This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. You’re listening to episode \_\_\_63\_\_\_. 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

My girls have this love/hate relationship with each other, you know? They all three have strong personalities, and so that makes for a lot of “Stop! Give it back! That’s mine!” If we’re honest right here in this space, and you know we are, most of the time I just ignore then and let them figure it out. I only step in if they come begging for assistance (in very dramatic ways of course). One thing they complain about all the time is if I ask them to clean up their messes. I hear, “That’s not mine. Or I didn’t do that” literally 4756 times a day. If it’s not theirs, they don’t want to clean it up. And I get it. I don’t want to clean up anyone else’s mess, either.

And I always say to them, it doesn’t matter. That I need everyone to help clean up. That’s not true, if I *know* it’s one girl’s mess, I make her clean it up, but if it’s a whole bunch of mess, you better believe they’re all in it cleaning it up.

I’m a firm believer in allowing each individual to experience the consequences of her own decisions and actions. Y’all’ve heard me talk about this a lot. One specific episode that can be helpful here is episode 28: What is my responsibility? But what if we *have* to live with someone else’s consequences? What if we have to clean up someone else’s mess?

As someone who highly values boundaries, this topic is so hard for me because every once in a while, we *do* have to live with the consequences of someone else’s mess. Many times, we can implement good boundaries by allowing the other person to experience their own consequences and not try to rescue them from whatever those are. But what if we can’t?

A couple of examples come to mind to help you see how this can look for us, you know, as grown humans and not small ones. Recently someone told me of a family member stealing thousands of money from them by using their credit cards. When the person was aware of it, their credit was completely shot and they owed thousands of dollars to credit card companies. A big storm ruined their home, and they had nothing left. As they tried to look for new homes, they were struggling because their credit was shot. And they had to pay the thousands back to get their credit back up because the family member was unable to. Honestly, this person could have pressed charges, but chose a gracious approach, living with the consequences of someone else’s actions. It was awful and terrible and so wrong, and the person has very strict boundaries now with that family member, but the person had to live through a lot of pain because of that.

Another example: a roommate decides to break the lease and move out due to conflict within the relationship, and the other person has to deal with the loss of a place to live and loss of a lot of money from breaking her lease. That choice wasn’t hers, but her roommate’s choice affected her greatly, and she had to live with the consequences, too.

Other quick examples: You spend too much money, and that decision affects the well-being of your whole family, not just you. You drive drunk and injure another driver. You miss a deadline and your whole team is penalized for it.

It’s kind of the worst, right? We just want to scream, this isn’t fair! We deserve better! Boundaries boundaries boundaries!

This isn’t in line with the circles of control. I can’t control or take responsibility for anyone else’s actions and consequences other than my own.

And though it’s not fair and we do deserve better, this can and will happen in your life at some point. We can’t be so far removed to never be affected by someone else’s choices. It just sucks even worse when we have to deal with their consequences, too.

So how can we deal with it if or when we do have to live with someone else’s consequences?

One way is to allow God to get the justice. This is a very David-like approach, but I ask God all the time to have justice, to expose people and sin and wrong behavior, to bring it to the light and bring whatever justice he sees fit. I don’t need justice. I can let him have it.

Another way is to consider a different approach to boundaries in your relationship with said other person whose consequences you are bearing. Maybe it’s time to confront them, to tell how you feel and what you think about this situation. How it’s affected you and what it’s cost you. To establish more clear and rigid boundaries with them in the future, to even request they take responsibility for what is theirs and not bear the blame yourself. Some people will always be ones who pass blame. They’ll walk away without apology, not caring how you’ve been affected by their decisions. Those aren’t people who need to stay in our lives.

When it’s so out of our control that we just have to deal, let’s be careful not to ignore our feelings. Because they matter. You may feel angry with God, like it’s not fair you have to pay for someone else’s mistake. You’ll feel angry toward the person, maybe hurt, maybe betrayed. Maybe highly anxious about how you’re going to handle it all, how you’re going to pay back the debt or pay the deposit back or whatever it is. Just be honest about those feelings with yourself, God, and a trusted other. Seek wise counsel about how to proceed.

If it’s possible to give the other person back their consequences, I think that’s an okay, route, too. If you’d rather them pay you back every penny, it’s okay to ask for and expect that. If a drunk driver injures you, and you have hospital bills, I think it’s okay to sue. If a person on your team keeps screwing up at work and you get in trouble for it, I think it’s okay to ask the person to own up to their own mistakes or requesting for that person to be removed from your team. I know these sound harsh, but these are just examples of not taking responsibility for something that isn’t yours to hold (in a very strict way).

I’m not ever sure there’s a universal right answer to something this complicated, and I know many of you will have more examples of how this has played out in your life. Regardless of it all, I hope we’ll all be able to release our hurt and anger at the feet of Jesus, ask him for justice and guidance about how to proceed, and work toward forgiveness. We may not even reconcile with that person, and we may never get paid back, if you will, but we can eventually let it go, let them go if we put in the work.

Enter music-

We can’t change other people, unfortunately. But we can think about how we can move forward from a situation like this a stronger, healthier version of ourselves. What do we need to heal from it? What do we need to do? To feel? To say? And then we can prioritize each thing as we work toward relationship wholeness.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that prioritizing new boundaries and healing from hurt like this will help you take a step toward wholeness so you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

Needing a brush up on your boundaries? I created a course called The Boundaries Bootcamp. It’s a six-lesson, go at your own pace, overview of healthy vs. unhealthy boundaries and how to implement them through a framework to help us with more open communication. Sign up to begin now at [www.kerrahfabacher.com/shop](http://www.kerrahfabacher.com/shop).

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 Alana Dawson, for editing.

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