

## Episode 114 - Remember Who You Are

### Barb Knows Best

#### Episode Transcripts

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:12] Hello, everyone. Hi, friends. Welcome back to Barb Knows Best the podcast. I'm your co-host, Michelle Maros. And today I'm deeply grateful to be sitting across the table from my mom, Barb, because it's been a week. Uh, we both have been a little under the weather. We've tried to record this episode a handful of times at this point. You'll probably hear a little bit of a change of our voices, but we're so committed to the pod, the cause, you all. We're making it work today, so. Hi, mom.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:49] Hi, Michelle. Very excited to be here today. I think we sound a whole lot better than we did the other few times we tried to record.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:00:55] You actually sound great.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:00:56] Oh, I'm glad. I'm glad it was. It was pretty. It did not sound great for a few times and we thought it was just way too distracting.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:01:06] You know, we figured you all probably would be able to listen past maybe raspy or voices, but you had a coughing fit the other other day and I'm like, I don't think they want to listen to us cough into a mic for an hour or so. No, let's hit the pause.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:01:23] Yeah, I went to the doctor. I just have a cold, tested me for Covid and all the things. And he said, you just have a really, really, really bad cold. He said, take care of yourself because it could turn into bronchitis. Like what?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:01:34] Well, when you told me that, I was like, oh, now you really need to take care of yourself.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:01:37] No, I know, I, I knew that it was something that I had never experienced before because I don't I don't get sick that often.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:01:42] No, you really don't.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:01:44] But this was the cough was more than I had ever in all of my years alive. I'd never I've never experienced a cough like this for so many days. And then the sneezing and I had some allergy attacks. Come on. So, as Michelle said, quite the week. It's been quite the week, but I feel a whole lot better today. And I'm very excited to be here with you, Michelle, to talk about our topic, because I'm so excited about the topic. That's why we kept trying to record almost every day we sat down, we said, okay, maybe today will be the day. Yeah, um, but today is the day now. So I'm very let us.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:02:17] Hope, let us hope we make it through.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:02:19] This one. We will make through it. We will make it through I, I have faith, I have faith, yeah.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:02:24] It's been, you know, because we're roommates. We've been kind of in this journey this week together. Uh, and. Yeah. Now we're here recording, so I'm glad that we've made it to this place and we can chat. You know, since you mentioned on a couple episodes ago, you were on a silent retreat and you brought up some of the things that you've learned or that came up for you or that you processed while on your retreat. And since we've been living together and spending more time together, you know, outside of work or just like regular life stuff, we've had a lot of chats about what came up for you and what you've been processing or noticing. And today's topic is one that was big for you while you were gone. And, um. It ties into a lot of things that we talk about on the show and in on social media, and I just think it's a great reminder and, um, topic to discuss. Yeah. Per usual.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:03:22] Yeah. And I think one of the things that I want to start with a little bit is that I'm, I'm truly a human that loves to be curious, and I love to constantly be having insights about life, having insights about myself and just loving it. And as Michelle said, so every time I would get an insight and then start talking about some of the insights and some of the things that I learned about myself, kind of what's been happening for me, especially the past six months. You all been listening to this and going through this divorce of 33 years of marriage. It really it really had, as you all have felt, and you're going to hear more and more. I keep saying

that, but this is part of more and more. It really did a number on me. And I think that, um, this particular. Part of it. This today that we're going to talk about is so, so profound for me. And I'm hoping that some of you will be able to, you know, just kind of feel this a little bit and say, wow, you know what? This this is really important. So I think without further ado, um, I was on the silent retreat. And on the retreat, we do a lot of walking and we do a lot of walking meditations, and we spend a lot of time in nature, which I absolutely love. And the weather was cooperative, so that was even better. So we were walking one one day after lunch and.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:04:46] During these walks, we take in the nature and, you know, we're not talking for 30 days, so it's it's quiet. And as I was walking down the hill, I heard this voice inside of me that said. Barb. You've forgotten who you are. Remember who you are. And I started to cry. I truly it was very overwhelming, very profound, very deep. And I remember stopping and just hearing this voice. Remember who you are. Remember who you are. And then I knew instantly why this was coming up, because for months and months and months and prior to even going through the divorce, there's just been a part of me that's been very clinging, clinging to the past, worried about the future, and thinking about, oh my gosh, now what? And how is this all going to unfold? And, and just really ruminating about the past. And I think what I, what that message was for me during that walk is when we try to cling to the past. Or even try to ruminate and think about how the past is going to be for the future. We are. As you can imagine, we are totally out of the present moment. We aren't at all experiencing the moment. So in this moment, on my walk, I was experiencing the moment. And that moment was telling me, you've forgotten who you are. You're clinging to the past. You're thinking you have no life without the past.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:06:14] You know, I don't know if I felt that dramatic about it, but certainly when you go day after day after day, I think everyone listening can relate to the fact that we can sometimes really ruminate about something for a very long time and day after day, and we can't actually let it go, or we have a really hard time letting it go. And I've always, I've always kind of kind of ruffled my feathers whenever someone would say to me, just let that go, just let that go. Yeah. And I just don't find it that easy to let it go, even though I believe strongly in that. We have to let things go. So what I believe what was happening for me was this was the process of me being able to let go. And what struck me so profoundly about this is my whole life's work is about all of us knowing who we are, what we want, and being the extraordinary humans that

we already are from the inside out. So for this beautiful voice inside of me to say, Barb, you've forgotten who you are. Remember who you are. So as I think about the clinging or I think about ruminating too much about the past and the future, what was happening for me as I started unraveling this, you've forgotten who you are. Remember who you are. Barb, is that I was. Not letting go, obviously, but I've been abandoning myself.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:07:35] I've been in kind of a victim mode. I've been in a little bit of a poor me mode. I've been in a mode of chasing friends and hoping that they will stay my friend and not abandon me for my ex husband. I've been in kind of a mode of. Uh, grasping and trying to cling to what I did have before without the person that I was married to. And how was all of that going to work? How was I going to reconcile my new life instead of just being who I am? A loving, caring, kind, smart, extraordinary. Human being. I'd forgotten. That I know what I need to do when I stay in the present moment. And so I share this with all of you listening. And I love this episode so much as it sounds sometimes trite to say, oh, just be in the present moment. Live in the present moment, be where your feet are. And all of us know that we have to live our lives like that. But it's very, very difficult to remember to be in the present moment. But when you actually get the message that remember who you are. So I would ask all of you to kind of just think about, are there times when you abandon yourself and Michelle? I know one of our favorite teachers is James Finley, and you quote him a lot in this. Yes. His most profound quote, I think, for both of us has been, can you live your whole life never meeting the person who's living it? Having never met the person who is living it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:09:11] And that's what he's talking about. Do we abandon ourselves and forget who we are? Can we actually look in the mirror and say, wait a minute, I know who I am? This is a very difficult time that I'm going through. But just remember who you are and that clinging and grasping and trying to run around behind the scenes and trying to make everything okay. Fixing, fixing, judging, looking at different situations and say, oh my gosh, those people never really liked me anyway. You know, all the things that we think about when we're about to lose something, especially if it's something that's been with us for 30 plus years. Yeah. Okay, I know it's a lot to unpack, but I wanted to just share. And for all of you, just to kind of take a deep breath and think about this idea of collective breath. Yeah. Of remembering who you are. And whatever that might mean for you. You may be bringing up things of abandoning yourself or bringing up things, of judging yourself, or being hard on yourself, or on yourself, or not being

true to yourself. Yeah, or thinking you've got to be something other than who you are to make other people happy, whatever that means for you. Just what would it mean if you heard a voice inside of you say, remember who you are?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:10:35] It's powerful and. In reaction to all of the things that you just said. I think it's important to remember for you that and anyone listening, because life is difficult as we talk about, I think every single episode like Scott Peck says. There is no good in life. Without bad in life, we wouldn't know that things were good if we didn't have something to contrast it to. So we have those highs and lows. We have those periods of difficulty. And you know, as we know it's it's what we do with it that determines how it impacts us. And you went through it or you've been going through it for a while now. And we've talked about this on the show quite a bit. And. Despite. Knowing and trusting and believing in all of those things, that this was is the right thing and was the right choice. It's hard because especially when you talk about identity and knowing who you are and remembering who you are, especially when you're in a divorce where that's, you know, you're part of your identity for so many years. It is going to break down your sense of self because you have to redefine yourself. And I think that that's very normal, even if it's just a breakup, a not a marriage or a friendship breakup or, you know, moving to a different location. So much of of how we identify ourselves and define ourselves is on our external life, even though we know the external world is unreliable and unpredictable. And so I just wanted to say first, if anyone relates to this, or even for you, mom, it's not to even beat yourself up for going through that phase of.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:12:23] Losing who you are, or forgetting who you are, or even going through those moments where you. We're acting in a way that, you know, saying that you were falling into victim mode and things like that because it's part of the like I almost think of, like, you know, the phoenix rising from the ashes. You have to kind of burn it all down and start over again. And. When we don't, when so much is taken from us. It creates a void. And until we get our footing, until we, you know, start to heal, sometimes that void gets filled with not the healthiest of habits, but it's all part of the process, I think. And it's been cool to watch you go through this as someone so close to you because. Well for many different reasons one. It's proof that no matter how committed you are to your practice or for how long you've been practicing, we're all going to struggle. And you talk about this so often to me personally, but even in our workshops that. Just because you're committed to a practice, you meditate, you're in therapy,

you're connected to yourself. It doesn't mean that life is going to be perfect. And the sooner that we can let go of that expectation that things will be seamless, I think the better we can handle things when they come our way. And I think you've done a great job at handling this, but we're always going to have difficulties. And the second thing that's exciting to me to watch this for you is it's almost like a snake shedding its skin. And, you know, I think for you, you've been good with.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:14:14] The loss of the relationship. The the husband piece for a while like that's been something that you've known for quite some time was done. You know. Of course, I think at the beginning, you know, maybe a year or two ago, just retraining your brain to live from a different perspective was hard. But I think as far as the person goes, you've been good. And now I think these past six months or eight months or even this half of the year has really been like everything else that goes along with it the friends, the social circle, the, you know, the life that went around with it, you know, living in the same town and reimagining your life. And it's like shedding that last layer of, like that snakeskin of your old life. And that's hard, too, because it's your life. It wasn't just one person. It was everything else that goes along with it. And so what's cool for me now is to feel like you've shedded that last bit of the snakeskin. And I think on this retreat, now that the skin is off, it sounds so gross now that the skin is off, like, who are you now? And I think that's where you can have this really cool opportunity again, even if you're not going through a difficult moment. But any moment in time, we can ask ourselves those questions that we've talked about so many episodes of like, who am I? What do I want? And what matters most to me? And how cool is it that each and every day, or at a pinnacle in time, we can have those moments to reinvent?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:15:45] That's so beautifully said, Michelle, and I really appreciate your words and your comments. And I think just to add on to what you've just said, what is so profound for me about this and why I'm so excited to share it with all of you. I mean, first of all, everything I do in my life, I love sharing with all of you and Michelle and I live for this. We love being able to share our life experiences in the hopes of helping all of you, in any small way. Begin to start noticing in little ways you you can start to change or shift and start to become more of exactly who you are from the inside out. So I appreciate what you're saying, Michelle. And I think why going back to why I'm so excited about this episode is. It's not very often that we that we, we get the hit that. Wait a minute, I'm abandoning myself. Wait a minute. I forgot who I am, and

yes, I've been done with this relationship. You're right. For several years. It's now the. Now what? You know what is my life look like? What? All of the things. And I think what's unfolding for me in such a beautiful way are many things. And number one, this idea of we're never going to be perfect, as you said, Michel. And this idea of just staying curious and staying open. But more than any of that, allowing yourself to go through the feelings with whatever is happening.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:17:07] What I noticed the most in this. Forgetting who I am. Is that I did not give myself permission to just be in whatever feelings or whatever emotions I was in, in the moment. I would kind of stop myself sometimes say, wait a minute, you know, shake out of this barb, and you're strong, you're vibrant, you're all these things. And yes, I am all those things, but I'm also human. We're we are also human. So if you're feeling, uh, you know, sad or if you're feeling abandoned by other people, or if you're feeling scared or if you're feeling like, my gosh, I need to, I need to go out there and figure out who are my people now or whatever it is. How am I going to rebuild this new life? What's going to happen to me? Or all the things that might be happening with whatever you might be going through in your own life? The idea of trying to push that aside. And just, you know, kind of force your way through it or, you know, muddle your way through it. It doesn't it doesn't work that way. And that's what I realized a lot on this retreat. It doesn't work that way. And the moment I gave into the quiet and the walking and the voice that said. Have you forgotten who you are? It was like a revelation, like, oh my gosh, who I am is patient, who I am.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:18:31] Knows that life is going to be difficult, and I can feel all the feelings and know that I'm going to be standing tall whenever that day might come. And I don't need to run around pleasing other people, or I don't need to run around checking, or I don't need to do all of those things. And that's the idea. I think what I've learned a little bit this, this whole past month or so is that's kind of what letting go means. But, you know, sometimes we're we're in a position, we're saying, okay, let's just let go of this, you know, just stop letting this bother you or we'll say to ourselves, I know I need to forgive this person, but I can't, you know, it's like we're trying to force ourselves to do things before we've actually felt the feelings. And so this idea of living in the present moment, remembering who you are, comes when you allow yourself to feel all the feelings and go through whatever it is you have to go through and be patient with yourself. Be kind and loving with yourself, not judging yourself. I think this is the most important

thing that we have to remember, and this is what I've learned the most. And when we're not doing that for ourselves. We really are abandoning ourselves.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:19:47] I love that.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:19:49] Let's take a quick break. And we're back. So there's so much that I want to say and kind of rewinding a bit and going back to.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:20:05] What are.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:20:06] What? Like what even prompts moments in life to allow us to realize that we've abandoned ourselves because, I mean, I think so often like that James Findlay quote that you said, can you live your whole life without knowing the person who's living it? Paraphrasing, of course. I think many of us, I could have gone through my life without the introspection, to even have the curiosity to know who I am. I mean, I don't I don't know if that makes sense, but. I think oftentimes when faced with difficulty or when, you know, huge shifts take place, it does put into our paths. The opportunity to to really dive into that introspection and I guess. Can you talk a little bit more about? Maybe some of the symptoms of self abandonment? Or is there a way to know that you've kind of disconnected before getting to a place where you realize like, oh, I'm full on separated? Does that make sense?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:21:17] That's a great question. Um, and I think probably the way I would answer it, especially coming out the other side now, as you said, shedding the skin, the way I would answer it is. I don't know if we can ever prevent it. But what I do know, and what I do feel today is that we can shorten the recovery time each time it happens. And that's the beauty of life. I feel. So even though I'm under the weather and you can kind of hear it in my voice, I'm sure. I am so excited about life. I'm so excited about being with all of you. I'm just so excited about my life and all the things that I have to share, and all the things that I have to live in my life. So I don't know if we can we can actually prevent ourselves from going through those things. But I do know that I can shorten the recovery time. I can come back into the present moment after I've gone through whatever it is I'm going through. But what I do know that will help shorten the recovery time, and possibly there will be times when we prevent ourselves from going down into a deep place for sure is not judging ourselves, not expecting ourselves to

be other than what's happening in the moment, and really being kind and gentle with ourselves. So do we all want to go a little bit deep in this episode?

**Michelle Maros:** [00:22:36] Are you asking.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:22:37] Us? Yeah, yeah. Okay.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:22:39] I want to go deep.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:22:39] So there's a there's a quote. And it goes like this. There are two kinds of suffering. Yes. Suffering that leads to more suffering. And suffering that leads to the end of suffering. And so I really contemplated and reflected on this a lot during my retreat. And when I heard this quote decades ago, you know, you all know I've been practicing for 40 years, and I've been studying all the great traditions and all the things, uh, about how do we make our lives be have the desires and the happiness and the success and all the things that we wish in life. I ran across this quote, and when I first heard it, I thought of it this way. Oh, we can actually come to the end of suffering.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:23:31] Interesting.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:23:31] And so thinking about that decades ago, I'm like, I don't even know how to do that. But I kind of tried and it was a failure. Right? Because I guess in my brain, decades ago, I thought we could end suffering if we just did all the things that we needed to do and how fast forward now to today. There is no way to end suffering because we are going to suffer. We are going to have pain, and we also are going to have happiness and joy and fun and laughter. This is what life is all about. So what I what I learned deeply on this retreat. Is how we add to more suffering. Is by writing all the stories. And telling ourselves all the things that aren't true, that keep us clinging to the past, or that keep us clinging to this idea of what we think is the right way for our life to be. Instead of being open to what is life presenting us in the moment, right? Let me feel all these sad feelings that are causing me pain and suffering. And let me work my way through them, instead of trying to pretend or cling to the past so hard that maybe I can wish away what is actually happening, and I can change everybody's opinions or everybody's thoughts around me, and that I will come out the righteous person. Because what I

feel is right. Right. And I don't know if any of this makes any sense, but it really makes great sense to me.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:25:04] It does that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:25:05] We're trying to be right, and we're trying to make it the way we want it to be, and life is showing us, no, this is not we can't control other people.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:25:15] I was going to say it's about control. So much of what the suffering that you're talking about has stemmed from. There's kind of like subconscious control where and I think using you. But even I mean from my experiences and breakups. Um. You go through these difficult times that are so layered and you want to control the narrative for a lack of a better word, you want to appear unbothered. You want to appear unscathed. Do you want people to know the truth about the situation and choose you? You want? Um. You want. You want to control the external world. And. Even though, I mean, knowing based off of this situation with you, like all of that is true. Like. Every. Everyone should be on your side for lack of a better. A lack of a better word. Um. There's no there's no way to control that. And there's it's not our place to try and control that. And that is the epitome of adding to suffering, because you can have it in your mind of how things, quote unquote, should be. And you're seeing something different in in the reality of life and reconciling that difference and trying to plot and scheme and plan to make things that way is exhausting. And. It adds to that suffering. And so. Remembering that. It's not our job to do that. And that our value and our worth and our ability to be loved isn't reflective. Based on how these chips fall in these situations is really powerful.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:27:14] I think that's really well said, Michelle. And I would add to that, I think our biggest, our biggest obstacle in all of this is we don't want change, right? We don't we don't like change for the most part, even though we crave change. And I think that's the duality that I found myself in. Right? You know, you don't want things to change, but you really want it to change because you're abandoning yourself in this situation that you're in right now. So we really crave the change, but we're scared of the change and we don't want the change, or then the righteousness comes in. But I'm right. Right. And so there's this whole, you know, flux of happenings around in our life that when you think about the idea that if we're in pain or we're in sadness or we're in grief or feeling like you're suffering, we add to that suffering. If we don't

allow ourselves to feel the feelings and be okay with it in the moment. And then allow us to to allow the feelings to move through us and then be able to say, okay. Now what? Or what's next? Or what could I imagine for myself? Just a little tiny opening of the door of what the next moment might look like. And so what I have found is that idea of. Suffering that leads to the end of suffering means that I'm going to feel my feelings in the moment. And I'm going to allow myself the grace of being sad, or being scared, or being uncertain that am I going to even have the friends that I already have, whatever that might be, allowing myself to feel that.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:28:51] And then if I allow myself to feel it, it'll move through me and I can possibly wake up the next day and say, wait a minute. I'm good. I got this. It's going to be hard. But I got this. And so I think that's the shortening of the recovery time. And that's the suffering that leads to the end of suffering. Until the next pain or the next wave of grief might come along. But that's what truly living in the present moment means. I got such a profound feeling of being present, of that. That's what letting go means. It's not this monumental. Let me let go of this 33 year marriage. It's like, let me let go little by little by little, by allowing myself to feel my feelings and being okay with what is in this present moment, and not abandoning myself and judging myself or being hard on myself or, you know, being hard on the other people or being, um, you know, needing to needing to dis all of them in order for me to be okay or whatever it is that we do. Yeah. Or whatever it is that happens to come up. And I think one of the things that really struck me big time. Was. That in the ways that I was abandoning myself. Was. Feeling like poor me. Or was feeling like. Oh, what's going to become of me? You know, kind of like this. This kind of a sad thing, which I think was the result of not allowing me to feel sad.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:30:32] Well, just to cut in there. What you're saying is, is the example I think, of what we've talked about so many times is Doctor Jill Bolte Taylor's study about emotions and feelings, where. In her studies, she found that it takes only 90s to actually completely process and feel emotions if we don't. Um, attached to it and allow our thoughts to perpetuate it. And that's being present to it, not pushing it away, not judging it and just letting it go. And I think that is the letting go and that is the being present moment to moment. It's. It's connecting to yourself and saying like, oh, today I'm really sad, but it's okay because that doesn't define me as a sad person. Or today I'm feeling very alone. I'm going to feel it, but it doesn't mean that I'm. Person who is always alone. I think it's in those moments where we let ourselves define ourselves by these difficult moments, um, or that. Were defined by the difficult

feelings, rather than just letting them move through us. And remembering that they're not our definitives. They're not things that are who we are. And that's kind of going back to remembering who you are and remembering what's true. And you only know what's true for you and how you define yourself. But it's in those moments, you know, when we're a little weaker or things are a little more challenging, where I think it's easier for it to slip in and say like, oh. I'm the victim because I'm, you know, things just keep beating me down.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:32:26] And I think that's so true. Michelle. I love how you put that and what starts to become when you really allow yourself to just be and and feel your feelings as you start to realize, first of all, feelings aren't facts. And if you don't allow yourself to feel and you kind of. Marinade in the feeling without acknowledging the feeling and letting it go. You start to recognize that that's who you are. You think that that's who you are. That feeling starts to have the power defining who you are.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:32:55] And feelings aren't.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:32:55] Final and feelings aren't final. And so that's what happens. This is what I've this is the epiphany that that's what happens when we don't feel our feelings and let them move through us. They start to have power over us, and we start to say, oh, this is who I am, or this is this is, you know, who am I? This you know, my sadness or no one's going to like me, or I'm not strong enough, or I'm not brave enough, or all the things that we're fearful of start to become a reality because we're giving them the power to name who we are.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:33:27] Well, and I think especially when you're someone who's had similar things happen over and over again, like breakups or rejections or challenges. That makes it even easier for us to start to make that part of our defining factors, like I'm someone who always blah blah, blah, or this is who I am, because this keeps happening. And I think that's when it's especially important to remember that those external, like you say, nothing has the power to name who you are. No external situation or experience or anything in your path has the power to name who you are. We get to do that. So everything else that comes along the way is just. Whatever we let it be. Um. And that's kind of a cool thing to remember in life. And especially knowing that, you know, there's so little that we can control. How is it that we want to define ourselves and present ourselves? And what what do we believe that's actually true about who

we are and what do we want to create? Because again, that James Findlay quote, living our lives without knowing who's living it. Like who is loving it and being creative and introspective and curious about it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:34:40] And I think that that the only way we can do that is by allowing ourselves the grace of living every moment with whatever life presents with us and whatever the feelings that come up. And I, I actually during this, during this time, I've started having different thoughts about the words letting go. So for me now letting go. It used to be a heavy burden, I think, and I didn't realize it like I used to get down on myself. If I couldn't let the past go, or I couldn't let something go, or I tried to control something. Now I've reframed it a little bit, and I'm going to play with this in my life in the next, you know, few months and I have been already this idea of that. One of our biggest teachers in life. Is impermanence. Like nothing is permanent. And so if we can really start to little by little by little, get that deep within our being that change, everything is change. Nothing is permanent. And that doesn't mean that we can't last with something for decades and decades and decades, but not having that expectation. Of that, we are going to be able to be the same person for the rest of our lives, or that life is going to be the same for the rest of our lives, or whatever. That mindset is that we want to have something and have it last forever, right? That's not going to happen. And that is a that is a falsehood that we sometimes take as a truth. And then when change happens, it's like, oh my gosh, now what? And so what I started to think about is this idea of impermanence.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:36:17] Well, it's true, the only constant in life is change. And how can we be accept that to such a degree where we're not? Rattled by it.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:36:26] Yeah. And I think I put on my mirror this quote. All is change. And the other thing that I think I wanted to share is I hope I'm not sounding too awful. No, I don't know how this is going to sound to all of you. All. It's okay if you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:36:38] Want to take some water. I know you.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:36:40] Might need it. It's okay, it's okay.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:36:42] Um. Just share.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:36:43] Let me just say this one thing, because it's really. It really got me, um, you know, the idea of suffering that leads to the end of suffering and suffering that leads to more suffering. As I was really reflecting on this, I also came to this belief that as I started moving through the pain. And this whole feeling of what now? As you were saying, Michelle, I had let go of the relationship several years ago. And so as you start to embrace the hurt or you start to acknowledge that there's the hurt and the pain, or start to acknowledge that there's a little bit of the feelings of fear and uncertainty. What starts to unfold, which is what you've been saying about me, is joy, or is laughter or is uays? And so it's a really beautiful, miraculous thing to say that when we embrace the suffering or the hurt or the pain that we might be going through and not try to push it away or not try to pretend like it's not there. We embrace it. It starts to, you know, evolve and it starts to unfold into becoming more of the freedom, right? And the joy. And the person who we really are from the inside out.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:38:05] Well it's that. It's that knowing that if you can show up for and be present to your life even when it's hard, you can then be open to and witness to. The possibility is all of the unlimited possibilities, all of the potential that can come from starting again and starting new and. Being excited about the possibility of a new beginning. And I think that's what's really cool about you, mom, and this situation. But even all of us is that each and every moment and every day is an opportunity to begin again if we want to, or to redefine who we are if we want to. Because we're never, like you were saying, nothing is permanent in life, and we are never, um, stuck to anything external that we've let define us. And so for me, it's been all about that personal connection within and becoming my own best friend. To know that the external world can ebb and flow and come and go and change and yes, I will be affected by it. I will have emotions and a feelings about things that happen. But like you were saying, mom, it's not going to etch away at the strong foundation that I have from within. And if it does, my recovery time or my reaction time will be less and less and less. And I think that's what fortifies continues to fortify me from the inside out.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:39:47] But let's take another quick break really quickly. Break really quickly. And we're back.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:39:56] I think what you just said, the idea of fortifying ourselves. I feel so much today that we just have to start being more gentle with ourselves. We have to be more compassionate with ourselves. And truly, everything begins with us in our lives. And so we have to be more patient, more loving, more kind. We're going through a tough time. First of all, know that you're not alone because all of us go through tough times, but also know that it's okay. And I think that the more that we can start embracing what's happening for us in the moment. The more that we start to move through that moment and get to the next moment and the next moment and the next moment. And we'll start to see the little bit of freedom where we start to see the little bit of joy, or we start to see the little bit of I got this. Okay, look at I weathered the storm better than I thought that I would. And even though this is this felt like a really long time of this whole process of this divorce, I actually feel like I've weathered this. Better than I ever could have imagined, now that I, of course. But it's interesting to say that, I mean, I, I feel like I, of course, but then having gone through it, I'm like really proud of myself.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:41:20] And that's what I want all of you to feel like. That's what happens when you go through something. Trusting that you can get through it. And like never giving up on yourself. You come out the other side like, wow, I'm a badass or I'm a very I'm a strong person and you start to have this sense of liking yourself even more. Or I like to say, maybe not liking yourself even more, but embracing the person that you already are. And so that little voice in me that said, Barb, you've forgotten who you are, right? And so you come out the other side of the sorrows, or the pain or the sadness of whatever we're going through at any given moment in life, which we all will have you start to come out the other side of feeling like, okay. I got this. Wow. I really love how I move through this. I really love how it's making me feel about myself and others. I really love that I can look in the mirror and say, I love you. You did a good job. You did a good job today, Barb.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:42:29] And I think that's a silver lining that we talk about that comes from difficult situations, is that you can find that love and appreciation for. What it made you, even though it was not pleasant.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:42:41] Well, and I think, too, when we rest and we embrace ourselves without judging, without comparing, without trying to fix others, without trying to fix the world. When we actually do this in a in a really mindful way, we're really returning our life back to

ourselves, right? It's almost like that. I remember when I was in one of my meditations. I was, I was really deeply feeling this idea of resting deeply within. And resting deeply within my life gets returned back to myself. It's a very it's a very profound, beautiful way. But it's also a very simple thing. But it's not easy. Like, all this is simple, like just be in the present moment, but it's not easy. And so we've got to be gentle and patient with ourselves. It is not easy. But we can do it. And as Glennon and Abbey always say on their podcast, we can do the hard things. And just trusting that we can do the hard thing no matter how long it takes. I would never imagine that you and I would still be talking about this all these years later. But it's so. I'm so free. Well, it's.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:43:59] The layers of the onion.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:44:00] Yeah, and we can do it right. So resting deeply, we can return our lives back to ourselves. And that resting deeply means pausing, being in the present moment, feeling your feelings, allowing yourselves to be even if it's just for one moment of every day.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:44:19] I'm curious a bit.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:44:22] Um.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:44:23] And I know that. We don't have a ton of time to dive into this, but. Knowing what you know now and feeling how you feel now about you, about yourself, about your life. You know, having that hindsight, being 20, 20. Is there any way? Or is there anything that you could have done? In those moments of the past where you felt. Like a victim or beat down or not chosen or that you were trying to. Control things. Is there any? Is there anything that you could have done or that could have been said to you that would have helped at all? Or do you think that these are the things that we just have to go through and have to feel and do all of the things to get to this point, to say, oh, yeah, that was all for a reason.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:45:24] That's a really good question. I would, I would have to contemplate that more for sure. I love this question, but off the top of my head, two things come to mind. One, I think life takes what it takes, right? It takes what it takes. And that's if we can really, truly embrace that. We will be patient and gentle with ourselves. But I also think that in reflecting back. Probably what prolonged this for me was not acknowledging that I was scared, not feeling

my feelings deeply. Like wanting to push them away. The rest and the rest like wanting to fix it, or wanting to maybe move through it faster than I was ready to move through it, or wanting to change things, or wanting to change other people, or projecting that they weren't going to like me anymore. All the things, all of that I believe. And I want to reflect on this more because I would love to talk about it more. But I believe the first blush of this, as I've come out of this, realizing that I kind of had abandoned myself for a while, I believe, is because I was too afraid to acknowledge that I was afraid. I guess I didn't trust myself enough. Maybe enough. Maybe. That I was, I was afraid. And the fear kicked in, maybe so strongly at times that I thought I could shapeshift, or I thought I could fix it, or I thought if I just changed this, or if I just got them or whoever to change that, or like.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:47:02] Or proving things.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:47:03] Or proving things, um, like it doesn't. I remember saying to myself, sometimes it doesn't have to be this way, right? And so as I reflect back on that, I was trying to fix it or change it, or I was not willing to acknowledge it was this way. And I think the beauty of all of this is it was this way and thank goodness it was this way, because in reality, as I've moved through it, I wouldn't want it any other way. I wanted this freedom, right? I want to be free. I want to be exactly who I am. And as I reflect back, I was. I was not exactly being who I am all the time because of the fear interesting, or the need to control or the need to change. So it's very it's very it's just so amazing and so profound, this idea that we can move through major suffering and sadness and change and come out the other side. Wow. This is what I really want. And I was holding on and trying to. Keep something that wasn't really for me. Yes, and life did its best to teach me that and show me that. And thank God life is so patient and so persevering. If I think about it that way. And I use the word life. I use the word God. I use the word all of the things of that, that spiritual energy within us, whatever resonates for you. But there is a life force that is working in our favor. I believe all the time. We just don't recognize it some of the time. And I think the beauty is. It takes what it takes. So just trusting that you. We will recognize it. And I think I never gave up. The thought that I was going to get to the end of this in a way that was going to be beneficial to me and everyone else involved in it. But. It took a lot.

**Speaker3:** [00:49:17] It takes what it takes.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:49:18] It took a lot.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:49:20] And I do think this will be a great conversation, maybe for next week, because there's lots of pieces that I know you've wanted to talk about that come up in these situations the judging, the fixing, the comparing and and what that brings up. So maybe we can dive in, take all of this and and continue this conversation. But I will say, if nothing else, it really seems to me like. If you're going through something traumatic or challenging or life changing. You have to remember to just care for yourself a little extra. And I think.

**Speaker3:** [00:49:56] It's.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:49:57] It sounds trite or cliché to say, but like the rest, the slowing down, the self care in ways that are aligned for you are what will help you to stay connected with yourself and to remember what's true. Because I think for you, it you know, you're always so busy. And I think maintaining your busy life led to additional chaos for you. Um, and having this time to go on the retreat and stop and reflect is where things could rise to the surface.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:50:27] Well, and I think just to interrupt you for a second, I think when you're when you're not wanting to feel your feelings, you're going to be busy in a way that that doesn't need to be busy. I can be busy and still also be, uh, quiet. Where? What? I'm. What? My reflection, what I noticed was I was causing myself to be busier than normal because I didn't want to feel like. Let me just distract myself in any way possible until I figure out how to fix all this. It's kind of a vicious cycle, and I love I love where we're going with all this, and I hope this all resonates for all of you listening. This idea that we just get caught up in this cycle of, let me just keep being busy because eventually I'm going to figure out a way to fix it. Right. And when the.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:51:11] Antidote is to really slow down and connect with yourself and just let yourself rest, let yourself recharge and recover from life and take the time to connect with yourself. And just remember who you are and each and every moment, and know that nothing is ever final. And like we always say, this too shall pass.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:51:32] And what happens when you do everything that you just said Michelle is you wake up the next day saying, oh, I know what I, I know what my next step is, right? I know what to do. I got this. Wait a minute.

**Speaker3:** [00:51:45] I know it's not one.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:51:46] Day at a time.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:51:47] Yeah, I know how I feel. And one day at a time can be several years from now. You know what I mean? It's like really being present and okay with what is however long the what is takes, right? And I know that's a hard. Quote pill to swallow sometimes, you know, being being with the present moment, however long it takes and the idea that it takes what it takes. But what I've. Recognized. And to answer your question from a while ago Michelle. Could I have stopped it from lasting so long? Or could I have done something differently? Maybe. But what I do know is that it takes what it takes. But what I also know is that when we do feel our feelings and allow ourselves to be with ourselves in the moment, without trying to push it away, without trying to distract ourselves with everything else that's going on in our lives, it does seem to move the process along more beautifully, more mindfully and more effectively, with less suffering and pain.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:52:50] That makes sense, and I'm excited to dive into that concept a little more next week. I think it'll be fun. I love it, what a cool. Who knew that this is where we were going to end up today?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:02] Well, you know what? I'll I'll end here. I'll tease next week's a little bit. So the idea of not comparing. Yeah. Not fixing and not judging. Yeah. If you think about those three things. So everyone listening today, just reflect on that for a little bit. If you didn't do those three things you know what's left.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:26] Yeah.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:27] What what is. The biggest cause of our suffering. So is that.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:32] Homework for everyone?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:34] Not necessarily homework, but I just I've loved I've loved reflecting on this and really diving into this with my own life.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:40] You do you talk about this often?

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:42] Well, if you take those three and you've been.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:43] Jonesing to talk about this on the.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:44] Show, I have I've it's like.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:46] All part of your master plan.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:48] And I think my voice will be back to normal. It will be my energy will be back to normal. But I love all of you very much. Thank you for indulging this voice. Thank you for being here.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:53:58] Thanks for.

**Barb Schmidt:** [00:53:59] And Michelle, you're an amazing caretaker.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:54:02] So are you. I learned from the best.

**Speaker3:** [00:54:04] I love you, love you.

**Michelle Maros:** [00:54:05] Thank you so much for listening and for, like she said, bearing with us, I know that it might not be the most pleasant at times, but I hope that you enjoyed this topic and this this episode, and we can't wait to dive into it a little deeper next week with some of these, uh, concepts that my mom was talking about. So think about until then. So again, make sure that you are liked and subscribed to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts. Apple, Google, Spotify so that you're always up to date with each and every new episode. If you want

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