



With the start of a brand new year, I want to share the joy, the remarkable experiences and deep personal learning's we have received from that most magical of creatures – the Horse.

The horse has always been a part of my life. The horse originally represented physical freedom for me. There is nothing like galloping on a horse with the wind blowing in your hair as you fly together as one being. Then I discovered the Epona Approach™ developed by Linda Kohanov and Kathleen Ingram Graham. Now I have found inner freedom through the wisdom of the horse. The connections with horses are on so many different levels – they encompass heart, body and soul. While I continue to enjoy riding a horse, the joy I am feeling is through our many connections on the ground. Introduced to the spirit of the horse, my heart is opening wide and I am living my dream.

Horses as Healers? What magic is this? Horse Whisperer? You mean I can have a horse follow me freely of his own free will? This is possible at Horse Spirit Connections! True power is wisdom found in remembering your total journey. The horse represents wisdom in power and is the embodiment of emotional balance. The Horse has given us the gift of being a Spiritual Mirror so that we can ride into the Darkness and find the shining of our Authentic Self.

My heart is bursting as I see the transformations of the people that have taken a leap forward to heal some aspect of their lives. We have had five workshops at the farm, as well numerous private sessions. All have walked away in wonder at the gifts the horses freely bestow upon us.

In this issue of HORSE TALES, Monty, our wise Grandfather is featured along with other fascinating stories. Enjoy. Please email any feedback or thoughts you would like to share to wendy@horsespiritconnections.com.

Give yourself a gift by joining us at Horse Spirit Connections in 2007. Here are the highlights of the workshops being offered. For details, please visit www.HorseSpiritConnections.com/workshops.

May your heart be open to new beginnings in the New Year!

Wendy Golding, Editor

The horses hold a sacred place for us and empower us with their presence to be who we are, where we are in the moment. They allow us to remember the self buried inside under layers of rules and expectations of who we think we should be. With every breath, they allow their energy to flow and when we flow in harmony with them, we rediscover what our own heart needs to say.

Written by Beth Golden Feather Heart during a creative writing session at Horse Spirit Connections.

MONTY: OUR WISE GRANDFATHER

Monty is our 33-year-old black thoroughbred who still thinks he is a young stallion. Originally from the racetrack, he was trained as a polo pony in Montreal. To me, Monty signifies Black Horse Wisdom and he has very patiently led me to the healing work with horses.

Monty was the first horse I purchased in 1992 for my son David who was learning how to play polo at the time. Monty is a very intelligent horse who exemplifies energy in motion! He is not known for standing still or even walking. Monty's life was galloping down a racecourse or charging around a polo field. He did not understand a walk in the woods – he saw open space and wanted to fly. As David quickly decided that Monty was not the teacher for him, I decided to learn polo with Monty. The key word here was 'I' – that 'I' had decided. Monty and I did not become a team until 'I' learned to respect him and he reciprocated. This took a couple of years. Monty loved the sport of polo and was an expert - 'bumping' other horses out of the way. To his regret Monty was retired a year ago. He created a new role for himself – the stallion of his herd of 8 mares! It was a delight to see him rearing up impressing all of his mares.

Early this fall we welcomed Contendor - a Paso Fino gelding to the farm. Unfortunately, Monty did not appreciate having to share his mares. Having received a gash on his front leg during an altercation. We pulled Monty and Angelina (our pregnant mare) from the herd so he could rest. One morning, Monty lying down on his sore leg, tried to get up, got half way – and fell back down, fracturing his elbow. Our vet was insistent that it was time to let Monty pass on. He suggested the average age of a

horse is 25 and Monty had lived a good life. After much soul searching, communicating with Monty and the Horse Ancestors, I decided that Monty was not ready to leave and we would do energy healing work. The vet phoned every week to see if it was time to let him go. I finally convinced him that we would wait until the bad weather came to see if he could handle the bad footing. It was a race against the weather. I am delighted to report that Monty was galloping around the snowy fields this morning as he was rejoined with Lady and Dusty his harem now three. He is in his glory again!

Monty has shown me how to live life in the moment to the fullest! He is a vibrant Grandfather full of wisdom for those who listen to his sage advice.



FIRST SESSION WITH MONTY, Fall 2006

Wendy and I sat in the large green paddock observing the horses grazing the remaining October grass. I was recording my first impressions and intuitions about the nature of each creature in my journal. I was elated.

I was destined for neurosurgery later in the month and needed to have experiences that fed my heart and gave me hope. If there was a moment in surgery where my spirit had to make a decision about staying or going, I wanted such earthly joys to be a reminder of what I loved and was worth living for.

I saw Monty, the black retired polo pony, and wanted to get closer to him – he obliged by approaching me. He seemed the least like me in character. I intuitively chose him to work with me in the round pen.

We moved to a sunny knoll behind the house where a round red metal pen had been installed. Monty was brought in and was quite alarmed at being separated from the herd. The session had begun – I wondered to what degree my own life reflected a separation from my own ‘herd’ as I entered the pen with a crop at my side. I knew that my healing journey would offer up many lessons. My intent: to trust and be self-accepting. I needed to accept what I did not want to see in myself.

I held out my hand and Monty came forward. I was excited that he was following me and I increased my speed while trotting backwards until I stumbled butt-first onto the ground. Would he trample me? Not a polo pony, I thought with relief as his hooves passed beside my body. How was I stumbling in my own life? Who was following me?

Monty expressed his impatience and frustration by pawing the ground. I had been impatient and frustrated not

only with my lack of health but also because my own ‘wildness’ (my own life) being held at bay...despite my busy schedule full of activities I thought I loved, I did not believe I was living fully. I wanted to race out of the pen and across the field in glee and at the same time was afraid I would burn myself out. Monty had once been a racehorse and loved to run, we had more in common than I realized. Later, I would reflect on the push and pull of my heart and head, the unwillingness of abandoning myself freely to my desires. I was afraid of feeling and following my own heart.

Monty neighed loudly, calling to his herd. I neighed back, increasing my pitch, startled by the sound of my own voice. I needed to be among my own as well. I had lost that somewhere along my journey. I neighed and snorted until I was weeping – crying for my own heart-led dream.

This moment with Monty was a chance to trust my own experience.

Imagine – across a species, a reflection for my own growth.

Inese Gravlejs



A JOURNEY OF HEALING

This story is about Agnes: a beautiful woman who has the courage to look deep inside herself - at her own shadow. Somewhere in our lives things separate into good and evil based on our personal conditioning, social upbringing and cultural background. As such we begin the shadow-making process where the refused and unacceptable characteristics collect in the dark corners of our personality. Amazingly, some very good characteristics turn up in the shadow as well – this is the pure gold of our personality. People often resist the noble aspects of their shadow – in fact it is downright terrifying. To own one’s own shadow is to reach a place of inner balance and beauty; the place where light and dark begin to touch. This is where miracles form.

This tale is a journey of healing for Agnes and the horses that touched her. Agnes has been attracted to horses throughout her life and was called to attend a personal growth workshop at Horse Spirit Connections. Because she had such a profound experience on her first visit, she has attended every workshop to date. It has been delightful to see Agnes finding her gold – inside of herself!

This is Agnes’ story from her journal as she wrote during the workshops.

With every fiber of my being, I love horses, their beauty and power. Attending these workshops has been a gift from Spirit in answer to my pleas for help.

The year before these workshops, I descended, revisiting areas of my life I felt I had healed through many years of therapy, workshops, ceremonies and prayers. I was not a pretty sight. I had packed on more weight than ever before. I could no longer make it through a karate class (I watched) and when I had to walk I felt I was going to have a heart attack. With the help of my spiritual guide and a final good-bye ceremony from my father, I was able to avert the need to have a heart attack at the age of 60. However I knew I needed help with my emotions, stuffing them down with food just wasn't all that it was cracked up to be!

During the first workshop at Horse Spirit Connections, I hooked up for grooming, more correctly "meditative grooming" with Monty, a black gelding. When I scanned my own body (using the body scan techniques that we were taught) I felt a great deal of grief around my heart. When I scanned it again facing Monty I also saw bright red jagged lines embedded in the grief. However, when I walked into his stall with my grief, Monty wasn't buying it. He was restless and jerky and I was scared. Monty was clearly upset until I finally recalled the anger I saw within my grief. I had immediate feedback as to what I do with my anger – I stuff it! Monty relaxed as soon as I owned my anger.

I now saw my emotional history as a ball of jangled up yarn. Dusty helped me see a part of that terrain more clearly in the round pen. She supported me while I released my anger through the power of my voice.

At the next workshop I felt more open to receiving the messages from the horses. I also felt more fear - after all the horses were unto me - I couldn't hide. Aria put it very succinctly: feel, Feel, FEEL, WAKE UP AND FEEL!

When I observed Monty in his stall, twice he went behind the wall and out again looking at me pointedly. And I heard the following: "Now you see me, now you don't - don't play that!!" Indeed, here again an immediate reflection of what I do - I show my shining and then I step back. This time the message from Pappy the alpha mare was: you need to be in your naturalness and to stay there. "You can do this".

In the next workshop the message from the scan was "Time to lunge (jump into the abyss)". Dancer told me to loosen up and fly when she continued to yawn and lick 10 times. This became my heart's desire and I found myself singing and dancing in the pen - in my full power. Dancer actually tried to dance with me at one point. I knew I was tucking all this away into my body, remembering what it feels like when I am in my power, in my beauty. I felt incredible gratitude.

At the next workshop, we explored heart connections with the help of the horses. My authentic-self statement was "I deserve abundance in my life". Wendy asked us to pull an emotion card. Of course I pulled ANGER – in my writing about it I realized that I need to own this emotion in my everyday life. My next emotion was EXHILARATION – spiking for short. This helped me see how I mask anger. During the body scan with Pappy I felt a sore right shoulder – my anger. Pappy's response was short and swift, GET

OVER IT! And just like that I did! My heart's desire became "to trust myself and to have faith in others to meet my needs." With my connection with Pappy, I felt I stepped through a portal wherein I walked in my beauty and power with self-trust and faith in others. Pappy's size, her power as alpha mare, and her beauty as she walked helped me to do the same as her equal.

Next, I danced with Lady. With the music in the background, I connected deeply with my womb. It was very sensuous, two matriarchs on equal footing, equally powerful. I experienced my womb as my anchor with the help of Lady.

In conclusion, who would have thought going through this gateway, jumping into the abyss would be such a heady experience! Why is it that only in the doing am I allowed in, into the understanding of the dizzying, spinning, bubbling, sizzling inside of me when I step into who I am? Why does fear fall away, turn into dust at the sight of someone in full power? How does Lady know how to teach me that BEAUTY is standing tall, holding my ground, looking her into the eye, without backing down? And how do I know that being at one with myself is the same as being at one with the earth? How is it that this first-time-ever-experience, this "just once completely" experience makes up for, obliterates what was before for almost 60 years? My heart is full of gratitude for the grace bestowed on me. It is enough. I am enough.

Agnes Flowering Heart Sings

Ed. Note: Agnes discovered that by owning her shadow – both the light and the dark, she was able to live on the edge and step into her shining.



HORSES HAVE THE GIFT OF SEEING RIGHT THROUGH US

My client, C. stands in the arena in late November, looking small, childlike, somewhat lost. Three feet from her stands Paris, a black half-Arab mare, breath fogging in the cold. Woman and horse are still, comfortable with each other, but seemingly lost in their own worlds.

C. makes a decision to open a door to her past, and face a fear of engaging with life. This belief about herself keeps her from moving forward with confidence in her life. Neither horse nor woman change position, but the space in between

them becomes charged and the energy shifts to a feeling of deep, intense focus. Several other horses walk by the arena door, but though Paris registers their presence with the flick of an ear and is free to move wherever she likes, she stays fully present with C., and the transformation she is going through.

After a few moments, C. speaks up. Her body language is confident and relaxed as she acknowledges that this belief, which has held her back for so many years, is not really who she is. Paris licks her lips, and quietly snorts, as I suggest that C. take a walk around the arena to experience what this new awareness feels like in her body.

Paris and I have just helped C. to reclaim an aspect of her Authentic Self, that part of each of us that is the essence of who we are naturally -- who we were before we got conditioned by outside influences such as our parents, culture, or religion, to believe things about ourselves that aren't true. Horses are gifted at helping us in this way because they never pretend to be anything other than they are. They are masterful at just being, and they can teach us to be more real and present to who we really are.

One of the easiest ways to recognize the presence of our Authentic Self is a deep sense of relaxation, and a feeling that everything is right with the world. Horses read the physical changes that go along with these sensations, such as lowered blood pressure and deep breathing, and they respond by licking and chewing, sighing, or yawning -- they mirror the calm and peaceful acceptance of self that we feel when we can just be ourselves, without any pretenses.

The next day, C. emails me to say that her husband has noticed a spark in her eye that he's never seen before. She's delighted and wants to work with Paris again as soon as possible, to find a few more parts of herself that she lost along the way.

Samena Jeffery



OF HORSE AND MEN

There's an incredible trend happening around the world and it's affecting both women and men. Many of us are seeking to know "who we are" on an emotional level. And of all the "people" that we thought could help us, the horse is taking center stage.

From various countries and cultures the horse is being re-discovered as the doorway to our true self. How befitting

that the animal which helped us advance our physical and mental progress by enabling us to travel long distances, farm the land to give us food and inspire us with a sense of freedom, now comes and helps us in our hour of need to clear away old emotional habits and forge a path for our soul's evolution.

Men and women are being touched by this desire for transformation -- especially men who traditionally have buried their emotions, but are now seeking a better understanding of where they "fit" at this time in our evolution.

Recently Horse Spirit Connections held a number of two-day workshops and the men that attended gain a profound understanding of themselves and powerful personal insights:

"This experience has been a critical step in verifying and nourishing the life changes I have begun." Ken B.

"An exciting method to realize and see your needs and wishes and ability to reach and realize them." Barry B.

"Who would have thought an animal could teach a human -- especially a male human?" Jack E.

It's true, horses have an uncanny ability and willingness to help, and even more uncanny, the ability to be totally honest! There is no hesitation; horses know precisely who they are in the moment and reflect back not the veneer of a person but their core and what lies behind the mask!

"I can't tell you how much I enjoyed the workshop. I have always been a little frightened of horses and never considered them to be such emotionally sensitive spirits. I learned much from the workshop: I learned to overcome my fear of horses, I learned to be myself with these beautiful animals, I learned to change my pattern of trying to force events and how just being natural will make things happen in a good way, and I now have a deeper understanding and love for these beautiful creatures." Nick M.

As the world turns and redefines itself, and as we try to find that balance between personal needs or wants and environmental consciousness -- it is the horse that stands waiting to help -- waiting for us to ask for a reflection of who we are, where we are and where are we headed.

The fact is, I believe the horse has an ulterior motive -- it knows where we humans are headed and wants to give us a helping hand away from our self inflicted disaster and towards self discovery and self worth.

To them I am grateful, and hope that you too can experience and be touched by their wisdom.

Andre Leclipteux



HORSE
spirit
connections

WHERE HORSE INTERACTION LEADS TO HUMAN INSIGHT.