

Sabre Equine Learning Center is located just north of Whitewood

Horses helping humans: Equine Assisted Learning

By Kristine MacDougall

Over the years humans have learned much from their interaction with horses.

One way we can benefit from such a connection is through Equine Assisted Learning (EAL). That is, learning essential life skills using 'horse sense'.

"The greatest part about horses is that they are like large mirrors and they teach us a lot about ourselves in the way we read individuals and the way we react to individuals," said Leanne Perrin-Bear, Program Co-ordinator at Sabre Equine Learning Center, just north of Whitewood, SK where equine assisted learning is taught.

The program began at Sabre Equine Learning Center in March and helps build personal development and communication skills by providing teams, groups and individuals with experiential learning opportunities.

Horses were chosen for this program because they are extremely sensitive, are aware of their surroundings and are quick to react.

Perrin-Bear says we can incorporate and learn from their astute senses and instincts when interacting with other people.

By combining the horse/human connection with unique exercises and elements in the arena, people are able to improve their communi-

cation, non-verbal and oral thinking skills as well as how they work with others.

"It's all about self awareness. We don't always see the impact and we ignore a lot of the non-verbal communication," said Perrin-Bear speaking of ways that horses communicate with us.

"That self-awareness really comes from the non-direct and experiential methods because you get to experience it, you're not having someone talk to you about it."

Perrin-Bear noted that EAL is similar to some therapeutic programs offered today but does differ in its approach to learning.

"This is a much less intrusive and much less direct method because it's just working on those core skills. It's not technically a therapy, but therapeutic results are definitely seen." She added, "the effectiveness (of this program) is far greater than traditional talk therapies because of the ability to experience, the ability to use all the senses to learn."

Equine assisted learning also shows us the impact we have in our everyday personal and working relationships.

"It will challenge the way that you perceive yourself, how you influence others and how you affect others around you," said Perrin-Bear.

This type of learning

can also benefit organizations and businesses as well as individuals.

"Because this doesn't take place in a classroom, there's the ability for a business to come in and work on group effectiveness or leadership skills and they have the added benefit of being in the arena with the horses," explained Perrin-Bear.

"So that they're actually able to simulate when they're challenged with an obstacle. How their team reacts to that, what critical thinking, planning and organizing they do and how effective are their methods," she said are some of the questions corporations may ask when participating in this type of program.

"Because it deals with essential skills, they found it really overlapped with the communication, the group effectiveness and team building that's really going on in the workplace," Perrin-Bear said mentioning that working through conflict and problem solving is as important as improving communication in the workplace.

With Equine assisted learning the challenges

are presented before you at that moment in the arena, and thus, applying what you learn is an essential part of the process.

No matter the situation among individuals, or teams in the business world, Perrin-Bear says that Equine assisted learning really does aid us with developing and improving how we interact and relate to people everyday.

"It's about re-connecting people to healthy relationships with each other."



EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING - The program began in March and helps build personal development and communication skills by providing teams, groups, and individuals with experiential learning opportunities.

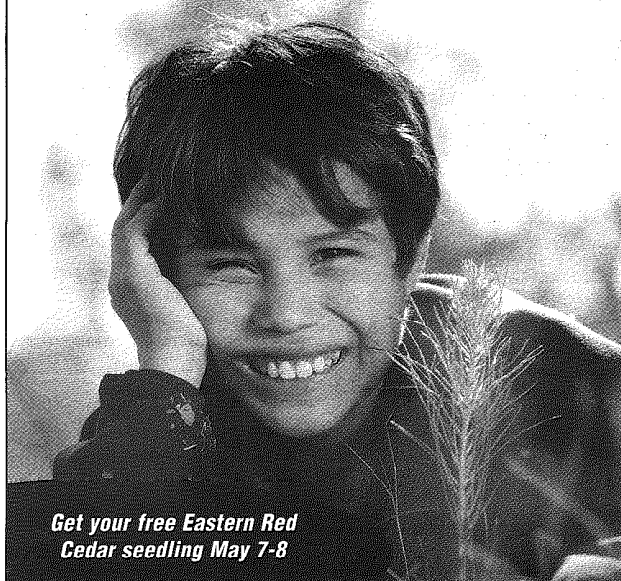
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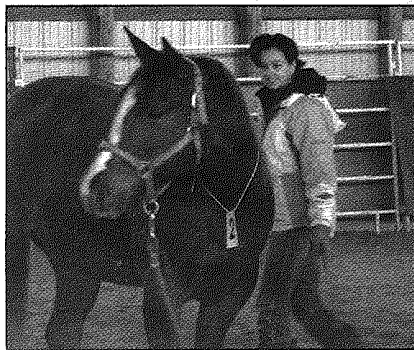
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ESSENTIAL SKILLS - Equine assisted learning also shows us the impact we have in our everyday personal and working relationships.

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Cows:

D1 - D2: 47 - 54
D3 - D4: 40 - 47
Shelly: 28 - 40
Feeder Cows:
Butcher Bulls: 47 - 56
Feeder Steers:
300-400:
400-500: 92 - 107
500-600: 90 - 109.75
600-700: 88 - 106.75
700-800: 86 - 100.75
800-900: 80 - 89.50
900-1,000: 79 - 85

Heifers:

300-400:
400-500: 86 - 98
500-600: 84 - 94.50
600-700: 81 - 91.50
700-800: 76 - 89.25
800-900: 74 - 86.50
900-1,000:

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