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The Reiki Animals of Hidden Brook Farm

PAMELA ALLEN-LEBLANC



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Horses That Heal

BY PAMELA ALLEN LEBLANC

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GORICA BARUDZIJA

I AM PROBABLY ONE OF THE LEAST likely Reiki Masters. My science degree in agriculture was followed by an MBA and a successful career in business. This seems to be at odds with the life I lead now, but I wouldn't have it any other way! And neither would the animals at Hidden Brook Farm.

Things were always black and white for me and based on straightforward, cut and dried science or business principles. So if you had told me four years ago when I started this journey that I would teach animal communication, sell essential oils and have horses who give Reiki treatments to their students on our little farm in Atlantic Canada, I'd have laughed out loud. My how things change!

After a very successful career with the government and then in business, the company I helped to become the fastest growing company in Atlantic Canada lost a major contract and had to shut down. Unemployed for the first time in my life, I became a business consultant and also grew my natural horsemanship clientele. For some reason, which doctors and allergy specialists could not understand, although my work made me very happy, my health began to suffer, and I was miserable. One of my students offered Reiki in exchange for her lesson. This helped immensely and I was hooked. Then that same student introduced me to Ellen Hawkins, a talented animal communicator and my first Reiki Master, and I studied my first two levels of Reiki with her. Ellen "spoke" with my horses for me to help me gain insights into their backgrounds and any issues they were having, and with amazement, I watched the horses' body language back up what they were telling her. Occasionally I would be able to "read" the answer in my horses' body language before Ellen could tell me what was said. So in addition to learning Reiki, I determined that in order to be the best horse-woman I could be, I needed to learn to communicate with animals too. Ellen assured me that anyone could do it.

Animal Communication

My first two levels of Reiki opened my intuition, as Reiki often does. But despite this and despite the many courses and books I read about animal communication and the science-based research conducted by scientists like Dr. Jane Goodall, I could hear nothing from the animals until two and a half years ago when I attended a wonderful clinic given by Christy Clarke in St. John, New Brunswick based on Linda Kohanov's book *The Tao of Equus: A Women's Journey of Healing and Transformation through the Way of Horses*.¹

In Linda's groundbreaking book, she indicates that cultures throughout the world have legends in which horses are considered mediums between the spirit and material worlds.² Arab tales in particular talk about the horses' sixth sense.³ In fact, Linda surmises that there is evidence of horses leading people to some form of lost knowledge. This made sense to me as religions throughout the world mention horses in their spiritual texts and most humans find horses beautiful.

At the clinic we learned that horses mirror the emotions of the people they work with and enjoy healing humans emotionally and that horses attempt to communicate with us on a regular basis. Christy explained that this understanding led Linda Kohanov to develop a very effective and increasingly popular practice she calls "equine facilitated psychotherapy" in order to teach other horse handlers how to make use of the healing abilities that horses possess.

This all made sense to me, after watching my horses "work" on their humans in riding lessons. Week after week, stressed, exhausted professionals, business executives and students come down the driveway for a lesson and leave refreshed, relaxed and re-energized.

I was very nervous at the clinic though, when the first exercise was explained. We were to become silent and listen for answers from the horses to questions we posed. I anxiously explained to one of the facilitators that despite my attempts to "hear" the horses for the past few years, that beyond reading their body language, I could not hear them at all. She said, "No one can hear her own horses, Pam. Owners are too emotionally involved with them. Try listening to ours." It was like someone flipped a switch in my brain. Floored, I went outside and immediately began "hearing" the horses, allowing me to proceed through the deeply healing exercises as the weekend unfolded, the culmination of which was an emotional healing experience with the horse. Over time this ability became refined and developed further to the almost effortless practice it is today.

¹ Linda Kohanov, *The Tao of Equus: A Women's Journey of Healing and Transformation through the Way of Horses* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2001).

² Kahanov, *The Tao of Equus*, 44.

³ *Ibid.*, 45.

Reiki

At one point in our relationship, after I attended this clinic, Ellen offered to give Reiki attunements to my horses. While I loved that my horses were healing people, I also did not want them to suffer for it so it made sense that Reiki would be useful to them in their work. It never occurred to me to question whether an animal “should” have a Reiki attunement. I had learned through Linda’s work to understand that not only are horses sentient beings, but that they have wisdom and abilities that far surpass ours and that their spiritual connection is respected in many cultures throughout the world. My own experiences confirmed this so it made sense that the horses would enjoy Reiki. Ellen and I checked, and while a few horses declined politely, most of the herd agreed to give Reiki a try.

Initially, Ellen attuned four of our ten horses to Reiki Level I. The next time she came to attune horses, even those who had initially declined decided they wanted a Reiki attunement too—so my entire herd became “Reiki horses,” and my students and I observed and remarked over the tremendous difference it seemed to make in the herd. My herd had been happy—but they became happier and more peaceful. A few horses who were shy or reserved stepped forward and their personalities changed almost overnight. Some horses that were a bit grumpy with certain students seemed to relax and their grumpiness gradually receded. And the horses’ students—well, they were going away with even more peace and relaxation than before. We all noticed the feeling that came over us as we worked with the horses as they wrapped us in their auras and Reiki energy. It was incredible. And it was amusing how toward the end of each lesson, both human and horse would yawn and yawn, releasing their stress. Occasion-

ally, there were even bigger healings, which was beautiful to see. It was quite lovely working with these Reiki horses.

You might be wondering how the horses work with their human clients. The horses do not seem to have to “ask permission”; they simply envelope their students and anyone else in their general vicinity (parents, siblings, instructors) in Reiki energy as the students work to groom the horses and prepare them for their lesson. Often, the horses keep us all enveloped in the energy through the entire lesson. We all notice a lifting at some point as our energies become better aligned and any issues we have been working through leave us. Occasionally, if we have a particularly stubborn spot, the horses put their nose on the spot and breathe into it. Then we feel that same lifting. Some horses start yawning and releasing as soon as their student arrives. Others work through an entire lesson before we notice them begin to release. I laughingly tell my students that they are getting two for the price of one!—a Reiki treatment for the cost of a riding lesson! And they agree! Once, an elderly student who had been recently widowed experienced a release so powerful that she felt energy wash through her body, and she had to get off her horse, her legs shaking. She knew she had received a big healing from the horse and realized that although she thought she had worked through her grief, she had not. Her horse stood beside her and continued to give her energy, filling her body with Reiki energy, until she felt better and was ready to go home. She still rides with us, and while she has never received as big of a healing again, she is aware that the horses help her each and every week. She notices her stamina and physical health as well as her emotional, mental and spiritual health suffers when she is unable to get out for her weekly lessons.



More Reiki for me...

Over the next few years of working with my healing herd, I came to the point where I was ready to move on to “Advanced Reiki Practitioner,” but it took my horse teachers (and my human ones!) to alert me to this. Pam Nadeau, my Level III Reiki Master, agreed to attune one of my more troubled horses to Level II Reiki. This horse had shown me past emotional trauma so I felt the Mental Emotional Symbol from Reiki Level II would be helpful to her.

We ride bitless (always), bareback (most of the time) and keep our horses barefoot for their comfort at Hidden Brook Farm OR Here Storm and I are enjoying a chat and some time together on the farm.



BG Buddy, my first Reiki Master and the horse who started it all releases energy with a yawn.

England, so I did—though it was with trepidation that I went to the class. Who was I to study with such a well-known and respected Reiki Master? What would he think of my animal work? I knew after watching the positive changes in my herd that I wanted to work with animals even though I was not certain I wanted to teach people. I also knew that I did not want those animals to have to wait for my “Reiki hands” to come to the pasture or into their lives for them to experience Reiki. While this is a beautiful experience, I saw firsthand how much more effective it is for an animal to have an attunement and work with the Reiki energy itself. I would still always take my Reiki hands out—who doesn’t like a treatment from someone else? But I wanted animals to have the ability to use Reiki on their own. What would William think of this? I learned Reiki from William’s books, watched his DVDs and listened to his meditations—Reiki had changed my life—so to say I had tremendous respect for him is probably an understatement. What would I do if he said “No, I don’t think you should attune animals”? I wasn’t sure!

Animals and Reiki attunements

Fortunately though, he didn’t. After an incredible and powerful class, which exceeded my expectations, I drew up my courage and asked. “William, I loved the class but I have a question for you. I’d really like to practice Reiki with horses and other animals—not just giving them Reiki, but giving them attunements. I know that some Reiki practitioners are not on board with this—but my horses all have Reiki Level I except one who has Level II, and it’s been REALLY positive for them.” “Yes,” he said. (Phew, I

Once that horse had Level II however, the others indicated that they wanted more Reiki levels as well. I asked both of my Reiki Masters to attune my other horses for me, but both said, as if they had rehearsed together, “I see that this is for you to do...” and so on to Reiki Level III.

In my Reiki Level III class, Pam indicated that I was going to England to study with William Rand. I thought she was crazy. I was broke. We had just built a riding arena for my lessons and were struggling to make payments. The economy was such that my business clients could not afford a consultant. But I was realizing that business consulting did not inspire me as my horse and Reiki work did so I was ready to make a change. Days after my class, I received an unexpected check in the mail, which was almost the same as the cost of the Reiki Master class in Glastonbury (and Stonehenge), England. My husband agreed that I should use the check to study with William in



MurMac Farm’s Scott’s Storm Chaser, now a Reiki Master and Karuna Reiki® Master joined our herd just a year and a half ago and really seems to enjoy our work.

thought.) “Well, I’m wondering if you’re okay with this—and if so, how high of a level can you take an animal to? Level II? Level III?” William replied, “I don’t know why you wouldn’t take them to the Master Level, Pam. Animals understand energy much better than we do.” I don’t know if he noticed my jaw drop, but I stammered “Really? Reiki Masters?” “Well, yes, you can hear the animals, can’t you?” “Yes, I can.” “Then ask them if they want a Reiki attunement. And if they do, ask them which level they want and respect their decision. They do not have to progress through the levels the way humans do—they just seem to know what to do with the energy.”

I was in awe and delighted as William and I discussed how to give a Reiki attunement to an animal. There is a point in the attunement where humans put their hands over their heads. That can’t happen with four-leggeds. So what to do? Also, when humans put their palms out, this won’t work for most animals either. So we decided that the attunement should look basically the same—just without hands over the head. What a relief—I would be allowed to do this work that I believed so strongly in—and with my teacher’s blessing!

Back home to attune animals

I came back to Canada with my head spinning at the possibilities. I had been sending distant energy to a number of sick horses and pets—these could now receive an attunement if they and their owner wished. And my own horses could receive additional attunements if they wished. Three days after my return, BG Buddy (or Big Buddy), who is on the lawn in front of me as I write this article to ensure that I get it right, received my first Reiki Master attunement. I went outside that morning to do chores, and he was waiting for me in the barn. My horses have the run of 80 acres and seldom spend time in the barn. But he was there with his girlfriend, Dawn. It was clear that he was waiting for me so I asked what I could do for him. He wanted his Reiki attunement. I gulped and explained that I had not practiced since my return, could not remember my notes, did not plan to do this at this time. “No,” he said, “you said when you returned from England that if you could, you would give us Reiki attunements. I’ve waited quite a while and I’m ready today.” I asked what level of Reiki he wanted and he replied, “It should

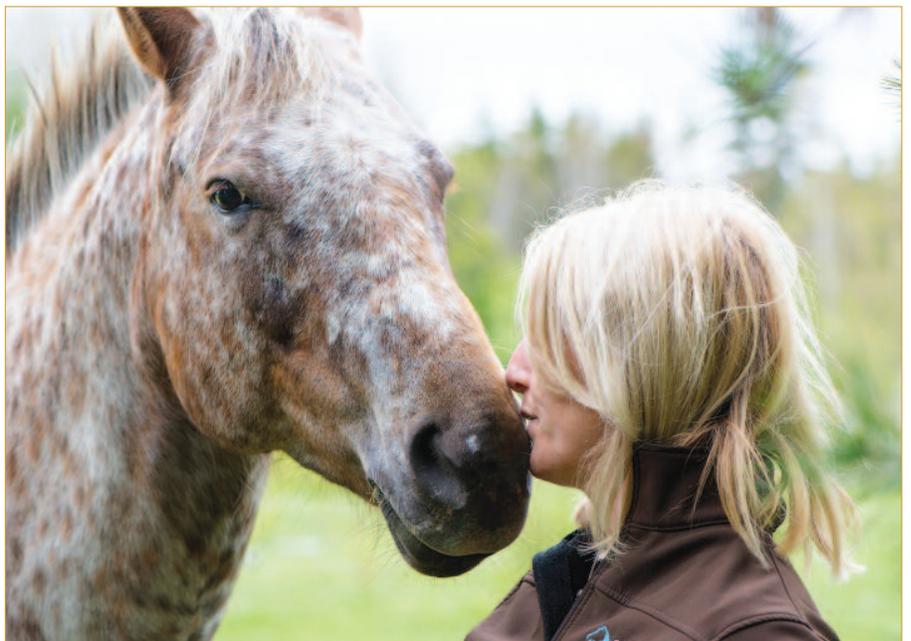
My daughter’s horse, Hidden Brook Starlight is a great lesson horse and is amazing with our autistic students.

be obvious that I would be a Reiki Master.” I laughed out loud. Bud is the male leader of my herd, my main lesson horse and the best horse I’ve ever worked with. He had been with me for my entire Reiki journey and holds a special place in my heart. Of course he was ready for a Reiki Master attunement! I had to restart three times as my memory supplied new pieces of information forgotten. But eventually, Bud became a Reiki Master. As soon as I finished, he yawned nine times, stretched, shook, said thank you and exited the barn. I asked Dawn if she wanted an attunement. She said, “Yes, Level II but not today”—and walked out behind Big Buddy.

With a sense of wonder and the grace of Reiki filling my body, I shook my head in amazement and returned to the house.

Over time, I have established an attunement process that works well for animals. I set the energy and use all of the same symbols I use when I attune humans. I place the symbols into the crown and motion them into the base of the skull. I place symbols on the tops of the hooves or paws and use my own hands in prayer position in the place of theirs. And I finish the attunement exactly as I would for a human, sealing it with hands at the base of the skull then placing the hands on the shoulders or withers in thanks, and moving in front of the animal with final thanks and blessing.

Since my initial animal attunement two years ago, most of my herd has either gradually or quickly worked their way to the Reiki Master Level, as has been right for each of them in his or her journey. Some horses went step-by-step. Some leaped right in. A few still don’t think they are ready for a Master attunement—and this is fine too; there is no pressure. My dogs all thought Level II was good for them, though two of our three dogs who normally stay outside during the day to guard the chickens once broke into





the house just as I was about to conduct an attunement during a Level III Reiki class. One dog sat on one side of the three ladies while the other sat on the other side. I looked at the ladies and said, “It looks like they would like a Level III attunement too” and all three agreed as the dogs sat motionless, wondering if we would let them stay. I asked if the ladies minded if we included them and they did not—so those two dogs went to Level III. The third dog came in with them but ran into the other room making clear his intention not to receive the attunement. My cats are all attuned to Level I except Roy. All of our cats and dogs are rescue animals and Roy was particularly troubled. He decided on Level II, came completely out of his shell and after some time at that level, Roy, who participates in almost every Reiki class or session, decided that the Master Level was right for him.

Other Reiki animals

Other folks have asked me to attune their animals, and I have been happy to do so if the animal also wants an attunement. To be certain I get it right, I normally use dowsing rods or a pendulum to help communicate with the animal and to be certain of the level attunement the animal wants. You simply ask the animal if he or she will communicate with you through the dowsing tool—and the animal is generally happy to do so.

Occasionally if an animal has not experienced Reiki, there might be some reluctance at first. In that case, we ask the animal if he or she wants a treatment. Most do. And most then decide on an attunement. Like their human counterparts, they often start at Level I or II. Animals who have more experience with Reiki—either from being here on the farm with my herd or from having Reiki owners—often jump in and decide on the Master Level.

Cats enjoy Reiki attunements too. Kringle has decided to stay at level 1 and says that is all he needs - at least for the time being.

What does it do?

Many of the animals communicate to me that it does not “fix” all their health or emotional issues, but as it does with humans, Reiki allows them to release stress and to work on their issues over time. We notice that animals often become happier immediately and then they gradually work away at their other concerns. We worked with a dog once who was becoming aggressive toward men and who seemed to be regressing in his development. After his Reiki Level I attunement, this turned around though he still does not like men as much as women. Horses often become

more relaxed. Some have worked on health issues. Most begin immediately working on their people! And it is a beautiful thing.

Occasionally the animals show us dramatic displays. One horse was not sure he wanted a Reiki attunement but his owners wanted us to try. I took him into the round pen and my herd pretty much ignored us as we did some training work. Afterward when I asked if he wanted a Reiki attunement, he was uncertain and thought perhaps he didn’t. He agreed to go ahead, knowing his owners wanted it, but reluctantly. As I was beginning, my herd suddenly lifted their heads and galloped over to our ring. They came to the fence and visited with him one by one. When they were done, they galloped back to the field and to their grazing; he turned around, came to the center of the ring with me and said yes, that he was ready for a Level I attunement—this time with his full intention.

Another time a really troubled horse was reluctant to receive an attunement during a clinic, although his owner really felt he needed one. He did agree to a Level I attunement, but I sensed he had reservations. Earlier that morning, I had forgotten to close a portion of the fence. My horses completely ignored this until the attunement for the six clinic horses was about to take place. Then they marched calmly into the arena one by one and visited with this horse, then calmly came over to me to be led back to the pasture. The attunement had not yet started, so the horses’ owners and clinic participants were still in the arena to witness this. They were dumbfounded, registering that something profound had taken place. The odd thing was that the grass in the pasture was gone at that time of the year. And the grass on the lawn was still green. Normally horses getting out of the pasture would go for the green grass—not march into a grassless arena to visit with one of the six visiting horses one at a time—and then



Tiba (now a Reiki Master) and Cody (level 3 Reiki) once broke into the house during a level 3 attunement and joined in. They both enjoy the work we do here on the farm.

calmly walk out and into the pasture again. The horse in question then said he felt more ready for the attunement and this troubled, stressed-out horse was in a state of zen afterward when I invited the clinic participants back to the arena to commune with the horses and see if they noticed any difference. I've had the privilege of working with maybe a hundred animals at this point, and it is always amazing and lovely.

Do animals still enjoy a Reiki treatment after they have an attunement? Yes, they do—just as we do. Just because we have Reiki does not mean we no longer enjoy or benefit from treatments from others. Should all animals receive Reiki attunements?—no, just those who wish to and whose owners want them to. I think this is really important. But if you want to stretch your limits a bit, Reiki attunements for animals can be a beautiful thing. Animals do so much for us on a daily basis—this is something we can give back to them. 

—Pamela can be contacted by email at pam@hiddenbrook.ca and through her website at www.hiddenbrook.ca

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Reiki Animals

Part One

BY PAMELA ALLEN-LEBLANC

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GORICA BARUDZIJA

AFTER TALKING WITH WILLIAM RAND in 2013 during a Karuna Reiki® class and sharing our experiences with “Reiki attuned” horses and pets, William asked me to write the “Horses That Heal” article, which appeared in the 2013 *Reiki News Magazine*.¹ If you have not read this and would like to, it’s available on our website.²

Since that time we have had quite a bit of experience sharing Reiki attunements with animals, particularly the horses in our herd at Hidden Brook Farm. But at the beginning, none of my 37 years of experience working with horses as a Centered Riding instructor, a student of Linda Kahonov’s “Tao of Equus” horse healing work, a horse trainer or even as an animal communicator really prepared me for working with Reiki and animals. The animals have been guiding that journey for me.

In the 2013 article, I shared most of the history of how and why I learned to give Reiki to my horses and eventually to make the decision to have them be attuned to Reiki themselves.³ Other horses received the opportunity to be attuned to Reiki through my two-day Horse Healing Tao of Equus Clinics held two to three times a year. During those clinics, if any of the participating horses or any of my horses wish to receive a Reiki attunement, we comply. If any of the human clinic participants are Reiki Masters, they help give the attunements so that they can gain experience attuning animals, and it is a beautiful experience! Since becoming a Reiki Master teacher in 2011, I have also done Reiki attunements for many of my animal communication clients and so have had the opportunity to share Reiki in this manner with a few hundred animals. Being attuned to Reiki often makes a profound difference in the animals’ lives.

What is the difference between an attunement and a Reiki session?

Just like us, horses and other animals can receive a Reiki session. It feels wonderful to most animals, though I have noticed that animals vary a great deal in their sensitivity to Reiki. In the process with humans and Reiki, when it is time to move forward and start to take charge of our own healing, we enroll in a Reiki class where we receive an attunement and the gift of being connected to the Reiki energy ourselves. Once connected, we are able to channel Reiki energy and work

toward our own healing and the healing of others. This is also true for animals, as I have come to understand through my relationship with them here.

Working with animals, communicating with them and teaching emotional healing work with horses, I have come to realize that our pets and animals are constantly working on our energy. I have often wondered why horses, dogs and cats stay around us. They do not need us. Why do my horses, who jump four foot fences with a human on their back stay inside my three foot fences and in their pasture eating grass and hay, when sometimes the grass across the road is much better than the grass left in my pasture? Dogs can survive on their own as can cats. The same argument can be made for almost any pet. Why do they stay with us? One theory is that they stay to help us with our spiritual connection and to help us to heal.

Should animals receive a Reiki attunement?

Some people wonder if animals should receive a Reiki attunement because they don’t believe that animals have the same “consciousness” that humans have. I tend to agree that they do not have the same consciousness as us. I have communicated with many animals since learning how in June 2010—with my own, with other people’s and with wild animals. Based on this, I am of the opinion that animals have a much higher level of consciousness than humans do. They are completely aware, very trusting of life and live fully in the now. I ask students in my clinics and animal communication classes how animals know how much hair to grow before winter. Over the years, in Eastern Canada, I’ve watched them grow much longer coats before a particularly trying winter than they do if the winter turns out to be mild. I’ve watched them register earthquakes that I am not aware of, and they seem to know more about storms and weather patterns than weathermen.

I believe that most animals maintain a closer connection and communication with the divine than most humans do. And I find that in spending time with animals, my connection to the

¹ Pamela Allen-LeBlanc, “Horses That Heal,” *Reiki News Magazine* Fall 2013, 8–14. See 11-12.

² www.hiddenbrook.ca.

³ “Horses That Heal,” 9-12.



REIKI ANIMALS

CJ Crackerjack has a heart condition, but seems to be doing well since his level 2 Reiki attunement just over 4 years ago.

divine becomes stronger. I think this happens in part because I believe that they too have a soul. As aware, conscious creatures with souls, animals appear to really appreciate Reiki and seem to know instinctively what to do with the energy—both for their own healing and for that of their caregivers. While some scientists may not agree with me about the presence of the soul, scientific studies show that spending time with animals can positively affect the levels of certain feel-good hormones such as oxytocin, dopamine production and blood pressure, so spending time with animals actually makes us healthier and happier humans!⁴

Have you ever noticed how a beloved pet takes on the symptoms of his or her person? Animals have indicated to me that this is because they know how to use energy, and in order to help heal us, they often take the symptoms into their own bodies and then try to release them. Sometimes they release them successfully and sometimes they cannot. I have observed both cases among my own horses. So, although aware that horses already knew how to use energy, I still thought it was a great idea when Ellen Hawkins, my Reiki Master and an animal communicator, proposed Usui Level I attunements for my horses so that they could channel Reiki energy directly, rather than have to wait for me to come to the field with my Reiki hands to receive it. At that point, I was teaching two to three students with each horse, and I found that over time, residual negative energy was building up in the horses as they worked to remove this energy from the students. One horse in particular started walking away when her students arrived, particularly the ones who brought quite a few old, unhealed problems with them.

Soon after Ellen gave my horses an attunement to Reiki I, they became calmer and happier, and the healing work they did for us naturally became stronger and more pronounced. Over time, as the horses all gradually decided upon additional

levels and attunements, the entire dynamics of my herd changed. In fact, in many respects, they stopped acting like horses. Horses are naturally a flight animal whose safety is in numbers; therefore horses generally “group together” into a herd when they are in the field. Here, my horses have close to 80 acres to roam, and they always did so in a loose group. After they moved along in their Reiki, I noticed they would be spread out all over the field, some of them completely separated from the group, seemingly unconcerned with where the rest of the group was! This is really odd so I asked them about it, and they said that they no longer felt fear and so had no need to be in a group. They liked being together, but it no longer seemed necessary for their safety. I had been a Reiki Master for six months at this point, and looking inside my own body, I realized that fear had largely left my body, too, something that is not uncommon with this step in Reiki.

We also noticed that in lessons involving our Reiki horses, more healing would take place with students and their parents as well as with the instructors. This demonstrated the value to us of giving Reiki attunements to our horses. Because this healing work was so profound, we decided to teach students on the autism spectrum with our Reiki horses. I was taught in my Tao of Equus work that horses will yawn, shake, stretch, roll, poop and pee to release energies for us, particularly during emotional healing work. We often noticed these releasing responses from our horses when they were working with students. However, after the horses received Reiki attunements, these actions become more obvious and pronounced. For instance, they might poop eight times in 15 minutes, which is far more than usual. Or they might yawn 9 or 10 times during or after a session. In addition,



Our little dog Cody is a Reiki master while his buddy Kringle remained at Level 1—until Holy Fire Reiki came home!

lessons became smoother and more enjoyable for everyone involved, with yawning, shaking, rolling horses afterward. We all found ourselves to be profoundly relaxed at some point in the lesson. Even students who were working against fear at the beginning of the lesson would quickly relax into the session and their time with the horse.

A Reiki attunement is not a fix-all for animals. It does not take the place of training or of proper veterinary care. But as with humans, Reiki can supplement these. And as with humans, Reiki works gradually on the animal, although occasionally we do see profound changes fairly quickly depending upon the animal and the issue.

Do all animals want or need an attunement?

This might surprise you, but the answer is no. Before attuning any animal, I always obtain permission from the animal's caregiver/legal guardian, then from the animal itself. After speaking with William, my Reiki Master Teacher, about what levels would be appropriate (we agreed that all would⁵) I simply ask them if they would like an attunement and if they do, then which level. They seem to have an awareness of the level that will best suit them. I've noticed that not many animals jump immediately to the Master Level.—they seem to take two steps to get there. And then at another time, several months down the road, they decide upon the Master Level if they have the opportunity. Most of my herd eventually went to that level, but two decided to stay at the ART Level for years until Karuna Reiki[®] came along. My three cats all decided on Level I and my dogs on Level II.⁶

How is it possible to receive permission from an animal you may ask? I could simply ask the animal, but for something as important as a Reiki attunement, I want to be certain that my ego is not involved so I ask the animal to communicate with me through my dowsing rods. I have noticed that animals whose humans have Reiki and who have received treatments and are familiar with Reiki often say YES right away to a Reiki attunement—those animals who are not familiar with Reiki are not as sure. Many of these animals have asked if they can receive Reiki first to get to know the energy and then make up their minds, and all these animals have afterwards chosen to be attuned. They know what they want. One of my Reiki Master friends who does horse healing work similar to ours asked the members of her herd

if they wanted Reiki attunements and while many did, one horse said: “No thanks, I have a different way of healing, and I'm going to keep using that!” I guess it's no different from human healers having different modalities of healing.

Twice, troubled horses whose humans wished them to have a Reiki attunement were unsure if they wanted it, a situation that I'm not comfortable going forward with. Instead, my herd intervened. In one case, I had forgotten to close a gate to the pasture earlier that morning and the horses ignored it all morning until the early afternoon, when it was time for Reiki attunements. Clinic participants were with me, asking the horses if they wanted Reiki attunements. Two of my horses who were Karuna Reiki[®] Masters were in the arena with me as well, helping and holding space. Although the owner really wanted this horse to have Reiki, the horse did not have much experience with it and was unsure, so I was not going to proceed. My horses filed into the arena one by one in a very calm manner, ignored all of the other horses tied there who had said “yes” to an attunement and went to the one unsure horse to speak with him. Even Big Buddy who was holding space, untied himself and went over. Then they calmly came to me to be led back to the pasture. The people present all said they would not have believed it if they had not seen it. But it was VERY clear what was happening! The horse then said he did want a Reiki attunement after all.

I know some people believe that animals already have the ability to work with energy and so they don't need an attunement. Yet I had seen such a positive effect from my own animals' attunements that I wondered about this. So I went to an expert, my horse Star. She is the wise woman of my herd and was profoundly affected when she received her first Reiki attunement, so she was a natural to answer this question. Star said,

Like you, we don't *need* a Reiki attunement, but we enjoy the energies. Just as a human can receive healing from receiving Reiki, so can we. But it is empowering to receive a direct connection to this energy and to get to decide how and when to use it ourselves. We find that we can release the energies that we take from you much more easily and more completely now that we have Reiki to help. Before Reiki, like human healers, we had to use our own energy when we healed, which we had to build up to use and which could deplete our energy over time. Having the ability to tap into the unlimited supply of Reiki energy means that we do not have to deplete our energy to help with your healing. This is nice.

I know you are busy and don't really have the time to get out here with your Reiki hands every time we need

⁴ Linda Kohanov, *The Power of the Herd: A Nonpredatory Approach to Social Intelligence, Leadership, and Innovation*, San Francisco, CA: New World Library, 2013, 122.

⁵ *Animals That Heal*, 11-12.

⁶ See *Ibid.*, 12-13.



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Jasper is an Usui Reiki Master and a Karuna Reiki® Master. He loves our line of essential oils too!

help. This takes that burden off of you. And yet, we appreciate your Reiki hands when you do find time to get out.

In fact, the horses give Reiki to me more often than I find the time to give it to them. And I am so grateful. They are EXPERTS at using this energy. Once, after an hour-long Reiki session and meditation, I was feeling pretty clear and proud of myself. And yet, a few minutes in the pasture and Big Buddy came over to say “you missed something” and started breathing over my heart space. I immediately felt something lift—and realized how in tune they are with energy. Our little dogs and cats are also quick to jump up on us and work on us when we need it. My husband is a diabetic and has been struggling with his sugar intake in the past few weeks. Cody, our Lhasa Apso, jumps on his lap in the morning as he has his coffee and soon both of them are yawning and releasing, and my husband starts to feel better!

People often tell me my animals are not like other animals, one comment being that they are “too calm.” One talented horse-woman and journalist writing about the farm said: “I’ve been around horses for 40 years, and I’ve never seen horses this quiet. Are your horses always this quiet?” The answer is yes, they are, and she was astounded when she learned that many of them were very young. People who are usually frightened of horses feel safe around ours “because they are so calm.” Others remark that the cats and dogs seem to participate in our clinics and classes. In fact, they do. All of the animals at Hidden Brook Farm tell me they really enjoy spreading this work, that it’s important and that they believe we are making a difference in the world. They like being a part of that.

After Usui Reiki, my animals had the opportunity to experience Karuna Reiki® and more recently, Holy Fire Usui Reiki and Holy Fire Karuna Reiki®. I will share more about these experiences in “Reiki Animals Part Two” in an upcoming issue of this magazine. 🌸



Pamela Allen LeBlanc is an Usui/Holy Fire ART Master and a Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® Master. She has a B.S. in Agriculture and an MBA. Following a successful career in government, she now teaches Natural Horsemanship. She lives with her husband, three children, 16 horses, three cats, three dogs and a bunch of chickens, guinea hens and ducks. She can be contacted by email at pam@hiddenbrook.ca and through her website at www.hiddenbrook.ca.



In addition to teaching all levels of Usui/Holy Fire II Reiki (including the advanced Holy Fire II Karuna Reiki® Masters), we teach Animal Communication, Horsemanship, Centered Riding, dowsing and emotional healing work by way of the horse at Hidden Brook Farm.

Go to www.hiddenbrook.ca/events/ to see our calendar, plan your courses and learn more about our offerings. Be sure to click on each event to see additional details!



Rain, a Holy Fire Karuna Reiki Master gives Reiki to Joanne during the Autumn Equinox Reiki share.

Reiki Animals

Part Two

BY PAMELA ALLEN-LEBLANC

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GORICA BARUDZIJA

AS A PRACTITIONER OF BOTH Natural Horsemanship and Reiki and as an animal communicator, it follows that these areas of my life would come together in a meaningful way. And that has been the case. I introduced this lively, healing connection to the readers of *Reiki News Magazine* in a Fall 2013 article entitled “Healing with Horses” and continued the story in “Reiki Animals Part One” in the Fall 2015 edition. In those articles, I describe first my early understanding of how my horses could interact even more therapeutically with my human riders and with each other when the animals received healing Usui Reiki sessions, and then eventually my growing awareness of the fact that the horses wished to be attuned to Reiki themselves. If you’d like to follow my story to see how this came about, you can find both of these articles on our website.¹ “Reiki Animals Part Two” describes the experiences of the horses and riders here at Hidden Brook Farm with Karuna Reiki® and Holy Fire Reiki.

Karuna Reiki®

In spring 2013, I studied Karuna Reiki® with William Rand in Glens Falls, NY. I found Karuna Reiki® to be effortless and beautiful. Upon my return, I held a level 2 horse clinic at Hidden Brook Farm, which was attended by one of the Karuna Reiki® Masters I had met in class. As she and I walked into the field to meet the horses, one horse in particular, Honey, who had a troubling past, walked over to this woman and asked for and received Karuna Reiki®. By that time, all but two of my horses had been Usui Reiki Masters for over a year. Later in that clinic, Honey and four other horses requested and received Karuna Reiki® attunements from the two of us. It was a wonderful opportunity to show my new friend how to give attunements to animals. One of the horses, Dawn, stepped forward and clearly wanted the attunement—much to my surprise as she hadn’t yet wanted to become an Usui Reiki Master. When I said as much to her, she said, “You can do that too if you want but I want Karuna!” So we did as she asked. Aside from the four hours, none of the rest of the horses in the herd nor any of the dogs and cats were interested in Karuna Reiki® and that was fine. They dictate what they want and when. I never push anything on them.

As time went on, I found that the Karuna Reiki® attuned horses seemed to live more effortlessly. We noticed even more healing on their students and the healing work seemed to be gentler and more subtle.

In November, at another level 2 horse clinic, with a different Karuna Reiki® Master from my Glens Falls class and one of my own Karuna Reiki® Master students in attendance, we again asked the animals if anyone wanted Karuna Reiki® attunements. This time, the three youngsters from the herd came along with the more experienced horses, two of whom asked to attend for the second time, indicating that this time, they wanted to receive the attunement from me. Horses, too, agree that it is a great idea to experience more than one attunement and if possible, from other Reiki Masters. Once again, the other animals on the farm were not interested but still, life became even MORE harmonious in our herd. Though the changes were subtle, the healing work in our riding lessons and in my Reiki room became even stronger and more profound.

One change that was not so subtle involved Honey. Several months after the second attunements, Honey, who had been plagued with insecurity and who had still been largely unsafe to ride, said she thought that she was ready to accept a rider now—and would we consider training her in our March break training week. We happily agreed, and she participated in our training for the first time. She did her best. She was still nervous, but seemed to have finally received the confidence to hold it together if we took things slowly for her and paid close attention to her cues. Over time, Storm and a few more horses added Karuna Reiki®—but the rest of the herd stayed with their Usui Reiki and were not really interested in Karuna. I asked Buddy shortly after he received his Karuna Reiki® attunement if animals also needed to “wait” between Usui and Karuna Reiki® attunements and he said, “Heavens yes! This Karuna Reiki® energy is such a high vibration, even for us, and we know how to work with energy. Just like you, we need the Usui Master symbol for six months or so before we are ready to integrate Karuna Reiki® into our energy fields.” I used that as a guideline going forward.

As the horses worked with the higher vibration of energy and developed their healing abilities, however, the herd started asking to work with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) clients. This

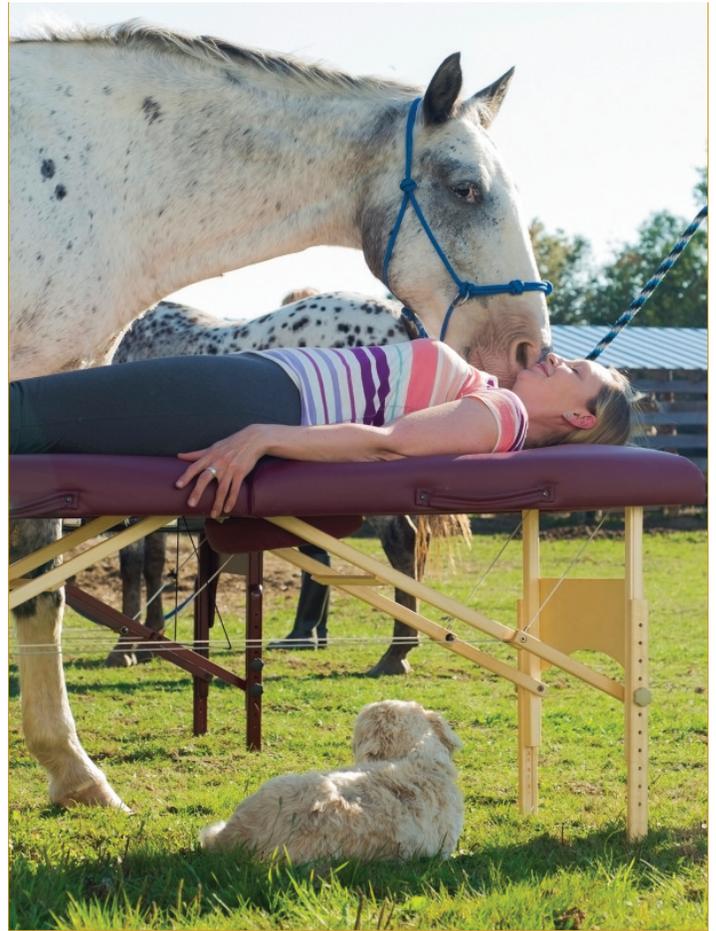
¹ www.hiddenbrook.ca.

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intimidated me. I was aware that with their ability to strip down our emotional states and help us heal deep issues, horses are naturals to work with PTSD clients, and I was also familiar with the large body of research and large number of horse organizations that have had proven, successful results with PTSD clients. I even had a trained counselor, Reiki Master and animal communicator willing to help with this work, yet still, I wasn't sure I was up to the task. In fact, I was quite sure I was not. It came up one day in one of my regular riding lessons however, and two of the students from that lesson approached me and said, "You may not think you are ready to work with clients with PTSD, but you are already working with two of them!" I had had no idea. I knew that these lessons required all of the horses' attention as well as mine. I had also been aware of a lot of energy moving each week for these students, but I had been unaware that two of my students had been diagnosed with PTSD. They both preferred to keep this to themselves until I had shared with them what the horses were asking of me.

We began to discuss PTSD from their points of view during lessons as we meandered through the trails of Eastern New Brunswick, and I realized that the horses who chose to work with these students were Karuna Reiki® Masters and that Storm had decided to have his Karuna Reiki® attunement after starting to work with one of the students with PTSD. All of this had happened below my level of awareness. But the horses had had it well in hand.

In discussing the condition to try and understand it better, one client explained to me that her emotions felt all mixed up and anxiety was constantly on the surface. She also explained that at times, she would suddenly be triggered and panic would overtake her for no reason that she could understand. During one lesson, she had to pass me the reins and run away from her horse, though nothing unusual was happening. She said the things that "triggered" her reactions did not make sense to her, and in sharing this with me, she helped me see our horse Honey in an entirely new light! In fact, this young lady and Honey had similar histories, histories that included abuse.



With a slightly better understanding of PTSD, I could now better understand my horse, and we were better equipped to move forward with Honey's training. The young lady with PTSD who helped me understand Honey asked if she could please ride her. I was not sure how these two fragile but volatile personalities would go together, but we decided to give it a try, so we rehearsed emergency dismounts and discussed what we would do if either panicked in their lessons. Then I stayed close by in case either needed me. I need not have worried. Honey

and her rider worked together beautifully, each drawing from the other and bringing out the best in each other. Together, they started working through their issues and both became calmer, more confident and more peaceful and settled. Panic attacks largely became a thing of the past for both of them, and we were pleased with the progress we saw.²

Above: Big Buddy (horse) and Cody (dog), Holy Fire Karuna Reiki Masters give Reiki to Rebecca during our Reiki share.

Left: Sisters, Star and Rain clear energies from the Reiki table between students.



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Right: Star shares a zen moment with Phillipa during the Reiki share.

Below: Cody (dog) helps Lisa give Reiki to a client.

One day, after hearing about the subject of “soul attachments,” the girls with PTSD shyly approached and asked if it was possible that they could have an attachment to their energy. I had been doing some reading on this and had recently been introduced to the book *Remarkable Healings: A Psychiatrist Discovers Unsuspected Roots of Mental and Physical Illness* by psychiatrist Dr. Shakuntala Modi,³ so I was aware that this was a possibility. I told them I was not sure, but I would dowse to check for them if they wished, and if they had an energetic attachment, I would combine Reiki with one of the removal techniques and attempt to remove it for them later that day. As we were discussing this, Honey untied herself and came to stand beside me, nudging my right hand. She had never untied herself before so we were all surprised. But as understanding dawned on us all, we looked at each other, then back to Honey, and I asked out loud “Do you have soul attachments, girl?” to which she nodded yes. I was in tears. I had heard about soul



attachments several months earlier but never even considered that my sweet mare might suffer from this. It turned out there were souls attached both to the girls and the horse. That afternoon, I worked with Reiki and my spirit guides, and we cleared the soul attachments. What happened next was truly amazing. The girls said that they felt better than they ever had before and were not completely drained for the first time in a long time. And the horse came around so completely, that she was able to be used in other lessons safely, even with small children. She still can react if she is frightened. The difference is that she used to be frightened all of the time and constantly working to hold it together, so the least little thing could set her into a panic. Now, she becomes frightened at the same things that other horses become frightened of and can generally hold it together, keeping everyone safe. What a blessing my PTSD students have been to us. They gave me the key to understanding my horse, and she is now ridden regularly and is confident and happy with her life—no longer fearful, confused and insecure. It only took us 8 or 9 years to get there with her, but it was worth it!

Holy Fire Reiki

Less than a year after my own Karuna Reiki® attunement, I read about Holy Fire Reiki. My response to this was “Yahoo, I get to study with William again!” I remembered how I hadn’t seen a need for Karuna Reiki® when I was an Usui Reiki Master as my life already was wonderful, but I had followed my inner guidance, attended the class and my life had improved anyway—beyond

² For more information about PTSD and Reiki, please refer to Kathie Lipinski’s 2012 article in this magazine. Kathie Lipinski, “Reiki and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,” *Reiki News Magazine*, Winter 2012. www.reikiwebstore.com/ProductPage.cfm?ProductID=668&CategoryID=39.

³ Shakuntala Modi, *Remarkable Healings: A Psychiatrist Discovers Unsuspected Roots of Mental and Physical Illness*. (Newburyport, MA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 1998). For further information on the subject of soul attachments and Reiki, see www.reiki.org/reikinews/improvepractice.html.





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Left: Honey, after her attachments were released became dependable enough for lessons; here my daughter, Caroline demonstrates a vaulting move.

Below: Tiba often scratches to get into my Reiki room when I have a client so she can help.

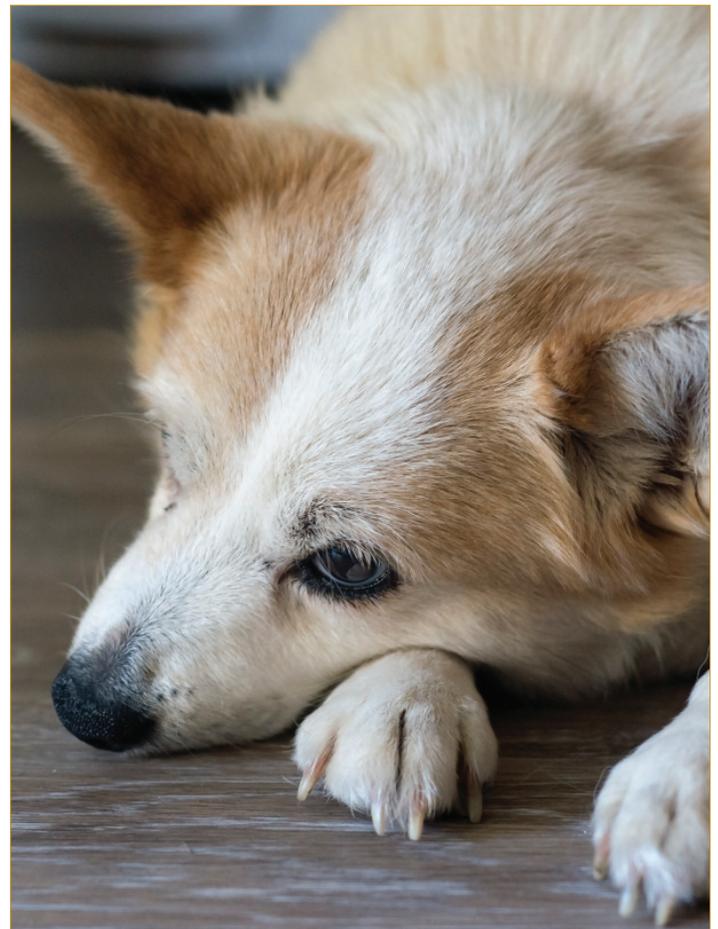
what I thought was possible. So I followed my inner guidance this time too, excited both by the opportunity to study with William again at some point and the opportunity to work with another energy that I was certain would only serve to raise my vibration and improve my life once again.

I was guided to sign up for the Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® class in Glens Falls in spring 2015. Imagine my surprise when I got my manual to see that there was a technique in the manual for releasing soul and spirit attachments. I was elated with this as well as with the information on the new Holy Fire Reiki energy. While I'd love to say class was a breeze and I had a ball, I can't really say that. It was wonderful to see William again and to learn again, but I was truly unprepared for the huge shift that I underwent in the class. It was uncomfortable at times, and at other times I was overwhelmed by what is possible with this new energy. Old patterns came up that needed to be healed and released, and I felt some physical discomfort too. But I knew that my spiritual guidance had brought me to class and that guidance has never steered me wrong—so along with my wonderful classmates, I persevered. The residual effects of the physical discomfort went away shortly after I returned home, so that I could truly begin to enjoy the addition of Holy Fire in my energy work.

In class, William said that animals really enjoy Holy Fire. Is that ever true! I arrived home from class only 45 minutes before I had to teach riding lessons. In order to accommodate my two classes that day and give myself time for the 10 hour drive home, I had put the two classes together in one and was teaching it in the evening. One was my young rider class, the other was my autism group. Those two classes would not normally go together very smoothly, but this was the only way to get both classes in that week. I also had a few students from the Thursday group join us and to add to the confusion, not all of my help was available. The class took place without a hitch. Everyone had a great time, including me. The horses were very drawn to me and let me know that they really enjoyed the feel of the Holy Fire energy as I spread it around the group as we headed out on the trail!

In my energy practice, the work itself became more effortless and effective than I had ever dreamed possible, and I felt strongly that Holy Fire was such a wonderful and important energy that it needed to spread in my region. So in June I was ready to teach a Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® class to three of my human Usui and Karuna Reiki® Masters.

Since Holy Fire Reiki works through ignitions, instead of attunements, it is now a bit more complicated to share a Holy Fire Reiki Master attunement with animals. And it also occurred to me just before class that I had not discussed this with William, so I emailed him. He suggested that I try a pre-ignition followed by one additional ignition for animals (instead of the additional ignitions humans need) and asked me to let him know how it went.



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house, they would maintain their heart connection with me and would receive the Holy Fire ignitions and meditations this way.

We began the class with the Ocean of Holy Love meditation. It was just lovely for all involved, and just before it wrapped up, the dog who had remained outside and who suffers from a heart condition, came running in, flopped down, went into a deep state of relaxation and completed the meditation with us. After the meditation, he stayed in this state of relaxation for the entire time we wrote in our journals. It seemed that he was trying to “catch up.” When he came awake from his state of relaxation, we were discussing the meditation, and he told us that as he had listened to us and felt the energy of the Ocean of Holy Love, he changed his mind and “could he please join us?” Of course he could. And he did.

Next came the Holy Fire pre-ignition, followed by additional Holy Love meditations and ignitions. I can't tell you how deeply the animals went into those meditations and ignitions. And while they often ran out of the room and went outside during the theory portions of the course, they would run right back in as SOON as a meditation or ignition was about to begin! The other students and I could not get over it and would shake our heads, marveling that they knew just when to come back and that they would flop right down and go entirely limp, beyond what they do when they are sleeping. One little dog is part Chihuahua, and she made us laugh as she snored and snorted through the meditations! The cats were in the room with us the first day, but opted to go in the room right behind us the second and third days, where only a window separated us so that they could see and hear just what we were doing. They slept almost touching each other from the moment class started and they NEVER do this!

Before the class, I had asked the horses if they would need all three days of ignitions. My horses had indicated that if they wanted Usui Holy Fire, two days of ignitions were enough, but that if they wished to have Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® it was necessary for them to join us on the third day. They also said that they enjoyed



Although I had hoped to “practice” doing ignitions with the animals before class, I ran out of time, and made the decision to offer the ignitions to the animals right along with the human students in that first class, which added to my nervousness about the class in general. Of course the ignitions worked when William did them, but would they work when I led them? Thankfully, I knew all three of the students joining the first class really well and was comfortable with them. They were all animal lovers and animal communicators so at the beginning of class, I asked if they minded if the animals joined us. They were delighted, so as I started class, I heart connected with my cats, dogs and herd of horses, offering them the opportunity to join us. This is how we connect and communicate even across distances. Eleven of our 14 horses, two cats and two dogs indicated that although they would be in the pasture around the

Above: Roy, the Reiki cat participates in Reiki classes and helps with our Reiki sessions knowing intuitively where clients need Reiki.

Right: The ducks at Hidden Brook Farm seem to enjoy Reiki too, though they have never requested an attunement or ignition.





Photo courtesy of Rebecca Willson

Lizzy (left) helped Sasha work through fear and back pain.

Receiving Reiki from Reiki Animals

BY PAM ALLEN-LEBLANC

IN A SERIES of *Reiki News Magazine* articles over the last three years,¹ I have shared our unique approach here at Hidden Brook Farm of attuning animals, giving them the ability to use Reiki on themselves, on other animals and on humans. Our staff and students have found that when we regularly receive Reiki from the animals, we sometimes achieve amazing health benefits. People who meet the Reiki animals at the farm comment that they seem calmer, wiser and more in-tune with people than other animals. We felt it was time to put together some stories so that others could understand the tremendous benefits of working with Reiki-attuned animals.

In addition to using Reiki for their own healing and stress reduction, Reiki animals tend to turn right around and use Reiki

gy. For animals, receiving the gift of Reiki in the form of an attunement allows them to work on us more effortlessly, accomplishing more. As more of our animals were attuned, we noticed that we could go to the barn feeling empty, upset or frustrated and come away feeling great. I decided to quantitatively capture what was happening with our emotions.

Soon after this decision, several of my students agreed to take a “test” each week for a period of 4–6 weeks noting the emotions present in them when they arrived, rating them in severity from 1 (least) to 10 (greatest), then filling in the form at the end of the lesson. We noticed dramatic differences. The negative emotions, which were often in the 6–10 range at the beginning of the lesson were in the 1–2 range by the end if they

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on us. Most of our students receive healing from the horses at the farm, but many are skeptical at first. That skepticism generally goes away once they work with Reiki horses, dogs, cats and other Reiki-attuned animals.

How do animals work with our energy? Working with “horse healers” in the Tao of Equus work and as an animal communicator, I have noticed that pets or animals who live with people are constantly working on the energy of their human caregivers. Their work is individualized and tends to be tailored to our needs. But generally, they seem to get close to us then expand their auras to include us—and we notice a lot of things happening. Our stress lessens, our emotions change; they might shake and roll, we yawn and they yawn, all of it releasing harmful ener-

were present at all! Formerly positive emotions were heightened significantly and new positive emotions were present—generally peace, fulfillment, joy and contentment. Along with this scientific data are the personal stories my students have agreed to share, giving us more of a picture of what Reiki animals can do for us.

Sasha

Sasha is a student in the light worker class who has received help from the horses. She experienced anxiety and suffered from back pain due to scoliosis. Although she had a fear of horses, she enrolled in weekly lessons, believing this was a therapy she needed. As Sasha studied to finish her Master’s degree and worked full time, she experienced a lot of stress and heightened anxiety. The weekly lessons helped her feel peaceful and calm and significantly reduced her back pain. Riding can put stress on the back but when Sasha rides Lizzie (a Reiki

¹ “Horses That Heal,” *Reiki News Magazine*, Fall 2013; “Reiki Animals, Part One,” *Reiki News Magazine*, Fall 2015; “Reiki Animals, Part Two,” *Reiki News Magazine*, Winter 2015.



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Willson

RECEIVING REIKI FROM REIKI ANIMALS

Tessa and Star share a special bond. Tessa has recovered completely from Lupus with the help of Star who received ignitions for Usui/Holy Fire Reiki Master and Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® Master.

cludes that since the only addition to the equation is her weekly rides and Reiki sessions with Star, Star and her Reiki must be responsible for the change. His skepticism about Reiki has disappeared. In fact, Brent has decided to take his Level I class in the very near future!

Master and Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® Master), she gets a lot of relief—more so than from any other therapy she has tried. The horses showed her how to stay present and centered throughout the day, shifting her fear and helping her build her confidence as a rider and a person. Sasha is a Level I Reiki student, and plans to pursue additional Reiki courses. In the meantime, she considers her weekly lesson with Lizzie a treatment that she is loathe to miss. Her husband, Matt, must also see the results—he is quick to remind her that she has a lesson in a few days whenever she faces difficulties!

Tessa

An elementary school teacher and a Level II Reiki practitioner, Tessa started lessons two years ago with Star—a Reiki Master and Karuna Reiki® Master. At that time, Tessa suffered from Lupus and severe food allergies. Her Lupus symptoms included severe skin rashes and bruising, poor circulation, hair loss, joint pain and swelling, sensitivity to heat and light, fatigue and high antinuclear antibodies. She wasn't able to manage her symptoms on her own; her health was deteriorating. After the first few weeks of riding lessons with Star, Tessa began to notice a reduction in her joint pain and eventually, the joint pain completely disappeared. Two months later, her sensitivity to the sun was gone and within a year, all of the symptoms of Lupus had disappeared.

Tessa's fiance Brent says Star provides Tessa with a sense of peace and wholeness and that in the last two-and-a-half years, she is a different person, both happier and healthier. He con-

Kim

Also a member of the light workers class, Kim had a fear of horses when she started in 2012, but came to us on the advice of a well-respected medium who told her horses were the “missing ingredient” in her life. As a Level II Reiki practitioner, when she found our horses had Reiki, felt it was a natural fit for her and was very open to receiving Reiki from the horses. Kim's predominant issue when she started—in addition to the fear—was a lack of trust in people. She struggled to open her heart even to close friends and family, and found it especially difficult to meet new people. Kim worked with Rain and noticed right away when Rain began working on her heart space, automatically resisting by protecting the area. One evening we decided to dance with the horses, moving to different music to see which ones the horses liked best. We were all enjoying ourselves, immersed in the moment. Kim was having so much fun, she forgot to protect her heart. Rain grabbed the opportunity and removed her heart wall completely. When the music was done, Kim was in tears, overwhelmed at how good it felt to have let Rain into her heart and to have shed the heart wall. Unsure about how to pro-

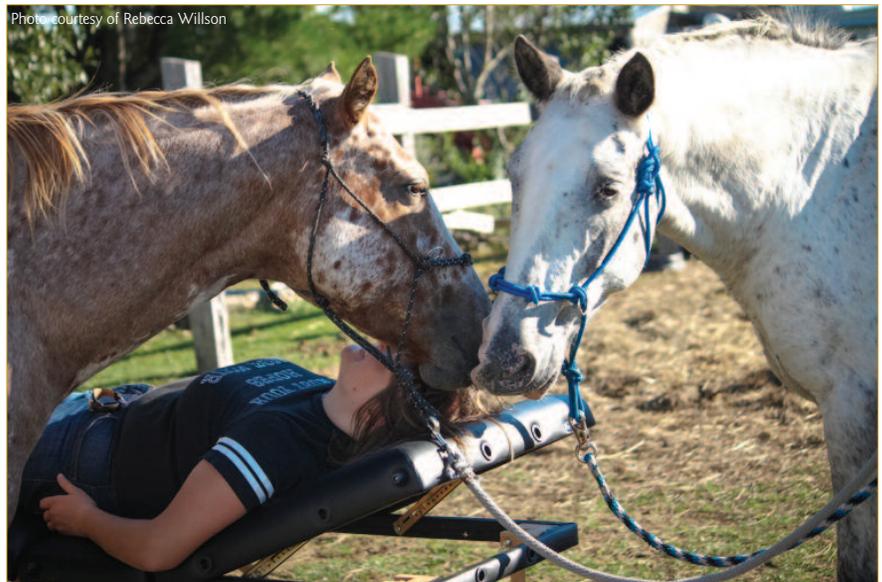


Photo courtesy of Rebecca Willson

Rain (left) works on Kim with the help of Buddy.

ceed without the heart wall, each week Kim relied on Rain to teach her new ways of moving forward. She was able to let her family and friends, co-workers and her daycare students take up residence in her renovated heart. Her shyness largely disappeared as she became happier and more confident. She went on to become a Reiki Master and a Karuna Reiki® Master and recently added Holy Fire to both of those titles. She still gets a weekly Reiki session with Rain, and occasionally Rain or some of the other horses asks for Reiki from her in return. She is always happy to do this for them and in addition, brings them each two beautiful apples—“After all they do for us, it’s the least we can do for them.”

Linda

After a year of riding lessons, Linda was still not sure about animal communication or Reiki from animals. Yet she enjoyed her lessons, finding solace in her time with Star and a reduction of her back pain, so she became more inclined to think that there might be something to it. Then one event changed everything for her. Linda’s dad was in the hospital with pneumonia that had progressed to both lungs. His health went back and forth, but after three weeks in the Critical Care Unit, the doctors could not figure out why he was not responding to treatment and had to call the family to tell them that they did not expect her father to survive. Linda was with him overnight in his darkened hospital room thinking and praying, reflecting and asking for strength and peace. Suddenly, through her closed eyes, Linda saw an image of Star and felt an overwhelming feeling of calm come over her as the little white snip on Star’s muzzle, what Linda calls Star’s kissing spot, reached toward her. Linda was overwhelmed once more with emotion, but with profound feelings of euphoria and peace that she had only felt a few times in her life. She came to lessons the next week perplexed and amazed, asking me if this was possible; could Star possibly have been giving her Reiki at this critical moment at that distance? I wasn’t sure so we asked Star. Star said “Of course I was. Linda had asked for it and needed it and so I sent her Reiki!” I don’t think there was a dry eye as Linda recanted her story to the group.

Her father did pull through though he was diagnosed with Infinite Pulmonary Fibrosis and

Bertina’s health was deteriorating in the hospital and medical professionals did not know what to do. She felt that when Gem came home, she could heal—and remarkably, that’s exactly what she did.

remained in the hospital for over three months with a prognosis of at most another year to live. Linda left her job and became his primary caregiver. Her Dad’s year was up last July and his health continues to improve, both of them are happy with whatever time they share now. Linda studied the first two levels of Reiki and uses it at home on her dad and in meals she prepares for them both, and she still works with Star every Saturday.

Bertina

Bertina helps me here on the farm. In May 2013, when she was just 25, although we knew she suffered from irritable bowel syndrome, no one was expecting that she would be admitted to the hospital with ulcerative colitis. Then six days later, her bowel ruptured, and she was rushed into surgery. Initially, surgeons thought things went well but the second day, she was in pain. This led to fever, infection, and sepsis. She had a second operation, but after this surgery, the doctors could not stem her internal bleeding. Everyone was worried she would not make it.

Bertina’s horse, Gem, has received ignitions for Usui/Holy Fire Reiki Master and Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® Master who I had trained. He was living temporarily with his previous owner three hours away. When I visited Bertina in the hospital she said “You know, Gem is doing all he can for me in Moncton. We communicate and he sends me Reiki every day, but he and I both feel that if he was closer, I might be able to recover better.” I knew that her doctors didn’t know what to do as complication after complication arose and her wounds refused to heal. I gulped, told her I’d find space for Gem, hooked the trailer on and picked him up the next day. Gem arrived June 18. Bertina’s health immediately improved. The infection cleared and her internal bleeding stopped. On her first day pass, she visited Gem and a week after his arrival, after a 39-day stay in the hospital, Bertina was released and with Gem’s help began to heal fully.

Photo courtesy of Rebecca Willson





Photo courtesy of Gorica Barudzija

RECEIVING REIKI FROM REIKI ANIMALS

"Reiki Rats," Pumpernickel (left) and Bear.

Bertina has not studied Reiki yet, though lately she has decided that it's time! She receives regular Reiki treatments from Gem and from the horses in my herd, especially Breaker Dawn. She feels that Reiki from Gem was and still is paramount to her healing and shows her appreciation to him with treats, back scratches and regular visits.

Although horses are incredibly effective with Reiki, it's not only horses that can do this. Dogs, cats and other pets can too. My dogs and Roy the Reiki cat regularly help with my Reiki clients.

One Reiki student, Gorica, asked me if I would attune her pet rats. Bear and Pumpernickel had lung issues, and she felt that Reiki would really help them. Having never attuned rats before, I wasn't sure, but kept an open mind. I'll only talk to an animal who agrees to talk with me, and I will only attune an animal to Reiki if both the caregiver and animal want the animal attuned. I was amazed at their intelligence and willingness. When I asked if they wanted Reiki attunements they asked to feel the energy first. Pumpernickel said no, but Bear said yes. When I asked Bear why he wanted Reiki, he said because Gorica, a photographer and Level II Reiki student, did not do her own Reiki—but that she spent a lot of time in her office editing photos so he could do Reiki for her then! They were so sweet! The brothers lived in a four-story "condo" cage and Gorica wanted Bear to remain in it for his attunement so he would not pee on the carpet. As a sign that Bear and I were in communication, I asked him to climb to the top of the cage to receive his attunement, which he did. Then Gorica left the room. Just as I was finishing Bear's

attunement, Pumpernickel pushed himself under my hands and flattened himself on top of Bear saying that he had changed his mind and could he have an attunement too.

At the end of the session and with Gorica present, the new "Reiki rats" asked to clean my fingernails as a payment. Gorica said this was quite a lovely experience. They then proceeded to give me the most gentle and thorough manicure of my life!

Rats have a short life span and both Bear and Pumpernickel have now passed on, but I'll never forget this experience with them. It changed forever the way I look at these gentle, intelligent creatures.

Several of our students have Reiki dogs. Rebecca was having difficulty with her adopted three-year-old Staffordshire Terrier mix named Penny. Experienced in owning a dog and training it, Rebecca could not figure this dog out. She consulted with several dog specialists but with no results. So, we booked a communication session. We had to meet offsite, where Penny could move and be in a familiar space as she was unable to be still and couldn't handle new situations. In the first session, Penny showed me that there were several sources of stress causing her difficulty. One was soul attachments and energies that Rebecca had picked up from her clients, so Rebecca and I made an appointment to address these. Penny visibly relaxed and leaned into me. The dog then explained that she was super sensitive and showed me the size of her energetic field. It was huge!

I asked Penny if she wished to have a Reiki attunement. She felt around in my energy field and became aware that I would be studying Holy Fire Reiki in May. She said, "Go get your new

Photo courtesy of Rebecca Willson



Penny and Rebecca.

Reiki, then we will talk!” When I studied Holy Fire Reiki, my teacher explained that animals enjoy Holy Fire Reiki more than other kinds, and I smiled. The sensitive Penny was aware of things that I was not!

Rebecca noticed that Penny had become calmer and more manageable after our first meeting and noticed an additional level of calmness after we did her soul release work. When I returned from my Holy Fire class, Rebecca and I arranged for Penny’s attunement. I connected with Penny to see if she would be ready and available at that time, and she clearly indicated that I was to come to her house this time!

At Rebecca’s home, I met her older dog, Mabel, a Lab-pitbull mix and also a rescue who is around 15 and it was clear why Penny had wanted me to come there. Because I was there, I was able to give attunements to both dogs. Mabel LOVED the Reiki, and Penny had to “run off” the excess energy.

Rebecca knows that Penny and Mabel do Reiki for her daily. Penny insists on touching her as she works. She also notices them work on her sister-in-law, who works in palliative care. Weeks when there are more deaths on her unit, Penny lays on her and won’t leave her alone. But what Rebecca finds truly amazing is watching them work on each other. In February following their

Spring attunements, Mabel had a tooth abscess and some time later, fell down some stairs. In both cases, Penny maintained physical contact with her at all times. Recently, Mabel, who is mostly blind and deaf, had a seizure. Once again, Penny patiently worked on her senior friend. Rebecca knows Mabel’s time is getting close and they take it day by day, but Mabel is not done yet and enjoys providing a stable influence and Reiki for her young friend, Penny.

I hope that you get an opportunity to work with Reiki animals someday if you do not already. It is extremely rewarding. In my next article, I will share stories of how our Reiki horses work with our autistic students and the incredible results they achieve! 



Pamela Allen LeBlanc is an Usui/Holy Fire ART/Master and a Holy Fire Karuna Reiki® Master. She has a B.S. in Agriculture and an MBA. Following a successful career in government, she now teaches Natural Horsemanship. She lives with her husband, three children, 16 horses, three cats, three dogs and a bunch of chickens, guinea hens and ducks. She can be contacted by email at pam@hiddenbrook.ca and through her website at www.hiddenbrook.ca.

In May and October, we pair our deeper horse courses and animal communication classes with our Usui/Holy Fire II Reiki Master (Teacher) class for a FULL week of learning for those who have to travel to study here. And in July, we do the same with our Holy Fire II/Karuna Reiki® Masters class. Go to www.hiddenbrook.ca/events/ to see our calendar, plan your courses and learn more about our offerings. Be sure to click on each event to see additional details.





Reiki, Horses and Autistic Children

BY PAM ALLEN-LEBLANC

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GORICA BARUDZIJA

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, based on the information that I had read in Dr. Temple Grandin's books *Thinking in Pictures* and *Animals in Translation*¹ about the ability people on the autism spectrum have to better understand how animals think, I came to understand that because a horse's brain and an autistic person's brain are very similar, horses can "reach" people who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) better than humans can. Based on this newly emerging concept, I decided to offer riding lessons to people with autism. As a result, we have experienced tremendous success over the last four and a half years, as our autism students seem to teach us and bring joy, understanding and learning to us all—volunteers, instructors, horses and other students.

I am an animal scientist so Dr. Grandin's work gave me the scientific viewpoint from which I can understand the potential of putting people on the autism spectrum together with horses. Reiki and my intuition told me that Reiki-attuned horses would be even more effective in helping people manage their conditions. To this end, we have noted several repeating patterns in the changes that our students experience. Usually the first change that we see involves connection. Our autism students often have difficulty connecting with and feeling empathy for other humans but seem to learn this skill within the first few sessions with the horse. We then watch them turn around and

The dynamic duo, Taryn and Breaker Dawn share so much through their connection.

connect with humans. It's truly beautiful. Over time, many of the students seem to develop more empathy. The second is in the area of confidence. They all grow in confidence as their anxiety and stress levels go down, and they seem better able to cope with the task of living everyday life, which for a person with autism can be daunting. The third change that we often see involves sleep patterns. As their confidence grows, lessening their levels of stress, some of our students notice improvements in their sleep patterns, which is an issue for many with this condition.

Why is this so effective?

There are several reasons why the connection we have established between our horses and our autistic students has been so beneficial. The first reason is that unlike even the most well-meaning humans, horses don't judge. And so by not judging our students, they create a safe space for them. Next comes the ability of Reiki to provide a calm, relaxing environment for the students and the horses to work together in. We have seen that the horses put up with much more from an autistic student rider than they will from other students.

Another important reason for the partnership's effectiveness is that because, as Dr. Grandin's writings describe, horses' brains are wired so much like human ones, the horses appear able to develop lines of communication with our autistic students on a level that the rest of us find difficult to understand; yet it is palpable and visible.

Also, since both horses in general and individuals on the autism spectrum are

hypersensitive and often unable to ignore the "noise" of everyday life that assaults our senses, our quiet lessons give our Reiki horses, through their usual outpouring of Reiki, the chance to help our students and themselves find a place to release the stress and excess energy they pick up each week. It's a beautiful thing to behold.

Once we determine that our potential students who are diagnosed as autistic can safely ride, we enroll them in our program. In addition to this, we teach the parents to lead the horses, creating a bonding experience between parent, horse and child.

We want you to meet some of the intelligent, sensitive, talented and remarkable students from our autism program.

Amanda

Twelve-year-old Amanda was our first student. Her mom, Lisa, is a Level II Reiki practitioner who has worked with other therapeutic riding programs and helped us get set up with a year-round program that would be specifically designed for young people diagnosed with autism who would use our "Reiki horses." Amanda was diagnosed with Mosaic Down's Syndrome before birth and later, with ADHD (inattentive type) and Asperger's, which often accompany this. Lisa hoped our program would help Amanda manage stress and

¹ Temple Grandin, *Thinking in Pictures, Expanded Edition: My Life with Autism*, rev. ed., (New York, NY: Vintage, 2010).; Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson, *Animals in Translation: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior*, (San Diego, CA: Harcourt, 2006).

hypertonia (overall muscle weakness), which is also part of her condition.

We generally allow our horses to pick their students. Star picked Amanda and a beautiful relationship ensued. Amanda tells me they have similar personality traits, that Star is the most like her. Lessons started in September at the beginning of the school year. The transition from summer to “school” for children on the autism spectrum is often difficult. Amanda’s parents were amazed at the easy transition Amanda experienced that fall; our jaws all dropped the third week of lessons when this shy, sensitive young woman announced that she planned to attend her first middle school dance. This increased interest and capability with her school experiences and academic work continued to expand and grow as the year progressed.

Our riders learn to groom their horses and work with them to establish a relationship. Amanda and her dad, Larry, call it their “date night” each Friday when they work together in lessons. Initially, Amanda’s weak muscles and lack of balance made it difficult for her to pick out hooves, get on the horse and maintain her seat, so we provided volunteers to walk with Amanda and hold each leg as we trained her father to lead Star. Each week we noticed Amanda’s core strength improve. Now, although we still walk with her in case she needs us, she and Star have things figured out; we are just there for show. Amanda can give all of the cues to Star and can even trot bareback on her own—sometimes with her arms out straight relying only on her balance. And she enjoys doing that to show us all what a great rider she has become.

When asked what she has gained from the lessons, Amanda, who is now a Level I Reiki practitioner herself, says that she enjoys the sense of energy and connection she gets from the horses. She says she feels a sense of spiritual belonging with animals

and that her time with Star has also helped improve her focus.

She finds that in addition to being physically stronger from her riding, Star has shown her how to be stronger mentally. “I don’t have as much Asperger’s as I used to in elementary [school]. I guess I don’t have as many traits”: she thinks that she learned to adapt from watching the horses. One trait of her Asperger’s condition is that she is extremely observant, and Amanda believes that this is why she can watch how the horses handle different situations and then adapt them to her own life. She surprised me when she said that she uses the skills from her riding lessons at school and at home. As an example, Amanda says that she can lower her extrasensory levels on cue now, and her parents agree. Noticing that when horses become stressed, they yawn and snort, she translated that to deep breathing for herself, and she employs this technique several times a day. She also says that she sleeps much better than she used to—especially after riding lessons; Larry says she is often asleep on the way home! And through the week, any time that she struggles to sleep, she uses her own Reiki to help. She plans to stick with riding into her adult life as she loves the peace and sense of belonging that she feels with the animals.

In Fall 2014, Amanda was able to share all of this with Dr. Grandin, herself, as she and I, along with my daughter and some other students, were blessed to travel to my undergrad university in Truro, Nova Scotia, to meet Dr. Grandin. There, we had the opportunity to inform her that her work had inspired our riding program.

Taryn

Taryn started lessons with Amanda when she was 11 years old. She said that she had always enjoyed the calm she noticed around her neighbor’s Percherons and wanted to learn to ride because of this. Taryn was originally diagnosed with

extreme deafness in her left ear and profound deafness in her right ear as an infant and with Asperger’s when she was 10. Taryn’s mother, Dawn, was familiar with Dr. Grandin’s work and wondered if our program might provide an outlet both for sport and socializing for her daughter, especially as deafness and autism are both communication disorders. She finds the program has given Taryn a way to communicate with another being without having to talk, allowing her to be herself without the pressure of verbal communication. We all watched Taryn blossom like a flower through her relationship with the horse that chose her—ironically named Breaker Dawn.

Taryn likes Breaker Dawn because she is easygoing and feels they clicked immediately.

I could see Taryn making a connection with Breaker Dawn and realized this was a difficult skill for her. I could almost see the wheels turning as she quickly determined how to apply this to connecting with people. She then proceeded to charm all of the volunteers and staff who helped with lessons! Taryn had a smooth transition into school that year and ALSO announced to us that she planned to attend her school dance which was held a week after Amanda’s!

Then one day, Breaker Dawn decided that Taryn did not need our help, and began gently pushing us out of the way during lessons, wanting Taryn to herself. Turns out that she was right—Taryn was able to begin riding independently well before WE were ready to drop the lead line. Then Taryn’s confidence soared. This growing sense of confidence is something that her mom recognizes, noticing that Taryn has learned to make small talk and is more in touch with what’s going on around her.

This awareness holds true for Taryn herself. She says that when she feels stressed, Breaker Dawn “drains the stress



Amanda with Star—a beautiful relationship.

away” and that when she sometimes has those typical teenage disagreements with her family, Breaker Dawn seems to help her see her way smoothly through those as well. Dawn (the mom) finds that Taryn is always really relaxed after her lessons and that Taryn looks forward to them all week. She loves that Taryn enjoys the opportunity to share with other people and finds she is in her element when she’s here. Lessons tend to bring down Taryn’s anxiety level and she is more relaxed physically, mentally and emotionally.

Like Amanda, Taryn is also attuned to Levels I and II Reiki, as is her mom. Taryn uses her own Reiki at night when her stomach feels funny and it helps that and also helps her sleep.

When I asked Taryn what advice she would give to kids on the autism spectrum who were thinking of working with Reiki horses, she said that “some people just feel drawn to a certain horse and if that horse is drawn to you too, it just clicks. Then it makes your life easier—maybe not your whole life but at least some of it.”

Christopher

Christopher is a 27-year-old man with classic or profound autism and a communication disorder. Christopher is non verbal and lost his vision completely due to

Rain brought wonderful changes for Christopher when they started working together.

retinal detachment a few years prior to starting lessons. This loss of vision caused Christopher to be frustrated, loud and violent much of the time. He suffered from anxiety and migraines and used to self injure with head hitting so that he always had to wear a soft helmet, even to bed. He struggled with appointments and with just about everything. Karen, his mother, is a school intervention worker who works with children with disabilities just like Christopher’s, but recognized that traditional therapies and medications simply were not working for her son. She was grasping at straws when she remembered that he used to enjoy riding horses in his

youth. And while his visual impairment and size do not allow him to ride, she wondered if she could set something up for him to “be around” horses to see if that would help.

At first, she found it difficult to believe that horses could do Reiki for a human—but she was willing to try it, simply to get him some horse-time in the hopes that would help.

It did not take long for Karen’s skepticism to turn to wonder, as her frustrated, unhappy son turned a corner that everyone noticed! The first week, after about 15 minutes with Rain, Christopher lifted his hands and smacked them down hard on Rain’s back. Thank goodness I can communicate with the animals, as I was ready to tell his mother he was not able to handle the sessions and cancel his lesson. His mortified mother grabbed Christopher’s hands and told him the behavior was unacceptable. Meanwhile Rain did not move except to turn her head around to me and say “It’s okay. You don’t understand what is going on with him, but I do. We



understand each other. He needed to do that. Don't cancel his lessons! I need to keep working with this boy." I relayed this to his mother and while Karen was still skeptical about horses, Reiki and animal communication, she was relieved that there would be a second lesson.

At the end of the second lesson, Christopher indicated that he was "finished" with a slightly less violent smack to Rain. After Rain looked at me with another "okay," I had to assume that it was progress. And by the third session, this agitated and somewhat violent young man was smiling and gentle with the horse. After a few more sessions, Christopher stopped self injuring and was able to remove his helmet, which after more lessons led to its removal in bed at night and during the day. Having had big behavior problems at his dental appointments for years, after his regular Reiki time with the horses, his dental appointments were so much easier that his dentist thought that perhaps he had been prescribed medication. Karen explained that the only change she had made was to bring him to horse sessions with Reiki horses. The dentist was surprised and skeptical but grudgingly admitted that "something" was working so keep it up.

And the changes in his behaviors and personality are not relegated to his dental appointments. Karen finds Christopher less anxious and frustrated. He talks, giggles and hums and where he used to yell high-pitched, negative sounds, now he sounds happy and content. Now Christopher tries using language and while he can generally only initiate the first sound for each word, there are several words we can all understand. He is beginning to communicate in a very different way.

Because of his vision impairment, Christopher generally simply sits with Rain though sometimes he even walks her around the arena. At first, it was with one of us holding his hand, but eventually he

and Rain walked on their own, each using the energy of the other to guide them.

One day, Bev, another animal communicator, visited, and Rain communicated full sentences for Christopher to her. This was a miracle as it allowed Christopher to express himself more completely than ever before. Bev described the things Christopher loves about his mother in detail, explaining things she does for him that neither Bev nor I had any way of knowing, but Karen was in tears as she said that she had always hoped he had felt this way, but never knew for sure. For the first time in her life, she received words of appreciation from her son. There were not many dry eyes in the arena that day, and Karen lost her skepticism about both Reiki and animal communication.

Sometimes the horses work together to bring about change. Christopher, who is very sensitive to changes in the weather and suffers migraines from air pressure changes, came to ride on a low pressure day after not having been there for awhile. He was not the happy, relaxed man that we had come to know. Star decided to come in and help Rain that day and the rest of the horses stopped grazing and joined them, lining up outside, facing the arena. They just stood there for most of the time Christopher was there. I noticed their odd formation and attention as I glanced out the door and asked Buddy what they were doing. Bud explained that Christopher had "a great head pain," and that he needed all of their help that day. So all of the horses worked on Christopher that day and within 45 minutes, our happy and relaxed Christopher was back. We were all just a little amazed at the change the horses brought about.

Christopher is trying new things again like music therapy, massage, swimming and art therapy. He is happy, humming much of the time. Occasionally, he gets quiet and starts making similar humming sounds to those he makes when he is here

with Rain. When Karen notices this she asks him who he is talking to and he replies, "Rai," so she knows that the two of them connect even when he is not here.

Eventually, Karen studied Reiki Level I and recently studied Usui/Holy Fire II Reiki II. We created a modified Reiki I class for Christopher, too, who understands everything we say to him despite his difficulty expressing language. He uses Reiki in between his riding classes, and we can see its effects coming out in his artwork too!

Karen feels that Christopher has regained a sense of value and worth through the time he spends with Rain. He now seems motivated to live his life fully. I certainly look forward to my "Christopher" time every week. His workers delight in him as do his teachers, therapists and pretty much everyone he meets. Karen, whose dedication to her son never ceases to amaze and inspire us, believes that Christopher's time with the horses profoundly changed everything for him and for them and that those changes continue to grow as he continues to spend time with the horses. She feels she too receives much needed therapy from the horses when she is here and is so grateful for all of this.

And gratitude is what we all feel for our Reiki horses and the people who join us here to experience the uplifting healing that they share with us. 🌸



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Photo by Rebecca Willson

Reiki and Concussions

BY PAM ALLEN-LEBLANC

RECENTLY HERE AT HIDDEN BROOK FARM, we had an opportunity to experience the results of using Reiki for people who had been diagnosed with a concussion. While we were certainly not initially grateful for this opportunity, the results of our use of Reiki were astounding. I realized that I would be able to share the results with others so that more people could receive help through Reiki for this complicated and somewhat mysterious issue. What I didn't realize was how important or far-reaching this might be—or how it would eventually affect my own family!

In the fall of 2015, two of our riders had significant falls from their horses at high speeds and another student hit her head on her patio at home. All three students subsequently experienced concussions. The two riders went to the hospital immediately where they were told definitively that they had concussions and were given a course of action that included not doing any activity that required concentration—computers, TV, reading etc.—

practitioner conducts a healing attunement to release the energy block. This is really effective as identifying the shape gives us, the client and the Reiki energy a focus and helps us understand whether or not the energy has left when we check on it afterward. If the energy is not completely gone, it can be followed by auric cleansing or psychic surgery, techniques also taught in the class, followed by a traditional Reiki session. I used all three of these techniques for my three clients, knowing from past experience that they are very powerful when put together, but my students and I were still amazed that the headaches, confusion, memory loss, brain fog, pain, pressure and swelling were completely gone for all three after just one Reiki session and that they never experienced any symptoms from their concussions afterward! So we were ready the next time a concussion came through the door.

Just before Easter, a 16-year-old boy who was close to our family committed suicide. This affected me tremendously and I felt there was something I was supposed to do about it but was

Some people believe that if you are wearing a helmet when you are injured, you will not get a concussion, but this also is not the case. Helmets are important and we ALWAYS wear them when we ride horses—but a concussion can still result from a fall.

for about a week to rest the brain. However, after one to two weeks of following this advice and not noticing much improvement, the students accepted my invitation to receive a Reiki session. Both were still experiencing headaches, confusion and memory loss, difficulty sleeping and balance issues and were finding it difficult to use their brain. One was a teacher and the other a high school student so this was very limiting!

The third student saw us just a few days after she hit her head and had heard about the others. She had a Reiki session and went to the hospital for a check afterward where she was given the same advice—to rest and do very little with her vision or brain.

In all three sessions, I had the students identify the energy that was causing the problems with their concussions. This is a regular part of the practice in the healing attunement taught by the ICRT in the Usui/Tibetan Reiki Master class. The client identifies where the energy is in the body as well as the shape, size, color, surface texture, weight and temperature and then the

unsure what. As I was standing in line at the funeral home with an old friend who is an emergency room nurse, she asked if the young boy had suffered from concussions, explaining that she raised the question because there were indications in the room that he had been a hockey player. She then proceeded to explain that her daughter's boyfriend had also been a hockey player who had experienced concussions in his hockey career and had also committed suicide a few years previously. She felt that there was a link between concussions (especially repeated concussions) and mental health. She had observed this phenomenon often in her 25-year career and believed that the resulting depression and suicides that also sometimes resulted were linked to this brain injury. She got me thinking.

Perhaps what I was to do in memory of my friends' son was to bring the phenomenal results I had seen with Reiki sessions into the world. Perhaps this connection that my friend had seen between repeated concussions and deteriorating mental health, a

connection that has far-reaching and potentially tragic circumstances for people, could be avoided if people only knew there was Reiki and some specific techniques that can help resolve the problems that follow this injury.

Further research has proved that my friend is not the first person to have made the link between mental health and concussions. This very real link is the centerpiece of the contemporary film, “Concussion,” which portrays the story of the real-life American/Nigerian forensic pathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu, who linked concussions to memory loss, dementia and eventual mental illness and death after performing autopsies and examining the brains of the late Hall of Fame NFL player, Mike Webster and then other NFL players. His studies showed that the repeated concussions that these players suffered, which were detected with brain scans while they were alive, had led to a condition called chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a condition that unfortunately cannot be detected until after a patient’s death.¹ CTE can progress to a stage where there is an increase in suicidal behaviors.² Dr. Omalu single-handedly took on the NFL to force them to recognize the importance of the link between concussions, particularly repeated concussions, and the mental illness that can result from them.³ I believe his efforts have made professional sports teams more cognizant and respectful about concussions and head traumas in their athletes as a result. But it’s not only elite or professional athletes who suffer from concussions. In fact, it’s most often everyday people doing average, everyday things who experience concussions.

Journalist Jordana Cepelewicz, in an article in *Scientific American*, reported that “new research published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* shows that even mild concussions sustained in ordinary community settings might be more detrimental than anyone anticipated; the long-term risk of suicide increases threefold in adults if they have experienced even one concussion. That risk increases by a third if the concussion is sustained on a weekend instead of a weekday—suggesting recreational concussions are riskier long-term than those sustained on the job.”⁴ And to this end, she also cites Donald

Redelmeier, a senior scientist at the University of Toronto and one of the study’s lead authors, as he indicates that most injuries are not sustained by professional athletes. In fact, the typical patients he sees are middle-aged adults who have fallen doing routine activities or who sustained injuries in a car accident.⁵ So concussions can affect anyone. While the evidence is not yet conclusive, there does appear to be a link between concussions and long-term mental health problems that is becoming more and more difficult to ignore.

With the information about concussions and mental health in hand, I approached one of my clients, Jonathan Harty, who is a professional hockey player in the European hockey leagues. Harty is an extremely intelligent, talented and determined player, so I figured that he might have some knowledge about and experience with concussions. He surprised me when he said he does not have any issues with concussions. How is this possible, I wondered? Harty explained, “I have experienced many degrees of head traumas from major concussions to being ‘dazed,’ but after every incident, when the session is over, I take some time to meditate and do some Reiki to limit the recovery time and the degree of the injury.”⁶ Jonathan is a Level II Reiki practitioner and uses his Reiki to ensure that he has no lasting effects. He says it is surprising sometimes which hits lead to concussion symptoms. He says sometimes he gets a pretty big hit but is okay while other times a small jostle will set off alarm signals that tell him he needs to tend to his brain to prevent injury. Jonathan finds that looking after himself like this right away allows him to return much faster to physical activity in better condition both physically and mentally, and as a result, he has had very few setbacks in his career due to his health. In fact, he believes this strategy will prolong his career. Jonathan also follows up with cranial-sacral therapy and finds this helpful as well, but he credits immediate Reiki and meditation with most of his success in avoiding serious injury.

I have to admit that I did not know much about concussions before I began working with them. In fact, it took a friend to help me link my own daughter’s symptoms to the fact that she had sustained a few concussions. You see, I thought you had to be “knocked out” to get a concussion. That’s not the case. Any head trauma can lead to the swelling of the brain, which we call “concussion.” How do you know if you have sustained one? Most of us have bumped our heads pretty hard at some point in our lives. Symptoms of a concussion typically include some combination of the following:

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Personal conversation with Jonathan Harty.

¹ www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2016/02/22/the-terrifying-link-between-concussions-and-suicide/?utm_term=.baf8c4e50bde.

² en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronic_traumatic_encephalopathy.

³ www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2016/02/22/the-terrifying-link-between-concussions-and-suicide/?utm_term=.baf8c4e50bde.

⁴ Jordana Cepelewicz, “A Single Concussion May Triple the Long-Term Risk of Suicide,” *Scientific American* (February 8, 2016). www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-single-concussion-may-triple-the-long-term-risk-of-suicide/.

- headache
- decreased cognitive function (loss of memory, difficulty concentrating, lack of focus)
- lack of coordination (dizziness, vertigo, difficulty with balance)
- pupil dilation
- nausea
- blurred vision or light sensitivity
- bruising
- mood swings or emotional outbursts (including depression, anxiety and agitation)
- slurred speech
- disrupted sleep patterns.⁷

However, just as no two brains are identical, no two concussions are identical and they all respond differently to traditional treatment.

Some people believe that if you are wearing a helmet when you are injured, you will not get a concussion, but this also is not the case. Helmets are important and we ALWAYS wear them when we ride horses—but a concussion can still result from a fall.

Recently, my friend mentioned that her daughter, Sophia, one of the riders I had treated previously for a concussion, was having headaches and other concussion symptoms again. When I investigated further, I realized they had begun in March when she re-injured herself in another fall. As my friend described Sophia's symptoms, a light went on for me. For some reason, I had never been able to figure out why my daughter had had frequent headaches for the previous two or three years. We had her eyes checked and had her checked medically, but there appeared to be no reason for these headaches. Still mother's intuition told me I was missing something. This conversation finally helped me put the pieces together and understand that while my daughter had never "passed out" or exhibited the typical signs of a concussion, she had fallen from different horses over the years, even damaging her helmets. So her headaches could be a result of concussions. Upon further questioning, we realized that this was not the only symptom she was experiencing. She had many additional concussion symptoms as well. How did I miss this? No matter—I could do something about it now that I understood what was going on.

Both my daughter, Caroline, and my friend's daughter, Sophia, agreed to help me with a "study" on concussions, and

in May I began tracking their symptoms as I embarked on a series of Reiki sessions. I had studied Holy Fire II Reiki with William Rand earlier that spring, first in a webinar and then in person, so this time the sessions were different in that I was doing the "healing experiences" of Holy Fire II Reiki instead of the healing attunements of the Usui/Tibetan Reiki. I had already done several healing experiences with clients and noticed that even more healing happened for them without the need for auric cleansing and psychic surgery. Therefore, I followed the newer protocols with the two girls, but other than that difference, the sessions with these two were the same as the earlier ones with my students.

I asked the girls to relate their symptoms and then rate them from 0 to 10 based on the severity and intensity, and we began working on the most severe ones. Further questioning revealed that Caroline probably had sustained concussions three times in the previous three years while Sophia had two in the previous eight months. We met once a week to work on the symptoms.

Initially, the girls rated their headaches 9 and 8 out of 10 respectively. They also had fairly high numbers for forgetfulness with 8 and 6. Although they had other symptoms, I focused on these two at first, treating them with a Holy Fire Healing Experience. Both girls noticed the blocks either getting smaller or disappearing during the meditation—and both ended their first session with a headache!

By the following session, their headaches had decreased to 7 and 6 respectively, while their forgetfulness had gone down to 6 and 2. Sophia noted she had not had a headache in four days, which was really unusual for her, and Caroline also reported fewer headaches in the previous week. Both girls noticed that their ear ringing and pressure (which had been a low number in the first session) had increased as their headaches decreased. I thought that was unusual, but I went with it. Sophia noticed dizziness that she had not noticed before, making me believe that sometimes as more serious symptoms leave, secondary ones become more prominent. Again, I simply did the healing experience meditation after they identified the blocks and again, the blocks either disappeared or got smaller. I could have followed up with a regular Reiki session here but opted not to for the purposes of the experiment.

By the third session, headaches rated 7 and 4 respectively. Ear ringing was up for Caroline but completely gone for Sophia. I then addressed Sophia's brain fog, forgetfulness and confusion in addition to her headaches while I continued with headaches and ear ringing for Caroline. Again, the blocks either left or got much smaller.

In the fourth session, headaches were down to 3 and 3 for the girls. Ear ringing and forgetfulness were just a 1 for Sophia and all other symptoms were gone. Two weeks later, Sophia,

⁷ www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/concussion/symptoms-causes/dxc-20273155.

whose concussions were more recent, reported that she was completely clear. She told me that she had gotten “shivers” during the final healing experience and had noticed her muscles twitching. She followed up her experience with these sessions by taking a Reiki class. For Caroline, ear ringing was down to a 5 and forgetfulness was down from a 6 to a 4. So the Reiki and I tackled these issues in the healing experience. Although they mostly left, I decided to have a fifth session just for Caroline. In her fifth and final session, she felt a BIG improvement in most of her symptoms. Based on this, I decided to continue with additional sessions if anything new came up but concluded that we were pretty much done.

I should note that it was a particularly stressful time for the girls while we were doing this work as they were both studying for and writing exams and papers, working their brains very hard, so they were both thankful that their headaches and symptoms were diminishing. If I were to do this work again, one thing that I would change is that I would only work on one symptom at a time in each healing experience. I have noticed the healing experiences in general work best that way, but when I was fairly new to using Holy Fire, I didn't realize this.

In conclusion, I believe that with immediate meditation, Reiki and rest, concussions have a much better chance of healing

and people can get back to their normal lives more efficiently and effectively. My work with the two girls showed that even when time has passed, the use of Reiki sessions can reduce and eliminate some of the longer-term effects of concussions and may be a boon to people's mental health after experiencing a concussion. At Hidden Brook Farm, we are now even more thankful for the gift of Reiki and hope that our findings will help others recover from this difficult and often debilitating condition.

Namaste. 



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