This is Be Known, and I’m Kerrah Fabacher, your host. You’re listening to episode 9. 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.

I came to New Orleans ten years ago with a bit of a chip on my shoulder. All my friends pretty much still lived in Baton Rouge or had moved somewhere else. And I did not need any more friends. I liked the ones I had.

I had spent four years with these people. Endless moments of laughter and tears, full of “I’m sorrys” and dreaming together. Hard, vulnerable conversations and road trips and driving around town. Making fun of the Bachelor in tiny on-campus apartments, nursing each others’ heartaches, and serving together. Getting hoarse at LSU football games and only calling each other by nicknames. Doing impulsive, dangerous things together, and crashing on each other’s couches. Time with each other felt safe, like it could last forever and it’d never grow old.

Every time I think about those years with those friends, my heart feels full.

So I left to come to New Orleans for graduate school with a chip on my shoulder. I loved my friends, and I did not want to spend the energy or time trying to make a bunch of new ones.

But that left me lonely and depressed, crying myself to sleep at night, longing to be near my friends again.

And interestingly, the lonelier I felt, the bigger the wall I put up.

Over the course of my time here, it took a lot of time, but I made some dear friends. I let my guard down and took the chip off my shoulder and decided friendship was worth it. Making friends after college is over is quite the feat. You aren’t living within I’ve minutes of all your people, and people start getting married and having babies and working big girl jobs. And friendship feels much harder to come by.

But the loneliness of not having friends in close proximity was killing me.

Many of those friends I have made in New Orleans have moved away from here, and I have stayed.

And that has felt lonely, too.

Because then it feels like you have to start all over again.

And good grief, that is exhausting.

And it just puts the wall back up every time.

I began to wonder if people really even wanted to be my friend. If I was worth their time.

If they just did not enjoy spending time time with me.

And then I wondered how I wanted them to treat me.

Recently I read a chapter out of Rebekah Lyon’s new book, *Rhythms of Renewal* called “Be The Friend You Wish To Have.”

And since we love talking about healthy relationships here in this space, I wanted to share a bit of her chapter with you.

Be the friend you wish to have. It’s that simple. With a hue of “golden rule” about it, this adage reminds me that if I could love my neighbor and friends as much as much as I love myself, my friendships would be remarkable. I knew that remarkable friends alleviate the stress of superficial friendships and the anxiety that so often comes with loneliness, but to make these kinds of friends, I’d need to be a consistent friend myself. If I wanted a trusted circle, If need to be trustworthy myself. If I wanted an authentic friend, I’d need to be authentic myself. (163)

I stopped and underlined, and reread. I have thought about this a little before, but in this moment, it hit me in a new way.

Be the friend I wish I had.

If I am to love my neighbor as I would love myself\*, then that means if I want to have good friends, then I need to treat them like I want them to treat me.

If I want them to initiate with me, I need to initiate with them.

If I want to them to remember my birthday, I need to remember theirs.

If I want them to ask me hard questions, I should be vulnerable and ask them hard questions, too.

If I want them to forgive me, I need to forgive them.

If I want them to listen to me, I need to listen to them.

If I want them to check on me, I need to check on them.

It’s a simple formula. But so hard for me to implement.

I tell people all the time that they should model behavior they wish to see from another person, so why couldn’t this apply to friendship.

People can’t read your mind. They don’t magically know what we need and when we need it.

They don’t always know how we best feel loved and seen and known.

We have to model it. We have to show the love we wish to have.

My friend Rachel is so great at this. She is one of the most intentional people I know, makes me feel loved more than most. I feel safe with her, like I know her friendship will stand the test of time.

She reminds me of how I should be treating others, too.

So what is it for you? How can you do something every day to be the friend you wish you had?

Send a text to encourage someone.

Buy a birthday gift and plan a party.

Go to her celebration.

Ask how you can pray for her.

Follow up with something they told you before.

Say yes when asked to hang out.

Bring her coffee.

Take a trip.

Be honest and vulnerable.

Start the conversation.

Listen.

Don’t jump in with advice.

Reach in for the hug.

Friendship is one of the most valuable investments you will ever make. It is worth the effort. I know it is hard, and I know it is exhausting. But it beats loneliness every time.

The risk is great, but the reward is greater.

C.S. Lewis once said “Friendship is born at the moment when one man says to another, ‘What! You too? I thought I was the only one’.”

Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that this practice of being the friend you wish you had 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 do not get the Monday Minute, our weekly email with practical next steps that I teach my counseling and coaching clients, you can sign up at the link in my Instagram bio or under “monday minute” on my website. And P.S. Have your taken our quiz that will show you your personality style in relationships? You can find it at the link in my instagram bio or in the pop-up 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!

\*Matthew 22:37 (Love your neighbor as yourself)