This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher, your host. You’re listening to episode \_\_\_7\_\_\_. 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.

In March 2015, The second movie in the Divergent movie series based off of Veronica Roth’s books debuted into the world. The movie is called Insurgent, and yes I know I am in my thirties and I should not still love teenage dystopian literature and movies. But I get sucked in every single time. I loved the Divergent series, well all but the final book, but I won’t go into that today. :)

At the end of the first movie, Tris, the main character, shoots and kills one of her close friends to protect herself and her mom. Both of her parents die trying to protect her, and she carries the trauma and guilt of that over into movie two. She has nightmares and struggles with being honest with her loved ones because she is so ashamed. Toward the end of the movie, she finally realizes that though she thinks she has been fighting her enemies, her real enemy is herself. She sees that she has not forgiven herself, and she decides to finally let it go.

That choice to forgive herself shattered her guilt and shame and literally opened the door for new possibilities in her life.

One of the main signs that a relationship is unhealthy is if there are unresolved wounds. One or both people in any type of relationship are stuck in the hurt of the past and cannot seem to move forward.

This hurt leads to bursts of anger with no known trigger or seasons of depression. It can lead to bitterness and more conflict.

But what if the hurt we hold was not caused by someone else? What if it was caused by us?

We went too far physically with a boy when we were 16.

We lied to our best friend when we were in college.

We drank too much one night.

We took too many pain pills.

We stayed in an abusive relationship.

We hurt someone.

We chose to wrong when we knew what was right.

The mistakes we have made (and my friend, we have ALL made them) keep us in chains and prevent us from moving on in life. We label ourselves based on past actions, and we cannot seem to give ourselves grace.

When I was 15, I told a lie to someone I loved. I knew the truth would hurt him deeply, and through some unfortunate events, he found out the truth. Not only did I hurt him deeply, but the exposed truth fueled his hurt to hurt me back. I was called all kinds of terrible things, and it was not long before my secret was told to everyone in our circle. The shame I felt after that experience took root, and before I knew it, I was still struggling with it five years later. FIVE YEARS. That is how long I held my guilt and shame over that experience. And that is only one example. I can think of many more.

Over the years I had tried to push it aside, try to forget any of it ever happened. Make new friends and date new people who did not know anything about it. I covered it up because I had not forgiven myself for it all. And that lack of grace was keeping me from being present and authentic in other relationships.

And if I had really thought about it, I would not have known how to forgive myself even if I tried.

No one had ever taught me that before.

I knew I was supposed to forgive other, but I did not know I needed to treat myself in the same way.

We can talk about the power of forgiving others, and why it is crucial to our own spiritual, relational, and mental health.

But what we don’t talk about enough is the power of forgiving ourselves.

In order to practice self-forgiveness, we can begin by considering how we have disappointed ourselves in the past. Most hurt is synonymous with the emotion of disappointment, so when have you disappointed yourself? Because if we are honest, we all have.

If you have been disappointed in yourself, that means you have not met all of your expectations you have had over the years for yourself. And again, who has? A helpful exercise is to think about your expectations of yourself.

Name them.

This could be something like:

I expect to:

Be successful

Make straight As

Be the hardest worker at my job

Be an excellent mother who packs organic lunches every day and makes homemade dinner every night

Never forget an important occasion

Remain pure until marriage

Graduate from college

Marry by age 27

Handle my mental illness on my own

Be the good girl who rarely sins

For my house to be spotless

To live according to my values

To be someone others can look up to

There will be situations when you not only can’t live up to your expectations but you also have to consider adjusting them. I was so hard on myself for a mistake made at 15 because I was a Christian leader in my church and school. I was supposed to be well-behaved, the straight A student, the one with strong Christian parents.

I could not believe I would allow myself to stoop so low, and I held that disappointment. I could not let it go.

You can probably think of ten things right now that you have done in your life that you are not proud of, times when you have not lived up to your own expectations.

Forgiveness is choosing to let go of that hurt.

Have you let go?

Or do you hold it still?

Letting go of that hurt and disappointment can shatter our shame and pave the way for a grace-filled life, not just toward ourselves but also toward our people, too.

Letting go is not an easy task, but it is necessary. If Jesus can remove our iniquities and remember our sin no more (Hebrews 8:12), then can we extend the same grace? Can we be the ones who do not label ourselves based on past mistakes, and label ourselves as a forgiven child of God? Can we be brave and face our hurt and work toward reconciliation?

In Matthew 6:14-15, we see that not forgiving will keep us from experiencing the full forgiveness of the Father. True freedom comes when we expose the hurt and bring it to the light and then choose stop holding it.

Let’s release it all as we would place in a leaf in a river, watching the river carry it away.

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As we stand and watch it go,

Let’s say these words:

I choose to forgive myself.

I am not going to bring it up again after this moment.

I am letting go of any anger I have held toward myself because of it.

I do not identify myself with it anymore.

I believe that God has forgiven me

Because I have confessed it to him

And chosen to turn from it.

I accept His forgiveness.

I accept my own.

I do not let shame win.

I am forgiven.

I am loved.

Thanks for sitting a while with me. You can grab the 8 exercises to get your relationships back on track today for a discounted rate! These exercises are based off of seven signs our relationships are unhealthy. In my quiz, *Discover Your Relationship Personality*, you can find out if you are the one with any of these tendencies or you may be the healthy one who has been able to overcome these issues and have thriving relationships. These 8 exercises will help you in those unhealthy areas and help you get your relationships back to a place of wholeness, and one is specifically about a path to forgiveness. You can get yours now at [www.kerrahfabacher.com/shop](http://www.kerrahfabacher.com/shop).

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And a big shout out to my friend Robert Hargrove who created the amazing music for the show, and fellow hope\*writer, Alana Dawson for editing the show.

Until next time friend, Happy Labor Day, and I’ll see you soon.