going on. And I mean, this isn't even including all of the other stuff that's happening in the world and our personal lives. Just it's even just saying all of this right now, I'm like, oh.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:27] Well, I think you and I, both agree and understand that. The energy that's in the world affects us. We might not know it, we might not be conscious of it, but the energy that's in the world affects us. So if we're already feeling an overload a little bit or feeling like, oh my gosh, I'm just trying to keep up with myself during this holiday season. And then you couple the energy of the world, and then you couple social media, because I've had some very bizarre comments coming through on, on social media that are very, it's very interesting. And I think we all do. So you add those three things together, it's no wonder that we feel like we're just making it. And I always like to use this phrase, catching up with myself. Because when I'm feeling in a place where I'm not grounded or being where my feet are or feeling, you know, my earth planted in the ground and my body all planted where I am, I always feel like I need to catch up with myself a little bit. Okay, what is it that my mind is somewhere else, but my body needs to be here and all of those things. So I feel like the time is pretty potent right now.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:43] Yeah, definitely. It's a lot. And so today we're going to talk about survival mode and how to notice if you're in survival mode, how to cultivate that awareness about how you might be entering survival mode, and just some little reminders to help you ease out of it and take care of yourself. Because we know that it's a lot. And there's a lot of feelings and a lot of difficult dynamics happening and. The best thing that we can do is take care of ourselves.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:22] And I think it's the other thing that I really want to make sure that everyone listening gets this for yourselves is that if you're feeling like you're in survival mode, it's okay. Sometimes just being in survival mode is enough. We don't want to live our whole lives in survival mode, but right now it's fine. You know, there's that that really viral meme that went around a few years back. And I think it probably still is around somewhere that, you know, I've 100% of the days I've survived. You know, sometimes we feel like we're not making it. We're not making it. But actually, if you just pause for a second and realize I'm here. I'm here right now and I've made it. And sometimes just making it is enough. So I want all of you to feel like. If you're feeling in survival mode, we're going to give you some tips to not only move through it, but also identify it. Because sometimes if we're not identifying what's happening with us, it's hard to move through it.

Michelle Maros: [00:05:26] Yeah. Just like with everything in life. Really? Yeah. And I feel like when we start talking about some of the signs of survival mode. This is. Some of these things to look out for are kind of common for you at this time of year.

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:44] Are you talking to me? Yes I agree.

Michelle Maros: [00:05:47] Is this shocking to you?

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:48] I agree. Well, because I think it's holidays bring up a lot and we've had a very traumatic, difficult, difficult year. So yes, these are coming up for me a lot many of them. But maybe not all of them. But anyway, I'm just trying to be a little funny to lighten the mood a little bit because this is heavy. I just feel like this time of year is heavy. And so let's go ahead and get to it. I would love for everyone to feel comfortable in this and know that if you identify with any of these, that's a good thing. Because we always talk about being aware of how you're

feeling and what it means. And what's happening is, is 90% of moving through whatever it is. So let's get to it Michelle.

Michelle Maros: [00:06:36] Let's get into it. Signs are in survival mode. Yeah. The first one is what I was referencing to you. You say almost every year. Yeah. So go for it. Let us know.

Barb Schmidt: [00:06:50] You tell yourself. I just need to get through this week. This month or this year. You're right.

Michelle Maros: [00:06:57] I think at this time of year you just say, I just need to get to 2024. I just need to get to 2023. I need to get through this year. And then things will be less stressful or chaotic. And I mean, especially in this season of your life that you've been in for the past few years. But this is a common one for you to say. I'm not outing you or I'm not trying to pass judgment. I just feel for you when you feel this way.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:26] No, I don't feel judged at all. And that was why I said, please don't anyone feel that something is wrong with you if any of these signs you relate to because there is nothing wrong with you, it's just an awareness and Michelle is right. This is an awareness that I have and especially this year. My divorce was final August. September, I felt like I was on very good ground and very good footing, and everything was moving along really well. It was very hopeful and looking forward to it. And not that I'm not today, it's just with the holidays coming and all of the the grief that comes with the holidays and all the pressure and all the stress or all the things that we manufacture inside of us, when I say, I just need to get through this week, what I'm really telling myself is be in the moment, Barb, because my mind happens to go berserk during the holiday time, like it wants to move, wants to go to so many different places. So I'm constantly reminding myself to just be present, be where my feet are. And so. I think if you're relating to this, that you just need to get through this day. To me, that survival mode. Because I go to bed at night. If I've said that during the particular day I go to bed at night, I do my reflection time. I'm like, okay. Put it all aside. Tomorrow is a new day. You know, have a good night's sleep and you'll be refreshed tomorrow. So it's true. It's true. Sometimes we just feel that way. I just want to get through this. But that's not how we want to live our lives. And so it's really a conundrum here, how do we admit and understand and become aware that I'm feeling this way? Or if you're feeling this way, but also know that this too shall pass. This is not

going to last forever. I'm not going to feel like I need to just survive forever. I'm feeling like it right now, in this moment, if that's what you're feeling. It's not going to last forever.

Michelle Maros: [00:09:16] Well, I think there's two things about this one that come up for me. And the first is if you're feeling like you just need to get through this week. And have some sort of vision or optimism in your mind of like. Oh, next month things will be better. Like ask yourself what you think is going to change between now and then. That will actually make it better. I think for you, when you tend to get into this survival mode of I just need to get to next year. You have these ideals in your mind of like, okay, January 1st, everything is going to change and some of these problems or dynamics are going to go away. But. Ultimately like going from Sunday to Monday or December 30th 1st to January 1st. That's not really. Things aren't magically changing. So just notice that if you're trying to rush through time or rush through circumstances. Start to think about what it is that you want to change, actually, so that you can do the things to make that happen rather than just getting through it. Does that make sense? It makes perfect.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:34] It makes perfect sense. And I agree with what you're saying. What helps me the most is remembering my intention for the year, because I think why I get so ready for the new year is I have my intentions. I have my my thoughts, I have my beliefs. I have all of the things that I'm looking forward to doing. So I just need to move that up. And if you relate to this with me, I just need to move that up to November. I need to not wait until January. So lately I've been taking a pause because what is happening is I'm putting everything in the beginning of the year and just kind of coasting through this part of the end of the year, which is not what we want to do, because we do not want to wish our time away.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:15] Yeah. That's what I was going to say.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:16] Yeah. Time is our most precious resource. Why and why in the world would we ever want to wish it away? That's why this is a big one. And so. I like to think of this as I am so aware of it. So I catch myself in the moment and I bring myself back to the present, and I think about, okay, what is my what is my intention for 2023 and how do I want to end this year? And I don't have to accomplish anything, truly, I'm not looking at, oh my gosh, I have 50 things that I want to do before the end of the year. I'm actually just saying, can I just be

present? Can I just really be present in every moment of the day? Can I say no to the things that I don't want to do? Can I be present and see? What do I need to do to be where my feet are, to be present and to feel like I'm owning every moment of the day because this is our precious life. So I'm glad you put this as number one, Michelle because this is something that I can fall into and this is how I fall into it. I'm thinking, okay, I'll just start all the things that I want to do in my intentions for 2024.

Barb Schmidt: [00:12:21] No, we don't want to do that. But we also don't have to beat ourselves up if we're feeling that way, or if we're feeling like, oh, I just want to survive till the end of the year. So it's okay to feel like you want to survive, but own every moment and be present for every moment. You don't have to do. Here's what I want to say. This is the perfect no. This is the perfect thing. Here's what I want to say. You don't have to do. You just have to be. Which is what I've been saying a lot. And I just got back from a four day trip and it was wonderful. I was in the mountains and it was just beautiful to be able to reset myself and say, just be Barb. Whatever's happening in the moment, just be. You don't have to be doing a lot. Of course we're going to do. But you don't have to pressure yourself to do all of the things that you think have to be done in order for you to be the person that you need to be.

Michelle Maros: [00:13:11] Yeah.

Barb Schmidt: [00:13:12] I hope that makes sense.

Michelle Maros: [00:13:13] It does make sense. And I just think kind of tackling off of what you said of not wishing time away, you know. Of course, when we're going through something difficult, we just want to get through it and we want to feel better and we want. That season to be over because we don't want to suffer. But if you're constantly in that state of just wanting to rush through and get to the other side of of a calendar day, month or year wishing away time. Remember that our time here is a gift and we don't know really when. When that will be up. I mean, not to sound super morbid, but. Don't. Don't waste your days wanting to wish your time away. And maybe just ask yourself if there's some way, even if you're in some sort of difficulty, if there's something you can small do for yourself, or help yourself, or just make yourself happy for a small moment in time to make the moments that you're in feel a little less insufferable

because you don't want to live your life just wasting it away and wishing it away because life is. I mean, time is fleeting and. I don't know. You just never know.

Barb Schmidt: [00:14:42] And I think what's so key to what you're saying, Michelle, is that I don't think most of us I know, I sure didn't. In the beginning.

Michelle Maros: [00:14:50] And there's no judgment for that, too.

Barb Schmidt: [00:14:52] Oh, none. Never any judgment. This is why we are so authentic and why we're so sharing our deepest, darkest moments and our joys. We want to share our lives because these are the experiences that we go to, and this is what we're here to do. So never any judgment and please never judge yourself. So I just wanted to add to what you said before we move on in, that I don't think we can I don't think we often connect that. Being in survival mode can also be that we're wishing our time away or we're just we're just kind of coasting because I don't think it always is. But for me, it had been. And so I think it's a, I don't know, I just feel like we're not we're not really thinking that we're wishing our time away. And so but but sometimes we are. And so I just wanted to say something about that, that. We don't have to. I think we're feeling like we're wishing our time away. And I think we're feeling like we're in survival mode because we feel like we have to be more productive.

Barb Schmidt: [00:15:52] We have to do things. We have to get things done. We have to make this right. We have to be perfect. We have to be the go between for a chaotic moment. We put so much pressure on ourselves to do and to be the responsible one that has to do all of these things, and I have to face my family, or I have to do this. And I think what I'm trying to say and what I've been doing a lot during this holiday season is that I'm when I get up in the morning and I start the day because I start the day very refreshed, very happy, very energetic. Michelle can attest to that because she lived with it for her whole life. And so what I'm starting to notice is as the day goes on, I start to feel the burden of, oh my gosh, I've got all this to do. So I've been starting to look at, okay, what do I not need to do? I don't have to be the perfect, productive person here to end out this 2023 year.

Michelle Maros: [00:16:46] Yeah. And what I was going to say too, is what I was meaning with this and wishing time away especially, I know a few episodes back we had a conversation

about aging and accepting as we get older. I think for a lot of my younger life, I kind of wished away time. I felt like I couldn't accept some of the circumstances that I was in, or didn't like some of the aspects of my life that were happening or felt a lot of. Um, frustration that I couldn't or that things weren't happening for me like I wanted them to. And I was kind of in my mind, wishing for two to move. Fast forward to the things in my life that having the things that I wanted. And so. I guess, you know, hindsight is 2020. But looking back on those periods of my life where I was younger and in a different period of my life, wishing away to be at a later period of my life, you know? No. Enjoy the moment that you're in, because we're not going to have it again. And that's kind of how I've started to reframe even now, when I'm still maybe not totally satisfied with areas of my life or aspects of my life or situations. I may have desires and wants for things to be different or to cultivate something different, but I know that in this moment. I'll never have the situation exactly as it is right now. So how can I just honor what is and take it all in and be present to it, knowing that life does change and I will get to another chapter eventually.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:29] Beautiful Michelle.

Michelle Maros: [00:18:30] And I think, yeah...

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:32] Yeah. And the last thing I just want to say about that. That's beautiful. That's really beautiful.

Michelle Maros: [00:18:35] And I think, too, having, you know, dad die in his sleep also gives me this very morbid sense of like. You just don't know when your time is up.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:47] I think it's not morbid and I think..

Michelle Maros: [00:18:51] No I just mean a lot of us don't think of life that way.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:52] I know, so instead of calling it morbid, it's reality. It can change your life. And that's a good thing. It changed your way of looking at every precious moment that you live. Because tomorrow, the next minute, the next second, the next breath is never promised to any of us. So the other thing I wanted to say before we close out, because.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:13] Because we have a lot to say about this one.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:14] Well the other thing I wanted to say is that you know this. You may not like what's happening in your life right now. You really got me thinking, Michelle, when you said that when you were younger. I remember living in those moments with you. You may not like what's I don't like. This was three years of hell. Really difficult. And then the divorce was final. And I don't like what is unfolded since the divorce that I have no control over with the people that are in my life. And so we may not like what's happening in our lives. We may not like how it's unfolding. But we have to accept it. If we cannot change it. And that's why the Serenity Prayer has been one of my go tos, my entire. 38 years, 40 years of practicing. We have to accept the things we cannot change. And so it has really been a huge thing for me the past few months. I have to accept the things I cannot change, and really put my energy and my wisdom on the things that I can. What can I do? So that has been a big shift for me in just needing to get through this week. Now, what can I do instead of getting through the week? What can I do to feel? Huh? That was a good week. I learned a lot. It was difficult, but I accepted the things that I cannot change.

Michelle Maros: [00:20:31] Well, even just you've made it through 100% of your difficult days and honoring. Even if it wasn't great, you did it. You know you got through. You. You are capable. You are strong. And I think that's a good thing.

Barb Schmidt: [00:20:50] Yes. And I love what you just said, even though it wasn't great. It's that's the judgment. That's the judgment that we're always talking about. Can you just get can you just finish a day not feeling any judgment and just acknowledging and being aware and accepting what it was? This was today I'm going to go to sleep and I'm going to wake up to the new day tomorrow.

Michelle Maros: [00:21:14] And on that note, let's take a break. And we're back. I guess I chose the first one to be the most interesting one.

Barb Schmidt: [00:21:27] Well, I think it speaks 1,000% to the idea of feeling like you're just surviving. Yeah. And I really am grateful for our community here, because I think we really

talked a lot about what it means to survive. It's okay that you feel like you're surviving, how to identify it, how to be accepting, how to be aware. And so now we can breeze through the other ones, because the other ones, I think are a little bit more. Everyone can relate to the other ones at one time or another in life.

Michelle Maros: [00:21:53] I know I can definitely relate to this.

Barb Schmidt: [00:21:55] Yeah, I was going to say this one is you, this one is you. Because I even if I didn't get a good night's sleep. So go ahead and give number two.

Michelle Maros: [00:22:04] Number two is, you know, you feel exhausted even after a good night's sleep. But, you know, I also think. If you're still exhausted, maybe you didn't have a good night's sleep.

Barb Schmidt: [00:22:16] Well, I think..

Michelle Maros: [00:22:18] But also, look, I'm in my own version of survival mode within this week. I've been literally kind of in a cave of my own home, diligently trying to get this draft of my book finished, which is a whole situation in and of itself. But, you know, it's true what they say that books are hard and I usually find writing not easy. I will never say that writing is easy, but I'm usually able to connect with what I want to say in a very. Aligned way to where it comes out pretty freely. And book writing is a whole other beast. And so I've spent. A lot of my past week in cave of just trying to get it done. And that is my own sense of survival mode, where I'm just kind of burning the candle at both ends and really not rested at all. In fact, you looked at me this morning and you were like, you gonna make it through this one.

Barb Schmidt: [00:23:29] Well, I know that.

Michelle Maros: [00:23:30] So I just even waking up today, I slept. I don't know if it was a good night's sleep, but I'm still exhausted because I'm not yet getting through that period of this book writing process. So yeah, I'm in my own survival mode right now. Also, knowing that it'll be over. But yeah, and I'm tired.

Barb Schmidt: [00:23:50] I think that makes sense. This is why I'm so excited about this episode, because I think as we go through the list here that we've talked about you and I personally for years, you're going to see that we are in survival mode a lot sometimes, especially during the holidays. So I think this when you feel exhausted, even after a good night's sleep, I think sometimes there's a misunderstanding, a good night's sleep. You can have eight hours worth of sleep, but if your mind is constantly going and you're feeling unsettled, you're going to be exhausted when you wake up the next morning.

Michelle Maros: [00:24:22] That's what's happening.

Barb Schmidt: [00:24:22] That's what's happening. That's I can feel that, you know, we've all been there. So I think it's just to take note if you're feeling exhausted when you wake up in the morning, see if there's something that's bothering you, see if you're saying yes to something that you really don't want to do. See if you're feeling like you need to be the one who's in charge of everything and have everything perfect, see if you're feeling like you're in the middle of a traumatic situation, a family members or friends, or just personally and you're feeling like there's no way out. I mean, I've felt all of these things. We've all felt all of these things in some way or in some version or another. And usually if there's something that, for me, if I've had a good night's sleep or I've had a long sleep, and by the middle of the day I'm feeling incredibly exhausted. Usually it's something that's burning inside of me that I haven't dealt with or that I haven't felt or that I haven't acknowledged. So when I can just stop and just say, okay, what is happening with you, Barb? What are you feeling right now? What is it that you're not dealing with, or what is it that you feel like you have to be the know it all here? That you have to make it right? What is going on with you? So I feel that that has helped me a lot.

Barb Schmidt: [00:25:34] But if you're feeling exhausted, just just take a little pause and see. Just ask yourself with like, this is the caveat of this entire episode, zero judgment, zero judgment on yourself. There is, I am. I would have to say one of my happiest moments in life is when I identify what's happening with me. You know, one of my joyous moments in life. So I don't have judgment if I identify that I'm feeling angry or if I'm feeling deserted, or if I'm feeling alone, or if I'm feeling tired, I don't I don't beat myself up then and say, oh my gosh, Barb, what is wrong with you? Wow, you're feeling this. You're not the person that I thought you were. I mean, all those things that we say to ourselves in the mind. So take care of yourself. If you're

feeling exhausted. Take care of yourself and try to really get in touch with what's happening so that you can course correct and say, wait a minute, I'm an extraordinary human being in this moment. I'm doing the best that I can. I'm not the boss of everyone. I'm only the boss of myself. And I can only change what I can change for myself. To make myself feel more present, feel more loving, and feel more centered in what it is that I'm trying to do in this moment.

Michelle Maros: [00:26:47] And I would say, if you are someone who's finding that you go to sleep and your mind is racing and you can't quite seem to get your mind to quiet, or you have lots of thoughts and you really just not finding yourself being settled in the sleep time. That's a perfect time to like you do, reflect before going to sleep or journal before going to sleep, to give those thoughts somewhere to live. That's kind of what was happening for me last night. I had been going to sleep so late for the past few days because I've just been working, and it's kind of messed up my sleep schedule. So last night, I kind of made a commitment to myself that I was going to go to sleep at a regular hour. But of course I got into bed at the normal time and I just my brain was going, I had. So many thoughts, so many ideas, so many things I didn't want to forget to write about or put in the book, or ideas that I thought maybe I hadn't gotten to yet. And that's when those kinds of things are happening for you at nighttime. Like pull out your journal and give your thoughts a home and give those thoughts a place to go.

Michelle Maros: [00:28:00] Because for me at least. I feel like sometimes I get a lot of good ideas in those moments when I'm kind of going into sleep and I feel like I was having good ideas last night as I was going into sleep, and I didn't set myself up to write it down because I'm like, no, Michelle, you just need to go to sleep. And so my mind kept saying, okay, but you don't want to forget this. So it was just going, going, going. And I really do believe if you take what's going into your mind and not letting you find peace and put it onto paper, your mind will start to release it a little better, because then you can wake up and say, oh wait, I had, you know, this morning I woke up and I said, oh my gosh, what were all those ideas I had? And I was trying to rack my brain to remember them. And some of them I remembered and some of them I'm having to work at. But that way you wake up and say, oh, these are all the things that came to me. I'm so happy I have it written down.

Barb Schmidt: [00:28:59] Genius, I love that. And we said we were going to start this episode with with tips and tricks. So I have a little trick to share with you. I read this in one of my

meditation books when I early on when I first started meditating, and I've used it. On and off, but mostly on for the past 38 or so years. And here it is. So in the Zen Buddhist tradition. And I'm not a Buddhist, and I just I studied all the religions. I think we've talked about that in this podcast. In the Zen Buddhist tradition, they truly are be where your feet are. They truly are be in the present moment. And so one of the things in reading about how that can happen for our lives, we have to do it when we're sleeping too. So what what I learned way back then was when we go to sleep, when we get into our bed or wherever it is we are sleeping, when we decide to go to sleep, like the bed or the floor or the sofa or whatever it is that we're sleeping on is for sleeping. So if we allow the mind then to tell us all the things that we need to know while we're sleeping, it's it's a recipe for disaster.

Barb Schmidt: [00:30:09] It's you're training your mind to constantly tell you all these things because you're allowing it. And so what I learned is when when you said it perfectly Michelle when you feel like you want to remember all these things. Because yes, we do have some great insights when we're sleeping because we're starting to go into the unconscious which which has all the gems and the jewels in it a lot of the time. So when you're starting to feel that way and you think it's important that you need to get get up and go in a chair. So I get up out of my bed and I go to the chair and as you said, Michelle journal, or I'll write it down, or I'll think about all the things and have all the strategies in my mind. And when I think I'm done, I'll get back into the bed, because the bed is for sleep and the chair is for thinking it has. It has been phenomenal for me all these years because now I know when I get in bed. I'm sleeping. I'm doing my little reflection and I go to sleep.

Michelle Maros: [00:30:58] I love that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:30:58] Its not perfect, but it really has served me very well because my body knows and my mind knows. I've trained my mind that when I get into bed, I sleep. So try that. When you think you you've got your mind going and you're having a lot of ideas or you're having trouble, get up and go sit in the chair. Even if you're not writing, just sit. Okay. Mind. You want to think so here I am. I'm sitting in the chair, ready to think. And many times what has happened for me is I get really, really tired and get into bed.

Michelle Maros: [00:31:26] Yeah. So good. That's a good one, because I probably had been spending too much time in my bed, not sleeping and working. And so my brain was like, well, you're in bed, so keep working.

Barb Schmidt: [00:31:40] Yeah, yeah, that is for sleep. Yeah.

Michelle Maros: [00:31:43] Yeah. All right. Number three.

Barb Schmidt: [00:31:45] So I would take this one because I was doing this a lot for the past three years. Yeah. And. Yeah. And you pointed this out to me a lot over the past few years.

Michelle Maros: [00:31:57] So let us have it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:31:58] So you frequently visualize worst case scenarios. You know, when you're when you're going through a huge life change, death, divorce, losing your home or buying a home or any of those things, those big life changes. It's natural that worst case scenarios are going to come up. We're going to go through the gamut of what are all the things that could go wrong, what are all the things that are going to be hard? What are all the things that I'm not going to be able to do? All those things will come up in the mind. And what has been helpful for me, and especially after the divorce was final, I didn't have these worst case scenarios anymore because it's over. It was all the leading up to it. And so what I want to share the most about this idea if you're visualizing worst case scenarios, visualize the best case scenarios too. And you taught me this Michelle early on in the in the separation and before the divorce. Mom, what are the good things that could happen? What are the good things? You know, we're going to the mind is going to tell us what bad is going to happen and how hard this is going to be, but what it also has the good things. So I would just offer up to you, which is what what I've done a lot. And I did it just recently when I was on my trip. I actually got into a sync of worst case scenarios, and then I immediately said, okay, now what are all the good things? Barb and the good outweighed the bad like. Huge. Hugely so. Don't beat yourself up, and don't judge yourself for going down the path of visualizing worst case scenarios, because sometimes that can be helpful. Sometimes it can. It can enlighten you to certain things that maybe you need to watch out for. But please look at the best case scenarios as well, and the

happy case scenarios and the good things that will come from whatever it is that you're doing in this juncture of your life.

Michelle Maros: [00:33:51] Yeah. Um. Yeah. When things are hard and life is tough and you are kind of living through the first and the second ones that we talked about, just wanting to get through the day and just being exhausted. It's really easy to let our minds love to go into that space of thinking about what are all the worst things that could happen. I mean, it makes sense. We're exhausted, we're spent, we're burned out. And so that's typically a breeding ground for our minds to engage in some of that negative thinking. And I think, if nothing else, we know how powerful our minds are and how much the thoughts and the mind influence so much of our lives and our viewpoints and our moods and our actions. And yeah, it's going to happen that when times are tough. We're going to start to think about. All of the bad that could happen. But if you catch yourself doing that, just try to add in some of the good that could happen to you just to even it out, you know. You know, I might visualize that I write this whole book and it comes out. And no one reads it and it's awful and I feel like a failure, for example.

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:16] That's not going to happen.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:18] Well, I'm saying.

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:18] Yes, it's true.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:20] But you know, also what else could I visualize for it? It comes out and hopefully you all read it and love it and it's great, you know, so kind of play that game with your mind of if you catch it going on one end of the spectrum, then say, okay. And also what about this?

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:41] I love it.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:42] You know, I could with your divorce. You know, I could lose all my friends. And no one wants to be with me. And I'm isolated and alone and miserable. Okay, but also, what if I have tons of friends around me and I'm constantly surrounded by love and support and people who care about me in a very deep way, and I feel infinitely loved.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:05] Beautiful.

Michelle Maros: [00:36:08] You know. Obviously we don't know how life is going to unfold, but at least we can have that picture in our minds of the good that could happen.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:18] There's never just one side. There's never one side of a coin. There's never one side. You have happy and you have sad. You have difficulties and you have ease. So there's never just one way. So always add in the other way. And I from the day that I started meditating almost 40 years ago, I looked at my meditation practice as training my mind. Yeah, training my mind. And you look at it Michelle you talk a lot about creating that new groove in the mind. Our mind wants to go to the difficulty. Our mind wants to go to the worst case scenarios. So it is our job. I look at it as my job to start training my mind to see both sides. And then little by little by little, my mind will. My mind now starts to say, okay, this is the worst that could happen, this is the best that could happen. And so my mind is now, little by little by little, becoming more of a friend and an ally instead of an enemy, right? Instead of the mind beating us up. So I'm going to say it again, please have no judgment for yourself, and do not beat yourself up for having worst case scenarios. Just add in what the other side could be, because there always is another side.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:29] Yeah. Exactly.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:31] So number four..

Michelle Maros: [00:37:33] Is me!

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:33] Is you too. You feel irritable and grumpy and catch yourself overreacting. I think it's not just you Michelle me all of us can relate to.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:41] I mean, as a kid, you would call me Oscar the Grouch.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:43] I think that, but I think that that's not. You weren't really overreacting. You just...

Michelle Maros: [00:37:49] No, I could be irritable.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:50] You're just irritable.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:51] I can be grumpy.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:52] Yeah, you could be grumpy.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:53] You can be an Eeyore.

Barb Schmidt: [00:37:54] But you also could be the most beautiful, happy person in the world. So that's.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:59] I don't take it personally I know that I can be a grump. I can be a little moody sometimes. But I also know that when I'm irrationally grumpy or moody or irritable, it's because I'm spent.

Barb Schmidt: [00:38:14] Yeah. So this one is a quick one because I think we all can relate. We all overreact at one point or another. I mean, it's just the nature of being a human being. I think the key for me has always been when I overreact. Or lash out or say things I wish that I hadn't said or looked at the situation and the reaction that I had didn't meet the situation. I always just, I can feel it inside of me. Whoa. That was a big overreaction. Barb. What can I do in this moment? It's really a huge trigger for me when I overreact and not a trigger to beat myself up or to tell myself, how could I be like this? It's a trigger, okay? You just overreacted. Take a few deep breaths. Calm down. What do you need to do now? Do you need to apologize? Do you need to course correct here? Need to go get something to eat? Do you take a break? Do you need to say no to whatever it is you have to do an hour from now because you're just not feeling it? What do I what step can I take that will that will bring me back into alignment of taking an action and being in the present moment and doing what I need to do. So I think the biggest... I would have to say I think the biggest issue or opportunity with overreacting is not to not to beat yourself up. We always do that. I mean, I just we are always upset with ourselves and we're upset with the other person. And the anger just grows and grows and grows or the

the irritability just grows and grows and grows. We need to nip it in the bud. Okay, wait a minute. Just overreacted. What do I need to do? And don't beat yourself up because that just makes it worse.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:53] Yeah. And just know that if you are finding yourself in this, in these moods or irritability or overreacting, like maybe see if you can take a couple of moments for yourself. I mean, when I'm really grumpy or irritable, if I can go and spend a couple of moments in the bathroom and close my eyes and breathe, or go get a coffee by myself and just kind of reset myself, it helps a lot. Obviously, that's not going to get you out of survival mode, but if you can find those little practices throughout the day, you know, we talk about the 1% rule of if you can spend 1% of your day in mindfulness. I mean, even if you're in survival mode and maybe 1% feels like too much, if you can spend a couple of moments for yourself in the day to go do something for yourself, to go be in nature or close your eyes or whatever, something that makes you happy that can help reset a little bit.

Barb Schmidt: [00:40:57] Love it Michelle love it, love it, and or cancel something you don't want to do and not feel guilty about it. Yeah, it's so important not to beat yourself up. How many times have I said that should be the title of this? It's so true. Because when we when we do something we don't want to do and we're not even feeling up for it. And I'm not saying things we have to do. We do have to do some things. We just have to.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:18] Of course.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:18] I know that's life, but I would love for you to just take a pause and say, how many things am I saying yes to that I don't really have to do. I'm doing it because I'm people pleasing, or I'm doing it because I feel like I have to. Is it really something you have to do? I mean, I'm the queen of this. If I wake up and things aren't, I'm not feeling myself in a way that where I'm feeling overwhelmed or feeling survival mode or feeling like I need, I need a little bit of a break. I will look at what I'm doing for the day and say, wait a minute, I'm going to take this out. So I think what you said to Michelle, and I think what I'm trying to say here is see what you need.

Michelle Maros: [00:41:59] Yeah.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:59] See what you need to take care of yourself. And I'm not saying to see what you need to take care of yourself at the expense of the people in your life. I'm saying, what do you need to take care of yourself to be the best version of you in that moment? And it may just be a 40% version, but that's enough.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:14] Yeah. Get in that dialog with yourself of what do I need in this moment to feel 1% better?

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:20] Yes.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:22] Let's take a quick break. We're back again. Let's get into it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:29] This one you feel overwhelmed by your daily routine but don't know how to change it.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:33] This is also me recently.`

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:35] So I think.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:37] I think is this podcast about us?

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:40] Well, of course, all these podcasts...

Michelle Maros: [00:42:44] I mean I know it was a line. Is this about us?

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:45] Yes, this is us. This is human. This is human beings. So really, all I want to say to add here is when you feel overwhelmed with your daily routine and don't know how to change it, just take a pause and see what's what are the identify. What are the things that you're feeling. Remember, feeling overwhelmed is a feeling. I'm feeling overwhelmed. But now let's get specific. What is it that you're feeling overwhelmed about and how are you feeling in the overwhelm state? Am I feeling angry? Am I feeling feeling irritable? Am I feeling less than? Am I feeling like I'm not doing enough? Like really get specific about how you're feeling, what is

happening? I would write it down. I use my journal for this a lot. If I'm feeling overwhelmed, I always stop and pause. Okay, I ask myself, what's happening for you, Barb, in this moment? And then I'll get my journal and say, okay, what? What is the overwhelm? Identify the overwhelm, become aware of the overwhelm. And what can I do about it? Because that's what that is what you can change. You can change. How whatever is happening in the moment is making you feel. We can't change our feelings. We can. We can feel our feelings, identify our feelings, and then change the reaction or the action to it. This has been a lifesaver for me, using my journal and really getting detailed about why am I not, why I don't. I don't use the word why very much. I use the word what? What is it that's happening? Barb? What is it about this moment? What is it about your daily routine that is causing you to feel overwhelmed? And then break down the overwhelm and really get to the core of what is happening.

Michelle Maros: [00:44:29] And I think if there's something about your daily, weekly routine that is giving you a lot of internal struggle, I'm not just saying like, oh, I really don't want to go to work today because I'd rather be in bed. That's, I think, a normal feeling that we have sometimes. But if there's something that you're repeatedly feeling overwhelm about, like you're saying, talk to yourself and say like what? Why? I mean, I like to I'm a y person, but like, why do I feel this way about this part of my routine or what? Where are these feelings coming from, and what can I do about it? Because if I can't necessarily immediately change my daily routine, let's just say like, we have to go to work, we have to go to work. Like getting in touch with the feelings and maybe seeing if there's a route. Somewhere that we can start to work with that can maybe ease the overwhelm a bit. It's not going to fix everything, but maybe you won't feel so, you know.

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:35] Unhinged one and break it up into little tiny pieces like, okay, I don't want to go to work today. Yeah, sometimes we feel that way. But is this a constant thing? Like, it's every day I'm overwhelmed because I want to change this routine, because I don't want to be in it. What is it about work or what is it about the routine? I'm so I'm so anal about getting to the what. What is it about this routine? What is happening here? It's not just one big glob of work or one big glob of my life, or one big glob of my routine. What is the specific thing about all of this that's happening? And then what can I do to change it? I think the title of my next book, if I ever get to writing it.

Michelle Maros: [00:46:17] Oh here we go. Have you heard her say this before?

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:19] We'll be Acceptance. I've been thinking about acceptance for the past few months, and it has really served me greatly, because it gets to a place where most of the things that I'm trying to change, I cannot. And so I would I would urge you. If this is one of those things where you're feeling overwhelmed, look at what is causing the overwhelm and think about the things that you can change. Because I know the overwhelm for me is trying to change something that I can't change, and then not acknowledging it and understanding that I need to then go to the next step of acceptance has been a game changer for me. Okay, you can't change this. Accept it. This is the reality. This is the truth of what it is. And now what can you do? Accepting this reality? What can you do in the next moment?

Michelle Maros: [00:47:04] Yeah. And I think thinking about what are the little things that you can't change. I remember a while ago we used to do a lot of filming in one day, and those days thinking about those days would really overwhelm me. And I would feel I would go into the days, not my best self because I just was. It was a lot. And, you know, you and I would kind of go back and forth like, Michelle, come on, like, we're here, be present, step up. Yeah. And then I would get annoyed with you because I'm like, stop, stop telling me what to do. And it it was tough sometimes, like, I think you would be on edge because you're like, I don't know how Michelle is going to show up for filming. I don't know if she's going to be in a good mood when Michelle is not in a good mood. That makes things a little more challenging. You know, all of this stuff. And finally, you and I both kind of came to this realization that maybe we didn't need to spend so long in one day filming.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:04] We were like, why don't we just cut it in half and break it up? And you're like, would that be helpful for you? Would and I think, sorry not to sidetrack, but having people that can maybe recognize in you too and say, hey, it seems like this is really difficult for you. Let's figure out something to help. So you proposed. We don't need to do so much in one day. Let's break it up. Let's, you know, set boundaries with it. And I really appreciated that because you gave me the permission. I think the overwhelm to was I felt I don't want to let people down. I don't want to be the the problem here. I don't want to be the one that's like keeping us from getting stuff done. So I didn't think in my mind that I had the option to make a

change. And you giving me that permission to say, hey, we don't need to do all of this in one day. How would you feel if we changed it a bit was super helpful.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:03] Well, I think that that's the key, isn't it? I mean, it's amazing. Once you and I started really getting to the core of what was happening, and then we decided to make a change. Our other two colleagues that film with us, that help us, Lauren and Rebeca, they they're so grateful. I remember Lauren saying to us, oh, I'm so happy that, you know, I think it works best if we're not filming long days, that we break it up and do shorter days. And so it's interesting. It was interesting to me, and I'm kind of smiling about it right now, that the one thing that we had control over. We weren't speaking up right away. And everyone wanted the same thing. It's so interesting and I bet more often than not that happens a lot because we have a fear of speaking up or we got to do it this way. We've always done it this way. We've got to do it this way. So it just it brings me so we brought so much more. I mean, our days of work are joyful, but we brought so much more fun. I love the days when we're together filming I, we brought so much more fun. And all it took was speaking up and saying, wait a minute, this just doesn't work.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:15] Yeah.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:16] And it's ironic that it really wasn't working for any of us.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:20] Right.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:20] So that may be happening in your life as well. Think about those places where maybe you just speaking up and saying what you need and what's happening for you in the moment will also serve others.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:31] Yeah.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:32] So number six, what do you think of this one? Michelle.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:35] Also me.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:35] You crave comfort foods or forget to eat?

Michelle Maros: [00:50:38] Yeah. I since I've been in my book writing mode and you were away, you would say you would call me and say, hey, how's it going? What did you eat today? And I'd be like, oh, I had a coffee at 11 a.m. and you'd be like. And like, oh, well, I'm going to get a bagel. And I'm good. You're like, no, you need to eat. And even the other day. I was feeling very overwhelmed and a little bit frazzled by just how much I felt like I had to do, and it didn't feel like I was getting anything done, even though I was. And I was kind of too in it. I was staring at my screen, just feeling blocked and frustrated, and I had realized that I hadn't really had like a proper meal that day. I had, you know, coffee, a bagel, I don't know, some snacks or whatever. And I'm like, you know what? I'm going to get some dinner. And so I ordered an actual proper meal, and I ate dinner and I came back to my computer. I'm like, oh, I feel like writing isn't so hard. Food actually helps your brain function. What a concept. Um, but I was noticing because usually I'm the opposite. Usually I crave comfort foods when I'm really stressed or overwhelmed or in survival mode, I'll go to my favorite food and eat. But in this moment, I was just kind of trying to power through. So I was forgetting to eat or not forgetting to eat. I didn't want a break to eat. And. Yeah. Barely surviving in my survival mode. Well, I think.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:34] Food for all of us is a good barometer of what's happening. You know, food can be a trigger. Food can be a comfort. Food can be difficult. So I think food, you know, is a really good way of thinking about or not thinking, but looking at what's happening. I know for me, if I start craving sugar or I think I walked into your apartment a few weeks ago and ate a piece of candy that you had in a dish there, and you looked at me and you said, are you okay? What's happening with you?

Michelle Maros: [00:53:05] But that's it. I know that that might sound like I was judging you, but I know you so well that if you go straight to the candy dish, that means that something's wrong for you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:14] Yeah. No, no, no, I'm glad.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:16] I don't have any judgment that you were eating candy.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:17] No judgment whatsoever. And that's the whole thing I was getting. At this point. You can't have judgment and just really know yourself. And I looked at you and I said, I'm stressed. So we sat down and talked for a little bit. So it's kind of nice to have someone in your life that doesn't judge you but also will acknowledge, hey, are you okay? What do you need? What's happening? And then the last one, you avoid connecting with friends because you just don't have time, and you could insert family there to friends or family.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:45] Or you just avoid doing anything that brings you happiness because you don't feel like you have time.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:50] Yeah, it brings you happiness or gets you out into a joyful state or puts you in a place of having fun. I know this one for me is about having fun. I will avoid that word avoid, I think, is very, very crucial whenever I'm in avoidance and I don't want to do something, I have to ask myself, do you just not want to do it because you're overwhelmed and you need to say no? Or do you not want to do it because you're just not in the mood to have fun, or you're not in the mood to be out with people. So it goes back, always goes back. For me, just identifying what is happening, what is happening for you when you want to avoid something. So really, it's taking all these words and identifying what's the core of them. When I want to avoid something, that means I'm not really wanting to be too honest. I'm not really wanting to say, hey, can't go out to dinner with you tonight. I'm feeling tired or I just can't go tonight. So think about the word that you're using.

Barb Schmidt: [00:54:49] If you are avoiding connecting with friends or family because you don't have time, is it because you know that you're just feeling a little bit down and you just don't want to go out and have fun? I've been in that place before. Sometimes when I'm feeling overwhelmed or if I'm feeling like things are hard, which I don't want to keep repeating myself. But it's been hard. I don't want to have fun either, which makes no sense. It makes absolutely no sense. So. And when I think about that, then I'll usually call up the person and say, hey, let's go out. I want to have some fun. And I have a few friends in my life right now who are so excited when I say, I want to have fun because I'm such a, I don't know, thinking about having fun has always been difficult in my life. And I think because my childhood was so traumatic. So

I've really been working on that idea of not just avoiding and not thinking that life is also not about fun as well.

Michelle Maros: [00:55:45] Yeah. I think when we are just surviving, we think that we have to do only the things that can get us through the day. And sometimes we don't think that fun and connection and being with loved ones has a real purpose in our lives, and it really does. And this isn't to say that, you know, if you. Again, not to go back into my own example, but when I was kind of in my book writing mode this week, I had people who asked me if I wanted to do stuff, and I really felt like I needed to just focus. And so I used my discernment to say, okay, I can't right now, but I'll see you when I get this done. And so knowing that, like it's not, you always have to say yes to people, but finding that balance of doing what you need to do to, you know, satisfy your responsibilities. And also knowing that being with people, having fun, letting yourself find those tiny joys is also a huge part of your self-care.

Barb Schmidt: [00:56:49] And I think that's why the word avoid is really, really key in this sentence. If you're avoiding check it out. Ask yourself what's happening here?

Michelle Maros: [00:57:00] So yeah, those are some of our top signs. I guess we were talking about ourselves. Maybe we are both in survival mode.

Barb Schmidt: [00:57:08] Well I think , I mean, if you think about this time of year, it's really.

Michelle Maros: [00:57:11] Well and I think this goes to show that it can be really sneaky. You might not necessarily you might have said or seen the topic of this episode and you're like, I'm good. I don't think that's me. But it slips in really easily and it can build fast. And having these little pieces to be aware of can really help. And of course, relying on your self-care practices that make you feel good, even if you're in a phase of survival mode, are crucial. What are those practices? Is it meditation? Getting the journal? Getting outside. Moving? Prioritizing your sleep. That's like on the top of my list for this week. Unplugging from the news. That's a big one and just being able to ask for help. I think you and I have gotten into a good place of if something's up, you can ask me and I can ask you, and there's no there's never any judgment. But we feel comfortable doing so and just knowing that. You know, these even these moments

of survival will pass. And it's like all about finding those little life rafts that can lift us up, even through the difficult moments.

Barb Schmidt: [00:58:26] Yes, Michelle love it. Thank you for a fabulous conversation. And we use this little phrase, name it to tame it a lot. So by naming survival mode as a place where we go as humans. For me, it's made it okay. It makes it no judgment. It makes it okay. Yeah. Sometimes I'm just surviving. So we name it, it kind of loses its it loses the heaviness, and it kind of brings us back up. Okay. For this moment. This is this is what I'm doing or this is what's happening. So I will end my segment of this saying, just please be gentle with yourself. Please don't judge yourself in not judging yourself. Really, you'll stop judging others too, and you'll have so much more energy and so much more happiness and joy from the inside out. But do not be hard on yourself. Do not feel guilty for saying no or for slowing down and doing less in your day. If it's what you need, It's what you need and don't feel bad about it and do not judge yourself. I love you all so much. Thank you for being here.

Michelle Maros: [00:59:31] Yeah, thank you so much for listening and be gentle with yourself. This is there is a lot going on. It's intense. And if anything else, try to release the judgment of whatever you're going through at this moment in time, thinking that it's not good enough, or that you should be farther along in your healing, or that you should be over something that you think you should be over by now, or that you're not, that you're in X, but you think you should be in Y. You know, just. Like my mom was saying, have that acceptance for for what is right now and know that you know you're doing the best you can with what you're being given in this moment. And life is always changing.

Barb Schmidt: [01:00:12] And it's enough.

Michelle Maros: [01:00:13] And it's enough. So thank you so much for listening. I hope this was helpful. Or any of you who are feeling like you're maybe in survival mode. I feel like this is exactly what you and I both needed to help us move through. So thanks for letting us talk through our own problems yet again.

Barb Schmidt: [01:00:31] It's why we have these conversations.

Michelle Maros: [01:00:33] Exactly. Thank you so much again for listening to the show, and thank you for being a part of our amazing community. We're so grateful for all of you. We really, really appreciate your support with the show and being with us week after week. It means so much to us. It's truly a joy to talk to you all every week and we don't take your support for granted. You know, I spent the time of year is to be grateful and we're so grateful for all of you. So thank you so much again for being a part of the BKB community. If you're loving the show, which we hope that you are, please make sure that you're liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts. Apple, Google, Spotify. So they are always up to date with new episodes. If you haven't yet a five star review on iTunes or Spotify is super helpful and also leaving a review. It's everything for the show, so we'd really appreciate it. And, you know, if nothing else, share your love of the show with a friend. Let us let them know about the show if they haven't heard about it yet. That's also super, super helpful. Lastly, we do have journals for sale for the holiday season. They're limited edition journals. We've talked about journaling in this week's episode, giving your thoughts at home. I love them, they're so cute! A little sha cameo on the journals, so click the link in our show notes if you want to check that out for this holiday season. All righty. Thank you so much again for listening. Thank you, mom, for sharing. And we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.