



The Crew Urban Youth Equestrians Student & Caregiver Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to The CREW Urban Youth Equestrians (“The CREW”)! Our program is based on building safe, healthy and trusting relationships with our students & families, volunteers and horses by living our 4 core tenets: **C**ommunity, **R**elationships, **E**mpowerment, and **W**ell-being. You and your grown-up will become familiar with The CREW’s training principles, horse safety, lesson flow and mindfulness techniques which will provide the skills and support you need to build connection with our horses. We are the only organization in Minnesota that is intentional about our students working with BIPOC * volunteers. We understand that if you see staff, volunteers and others who look like you and have similar lived experiences from the moment you arrive, you will be less likely to feel alone and more likely to feel empowered to try something new.

We support you in deepening emotional self-awareness and self-regulation in order to become open to understanding what our horses are communicating. We do this in a number of ways. First and foremost you and our horses are given choice. You are able to choose how you want to spend your lesson time at the barn. By the same token, our horses are given opportunities to say “no” to asks. Our training approach is a combination of positive (pleasure stimulant when a “correct” response is given) and negative reinforcement (pressure & release). We are always open to learning about other ideas and experiences when working with our horses. We want you to understand there are many ways to approach situations while exploring what works best for you and our horses.

Did you know horses and humans are energetic and relational beings? We pick up on subtle energy from our environment to gauge our safety and to choose the way we move in the world. You will learn mindfulness techniques to build your inner resilience and awareness of your internal landscape. The CREW is creating a community of support for you and your family. This is important because the way we show up to a lesson can be felt by our horses. The various techniques you learn will help you build awareness of your body and inner world. Research shows that mindfulness helps individual’s gain agency of their minds and body to make conscious decisions that will carry over while working with the horses and outside in other areas of students’ lives. We encourage open and honest communication among you, your grown-up and volunteers. There is an expectation that each grown-up will do their own “inner work” at their own pace and in their own way in order for us to be the best team we can.

*We use the term “BIPOC” for those who identify as Black, Indigenous and as a Person of Color. We acknowledge that BIPOC is an umbrella term, and not how many in our

communities would identify themselves. We encourage and respect each person's right to identify their nationality and gender.

Policies & Procedures

Barn Safety Rules

Horses are large prey animals. This means they get scared easily. In the interest of keeping both humans and horses safe, please follow the safety rules outlined below.

1. Every door or gate we open, we close
2. Say "Door" before going through a door
3. Before entering the indoor arena: STOP in the doorway; say "Door"; and look along the rail/wall both ways before entering.
4. Walk
5. Use our normal voices
6. Don't feed horses without permission from the owner
7. Wear closed toe shoes, i.e. boots or tennis shoes
8. All students & visitors under age 18 are required to wear a helmet around the horses.
9. Please use your voice to let us know how you are feeling
10. Be calm & quiet when around the horses
11. Some pastures have electric fencing. Always confirm with a volunteer if a fence is electric before touching.
12. There is no smoking anywhere on the property
 - a. Hay and other items around the barn are highly flammable
13. Please park in designated areas
14. Grown-ups waiting for kiddos may sit in the lounge, the porch or in their car.
 - a. You may walk around the barn area of designated trails while observing the Safety Rules above.
 - b. If a grown-up has younger kiddos waiting with them, please hold their hands at all times, carry them or ensure they are in their stroller. Little ones are quick and horses are easily spooked.

Payment & Cancellations (for grown-ups)

Payments

1. Our purpose is to open the door to horses to BIPOC youth. We will not deny a child the opportunity to join The CREW due to financial barriers. Therefore, we

are committed to working with each family regarding fees. We request families pay the agreed upon session fees prior to the sessions.

2. Agreed upon lesson fees will be paid online through a link provided by the Board Treasurer.

Cancellations

1. **We require a 24-hour cancellation notice.** We are thoughtful in structuring each lesson to be a positive and learning experience for our students. In addition, we are an all-volunteer organization. Canceling less than 24-hours before a scheduled lesson is disruptive to our lesson planning and schedules.
 - a. If a lesson is canceled less than 24-hours in advance, the lesson will be charged.
 - b. If a lesson is canceled less than 24-hours 3 times in a 6-month period, the student will be placed on the waiting list.
 - c. If a student is a no call/no show 2 times in a 6-month period, the student will be placed on the waiting list.
 - d. If lessons are canceled prior to the 24-hours notice period 6 times in a 6-month period, the student will be placed on the waiting list.

Clothing/Shoes

1. Students should come in weather appropriate clothing. If a student has advanced to riding they should wear jeans or long pants. The CREW has some winter hats, gloves, boots and coats if you need support with these items.
2. Students are required to wear closed toe shoes, i.e. boots or tennis shoes.
3. All students under age 18 are required to wear a helmet whenever working with the horses.

Hairstyles

The CREW has a wide variety of helmet sizes and styles. We acknowledge that because the equine industry is predominantly white that form and function of helmets are manufactured to fit the so-called “standard” of white hair texture and styles. Our volunteer staff, many of whom are BIPOC equestrians, are open and willing to talk through with you style options that work well with wearing a helmet. A well fitting helmet is vital to keeping your student safe and reducing the risk of a concussion.

Our lead volunteers attended a helmet fitting clinic to learn the proper fit of a helmet for riding, and the lead volunteer in each session has passed the CDC HEADS UP Concussion Training. We strongly encourage you to take the free online course. (See CDC Concussion Handout)

How We Will Work Together

Working with our students

Your emotional and physical well-being is at the heart of everything we do. We provide a safe space where you will learn horse husbandry, anatomy and natural horsemanship skills starting on the ground and progressing through to ridden work. You are encouraged to trust yourself and your choices as you develop the emotional and technical skills needed to become successful with the horses and in life. We do this through building a relationship with you.

- **Provide Choice** - The CREW is a student-led program where you are given choice in how you want to spend your time while at the barn. Some students choose to stay in the pasture and observe or connect with the horses for long periods of time. Others are excited to move into the “doing” aspects of the program. At the same time, we will provide a framework and options as to what is available to you. We encourage you to use your voice. This is a safe space to say what you would like to do, set boundaries and acknowledge whatever you may be feeling.
- **Validating emotions & feelings** - We are all about validating whatever emotions & feelings come up during a lesson. We do this by taking note of where in our bodies we have our feelings, and then taking a breath to open ourselves to be okay with them.
- **Creating space for students to figure out solutions/develop individual relationships with the horses** - Our responsibility to you is to provide you the space to fail and try again. It is through our failures we learn and we gain confidence in ourselves that we are smart and resourceful. A phrase we often say is, “It takes the time it takes.” What this means is we won’t rush. Whether it is learning how to open the gates or saddle training one of our horses, we will take the time it takes for you (or horse) to master skills. This doesn’t mean we won’t help. It is valuable and brave to ask for help too.

Working with our horses

Horses are sentient beings. Although there is debate on whether they “feel emotions” there is no denying horses experience relaxation, nervousness, fear, calmness, release of tension in their bodies, etc. How we interact with them impacts these experiences.

- **Positive and Negative Reinforcement** - The definition of Positive Reinforcement (R+) is adding something “good” when a requested behavior is enacted. Negative Reinforcement (R-) is taking something “uncomfortable” away when a requested behavior is enacted. With horse training, this is often called “Pressure & Release”.
- **Pressure & Release Training** - This theory of training is based on an assumption horses learn from the release of pressure. This means that we apply a type of pressure to request a specific behavior and when the horse responds, even with a little try, to what we are asking we release/remove/take away the pressure.
 - When utilizing this training method we always start with the softest cue/pressure and escalate as needed, and we work to not go over a horse’s threshold*. There is A LOT of nuance in this, and this is where C-FIT, understanding the horse’s perspective and what the horse is communicating is vital.
 - **No expectations** - We are all the accumulation of our experiences. All of us, including our horses, are different every day. What this looks like during a lesson is we can have an idea of what we would like to accomplish with a particular horse, but we have a responsibility to meet the horse we have in front of us which may mean we have to change course. This is totally okay! Learning to go into situations with no expectations opens us up to fully experience life as it is not how we would like it to be. It provides us opportunities to feel and validate how we may feel when something doesn’t go as planned, strengthening our emotional resilience.
 - How this most often presents in a lesson is when a horse, usually Samir, is unwilling to be haltered. When this happens, it is a beautiful time to talk about the difference between having a mindset that we must put the halter on versus a mindset where we create a space for the horse to feel safe and the result may be a willingness to accept the halter.

***Threshold** - Every sentient being has a threshold where their fight, flight or freeze response kicks in. We work very hard to not go over this threshold when training our horses.

What You Will Learn

Understanding Horses as Prey Animals

Horses are prey animals. This means in the wild they are food for predators (wolves, mountain lions, bears, etc.). A horse's #1 priority is to remain safe and survive. Like many prey animals they live in herds because there is safety in numbers. They have evolved to sense energies among the herd and environment as well as become connected with one another on an unconscious level. Do you ever notice when horses are walking or running together they are almost always matching each others' steps? Horses, birds, fish, etc. are able to move as one when threatened. This is possible through their connected energy.

When we humans separate them from their equine herd, we are taking on the responsibility of being their herd and guaranteeing their safety. We are responsible for building that connection and relationship with them in order to communicate in the most subtle ways to cultivate a sense of safety for them. In order for us to fulfill our responsibility, we must do our own inner work to acknowledge our emotions without judgment, and process those emotions so we can be present with the horse. When we do our inner work we are also better able to develop empathy and compassion for our students and to respond to them in the moment. You are not alone in this. As part of The CREW, you are in a space where we value the place each of us are in life, and support each other in our journeys of self-discovery.

C-FIT (Context, Feel, Intention & Timing)

Working with horses can be boiled down to these 4 concepts:

- **Context** - Horse behaviors and our perceptions of them depend on the context in which they happen. How a horse responds to a cue or how we perceive their responses depend on the context surrounding the ask & response.
- **Feel** - As we are learning how to communicate with our horses, we develop the skill of feel. Being able to have soft hands when giving a cue is one example. Feeling the energy of the horse, ourselves and the environment is another example. It is something intangible, yet very important in developing conversations with our horses.
- **Intention** - How we initiate a cue or correction is all about our intention and emotional awareness. Are we frustrated the horse isn't understanding our cue/ask? What was our intention when we made the correction?

Acknowledging our intention and emotional state are two ways we build trust with our horses.

- **Timing** - How quickly we respond to the horse giving us the behavior we asked for is all in our timing. For negative reinforcement (pressure & release), releasing the pressure at the slightest try or forward movement lets our horse know we are attuned to them. The same goes for providing positive reinforcement. When our horse realizes he is seen, heard and validated their trust in us deepens.

Feeding Horses

- All our feed and supplements are kept in The CREW's trailer. Recipes for each horse are written on the dry erase board.

Pasture Safety

- Pastures are reinforced with electric fences. Please do not touch wire fencing.
- Horses are able to sense our energy/heart rate from several feet away. Grounding ourselves before entering the pasture, becoming present to the current moment, and letting go of whatever happened before arriving at the barn is important to starting our interactions. You will learn what it is to use our breath as a tool for emotional regulation.
 - There are several options we can use. Choice in this exercise is vital especially because it can seem awkward or uncomfortable for those who haven't practiced before.
 - Breath work:
 - Smell the flower, blow out the candle
 - 5 breaths with our fingers - In breath up our finger, out breath down our finger
 - Close our eyes taking 3 breaths and grounding our feet to the earth
 - Observation Exercise:
 - Take note of 5 things in our environment that align with 4-5 senses (taste can be difficult)
- Observe Horse Herd behavior before entering pasture
 - Just like humans, horses have their "moods" dependent on many factors. We want to take a few moments to observe and acknowledge how the horses are, what vibe we may be feeling from them, etc. The purpose of doing this is both to begin to understand herd dynamics and for safety.

- Volunteers maintain a safety zone around the horses we are haltering to bring in from the rest of the herd.
 - When we enter the pasture, we will remind you we are entering as a herd. The volunteers are the “sentinels”, and responsible to ensure our space as well as inviting our horses into our herd. Volunteers will have flags, and are provided direction on how to use them.

Horse Safety & Body Language

- When walking around a horse, be aware of your body space and theirs. When walking behind the horse there are 2 options:
 - Walking directly behind touching their croup and staying close. Staying close prevents them from getting a “wind-up” for a big kick.
 - Walk a large circle outside of the kicking zone.
- Horse Body Language and what it tells you:
 - Eyes - The eyes tell a lot about what the horse is feeling in their nervous system.
 - Is there tension around their eyes?
 - Can you see the sclera (white part) of their eye?
 - What is happening in the environment? Are there stressors?
 - What energy are you feeling?
 - Ears also tell a lot about what the horse is feeling in their nervous system, and where their focus is:
 - Ears back - “Fight Mode”
 - Could be resource guarding, fear, etc.
 - Could be playing with another horse
 - What energy are you feeling?
 - Ears moving to sound
 - Alert and focusing on environment
 - The direction of their ears tells you where their brain is focusing.
 - If focus is away from you, try options to bring focus back to you.
 - Tail swishing - Irritated or could be flies in the summer
 - Take a moment to note the energy of how the horse is swishing his tail. What is the **context** of the behavior?
 - Stomping foot - Irritated or could be flies in the summer
 - Take a moment to note the energy of how the horse is stomping his foot. What is the **context** of the behavior?
 - Yawning - Can be either tension release or stress response.

- Take a moment to note the environment, are we doing something new or doing something relaxing with the horse? What is the **context** of the behavior?
 - Dropping head - Can be either tension release or stress response
 - Take a moment to note the environment, are we doing something new or doing something relaxing with the horse? What is the **context** of the behavior?
 - Sighing - This is almost always tension release
 - Licking & Chewing - Can be tension release, processing a learning concept
 - Take a moment to note the environment, are we doing something new or doing something relaxing with the horse? What is the **context** of the behavior?
 - Shaking body out - Usually a tension release
 - Nodding head - Usually irritation

Leading the Horses

- We train our horses to walk behind us when leading them. The reason for this is safety. If a horse would spook, having them walk behind us gives them 3 safe options to move their bodies in ways that are less likely to injure the person leading.

Advancing to Ridden Work

The CREW has developed a ladder curriculum where our students begin learning fundamental horsemanship skills on the ground. The curriculum is centered around our **CREW (Community, Relationships, Empowerment & Well-being)** tenets and **C-FIT** concepts. Developing proficiency in these areas while on the ground builds students' mind & muscle memory to enable them to utilize the tools learned in a confident, responsive manner. Each student's path is different and will happen in their own timeline.

The fundamental skills we are looking for students to master before advancing to ridden work are the following:

- Consistent practice and comfort at acknowledging their emotional state & ability to take the break needed to come back to their center.
 - Horses are sentient beings and prey animals. At times they do the unexpected. If students have internalized emotional acknowledgement,

have the ability to breathe into the emotion, and relax into it then they are able to respond more quickly and the risk of escalation is reduced.

- Ability to recognize the horse's emotional state, acknowledge where the horse's threshold is, and how to support the horse to come back to center.
 - The majority of the time horses initially communicate their emotional states in subtle ways, and escalate their behaviors if they are unable to find safety or relief. If students are able to recognize what the horse is communicating as soon as possible, and provide tools to support the horse in finding their center then the risk of escalation is reduced.
- Consistent practice of using soft cues and releasing at the try.
 - We work with our horses from the perspective they want to do what we are asking, but may have difficulty understanding the ask. If we ask with soft cues and reward our horses when they provide the slightest try to respond then we develop more responsive horses.
- Ability to halter and lead the horses independently (we understand haltering T'Challa is the exception given his height).

Healing, Self-Care & Mindfulness

(Feel Free to Use at Home!)

- **Importance of Caregiver Self Care** - The way we show up for our kiddos and ourselves matters, that is why we encourage all of us to be committed to our own self care. We are only able to support our kiddos to the extent that we ourselves have healed. When we clear our own traumas and have skills to regulate our own emotion; we are then able to show up more presently for our kiddos to form deeper connections. **The Student/Caregiver Handbook** provides some resources and references to mindfulness based practices. We encourage you to follow what your body needs. Our bodies are wise and ever growing. Held traumas can resurface throughout our life looking for the next layer of healing. We therefore encourage you to reach out to a trained professional for deeper support if feelings arise for you that are not resolving. **See Appendix C for Inner Work Resources.**
- **Human Energy Field** - Our energy field is affected by events, people and environments in our lives and is meant to fluctuate from being open or contracted based on what we encounter in our environment. The flexibility of our energy system to move between these two states is what is meant by being resilient and balanced. An open energy field means open energy flow and leads to optimal health. A congested energy field means energy flow is compromised and

over time this leads to symptoms in our mind, body and spirit. Trauma that is not cleared produces congested energy and can lead to the body looping in thought and action. **See Appendix G for details on the listed practices below to clear your energy field.**

- Open Heart Meditation
 - The Bridger
 - Shaking
 - First Gate
- **Trauma in the Body** - Trauma occurs when the trauma response cycle of the body becomes immobilized and the body is unable to move through the full physiological process of an event due to fear. Trauma varies from person to person as it involves incidents that are perceived threats to one's safety by the individual. The incidents can be one time occurrences or persistent and pervasive trauma that occurs over a long period of time. When energy from a traumatic experience is not fully discharged from the body it gets held in the body and overtime symptoms develop. Animals move through trauma quicker than humans. This is because the human's rational brain (neocortex) is highly evolved and complex and can block the lower reptilian brain from the instinctual responses that naturally discharge traumatic events.

Recent scientific research in the study of epigenetics has shown that trauma can be passed down from our ancestors through the modification of gene expression and direct alteration of DNA regulation. We also know there are things we can do to release intergenerational and present day trauma. Horses can help the body heal through shifting the body's energy and frequency to a state of balance and homeostasis. Building awareness of our body, emotional vocabulary and mindfulness tools assists the body in returning to a state of balance and peace. At the CREW we look to build a community of trust by providing a healing space that is safe, protective and supportive so our students, families and volunteers are empowered to regain connection to their own inner wisdom. **See Appendix H for an Emotion & Feelings List to expand your emotional vocabulary.**

- **Wellness & Mindfulness Techniques** - Practicing mindfulness techniques out of the moment is the best way to lay the foundation for successful use of the techniques in the moment. The following are mindfulness techniques for calming a stressed system, building body awareness, and strengthening attention. You are encouraged to pause and take a break to regulate yourself during sessions. Modeling this is an excellent way to encourage your kiddos to do the same. **See**

Appendix I for the details on how to do the following Mindfulness Exercises.

- Grounding Meditation
- Body Scan
- Breath Work
- Name It to Tame It
- Irreducible Grace Foundation Mindfulness Flashcards
- Visualization to Manifestation
- Mantra Making
- Orientation
- Butterfly Tapping
- Hum, Sing or Sigh Release

Checklist

- Review Barn Rules
- Review Concussion Information Sheet
- Review Equestrian Helmet Safety Document
- Review **Understanding Horses as Prey Animals**
- Review **C-Fit**
- Review Tack Locker & Equipment
 - Human First Aid Kit
 - Horse First Aid Kit
 - Halters & Lead Ropes
 - Saddles & Saddle pads
 - Bridles
 - Grooming Tote & equipment
 - Helmets
- Review **Feeding Horses**
- Review **Pasture Safety**
- Review **Horse Safety & Body Language**
- Review **Leading the Horses**
- Review **Working with Our Students**
- Review **Working with Our Horses**
- Review **Importance of Caregiver Self-Care**
- Review **Human Energy Fields**
- Review **Trauma in the Body**
- Review **Wellness & Mindfulness Techniques**

Appendix A

BIPOC Equestrian Community & History Resources

- Equestrians of Color Facebook Page
- Black in the Saddle Podcast
- Black in the Saddle Community Facebook Page
- Equestrians of Color & Allies MN Facebook Page
- The Compton Cowboys by Walter Thompson-Hernandez
- Black Cowboys of Rodeo: Unsung Heroes from Harlem to Hollywood and the American West by Keith Ryan Cartwright
- Black Equestrian Coloring Book by Caitlin Gooch
- Cowgirl Camryn book series by Abriana Johnson
- Crossing the Line: A Fearless Team of Brothers and the Sport that Changed Their Lives Forever by Kareem Rosser

*This is not an exhaustive list. Please provide resources you have found valuable which align with The CREW's approach.

Appendix B

Horse Training Resources

Understanding & Training Horses

- Nahshon Cook
 - [Being With Horses](#)
 - [Horses See Us As We Are](#)
 - Nahshon Cook Horsemanship Facebook page
- Warwick Schiller
 - Principles of Training on YouTube
 - Warwick Schiller Attuned Horsemanship Facebook page
 - Warwick Schiller Minnesota Facebook page
 - JourneyOn Podcast
 - www.warwickschiller.com
- Mark Rashid books (any)
 - [Finding the Missed Path](#)
 - [For The Love of The Horse](#)
 - [Considering the Horse](#)
 - [Nature in Horsemanship](#)
 - [Horses Never Lie](#)
- [Evidence Based Horsemanship](#) by Stephen Peters and Martin Black
- [Horse Speak: The Equine-Human Translation Guide](#) by Sharon Wilsie & Gretchen Vogel
- [Equine Behaviour In Mind: Applying Behavioural Science to the Way We Keep, Work and Care for Horses](#) by Suzanne Rogers
- [Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions](#) by Jaak Panksepp
- [Don't Shoot the Dog! The New Art of Teaching and Training](#) by Karen Pryor
- [The Tao of Equus: A Woman's Journey of Healing and Transformation through the Way of the Horse](#) by Linda Kohanov
- [True Unity](#) by Tom Dorrance
- [True Horsemanship Through Feel](#) by Leslie Desmond & Bill Dorrance
- [Buck](#) the movie
- [Horse Head: Brain Science & other Insights](#) by Maddy Butcher & Dr. Stephen Peters
- [Sacred space: communion with the horse through science and spirit](#) by Dr. Susan D Fay

Horse Care

- Insight to Equus: Holistic Veterinary Perspectives on Health and Healing by Tomas G. Teskey D.V.M
- Down-To-Earth Natural Horse Care: Keeping Your Horse as Best Suits His Mind, Body, and Soul by Lisa Ross-Williams

*This is not an exhaustive list. Please provide resources you have found valuable which align with The CREW's approach.

Appendix C

Inner Work Resources

Inner Work Resources

- The Body Keeps the Score by Bassel van der Kolk
- Pema Chodron audio and/or written books
- Resmaa Menakem-
 - My Grandmother's Hands- racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies
 - The Quaking of America: an embodied guide to navigating our Nation's upheaval and racial reckoning
- Waking The Tiger Healing Trauma by Peter A. Levine
- The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
- Being With Horses by Nashon Cook
- Mindful of Race by Ruth King
- Emotional Intelligence 2.0 by Travis Bradberry & Jean Greaves
- Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman
- The Four Agreements: A Practical guide to personal freedom (A Toltec Wisdom Book) by Don Miguel Ruiz

Therapy Resources

- <http://blackmentalhealthresources.net/>

*This is not an exhaustive list. Please provide resources you have found valuable which align with The CREW's approach.

Appendix D

Working With & Understanding Children Resources

- The Whole Brain Child by Daniel Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson
- Brainstorm the Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain by Daniel J. Siegel
- Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman
- Mindfulness for Teens by Jennie Marie Battistin
- Irreducible Grace Foundation (St.Paul, MN) - Mindfulness, wellness and breathing resources for kids. <https://www.irgrace.org/>

*This is not an exhaustive list. Please provide resources you have found valuable which align with The CREW's approach.

Appendix E

Equestrian Vocabulary

Tack- equipment used to handle a horse

- Mounting Block-set of stairs used to mount a horse to ride.
- Halter - A headstall placed on the head of a horse to lead it.
- Lead Rope - A rope with a clip on one end used to lead a horse.
- Bridle - A headstall with a bit & reins. Used to steer a horse.
- Bit - A metal piece of equipment placed in a horse's mouth to steer.
- Reins - Long pieces of leather attached to the bit used to steer.
- Saddle - A seat used for riding. Can be English style or Western style.

Grooming Tools:

- **Curry** - tool used for brushing a horse that is used to remove hair & dirt as well as stimulate the oils in the skin. Curry brushes have ridge bristles made of hard plastic or metal. Not to be used on sensitive parts of the horse such as their face or lower legs.
- **Hard Brush** - A hard bristle brush used to remove the hair and dirt that was loosened by the curry.
- **Soft brush**- soft bristle brush that is used to brush sensitive areas of the horse such as face and lower legs. It can be used on the whole body.
- **Sweat Scraper**- Made of metal or hard plastic and is used to get excess water off the horse.
- **Hoof Pick**- metal pick that is used to clean rocks, mud and debris from the horse's hooves.
- **Mane and Tail Comb** - Comb for brushing mane and tail
- **Bot Knife**- serrated knife used to remove bot eggs from horses coat

Horse Gaits

- **Walk** - Four-beat gait that averages about 4.3 mph
- **Trot** - A two-beat diagonal gait where the horse's legs work in paired diagonals.
- **Canter/Lope** - A three-beat gait where one pair of feet strike the ground simultaneously and the other two feet land independently. There is a right & left lead in the canter/lope.
- **Gallop** - The fastest gait. Similar to a canter/lope but has four beats. All four hooves leave the ground at the same time, when the horse's hind legs swing near the front legs.

Horse Activities

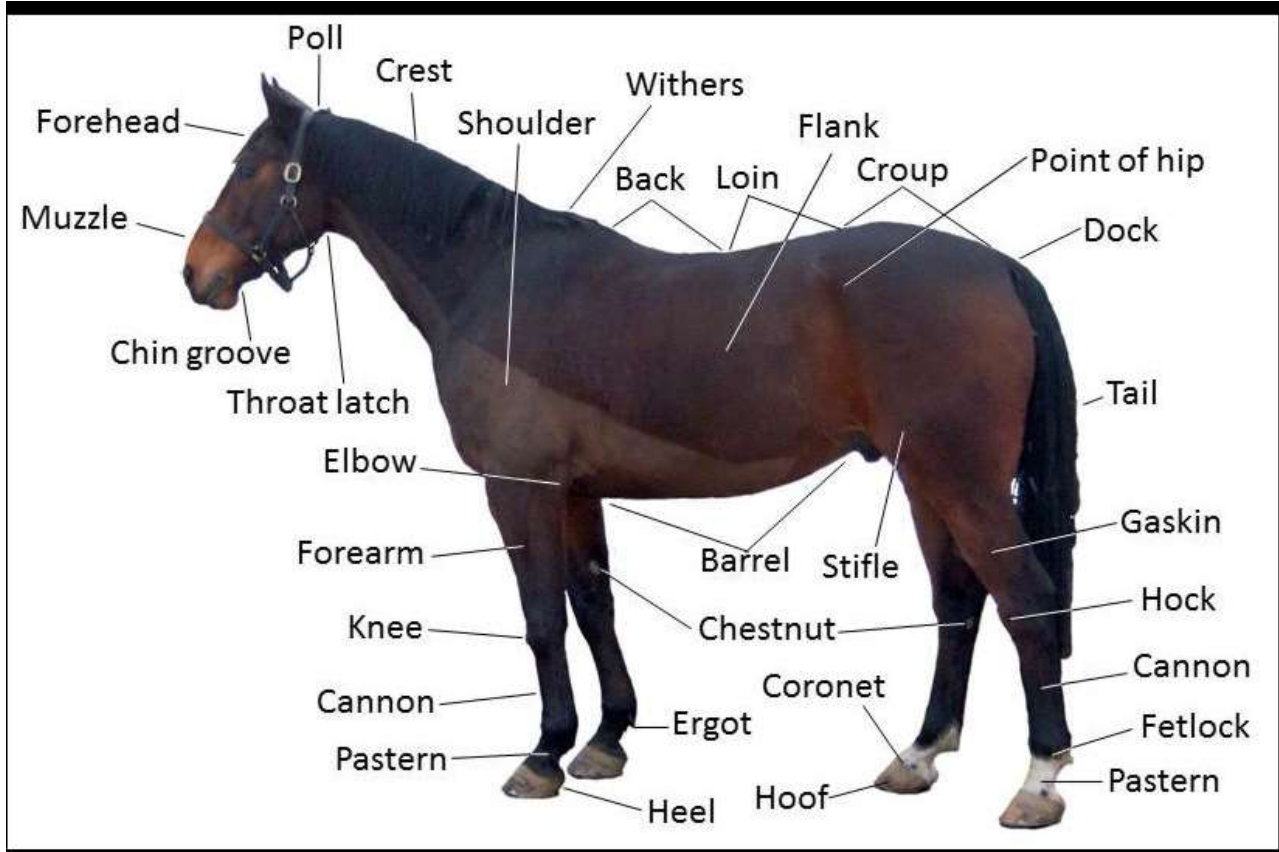
- **Groundwork** - Work done with the horse when we are on the ground.
- **Lunge** - Using a lunge line, asking the horse to walk & trot around us.
- **Riding** - Mounted on the horse

Miscellaneous Terms

- **The Rail** - Refers to the wall or fence rails that define an arena
- **Foal** - Baby horse
 - **Filly** - Female horse under 4 years old
 - **Colt** - Male horse under 4 years old
- **Yearling** - A horse who is 1 year old
 - Note: In the horse industry all horses are aged on January 1. Technically a horse born December 31 could be considered a yearling on January 1.
- **Mare** - Female horse
- **Gelding** - A male horse that has had his testicles removed
- **Stallion** - An intact male horse

Appendix F

Horse Anatomy



Appendix G

Energy Clearing Practices to Enhance Horse and Student Connection

Open Heart Meditation- Focus your attention on the breath to center yourself. Hold one hand on top of the other on the heart. Now think of something, someone, or someplace that brings you joy. This is your “joy trigger”. Let yourself smile and shift your attention to the felt sensation in the body. When the mind wanders, gently bring your focus back to your “joy trigger”, then let the trigger go, feel and just be. The more you practice this the easier it is to bring this open hearted space to moments in your life you are experiencing tension. This is also the space you want to work from when doing The Bridger.

The Bridger- This is an energy based technique, adapted from Healing Touch with Animals, used to build connection with your horse. It also helps the horse to calm if anxious and to focus if distracted. Ground yourself, take a deep breath and release any held body tension or expectations. Connect with an open heart and clear neutral mind. Set an intention for the purpose of doing the Bridger (e.g., to bring connection with you and the horse, to facilitate calm for the horse...etc). Place one hand on the horse's heart energy center (chest space between the front two legs) and the other hand on the throat energy center (space right in front of the withers). If your mind wanders, bring it back to the breath or the felt sensation of the body in an open neutral heart space. Watch the body language of the horse and any release that may be happening or indication that he is done with the energy work. Rest here for 3-10 minutes. When done, disconnect from the horse by thanking them.

Shaking- This helps to clear any congested energy in your field and to get back into the body. Start by shaking one foot. Rest the foot on the ground and slowly shake the entire leg. Next start shaking the hand on the same side of the body. Then slowly start shaking the entire arm. Switch to the other side, shaking foot, leg, hand and arm. Next shake the hips and bounce the shoulders. End with a full body shake of legs and arms. Also take the movement from a shake to a wave motion from foot to head. Now rest and feel. What do you notice?

First Gate- This exercise helps to clear your energy field of any negativity that may be clouding you and also helps strengthen your feeling sense. Being in your feeling sense is important for increasing one's body awareness to choose our behaviors and actions versus reactively responding. This technique is best demonstrated so please ask a lead volunteer to teach you this technique.

Appendix H

Feelings List

Accepting /

Open

Calm
Centered
Content
Fulfilled
Patient
Peaceful
Present
Relaxed
Serene
Trusting

Aliveness / Joy

Amazed
Awe
Bliss
Delighted
Eager
Ecstatic
Enchanted
Energized
Engaged
Enthusiastic
Excited
Free
Happy
Inspired
Invigorated
Lively
Passionate
Playful
Radiant
Refreshed
Rejuvenated
Renewed
Satisfied
Thrilled
Vibrant

Angry /

Annoyed

Agitated
Aggravated
Bitter
Contempt
Cynical
Disdain
Disgruntled
Disturbed
Edgy
Exasperated
Frustrated
Furious

Grouchy
Hostile
Impatient
Irritated
Irate
Moody
On edge
Outraged
Pissed
Resentful
Upset
Vindictive

Courageous /

Powerful

Adventurous
Brave
Capable
Confident
Daring
Determined
Free
Grounded
Proud
Strong
Worthy

Valiant

Connected /

Loving

Accepting
Affectionate
Caring
Compassion
Empathy
Fulfilled
Present
Safe
Warm
Worthy

Curious

Engaged
Exploring
Fascinated
Interested
Intrigued
Involved
Stimulated

Despair / Sad

Anguish
Depressed
Despondent
Disappointed
Discouraged
Forlorn
Gloomy
Grief
Heartbroken
Hopeless
Lonely
Longing
Melancholy
Sorrow
Teary
Unhappy

Upset

Weary

Yearning

Disconnected / Numb

Aloof
Bored
Confused
Distant
Empty
Indifferent
Isolated
Lethargic
Listless
Removed
Resistant
Shut Down
Uneasy
Withdrawn

Embarrassed / Shame

Ashamed
Humiliated
Inhibited
Mortified
Self-conscious
Useless
Weak
Worthless

Fear

Afraid
Anxious
Apprehensive
Frightened
Hesitant
Nervous
Panic
Paralyzed
Scared

Terrified

Worried

Fragile

Helpless
Sensitive

Grateful

Appreciative
Blessed
Delighted
Fortunate
Grace
Humbled
Lucky
Moved
Thankful
Touched

Guilt

Regret
Remorseful
Sorry

Hopeful

Encouraged
Expectant
Optimistic
Trusting

Powerless

impotent
Incapable
Resigned
Trapped
Victim

Tender

Calm
Caring
Loving
Reflective
Self-loving

Serene

Vulnerable

Warm

Stressed / Tense

Anxious
Burned out
Cranky
Depleted
Edgy
Exhausted
Frazzled
Overwhelm
Rattled
Rejecting
Restless
Shaken
Tight
Weary
Worn out

Unsettled / Doubt

Apprehensive
Concerned
Dissatisfied
Disturbed
Grouchy
Hesitant
Inhibited
Perplexed
Questioning
Rejecting
Reluctant
Shocked
Skeptical
Suspicious
Ungrounded
Unsure
Worry

Body Sensations

Achy
Airy
Blocked
Breathless
Bruised
Burning
Buzzy
Clammy
Clenched
Cold
Constricted
Contained

Contracted
Dizzy
Drained
Dull
Electric
Empty
Expanded
Flowing
Fluid
Fluttery
Frozen
Full

Gentle
Hard
Heavy
Hollow
Hot
Icy
Itchy
Jumpy
Knotted
Light
Loose
Nauseous

Numb
Pain
Pounding
Prickly
Pulsing
Queasy
Radiating
Relaxed
Releasing
Rigid
Sensitive
Settled

Shaky
Shivery
Slow
Smooth
Soft
Sore
Spacey
Spacious
Sparkly
Stiff
Still
Suffocated

Sweaty
Tender
Tense
Throbbing
Tight
Tingling
Trembly
Twitchy
Vibrating
Warm
Wobbly
Wooden

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Appendix I

Wellness & Mindfulness Techniques

Grounding Meditation - Sit or stand comfortably. Focus your attention on your breath, paying attention to the felt sensation of the breath entering and exiting your nose. Feel the soles of the feet as they make contact with mother earth. Feel the pulse of the earth's energy as it enters the feet and rises up the body. As the earth's energy rises from the feet to the legs, hips, torso, back, neck, shoulders, head allow the body to relax. If there is any tension, invite the breath which is filled with the rising energy of mother earth to break up the tension as you envision a ball of healing white light going to the areas of tension. Now feel the whole body as it moves with the pulse of mother earth energy. As the meditation comes to a close, thank mother earth for her grounding and ending (death) and beginning (birth) cycles of life. Open your eyes and slowly tap your feet or twist the body to ground into the present space that you're in.

Adaptation: Another way to do this meditation is to envision yourself as your favorite tree. Do the same grounding steps but see your roots extending from the soles of your feet into mother earth, your legs are the trunk, your arms and head as the branches. See yourself swaying with the breeze not being phased by the various winds that come your way. Ground back into the space you're in. You can call upon the tree you envision as a way to ground when times are unsettling in your day to day life. Simply center your breathing and envision your body as the tree with deep roots into mother earth and branches extending to the heavens.

Body Scan - Scanning the body helps us to develop body awareness. It invites us to get out of our head and intellect and into the body and our feeling sense. This is important both for our youth and horses as we use our feeling sense to assess the safety of our environment. Scanning our body helps us identify any held tension in the body which inadvertently can be passed on to those around us. Our relaxed or tense states can contribute to a closed or open state of being for our youth and horses.

- **Body Scan:** Starting at the top of your head slowly bring your felt sense of attention through your various body parts (e.g. head, neck, shoulders, arms, torso, hips, legs, feet) and then to the inside body organs (e.g., beating of your heart, feeling in your tummy, sensation in the chest/lungs). Notice any tension or holding. Invite a breath to the area and just be.

Breath work - Our breath signals the body to respond in various ways from relax and rest to fight and flight. Many times we are not conscious of our breathing patterns unless they are extreme. Learning to become conscious of what our breath is doing can help us alter our body responses and behavior. Our breath in turn flows through our body which the horses can feel. Our breathing alone can help to create an environment of safety or unrest for our horses and the youth with whom we work. Experiment with what breath technique works for you.

- **Four for Four:** Breathe in four counts, hold your breath for four, and exhale for four

- **Smell the Rose, Blow Out the Candle:** Put your finger up to your nose like a flower and then move your finger down to your mouth and exhale like it's a candle.
- **Belly Breathing** - Inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the nose begin to focus on the felt sensation of the air as it enters the nose and the feeling of the tummy rising. On the exhale focus your attention at the felt sense of air as it leaves the nose.

Name It to Tame It- This phrase was coined by Dr. Daniel Siegel and helps us remember the power in naming our emotions. Naming feelings eases the nervous system by giving recognition to what the body is experiencing. This simple act of naming your emotions reduces the negative effects from the feeling up to 50% and introduces a sense of agency and choice to what you need to do to address the feeling. Modeling naming our own emotions/feelings in the moment while we are working with the horses and encouraging the youth through a simple prompt of “What are you feeling right now” is a great way to reinforce this skill. See Appendix H for emotion and feelings list.

Irreducible Grace Foundation Mindfulness Flashcards- These laminated flashcards introduce the children to a new mindfulness, breathing or wellness skill. Offering the youth to pick a card at the start of their lesson and reinforcing it through modeling is one way to use this invaluable set of techniques.

Visualization to manifestation- Our body’s energy follows our thoughts. Visualization is a great tool to center oneself and align with the desired outcome you are trying to create. This comes in handy when working with our students and the horses. Before you begin a session with students, set your intention for how you are going to show up. Then visualize yourself moving with this intention as you walk through the session in your mind's eye. You can encourage the students to use this technique before they set out to do obstacles with the horse or if something is not going quite right with their connection with the horse. Have them pause and envision in their minds eye walking the obstacle or walking with connection with the horse around the arena.

Mantra Making- Mantras are a great way to redirect the mind, body and spirit in moments we need regulation. Practice creating a mantra with words that remind you of how you want to feel. Our words are powerful and create states in the body. Example: “Calm Moves, Calm Hands, Calm Voice, Open Heart”

Orientation - Orientation is a natural process our body does to know it is safe. This exercise can calm anxiousness and helps bring you back into your body and the space you’re in. Take a deep breath and feel your body in the space it's in (feet on floor, clothes on body, weather touching your body). Begin to look around the space you are in, looking for the doors, windows. Turn your head around the space you are in looking up, down, in front and behind you. Take your hands and rub your arms, legs or face. Jump up and down or shake the whole body. Now just feel. What do you notice in the body now that you have oriented yourself to the environment?

Butterfly Tapping- This exercise helps to calm the body and connect to your inner strength. Interlock your thumbs to create a butterfly shape with your palms facing your chest. Rest your fingers on either side of your collar bone. Keeping your hands on your chest alternate tapping your right collarbone and then your left collarbone going back and forth for some minutes. You can recite a calming mantra here as well. Notice how your body feels after a few minutes in this practice.

Hum, Sing, Sigh Release - The throat energy center is one that typically gets blocked in times of stress and trauma. Humming, signing or audible sighing can help move congested energy in the throat and help the body return to a state of calm.