

RESILIENCE

NEWSLETTER SA EQUINE FACILITATED INTERVENTION
ASSOCIATION (SAEFIA)

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Picture: In the Company of Horses



Resilience - elasticity, flowing movement through adversity, a constant and ever changing process of reflecting, regenerating, living and thriving not just surviving, understanding, forgiving, healing, cathartic release, finding meaning and re-creation of one's story. Resilience - the golden layers upon layers of warrior armour that are created over time by experiencing adversity - golden armour - not hardened but rather used to protect self whilst also permeating love, light and blessings to all - a light spread to all earthly beings, a light shone from within, outwards towards all. Golden permeable armour that can 'breathe in' light just as much as it can breathe out and shine that light. A symbol, an anchor, a reserve of golden light held for others who are trying to find their light, once again. Equids gift us with the ever so subtle and so often the ever so outward push towards the light. They are light workers. Reminding us to just be, breathe, process, respond, and to let go of what does not serve our higher purpose. They gift us with the metaphor of what it means to be resilient. **By Juanita Biggs**

"A Medicine Woman's Prayer"

*I will not rescue you.
For you are not powerless.
I will not fix you.
For you are not broken.
I will not heal you.
For I see you, in your wholeness.
I will walk with you through the darkness
As you remember your light."*

By Sheree Bliss Tilsley, Falcon Spirit Healing c/o Juanita Biggs

WHY RESILIENCE...

A common thread weaving through this newsletter is that we get strength and heal in relationship with other sentient beings and in our very fortunate case, with our horses. Equines sense the imbalances within us and gift us with the non-judging space and the means to heal. Here you will find treasure! An incredible richness and beauty of our members' insights. **ED, Kirsten Neke**

We adapt to adversity by orienting to our strengths, attending to our pain, and taking charge of the narratives that define our lives. I believe that we all have the capacity to overcome adversity. However, this requires that we have compassionate support and intelligent guidance. Our injuries do not occur in a vacuum, so our healing cannot occur in one either. Our hurts and losses need to be repaired interpersonally. We cannot heal alone. **By Arielle Schwartz**



COMPANIONSHIP: Luighseach & Vitimine
~ with thanks to Natasha O'Shaughnessy

In grappling with the word **RESILIENCE**, and the meaning it has for me, I confess that my first thought is: "I don't want to live a life that I need to be resilient for!" Perhaps I'm having a bit of a tantrum, but truly, I yearn for a pause and for some ease. Taking a good look around me however, and life being what it is, I know that storms and sunshine will continue to mix freely and unpredictably. So, I think ... how can I:

(1) Create a Life of Ease

- Daily interaction with horses, developing my awareness and capacity for discernment: I choose to let go of this, I choose to send that right on past me. Just this step removes untold amounts of stress from my life, bringing me more ease.
- Limit chores, stimuli and social engagements. Instead I dial up on the creative moments, inspired impulses, free unfolding of where my body takes me...and choose time spent in nature, even if in the city.
- Calendars or actions lists used more consciously as a tool to **limit** my commitments, rather than to fit in as much as possible.
- Cultivate internal ease: energy awareness and control within my body; conscious and expressive movement - dancing ☺
- Trauma awareness and a sense of the programming, both in my brain and body, helps me keep my "surf board waxed", letting me glide more often and more easily without getting snagged on life's bumps and triggers.
- Nutrition and good sleep are key!

So much lately is being written, spoken, researched, taught, and celebrated about Resilience.

Until not so long ago I too was energised and inspired by the knowledge that we can develop and harness our resilience. It felt to me like it offered us some answers - finally! There was the promise of clarity and a newfound direction, and my task was clear. Learn more, practice more and share the learning. There was a resurgence of hope. Hope in a time when it was sorely needed. It is not that I no longer believe in resilience but just that there is more. So much more. So much that is not about understanding. We (I) recently lost a being who was among many other things every inch resilient. But the enduring question that I have been left with, is this: Why should he have had to be so resilient? Pausing there the next layer arrives: Did his Resilience prematurely assuage hearts that should have been pained with sorrow? The sorrow of having failed to live up to what it means to be a human being? What it means to live in connection? What it means when we agree to a relationship?

Resilience is worthy of our respect and endeavours; but not when it blurs what really matters: That our hearts are meant to hurt; whether it is from loss, the regret of having failed, from sorrow, remorse, or deep love and empathy. A Universe of paradox. There lies the resilience. RIP Russi: In the words of someone who knew you in service and not for long, but delivered on all those fronts "What a Great Guy!!!". Thank you. I think that says it all and I think you would have loved it - being remembered that way.

By Marion Greene

(2) Cross-train and Strengthen my "Resilience Muscle"

- A supple, vital and aware body gives me confidence in the world!
- Aim to keep my "bucket" full: with nourishment of intimacy and hugs; the wonder of nature; sharing space with my beloved equine bestie! This functions like a buffer for me in adversity.
- Choosing my "herd" of wonderful beings: like a net of interwoven strands, knotted together at many points. Should one point fail, the rest of the net can pick up the strain with relative ease, until that knot has stabilised and retied itself.
- Practice of internal ease, awareness and resolution of my pain and past has given me a good capacity to flex like a reed, be agile like a monkey, or surf the waves - a saving grace in troubled times.
- Interesting Point of View. Such helpful words. When in conversation and feeling resistance from or to someone's words.... repeat to myself:

"what an interesting point of view you have!"

Oooh, this one can be very hard to live!

- Daily practice of standing up for myself. I take inspiration from the horses - they do not apologise for seeking comfort and they remain unapologetically "HORSE".

By Natalie Stobäus

Horse-powered Agility -- Non-negotiable leadership competency in today's VUCA World.

Agility is the ability of an individual to smoothly adjust to changing environments and conditions. 2020 - the year when the world we knew suddenly changed! How smoothly did you, your family and your business adapt to the changes required? Were you caught off-guard and as a result found yourself scrambling to try and implement the necessary changes? Were you catapulted into stages of grief, stuck in denial or possibly deep-seated anger or depression? Neither of these emotions are being judged or wrong, however how would you have experienced Covid-19 if your ability to respond with agility was more mature and developed?

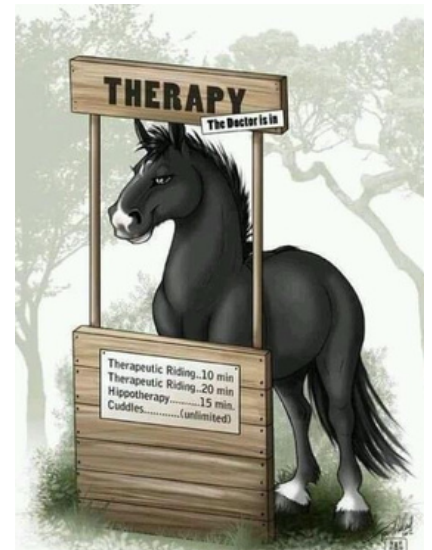
Horses very seldom are caught off-guard, they are continuously listening to change, physically, mentally and emotionally. Is it safe to assume that for a human being to develop and mature the ability to respond to life and all that happens in a more agile way, we have to listen to change more and with deeper awareness?

We might just discover a readiness that we did not know we had and so we should own that readiness and embrace the opportunities that are brought along by change with agility ...

Are you listening yet?

By Isabel Wolf-Gillespie

VUCA: Volatile, Uncertain, Chaotic, Ambiguous



Thanks to Natasha O'Shaughnessy

Epona's Wise Counsel

The ultimate test of the mastery of resilience is having a horse to care for. They will test the mettle of your soul. Resilient is not good enough for those who are brave and crazy enough to choose to walk the way of Equus. Call it Transcendent Resilience. For when the soul thinks "I can't go on", those eyes will find you and they will whisper "Yes, you can. For us you can and you will." Epona, the Great Mare has spoken.

By Natasha O'Shaughnessy



*A Poem to acknowledge the daily resilience and resolve needed for an equine to survive for decades.
This poem speaks of a simpler equine life, without humans contributing their personal internal and external stresses to the horse.*

A Life Time of Resilience

The winter sun illuminates my skin
the breath of wind warms me

With sunshine on my back and face
I move along the beaten track -it starts to burn down into my skin

I follow my senses as I walk along in the blazing sun, they take me to some trickling water
Here, I may quench my thirst

The grass is lush and it is sweet, I find it hard to tear myself away; my stomach acids growling loudly
The sun is unforgiving, I walk and walk in the midday heat to the shade of a great big tree
Here I find some reprieve

Rushing past, walking slow, crunching leaves, my herd does know
how to stay present and connected

Here and now outside noises filter through my inside thoughts and senses,
I have no expectations

I breathe in and I breathe out,
and just accept the rustling leaves and fragrant sound of buzzing bees will carry on just as they please

The wind is picking up now, the clouds are rolling in
We start to move back to the night time place
We march forward, necks bracing against the building storm

Great big black clouds open wide and water gushes down
Giant ice balls smack our faces as we move against all space and time

Bruised, tired, hungry, wet and cold, we arrive at the makeshift shelter
Here we will huddle together, keep warm until we feel safe enough to once again, venture out for food

32 years, every single day, moving, adjusting, surviving, pushing through, remaining in the here and now,
I resolve to be resilient.

By Jane Armstrong

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