This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. You’re listening to episode \_\_\_37\_\_\_. 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.

Recently I got to have a conversation with my friend Mary B. About when friends hold grudges, and I’ve been thinking about this subject a lot since. If you want to have more conversations about the hard parts of friendship, every month, Mary B. and I are chatting over on her Instagram @maryb.safrit.

Last time we talked about grudges, and honestly, this topic makes me feel all kinds of icky because it’s something I have struggled with sometimes in my own life. Grudges can destroy friendships, and it’s important for us to know how to handle them so they *don’t* destroy our friendships.

A grudge is when a person has been wronged or *feels* as though they’ve been wronged by another and chooses not to forgive. Instead, she keeps her anger, bitterness, and resentment inside to the point of pull away from the other person, turning others against them, and/or wanting vengeance in some way.

The reality of life is that people are fallen and imperfect and sometimes hurt one another intentionally or unintentionally. Regardless if that hurt is the end of a relationship and no matter how traumatic, holding a grudge against someone is only bringing more pain to yourself.

Let’s shift the conversation for a minute to if one of your friends is holding a grudge against you. How do you know if they are this hurt and angry with you?

It really depends on the person and the situation here, but some of the main things to look for:

 - your friend is being passive aggressive (and more so than normal). This is how some people show they are hurt or angry, but it isn’t a healthy way to handle hurt because it never actually solves a problem.

 - Your friend keeps bringing up the hurt or whatever you did. They talk about it to you or they talk about it a lot to others. This is indicating they are still holding onto the hurt and haven’t moved past it.

 - They pull away and distance themselves emotionally and physically. They may stop talking to you completely, stop hanging out, stop inviting you to do things, or sharing things about their lives with you. Though this isn’t always an unhealthy way to handle it, it is almost like the person is simply pushing the issue aside and avoiding the pain of talking with you about it. So they pull away and give you no chance to understand or advocate for yourself or the friendship.

 - Your friend may act in spiteful ways, which is an immature way to handle hurt. This is the “You hurt me, I hurt you” mentality. An “eye for an eye” attitude that only intensifies someone’s anger.

 - Or your friend may be more healthy and tell you directly that you’ve hurt them and they are having a hard time forgiving you. They may tell you the relationship is over, or that they can’t forgive you (and that is their decision, even if it isn’t a great one because that just becomes toxic to that person.

Now that we know more about what a grudge looks like, how can we talk to a friend who is holding a grudge against us? Because unless we are okay with just not talking to our friend anymore and the friendship being over, we need to do what is our responsibility here and try to resolve what we can. Ask your friend if she would be willing to talk with you first. If she isn’t, that is something to grieve and eventually accept. If they are willing to, ask clarifying questions without interrupting. Ask things like, “Will you help me understand how you are feeling or why you are upset with me?” “What do you need from me right now?” “Will you forgive me?” Or “Where do you want to go from here?” Then after they have had time to share, then share your own thoughts and feelings, too.

Besides, you are in the friendship, too, and just as important as she is. Make sure you apologize for any wrong you did do. Take this time to be honest and kind, but make sure you share how you feel about the situation, too, and what you hope for in the relationship.

You aren’t in charge of how they respond or if they forgive you or not. That’s their responsibility. Hopefully, after your conversation the relationship will be back on track, but if they choose to end it, it is something that you will need to accept. I know this isn’t easy and sometimes some of the worst pain, but it is a possibility. Just be aware that, but remain hopeful! People move past friendship hurt all the time.

But what if you are the one struggling to forgive? How can you let go when the wrong has been done to you?

 - Name the hurt (s). Be specific about what it is.

 - Name the feeling. Are you disappointed? Do you feel betrayed? Do you feel forgotten? Name the feeling.

 - Practice letting go of the feeling, riding it out, and feeling it, but letting it go when ready.

 - Then practice forgiveness. Walk through each hurt, and spend some time with Jesus. Over each hurt, say, “I forgive \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_.” This sounds simple, but it is harder than it sounds. Spend the time you need, and say it as many times as you need.

 - Share it with the other person.

 - Then set some boundaries if necessary to help protect from repeated hurts in the future.

Listen, I know this isn’t the most fun of all the topics, but it I hope this conversation has been practical. I want to share a quick story in case you feel heavy from this one.

One of my best friends and I had an awful experience in college where we both hurt one another, and we were both struggling to forgive each other. But she knew the friendship was worth fighting for, and she sat down with me. We were honest about our hurt. We were honest about it all. And then we cried and forgave one another, and it was beautiful. Now our friendship is stronger than it was before that. It’s possible! Reconciliation is possible, my friend. Believe in that.

Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that understanding how to handle grudges in friendship will help you take a step toward wholeness so you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

Come and hang out more with me over on Instagram @kerrahfabacher or on my website at [kerrahfabacher.com](http://kerrahfabacher.com)

To finish up, the transcript for this episode is 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 fellow hope\*writer, Alana Dawson, for being a great editor.

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