

Episode 119 - How Do We Actually Forgive?

Barb Knows Best

Episode Transcripts

Michelle Maros: [00:00:00] Coming up on this week's episode of Barb Knows Best The Podcast.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:04] What I discovered in this process of healing from this marriage is that I was harming myself. I was not forgiving myself.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:23] Hello, everyone. Hi, friends. Welcome back to Barb Knows Best the podcast. It's me, Michelle, and I'm here with my mom, Barb, and we're thrilled to be sitting across the table from each other to chat some more about life. Yeah. Hi, mom. Hi, Michelle. Hi.

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:40] Another great episode.

Michelle Maros: [00:00:41] How are you?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:42] I'm good. You're good. Yeah. I'm good. How's everybody listening?

Michelle Maros: [00:00:46] Yeah. I always ask you, mom, but. Yeah, that's a good one. How is everyone out there?

Barb Schmidt: [00:00:50] How are you all doing? Maybe if you're not driving and you're stationary right now, maybe just take a second to close your eyes and just take a deep breath and connect with your, your body and just see how you're feeling.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:03] I love that. What a nice way to start the show.

Barb Schmidt: [00:01:07] I agree, I love it. I mean, we talk about we talk about that often and I do it regularly. It's really what brings me back to center, especially if I'm feeling a little off or. Now just anxious or just overwhelmed or even sometimes just, you

know, sometimes I'll walk through the day and I'll think, wait a minute, let me bring myself back to the present moment. Yeah, not sure sometimes where my mind has been, but I'm always I'm, I'm most often searching for any wisdom and any body indications that I've left the moment. And I want to make sure that I'm present as much as possible, since that's where we have our opportunities to live our best life.

Michelle Maros: [00:01:48] Absolutely. And let this start of the show be your permission to take a break and breathe and connect with yourself. Because we know that life is busy and we're always on the go, and you deserve to have some some moments for yourself.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:05] I love that you use the word break. I think sometimes we think of break and that's not possible because for whatever reason, we think of a break as being some longer, more planned or drawn out thing. And really break is just literally just stopping, taking a deep breath and begin again, like pause. And come back to the present moment and just begin. Begin again. That simple. That easy.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:32] Not always easy. Easy. But not always. Easy to do in the moment because.

Barb Schmidt: [00:02:38] We don't remember that we can do that. Yeah, that it really is helpful. And it it can change everything.

Michelle Maros: [00:02:44] It really can. Um, so. We did an episode a couple of weeks ago that received lots of feedback and questions and comments and requests for some more, and we remembered after the fact that we did promise more on this topic. And so we're making good on our promise and adding on to our episode of forgiveness from a few weeks ago.

Barb Schmidt: [00:03:14] Yes. So here's more.

Michelle Maros: [00:03:15] Here's more. So yes, I'm very excited. If you haven't listened to that episode, maybe pause this and go back, just because I really loved that conversation. And I think you brought up a lot of different unique points and perspectives on forgiveness and. I just thought it was really cool, so definitely worth a

listen. But today in this kind of part two of the show, we wanted to dive a little deeper into the nitty gritty ins and outs. What does it look like in regular life? How do you put this into practice in real life? Because in theory, like we can say all of this stuff from meditation to journaling to forgiveness to being present and it all can sound like really nice and good in our minds. But what does that actually look like in our busy, messy lives? And that's what I hope today's show can be all about, because. Forgiveness is hard. The practice of forgiveness is hard. The pressure of forgiveness is hard. And I think that it's a beneficial practice. But like we talked about in the other episode, it has to be in our own aligned timing. And I'm excited for you to share more of your insights about it today, mom. Well, I.

Barb Schmidt: [00:04:36] Think, you know, we talk about things being hard in life and they actually are. Life is difficult, as we say often on this podcast. But I think the other piece to that and, you know, it's never just all one thing, the other piece to that is it is hard. But I think what makes it even harder is that we are not okay with being where we are in the moment. And for me, that's going to kind of be the the foundation of this talk today, Michelle, is I've really been focusing and reflecting and thinking about how often we leave the present moment and what is what makes it so hard to forgive, what makes it so hard to just deal with daily life? You know what makes it so hard to get up sometimes in the morning? And I think a lot of it is because of our understanding and our attitude and our thoughts about. What we're trying to do and the whole thing about being present. We're so busy ruminating about the past and not quite sure how we feel, or not quite sure how we want to process things and being worried and fearful about the future. And oh my gosh, what is this whole for me instead of being present? So I really want us to understand that, especially in the realm of forgiveness. But everything that we do in life, being present is, is a must.

Barb Schmidt: [00:05:55] But in the realm of forgiveness, it's so important to be present and really do your best. Set that intention to do your best, not to dwell on the past and not to worry about the future. And I don't mean not reflect on the past. I mean dwell on it. Because I think the first thing in these steps to forgiveness that you and I are going to talk about Michelle and they're not a one, two, three, four, five step thing. We had this conversation earlier. It's really just our practice and things that I have been doing in processing the grief and the trauma and the anger and the resentment that I have had as a after having gone through this divorce of 33 year marriage. So I think where I

would like to start is the first thing we have to do is be able to acknowledge that we have had a relationship. With someone else that has harmed us, or that we feel harmed, or that we feel that we need to forgive them, or that we have done the harming and it could be with someone else, or it also could be with ourselves. It's really just acknowledging that. We've been harmed or their harm has existed in this process. Because how do we don't need to forgive if we don't feel there's been harm that's been done right? I think it's really acknowledging that.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:11] Yeah, you're diving right in.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:13] Oh, I.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:14] Know I love it. I just wanted to. So thinking of I tend.

Barb Schmidt: [00:07:18] To do that.

Michelle Maros: [00:07:18] No, it's it's good because when she wants to go, you just got to let her go. Um. And I like that you start with acknowledging because I think. When I think about my own life with instances of forgiveness, it's like there's a hurt or a harm and. We know that it's there, but we kind of rush to the okay, I have to get over it forgiveness place and. Even though I know this isn't like a one, two, three step thing, I think that each aspect of these of this practice is important because. Each part of this practice has value and meaning in our lives towards healing, and I think that this first step is really crucial. And I love that you started with it because. I don't know. For better or for worse. You have to acknowledge the harm and the hurt, even though it might be painful, but that it's the reality. And I think accepting what's true and what's real in the moment. Can help us to get centered and grounded in what we're actually trying to accomplish in this forgiveness journey. So. Okay. Continue.

Barb Schmidt: [00:08:32] No, I love what you just said, Michelle you encapsulated it perfectly. If we don't acknowledge that harm has been done, it's really difficult to move forward. We're still uncertain. We're still unclear. We don't have the clarity that we need. And I feel like there's many reasons why this is important. And you just named most of them, and one that I would like to add to. That is what I discovered in this process of healing from this marriage is that I was harming myself. I was not forgiving myself. I had

so I, I was not acknowledging that. Wait a minute, I'm not thinking a whole lot about myself. There was a lot of shame or guilt. You know, I think we talked touched on this in the last episode, you know, why did it take me so long to wake up to, to just the trauma of this whole thing? And and I want to be clear, not that there weren't some good times. You know, whenever we talk about this, it's not like it's all one thing, right? Of course, there were some good times, but the trauma was overwhelming for the most part, as I've reflected back and as I've really gone through my own feelings and the experiences that I had. So I think it was important for me to first work on myself first. Look at what did I need to forgive about myself? What was I angry with myself about? What was I feeling shame about? What was I feeling impatience about with myself? Why was I not feeling care and love and grace for myself?

Michelle Maros: [00:09:55] That's interesting, because and I think there's a little bit of nuance in that, because of course, we always talk about self forgiveness as a huge practice of forgiveness. But I think when in your particular case with. Your divorce. I think we would immediately jump to. Okay, you need to forgive your ex-husband, but I think it's really interesting that you said to yourself, okay, I got to work this out within myself of of some of the. Difficult feelings I have about myself for for staying too long or whatever it might be, and then I can get to that next step of of him. That's super interesting.

Barb Schmidt: [00:10:37] It was the only way that I could do it, because I realized, and I think you and I did talk about this during this. I mean, this was a, I mean, 2019, this was a three year, four year process. This was not a short time. Right. And I think part of why the process was possibly longer than maybe I don't want to say it needed because it takes what it takes. I truly believe that deep within my heart, life takes what it takes. So I truly believe that.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:01] Can I say something? Sure. I don't mean to interrupt. No, no, I love.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:04] What you're going to say.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:06] It takes what it takes has become my favorite thing ever. And you and I, you're a huge sports person. And of course, as we know, we were

watching the NBA playoffs. And I think this is fascinating. I don't know what connection this has to us or anything. Obviously you didn't come up with that, but um. We were watching. You were rooting for the Celtics. The Celtics were down and during a time out, they were showing the coach talking to the players. And he was like, you got to keep going. It takes what it takes. And then they won.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:41] And you recorded that they were down. I loved it I love it. Nice sidebar. Michelle I love that. No I love what it takes.

Michelle Maros: [00:11:46] It's for everything.

Barb Schmidt: [00:11:48] You come to these, you come to this wisdom in our experiences in life. And so he came to that in his experience of whatever was happening on the court with himself and with his players. And I think we can do the same thing. I think that's what's so magical about life and, and us being able to work through all the hardships of life. And so today we're talking about forgiveness. So I had to acknowledge I truly had to acknowledge that even though I had so much anger and a lot of times in the last episode, we used the word rage and all of the things that I had, the feelings that I had toward my ex-husband. I had to look at what was happening inside of me, that I felt stuck in. This whole idea of moving forward. And what was happening is I had so much guilt and shame and that I'd let you down Michelle and that I didn't. There were things that I wish that I could have done differently. So much trauma was happening in many parts of this relationship and I think, oh my gosh, why didn't you do this? Why didn't you do that? You did this. You're the problem, Barb, because I was told that for so many years in this relationship. And so I really got stuck on that, that I was the problem.

Barb Schmidt: [00:12:55] And had I done things differently, I wouldn't be sitting in the situation that I'm in today. And that's the problem that was that really kept me. That stops everything, that stops the process of everything, the process actually, of living as well. Because certainly I wasn't in the moment. And one day I was in my meditation and it it just was overwhelming to me. Barb, you're treating yourself with such unkindness. You were you were. You would never treat a close friend. You would never treat your daughter this way. You would never treat all of the people in this community, in this world that listens to our podcast and that we love so dearly on social media and in the

emails and Substack and all the things that we do, we would never treat any of anyone the way you're treating yourself. It was a big wake up call. And when I acknowledged that I did a good deal of work of establishing the love and the care and the understanding that I have for myself, and so I did a lot of self love meditation. A lot. I was really dedicated, and especially during that 30 day retreat that I took this year, I did a lot of. Though my mind wanted to jump to my ex-husband or wanted to jump to, you know, forgiving whatever it is. But it was mostly that marriage.

Barb Schmidt: [00:14:13] I brought it right back to the moment. Wait a minute. How are you feeling about yourself right now? Are you still feeling shame? Are you feeling like you failed your daughter, or you're feeling like a failure in life? And so in doing that, it was so powerful. And that's why I'm sharing this. First, it really brought me to a place of it takes what it takes. I did the very best that I could in that moment, with all of the information and all of the things and the wisdom that I had inside of me, and I did what I could. And there's something so powerful about admitting that to yourself. Because I believe it. And I believe that that you are. You are good. You. I didn't destroy you. I didn't damage you to a place where I need to feel guilty or shame. Things happened. I did the very best. And now I'm acknowledging that. Wait a minute. Yes, it happened back then. But look at who you are today. Barb, look at the wisdom that you've gained. As Maya Angelou says, one of my favorite people on the planet. Forgive yourself for not knowing what you didn't know before you learned it. So I really took that to heart deeply and spent 30 days, you know, really cultivating that deep forgiveness for myself.

Michelle Maros: [00:15:25] Mm.

Barb Schmidt: [00:15:26] So it's given me so much more clarity now of where I need to start the forgiveness process for my ex-husband.

Michelle Maros: [00:15:35] That's really, really interesting. And I think regardless of what situation the listeners might find themselves in. Coming back to yourself first, to just even take an inventory of where you're at and what what's going on in the feelings that are being felt and. And especially how you're feeling about yourself is such an important step. In this journey. And I just think that that's a really fascinating way or place to to start the conversation.

Barb Schmidt: [00:16:06] And I think the most important and I think maybe we could make sure that always whenever you and I are talking about anything really, but especially with things like this, forgiveness, something huge in life, it's always without judgment, without comparison, or without trying to fix. Because that's where my brain goes. I think those three things are crucial in our lives. If you really recognize how often your brain goes to how often my mind, my mind immediately went to judging myself. Of course, that's a shame. That's the the guilt. Those are all the things. And then it goes to I bet no one else is going through what I'm going through. Other people aren't experiencing this. I just made so many mistakes or I just did things, you know, it goes people do.

Michelle Maros: [00:16:51] Things so much better than.

Barb Schmidt: [00:16:52] You. People do things so much better than I do. And all of those things, all those comparisons and the idea we had this episode a while ago about how much it took me to get past the idea that I was going to be divorced twice. Right. So I think and then then immediately my mind goes to wanting to fix it. How do I fix this? And I cannot fix anything in the past. So that's the dilemma I think we find ourselves in often as humans. We come to this place. I got to fix it, but I can't fix the past. I can't change the past. So fixing it really doesn't mean fixing it. Fixing it means okay, what step can I take now in the direction of leading the life and having the relationships that I truly want to have? What do I what is what is the action that I need to take? Now? I'm not fixing something. I'm actually moving forward in. What's the next iteration of this relationship with myself and with others?

Michelle Maros: [00:17:44] Well, it's almost like you're reconciling the past with the present. And I think especially with self forgiveness. I feel like. You know you have to. Let go of and accept. And come to terms with the fact that we made choices and decisions that might have taken us away from ourselves and who we are and what we really want, and not having so much judgment about it, but then also in the present moment, really seeing and asking, what is it that we need to do to come back to ourselves and kind of going back to what you were saying a little bit ago, too. It is super fascinating to me to think about this concept of. Self-forgiveness first, in a sense, because I could see if you neglect the self forgiveness and thinking specifically about your situation with divorce and, you know, kind of jumping to the forgiveness of your ex

husband and not thinking about all of the feelings that are also going on underneath the surface of why, why did I stay so long? Oh my gosh, I really messed Michelle up. All of the things that you're saying like that only builds more frustration and angst and anxiety and rage for yourself, which kind of. It almost feels like it's impossible to come to a resolution because. You're not like you're how to say this? How I'm trying to say it. But like you, you mom or you listener, you're you. And you're the only one who's living your life. And like we always say, becoming your own best friend. Like taking good care of yourself, loving yourself, being gentle with yourself if you're not checking in and tapping into that self forgiveness and letting the rage and angst and disappointment build up while then simultaneously trying to. Reconcile something in the external world. I just it's like you're trying to cross a bridge, but the center has been cut in half. And so, like, you're not going to get there because you have to tend to yourself. Does that make.

Barb Schmidt: [00:19:56] Sense? Beautifully said. Yeah. You have to start with.

Michelle Maros: [00:19:58] Not in like a selfish way, but just. You gotta make yourself. And I don't mean this because we talk about the becoming whole. But you ought to make yourself whole. Like bring yourself, bring all the pieces of yourself back together from whatever has happened so that you can then tackle whatever else is happening in the external world.

Barb Schmidt: [00:20:18] Exactly. It always has to start with us. It has to start with you. It can't start any other place because that is that is I believe that is why we have so much difficulty. We're making life harder than it needs to be. You know, it's that episode we talked about there suffering that leads to the end of suffering, and there's suffering that leads to more suffering. And we're always going to have pain and suffering. We talk about so much because that's the way life is. It's just not all, you know, roses and happiness we do have. We do have pain. We do have sadness, we do have sorrow, but we add to it, we add on to it. And so by comparing ourselves and judging ourselves and and trying to fix ourselves, what is wrong with me? You know, it. It really just not only takes away your energy and your presence, but it actually you're right Michelle it chips away in erode your ability to even be able to function in other relationships, and especially one that you're trying to extricate yourself from, or trying to figure out where you fit in it or what you want to do next, especially if it's a relationship that's harmed you. Like, I just.

Michelle Maros: [00:21:23] See, it would be more confusing if you can't come back to yourself, how you could even know what to do with someone else, or something else, or a situation in the external world. You don't.

Barb Schmidt: [00:21:32] And isn't this kind of your gaslighting yourself? Is that what? Am I using that word correctly? Yeah, you're kind of gaslighting yourself. Yeah, you're putting all the blame on you. You're saying you should have known better. Oh, yeah. You're you're suffering right now, but you caused your own suffering. You know, you're you're you're kind of taking it all on, but at the same time you're still having anger and rage or resentment towards your ex. And yeah, it just doesn't. You go round and round in circles with it all, and you never get to a place of where you really want to be. And that's where the exhaustion and the like, oh my gosh, can I ever just get over this? Can I ever just move forward? What is the matter with me is always for me. I'm always speaking from my own experience. What is the matter with me is the last thing I usually say to myself when I'm just so caught up in this hamster wheel of going round and round. So all of that to say that, I think I know that it is incredibly important to get straight with yourself first, to really you have to have that loving, caring relationship with yourself. Otherwise you will probably. I know for me, I can't have patience and and grace and care for myself. It just doesn't go together. If I'm not really. Treating myself with the utmost care and kindness. And I think where you go from there is powerful. This is this is where it really all starts. What did Shakespeare say? Where? Where the rubber meets the road or however that goes. Not sure I'm even sure. Shakespeare said.

Michelle Maros: [00:23:00] That doesn't sound very Shakespeare.

Barb Schmidt: [00:23:02] There's something similar to that.

Michelle Maros: [00:23:03] Where the rubber meets.

Barb Schmidt: [00:23:05] The road. You know, this is where the. This is where once we can get straight with ourselves and really get that loving kindness and sense of, we've done the best that we can. Now let's move forward into what's happening now in this relationship. We can really start to go through it. It makes it makes so much more sense. Like you were saying, you don't even know how you could do it because you

can't cross the bridge if the middle of the bridge is gone. So what happened for me was when I got straight with myself, it was almost easy for me to spend some quiet time feeling the feelings that I had of this rage and this anger and this resentment. And without judgment, without comparison, without fixing. And in feeling those feelings, they're real. I realize these are real. I don't want to brush them away. I don't want to say, Barb, you're on a path for 40 years. You know, loving kindness is your thing and really helping the world grow and become. You got to forgive him. I didn't allow myself to say those things anymore.

Barb Schmidt: [00:24:04] But wait a minute. This is how I feel right now. And that's when we talked in the last episode. I realized that I'm not ready to actually forgive. Which means that I can I can bless the person and wish them well and move on. Doesn't remember. Forgiveness does never mean forgetting. It doesn't mean what happened was okay. It just means that I wish the person well and I can move on now. So I wasn't even at that stage and I wasn't at the stage of wanting to attend that, because I was still so filled with the anger and the rage that now that I was straight with myself in a great place, you know, really had myself with loving care and kindness, I could see I'm really I'm really hurt. I suffered a lot of pain and sorrow. And then. So I didn't try to fix the pain in the sorrow. I let myself feel it instead of pushing the feelings away, which was blocking my ability to get to some kind of a resolution and closure.

Michelle Maros: [00:24:59] Right? Can I interject really quickly? Of course, and rewind a little bit? Sure. I'm interested in what you just said about forgiveness. And I can't remember if we talked about this in the other episode, but. Do you define forgiveness as? Being able to like is that the goal of forgiveness is to be getting to a place where you can, like you said, bless the person from afar. Does it have to get there for you to say that you've forgiven?

Barb Schmidt: [00:25:34] Um, you know, this is kind of new. Experiences and and territory that I feel like I'm in. I'm really exploring. In the past, it took a long time to forgive my uncle for sexually abusing me. It took a long time, but I. For whatever reason, I had a lot of self forgiveness that had to happen first. I got there and I felt like I was glad I got there, because then I could just truly put it in the past and move forward with a lot of therapy and a lot of help. So in this situation, I don't know. But I do know my ethos in life is loving. Kindness is freedom is freedom and not. And you know, when I

talk about freedom, it's not freedom from the person. You know, the feelings and and working through my feelings will give me freedom from the person. It'll what it has done. It has helped me see clearly what I need and what I want to move forward. Freedom from the feelings and freedom from the tyranny of the suffering and the pain. You know, freedom from the feelings of of that. I'm the problem. So it's kind of like all mixed into one. So when I talk freedom, I already have freedom from the person.

Michelle Maros: [00:26:51] Mhm.

Barb Schmidt: [00:26:51] I already have decided there is no contact that I will have with this person. I don't need contact with him, I don't want contact with him. There is no contact that I want with this person nor will I have it. There is no scenario where this person will ever be a part of my life and in in feeling that freedom from that, it feels so good. It feels certain and it doesn't feel mean. It doesn't feel like I have ill will about it. It feels this is because I have so much love and care for myself. It feels like, wow, this feels so good and I'm not harming the other person. So there is that peace of not harming the other person. So I think it's a process for sure. So it's a little process of, okay, I've got to this point where I'm really clear and I feel good about my decision. No contact. The boundaries are very clear. It's just not going to happen.

Michelle Maros: [00:27:44] Right?

Barb Schmidt: [00:27:44] So am I to the place where I wish him? Well, uh, no. Not yet, I don't know, I don't know what I need yet, but I'm confident that being in the present moment and trusting my timing. Yeah. And trusting this process, that I will get there. And I think that's the key. Please stop pressuring yourself to get there now. The patience has served me very well because I feel so, you know, you feel so good about yourself when you've got to a level of this feels good, right?

Michelle Maros: [00:28:13] I'm just curious because I think a lot of people, even though we're saying you don't have to make this, you know, the center of your forgiveness practice, get to that, or feel like they have to get to that place of wishing them well to to feel like they've, like, reached that level of forgiveness. So I'm, I'm just does that even need to happen in order to say that you've moved on?

Barb Schmidt: [00:28:33] I just got an epiphany of wisdom. Love it. Let's take that away from the equation. Why do we have to have some? That's what I. And you're exactly right. Michelle. Michelle. Michelle. Michelle. Michelle. I'm so excited. I can hardly talk. Because you're right. This is what wisdom does when you really get to a place of, oh my gosh, this is speaking straight to my heart. This is what I believe and feel. That is freedom. It does. Why do we have to have an end result? Why can't we just trust the process of. I have a relationship with myself now that I always had, but somehow it got eroded in this whole idea of me feeling the guilt and the shame around this marriage of what I. You know what I've already said about you. So processing that and having this really coming back to myself, as you said, bringing the pieces of the puzzle back to to wholeness within myself and really loving myself in the context of this relationship and knowing that I did the best that I can. So now I'm moving to the next step, and that's feeling the rage and the anger that I have toward my ex-husband. Got it. And so what's what I believe? Why do we have to I got.

Barb Schmidt: [00:29:40] Why do we have to think, oh, I got to get to this place, though. That's the future. I don't know what the future is going to hold for me in this, in the context of this relationship, and I'm okay with that. Why do we have to feel like in order to be a good person or to order to be right, or I don't know what it is we're thinking. I don't even know what the words are, but why do we think we have to have some sense of closure as to what that closure has to be? I believe I will get to some sense of really good healing. And really good closure to the extent of how I'm feeling free and feeling really comfortable in my healing process. But I don't know what that's going to look like. So I'm giving myself the. Present, really the presence of my presence in the in the moment and allowing myself the grace of I don't know what's going to happen and I'm okay with that. I don't have to know what's going to happen. There is no end result that I have to get to. That is too much pressure, and I think it's going to stop my healing.

Michelle Maros: [00:30:43] I. I think that's hugely important. Because I in everyone's healing journey, it's it's almost like setting yourself up for failure, thinking that that is the place of achievement of that. You can wish someone well from afar because then some. I really think in some cases that might not be possible and and don't make that your goal. I think also thinking about forgiveness. For me, it's really been and I and I hope you don't mind me saying this as someone who's in your life watching you, it's it's not even necessarily about the other person, so to speak. It's about how can you free

yourself of the things of the past that have happened so that they no longer, like, torture you in the present so that you're no longer, you know, digging it up? It's like, what what, what healing do you need to do for yourself? What actions do you need to take? And I might be jumping the shark of more things that you're going to say, but what actions do you need to say? Or what actions do you need to do or say or accomplish so that you feel complete with with the things of the past and they're no longer like gnawing away at you in the present. It's almost like for me and maybe for you, because a lot of the the traumas that we are working through.

Barb Schmidt: [00:32:05] Kind of are shared.

Michelle Maros: [00:32:06] Are shared and run parallel with each other. But it's like, I know for you. If you feel like you haven't said your piece or your truth, or stood up for yourself in a way that feels aligned for you, it kind of gnaws away at you where it's like in your present psyche. So it's like, what can you do? Or what can you say to yourself or to someone else, or to other, or in a letter or in your journal that will kind of make you feel like you've closed that loop so that it's not like nagging you in your subconscious.

Barb Schmidt: [00:32:41] Honestly, acknowledging it to yourself is everything. And I think you're right, because there are a lot of times you can't actually speak the words right, or a lot of times you can't act. I couldn't speak the words to my uncle, I couldn't, and I.

Michelle Maros: [00:32:52] Think there's that sense of like trying to seek justice. But justice is not going to give you forgiveness. No. And sometimes, you know, justice isn't. We all seek justice for our wrongs or when we've been wronged. But sometimes that's a journey that isn't going to give us the outcome that we want. Well, no.

Barb Schmidt: [00:33:10] Because we don't have the power there. And that's the problem. We're putting our power somewhere where we where it doesn't belong because we can't we don't we don't have it. We can't have it. And I think that's the beauty of this conversation and where I'm moving in the direction of, of forgiveness in this relationship. I'm looking at what can I control, what do I have the power over? Where can I assert my own presence, really? My own, my own sense of being what I love, what I, what I love about me and who I am? And often we can't say the words to

the other person, but when we acknowledge them to ourselves, when I actually when I actually name what I'm feeling, when I actually say I have rage, I have never used that word in my life. I don't even think I use that word. When I went through therapy, I think my therapist tried to get me to say it when I was digesting my bulimia and the, uh, the sexual assault with my uncle, I think. But I don't know if I ever connected to any rage, anger. Yes. And all of that.

Michelle Maros: [00:34:10] So I do want to do an episode about rage.

Barb Schmidt: [00:34:12] We will. And I think just just the idea, though, of naming it, just naming it, telling yourself this is how I'm feeling, saying I'm feeling this way. Just that simple sentence. I'm feeling angry. I'm feeling rage. I'm feeling, whatever that is. Just that simple sentence gives you. You can breathe. Oh, I said it. It's real. It's true. It rings true for me in my heart. It kind of gives you goosebumps. And you're like, oh, thank goodness I finally said it. Thank goodness I finally release myself from the rage and the anger or the resentment or the disappointment because it's I'm validating myself, you know, because feelings aren't facts. And of course, feelings aren't final. They come and they go. So I'm validating myself, and I know that that feeling is going to go because it won't last. It only lasts because we're constantly negating it. So what happened in the moment? For me, when I felt that feeling and allowed myself to feel it and cried and got angry, and if I'd have been in a boxing ring, I might have been boxing a, you know, one of those balls or whatever it is that they box or, you know, the boxing bag or whatever it is. Because what I just want to say that one more time when you when you name it to yourself and tell yourself, I'm feeling rage, just in my case, that simple sentence.

Barb Schmidt: [00:35:33] Gave me relief. Gave me my power back. Gave me the sense of wow. Validation. You're okay. Barb, you're allowed to feel rage even though your handle on Instagram is peaceful. Barb. You know, I mean, just think about that for a second. So. And then I think what else it did most so important that you get to this place as well. And it just happens naturally because you're being with yourself in the moment. Is I validating myself? I realize this is a temporary feeling. I'm not always going to feel like this. It's not going to last forever. And it allowed me then to it allowed the feeling then, and the whole sense of all of these feelings to have less power over me. And I had more power over my life. And what's next and clarity over what's next, because I think when we lower that intensity of the emotions, my emotions were off the wall the past

few years and I know you were front and center. You're a front row seat to all of it. When we lower that intensity of the emotions, which what happens when you name your feelings and when you really allow yourself to feel them? We can take that next step, which is where I would go with with the next thing that happens, we we we're able to take the next step.

Barb Schmidt: [00:36:50] I wasn't able to even go to the next step. What choice? As you said, what choices do I have now? What are my choices here? And it's like a floodgate opens up. Your your, your mind is so clear that all these things come to you. And you, like, have a myriad, a grocery store of choices, of all the things that you can choose from. And then you start answering yourself, well, I have this choice, but I don't choose to take that choice. I have this choice. This looks pretty interesting. How could that play out? You know, you can journal them, you can write them down, but you actually feel this is where the freedom starts to come, where you actually feel that sense of, wow, I have the power over my own life. I am no longer a victim. I am no longer the problem. I am the solution for my own happiness and for my own success and joy in my life. And so then when you get through that, what are the choices that I have? And you start to hone in on which choices I'm going to make and how that might look. Then you can ask yourself, what do I really want here? And in asking myself that. And I haven't even gotten to the place of Will. I want to wish him well. I mean, that's just not in the that's not in the realm of my thinking right now, because I'm staying present in what's happening inside of me.

Barb Schmidt: [00:38:07] You know, 33 years is a really long time. So what do I really want? And what I really want is freedom. I really want to be at peace. I really want to love myself so completely, love my life so completely, and really do the things in my life that are going to bring me the joy and the success and the happiness that I desire. So what does that look like then? Then you. Then you. Okay, what do I really want? And I think those are the those are the. Those are the iterations of the next step and the next step and the next step when we're actually being present. And I'm not saying that during this whole process that the past didn't try to creep in and say, yeah, but Barb, but what about this situation? You didn't do this in this situation and you could have done something differently. Of course, those thoughts are going to creep back in. But when you start to have the clarity and you start to care more about yourself than you do about

trying to fix yourself in the past, which you can't do, you're able to come back. Wait a minute. Take a deep breath, Barb. The past is gone.

Barb Schmidt: [00:39:09] You already. You already made peace with all of that. You already know you can't change it. You already know. You're so blessed right now, in this moment. To be in this place of working through your pain and suffering. That's the blessing. It's not like I'm going to thank him one day for the whole relationship. And thank you for all this trauma and pain and suffering. I think that's where we kind of get confused. I know I got confused, oh, the one day I'm going to it's going to be a blessing that all this happened to me. No, I mean, I would never wished any of this on myself or anyone else that I know in life. But the blessing is that I've come back to myself and I know myself even better. I have more wisdom about wow, what am I going to do next time around? You know, if you're if you're beating yourself up about what you did in the past, how about. Working through what we just talked about and forgiving yourself and coming to a place of, okay, now what will I do next? Because I'm certainly going to be in more relationships and not just romantic ones. Any any place where we are. Our life is all about relationships. So the wisdom of wow, that didn't work for 33 years. What does work for me?

Michelle Maros: [00:40:17] Not to reiterate a past point, but that it takes what it takes as such a huge piece of that because. You're. Your life. Was that 33 years? And? Even if in this present moment you wish that maybe things were shorter or you got the lesson sooner, that wasn't what was in the cards for you in this journey. And so for me, as a witness to your life, but in thinking about my own life, it's like, okay, what did I pick up in those 33 years that, like you're saying, I can take with me into this next chapter of life? And not even to. Have judgment about that last chapter of life, but it's almost like. And then I know I've said this in the past, and you always laugh like a video game, like you've you've worked through that level and you've picked up everything. And now what? What do you take with you in this next level of the game and. That game was or that level was a hard part of the game. But now you're in a new one and it's like. And I hate to say this because I don't mean it this way, but it's like all of that doesn't even matter now because you're in a brand new space. And it was what it was. And obviously when things pop up or you feel triggered or emotions arise or something happens to bring you back to that place, you work through it. But it's like. It's almost too like forgiveness is. How can I put that to rest?

Barb Schmidt: [00:41:49] Michelle, this is genius. What you're saying. Absolute genius. I can't I can't say that enough, and it's so hard to. It's so hard to put words to everything that we're talking about, because it's almost the experience that you get. Oh my gosh. Yes. So. It. There's a, there's a very, very old, old book that's fantastic. And it's called life is a game. I can't remember who the author is. Um, it's a woman, and it's. She's got it up and.

Michelle Maros: [00:42:20] Put it in the. Yeah, she's.

Barb Schmidt: [00:42:21] Got a series. Life is because I think that's, you know, sometimes it can sound. You're right. Sometimes it can sound. Oh, life is a game. But we're not. We're. This is serious stuff we're talking about, so we're not. This is not trivial. I think what I'm trying to say in this process and I'm in it, I think that's what that is. The beauty of this, I'm in it. It's not like I worked myself all the way through it, and now I'm sharing it all with you. I'm still in it. And what I want to say to everyone listening is that you truly do have to. You have to have that deep relationship with yourself before any of this can happen. And then you truly do have to trust the timing. Trust the process. Because what I'm feeling as I'm moving through this is and it's kind of I have a little smile on my face right now is I'm going to get to a place of that. 33 years was never a waste. Nothing we do in life is ever a waste. And that's going to be an episode one day. Because, you know, I've had so many conversations. I'm at this place. Nothing. I'm 67 years old, 33. Half of my life was in this. And I'm at a place right now where I feel like nothing is ever a waste. How did I get here? I don't know, I know this is what I've done, but did I will myself to get to this place? No. Did I manifest myself to get to this place? No. I just was, all the while taking cues from my inner knowing, okay, I'm feeling these feelings and trusting I'm not going to.

Barb Schmidt: [00:43:50] These aren't going to last forever. And trusting. Okay, what what do I really want? What is the next step? And trusting and trusting and it just happens. The process just happens. Life just unfolds in that particular way. And I know that has to be really hard to hear. I would probably have a hard time hearing it from someone because it just when you're in the when you're in the thick of it, it just doesn't make any sense. And I guess that's where you have to just trust yourself and be in the thick of it. I think that's what I'm trying to say. Just be with yourself. Allow yourself to just

be. You know, and always with the with the notion you're not going to hurt others, you're not going to harm others. Because I think when you're in this. You're more likely not to reach out and do something drastic that you wish you hadn't done or harm someone, or say something that you wish you hadn't done because you're kind of keeping. You're staying in this little contained bubble of taking care of yourself. And what do you need here? And what do you really, really want? And caring deeply for yourself. Cause then we can actually start to really. Not only do I trust it now, I don't have to think about, am I ever going to get to a place where I wish him well from afar because I'm such a loving, caring, kind person? I don't know. I know I said that already once, but it's it brings me such joy. It actually brings me such joy.

Michelle Maros: [00:45:06] I can feel the joy from him because I.

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:08] Don't I don't know, I don't know, I don't know what I don't know, but I do know what I do know. And when you know that, you know it's such freedom and it's such joy. And I know that I know that I'm on the right path with this healing I'm on the right track of. I don't know where I'm going to end up and how I'm going to end up feeling about this, but I do know how I feel in this moment, and I trust that every step that I take along the way, I'm constantly connected deep within myself, that it's going to be what I need for that next step and that next step.

Michelle Maros: [00:45:45] Wow.

Barb Schmidt: [00:45:46] We're allowing ourselves to be with the moment without the pressure. I guess is probably the simplest way that I can say it. When we feel pressure to confine to rules, or what society says, or what other people are telling us, aren't you over this yet? You're better than this. You've got all the tools. You've been practicing meditation and mindfulness and all these things for 40 years. You've been through so much trauma in your life. This should be easy for you to get over. And none of that has been true. But what is true is having practiced this for 40 years, I know how to come back to myself, as you said, Michelle bringing some of those pieces back together and making that connection with myself really whole for this particular experience. Not that I'm not whole in other places in my life, but this particular one fragmented me. Yeah, I was told so often that I'm the problem. I started to believe it, so it's taken me a while to unpack all of that. I'm not the problem. And what is the problem is that I need to process

all the feelings and with love and care for myself. And when I'm beating myself up, or comparing myself, or judging myself or trying to fix the past, I'm stuck. And I'll be stuck there until I set myself free. And I think that's the beauty also, that you start to feel that your freedom is in the hands of others. Your freedom is in the hands of yourself.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:14] That's why it's not. You don't have to get justice for to find freedom.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:17] No, you set yourself free. But I did want justice. Of course. That's what I'm trying to say. Don't. We've spent.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:24] Lots of time plotting and planning our revenge vigilante.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:29] Style, you know, because the mind goes there. And if you don't acknowledge that, then you're just lying to yourself. And that's where you start to cover up all the things that you need to be that whole person to work through the traumas and the really difficult suffering and pain that we have in life. Acknowledge it. Don't. You're not going to live there. It's not really who you are. But we have that thought.

Michelle Maros: [00:47:50] I have those thoughts maybe more than you know.

Barb Schmidt: [00:47:52] We have those thoughts. We're human. We're human. We have those thoughts. So I hope this has been helpful. I feel I think so I feel.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:02] So I feel helped good. Thank you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:48:05] You know so I just to close it up and I'm still in a phase of trusting the timing. And there is a possibility that I might get to some other closure that looks looks. Here's what the thing is. There is no other area of my life right now, in this moment, that I haven't been able to get to that place of I wish you well from afar, I love you, but and I wish you well, but you can't be in my life. Wherever I've had some family situations, wherever I've had any kind of relationships where it where it's just not ending in a way that's helpful for any of us in the relationship. I've always been able to work through the suffering and work through the healing and come out the other side wishing

them well and and loving, having that loving kindness and wishing them well from afar. I don't know if that's possible in this situation, and I don't have that pressure on myself.

Michelle Maros: [00:48:57] That's great, because it's great to know that you can. Feel freedom and forgiveness from from your past without. Also reaching that level.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:08] Yeah, stop the pressure.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:10] Because I do think if we even push ourselves to get there sometimes it's, it's, it's fake anyways and I. You know, I think as someone like you who's a a loving, kind hearted, loving kindness is your ethos, as you said person, you, you send out love to, you know, humanity on a whole. So that person, you know, gets it from there. You don't need to specify it. I think I.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:33] Love that so much. You know? I love that so much.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:35] You don't need to add extra for that one person who who doesn't deserve it.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:39] Maybe I love that. That's a great that's a great way to end this conversation. That is so fantastic.

Michelle Maros: [00:49:45] You know, it's it's.

Barb Schmidt: [00:49:47] If you're a loving, kind person and you're because I do this every single day. And in one of my meditation practices, sending out loving kindness to humanity. You're right, I love that. And I love all of you for being here. And I love all of you for giving us the privilege of talking with you every single week. This matters. And the vulnerability that I feel is there, but also the loving kindness and the safety that I feel is here as well. So I hope it's been helpful. And as Michelle always says, let us know. Yeah, give us your comments and we can continue talking. Yeah, you know about this and I'll keep you updated.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:22] Yes, please.

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:23] So what my journey is how my healing journey is going. I would.

Michelle Maros: [00:50:26] Love that. Or I personally, and I'm sure everyone else would too. Before we close, um, for anyone who's listening and is like, okay, I again, going back to the beginning, I mentally can understand this. Everything you said makes sense. What can I do today? Right now? To start. What would you say?

Barb Schmidt: [00:50:50] Sit down with yourself and quiet for a few minutes with no outside distraction whatsoever. None. Go in. Go in a room and close the door and just sit there and ask yourself, what? What am I feeling right now? This person, I feel harmed, I feel judged or I whatever and just start acknowledging something, just saying I feel harmed, I feel I'm in, I, I am in pain, I am suffering. Just really acknowledging what you are feeling and then asking yourself, how do you feel about yourself? What are the feelings that you're having towards yourself? I'm feeling shame. I'm feeling, uh, you know, resentment. I'm feeling guilt. And really just start getting comfortable with acknowledging how you feel towards yourself and towards the other person or towards the relationship. That is the very first place to start. And I think, you know, listen to the show several times. But I think once you do that and you do it every single day, you know, repetition is key, that repetition of every day, because you're really committed to this. You're telling yourself, I care about you. I say to myself, when this started, I said, Barb, I care about you, I was committed, I care about you.

Barb Schmidt: [00:52:08] I care about your suffering. I care about your pain. You know. May you be safe. May you be healthy. You know. May you be all that you wish to be. I care about you. So every day when you're saying that just for just for a few minutes. I know people have don't have time for this. You have time for a few minutes. You care deeply about yourself. You have time for a few minutes every day. Consistency is key every day, and you'll just start to see it opening up a little bit. You start to feel that anger or rage soften a little bit. You know it may still be there. There's no timing on it. You know, really just sitting and just saying, I'm committed to this for the long haul. It's going to take what it takes. But I'm committed to loving and caring and trusting myself completely. And then just allow the process to unfold. I love that with patience, with grace, and with love for yourself always.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:07] Perfect. I love it, thank you, thank you. Thanks mom for being so vulnerable in this episode and sharing from your experience. I think it's been really helpful. Right. That will be very helpful.

Barb Schmidt: [00:53:19] You too.

Michelle Maros: [00:53:19] We love you. Yes, and thank you friends for listening to the show. We're so grateful for you for being such a supportive and loving community. Um, the show wouldn't be the show without you. And we're we're so grateful always to be chatting with you every single, every single week. So thank you for that. Um, if you haven't yet, make sure you're liked and subscribe to the podcast wherever you listen to podcasts, Apple, Google, Spotify, etc. so that you're always up to date on each new episode. And make sure that you're following us on social media at peaceful Barb at Michelle Maros at Barb Knows Best pod. As you guys know, that's the best way to send us podcast topic requests, questions, comments, concerns, etc. etc. etc. if you haven't yet and you're loving the show, give us a five star rating on iTunes and Spotify and leave a review. It's really, really helpful for us and for the show and we always really greatly appreciate it. Lastly, the link in the show notes is to sign up for our newsletter, which will be. Which is super fun. It's a great place to be and you'll always be up to date with announcements, fun things, lots of stuff in store. So sign up there. Thank you so much again for listening. Thank you mom, for being you. And we will chat with you next week because as we know, Barb knows best. Bye.