

By Karla Boyd



*Men and women everywhere are being made acutely aware of the fact that something essential to life and well-being is flickering very low in the human species and threatening to go out entirely. This “something” has to do with such values as love...unselfishness...integrity...sincerity...loyalty to one’s best...honesty...enthusiasm...humility...goodness...happiness...fun. Practically every animal still has these assets in abundance and is eager to share them, given opportunity and encouragement.*

*In this connection it is interesting to recall that people of certain ancient times appear to have been great virtuosos in the art of living, particularly skilled in the delicate science of being in right relations with everything, including animals. Every living thing was seen as a partner in a universal enterprise. Each had an individual contribution to make to the general good which it, and it alone, could supply. Everything lived for everything else, at all times and under all circumstances.*

*Those were the days when “the whole earth was one language and speech...and all was on grand concord.” Humans, animals, snakes, birds, insects—all shared a common language. By means of this language all were able to express their thoughts and feelings freely on matters of mutual interest. From divinely bestowed wisdom, they could reason together for the common good, the common happiness, and the common fun. Evidently this was so simple and natural a part of everyday living as not to need explaining any more than breathing. However one may regard this ancient relationship phenomena, there is evidence that at one time on earth every living thing was able to be in rational correspondence with everything else. Humans and animals moved in full accord not only with one another but with the cosmic Plan as well.*

*Can we “modern humans” recapture this seemingly lost universal language? Can we by means of it learn to move in genuine good fellowship not only with the members of our own species but with other creatures? I believe that we can.*

From *Kinship with All Life* by J. Allen Boone

## **LEADERSHIP BREAKDOWN**

Good leadership is grounded in conscious relationship, one that honors the integrity of our inherent interconnectedness with all of life. In ancient times, the art of living in accordance with such relationship was easier. But in the fast pace of our modern world, it has become increasingly difficult to hold that sense of interconnection.

With the pressures and demands of everyday work-life, it's easy to leave the field of relatedness and regard the world as an object, like furniture to be moved around in order to get your mental agendas satisfied. You might find yourself withdrawing from the very connectivity that could center you in your contribution and put you in harmony with those you love. What is the value of your work, you might ask, if you ignore your connection with the very life seeking to partner with you? How can you work for those you serve if you are unwilling to be in an openhearted relationship with them?

When you leave your engagement with the animals and the "other," you enter a dangerous place of separative behavior that has you fall into all kinds of ineffective work practices. As one person testified, "When I am in that state, I just want to get the task done and get back to my room; everyone is in my way and they just annoy me, delaying me like that."

Mentally driven strategic plans, executed daily, produce endless unintended side effects, harming co-workers, projects, animal friends and yourself. They can kill off your best team members and cause your projects to become derailed. Over time, you might find yourself becoming more impatient, frustrated, bored, apathetic, resigned, disengaged or aggressive. When cut off from the roots of authentic relationship, it's easy to lose credibility, integrity, enthusiasm, joy and the capacity to be kind.

## **TIME OUT**

When leadership "tools" become weapons it is a signal that leadership has gone amuck. Broken relationships signal the need to start down a new road. Needless deaths, burnout and debilitating breakdowns announce it's time to STOP. They signal a halt to business as usual.

## **OPPORTUNITY COMES KNOCKING**

This time-out can be a rich opportunity for reflection and inquiry before setting sail for a new future. When you stop going down the old road, you can discover a new way. This is the time to invest in a qualified leadership-learning program to reshape your new destiny. An immersion into leadership development will help identify and eliminate communication practices that caused the breakdowns. Developing your leadership in new, effective ways will shift outmoded practices, mend relationships and align your work with your core values.

Soul of Leadership for Animal Stewards will teach you how to nourish the connections with those you serve while empowering your teams. It will help you identify and learn to work with your strengths and weaknesses and how to get complete with the broken past. You will learn new distinctions, tools and best leadership practices to create a new future. You will find out how to make time for being in relationship with the animals you steward, expand your

partnership with stakeholders and experience the energizing power of positive partnerships. And you will discover how these relationships lead to better solutions for the animal lives you serve.

Namaste's Equine-Guided Leadership helps you reconnect with the bigger energy field of your programs and the animals you serve. Horses have big hearts. They remember the times where "every living thing was seen as a partner in a universal enterprise." As herd animals, horses are masters at relationship. They are deeply connected to one another and the environment around them. Have you ever wondered how a goat and horse in the same field get along? Or cows and horses? They know how to relate. They communicate with body language and their integrity of being. They move in harmony with the nature around them.

Equine-guided leadership opens fresh doors for authentic engagement. Horses have magically been in relationship with people since our early beginnings. There is a certain sense of knowing that you are on the right path when you engage a horse through your intention and energy without whips or threat. When you stand and express passion for your vision and the horse comes strolling over to nudge up close beside you, you know you have something to offer. You don't need to ride the horse to move into this unified connection. The horse, when you are listening, will show you how.

*The Celtic people used communing with horses for human development, awareness, and spiritual growth. Horses, if given the opportunity, would highlight the defenses that stood in each human being's way, thrusting people into ever-increasing levels of self-awareness. By accepting the equine reaction, a person would commune with the heart of nature while also questioning personal habit and beliefs. Merging with horses, as long as it is not for self-aggrandizement, animates the human spirit and furnishes it with boundless energy.*

*Celts learned a kind of humility and appreciation for the great vastness of Creation that cannot be conveyed in words alone. For example, they learned that through their connection with all creatures that judgments, even if valid, consume energy and prevent clarity of thought and transcendence.*

*Horses and the Mystical Path, Adele von Rust, Marlena Deborah, Thomas McCormick*

Renewed in a relationship with others, your projects, team and vision can move forward in newfound peace and confidence. In the classroom of leadership learning, you will discover the methods to design a learning culture that helps the animals and your teams live the realization of a shared vision.

## **NOURISHING THE HEART; EXPANDING THE SOUL**

When you invest in front-end efforts, you have fewer breakdowns, setbacks and broken partnerships. Energy fields are kept clean. The animals are happier and so are their stewards. There is magic and connectivity and team play. There is also more authenticity that includes spontaneity, creativity and out-of-box thinking. You laugh more. Tails wag, horses whinny. This is vitalizing to the spirit. It can relive this experience as you return to project and teams.

Letting your organization invest in ongoing consultation for leadership development of your learning community is a clear way to shift the past and design a new future. It pays off in the way that your community is effective, making the animals and people alike happier, with better outcomes for all. It lets you go home at night and sleep, knowing that there is a learning environment you are helping to create that inspires others to grow into their full stature. It brings out your best for the animals and your teams.

You are worth the time you put into evolving your leadership. It is some of the finest nourishment that you can get. And with the stakes high for the future of us all, it gives you the support and edge you need. You can, through keeping your team leadership and communication rich, create bold new breakthroughs, unprecedented partnerships, and a future rich with intended outcomes for you and the animals.

