Be Known, the Podcast

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Episode 98: Not All Connection is Created Equal

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This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. You’re listening to episode \_\_\_98\_\_\_. 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.

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So I read a LOT of novels. Fantasy is my favorite genre. Yes, I embrace the nerdy. But I’ll also read rom coms sometimes for the fun of it. Most of them are pretty forgettable, but recently I read one that surprised me. I kept wondering why it was so surprising to me. What about it made me want to read every word instead of skip around in boredom? But I realized it was the connection of the main characters that drew me in.

It’s not uncommon (to the fault of the authors) for main characters to not be fully developed or for the author to pay too much attention to one part of their connection more than others. But this book (and no I can’t even remember the name because I returned it already), focused on all the various types of connection.

A client and I were talking recently about the need for deeper connection in a relationship, and we realized how helpful it is to clarify what type of connection we need, and in that, recognizing there are various levels of connection that correlate with closeness and safety in a relationship.

Stick with me.

I’m getting somewhere.

She was trying to communicate these needs to someone in her life, but we had to clarify first what connection was missing, what connection she needed more of.

And just like all connection isn’t created equal, not all relationships will be either. Some connections are appropriate, and some not, based on the type of relationship and closeness.

So okay, let’s just identify different kinds of connection we can have in our relationships.

1. Physical connection

Let’s start with the obvious. Since birth, we are wired to need physical connection with others. We need physical touch in order to survive and thrive in this world. This could be hugs and snuggles, rubbing one’s back, grabbing a hand. High fives and lows fives and all that. This could include tuning into to others’ body language and facial expressions. This could also include simply being with someone in a shared space at the same time. We need presence. We need touch.

2. Sexual Connection

Closely related to (and often mistaken for) physical connection, sexual connection is going further than physical touch or presence. It’s when people connect in sexual ways. In case there are young ears around, I won’t go into the details of that because I think you can deduce what I mean here, but it could include acts in someone’s presence or even in shared communication over a distance. Many new couples emphasize sexual connection (and chemistry) and don’t always prioritize the need for these other types for the health of their relationship. Unlike physical connection, people can survive without sexual connection, but it is still important, esp. in romantic relationships.

3. Emotional Connection

I think this is the one that surprised me the most in that book. The conversations and interactions between the characters was so good. They slowly would get deeper and deeper and tell each other more and more about themselves and their stories. It was a healthy progression. Emotional connection could mean a lot of things, but really, it’s if you and a person are able to know and be known by one another. Expressing deeply personal things after a period of time. Sharing about how they’re doing, taking off masks, being honest with one another, telling stories about their lives, trusting one another, being a safe person to another, expressing feelings and thoughts. Sometimes emotional connection can also be built in significant shared experiences, shared values, shared history.

4. Social Connection

This is just simply spending time around others. Going to events. Going to groups. Being involved in your community. Talking and engaging with people around you. These aren’t usually our deepest connections, but they are still valuable all the same.

5. Spiritual Connection

This involves having conversations about spirituality, God, faith, and the like. I am aware there are lots of ways people connect spiritually that aren’t the same as those in the Christian faith, so I realize I may be missing a lot of things here, but for a person of faith, it can include gathering together, talking about these things, learning from one another, asking hard questions, disagreeing sometimes. It could also mean the connection one has with God.

6. Intellectual Connection

This is often just talking about things that can help you learn and grow. It could be discussing new policies or the state of politics. What you’re learning from a book or a class. It could be doing some training together. These kind of things.

7. Recreational Connection

This is just the fun stuff. Doing fun things with people you care about and enjoy being around.

8. Connection with Self

Okay, don’t get weird on me. This is about the relationship we have with ourselves. How we know ourselves. How we get to understand ourselves. How we learn to listen to our emotions and our bodies and how we learn to take care of ourselves. This is our sense of self-worth and how we can have self-compassion. This is self reflection and allowing our true selves to be.

Each type of connection is unique. And there are different levels of connection, too. There are shallow end connections, where people only know basic things about one another, or maybe just spend time with each other in social situations. There are middle-of-the-pool connections, where maybe more time is spent, more conversations are had, but not the deep ones. And there are deep-end connections, where you are known and know others in many ways. Where you share parts of yourself you wouldn’t share with others. Where trust and safety are secure. Where you feel seen, supported and the deep-end people do, too. Most people aren’t in the deep end. That’s usually only a few.

When you consider each type, how connected do you feel? Do you feel disconnected from others, God, or even from yourself? There are many things that can affect the experience or feeling of disconnection, and we don’t have time to dig in there today, but is there a type of connection you need? Is there one someone’s used to hurt you and so you have a hard time allowing that kind of connection today? What is missing? And how can you get that cup of connection filled? Is there a conversation that needs to be had? An action step you can take?

Here me. None of these will be perfectly filled all the time, but it is important to assess the need when they aren’t full. We need connection. We need relationship.

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Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that gently will help you take a step toward wholeness so you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

You can also follow along on social media— instagram @kerrahfabacher is a great place to start. Also, something new I’m doing is I have created a specific instagram account for the podcast to quiet up my own personal page a bit. You can follow that account @beknownthepodcast!

A big thanks to my friend Robert Hargrove for creating the music for the show, and Renowned Media for editing.

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