Be Known, the Podcast

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Episode 83: How Your Story Can Impact Your Relationships

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This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. Welcome Back and Happy New Year! You’re listening to episode \_\_\_83\_\_\_. We were made for relationship, but so often our relationships are broken. And when our relationships are broken, we are broken. One of our deepest human desires is to be known, but we often have lost ourselves along the way. This is a podcast to help you get your relationships back to a place of wholeness. A place of authentic connection, where you feel truly known.

So come on in and sit a while. Let’s exchange fear for love and finally see what good relationships are made of.

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First of all, before we jump into the topic for today, if you usually listen on Mondays when the podcast comes out, I want to say thank you for your patience the last couple of weeks. Even though I’ll share some personal stories and reflections and things I’m learning with you from time to time, the details of it all are still kept pretty private. And the current details are no different. I’m not going to lie, though, I was debating even bringing the podcast back at all. Because recently there are some who listen and have used it as ammo for gossip and slander about me, and there are some that have used it as a weapon against me directly. There even are those making assumptions about things I’m sharing. So yeh, I’m struggling bringing the podcast back. But God asked me clearly to do this back in 2020. And I’m not going to stop bringing it to you just because of some. Those things have hurt, for sure. But I’m not going to let it stop me.

And remember to be careful with assumptions. Just because I teach you something in this space, doesn’t mean I’m personally walking through it, or that it means anything in particular about my story. Sometimes, yeh, maybe it does. And many times it doesn’t. The podcast helps me just like it helps you because we all need to strive for more whole relationships. But again, those details for my story will remain fairly private.

For those who are like, huh? Ha! I’m thankful for you. For how you show up week after week.

So, now that’s that out of the way, let’s jump in.

You guys have offered so many great ideas for episode topics, and I’m super ready to dig in.

Today, I wanted to introduce the concept of story to you. We don’t have nearly enough time to jump into the deep end here, but we’re going to dip our toes in to the shallow end a bit today.

One person told me they’d like to hear more about trauma. And I’ll gently bring up different aspects of that conversation slowly over time, but today, I want to talk about how your story can impact your relationships.

Most of you already know this.

You’re living this.

In his book *To Be Told: God Invites You to Coauthor Your Future,* Dan Allender says this:

If we don’t tell our stories, our stories will tell us. Whether we revisit the past or not, who we are today is profoundly shaped by the events of our lives and the responses to those events. Our stories will impact us either unconsciously or consciously. It’s up to us tp decided whether we’ll be passive recipients or active agents in the shaping of our lives. (p. 1-2)

Choosing to engage our stories honestly requires a great deal of courage… Socrates once said that the unexamined life is not worth living. One of the privileges of being human is that we have an enormous capacity to reflect and learn and change. When we settle for simply getting by, we mar the glory that was created in us revisiting the past, which may reopen painful wounds of failure and betrayal. The only reason worth reentering the pain is the hope that somehow it can be transformed, that through it we will learn to love better and will know more joy. We trudge though the valley of the shadow of death clinging to the hope of what lies on the other side. We could take the shortcut of putting the past behind us and leaving it there. But instead we choose the difficult path back through stories because of our sacred hope that this path will lead to something beautiful and good: *God has a history of redeeming. Maybe he will redeem my story as well.* (p.2)

What has happened in our lives up to this point has literally shaped nearly everything about us today, especially the way we do relationships.

Our story impacts the relationship we have with ourselves. I can name memory after memory of things people did or said to me, about me, that shaped how I saw myself for a long time. If someone said I was pretty, I thought, man, I guess I’m pretty. If someone made fun of my zits as a teenager, I lived always thinking I had bad skin. I STILL am not a fan of my skin. If someone told me I was annoying, I thought I was annoying. You guys hear this? The way others treated us directly impacts how we treat ourselves. Or it could look something like this: maybe you weren’t treated like you matter, so you now don’t treat yourself like you matter. You’ll do so much for others at the expense of yourself, and you’ll neglect to take care of your needs because others’ needs are more important than yours. Uh oh, I gotta stop preaching now. If people shamed you, made fun of you, talked down to you, ignored you, betrayed you… I could imagine how you’d have a tough time loving yourself today.

Our story also impacts our relationship with others. As young kids, we learn by example. How did your parents and family members interact? How did they argue? How’d they show their emotions? How’d they show affection and love? Did they feel safe to you? As we grow, we learn by example and by experiencing relationships ourselves. How were your friendships? What were they like? What about romantic relationships? This is attachment history 101 right here, and we touched on that last fall. But lean into this? What were your deepest moments of joy in relationships and what were your deepest moments of pain? Now think about how you do relationships with people today How would you describe your relationship with your family members today? Your friends? Your romantic partner? Your boss or your pastor or other leaders in your life? Man, so much of our story impacts what we think is normal in relationships, what expectations we have, what we won’t tolerate. It impacts how we love people and how we receive love. Everything.

And our story impacts our relationship with God. Geez. These all can be so complicated based on your individual experiences, but this one, Whooo. Was religion or spirituality or faith a part of your life growing up? Spend some time thinking about what that meant. What you thought of it all then, and what you think of it all now. How did you view God as a child? How do you view Him now? Are you completely turned off to religion at all because of a bad or even abusive experience? Was faith used as a weapon against you? Did someone who was a leader in the faith hurt you? Was your family legalistic and shaming? Was your faith community loving and compassionate? Do you struggle to see God as father because your own sucked? Do you hear how so much of what happened in our lives and how faith was used or misused can greatly impact how we relate to God today.

Some of you are like, yeh, this is exactly why I don’t want to revisit those stories. They’re too painful. But remember, if you don’t engage it, if you don’t tell you story, it will tell you. It will continue to own you and drive you. But when we engage it, we take that power back. It no longer has to have the final say.

I told you we’d just scratch the surface on the vast impact your story can have on every one of your relationships, but the most important point with all of it is for you (if you haven’t already in your life) to begin taking a closer look at your story, at the memories that built you. At the lasting impact today. I’d recommend doing this with a trusted, trauma-trained licensed professional. They’ll help you navigate safely through it, resolve as much as possible, and make meaning. And then they’ll help you rewrite it from this point on so that your story doesn’t continue to negatively impact your relationships today.

I also love the resource I shared earlier, to get started. It’s a workbook called *To Be Told*, by Dan Allender. It’d be great to do with your counselor.

Our stories don’t have to define us forever. They can be redeemed. We can be redeemed. The same hurt that’s held us back for so long doesn’t have to hold us back anymore. Our relationships can be whole again.

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If you are engaging your story for the first time intentionally, I applaud your bravery. I pray that things will be brought to the light, that those things lose their power as soon as the light touches them.

You are embark[ing] on a journey of stories, of your stories and God’s stories and how they intersect. And of seeing God at work in the unlikeliest places. May the path continue to grant you tiny glimpses and spectacular vistas of God’s passionate love, tender strength, and playful redemption. May you create an exquisitely beautiful quilt from the scraps of calico you’ve been given. And may you write your story— and his story in your story — with honesty and kindness.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Amen.

Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that engaging your story will help you take a step toward wholeness so you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

If you’d like to help continue to make this podcast possible, I’d love for you to consider being a monthly supporter. You can give as little as 99c a month, $4.99, or $9.99 a month. You can find out more by heading to <https://anchor.fm/beknown> and click the button that says, “support.” As always, I’m thankful for each and every listener. Wouldn’t be able to do it without you.

To finish up, the transcript for this episode will be on the podcast page on my website, kerrahfabacher.com.

A big thanks to my friend Robert Hargrove for creating the music for the show, and Tammy and her team at Wildfire Creative Company for editing.

Until next time friend, I’ll see you soon.

1. To Be Told, Dan Allender, p. 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)