

Episode 98 – A New Beginning
Barb Knows Best™
Episode Transcripts

Michelle Maros: [00:00:13] Hello everyone. Hi friends, and happy New Year! Welcome back to Barb Knows Best, the podcast. Welcome to a new year. Welcome to 2024. Welcome to all the things. Welcome, mom.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:29] Hi, Michelle. Happy new year.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:31] Wow, that was chipper.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:32] I'm very chipper.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:33] Happy New Year.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:34] Happy New year to everyone listening and just feel with so much gratitude for this community of listeners and beautiful human beings every week, being with us to hear what it is that we have to share.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:46] Yeah, it actually is really nice that you all are so lovely and listen to us talk every week, because I feel like you all have so many options of things to listen to, and the fact that you choose to listen to us is really special. So thank you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:03] It is really,

Michelle Maros: [00:01:04] If we haven't said that enough. Well, and I appreciate and we don't take it for granted that you do choose to listen to this show and be a part of this community.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:12] You know, as I was doing my reflection of 2023 and into the new year, January 2nd today, I was thinking about how much joy. And how much beauty and real comfort that this community of like minded, beautiful human beings, we come together every week. And as you said, Michelle, listen to us talk and we get all of your messages and all your comments and it really feels so special and comforting. Comfort is the right word. I feel like it's,

you know, so many things are uncertain and unstable and unpredictable and, you know, life is that way. We know that. But to every week be able to come here, I get to see you and we get to talk about all of the things that we talk about anyway. But now we get to share all of our experiences and our thoughts and our feelings with a beautiful community of like minded people and of phenomenal people. I'm just very, very grateful for it. As we've moved into this new year.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:10] It is very special and I feel like we're. I think this is episode 98.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:18] Wow.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:18] To think that. We're almost at 100. Wow. Crazy. What is time?

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:27] It is interesting.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:28] I've been sitting across the table from you, staring at you for a long, long time. Wild

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:32] And we haven't taken one day off. We've done almost 100 episodes. So 100 straight weeks.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:40] No. Yes. Sorry

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:42] Okay. I was gonna say hopefully my math is right. And I think what's so profound for me about that right now, in this moment is how much this means to us. There are many times and many. Stages in life where we take a break or, you know, as people, we say, okay, we've done enough with this, but you and I look forward to every single week to coming together and sharing some experiences that have happened recently or things that we've learned from the past. And I just find that really heartwarming.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:16] Well, it's interesting, and this is not the point of this week's episode, but. The concept of commitment and making commitments to things that you really care about. And I feel like you know, I had this idea to do a podcast with you for a long, long

time. And I don't think our schedules and our lifestyles allowed for us to commit to it in the way that you wanted to, and I wanted to, knowing that it would be something that requires us to show up regularly to record. And now that we've done this for 98 episodes, it is a commitment. But it's you know, I think sometimes people think of commitments that are difficult or challenging or even punishments. But when you make commitments to things that. You like and you appreciate and you're grateful for you do show up happily and it doesn't feel so much like a chore. Yes, certainly there are days I show up and I'm like. Would I rather be doing something else in recording? Maybe. But we get into it and we love it. And I think that's a nice way to reframe commitment. Maybe I have commitment on the brain because I just wrote a book entry about commitment. God help us. But I think it's interesting to think about it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:35] It is commitment is important we have many commitments in our lives.

Michelle Maros: [00:04:38] And I say that because I used to be a commitment phobic.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:40] Yes you did. And I feel like. Where I'm feeling really grateful for this commitment of doing an episode every week of Barb Knows Best, the podcast is that it's joyful, and I think it's kind of this could be an episode one day, Michelle. Well, how do we look at our commitments? And you talk all the time about finding the tiny joys, but how do we look at our commitments and knowing we've committed to this? So how can we make sure that when we show up for it, it's joyful?

Michelle Maros: [00:05:10] Yeah.

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:11] Or at least there's some joy and some pleasure and some heartfelt authenticity that comes along with it. And I think that's how I feel so much about this, because really, we started this whole podcast episode. I think our first episode was about sitting in our living room. We would love for all of you, even though you're listening, you know, while you're driving or on the train or walking or, you know, sitting in your family room. It's really like we are sitting in a room with you. We're sitting in a family room or wherever you want to call it. We're sitting together, just having a conversation on the sofas, you know, riffing about life and all the

things that are difficult and interesting and tiring and traumatic and all the things. It's just so much fun. I love the idea of sitting in the living room with all of you, so thank you.

Michelle Maros: [00:05:59] And since we are sitting in the living room, you can really hear, oh, she just looked at me like, what is going to come out of her mouth?

Barb Schmidt: [00:06:05] I have no idea.

Michelle Maros: [00:06:05] Um, I'll give you a glimpse of sitting in the living room of just some of the fun things that you say since you said Tiny joys, um, you love putting it back to me how much I talk about Tiny Joys. And yesterday we were talking together and I already I have the word joy as a tattoo already. I got it a couple of years ago on my birthday. Um, and you looked at me and you said you had a, you would bought this little dish that said Joy and this really beautiful script. You said you should get this tattooed, your next tattoo should be this. And it just said joy. And I said, yeah, I love that. Um, but I have joy. And I showed it to you on my arm and you said, yeah, but you should do Tiny Joys because you always say Tiny Joys on the podcast. And this is in a really beautiful script. And what you have right now is just kind of like regular letters. So next tattoo get Tiny Joys in this script. I'm like, okay, okay, thank you. She's like for the podcast. So she's always thinking about you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:10] So funny.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:11] Podcast Community.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:11] I am always thinking about you.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:13] So anyways, maybe we all get Tiny Joys tattoos in 2024.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:17] Today we have a great episode. I'm just going to go swimmingly right past that. Today we have a great....

Michelle Maros: [00:07:24] Hey if you enjoyed that anecdote, you send me a message when you listen to it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:27] Please do. I love it, I love it.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:28] Anyways, um, we are in the new year, January 2nd, and we've kind of. Well, we have because of time passed through that, you know, I think people think of that week between Christmas and New Year's as like a dead week. You know, there's a lot of us are off work. We weren't off work, but a lot of us are off work. It's a weird vibe because you feel so festive from the holidays, and then it's kind of like gearing up for the new chapter, you know? No one really knows what day it is or what's going on. You know, that wonky, wonky week. And I spent that week in a ritual that I feel like has been really meaningful for me and preparing for a new year, and I wanted to share that with everyone this week. Obviously, you don't have to do it before the New Year, but I really felt grounded and hopeful after doing it. And so I wanted to share that this week. How does that sound Barbara?

Barb Schmidt: [00:08:30] I love it. I love it because I love this ritual that you have. You're right. This is kind of a this is kind of a wonky, a funny time of year this week between Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and New Year's. So it's kind of I never think of it as a dead week, though. For some reason, it's a week where I have to be careful not to get speeded up. Oh, and I have to slow down a little because.

Michelle Maros: [00:08:53] I like to sloth it up.

Barb Schmidt: [00:08:54] See. And that's where you and I are different.

Michelle Maros: [00:08:57] In bed, don't ask me to do anything.

Barb Schmidt: [00:08:59] That's where you and I are very different, because I'm thinking I've got to get everything done that I want to get done, so that I can have a fresh slate for 2024. So it's always very this is always a very mindful week for me in that. I want to really try to be more mindful and be more slowed down and paying attention to time and not thinking that I have to be a time demon and get everything done. Or I have to. Oh my God, it's now 1:00 today. Oh my gosh, I only have this. I want to really just stay present for the moment, which can be very difficult because it's this week between the end of the year and New Year's for me is always

one that psychologically speeds me up. And so I just wanted to share this one quote from one of my favorite teachers. I say that about everyone that you talk about, but one of my favorite teachers, Meister Eckhart. Who was a German mystic. And he said this. So many people come to me asking me, how should I pray? How should I think? What should I do? And the whole time they neglect the most important question, which is how should I be? And so for me, when I read this a lot, I read Meister Eckhart.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:16] He's just a phenomenal teacher for me all these years. But I read this one in particular and I've written this on my mirror. I wrote it on my mirror for this, this week that we've just been through before the New Year. In that idea of this. How should I be the whole time is how should I be? And when I think about this, I think it slows me down when I think if I can slow it down, I can find a rhythm of who I am and how should I be. And so this has been really important ritual for me coming into a new year. I want to find the rhythm of me and not the rhythm of time, and not the rhythm of other people, and not the rhythm of traffic and not the rhythm of, oh my gosh, what all I have to do, like the rhythm of me and staying in my true, authentic, mindful self.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:09] That's very nice.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:10] Well, I think it's so cool because you and I have different practices, but they all take us to the same place of what we're going to talk about today in this idea of. You know, not idea of time, but just this idea of how can we be. Mhm. How can we be connected to who we are. How can we be. And not get caught up in this. Vision or this idea of what we think we should be. But how can we actually settle into being?

Michelle Maros: [00:11:42] Very deep and existential, but meaningful.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:49] But I think it goes along with the ritual that you're going to talk about that you do. Because I think it's really beautiful. And I think it's important not to let. Not to let time dictate to us. What should be happening, but really. Taking part in honoring everything that's gone on. In the past. And how do we live in the present moment? Free.

Michelle Maros: [00:12:17] Yeah. Yeah. So. This ritual that I've been doing.

Barb Schmidt: [00:12:25] Did I throw you off track?

Michelle Maros: [00:12:26] No, no, I was taking in what you were saying because it is very profound. And I was just letting it land.

Barb Schmidt: [00:12:33] Thank you.

Michelle Maros: [00:12:35] So yes, last week when I was kind of contemplating. You know, I get very reflective even though I'm sloth dead week in that week. Okay, it's. I know you don't like me saying that word.

Barb Schmidt: [00:12:51] Well, no, I get what you're saying, because I don't feel like you're sloth. I think I feel like you're very reflective and very inward, which I love.

Michelle Maros: [00:12:59] Put me in a cave is what I would love.

Barb Schmidt: [00:13:00] Like you're inward. Yeah. You're truly inward reflecting.

Michelle Maros: [00:13:05] Yes. I get very reflective at the end of the year. And interesting that you said that at the end of the year you get sped up because you want to accomplish and take things off your list so that you can have a clean slate. I think that tees this first part up very well because I think depending on if you're either more like me or like Barb. The end of the year comes up and we tend to. Think about what we're currently. Dealing with or working through to get to the new year. And it's really easy to forget what has actually transpired in our lives over the past 12 months. 12 months is a really long time. I mean, what was January 2023? I don't know, that was so long ago. And so what I really love to do when I'm feeling reflective about the end of the year is to kind of take an inventory of my year, and I really love to do this in a journal. I'm I'm very old school, that way of like liking to put pen to paper when I do these kinds of things. You can do it on a computer or on your phone if you prefer. But I love journals. I love the journal that we made that's still available. Very cute for this practice. Link in the show notes. Not a sales pitch, but true. Um, and so I love to take inventory of the year and remembering, I think we've talked about this in an episode a few weeks ago about, like,

sometimes I get very melancholy at this time of year like that Counting Crows song, Long December.

Michelle Maros: [00:14:47] Maybe this year will be better than the last. Sometimes I really get into that mood. And so in order to counteract that, I love to start this ritual with like positivity. For whatever reason. We've talked about this so often on the show, our brains tend to focus more on the bad. You know, even we started off this episode of like 23 was tough. Let's get past it. And so for this part one of this inventory, really make it a concentrated effort to think about the highs and take an inventory because so often and write them down because so often there's so much more than we could even remember of the good our brains let it pass by. We don't necessarily even notice some of the good because we just are like you said, mom, moving on to the next thing. And so bring forth the things that went well. In 2023 from macro to micro. Um, like, what did you accomplish? Like, how did you grow? What lessons did you learn? How did I take care of myself? What did I do for myself this year? And just, I don't know, you can meditate and then think of these questions. You can be in a cute quiet space and contemplate it, but really, let yourself be open to calling forth the good that happened for you in this year. Because again, it's so easy to think about the bad.

Barb Schmidt: [00:16:29] Michelle. I love that so much, and I think that's what came up for me during this week. That idea of reflecting and also slowing it down enough where I can actually sit back, as you said, and I took the journal that I bought that you prepared. I love it, and really just starting to look at the whole year because you're right. What the heck happened in January 2023? I don't know, but I do know in March of 2023, I went on a month long silent vacation. That's vacation. It felt like a vacation because I was away from the world. But a month long silent retreat.

Michelle Maros: [00:17:04] That's wild. That that was only this year.

Barb Schmidt: [00:17:06] That's this year, March of 2023. And as I've been. Reflecting back and looking at everything and use that week between. Christmas, Hanukkah, New Years and years that I've thought, oh my gosh, I've really been reflecting a lot on and taking in how hard the last quarter of this year has been. But that retreat prepared me to weather the storm of these last four months, and it brought some. Like I'm tingling right now. I have so many goosebumps right

now because when I was thinking about like, wow, thank you. Just that whole sense of gratitude came over my being. And I'm feeling it right now. Thank you. That retreat, those silent 31 days in March, prepared me for the difficulty that was happening in this fourth quarter, which I'll be sharing a lot of that with you even more during this year. I. It brought a whole different perspective. Exactly what you're saying, Michelle. We're so easy to look at how hard and I know I posted a lot about how hard and Instagram and it has been really, really hard. But look at I'm still standing. And the thing that I was reflecting on the most actually yesterday. Who was one of my favorite teachers as well, Maya Angelou and her poem And Still I rise and still I rise.

Barb Schmidt: [00:18:26] I was thinking, Barb. You're risen. You still are rising. And still I rise. No matter what happens. You're still rising. And so the gratitude that I have for 2023, which toward this last few months, I'm thinking, do I have any gratitude for. Of course I have gratitude. So I love Michelle that you're suggesting, and you're offering to us to use this time to reflect on the whole year, maybe go month by month. And that's what I love about your journal. It really took me through. I could slow it down enough to really be with myself. Okay, what happened in January? I'm a big basketball fan. So what happened when I got out of my retreat? All the fun things that were happening with Florida Atlantic University basketball and all the things. It was so cool. And I remember taking in every single moment back then, and it was such a beautiful as, in hindsight, such a beautiful preparation. For the last quarter of this year, and now it's a beautiful launching pad for my reflection launching into 2024 with immense gratitude.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:30] I love that. And. I know that there's the quote that says that there's always something to be grateful for, and sometimes that can sound very minimizing of difficult experiences and tragedies and traumas. But. I do believe it to be true. When we let ourselves really drill down into the micro of things that we can be grateful for. And I think if you're having trouble with this first part of thinking of the highs of 2023, maybe this year was really hard all the way around and just things did not go your way there. I believe that there can always be small, small things that you can be grateful for. Like when I made this inventory for myself. One of the small things is I'm really happy and grateful that I have a bunch of plants that are thriving. I moved them to a different location and they're blooming. They look great. I've never been a plant person. Covid times kind of pushed me into caring about my plants, because what else was I doing at home? And now that I see that they're blooming, that makes me really

happy. You know, that's not something that deeply impacts my life on a daily basis. But when I look at my plants growing a new leaf that gives me joy or optimism or hope, the other thing that I put on my list was that my almost 18 year old cat has her health. You know, for a period of time during Covid, she wasn't doing so well. And I think we all thought, well, she's pretty old. It might be close to, you know, the end for her. And she's like a kitten again. Benjamin Button cat. So I mean, that one's a little bit bigger because I am grateful for her health, but I really let myself drill into those kinds of things of gratitude. Yeah, Charlotte still has diabetes, and I have to give her shots twice a day. But she's doing really well, and she's. You know. Still with us.

Barb Schmidt: [00:21:41] I think this is why it's so important to have a reflective time. And I would also say develop a reflective mode within yourself. Reflection has been a lifeline for me. I do a reflection every night before I go to bed. I sit with myself and reflect. I meditate every day, all the things. But it doesn't have to be heavy duty. It can just be just to sit down for a moment. And I think this these are the tiny joys Michelle that you talk about. We're saying just sit for a moment. But really, in this, in this whole. I guess, inventory of all the highs and the lows and the things that have happened for the whole year. When do we really ever sit down and reflect and notice and recall how we're feeling about, even if it's a small thing, like your plants? How are we feeling in this moment about some of the successes or some of the little things that made us smile? And I think it's really, really important. It's, it's and it helps us slow time down to a place. When I say slow time down, I mean slow time down in part slow time down inside of us. We all know that time just does its thing. We're the ones that co-opt time and make it something that it really isn't. And so I think it's so, so important to start this part one, if you want to call it Michelle of the inventory, this whole process that you take every single year, this ritual, you call it your ritual, which I love so much, I think it's important, this part one, to actually be able to name. What are some of the successes, how can I honor myself and some things that went really, really well? Yeah. And it can be small. The smaller the better sometimes.

Michelle Maros: [00:23:27] Yeah, it's anything really. However you define success. And I think the last part of this, this part one, is to let yourself feel how you felt in those successes. I think so often. Whenever we do exercises like this, especially intentions or manifesting, or what do we want to cultivate? We leave out the feelings of it, of how do I want to feel? What did I feel? How did it make me feel? When I saw that my plant was growing a new leaf? When I thought it was dead? Like I was really excited. Maybe in difficult times you don't feel a lot of excitement

because things are hard, but let yourself remember how you felt in those tiny wins or tiny joys or tiny successes, because you're letting yourself access the feelings, even if your current situation isn't actively promoting those feelings.

Barb Schmidt: [00:24:23] And that's why I think it's so important, as you started this whole process off with sitting with yourself and quiet. Find a place. Find a time where just for a few minutes, you can sit with yourself in quiet. Because what what happens is exactly what you're saying. Michelle you actually get to feel the feelings like I just shared with you when I sat down, and now even sharing it here again with going on that month long retreat, it truly set the stage for my strength at the end of this year. And I got I got goosebumps when I was remembering that, oh my gosh, I went on this retreat when I was reflecting at goosebumps. Then I could feel the feelings that you're talking about. Michelle allow yourself to feel the feelings because it's true. It's like it's true. It's like a real remembrance of oh yes, this whole year wasn't crap. This whole year wasn't the most hardest thing that I've ever been through. There were some moments. There were a lot of moments. Where I had this beautiful feeling of gratitude or this beautiful feeling of all is well in this moment. So when you feel those feelings and you get those little goosebumps, know that that's the truth of your heart. And that's the truth coming from the inside out.

Michelle Maros: [00:25:37] Yes. Before we get into the next one, let's take a quick break. And we are back. So. Starting off high. Going into part two, I like to not rather than thinking of it as lows, but I like to cultivate the lessons that I've learned. Or if I know you don't love the word lessons. So cultivate the teachings that life taught you in 2023. Um. You know. There is a lot going on in the world. There's a lot going on in our lives personally, collectively, globally, spiritually. There's challenges, pivots, trauma. So let this part and also you can do I meant to say at the beginning, you don't have to do this all in one sitting to you can do because this is a lot you can do this in another day or another sitting.

Barb Schmidt: [00:26:37] Well you take a whole week right?

Michelle Maros: [00:26:37] Yeah. But I'm saying.

Barb Schmidt: [00:26:39] Yeah, take as much time as you need.

Michelle Maros: [00:26:41] It doesn't have to be all at one time. Yeah. Um, especially with this part with the lessons, because it's heavy and it's a lot. But the way I encourage everyone to view this section is not like. To do an inventory of your trauma to make you feel bad. Um, I don't intend for to share this with you so that you can remember everything difficult and then leave this practice in the gutter. I encourage you to. Think about the lessons that you learned and the strength that you had as you moved through it. You know, I think one of the things that you've said throughout this year to me is how better you feel like you've handled things than you would have expected. And I feel like I've handled certain situations in my life better than I would have expected to and like. I love that. I don't like that I'm going through something difficult, but I do love seeing that perhaps all of my life experience and lessons that I've learned from years before have prepped me to handle this maybe better than the time before. So this part is really to just honor yourself for your perseverance, your strength, your resiliency, and to remember the times that you were strong and capable and handled things better than maybe you expected yourself to.

Barb Schmidt: [00:28:22] I love this part too, Michelle, because I feel strongly for me, it's helped me see. Well, it's helped me see what I've learned, and I think it's why I love to use the word teachings instead of lessons. And I think that might come from my trauma background. So much trauma, especially so much trauma as a child and then so much trauma as an adult, but so much trauma as a child. That to me, the word lesson was brought about was I'm going to teach you a lesson here. It was always a negative context. So I can see why. Now, as an adult and in my years of practice, that I love the word teachings, because when I sit down, it does exactly what you said you're hopeful for when people look at doing this whole ritual that it's really a part of, not to bring up the trauma for you to, you know, dwell on all the bad things that happened or what did I do wrong and all, you know, all the things I always talking about, like a little girl, what did I do wrong? But it actually for me, it brings up all of the the teachings. Oh, I learned this. It brings a I don't know, it just brings a different shadow to it. Like, oh wow, I learned this. I learned that I need to set this boundary with this person. And they don't even know that. They don't even need to know that I'm setting it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:29:42] But I learned that it helps both of us. So it's almost going through all the things. When I look at some of the things that happened this year, yes, it made me

stronger, but it also made me more appreciative of my resilience, as you mentioned, the word resiliency. And it also made me honor the fact that I'm learning and I'm growing. I'm always constantly learning, and I'm growing, and I'm becoming the greatest version of who I already am. So it leads me always back to, you know, how shall I be? And this is how I am the best version of who I am being authentically me. So this part two is never, for whatever reason, this part in it reflecting back on all the things. You know, that happened that weren't so great and things that were really not so great and all the traumas that may have happened this year, framing it in this way, of what did I learn so that I won't repeat the same thing the next time around, is so crucial to me, because I put a huge value on learning, a huge value on becoming a huge value on no, I am always here to learn until the day I die, I will always be learning from something. Because I want to keep fulfilling my mission as a human being, to keep becoming the greatest version of who I already am.

Michelle Maros: [00:31:07] Yeah, I love that. And I think this part is to just cultivate and remember. That you are strong and capable, and that you've gotten through 100% of your hard days. If you're sitting listening to this in this moment and that means something that matters, maybe it wasn't pleasant getting through it, but you got through it. And one of the things for me when I did this part for myself personally is I. Liked that I. Sort of. Chilled out. In a sense. I'm not perfect, obviously, where I don't let chaos tend to get the best of me, maybe in ways that I used to, and the end of 2023 was extremely chaotic. There was a lot going on, and it was a lot. I felt very overwhelmed, confused. Like fried, frazzled, all of the things. So much so that on Christmas, I woke up Christmas morning and literally our massive TV that was bolted into the wall fell on the floor in the middle of the night, shattering the TV, everything around it, making a huge mess. Glass everywhere, green glitter everywhere because something in it had glitter in it. Like it literally looked like. You know, I don't even know. It was just a mess to wake up to on Christmas morning when really, you and I had discussed that.

Michelle Maros: [00:32:51] Like, we just really wanted to have a chill, low key Christmas, like, relaxing, quiet, peaceful, not a lot of stuff. And so when I saw that, I was like, what the hell is this? But I started laughing. And that was my point of all of this is I feel like I've leaned on humor to get me through, like the ridiculous of life, because it does help me move through it. Like, I just looked at that and I was like, of course, like Christmas morning, I'm cleaning up a shattered TV and elf glitter that. Spewed all over the place because of course, that's what this

day is going to present to me in this chaotic end of the year. And I was obviously frustrated. Obviously, there's a lot of stuff that has to happen to fix the situation that's not pleasant. But in that moment, I kind of I leaned on humor to not amplify what was already challenging, and I feel like I've done that a lot in this past year of rather than letting something that's amped me up, amp me up more humor kind of diffuses me in a way where I'm like, okay, what do I need to do to fix this?

Barb Schmidt: [00:34:06] I just want to say, you are extraordinary. You truly have found. The space between the chaos and what's next? And I think that that's what's so beautiful about how we can learn and how we can grow. You you have not let chaos, as you said, get the better of you. You truly have found that space between chaos. And now how am I going to respond? Which is we talk about a lot. How do you find the space between, you know, what's happened and the consequence and the action and all of the things. And so you're right. And so when I walked in the door. Merry Christmas, sweetie, and saw all of this. You're right. Humor was really the perfect antidote to how do we deal with this. And I think the thing that I've been really focusing on and being present to is acceptance, acceptance of the present moment. And I remember walking to the door, looking at that, thinking, I can get all worked up or I can wait and get worked up tomorrow, the day after Christmas, and be present to what's happening today and deal with this stuff tomorrow. And so you and I laughed and we had a great day of being just present. So that idea of acceptance has been really present for me a lot in the past few months. And I think it's maybe that's one of the things that I really learned big time in that silent retreat of acceptance.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:34] Yeah, I do think that there is some truth to, you know, laughter is really good medicine because I kept joking with you when the TV fell. If you follow me on Instagram, you saw this on my stories. You had this really cute polar bear with a scarf.

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:51] So cute.

Michelle Maros: [00:35:51] Sitting below the TV. And when it fell, the TV like demolished the polar bear. And you were very sad because you loved him with his little scarf. And you know, I was joking. I was like, I found him underneath the TV and it just making it jokey helped the situation, I think. And we're going to fix her polar bear, I believe.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:19] Well, I think what was so sweet about it, we're talking about, like a 4 or \$5 really cute little polar bear with a nice little scarf on it. It's not a big deal thing. It was just in that moment the humor of what was happening with everything shattered on the floor. But seeing that little polar bear sliced in half underneath the TV...

Michelle Maros: [00:36:41] underneath the tv was just a grim visual.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:43] Yeah, a grim but also a.

Michelle Maros: [00:36:45] Hilarious.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:46] Lighthearted. It brought some lightheartedness to a to a moment that was okay, now what? So it was perfect. I think this, what we're saying and what I'm feeling so strongly right now in this moment is how can we start to be a little bit more light hearted in knowing that when bad things happen or when difficult things happen or tragedies and it's overwhelming and it's a lot. I'm not trying to make light of it. I certainly I've been there. I know that I'm with you if you're feeling that way, just being able to have another person in your life that can help you find the smile, like Thich Nhat Hanh was that teacher for me, he used to just walk into a retreat and say, smile. There's something about being able to smile in the midst of tragedy or in the midst of chaos, as you talked about that, it kind of shifts the inner mode of, okay, I got this. Okay, now what can I do? It's that pause. And I think that's what happened yesterday. And then we live in South Florida. You know, the temperature is like 80 degrees during the day. We had no AC. So it's interesting what life will send you. You can really be buried by it or overcome by the chaos or the situation, or you can just put it on the list. Okay, this is happening right now. What what can I do in this moment to bring a little bit of levity to it and actually know that I'm doing something in the progression of rectifying the situation.

Michelle Maros: [00:38:17] And I will say the last thing about this piece, um, that was interesting, that I feel like helped us move through the situation was cultivating gratitude, even though it was a really messed up situation. Like I remember saying to you, well, the good thing about this is nothing that was irreplaceable was ruined. But the TV falling down, everything that broke can be replaced. And I said that because the day before we had moved a bunch of

decorations around and we had kind of put some old stuff that I had made in that area from like a kid, like stuff that's not replaceable, um, or things that had like a lot of sentimental long history with, um, I'm like. Every if it had to have happened, I guess it kind of happened in the best way possible. And hopefully the TV will be replaced. Yeah, and It was a mess. It sucked. It wasn't what I wanted to do Christmas morning, but there was blessings hidden in that as well. No one got hurt. Thank God it happened in the middle of the night, even though it scared Charlotte to death with the loud bang and crash. But luckily nobody was. If it had fallen on someone, it was really heavy. So I just in my mind in that moment too, thinking of okay, but there's also good as well. So I know I kind of got on a tangent with the situation, but handling things better than I thought that I would has been really beneficial for me in this year, and I'm really grateful that past lessons, past situations, trauma, and wisdom has helped me to do that. And I hope to continue that in this new year knowing that each part of my life has presented me something that I can carry with me in the present and in the future, to know that I can handle whatever life puts in my path.

Barb Schmidt: [00:40:21] Beautiful. I love it.

Michelle Maros: [00:40:24] All right, and before we get into part three, let's take one more quick break. And we are back. Part three is the fun part. It's the part that we all like to think about when we are talking about a new year. Next week we're going to go into another fun practice that kind of dovetails off of this part three. But, I love to at the end of the year, sort of a new year, reflect about like, what do I really want to cultivate and create in this new year, in this new chapter? And, you know, you obviously can do this at any time. It doesn't have to be the new year. But I do like to think of each of us as creators every minute of every day. We're constantly creating something with our words, our thoughts, our actions. So a lot of times we think that we're powerless, that we have no control over the world, which we know we don't of the external world, but we do have that power and control over what we are putting into the world, what we're thinking, what we're doing, what we're creating. And so this. Part of this ritual is one of my favorites to really. I know. Sit with myself again in a space where maybe you can be in quiet, comfortable, meditative, connected to yourself and really ask yourself, what do you want to create? And think about what comes up when you ask yourself that, and let yourself tap in to maybe any hidden desires, hopes, dreams, creativity. Really like this is your

opportunity to let your mind, your soul, your spirit kind of think big, dream big. There's no limits. There's no rules. Like just let your imagination run wild.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:27] I love that and I love that you always use the word creator. That is such a beautifully powerful word. When we think about how we want to live our lives, we are the creator. And one of our dearest friends, Yasmine Cheyenne. She sent me for the holiday. She sent me this ornament. That says, I trust the next chapter because I know the author.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:54] I did love that ornament.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:55] And so I truly thank you, Yasmine. You're such a beautiful soul. I really want you all to think about that. You trust your life. I trust the timing of my life. I trust myself, I trust the next chapter because I know the author. So as you think about this part three, and as you think about this whole idea of creating the life that you want to live, it really starts in very, very, very small segments of creating. The the possibilities of being open to all of the possibilities that are there. And then how do I look at what would be the first step? And so really, this whole part three is identifying what are all the possibilities that I would love to create for my own life, and trusting yourself because you know the author, you are the author. You are the one writing the story of your life. And this is just now another chapter. So I think coming back to, for me the teachings and the things that I've learned this year, how can all of the things that I've learned this year and all of the teachings that I've had, how can that now really like I'm looking at a tree right now. I'm looking at a real tree. And how does that.

Michelle Maros: [00:44:13] Not really a tree. A tree in her imagination.

Barb Schmidt: [00:44:15] No, in my imagination.

Michelle Maros: [00:44:17] I'm like, what tree are we looking at?

Barb Schmidt: [00:44:18] I'm looking at a tree right now and looking at, okay, now what? What can I add to this branch and what can I add to this branch, and what can I add to the tree of my life in this moment? What can I add to it? What are the things that will help me build on the successes and all of the highs, or all of the lows that I had this past 2023? That will help me

create the chapter of this part of my life. Um, and trusting myself completely. We have to trust if we don't trust ourselves, and this is a really tall order, it is not easy for me to trust being a trauma survivor, being a trauma survivor as a child, being a trauma survivor as an adult. It is not easy for me to trust. So if it's not easy for you to trust, it's hard to trust yourself. They don't trust other people. And now how in the heck am I going to trust myself? So it's really, really important for me. It has been very, very important for me. And so I want to share this with all of you to start to trust myself. And when Yasmine sent me this ornament, I trust the next chapter because I know the author, I just goosebumps again.

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:26] I want to cry. It's the truth. And so if we can sit in quiet. A little bit and start to really. Uh, like, take hold of this truth. Like, wrap this truth in a big, huge hug. Like this is the truth. You trust this next chapter because you know the author. You are the author. So for me, this last part about what do I wish to create? What do I wish to cultivate? What do I wish to do? How do I wish to be? And I'm so grateful for you. Michelle when you this idea that you truly have learned how to navigate chaos. And I don't know if you think about this, but you've always talked about how do I want to feel? And if this if this happens, this is how I want to feel. And so I think you do that. Like how do I want to feel on Christmas morning? I want to feel joyful. I want to feel gratitude. And so watching the television or seeing the television crashed on the floor didn't throw you for a loop and say, oh my gosh, why me?

Michelle Maros: [00:46:36] I mean, I did say, why me? Because who on earth does that happen to? But yes, you're right.

Barb Schmidt: [00:46:40] Of course we can say why me? But you don't live in the. Why me? You know, we have all these things I don't ever want you to think we don't think these things or say these things, but the whole point of living our lives is not to live there in the chaos or in the pity or in the why me? So. And if things of value had been destroyed, or I'm really starting to really dive deep into this word, acceptance.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:02] And attachment.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:03] And attachment, it just meant that it had served its purpose. And it's not meant to go into this next chapter of my life.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:08] Because interestingly enough, you had moved one. Little ornament underneath that TV the night before I saw you move it, because I had it in the kitchen and you moved it. I did, and it was this ornament that you had bought many years ago in New York of a it had glass around it, but inside was a Ganesha, who in Hindu culture is the remover of obstacles. And Ganesha has always been your favorite. It's my favorite. We have a lot of Ganesha things and you're like, Ganesha needs to be front and center. This was getting lost over there. Let's put it right here in front, on the TV or underneath the TV. And. Sadly. The glass around Ganesha did break, but luckily the figurine inside only had minimal damage. And you were like, My Ganesha is broken. I'm like, well look, I found his arm under the TV. We can glue him. I found something, another part of him. Most of him is intact. But. And you were saying, you know, it's okay because this is really helping me to practice non-attachment to this item. It brought me a lot of joy for many years.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:24] He's still Ganesha.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:26] He's still Ganesha. One hand less. But, um. Yeah, that was funny.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:33] And he's still Ganesha in my heart. He's still Ganesha as a figure. Whenever I'm feeling like I have a huge obstacle in front of me, I think. And Ganesha is an elephant. Go Google him.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:44] We will put it up on Instagram or something.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:45] And it's kind of a cool story, and it's just the idea that this huge elephant can be the remover of obstacles, and it has served me. When I was studying, you know, I talked about this. I studied all the great traditions and religions of the world for decades when I was studying Hinduism, because I had never I didn't know a thing about Hinduism. And when I started studying it, Ganesha really resonated for me. This idea I love elephants and this idea that that he could be a mover, he or she could be a remover of all obstacles was really profound for me. And so.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:19] Well, perhaps having it there removed the obstacle of more chaotic damage, like the floor didn't get damaged, which was also a big concern.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:27] And also, maybe it's what set the stage for us to be in a place of, okay, we're not going to let this, you know, turn us under and change our whole attitude and, and feelings about this beautiful morning. So I love it.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:43] Yeah. So yeah, that again, not to digress, but the last part is to just ask yourself what you want to create, what matters most to you in this new year, and how can you take what you've already created? And in 2023, combined with the lessons, the wisdom, the knowledge that you also went through and use that as like a jumping board to propel you into 2024 of what you want, what you want to create, what makes you excited. And again, knowing that it can be something really, really small. I do think a lot of times that the New Year resolution energy we think of like the biggest stuff in the world, like this is going to be the year that I write my book, which God help me if it's not just kidding, I already have a draft done. You know, we think, oh, we just have to tick off all of the big boxes of the dreams that we have of our lives. But it can also be maybe this is the year I keep a plant alive. You know, maybe this is the year that I. Get rid of unnecessary clutter, which is also on our list. You know, just knowing that when I'm suggesting or encouraging you to do this, know that I'm not trying to place any unnecessary pressure on you to maybe extend yourself more than you're already extended.

Barb Schmidt: [00:51:10] Definitely. This should not be a chore. It should not feel like a homework assignment or anything like that. It truly is just a way to come back to yourself. You know. There's that. Beautiful saying, could I live my whole life never having met the person who's living it? And I think that's really what this is, is just a reflective time of taking stock, really taking stock of who you are. Who do you want to be? How can I just be? And I feel like for me to end this beautiful conversation with all of you is just thinking about. You know. What should I be? Who am I and what should I be? And then slowing down a little bit just to find that rhythm. As we're moving into the cycle of this new year. Finding your rhythm. What is my rhythm? Where the rhythm of my footsteps can match. The rhythm of my breath? Could match the rhythm of my life like it could. Finding our own rhythm here and not trying to come into anyone else's rhythm, or anyone else's sense of time, or anyone else's sense of space. How can I actually just embrace and embody the true me as I move into this new year?

Michelle Maros: [00:52:27] I love that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:27] And trusting yourself completely because you know the author of this next chapter.

Michelle Maros: [00:52:32] I love that.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:33] I love you all very much. Thank you for being here. Thank you for beginning this new 2024 with us. We have a we have a fun, wild ride planned for all of you, and I'm really grateful to be here with you. Michelle.

Michelle Maros: [00:52:45] Sounds ominous.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:46] No, no, it's just going to be fun.

Michelle Maros: [00:52:48] No, I'm...

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:49] We are just gonna mix it up a little bit. We've got a couple of new ideas for this year, and I'm just very grateful right now to be with all of you and Michelle I love you so much and all of you. What a beautiful community we have here. And thank you.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:02] Yes, thank you so much.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:03] Meister Eckhart says one thing that I will leave with.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:06] Okay.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:07] He says if the only prayer. That you can say is thank you. It would be enough.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:13] I do love that one.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:14] So thank you all.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:15] Thank you. I hope that this little run through was helpful for you all to just start and start this year. New chapter any time of the year in a way that feels good for you. And as always, take what works. Leave the rest. Make this your own and just know that. We're here for you. We've got you. This is a beautiful community. And share with us. Maybe if there's anything that comes up for you that you want to share from doing this. The best way to do so is sending us a message on social media at Peaceful_Barb, at Michelle Maros, at Barb Knows Best pod. Let us know there because we love hearing from you. We love reading your messages. We love all of that so much. Um. So thank you. Lastly, if you are loving the show, please make sure that you're liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts. Apple, Google, Spotify and give us a five star rating on Apple and Spotify and leave a review if you feel so inclined. We do greatly appreciate that. There are still journals available if you are interested in them. We have a few left, so click the link in our show notes to buy one for you. Buy one for a friend. I think they're very cute. They will be limited edition styles. We're going to come up with some new ones for 2024, so if you liked this one, make sure you grab one. And thank you so much again for listening. Thank you mom for all of your wisdom as always, and we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb Knows Best. Bye.