

Episode 101 – Releasing Emotional Monitoring
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'm here with my mom, Barb, and I am so excited to be back sitting across the table from her, picking up on last week's conversation and so much more. As always, it's you never just get one thing with this show. You get a lot. So. Hi, mom. Welcome back.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:40] Thank you. Michelle.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:40] How's it going?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:41] It's going great. How's it going being you today?

Michelle Maros: [00:00:44] It's going.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:45] I think that's what I love about us doing this every week, because I've been so super looking forward to having, like, a short little part two.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:54] Yes, I know.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:55] Carry over from last week because it's it was a lot.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:58] I felt like I kind of had to cut you off last week because. We were running a little long, but there obviously is so much to say about this topic of emotional monitoring. If you didn't listen to last week's episode, maybe go back and listen and then catch this after, because we will be kind of...I felt a little incomplete after last week's episode. There was a lot I wanted to say. I know there's a lot you wanted to say, and just tying it up in a nice little bow to present it to you all as a the gift of this of this week.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:30] Well I think exactly Michelle. And I think what we love to do is obviously share our own experiences and how we move through life, through all the difficulties

and all the hard things. And I think the episode for this, for today and for this week will be about how what are some of the tools or what are some of the things that we've learned or some of the ways that we've been able to manage? Not obviously, this is this is kind of a part two or a follow up episode from last week about emotional monitoring. And so Michelle and I both feel like we want to share some of the ways we've been able to become aware of that. We've been able to cut through that, and we've been able to come back to ourselves. And maybe that would be the whole theme of this episode this week is how do we find our place back to ourselves, like coming back home or coming back to a place of you know, I want to say joy. That keeps coming up for me. Place of joy, but also a place of ease. A place of acceptance. Okay, this is what's happening. This is who I am. This is how I feel. And. Okay. Now what? It's kind of like, you know, I had a teacher say he did a whole talk, and he said, you know, what comes first, the chicken or the egg. But let's just assume that the egg comes first. And when an egg is there, there's the egg. And then when the egg is hatched, the chicken comes out of the egg. And then imagine the chicken coming out of the egg saying, okay, now what? Maybe you had to be in person. You used to have a.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:14] You used to have a slide of this.

Barb Schmidt: [00:03:14] I did. I used to use it all the time because I loved it so much. So that's how we are. We come out of the womb and we're babies, and we're taking care of as babies, you know, in the best way, I guess possible in terms of whatever's happening. Everyone's life is different as they come into this, to this world. And we come in and then we're like, now what? Okay, now, what is it you expect me to do? Or now, what is it am I supposed to do? And I think that's the proverbial question that we're to ask all of ourselves. Like, now what? And I think this for me, this episode as a follow up to last week is going to be we're going to give you some of the now what's. Some of the tools and you always say tips, tips and tools for how we can start to chip away at this emotional monitoring.

Michelle Maros: [00:04:02] You're so funny.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:03] Why?

Michelle Maros: [00:04:04] I just it obviously technology, and I don't even think it would be a good thing to provide us to do so has not advanced. So I could know what's going on in your brain at all times, but I think for one day it would be nice to just witness your mental activity, because I just never know what's going to come out of your mouth. Like, I could have never predicted that you were going to talk about a chicken cracking open through an egg today. So thank you for that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:31] You're so welcome.

Michelle Maros: [00:04:31] Keep us on our toes.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:34] Isn't that the beauty of life? You never know.

Michelle Maros: [00:04:37] Certainly. Certainly is. So yes, we want to dive in deeper to last week's episode and conversation about emotional monitoring and really just. People's moods, managing moods and what we can do to fortify ourselves from the inside out, to manage whatever these things that come up in our lives so that we don't have to be so hyper vigilant about other people.

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:03] And for people that didn't listen to last week's episode, if you're listening to it now, go back and listen as you said, Michelle. But why don't you just give them like a 30,000 foot quick. Like if you grew up in an environment really is how we started last week. If you grew up in an environment where you felt like you had to manage other people's moods or behaviors.

Michelle Maros: [00:05:23] That's emotional monitoring. It's when you feel like....

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:25] Give them a little.

Michelle Maros: [00:05:27] It's where you feel like you just have to be hyper vigilant and. Watch out for and monitor and manage other people's emotions and moods in every single situation. And it's exhausting and it's energy depleting. And I think a lot of us do fall into this category, and a lot of us maybe never even thought that there was something wrong with it,

because it can be so similar. I think it's a very fine line between being empathetic and being someone who is emotionally monitoring and hyper vigilant of other people's emotions, and I think that fine line and what separates it is allowing ourselves to take it on as our own responsibility and as our job to keep the peace, but also in taking it personally and making it a reflection of you and part of what defines you, rather than knowing that and remembering that other people's actions and words and behaviors are theirs and theirs alone and their responsibility. And it isn't a reflection of who we are and it's not. It's not our job to manage it and it's not something to take personal. And I think that's the biggest piece and takeaway that I've experienced in my life, is that I can let people have their behaviors, their actions, their outbursts, their uncomfortable moments, and it doesn't have to say anything about me. And I don't have to take that on as something that I have to apologize for or, um, work through as a part of my own worthiness and purpose in life.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:13] Beautifully said, Michelle. Beautifully said.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:18] That's it. Alright! Bye.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:20] Yeah, I think it is. And I the only thing that I would add to that is and it doesn't work. You know, we may think it works for a while that we can manage other people's moods and behaviors and all of that. And we think it's going to reduce or decrease any anxiety or any problems or any chaos or any drama that we might have in our lives. And maybe it does for a moment here and a moment there, you know, or a year here or a year there, you know, whatever time. You know, lapses, whatever it is, but it ultimately doesn't work. It ends up increasing our anxiety, increasing our separation from ourselves, not knowing who we are, not knowing how we feel, abandoning our own needs and our own wants. And it ends up being a situation that doesn't work. And. I believe strongly that we want to do things that do work. We want to we really want to look at all the things that we've learned. Because that's what I feel is so beautiful about getting older. I am so much more wise, and I love the fact that I get wiser and wiser every day or every year. I believe we're here to learn and continue to grow and to continue to keep becoming and keep.

Barb Schmidt: [00:08:33] You know, I like to think of what's happening on the inside of us is like an onion, and we continually peel back the layers of the onion from the inside one, one layer of

this situation that doesn't work. Or if you are someone who has to monitor and manage other people's moods, which takes you completely out of the present moment, we're going to peel that layer back so we can see, wow, I really am losing myself here. What what can I do? How can I start to shift that? And today's episode will be that. Giving you little ways, little things that you can put into your life. Not some big thing, just a little thing here and there that you can put into your life that will start to shift that from the inside out, but also start to help you become aware of when you're doing it. Help you become aware of what you're doing, what you're doing, and help you start to really understand what is your place in life, what is your responsibility. What is your job and what isn't, and how you can recapture some of your energy and your vibrance for the most extraordinary life that you want to live, and for the magnificent person that you are.

Michelle Maros: [00:09:40] Yeah, I think that. The concept of emotions, and especially when we think of relationships and our day to day lives, of being in interactions with people and how other people impact us and how we feel about ourselves is so layered and complex, and there's a lot that goes into and it's unique for each of us, too, of how we show up in the world and how we take on or let other people impact how we feel about ourselves. But I think in this particular habit of emotional monitoring and even the concept of taking on people's moods and feelings and actions. It does become a full time job for people that fall into that. I mean, I've been in that space where I think I allowed myself to become so empathetic that I became like a sponge of just taking in everything around me to the point where, like you said, I was disconnected from myself. I couldn't maybe necessarily differentiate what was mine to carry and what wasn't mine to carry. I would make other people's problems my own because I, you know, I thought if I was there to witness it, then maybe I need to be the one to fix it, because maybe this person can't fix it themselves. And it's very confusing living life from that place.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:12] And it's tricky because you think, oh, I'm being such a kind, caring person that I'm going to you know, take on my friends, whatever, because they can't do it themselves. So I'm going to wear this badge of honor of like, look, let me go through this for you or help you in such a deeply emotional way because this is going to be really helpful. I can do it better than you can. And I may be a little. This is like what I would say to myself in my mind, I'm maybe more emotionally equipped to handle it than you can. And so let me do this for you, because I'm such a kind and empathetic and caring person. And it's you can see, like

the web, that it weaves of confusion and boundaries being crossed and just. Really wonky energy of doing that, but also how it disconnects you from yourself. And again, it's really tricky to distinguish as caring, kind, empathetic, compassionate people. You want to help people, you want to be supportive of people. But what is that line between. Being that kind, caring person and then going too far and taking things on that aren't your own. And I think if you are someone that falls into the habit and the pattern of emotional monitoring growing up in traumatic situations or chaotic dynamics and environments and dysfunction, you take that on as one of your core.

Michelle Maros: [00:12:41] traits of being the person that fixes it. And we walk around with, like, this badge of honor that, you know, I'm so messed up that I can fix anything because I've been through everything and. For me, it's been a slow chipping away of that. Badge of honor because it's it's not really something to be. Happy about. And again, we said this last week, but again this week it's not any of our jobs to do this. It's exhausting, it's overwhelming, and it ultimately just isn't beneficial for us or for the other person that we're trying to step in for. And I think if we can start to connect with ourselves in a way and remind ourselves constantly over and over, I think this is something that I'm going to have to remind myself every single day that other people's opinions and moods and thoughts are not personal. It has nothing to do with me. But doing so can so that we can detach ourselves in a healthy, whole way is really how we can start to. Kind of live our lives connected because we're all connected in this world that we lived in, live in, but independent in a healthy way.

Barb Schmidt: [00:14:02] Yeah, beautifully said, Michelle. And I think that for me, what helped me the there is, there is a simple, sometimes I don't really like to use that word simple because nothing really ever seems very simple in life. But there is a simple practice that you and I talk about all the time that I think has helped you, and it certainly has helped me, is that idea, and we ended last week's episode with this about we have to honor our own emotions and our own feelings. We have to know why we are. We have to know what is the what, what is causing us to feel like we need to fix it. What is causing us to feel like we need to be jumping in the middle here and trying to monitor it, or trying to keep it at bay so it doesn't turn into some full blown chaotic mess or whatever that is. And so if we're not aware, if we're if we're constantly living ourselves, living our lives from the outside in, at the mercy there of the external world, I like to say, and not really understanding, wait, what's my what? How am I feeling right now? What's

happening right now? Why am I feeling like I have to jump in here? Is it because I just really I'm feeling. I'm feeling good. I'm feeling like I don't want to fix anything. I'm feeling like I just. I want to be here for the person I am a kind, caring, loving person. I want to be here. Or am I feeling like, oh my gosh, I can't take one more thing here. Let me try to let me try to monitor this and fix it so it doesn't blow up into something worse or whatever might be happening for you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:15:29] So I think that the thing that has helped me break this cycle, I believe this is a generational cycle for sure, but to break this cycle of needing to fix or to monitor other people's moods or behaviors or emotions has been to have a practice of sitting with myself and asking myself, what is happening right now? What are you feeling right now? And not abandoning myself, not forgoing and saying my feelings don't matter. It doesn't matter what I'm feeling. It doesn't matter what's happening with me. Let me just jump in here and do it. Or let me just do this because I. I don't want the explosion or I don't want what's going to happen. And I have to always know my own place here. Where am I coming from? How am I feeling? So naming my emotions and just taking a moment, pausing and taking a moment. How am I feeling right now? And then if I'm feeling scared or I'm feeling like there's going to be a problem here, then going down that path of, okay, what, what could the problem be and what do I need to do for myself first? So I think the simple practice of starting to move into a direction of not emotionally thinking that we're responsible for other people's behaviors and, and moods and all of those things is understanding our place and understanding where we're coming from and understanding what is happening for us, and naming our emotions and not thinking that I have to anticipate someone else's emotion, but actually just being grounded in my own feelings and my own emotions and what's happening for me. And what do I need?

Michelle Maros: [00:17:06] Yeah, I love that. Let's take a quick break. And we're back.

Barb Schmidt: [00:17:13] And one of the things.

Michelle Maros: [00:17:14] She was so ready.

Barb Schmidt: [00:17:14] I was really on the.. Because one of the things I, I want to share again and I know we've shared this before is that changed my life so much is the Jill Bolte Taylor. She was a neuro anatomist, not a neurosurgeon, but a neuroanatomist. And she had a stroke at age

like 37 years old, a massive stroke. And it took her eight years and she fully recovered from a stroke that no one thought she could recover from. And in her research, because she was a research scientist, a neuroanatomist, in her research she discovered that we all have emotions. We have emotions all the time. We have feelings all the time, and emotions and feelings. They want to be felt. They want to come and they want to go. That's what they want to do. They want to come and go and come and go and come and go. And so what she discovered in her research in healing herself from this severe stroke was that it takes 90s. For an emotion to come up, for a feeling to come up, and for it to move right through our body. Unless we start allowing the mind to start thinking about the feeling, or start blocking the feeling, or start negating the feeling, or start holding on to the feeling, then it starts to manifest in many, many other ways inside of our body and inside of our minds and inside of our actions.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:42] So I've never forgotten this, and I always use this, that if we could just feel our emotions in the moment when they're happening and feel the feelings and honor them without judging them and without trying to make a story about them, they'll move through us. So for me, in trying to look at this idea of really codependency, which I think we have a whole episode on codependency. Instead of thinking that I've got to fix or save someone else, I can be there just to be who I am. If the feeling is overwhelming and it's not my job to try to fix or save, or it's not my job to try to jump between what's happening and what could happen. It's my job to stay in the present moment so I can be there as a strong, as you were saying, a kind, loving person that wants to help. We can't be kind, loving people if we're not honoring our own emotions or our own feelings in the moment. So I think you had a therapist that shared something with you that I love this visual about how we can think of ourselves. I know you and I've talked about this before, but maybe it was one of my therapists.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:48] I was gonna say, it's not mine.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:49] Oh, maybe it's one of my therapists that think of yourself as a tube. I really like visuals a lot. So think of yourself as a tube, or think of your emotions that have to run through a tube. Think of yourself as seeing the emotions come up through this tube, and then they have to go out somewhere and allowing the emotion to flow through you. This was such a beautiful visual for me that encapsulated Jill Bolte Taylor's research in emotions and feelings, instead of absorbing the moods and the behaviors of other people. Let them run. Let your

emotions run through you and see how you feel in that moment, allowing their emotions to do the same, knowing that you will know what step to take in that moment. And understanding that this is how we live our lives from the inside out.

Michelle Maros: [00:20:38] Yes. And it's super interesting because as you were talking and as I was thinking about this dynamic. And why it comes up for us and why we do it. I think it's a denial of what's true and trying to change what's true to suit what we want and what our needs are, rather than either accepting what is true or making a change to create a new reality. Because I think so much about emotional monitoring and trying to jump in between an experience and a reaction to make things better. And it's really knowing that someone or something is going to have a certain reaction or say something or do something that really isn't okay for us, but accepting it anyways, thinking that we can make it okay or make it better and. That isn't necessarily a healthy response, because if there's something happening in our lives that's not in alignment. Emotional monitoring really is a Band-Aid to the real problem. And getting to the root of the real problem is maybe this person isn't aligned with my life or, you know, maybe this dynamic is toxic. Or maybe I'm in a codependent relationship where I need to sort this out because this isn't healthy. And I feel like knowing that. It's really a band aid and not a solution has been huge for me. And then also thinking about underneath that emotions and and feelings that come up in these dynamics. And Jill Bolte Taylor's research, Indiana University alum shout out, is fascinating because I think we often take on our feelings and emotions as part of our personalities, and especially when we're so used to being in these toxic, traumatic environments where, you know, a conflict arises and we respond. And it's like these patterns that we get ourselves into, that we take on as parts of our personality or part of our mindset.

Michelle Maros: [00:22:55] But in reality, these reactions, these feelings, these emotions are just responses to life and to what's happening in life. And if you can start to think about feelings through that lens, like Jill Bolte Taylor says of it only takes 90s for our bodies to process an emotion that comes up. And the reason that it takes longer is because we've engaged with it in a way that's perpetuated it. And so thinking about feelings, thinking about a reactions and emotions and responses to life, knowing that. Okay. You just did something to me that made me feel really sad. I feel sad about it. Let myself process it and then move on. Is a huge piece, and it's been a huge practice for me in starting to identify. Who I am in a situation and not allowing my feelings to define who I am in a situation, and then separately going on to then

allowing myself to truly understand and grasp the concept that other people's feelings and emotions aren't a reflection of me as well. It's like how many layers of emotions and feelings am I going to let define me? It's like I let my own and then I let other people's, and it's like chipping away. Or like you, you love the peeling back, the layers of the onion. But. Pulling it back, and none of it is a reflection of who we are. It's all just reaction and emotion based, and it's so quick and momentary and fluid that no wonder we feel so confused and exhausted all the time, because we're constantly being moved and swayed and influenced by emotions that are always changing and that sometimes aren't even truly based in reality.

Barb Schmidt: [00:24:44] This is brilliant. Michelle. This is a whole other episode.

Michelle Maros: [00:24:47] Oh there we go!

Barb Schmidt: [00:24:47] Because feelings are not facts. Feelings are feelings. And that's why Jill Bolte Taylor's research and her whole her whole life's work as a result, especially of that stroke that she had, is, is just genius. If we really can get it and understand it and really live that way. I was in a relationship for 33 years where I was told I was the problem all the time. And what he meant by that was he didn't like my feelings. My feelings were the problem. How you feel about this is the problem. And so if we're going to think that feelings are facts and that feelings are who we are, you just said it so beautifully. Michelle feelings are not who we are. And that's what I love about this idea of feelings or feelings. They come and they go. They come and they go. If you really can understand that. And it's the same for the other person. So if my feelings, if I acknowledge my feelings and name them and take care of myself and understand what's happening for me in the moment, they will come and go. And the same is for the other person. So the other, the other little step or the other little thing that we can do is allow people to have their if someone is having a bad mood, if someone is having some really bad behavior, we can name it and say, this mood or this behavior right now is not okay for me. Let's take a break. I'm going to go take a break.

Barb Schmidt: [00:26:07] I'm going to go take a walk, or I'm going to go do some work that I'm behind on, or I'm going to go meditate for a few minutes. Let's take a break and let's come back to it. And then let's talk about what's really happening, because sometimes the feelings can be overwhelming. Obviously. Sometimes feelings can be overwhelming. The emotions can be

overwhelming. We're not always going to let in 90s let a feeling come and go. But if that can kind of be the baseline that we could try to do that or try to be mindful of that, then when they're really overwhelming and we just can't. Which I had a lot of that in this past year especially, we can take a little pause and take a little break and not own it as who we are, which is what you just said, so wonderfully Michelle. Because feelings are not who we are. Emotions are not who we are. There are reaction to what's happening and when we can get to what's happening, then we can understand what we need to do about it. Because who we are at the core is not all of this stuff. And this has been a huge awakening for me. How can I not take on the feelings and the emotions as who I am? And how can I actually let go of the idea that I'm the problem? Maybe some of my behavior has been the problem. Maybe some of my actions have been the problem. Absolutely. So let's have a conversation about it. And this is the same way that you can approach another person.

Barb Schmidt: [00:27:27] Of course, moods and added attitude behaviors and actions and all of that absolutely can be problem. Absolutely can be something that have to be dealt with. But if they're mixed in and you get the wrong message that you're feelings are wrong, or your feelings are the problem or your emotions are the problem, then there's no there's no way of moving out of it because you can't fix a feeling. You can't fix an emotion. You can allow it to happen, and then you can get underneath it and say, okay, now what's happening now? What do I need to look at here? What is it that's causing me to have this feeling? Am I feeling like I'm not worthy? Am I feeling insecure? Am I feeling that you're going to hurt me? Am I feeling unsafe? Am I feeling any of those things like I'm not good enough or whatever it is? There's so many layers underneath that idea of what we're feeling or not the idea. There's so many layers underneath, the feeling of the emotions that we're feeling. So I think that's the huge that we just we named one naming your emotions and allowing them to move through you and not allowing you to react to emotions and feelings, letting them just be. But then number two, or maybe the next step to look at that is, yes, the behaviors and the actions need to have some look at, but not attaching it to the feelings and not owning the feeling as you said, Michelle as being who you are.

Michelle Maros: [00:28:53] Yeah, and I think. In really contemplating this. It is a building block of how we perceive and react to life, to where I think from early ages we have experiences and we have feelings and reactions to things that maybe we don't fully process. And we write

stories about what it means about us, and we make it part of our personality. And we. Make it part of who we are. And so then we start to build on to that as we go through life and look for experiences and reasons to make those stories that we've written about our feelings be true. And the thing that keeps coming to mind for me in this instance, as someone who is, you know, a recovering people pleaser, someone who is an empath, someone who typically would make other people's actions a part of who I am, you know, like I would be so sensitive to things to where like if someone cut me off in traffic or honked their horn at me or flicked me off because I didn't go right when the light turned green, I would internalize and make that mean so much about me. I'm a bad person. I'm not good enough. That person thinks I'm stupid.

Barb Schmidt: [00:30:25] I don't know how to drive.

Michelle Maros: [00:30:26] Who am I to be on the road? Oh my gosh, what does that person think about me? Do they think because of what kind of car I have, maybe they think I'm this, this and this, and maybe they saw that I'm a girl and they think this isn't like I would let something so simple as, like, getting honked at on the road, take up so much of that mental energy and allow it to define me in such a way. But I think it's because it's been based on and propped up by years and years and years of unprocessed emotions and stories that I've told myself that I constantly have to prove myself and make people like me. And so in thinking about it from this lens of like, what are those? Stories that we've told ourselves about people and about our places in the world, and about how we have to show up, and what are the feelings that we've suppressed along the way that we haven't fully processed, that have led to these stories? And how can we remind ourselves that they're just not true? Like sometimes being on the road and getting honked at is just something that happens. It doesn't have anything to do with me, and it's crazy to even say that as something that would be a part of my emotional wherewithal because it's such a seemingly innocuous day to day experience. But I think for some of us who are so sensitive, we let those little bumps in the road pile up in our emotional bank, I guess, so to speak. And what do we need to do to empty that and that and retell ourselves what's true and what's not true about us and about our lives.

Barb Schmidt: [00:32:14] I love that the idea of what is true, and I want to add to that for me. What I really noticed, and I think I've noticed it a lot. You know, it's not like we get an epiphany and then it's over. We get an epiphany, and then we may slide back a little bit, and then we get

a bigger epiphany, and then we may slide back a little bit. And that's how I feel like my life has been. And if I look at this past year or so, what I've really discovered is just what you said earlier. I've allowed my feelings to be who I am and to negate any of the true facts and the truth underneath of what's really going on. So let me give you all an example. So here's an example. Let's say you're having a feeling of insecurity or you're having a feeling of hurt or insecurity or. Um, abandonment or the feeling that. I'm trying to think of the feeling. I'm trying to get myself into one of the feelings, one of the really intense feelings. Been a lot of them, but a really intense feeling. And I think it was insecurity that I'm not that I'm not okay with who I am or that I'm not enough in the relationship that I was in, in the marriage that I was in. And so what happens is I'm feeling those feelings. And so if you go to try to have the conversation with the partner that you're in the relationship with based on the feelings you're going to be told, probably more often than not that's a problem.

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:40] No, that's not true or whatever. And so you're going to believe that that, oh, there's something wrong with my feelings or my feelings aren't valid, or there's something wrong with you, or you're the problem or whatever it is, if you're going into a conversation based on feelings instead of having it, having a conversation first that says, this is how I'm feeling. And it's not making it's it's making me not trust or it's making me not okay or it's making me all these. So I want to take some time to process these feelings, and then I want to come back to you and have a conversation. So you can actually have a conversation about the facts and the truth of what's underneath, the feeling of insecurity, or the feeling of not trusting someone, or the feeling of being abandoned, or the feeling of not being worthy, or the feeling of not being good enough. Whatever the feeling is, that feeling of emotional abandonment really is what it is. So I think when I look back on all of the difficulties in any of my relationships, but especially this last marriage, it's been about not honoring my own feelings. And being okay with my feelings, and then digging deeper and being strong enough and brave enough to say no, this is the fact.

Barb Schmidt: [00:34:54] This is the truth for me. This is my truth or my fact. It might not be your fact, but it is my truth. So now let me hear your truth and let's get to a place of compromise or a place of understanding. And I think too often we never get to that. Not we. I just mean collectively. It's hard to get to that place. It's hard to not take your feelings as facts, and it's hard to sit with yourself and understand what is the truth underneath it all and then

have the honest, really, really, really difficult conversation. And I think if we don't do that, then the feelings are going to keep coming up. And that's what happened in my relationship for sure. The feelings kept coming up because I never allowed myself.... I never felt like I was allowed to have the feeling without feeling like I was a problem for having the feeling or the emotion.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:42] Right.

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:43] And so I didn't take responsibility for my own self and my own emotions and my own feelings in this particular relationship, more often than not. And it's necessary. So we have to honor our feelings. We have to know how we feel, but we can't have a conversation about some deep seated stuff that we need to talk about in the feeling mode, right? I can't, I couldn't, and it never worked right.

Michelle Maros: [00:36:06] Let's take another quick break really quickly. Sorry. Thank you. We are back.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:13] And so I think what I've learned is what works is honoring the feeling and knowing how you feel. But what is what is underneath the feeling? And what is the actual conversation that has to be had either with yourself or with your partner, or with your kids, or with whoever your family members or neighbors or friends is like really, really being okay with how you feel. Don't judge your feelings and allowing yourself to be okay with how you feel. But then do the work. Do the quiet inner work of understanding what's underneath the feeling. What is causing me to feel this way, not why am I feeling this way? Because when I would ever ask myself the question why, I would say, oh, because you're weak, Barb. Or oh, because you're not like other people. You should be strong by now. You're 67 years old. You've been in a lot of therapy. You should be strong by now. No, it's not a why for me, it's a what? Okay. What is it that's still under there? What is underneath that next layer of that onion that's still there that I need to get to, that I need to talk about, or that I need to share.

Michelle Maros: [00:37:17] Yes. And I think that unpacking and getting to the root of those what's underneath the feelings and not even necessarily letting, like our emotional baggage spill out onto our relationships. Because I do think that. When we don't necessarily know what we're feeling or why we're feeling, and then we act out based on those feelings without really

processing them. That's when we get into tricky dynamics in our relationships of people feeling like we're too emotional or we're too needy or we're confusing or whatever that might be. And I do think that practice of just starting to let yourself become detached from your feelings in a sense of like, oh, this came up and I'm feeling X, where did that come from? What is making me feel this way. And like, just like we always say, being a scientist of your life and picking it apart in a sense of like, oh, this is why I feel that way. And this dynamic is leading to me think this, but this is true and this isn't. And that's why I love journaling so much, because you can really start to pick apart your emotions and your feelings and your journal where it's not necessarily. Spilling into your personal relationships, but where you can start to look at feelings and patterns and thought processes without judgment of like, wow, this really keeps coming up for me and it doesn't make me feel good. And I want to start to get to the bottom of like, why? Why it's happening? Or am I putting myself in situations where this is constantly triggering me, or am I surrounding myself with people that don't let me feel safe to express my emotions, or that I can speak up about what's up for me? What do I need to do in my life to make those small changes so that I can feel better and maybe pick apart and break apart some of those patterns and. And toxic. Thought processes, processes.

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:30] Yeah. I think what we're saying really is powerful.

Michelle Maros: [00:39:33] Oh do you?

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:33] Yeah. I mean, it's very powerful because we're really getting to the core of. What I have seen in my own life in being the scientist of my own life, especially the past year, is that. I was judging and trying to make it okay that I was feeling the way that I was. I was not just allowing my feelings to just be. Like I had to make them.... It's okay that you feel this way, Barb, because you've got all these things underneath that are making you... Like I was needing that approval to feel the way I was, and I needed that laundry list of why I felt this way and how terrible it was for me to feel this way. Instead of, of course, I feel this way. It's fine to feel this way. It's not good or bad. It just is. Now let's dig into what is the cause, what is happening, Barb, and what was happening underneath all that was not okay. So I think we get confused. You know that idea that it is okay to be sad? Of course it's okay to be sad. Give me a break. Like I want to scream when we think that it's not okay to be sad. So then let's let the feeling go through us, and then let's figure out, oh, the sadness is because my mother died and

I don't want somebody telling me I need to be over it in X amount of time. I want someone to say, oh, I, my mother died too. So I understand that feeling of sadness or I can't imagine what you're feeling because my mother hasn't died.

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:09] Let me just be here with you so you can. You can feel safe in the feelings. But instead we own the feeling. We think it's not okay to have the feeling or the emotion, even the emotion, even the rage. I think rage comes from not feeling the feelings. They brew and they brew and they brew and they compound and they compound and they compound. And then we feel rage. If we just would allow ourselves to feel the feeling without judging it and having any kind of particular, judgment is the word that keeps coming up. But I feel like there's a stronger word even than judgment. Like, how dare us say it is not okay to feel this way? Or continually feeling a certain way because we're not allowing ourselves to feel it and then get underneath it to see what what is the root of it. And if we can get to the root of it. I'm feeling this way because I was never allowed to be sad. But wait a minute now I'm 67 years old. I can be sad. I can be angry. I can not like people's behavior. I'm not a problem because I don't like someone's behavior. And some of the things, the actions that are being taken in a relationship. And so I can't change that. And I can't fix that. And I can't monitor that. I can't manage that. So I need to just say how I feel and let you do your part in fixing yourself or in managing your own behaviors and your own actions. But we can't manage people's emotions.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:41] No, it's not our jobs.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:43] And you can't. And you can't even manage your own emotion. Because if we could manage our own emotions, there would be no such thing as rage. There would be no such thing as any of the stuff that's happening. I think if we could manage our own emotions well, we can put a lid on them. .

Michelle Maros: [00:42:56] I think we can manage....

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:57] We can put a lid on them and let them simmer for a while. I guess if you call that managing by putting a lid on it. For me, managing is for me. The word manage means to and I don't know what the dictionary says, but for me is, as a quote, manager of my life or as a quote manager in my businesses and things like that. For me, that means finding the

solution. How do I get from A to Z successfully or properly or in the best way possible? So manage to me means I'm thinking that that's how I have to fix it. But you can't fix an emotion. They're going to come and go. So if we think we can manage our emotions, we can put a lid on them. Uh, we can we can sit with ourselves for a moment and say, okay, Barb, come down here. What's happening for you in this moment? And I don't think that that's managing my emotions. I think that's giving my emotions a home. And to be safe and be okay with and allowing them to move through me.

Michelle Maros: [00:43:52] Super interesting.

Barb Schmidt: [00:43:53] It is really interesting and I've really just been practicing with this and looking at this a lot. Some of the words we use, some of the words I think as humans we use can be very detrimental to our own mental and physical and emotional well-being. And for me, the word manage, for me the word why. Who knows why I can know what though? What is it that's causing me? I don't know why. And if I think of being sexually abused as a child as a why, it's more of a what. Okay. That sexual assault as a child is a what for me. Okay. Now what do I do with that? You know, what did I feel back then? What shut down in me? Like all the what's it brings up all the other questions.

Michelle Maros: [00:44:39] Yes it does.

Barb Schmidt: [00:44:42] We always tend to go in such a very deep place a lot, and I love it so much. So I think just a recap, right?

Michelle Maros: [00:44:49] I think ultimately wrapping up this conversation of emotional monitoring and thinking about moods and emotions and feelings and what they mean about our lives and what they mean about who we are, is really knowing that what happens in the external world obviously is out of our control, and it's not a reflection of who we are and why we're here. What our emotions are, are our reactions to life and to other people and to situations and circumstances. They are emotional responses based on our past experiences, based on trauma, based on our beliefs and our values. And again, those don't reflect who we are and don't define us. And then ultimately other people's moods, emotions, actions, words are also not reflections of who we are, and it's not our job or in our capability to try to change

that or manage that. And I think that ultimately it settles down into acceptance, like you've been saying. And what can and can't you accept, which is ultimately, as we know, the root of boundaries. But, you know, if you have someone in your life that you feel like you're constantly trying to emotionally monitor with micromanaging their behaviors or their reactions or their moods, is that someone that needs to be in your life.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:21] Or what can you or what steps can you take to change that dynamic?

Michelle Maros: [00:46:25] Can you accept? Maybe it's something that's benign that you're trying to micromanage. Can you accept that person's quirks or, you know, annoying traits? Or if it's something more critical and serious where there's a safety issue? What boundary do you need to set.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:41] Right. Or what conversation do you need to have that's not an emotional one, but a factual one or a truthful one?

Michelle Maros: [00:46:47] And so it's really settling into what you will and will not accept or tolerate in your life? And how can you start to feel your feelings in a way where you're processing and allowing it to flow through you? Like Jill Bolte Taylor says? Like thinking of yourself in that tube, but not making it a part of you and not making it a definition of you. And then staying grounded in yourself to know that you're strong and capable and able to tackle whatever life puts in your path and whatever has happened in the past doesn't chip away at that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:26] Yeah. The past does not define who you are. Nothing has the power to define who you are but you. And I think I will end this with that. Because if we can really get that I was allowing I was allowing my marriage and this person to define who I was, and because I was owning it for my own. When I say define or when Michelle and I are talking about. This idea of feeling feelings like don't own you. Wear your emotions like a moo moo. Let them just run through. You know this does date me and then I'll be done talking I think those big like those big calftan like moomoo's, those big robes or those big things, those I don't know what they're called dusters or whatever, whatever. Like wear like that, wear it loosely. Don't own your feelings and your emotions. Honor them. Honor them. But they are not who you are.

Allow yourself to be who you are underneath all of that and get to the core of the beautifulness that you are that a word? Beautifulness I don't even know if it is. But anyway, I love you all so much. Thank you for indulging these past two weeks of this conversation. Maybe we'll do more of these kind of things like we've been, you know, testing the waters of sharing so many more things here personally in this past year or so I just appreciate all of you so much. And I want you to know how much we love you and care about you.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:54] Yeah, I hope that this helped everyone listening. Just start to think about all of this in a different way from a different lens, because ultimately, that's why we do this is obviously none of this is like a cure all, fix all one and done kind of thing. But how can we start to shift our perceptions of things, how we view things, how we view dynamics in life? And just what are those little tiny shifts that we can make to ultimately help us feel better as we move through life? So if this is something that resonates with you, I hope that it has been helpful and beneficial just for you to think about it and contemplate it in a different way, and maybe do something a little bit differently next time you're faced with this. But let us know, obviously, and keep us posted about what comes up for you through the lens of this conversation, because we always love to stay in touch. And of course, the best way to do so is making sure that you're following us on social media at Peaceful_Barb, at Michelle Maros, at Barb Knows Best Pod. That's how you can ask us questions. Want us to clarify anything or give us future podcast topic requests? If you are loving the show, make sure to share it with a friend. Tell a loved one we always love adding new people into the Bxb family, and make sure that your liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts, Apple, Google, Spotify, etc. so that you're always up to date on each new episode. And again, if you do love the show, give us a five star rating on iTunes and Spotify and leave us a review. It's super helpful and it means so much to us when we get that feedback and support. Thank you so much again for listening and being a part of this community. Thank you mom for all of your insights and we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.