

publisher's pick



Healing with Horses Sanctuary

by Amber McKenzie

When I was 13, I jumped off the back of a pregnant horse who was running toward a barbed wire fence and I couldn't stop her. The instant I jumped off, she stopped running. Phew! But I decided after that (painful) experience, I didn't really need horses in my life. Fast forward 30 years, I meet Gloria Lybecker, owner and lead facilitator at Healing with Horses Sanctuary. Gloria shares her deep passion and expertise of equine-led growth and healing programs with me, and I start wondering what I'm missing. I explain to Gloria that I don't understand how a horse can facilitate healing. She suggests an experiential approach and an abbreviated *Constellations with Horses* workshop session, and I was immediately in. The entire experience blew my mind.

Overview

Constellations with Horses is a program that explores our shadow sides with empathy and self-compassion by integrating Gloria's Healing Herd of seven horses, HeartMath and cutting-edge neuroscience. I learned that research has proven the human heart has a larger electromagnetic field and higher intelligence than the brain and that the heart's electrical and magnetic fields extend up to 10 feet around the body. I also learned that the horse's electromagnetic heart field is five times stronger and bigger than a human's and that it can actually influence our own heart rhythms. This is why

many people feel a sense of well-being and peace while in the presence of horse, which I definitely experienced.

My Experience

A lot happened in our three-hour session facilitated by Gloria Lybecker and Flow Coordinator Ruth Crea. Both facilitators offered education, guidance and support throughout the session and I felt very prepared for everything I encountered.

My first task was to walk around the corrals and observe all seven horses and write down my observations from each horse on one side of the page, and what I felt in my body on the other. The first horse was black with a little white patch between his eyes. He approached me from behind the fence and looked directly into my eyes. I felt complete and total presence from him—like he knew me and was looking directly into my soul. I immediately started crying, which surprised me, and my heart began beating very fast. I wrote down that it felt “difficult being looked at so deeply.” This horse seemed to follow me—like a shadow. I wrote that down too. The next



Aragon, Amber and Gloria

was a cute little mini horse. He seemed to be asking for my attention—he wanted to be seen and acknowledged. It immediately reminded me of my child self who loved attention and feeling important to others. I wrote that down. The next was a big white horse. While watching him, he laid down in the dirt and started rolling around enthusiastically, then got up and shook everything off. I saw dirt, hair and debris flying off him as he shook. I laughed and wrote down, “he's releasing what's no longer necessary with complete joy and abandon. I could use some of that!” And on it went with all seven horses. Each a mirror reflecting something in me and teaching me about myself.

Aragon

The facilitators and I process this experience in depth, and it felt good. The next phase was meeting one-on-one with the horse I felt the most connection with in an area called the “sacred circle” which represents the energetic field of the client's life. Wow. I knew I was supposed to meet with the first horse whose name is Aragon, which means “equally strong, dramatic and romantic.” I can't even begin to express the power of this session. Thanks to the steady presence of Aragon and his gentle coaching, I came face-to-face with parts of myself that were deeply uncomfortable but ready to emerge. Aragon offered me a sense of safety, comfort and playfulness followed by a quick yet subtle shift in energy that became uncomfortable and provided me an opportunity to stand my ground and create the boundary that the moment required. How did he know I needed that? He taught me to trust myself and my own inner wisdom and to take action when necessary. I could go on and on about this experience, but if you are curious about the power of the horse-human connection, then I highly suggest you enroll in an upcoming workshop at Healing with Horses Sanctuary! Powerful beyond belief.

For more information about upcoming workshops and classes, visit HealingWithHorsesSanctuary.com or call Gloria Lybecker at 509-876-1802.