This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. You’re listening to episode \_\_\_69\_\_\_. 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. And let’s see what kind of healing happens here.

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Way back in my my yester-years, I was kind of weird serial dater. Like let’s be honest, it was kind of unhealthy. Unhealthy like, date a guy for a year, break up and date someone else a week later. And repeat. I was a different version of myself back then, and I won’t judge that girl today, but I will share one story. Most of the time I did the breaking up with people, but it happened to me some, too. When I was in high school, I dated a guy who, when he broke up with me, told me some stuff that was super hard for me to hear. Things like, “You’re too much.” “You can be annoying.” “You want to spend too much time with me.” And more things like that.

And let me tell you something. These words to a teenage girl? Geezum. They were brutal. I mean, I cringe a little saying them right now. Because, um, they’re mean. But when I first heard them? I assumed they were true. How could they not be? This guy was a stand up guy, very well-liked. Kind. Funny. And he was no serial dater like me.

These words were so devastating that I was a complete wreck for days. My mom put me in the car and drove me to my grandparents who lived a couple of hours away. And I spent several days in a king size bed watching *Beaches* on VHS over and over and crying my eyes out. I’ll never forget my Mimi coming in every so often to touch my face and tell me how loved I was.

Those words had a lot of power over me. To the point that I, at times, would ask my college boyfriends way too often if I was annoying them, if I was being clingy. If I was too much.

And then it happened again.

Another boy I fell hard for broke Kerrbear’s heart, made her feel like she was too much right now.

Now, in hindsight, I actually do see patterns of clinging a bit too hard, too fast in my relationships. I can see how I acted, and what things I would say that were immature. I was a teenager, for crying out loud. Who isn’t immature at that time? But what I’m saying is, there were bits of truth in what that first guy told me, but he just said it all in a mean way. I know there were also things he said that weren’t true about me, that aren’t true.

Sometimes people will tell us something that is true or that has a little truth in it, and it can be super painful for us to hear. I value truth and clarity and honesty in my relationships. In fact, I don’t have time for people who won’t show up authentically. But sometimes that honesty hurts. Sometimes it hurts a lot.

Especially when it feels true.

I think what was so hard about what that first guy told me was that it reinforced my already-present insecurity. Even though this guy had an interesting (and pretty quirky) group of friends, I always struggled feeling like I belonged with them. He always seemed to enjoy their company more than mine, so I wasn’t ever sure if he really even liked me that much to begin with.

So hearing those words made how I felt about myself even worse.

What do we do when someone tells us something that is hard to hear or that reinforces a negative belief about ourselves? Or what if what they are saying has truth to it?

How can we respond?

I think we allow ourselves to sit with how those comments make us feel, what comes up in us, what feels true about them, and why it feels true.

1. We sit with our feelings for a bit and notice what comes up.

 This may require taking space away from the conversation in the moment and just be with yourself. Put a name to the feeling. Anger. hurt. Confused. Insecure. Anxious. Lonely. Put a name to it. When that person told you that thing that hurt, that may have been a little true, how did you feel? How do you feel now thinking about it? Then get curious. Consider what it was about the conversation that triggered this feeling in you. Is this the first time you’ve felt like that with this person? Or is this a feeling you feel pretty often with them? When do you feel it most?

Just spend some time with yourself reflecting. Be careful not lost in your emotion. Like when I cried for days when my boyfriend broke up with me… I was grieving, and that’s okay to be in that space. To cry and scream and whatever you need. But if I had stayed in that space for way too long, I would have become depressed. I allowed myself to be sad, and eventually the sadness passed. It was his words that sunk in too deeply for me. And since that time, I’ve had to lean into why that is.

2. What feels true about the words spoken to you, and why? Or what *is* true?)

 So this person in your life tells you something that hurts. And you consider how you feel. And you allow yourself to feel it. Then what? I think it’s important to consider what feels true about the words spoke. I was often treated like I was annoying people around me when I was a kid. Kerrah, you cry too much. You whine too much. You’re too picky. You’re annoying me. You’re too loud. You sing too much. And so when that guy told me that stuff, I was like, wow. It all must be true. I must be annoying. I must be too much. If enough people tell you something in your life, you tend to believe it. So those words he said felt true to me, even though I look back and know they weren’t all true. And they were said in a hurtful way, not a helpful way.

What feels true to you about what someone said to you? And then, what *is* true? He said, “You want to spend too much time with me, and I want to spend more time with my friends.” I look back on that statement and know it was a bit true. I was like that sometimes with boyfriends. I wasn’t always like that because I wanted my time with my own friends, too. But I definitely could see how I came on strong. That information has helped me mature over the years.

What I’ve learned is to filter out the things that feel true (but aren’t), especially things that are hurtful and not helpful. It’s hard to do this because words have so much power and meaning in our lives. But if we don’t filter out the yucky stuff, it can become toxic to us. We must be able to recognize the difference between felt truth and actual truth. Just because someone says it doesn’t make it true. And just because we feel it doesn’t make it true, either. We can be gather the truth in what someone says to us and use it to better ourselves as we continue on in our lives, but the other stuff? Yeh, let’s throw it out.

3. Respond to the person if necessary.

 It may not be necessary, especially if there was no established safety in the relationship prior to that confrontation. But it’s probably important to respond if there is safety and connection. You can acknowledge gratitude to the person for telling you whatever it was, and express how you felt hearing those words. You can also let them know that you hear them and will work to grow in ways that need growth, but if something is hurtful or mean they said? You can say something like, “Though there is some truth to what you are saying, I’m choosing not to believe these other unhelpful (or untrue) things about myself, and I’d appreciate if you didn’t speak to me like that again.”

This is so tricky, because I’ll never know every single person’s situation listening to the show. I won’t be able to present in each moment, in each conversation to coach you on what to say and how to act. But I do think these things can be a helpful starting point for you.

Words can really sting. And it’s inevitable we’ll find ourselves in a situation like this sooner or later, if we haven’t already. But even in the sting, we have the choice of how they will affect us from that point on. We have the choice to listen and discern and change whatever behavior that’s necessary. We can choose to filter in and filter out. Don’t ever forget you have this power.

Enter music

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Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that knowing what to do when the truth hurts will help you take a step toward wholeness so you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

To finish up, the transcript for this episode will be on the podcast page on my website, kerrahfabacher.com. I have a spot open for one-on-one coaching if you have been struggling to navigate these kind of hard conversations in your life. I love helping you overcome in this, so check out how to work with me at [www.kerrahfabacher.com/book-online](http://www.kerrahfabacher.com/book-online)

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.