

## Animals as Natural Therapy's **Full Value Contract or Team Contract**

*In group we all discuss this and then sign it, adding a gift that we bring to the group such as humor, curiosity, knowledge etc.*

**I agree to keep myself and others physically and emotionally safe.**

**I agree to give and receive respectful feedback**

**I agree to work as a team.**

Physical safety is usually covered in the barn rules but often needs to include keeping body parts to self so no kicking another kid. Emotional safety is not putting self or another down or laughing at someone in their vulnerable moments. Respectful feedback includes no triangulating, or being rude to another in our words and this goes for in our office as well as around stressful event planning. If there is ever an issue with a kid or volunteer, we go back to the contract, look for their signature and talk about if they are following it and what that might look like.

## Animals as Natural Therapy's **Horse Contract**

*Said while looking directly into the horse's eyes*

**I promise to take good care of you, and I need you to promise to take good care of me.**

**I promise to forgive you if you mess up, and I need you to forgive me when I mess up.**

All of our processes at Animals as Natural Therapy have carryover from the human-animal relationship to the world of human-human relationships. The premise for this contract is that we humans need to learn to state what we want from the other. We all deserve to be taken good care of by the other. (Many of our program youth come from abusive situations). Also once we make the promise we cannot assume the other's ill intent. Therefore, we are primed to forgive when something goes awry. If something goes awry we take responsibility for part of it. We pause and ask "What did I mis-communicate?" Yet if something goes awry and we are hurt, such as from a horse nip, we can get indignant and say, "That hurt me! and I need you to communicate with me in a more respectful way, and yes I will forgive you." This gives those who have been mistreated a chance to stand up for themselves. We don't just say "that's ok" when we get the apology, because it wasn't ok.

## Animals as Natural Therapy's **Grounding Exercise**

Imagine a grounding chord connecting you with mother earth. What is it made of? Is it a giant anchor with a chain connecting you to the center of the earth, is it an unbreakable gold strand, is it a waterfall or a shaft of stone or giant tree roots? Imagine this coming off your seat bones and keeping you connected to the earth. Now imagine a color that mother earth will send up through your feet into your entire body. What color is this for you? She is filling you with her energy, strong nurturing earth energy. Run this energy up from both feet, through ankles, calves, knees, thighs and into belly and chest, then arms and head... to dance and play in your

body. Next invite Divine energy ( A golden, silver, or radiant white light) down through the top of your head through the base of your skull into every vertebrae all the way to your sacrum and there it comes forward and mixes with mother earth energy and they dance and play throughout your body, washing all areas clean. Anything that is not for your highest good will go down your grounding chord, back to mother earth, and you will be left washed clear. Feel this peace. Then think of a color to surround yourself with and put a shield veil of that color all the way around and above and below your body.

**Self-care** by Sonja Wingard, B.S.N.

SLEEPS isn't just adequate sleep but an acronym I have created to remind me of what I have learned from Kris Carr, (of Crazy Sexy Cancer, and now Crazy Sexy You) and other teachers over the past eighteen months of my journey to overcome the Lymphoma that had taken hold in my body. I use SLEEPS as an internal checklist to see what I need to focus on each day, as when asked which of these areas is the most important to focus on, Kris Carr says "the one you are not doing."

S: Sleep 6 to 8 hours a day, this makes a huge difference on every level of our lives to rest and rejuvenate our cells. The research says the best sleep is before 2 AM so trying to get to sleep by 10 or 11 is my goal.

L: Listening: It may be reading an inspiring book and pausing to reflect on it and one's life. Journaling. For me this is meditating, pausing in quiet for periods of listening to my higher power, God/Mother Mary and my inner wise woman.

E: Exercise: It is important that we get our body moving: twice daily is best whether it be a ten minute walk, a jump on the rebounder, yoga/chi gong, dancing in the kitchen or a real workout. We need to move our body to get our lymph and cleaning process activated. I find Donna Eden's Energy Medicine videos (free on-line) very helpful in this area.

E: Eating well: we need to eat at least 60 % super healthy food including plenty of green vegetables and avoiding toxic chemicals in our food sourcing. There is a lot to be learned here and I find Kris Carr, Dr. Lu's Nourishing Life clinic and Chris Wark all great resources.

P: Play: having our lives full of fun activities and people. Taking time for things that we really enjoy. Music, hobbies, hikes and people that feed our soul.

S: Stress can be a killer and is the root cause of most health problems. As long as thirty years ago it was known that stress was the underlying cause of most disease (think about the word dis-ease) seen by a family doctor. To learn more Gabor Mate, M.D. has a great book, When the Body Says NO, Exploring the Stress- Disease Connection.

I invite you to take self-care seriously *before* you are stopped in your tracks by a life-threatening teacher such as cancer. Blessings.

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