

**Episode 108 – How We Define Peace?**  
***Barb Knows Best™***  
**Episode Transcripts**

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:12] Hello, everyone. Hi friends. Welcome back to Barb Knows Best the podcast. I'm actually truly excited. I'm always excited to be sitting here chatting with you today, but I'm especially excited and grateful for the ability to be chatting with you all here today. And I'm going to tell you why. But first. Hi, mom.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:33] Hi, Michelle.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:34] Are you equally as excited?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:37] Yes, I'm really excited.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:39] I'm thrilled that all equipment is all in working order. And now you go over what we've been through for the last 24 hours.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:46] You know, we talk about Tiny Joys a lot, and I talk about silver linings a lot. And I know that it sometimes gets a bit overplayed or can be cliché. However, we saw these little practices put into place full force within the past few days. Um, if you follow. Well, I guess me, you didn't post anything about that kind of stuff on social media, but if you follow me at Michelle Maros on Instagram, you might have seen that we had a major water flood situation happening in my apartment, which also houses our podcast room. Uh, a unit above us had a pipe burst and I woke up to it quite literally raining in my house, which was really surreal. There's nothing like waking up to go and feed your cat her fancy feast. Not sponsored. And you literally just see rain through an elevator, water coming through every single, uh, air conditioning vent, every hole, every orifice in the unit had water coming through it. Um. So yeah, that was a fun Friday. And now it's a Monday. And we have machines everywhere trying to dry the place out and we're like, let's see if amidst the chaos, the turbulence, the mess, the destruction, can we find some peace and quiet to record a podcast? I just want to say this is our commitment and dedication to you all. And also, we're nuts. But the tiny joy of all of that and the silver linings is we have a ton of damage, as you all can imagine. But somehow the lords that be the good vibes of us all our podcasting equipment is working for

the moment. Who's to say what will happen tomorrow? But here we are recording a pod safely. Knock on wood.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:02:53] Yeah. In this moment, it's good. And I think you did a really nice job of recapping what's been going on for the past 24, 48 hours and what I find incredibly ironic. But not because, you know, we believe that, you know, life sends us what we need, even if it's not something that we want. And we had talked last week about wanting to do. I think we even mentioned it on the episode last week that we wanted to do an episode and talk about what is peace mean to us, and how do we have that kind of inner peace where we can withstand anything and everything that the outside world sends us? It doesn't mean that we're not going to be frustrated or overwhelmed or having the most difficult time ever. It just means that we know that at the end of the day, we got it, and we know that we can we know what we need to do. So that's so amazing that we are prepared now today to talk to you about peace and what that means to us. And we just have been going through the past 48 hours of utter chaos. And destruction. So, I love that we're sitting here having this conversation today. Michelle.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:04:03] Yeah. With, uh, the fans going in the background.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:04:06] But we did unplug them here in the podcast room so we could pray for us. No, so we could have a conversation that wasn't.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:04:12] It's just funny.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:04:14] That had a little bit of peace about it and wasn't so noisy. Yeah.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:04:17] So it is an interesting mirror between the external and the internal with the stuff that's been happening here for us and talking about peace and, and what it means to be peaceful. And that was my intention when we chatted briefly about it last week, was to I love how you define and describe what peace means to you. And even in thinking about this topic and this concept, you know, we started a nonprofit called Peaceful Mind Peaceful Life. And what does that mean and why was that a wording and a phrase that was so important. I mean, you had the idea, mom. So ultimately for you as to making this your life's work. And I do think it's cool to. I don't know. We always say that we talk about our real-life

examples on the show, but given the extreme situation that we find ourselves in, it's really cool when life mirrors, the topics that we talk about and the tools that we talk about show up in real life and do have the examples and evidence that this stuff works in a sense. And., I don't know, I just find life very wild and crazy in those ways. So, it'll today's going to be a hodgepodge of finding peace and chaos and really talking about what peace actually means and how does that play out in our lives? You know, you hear the word peace thrown out, obviously, in so many contexts in life. Um, and I think, and we talk so often about redefining words, but it gets misconstrued when we talk about inner peace, being peaceful, finding mental peace, living a peaceful existence. And. I just really like how you talk about that. Thank you. So. No. I'm just. Just taking it all in. No, I'm excited to, um, to talk about it a little bit more.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:06:29] Me, too. It's one of my favorite things to talk about, and I'm sure that that's why our nonprofit is called Peace Mind Peaceful Life. And I feel strongly about, you know, I don't want to go all the way back, go back to some of the other episodes that I'll talk about my, you know, treatment, my six weeks and treatment for bulimia and recovery and all of that. And what just to kind of minimize this right now and just kind of drill it down into just a little bit into this episode, is that when I got out of treatment 40 years ago this year in October, I remember feeling like, now I know what I need to do. That kind of feeling of wow. The problem is that I'm trying to make the outside world be okay for me. Like, I thought I was the problem, and I thought that I didn't have any ability to be able to handle things. And everybody else in the world sure look like they could handle things. And they made their outside world, you know, well and comfortable and feeling good. I just, I had this feeling that the outside world is what needed to change. And so, when I got out of treatment and I talked about this before many times on the podcast, is that Scott Peck's *The Road Less Traveled* was one of the first books I read, and that first paragraph, life is difficult.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:07:50] And then he goes on to say, basically that once you really realize this truth that life is difficult, it no longer matters. And I almost cry every time I read that, because that idea that it no longer matters. So, what that meant to me back then, 40 years ago, is like, oh, if it no longer matters, then I don't need to try to make that right. I don't need to fix it. I don't need to do anything there. I can kind of let life be. And what I need to do is look at myself. And so, in treatment, obviously, I had lots of therapy and lots of meditation and yoga and all of the things. And so, there was a huge relief that came over me. So fast forward 40 years later

and we found a peace of mind, peace of life in 2011. I really get it that if we actually can make the mind our friend, which I know we talk about on the show a lot as well, if we can make the mind our friend and you're going to laugh because I had a dream about this recently, that a new title for my book that I'm writing.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:08:55] Oh dear.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:08:56] But if we can actually make the mind our friend because I think that's the job.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:08:59] Is that the book?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:09:00] That's the job of us is to make the mind our friend, because the mind can be our greatest friend or our most strict hard enemy. So, it can be our ally or it can be our enemy. And I like to think of myself as an expert in the mind. I've been meditating for 40 years, and really, the mind and understanding my mind and understanding where my difficulties lie and knowing that my peace, which for me peace means strength, confidence, unwavering, unshakable faith. It means all of those things. That peace means that nothing in the outer world can shake the inner connectedness to myself and my best friend, which is my mind. Then that I can weather any storm. I had to pause for a second because it just makes me so emotional. Because I love it so peace of mind, peace life came from that. I believe if we all can have a sense of a confident, strong, kind, loving, unshakable, faithful mind peace, that's what a peaceful mind would be. Then we will have a world out there where humanity cares about each other, where humanity is trying to do their best and do the right thing by everyone. Where we my whole goal in life or my whole mission, why I believe I came here was that all of us feel free.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:10:29] Because freedom is a huge thing for me. That all of us feel free. We all are treated equally. And that we can thrive in whatever way we were meant to thrive when we come here. So, I love this episode, Michelle. And I love talking about what you know. What is peace actually mean? So that all of you listening can, you know, just start to get an idea of what it would mean if you had inner peace. If you had a sense of. Things might be falling apart around me as I've talked about, you know, a lot in 2023. Going through my divorce. And that doesn't mean I'm not having the hardest time ever back then. Or it doesn't mean that things

are falling apart around me. But I'm still. I'm still. Oh, you know, I don't have any emotions about it. I can just kind of weather any storm. We can weather any storm, but we weather the storm by going through our emotions. So, I think I've, I think I could go on and on, but it's a very interesting thought to redefine peace and see how it plays such a huge role in our lives. It's not passive.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:11:44] Right. So many things to say. What I think you're saying is that your inner peace doesn't have to be. Influenced or affected by external situations. I mean it, life will bring you situations and circumstances that will have emotions and feelings and reactions that arise. But. You can practice and fortify the strength within and the inner peace that you have from within to where external chaos doesn't have to negate internal peace. Like they're not, um, they don't have to be mutually exclusive. Like, I think so often we think, oh, my life's a mess. I can't find peace right now. And I think that's why so many of us kind of put off self-care, wellness, our own mental well-being. Um. Relaxation, anything because life is too chaotic. And I think that's one of the big redefines in this conversation, too, of how can we do all of this? While life is throwing us curve balls and being challenging and uncertain.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:13:02] And I think that's a beautiful question, Michelle, because I think that our biggest issue is we don't like what the present moment is giving us, so we don't like it. And the fact that we are going up against life and not liking what is happening in the moment is causing us so much more turmoil and pain and suffering, and that doesn't mean we're not going to do that. I didn't like what was happening last year in many ways, and so I suffered a lot. But there was a part of me from the inside out that knew I got this. So, it's such an it's such an interesting topic to talk about because it doesn't mean we're not going to suffer. It doesn't mean we're not going to feel the pain. It doesn't mean that we're just going to kind of skim through life and everything's going to be hunky dory. I'm using some weird words today, even earlier. It doesn't mean....

**Michelle Maros:** [00:13:50] Actually I have a funny thing about that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:13:52] It doesn't mean that at all. What it means is that. We are going to recover quicker because we're going to allow ourselves to be we're going to not push against what life is giving us and by not pushing against. And recovering a little bit sooner or a little bit

sooner, a little bit sooner. We then know what actions we need to take. We then are okay with what's happening, even though we're not okay with what's happening. I don't know if that makes any sense because we can't actually, the only way we can change things that are happening in the outside world is by taking one little baby step at a time, feeling the feelings that we have, and getting clear on what it is life is asking us to do in this moment. And I think one of the greatest quotes that I read actually wasn't a quote. It was a study. I think Harvard may have done it that talked about 85% of what we worry about never happens. So, when I talk about a peaceful mind, or when we talk about allowing our minds to little by little become our best friend. It's that whole what if and the worry and the feelings that we have around not being okay with what's happening in the moment, not thinking that we're strong enough to handle it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:15:08] Thinking that we're just not going to make it. And it's the mind taking us out of the present moment where which it is, the present moment that gives us our power and telling us we're not good enough. You know, this is it. This is going to put you under. And of course, some of those thoughts went through my mind last year. Of course, some of those thoughts go through all of our minds. Life is not easy. Life is hard. But when we stop thinking that what the mind is thinking is the truth, and we start understanding that the mind is trying to throw everything at us. The mind is a tricky customer, and the mind is really trying to be the boss. And so, it'll throw anything it wants to at us. And so, our job is to question it all the time. So, if you think about 85% of what happens and what we worry about, worry about never happens. That other 15%, the study goes on to say, does happen. And when it's over, we sit down and we reflect and we say, wow, I handled that, handled that so much better than I thought that I would. So that's everything? Yeah.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:16:19] I feel like there's no better feeling than going through a difficult situation and realizing that you handled it better than you thought you could have or going through. You know, a nightmare. And feeling that. Gratitude for your ability to handle it. I mean, I never would have thought that I would have woken up to having it being raining inside my house. That's not something my mind ever imagined would be in my life's path, and I had no idea what to do or how to handle it. It was really early in the morning, so it's not like. There were people around to help and. I think we did a good job.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:17:10] You were extraordinary.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:17:12] But I mean, it's like we figured it out, and we did what we could. And I, you know, it didn't get to tense. I think we made a lot of jokes about it. I feel like laughter and humor in chaos is a really great tool and then looking for the silver linings, you know.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:17:36] Well, I just want to interrupt you just for a second, because I got here, you called me and I got here maybe, what, half hour, hour later, and I was in such awe of you were just taking it one step at a time and doing one thing at a time and one thing at a time. And you had you had no. Um. Oh my gosh. Oh my God. You had no worked up emotion like you couldn't handle it. It felt to me. And I believe that this is true, that you were handling it. You were taking one step at a time. You weren't poor me. You weren't allowing the circumstance to do a number on your confidence and your ability to take one moment at a time. You stayed in the present moment, and you were having some, I don't want to say fun, but you were lighthearted in the midst of extreme chaos. And so I think it exemplifies exactly what we're trying to say today, that that's what inner peace is. That's what living your life from the inside out. Instead of allowing the outside world to dictate what your mood is going to be, what your attitude is going to be, how you're going to assess the situation. And I think that that's what we do in circumstances that we can start to look at. How can I do this differently? How can I see chaos and outer turmoil differently? How can I stay in the present moment and allow myself to feel the feelings of what's happening, and not allowing the external world to disrupt or hijack, or be the thief of my inner peace? Of my groundedness and myself knowing that I'm going to I'm going to know what I need to do in this next moment, knowing that I can weather this storm. As Maya Angelou says, every rain runs, every storm runs out of rain, you know? So that's a perfect that's a perfect analogy.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:19:33] Because even after the water was finally turned off, it was still raining inside. And they're like, the water will run out eventually. The rain. The storm did run out of rain eventually.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:19:45] It's funny. It's so true. And I think that these are all practices, and this does not come easy. Cultivating a mind that is your friend and not your worst enemy is not easy. It takes vigilance and perseverance to be able to notice. What is the mind telling me that's

not true? Because most of the time it's not true. And this is what I'm thinking. I've been thinking about this a lot over the past month or two, especially since the new year and the year that I had last year. And I was thinking about this, that. If I cultivate my mind to be a friend and not an enemy. Then I'll actually know what truth means. Mhm. And I don't know if that lands or makes any sense because I've really been thinking about this a lot. Like what would it mean if my mind was my friend, and it threw stuff at me and I knew what was true and what's not true. And as a result of cultivating this friendship with myself, loving myself, accepting that I, I got this. It's going to be hard. I'm not perfect, but I got this. What would it mean then to really know what truth is? Like understanding that what truth means. It's a very. Deep thing that I've been thinking about, because I feel like we get caught up in allowing the outside world and other people and other things out there to take our joy. Mhm. Or to take our sense of connectedness to ourselves. And I believe that a lot of it is because we believe things that aren't true. We believe things in the outside world that aren't true, or we believe whatever other people say about ourselves.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:21:41] And let's just start there. One of the one of the biggest ways that my inner peace can get destroyed, especially back in the day, was if someone told me that I wasn't looking so good today, or, oh, your blouse looks a little bit tight, you know, or any of those things that people in the outside world, you know, I'm not sure what you did to your hair, but I'm not liking it as much as I used to. You know, whatever it is, you know how people, you know, they will give a comment or they'll have a judgment and it will throw us off for the rest of the day sometimes. So that's kind of what we're talking about. Not allowing other people's opinions and judgments and thoughts about us to have any effect on who we are, what we believe about ourselves, and what we know that we need to do in every given moment. And I think that that's the whole point of this conversation today is how can we become. So strong within ourselves that when we do kind of slide off the path of believing what the mind is saying or what other people are saying to us, we come, we shorten the recovery time. You know, it might last a day or two, it might last a month or two. But we always come back to the truth, which is we're enough. We are worthy and we have everything that we need inside of us to live a life that is true to who we are.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:23:05] I love that. Let's take a quick break. And we are back.



**Barb Schmidt:** [00:23:13] And if I could just add one more thing ready? Because I think one of the things that I noticed and this was early on in my practice, one of the things that I noticed that derailed me a lot is if I would be standing in line at a grocery store and the judgments that I would have all around me, my mind was judging how someone was unloading their cart on the on the conveyor belt. My mind was judging somebody wearing a hat that looked a little bit silly. My mind was judging how somebody was scanning the items and taking too long, and just. I would just ask all of you listening, think about all the time. Wherever you are, whether your mind is going and going and going and having judgments and just having random thoughts about things that are around you that you have no control over. And what I noticed about myself years ago is that it's such a waste of energy. It's such a waste of my time, but it is stealing my joy in the moment. I'm allowing that to rob me of my inner peace. My inner confidence. My inner strength because I'm so busy using my energy to have judgments about things that don't even matter.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:24:33] Right, That's so interesting. I feel that there's a lot of I have a lot of follow up questions and a lot of layers and things to unpack from what you were just saying, but.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:24:46] Well, let me just say one more thing about that.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:24:47] Then go for it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:24:48] Before you ask a question, just to give another explanation of how I believe this works in our lives. We do not have an unlimited amount of time. We can never get time back. We do not have an unlimited amount of energy. We have to fortify ourselves. We have to take care of ourselves. We have to get enough sleep. We have to eat properly. All the things that we all know. We don't have those two things ever coming back to us. So, if we are expending our time or wasting our time or using our time to place judgments or opinions or anger or resentment while we're standing in the grocery store line, we're first of all, we're wasting that precious moment that we will never have that moment back. So, we're frittering our time away.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:25:39] Wow another good word.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:25:39] And then the other part of that is we also can't get our energy back. So, we wonder if we are allowing our mind to run amok all day long, making judgments, making opinions, beeping our horn because somebody didn't go fast enough or they changed whatever. They didn't turn their turn signal on when they changed lanes. We are wasting our energy. So, we get home and we're exhausted. We don't really understand why we're exhausted, and we're a little bit short with the family, or we're a little bit overwhelmed with maybe the smallest of things. And it's because our energy was spent on things that don't matter.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:26:21] Yeah. It's true. And I think. The issue with. Peace. And you mentioned this at the beginning and. And everything that you're you've been talking about with fortifying yourself from the inside, is that. I think so often people think that being peaceful or cultivating that inner peace, or even being mindful is a signal of weakness and even, a degree of indifference. Like you're just sort of passive to life and even when you think about peace from the typical standpoint of like conflict, you know, war and peace, it's like peace is the antithesis, which is, you know. The opposite of aggression. And I think. Sometimes people think that if you are peaceful, you set yourself up to be a victim or open to. Quote unquote attack or you'll be taken advantage of because you're not as strong. And I would love for you to talk a bit about that, because. We don't believe that to be true. What do you think?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:55] Yeah, I think it is real. I think it's very difficult to wrap our minds around, how can we be peaceful in the midst of all the hard things happening in the world? All the trouble, all the noise, all the chaos, all the disruption, all the inequities? All the racism, all the things. I mean, there are so many things happening out there right now. And I think, you know, maybe social media has made us more aware. All these things were probably always happening, but we just weren't aware of it. And I think we're not saying that all those things aren't happening and that we don't need to care about it and that we don't need to do anything about it. I consider myself. And in my bio one of the things in my bio I'm an activist. I truly feel deeply for all of the inequities, all of the inequalities, all of the things. I'm a 60s girl. I grew up in the 60s movement, and so I am here to help move humanity forward. If you want to use it that way, in a way where we all start to live in love and goodness for each other, and that we start

to recognize where do we need to start making some changes so that everyone can benefit and not just a few? So, I am all in and I am all on board for that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:29:18] That has been my heart's desire for as long as I can remember is being a little girl. But what I've know, what I know to be true is it. We still have to be strong, and we have to. Take a look at where are we wasting our time and energy on things that don't matter, which is taking away from the energy that we need to live our lives in a way that starts to promote the things that matter most to us. So, I guess that's a that's a long way of saying what matters to you and what doesn't matter. And I think if someone's hair is green and we're spending, you know, like 20 minutes in the mine trying to figure out how does someone dye their hair green, does that matter? No. And I think if you can start to correlate that to, I'm, I'm taking away precious time. And my precious energy on something that doesn't matter. It's kind of. I think you wrote about this once, Michelle in one of your blogs. It's kind of like I'm being unnecessarily negative, like I'm being unnecessarily judgmental. I'm being I'm using my brain. I'm using my mind to be unnecessarily, um, worked up, agitated.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:30] So it's also a practice of discernment choosing.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:33] 100%.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:34] Like peace is being discerning enough to decide where you do want to expend your energy, and how much time and energy you want to put towards any sort of situation in life.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:30:48] 100%. It's truly...

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:50] And then I guess the emotional intelligence of like we always say, recognizing a feeling arise. Feeling it. Taking action and letting it go and not. Getting yourself amped up into situations where it's not necessary.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:31:12] Well, and I think that that whole thing that we talk about a lot in our lives, in the work that we do and on this podcast is we become we take on the behaviors of the people that we spend the most time with. And so. It's all about looking at where are we

spending our time? Where are we allowing our mind to go in every single moment of the day? And how can we start to notice? Wow, I'm with this particular person, and when I'm with this particular person, I find myself agitated. I find myself worked up. I find myself more judgmental. I find myself more angry. And I think that if we can start to notice that. Where we actually abdicate. Being the boss of our own lives. We abdicate being the boss of our mind. And I think we just kind of allow ourselves to fall into certain things. And if we could start to become the scientists which we talk about so much, if we can start to become a scientist, if anyone would ask me what would be the first step to cultivating your mind to become your best friend, start to recognize every single time. Well, I'm exaggerating every single time is kind of a perfectionist in me saying that. Start recognizing how often during the day you get agitated. How often is your mind agitated? And just keep a little notebook. I kept a notebook for a year. When I started thinking about and really wanting to cultivate a mind. That's my friend. Because I wanted to get to the truth of what's real and what isn't real, and what is my mind trying to trick me into doing, and what do I really know is the right thing for me to do, or the right thing for, or the right action for me to take? So just start keeping a little notebook every what are there certain people in my life that are really agitating me? How can I maybe minimize the time that I spend with those people? I mean, it's all an experiment.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:33:09] You know, we talk about I think life is an experiment. It's try this, try that. Let's see this. So, what is the purpose of the experiment? This is what, I guess I would say the purpose of my experiment in my life is to constantly look at or to continuously look at, not constantly, continuously look at. Where does my mind get aggravated? Where does my mind get agitated, and what is causing it? What is the cause? So, I'll give you an example years ago. And you'll laugh at this one. Michelle years ago, I decided that when I'm driving is a challenge for me. For whatever reason, time and getting worked up and traffic and I don't know, it's just always been a thing for me. And so instead of berating myself for it, I started to look at all the ways that my mind got distracted when I was driving, which is not a good thing, right? We don't want our minds distracted when we're driving.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:34:06] Or operating heavy machinery.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:34:07] Yeah, and what I noticed the most was having a radio on in the car or having anything on in the car. It distracted me from paying attention. It took me out of the

moment, and by keeping silence in the car when I was by myself, I actually noticed that my mind was running a mile a minute about all the things that were wrong out there on the road. And so, I don't know if this is helpful, but just trying to find ways where I can start to listen. More intently to what my mind is thinking and pushing back a little bit on it and not taking it as truth.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:34:43] Right. It's interesting because I think everything that you're talking about is kind of an example of like, what came first, the chicken or the egg and, and kind of an endless loop of how all of these practices and ideas. Kind of become a mesh. Because what I hear you saying now is that especially when we're talking about being open to letting your mind become your best friend rather than your worst enemy and cultivating that awareness of what's actually going on in your mind at any given moment. Allowing for the space between that stimulus and response. Like Viktor Frankl says, to have the choice of how you're going to respond requires mindfulness, being in the present moment. Knowing that it requires mindfulness and knowing that it requires that attention to each moment to have the choice, and then also the discernment and the discipline, I guess, to be committed. To acting within your own best interest of what is most aligned for you. And then also the practice of fortifying yourself from the inside, you know, with meditation, with affirmation, with therapy, with, positive reinforcement from, you know, your community or your circle. I feel like they all kind of feed into each other and are always working off of each other to ultimately establish this peace that we're talking about, which is why it's this conversation is so fascinating to me because you talk about, we talk about peace all the time, and it seems like such a simple, like a peace, you know, whatever. It's just kind of a it almost to me feels like a fluff word at this point in our society. But when we talk about it from this lens, it's so multifaceted and it's so layered and it's a challenge to cultivate peace and all of these systems, so to speak, in our lives have to be working to achieve it in that way. I mean, there's no like. Okay, I've reached peace and now I'm done. But maintaining that like equilibrium of peace.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:37:22] And I think it doesn't mean that you're going to be able to maintain it either. I think. I love what you just said.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:37:28] It's like a constant check in.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:37:30] It's a continuous check in. I think we just have to be mindful of what we are talking about is practice. I mean, everything we talk about on the show here is practice. What we're talking about is practice. So, you don't have to take all the things that we're mentioning today. As you said, Michelle it's like overwhelming. I got to do all these things in order to find inner peace. I think if you just do one, if you just do one thing to start the motion of finding that sense of connectedness within and knowing that your time and your energy and how you feel about yourself and the connectedness that you have with yourself, is the greatest thing that you can do in life. It is truly the most extraordinary thing that you can do, cultivating that relationship with yourself. And so how that can transform, I mean, how that can be put into daily life. When I went on a retreat, my first retreat with Nathan back in the late 90s, mid to late 90s, I think I've told you guys this that, you know, I was expecting Nathan as one of the greatest, most amazing meditation teachers of all time. And I was it was like 1995, here I am, you know, ten years out of treatment and I'm going on a retreat with the incredible infamous Thich Nhat Hanh.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:38:46] Infamous?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:38:46] So I thought he was going to tell us. Isn't that mean renowned? Okay.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:38:51] Yeah..

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:38:53] And so I'm thinking that he's going to give me everything that I need to know about meditation and all the things, and. What he said to us to prepare us for any of the meditations. Every time we'd go for a walking meditation or a sitting, he would just say, be where your feet are. I remember thinking, okay, I have to figure out what that means. But and it's so simple. So, I think these things aren't that hard. We make them complicated. So be in the present moment. Be where your feet are. And so, one of the things I learned from him. When we ended the retreat, he said to us as he was giving us our parting words, he said. Every day. Go into your day and relieve the suffering of another human being. And then, you know, that could be heavy, especially when you look at what we feel like is going on around us in the world. But then he went on to say, just your smile. Is enough to change someone's day or enough to change someone's life. So that idea that just do a little bit. I think we get so overwhelmed with what it is we think we have to do. So often we're like in shock mode or

whatever it is. So, we do nothing or we don't do enough, and then we feel overwhelmed and then we start, you know, beating ourselves up. Oh my gosh, there's so much going on. I just don't know what to do. And I'm doing nothing and I'm useless or this inner peace is not for me. Because look, it's made me very passive. Right. So, I think that idea of just doing a little bit do one thing every day because that one, that one little bit of good of relieving the suffering.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:40:33] I think I've told this story before, that I walked into the post office during holiday time in Colorado, and everybody was enraged. The line was so long, and I got up to the counter and I just smiled at the person behind the counter.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:40:48] Right.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:40:48] I didn't think anything of it. I just smiled and she looked back at me, and she said, thank you. Your friendliness has made this day for me. It's been really difficult day and I said, I can feel that around. She said, thank you. All I did was smile. So, I think if we can stay in the moment and feel the feelings that we're having, because so often we are in the moment and we're feeling the pain or the suffering or the hardships around us. And so, to kind of get outside of ourselves for one moment of every day and take in the energy of what's around us, just being present and giving someone in our vicinity or someone in our path. One little bit of goodness, or one little bit of joy, or a little smile or, you know, helping someone cross the street. Helping someone. I had helped someone the other day figure out how to do the parking meters here, because they've been adding new parking meters every time we turn around. They had no idea how to turn the do the parking meters. I just feel like if we can just bring it down to very, very, very basic, we're trying to make it so monumental. And it's the little things every single day that add up.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:05] Absolutely. I just like with everything the little things we do, the little practices we take, the even. We've talked about this a lot in other episodes. The 1% rule of a minute of mindfulness here, a minute of mindfulness there can transform the rest of your day. Each little commitment that we make towards being mindful, being present, being aware, being kind of works to fortify from the inside out and makes such a difference in the external world and how we interact with people. And it's true. I think oftentimes when people think about personal development and healing and self-care, it can come across as being a little bit

insulated and selfish. People call it sometimes because it's like you're just focusing on yourself. But truthfully, we do all of these things, and we work so hard on ourselves to cultivate all of these qualities and be strong from the inside out so that we can act in a way to help relieve the suffering of others, or to be a bright spot in someone else's day, like you were saying at the post office. Even just a smile helped change that person. It's like, how can you not add on to the already immense level of suffering that we that the world is experiencing, you know, both on the micro and the macro, in our own, in our own, uh, inner circle and our own communities. But of course. Globally and. That's why, I think. And that was. This is a tagline for peaceful mind, peaceful life when we started. As you know, outer peace begins with inner peace and. Again, that statement could sound a little fluffy or trite when you think about peace in just this la la, everything's happy. And no one is angry, ever. But it's so much deeper and more than that when you think about the personal responsibility, we all can take to be that version of ourselves that has the ripple effect.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:44:35] And I think I love that Michelle so beautiful. And I think that all starts with the relationship that you have with yourself. Like inner peace can't happen until you've made peace with yourself, until you love yourself, until you accept yourself, until you trust yourself, until you feel like it's not selfish for me to take care of myself, because there really is no way that we're going to feel like we can handle things in the outer world and that we're going to believe that every storm runs out of rain and all of those things, unless we care about ourselves deeply. And so, this whole conversation today is truly about if you are looking to have a sense of groundedness or have a sense of confidence, you have to start looking at how you treat yourself. What do you say to yourself? How do you treat yourself and start making peace with yourself? I think that's the huge answer to how do I, you know, and you see those quotes that say, don't let someone steal your joy, don't allow the outside world to disrupt your inner peace. So, what were what I believe? We're saying and what I believe anyone that has started to cultivate a relationship with themselves, what they're saying is start having a deep connection with yourself so that when the storm comes, you can anchor yourself in your strength, or you can anchor yourself even in the knowing.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:46:06] Like, I had a deep knowing last year that everything was going to be okay in the midst of the storm. That's what it means to have that inner peace. It doesn't mean that I'm going to feel are. I got this. I don't even need to feel the feelings I don't even need. No,



it meant that I knew that the storm was going to run out of rain. Because Maya Angelou is one of my favorite teachers of all time, and I had faith in myself. I asked for that every day in my meditation for 40 years. Grant me the grace of unshakable faith, and I don't even know what that means. Sometimes during the day, I didn't in the early days of saying it 40 years ago, I just knew that I wanted to feel unshakable. And it didn't mean perfect, and it didn't mean that things weren't going to be, you know, crazy out there. It just meant that I was going to be able to weather the storm. That's the best. I guess that's the best thing that I love. That idea of saying weathering a storm, meaning that I can just kind of come inside myself or just anchor inside myself, knowing that I have everything that I need and allow the present moment to keep unfolding, moment and moment at a time, knowing that I will be shown, or I will know what my next step should be, or what my next step can be.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:47:24] So I think if you're looking at reading these quotes or seeing things about peace, I think if you could just. Start to, I don't know, start to see what it feels like to make peace with yourself. What would that mean to make peace with yourself? And for me, in the early days it meant stop beating yourself up, Barb. Stop saying you're not good enough. Stop saying you're not worthy. Stop saying that. Oh, if you were only thinner, then life would be better. All those things that the mind is saying to you are not true. They truly are not true. Because we do know we've all experienced this, probably in some version or some form that, oh, if we did lose weight and got better, then something else would be wrong. Like it's not centered in the outside world. It's centered inside. So, finding that way, little by little by little of making peace with yourself, whatever that looks like for you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:48:17] I love that. Let's take another quick break. And we are back again. I love that. Um, because it is work and I was. You often say that peace is not passive. It's not. Being. It's not leaning back into life and letting life happen to you. And I was kind of researching this a bit, and I really liked this quote from Hubert Humphrey where he says, peace is not passive, it is active. Peace is not appeasement. It is strength. Peace does not happen. It requires work. And I think that's exactly what we're saying here. Where? There is a lot of effort. And meaningful work that goes into cultivating peace. And it's a worthwhile endeavor because it impacts so much both for ourselves and for, you know, everyone else around us. And I wanted to add to. An interesting piece. Kind of going back to peace of mind. Peaceful life and the nonprofit part of this conversation. When you started teaching meditation classes at our local

university at FAU, there was the peace studies program that you worked through and the program or the department had courses and information about external conflict resolution. And I remember you saying at that time, that's great because that's important. But where is the component for internal? Peace. Can you, will you talk a little bit about that and why that kind of fell into that department?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:50:05] Yeah, those two have to go together. I mean, certainly we need conflict resolution. And that kind of boils down to good communication. And how can we start to be in community with each other and all of the things that need to happen in a conflict resolution place? But none of that can get to, I don't even believe you can get to that place in a lasting way, without having programming and without having understanding and practices and a deep knowing of what do I need to do to bring peace to myself first? How do I need to make peace with myself? How do I need to embrace myself as my most trusted friend, my most loyal companion? Uh, that I love as much as I love dearly any other person in my life. Um, you know, I like to say often, who's the one person in your life that you love so much you would do anything for? Cultivate that same relationship with yourself that you would do anything for yourself. Because I think if we did that, I know for me, when I practice doing that. It kind of sheds light on all the things that matter and the things that I need to be doing for myself, but also for others, or also for my job, or also for my children or whatever it is.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:51:22] It's so important, I think, that we understand that the outer world is real. I like to say this often because it really impacted me a long time ago. Because sometimes we can get to some of the things we read or some of the things that people say we can get too heavy, like, well, the outside world is not real anyway. You know, it's an illusion or whatever. I don't, I don't know because that never made any sense to me back in the day. What I have discovered is the outside world is real. We are living out here when all hell breaks loose and it's utter chaos and other fear and utter despair. It is real that we are feeling those feelings, and so we feel the feelings, but understanding and knowing that the inner world is just as real. So I would love for everyone to give the outer world and the inner world the same space on the same stage.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:52:15] I love that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:52:15] And I think that that's where we really start to make progress in this idea of don't allow behavior of others to destroy your inner peace. I think the Dalai Lama says that. Okay, so what does that mean? I don't I mean, all of that is good. It is a really good quote, a really good way to live your life. But how do we do that? And the only way that I have found in 40 years of trying to do that and working on that in my practices, is I do that by having a relationship with myself, understanding that inner peace, me understanding and knowing what it is that I need in any moment, or knowing that I can have the emotions that I'm having. But none of that ever has the power to define who I am. At my core, I'm worthy. I'm enough. I'm amazing. I'm extraordinary. I'm beautiful. I'm love. So, at my core, I'm all those things. So, when I go back into that, I got goosebumps. Right now, when I go back into that place of knowing in that moment all the things that are happening in the outside world that are falling apart around me and in my life kind of fades away a little bit. Not that it's not there, but my attention is on my inner life, on my inner knowing of my strength, my goodness, my ability to handle whatever life brings my way. Because nobody can actually bring peace to me but me. Sure, we become the we take on the behaviors of the people we spend the most time with.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:48] So being around people that are joyful and that really feel like they've got a good relationship with themselves. And I think that's what I was trying to say at the beginning of this episode, when I walked in the door, when you called me and said, it's raining in my apartment. When I walked in the door, I was a little overwhelmed watching all the rain flood out of the elevator and watching it pouring out of places all around the place. But all I just kind of took a moment, took a deep breath, and watched you. Because I think I even said to you, I don't know what to do. I don't know where to begin. I'm just going to follow you. And there's nothing. And I think that's what is beautiful, because you kind of I don't know if you didn't know what to do, but you knew in every moment. If you did just this one little thing, it would lead to the next thing. I just watched you and I followed you. So, all that to say is you brought yourself inner peace in the midst of utter destruction.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:54:51] Yeah.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:54:51] And you had some smiling and a little bit of laughter to go along with it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:54:56] Well. Yes, because I do think that there is a level of humor that comes to the surface during times of madness that really helps. And it just kind of felt like we were on the Titanic and in the morning, early, I called one of my closest friends to come over to help, and he was like, we're on the Titanic, like women and children only. And we were just kind of joking around as we were putting towels down everywhere. Obviously, the Titanic was not a funny situation. I'm talking more about the movie, which wasn't funny, but you get what I'm saying. And it does relieve some of the stress when you can at least just have a laugh while you're trying to do what you need to do in a situation that's out of your control. And then I think it's also the epitome of life. You know you're never in control of things that happen in the external world. Even though I could literally see that water was coming down from every square inch of the ceiling, there was literally nothing I could do about it. So. Like, what could I do? Well, what were the things that I could do?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:21] You did the one thing you could do. You went and got a lot of towels. We had a lot of wet towels. And I think that that's the point, and I think I want to leave. This conversation with this thought. That's the point. What can I do instead of focusing on what I can't do and the overwhelm, what can I do? And then you had a friend in your life that you knew to call, like your lifeline.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:56:46] Yes, I had people.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:56:47] You had a friend in your life that you to call that was going to lift the mood, lift. Like knowing this is such a horrendous thing. But when we can come from a place of inner peace, inner strength, you're going to know what to do. So, you got every single towel that you had imaginable, and you started doing what you could do in that moment. And for me, as we end this episode, I just want to tell you what it means for me to have this whole scenario of this idea of this inner peace, this inner world and outer world, and knowing that I can handle anything, even though sometimes it doesn't feel like it. It's freedom. So, for me, peace is freedom. It's liberty. It like, it feels so good. And I felt you so free in the moment. I think some of the light heartedness, even though this was really hard. I mean, you could feel the seriousness of it, but you weren't taking yourself so seriously. And I think I've said this in my first book, we need to take the life that we want to live seriously. We need to know, you know, what matters to us and all of those. But we can't take ourselves so seriously all the time. And I

think that was a very lighthearted way that you were. You were so serious about what you needed to do, but you weren't taking yourself so seriously. So, you had a little laughter going on. And you have a friend in your life who's like that for you. And I just love it.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:58:09] And then we have other friends who came in, knew exactly what to do and.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:58:14] Started doing the work.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:58:15] Do this, this, this, this and this. Yes, I think that's all. Also to just to close out that conversation where, you know, having people in your circle that serve that great purpose, especially when you need it, of, you know, you can provide comedic relief or can come in and be clear minded or can know who to call, or can just who even just says, hey, can I do anything for you? How can I help? I think those are. That's the energy of, you know, your circle and you reflect that back for your people hopefully. So yeah, it was a cool example of all of the stuff that we talk about kind of playing out in real life. But you know, being peaceful in times of chaos and being committed to the peace that lives within all of us is certainly a worthwhile practice and endeavor and commitment to recommit to every day.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:59:27] And it might not be a easy journey. It can be a difficult journey as you venture into this, but it's a worthwhile journey. You will be glad that you formed this relationship with yourself, and you will feel that sense of inner joy.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:59:43] And again, it's you know, you can put in the work and sometimes not see necessarily the quote unquote results or feel like nothing's changing or nothing's happening. But I, you know, in times like with what happened with the leak or just so many other circumstances in my life personally, where you realize, oh, I did handle this better than I ever thought I would have. Wow. That's what all of this stuff I've been doing for all of these years has, has done for me. So, it's like, don't. Don't give up on the practices or your commitments just because you're not seeing necessarily those grand changes or results. Because I think the best quote unquote results are the subtle ones, or that pop up when you don't expect it, or you realize that you're so much stronger than you think that you are. It's a cool feeling.

**Barb Schmidt:** [01:00:34] Thank you.

**Michelle Maros:** [01:00:36] Thank you. Wow, we did it. A whole podcast under the water.

**Barb Schmidt:** [01:00:41] Surrounded by peace.

**Michelle Maros:** [01:00:43] Surrounded by peace. I hope that this was helpful. It was a fun conversation, and I'm glad that it life presented all of these external circumstances to chat about it while we talk about internal peace. Um. Let us know what you think and your thoughts. We love hearing from you. The best way to do so is making sure you're connected to us on social media, at Peaceful\_Barb, at Michelle Maros, and at Barb Knows Best Pod. That's the best way to send us podcast topic requests, ask us questions, all of the things you can do. So there. Also, make sure that your liked and subscribe to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts. Apple, Google, Spotify, all of the places so that you're always up to date with each new episode and everything else that's going on in the world of Barb Knows Best. If you're loving the show, share the show with a friend. We love hearing from people that share it. Word of mouth. It's such a special gift to give to us. And if you haven't yet given us a five star rating on iTunes and Spotify and leave a review. We are so grateful for everyone who has done that, and we absolutely love reading your feedback about the show. Lastly, we do have some fun merch that is available still via the link in the show notes. I love it! I'm loving seeing you guys order it, sending me messages about it. So if you're looking for some new BKB merch, make sure you check that out. Thank you again for listening. Thank you so much mom, and we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.