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Healing with Horses

by Avis A. Burnett, PhD

What is it with horses?

I ask inquisitively as someone who both fears and adores them. "Fears" because, until recently, I had spent so little time around them they seemed somewhat unpredictable and dangerous. That fear was compounded while in Hawaii, on the "trail ride of a lifetime", a horse named "Shadow" decided to jettison me from his back. Yet the fears seem so much less interesting than the addiction... I mean "adoration".

I'm very grateful that four years ago my prayer to find a place where I could be around horses was answered. The answer was Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc., a sanctuary for people and rescued horses in Pattersonville, New York. From the moment I drove onto the property, I was transformed by the beauty and peacefulness of this aptly named farm. And, in addition to the views and serenity, there were horses! They came in all makes and models, all looking cared for, happy, confident and inquisitive. Just when I thought it couldn't get any better, it did. I met the founder of Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc., Nanci Beyerl, and discovered she embraced a deep spirituality and openness to energy work for herself and her horses.

For almost twenty years, I've devoted my personal and professional life to spiritual counseling and teaching. Working with energy is what I eat, breathe and speak! At last, I sighed, I had an opportunity to be around horses safely and explore how they relate to energy.

I immediately signed up for Nanci's non-riding equine-guided experiential learning classes. These sessions offer opportunities to connect with horses in what I would call a spiritual way. Whether we humans bring burdens, questions, or simply a desire to connect and play, horses often respond in ingenious ways which result in healing shifts and unexpected insights. So I decided: hanging out with horses is healing!

When invited to offer healing to horses in distress, I discovered that they respond very well to energy work. Not only that, I too was uplifted and somehow transformed by our work together. So I learned: exchanging healing energy with horses is healing!

Then, I decided to experiment by offering healing sessions for humans in the presence of horses. The results were profound and truly amazing. Physical and emotional changes seemed greatly enhanced when overseen by an equine assistant. I'm convinced: energy work in the presence of horses is especially healing!

Last fall, Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc. offered a weekend retreat for women with breast cancer. As a facilitator, I offered workshops on

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Quantum-Level Healing (my latest passion in energy work). One of these classes was held in an enclosed arena with two freely-roaming horses. As usual, I started the session by explaining some of the science behind quantum healing and then proceeded to demonstrate several cellular-level healing techniques. The horses ignored us while I lectured, but as soon as we began actually shifting energy they engaged and mirrored back to us many of the concepts we were working with. Several times, the horses gently approached women who were sharing something deeply personal and offered a knowing and loving nose.



The most dramatic display happened when we, as a group, released some stuck energy. As I was waving my arms to encourage the freeing of Chi, a horse outside the arena exploded into a marvelous demonstration of unleashed chi/life-force/joy by racing around her pasture, jumping and kicking up her heels.

Most memorable, though, was when a participant shared her feelings of peace, joy, and inspiration from our session by saying, "I am in such a good space, I could just roll in it!" As if on cue, the two horses within the arena dropped and rolled in front of us!

So, what is it with horses?

All I know is that simply being around them brings a sense of peace and joy. Healing work in the presence of equines is amazingly potent and heart-opening for all involved.

My current research leads me to believe that to profoundly help ourselves and the planet, we must get out of our left brains. We must enter (through the right brain) the world of possibility, oneness, respect for all beings, feelings, intuition... in short, the land

Avis A. Burnett, PhD

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beyond the Known. There are many names and concepts for this, such as the non-conscious, the zero-point field, the place of all-potentiality. Whatever we call it, humans can learn how to access the place/space where we can effect powerful, positive change in our lives and in the world.

What does this have to do with horses? I believe they are potent and willing vehicles to this place, this way of being. It's not the only way to get there, obviously. However, if you are at all drawn to horses, it can be one of the most pleasurable.

Avis A. Burnett, PhD, holds a doctorate in Transpersonal Psychology and brings over 19 years of experience to her work. Her passion is Transformational Counseling, using principles of quantum mechanics to bring cellular-level healing to physical, emotional, mental and spiritual issues. Avis has studied numerous counseling and healing techniques over the years and draws from all of them in her work. Most recently, she has been inspired by Matrix Energetics and incorporates the methods and theories of its founder, Richard Bartlett, in her Quantum Transformation sessions. She may be reached at her Clifton park office (518-371-0579) and you may visit her website at: www.AvisABurnettPhD.com. She will be offering Healing With Horses workshops throughout the spring, summer and fall at Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc.

Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc. is a sanctuary for humans and horses in Pattersonville, NY. Along with Equine-guided Experiential Learning work with individuals, families, businesses and groups, Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc. also offers wellness-oriented retreats. You may reach Peaceful Acres Horses, Inc. at 518-887-3178 or visit their website at: www.peacefulacreshorses.com.