This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. You’re listening to episode \_\_14\_\_. 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.

2020 has been the year of goodbyes. Goodbyes to normalcy, to routine, to in-person meetings and gatherings, to hugs, to ceremonies and celebrations. To eating out and traveling far. To church in an actual building. To being able to walk freely into places without a mask on. Because masks are seriously the worst. It’s been goodbyes to loved ones and the end of a senior year. Goodbye to great-grandmothers and teaching little girls about heaven. Goodbye to financial security or a job or a home we’ve loved for a long time.

I’m a bit tired of saying these goodbyes this year. Some have been goodbyes forever and some are just see-you-laters. Difficult all the same.

And honestly I’m not sure I’ve fully grieved. I think I’ve just been numb.

But the goodbyes that often come with relationships can at times be even harder to swallow. Houses and jobs can be replaced. Masks won’t always be required. COVID won’t always be here.

But relationships are not as easily replaced.

I walked through a season of intense loneliness when I first moved to New Orleans over a decade ago. I remember talking with my mom about how it felt like my college friendships were slipping away. I was kind of being dramatic, ha, but I felt like an outsider. Like everyone was getting closer and I was getting farther away. My mom said to me that it is important to realize that some friendships are only meant to last for a season. And I felt a lump in my throat because I knew she was right.

I can look back on my life and think about the close friends I had during different seasons. My friend Madeline who lived in the brown house at the end of the cul-de-sac. A friendship full of swimming and make believe and hide-n-seek with the neighborhood kids in the dark.

My friend Chessi and I would have millions of sleepovers, watching Pearl Harbor and scary movies and listening to country music and singing at the top of our lungs.

My friend Jenna would always have our group over out in the country for bonfires and four wheeler rides and tricks on trampolines.

My friend Jordan and I would go explore downtown in the small town we lived in and go to poetry readings and concerts of local teenage bands and make an endless amount of burned cds.

These are friends I rarely talk to other than on social media, if that. I felt like they were life-long best friends at the time, but our lives have taken us down different paths.

And I’m learning that that is OK.

Not all my friendship goodbyes have been that amicable. And we won’t even talk about all the break-ups with all the boys. Nope. The less friendly partings haunted me for years after they ended. Some ended by me, some by others. But painful all the same.

Some friendships will stand the test of time and will be in our lives until we draw our final breaths. And some won’t. It’s OK to grieve those endings, especially if they were not endings we asked for.

But it is important to remember that each friendship plays a role in our lives. The friend that teaches us how to be adventurous. The one who shows us how to be kind. The one who models true authenticity. The kindred spirit. The one with similar taste in music and love for deep conversations. The one who protects like a brother. The one who will always yell obnoxiously loud in the football stadium. The one who listens more than speaks. The one who helped take away our loneliness. The one who is obsessed with Chip and Joanna Gaines with you. The one who you always make time for, no matter what. The one who reminded us that a missional and welcoming heart is the best kind of all. The one who asks the most intentional questions to remind you that you are in fact, seen . The one who will sit with you every Monday night to make fun of the Bachelor.

It is important to reflect on the goodbyes, the friendships that shaped you. The friends that are no longer in your life. To think about what that friendship taught you and how it filled you in that season and acknowledge that time naturally changes things, including people. That it is normal for friendships to come and go in life.

But sometimes we hang on to a friendship too long, one that needed to end long ago. We hang on in light of perceived companionship or fear of loneliness when in reality the friendship has become unhealthy or toxic or too painful to continue. How do you know when it is time to part ways?

1. The other is taking much more than they are giving.

Good grief have I been guilty of this. Relationships are meant to be reciprocal, a give and take. Some are more prone to take, and some to give. And it’s good for us to grow in those areas. But if on is taking so much that the other has nothing left, it may be time to have an important conversation, to share with your friend that you are not OK with this dynamic anymore, and to set boundaries. If your friend keeps up the selfish behavior, it could be time to say goodbye and part ways.

2. The relationship is toxic.

I know this word is thrown around a lot, but stay with me. This could be someone who drinks too much around you even though you are a recovering alcoholic. Someone who lies and manipulates you a lot. Someone who has broken your trust repeatedly or takes advantage of your time and resources. It could be a person that you’ve become too dependent on or attached to in an unhealthy way. Or a person who constantly argues with you or continually crosses boundaries. If the relationship literally feels life-sucking, it could be time to say goodbye.

3. The person is abusive.

I know this seems self-explanatory, but these are often the hardest relationships for us to leave. This could be spiritual abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or physical abuse. Any abuse is NEVER ok. And it is time to get out or seek help if you can’t.

Friendship is one of the greatest gifts of our lifetime, and though some end too soon, we can lean into their lasting impact. And for those we hold onto too tightly, may we be brave to say goodbye.

To end our time today, I will read a blessing from John O’ Donahue from his book, *To Bless the Space Between Us.* (P. 176-177)This is for lost friends.

As twilight makes a rainbow robe

From the concealed colors of day

In order for time to stay alive

Within the dark weight of night,

May we lose no one we love

From the shelter of our hearts.

When we love another heart

And allow it to love us,

We journey deep below time

Into that eternal weave

Where nothing unravels.

May we have the grace to see

Despite the hurt of rupture,

The searing of anger,

And the empty disappointment,

That whoever we have loved,

Such love can never quench.

Though a door may have closed,

Closed between us,

May we be able to view

Our lost friends with eyes

Wise with calming grace;

Forgive them the damage

We were left to inherit;

Free ourselves from the chains

Of forlorn resentment;

Bring warmth again to

Where the heart has frozen

In order that beyond the walls

Of our cherished hurt

And chosen distance

We may be able to

Celebrate the gifts they brought,

Learn and grow from the pain,

And prosper into difference,

Wishing them the peace

Where spirit can summon

Beauty from wounded space.

Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that knowing when to say goodbye will help you make one more step toward wholeness so that you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

You can find me on instagram @kerrahfabacher or at my website, [www.kerrahfabacher.com](http://www.kerrahfabacher.com).

If you are having a hard time knowing when it is time to say goodbye, let’s chat. Check out how to work with me one-on-one in boundaries coaching at [www.kerrahfabacher.com/book-online](http://www.kerrahfabacher.com/book-online).

The transcript for this episode is on the podcast page on my website.

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And a big thanks to my friend, Robert Hargrove, for creating the music for our podcast, and fellow hope\*writer, Alana Dawson for editing the show.

Until next time, friend.

I’ll see you soon!