Be Known, the Podcast

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Episode 87: See the Inner Child

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This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher. Welcome back after we took a break during Lent. You’re listening to episode \_\_\_87\_\_\_. 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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As someone who’s an introvert and not always inclined to be super present in public ways, taking time off of the podcast and sometimes even social media is a must. It’s all a bit loud to me, if I’m honest, so thank you for hanging in there while I took time off during Lent. I didn’t get as much rest or reflection during this season, but I did get to quiet my mind a bit more than I normally do. So again, thank you.

One thing I got to be a part of during this season was the inaugural Mental Health and The Church Conference held in New Orleans. I had the honor and privilege of getting to be a breakout speaker on one of my favorite topics- boundaries:). But I also got the honor to sit under some brilliant therapists, psychologists, spiritual directors, pastors, and friends during the weekend.

I’ll have more reflections from this conference as we go, but I couldn’t stop thinking about this one thing and knew I wanted to share it with you on our first Monday back.

Lately, I’ve been incorporating more inner child work into my therapy practice— helping clients learn how to love on, nurture, and protect the child within them that has old wounds. To provide that child what he or she may or may not have had growing up. To treat oneself like he or she would treat themselves as a child, finding compassion and empathy, strength and resilience.

It’s honestly some of the most powerful work. I never see someone untouched by an intervention like that. It’s why it’s a hot topic in the field of psychology and counseling right now. Because it’s effective and meaningful to clients.

But one of the speakers at the conference talked about this concept in a way I hadn’t thought about. Before, if I’m honest.

And that’s to treat others as if you see the inner child in them, too.

I recently spent time with some of my extended family, people I don’t see often because I don’t live close to them.

We were sitting there listening to a sermon on Easter Sunday, and I loved how the pastor brought to our attention more of Jesus; humanity in it. How he felt, what he needed, and how his people betrayed him and hurt him in the process. How in the garden he just needed his closest friends to be with him, and they kept falling asleep.

For some reason as he’s saying this, I looked at my brother who was sitting a row in front of us. I watched him nod his head, which is a big deal for him. He’s not one to nod his head in agreement unless he really agrees. And when he nodded his head, I felt a lump in my throat as I thought about him as a little boy— one of the cutest little boys I’d ever seen. He had white blonde hair for years, always cut in a chili bowl haircut. And I loved that little boy. No matter how often we got on each other’s nerves, I loved him. And I looked at my brother who’s a man now, and thought, I see you. I see that you still need people, you still need that love. As you nod your head at the fact that Jesus needed his close people, too.

I saw the little boy in him and had so much compassion that a lump formed in my throat.

Of course, seeing the inner child in someone will be easier if you actually knew and loved that person when they were a child. It’s much harder with others.

Especially if the person drives you crazy. Is unkind. Maybe narcissistic or manipulative. If the person is not someone you enjoy being around or maybe has hurt you deeply. It’s when a person is acting out or acting in unhealthy, unkind ways that it’s hardest to see their inner child in them.

Seeing the inner child in another doesn’t mean you won’t get annoyed or angry or hurt. I feel these things toward my own kids often. It also doesn’t mean you have to agree with their words or actions. A lot of times you won’t. It doesn’t mean seeing them as inferior like many adults do with children, and it doesn’t mean parenting them and trying to control what they do. It doesn’t mean ignoring or enabling their behavior, either, and it doesn’t mean we rush in to rescue them so they’ll *need* us. Nope. That’s not what I mean.

What it does mean is that you intentionally move toward their emotions and deeper longings, expressed or not, not *ignoring* surface behavior, but seeing *past* it to what really could be going on underneath. It’s seeing the longing for connection, attention, and belonging underneath the attention-seeking behaviors. It’s seeing the fear, insecurity, and discomfort underneath the defensiveness, walls, and other protective behaviors. It’s recognizing that underneath all the tough exteriors and need for control and tendency to withdraw is a person who once was a child, with a longing for safety, security, relationship, and love. It’s a child longing to be seen and valued.

We don’t want to assume we know what’s underneath it all, so be careful with this. It’s more of a *posture* toward them than an assumption we have them figured out, especially if we haven’t taken the time to get to know them. It’s a leaning toward instead of away. It’s a listening instead of jumping in to speak. If the person has hurt you enough and needs to be kept at a distance, it’s a posture of your heart, a choosing to maintain boundaries while also knowing there is a human being there who’s hurt in their lives, too.

We can get so lost in the surface “bad” behaviors that we neglect to see the heart, the human behind them. They are responsible for their actions, and if their actions are unkind, that’s not okay. But we are responsible for ours, too. And we can demonstrate empathy, compassion, active listening. We can be slow to speak and slow to jump to our own defense. We can look people in the eye and try to truly understand what’s under it all. We can treat people like we’d treat them if they were a small innocent child just seeking to have a place in this world.

This practice could literally transform your heart and your relationships. It could soften interactions with difficult people enough to where they soften, too.

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

It’s so good to be back. Here’s a couple of ways you can support the podcasts we move forward: 1. You can follow, rate, and review the show! This helps it to be more visible so more people can find and listen, too. 2. You can choose to become a monthly supporter by giving .99, 4.99, or 9.99 a month. Just like anything the podcast requires the monies to keep it going, so any amount helps! Thank you for your support.

If you’re a new listener and have started closer to the beginning, there are some resources I had available back then that I announced on the podcast that are no longer live— like a relationship quiz. Sorry about that confusion, but you can always reach out on instagram to check if those things are still available if you can’t find!

Speaking of, come follow me on Instagram @kerrahfabacher. Okay, enough of all of that!

To finish up, the transcript for this episode will be on the podcast page on my website, [kerrahfabacher.com](http://kerrahfabacher.com).

A big thanks to my friend Robert Hargrove for creating the music for the show, and the team at Wildfire Creative Co for editing.

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