

# *Horse Sense & Healing*

Instructor Handbook



David L. Davis

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Compiled by David L. Davis  
Religious Education  
Brigham Young University  
Contact at

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## Acknowledgements

Monty Roberts discovered that horses have a language while studying the mustangs in Nevada in the 1940s. His experience with returning Veterans from the Korean War began during his college days in the 1950s and Monty has been a student of horses and people all his life. With two doctorates in Behavioral Science and an unquenchable thirst to learn more, Monty attracted the attention of Discovery Military in 2010 resulting in the documentary *Horse Sense and Soldiers*. Monty remains the inspiration and energy behind this program which has developed with the help of his team on Flag Is Up Farms and devoted professionals who intend to see that the concepts of trust and communication, through Join-Up, shape a more peaceful future for all.

Pat Roberts, as Executive Director of the non-profit Join-Up International, helped develop the program by guiding support from benefactors to this worthwhile program. Pat has a lifelong commitment to help individuals reach their potential and, through making good choices, live happier lives. Nowhere is Pat's commitment more evident than the fact that Monty and Pat together raised 47 foster children, as well as three biological children of their own.

Debbie Roberts Loucks has brought many projects to her parents, Monty and Pat, which share the beneficial qualities of Join-Up to challenged populations such as at-risk youth, prisoners and victims of violence. Perhaps no one project has been as life-changing as the work with returning war Veterans and their families. Debbie believes that violence is the root of much of the angst today and that horses hold the key to teach us how to move away from violence. She feels extremely privileged to

work with this team of talented and caring people.

Courtney Dunn has been aware of the amazing healing powers of the horse since she was a child growing up on a horse farm. She has her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology, a minor in Biology and is a Certified Monty Roberts Instructor. Courtney has found her career with horses the most fulfilling. Her experience with the *Horse Sense and Healing* has impressed her more than ever in how amazing being in the presence of a horse can deeply affect people.

Denise Heinlein discovered her passion for horses at a very early age and started to ride when she was 5 years old. Since 2006 Denise has followed Monty's methods and has been working and learning from Monty himself and different Certified Instructors at the Monty Roberts International Learning Center (MRILC) and in Germany, Portugal, Netherlands and England. In November of 2009 Denise realized her goal of becoming an Instructor of Monty's methods and is now spreading the concepts of Monty's non-violent approach. After teaching classes and courses in Germany and getting a lot of experience in the Thoroughbred Industry she is now the senior instructor working and teaching at the MRILC.

Maya Horsey grew up with horses in England, became a student of Monty Roberts in the late 1990's and is one of his original Certified Instructors. While teaching as the Head Instructor at the Monty Roberts International Learning Center, Maya helped facilitate Horse Sense and Healing workshops as Monty developed the program. Her insight and input as an advanced instructor in Monty's concepts was invaluable and appreciated.

Stephen Harrison has volunteered his time as a consultant and facilitator on Monty's Horse Sense and Healing clinics since he first attended one of the ongoing programs in December of 2011. Stephen served in the Marines from 1988 to 1992 as an artillery/Naval gunfire scout. Stephen has traveled the world as a Marine, a surfer and a missionary. At Madigan Army Medical Center, Stephen saw the methods of therapies for returning Veterans and was distressed and heartbroken about the methods used for mental health. He has used his position as warrior and chaplain's assistant to support and counsel other Veterans.

Kris Robins is a Canadian who has been volunteering at Flag Is Up Farms since 2012. Kris is a clinical social worker who is currently in private practice as an organizational development trainer and consultant. She has a deep affinity for horses and a high regard for returned men and women who have been injured in service to their countries. Kris has been studying Motivational Interviewing since the 1990's and considers William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick the most influential social scientists of our time. Bridging their ground-breaking work with people to Monty Roberts' globe-circling work with horses is a deep and abiding passion for Kris. It is definitely a bucket list item for Kris to have had the pleasure of working on this project with the remarkable horses and people that contribute their gifts so freely.

Dan Quinajon served in the United States Navy from 1993 to 1999 and joined his first Horse Sense and Healing clinic in 2012 and was encouraged by her riding coach, Gina VonDerBurg, to learn as much as he could from Monty and the Join-Up process. Dan recognized the difference after his first Join-Up and with his own horse, Rowdy. Dan returns to chronicle the workshops

photographically now and is hopeful that more Veterans will have the opportunity to work through their battles in this fashion.





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## **Program Overview**

Horse Sense and Healing is a 3-day Clinic for military Veterans who are affected by Post-Traumatic Stress Injury (PTSI), and for the Veterans supporters (families, friends, and significant others). The Program is currently held at the home of Monty and Pat Roberts. Monty's mission is to "Leave the world a better place for horses and for people." This mission is shared by Monty's family and staff. Monty and his family have established a legacy of helping those in need, a legacy that extends to military service personnel. Monty and Pat welcome Veterans for a weekend of healing through working with horses.

To do this Monty uses an equine assisted experience to teach Veterans to lower their adrenaline levels and respond gently and with patience; understanding that their body can communicate, through nonverbal language, their fear, anger, and unease.

Since the first military Clinic in 2010, Veterans and their families have been recovering from PTSI with the help of an equine medium. Horses have been helping Veterans rebuild trust, find strength within themselves so that they can respond appropriately in moments of stress, and rebuild relationships that have been faced with trials.

Several Veterans affected by Horse Sense and Healing have continued to return—some to heal, while others are now in roles of offering assistance to their comrades and fellow Veterans.

This is a unique program that allows Veterans to experience healing from PTSI in a profound and impactful weekend surrounded by others like themselves. By the end of the workshop, service personnel, members of their support, Monty

Roberts, his family, and trainers have created a bond of shared experiences with the help of an equine medium.

Besides the goal of a Veteran lowering their symptoms of PTSD, and building trust. Horse Sense and Healing hopes to help family members heal from their own traumatic experience in watching their loved one suffer. Horse Sense for Healing aims to strengthen the family by providing a common Join-Up experience for members of the family to grow from.

The success of this program is largely due to its founder, Monty Roberts, whose personal compassion is the cornerstone that draws Veterans to Flag Is Up Farms. Once at the farm, Veterans are influenced by Monty's personal story of resilience and his deep desire in helping those whose lives, like his, have been impacted by trauma.

Monty Roberts, a world-renowned horse trainer, has done more than instruct horse owners and trainers concerning his nonviolent techniques of horse training. He developed a concept about nonviolence through a process called Join-Up, as well as provided aid to those who have suffered from the effects of violence and trauma. This section covers the early history of Monty Roberts, the development of the concept of Join-Up, his interactions with Veterans and the creation (program) of Horse Sense and Healing.

## History of Monty Roberts

Monty was born on May 14, 1935, during the great depression, among the rolling hills and valleys of Salinas California.<sup>1</sup> During that time Monty's parents were living on the Salinas rodeo competition grounds. His father, Marvin Roberts, managed the rodeo grounds for the city, operated a riding school from the property as well as trained and boarded horses for private clients.<sup>2</sup> For the Roberts family, horses were a significant part of their life, and by the age of two, Monty was riding his own horse by the age of four he was conducting horse riding stunts for his father's clients.<sup>3</sup>



In regards to his father, Monty describes Marvin as “a tall man of slim, muscular build, with chiseled features and light brown hair. He was as neat and orderly as circumstances allowed. If he met a friend in Salinas, he could be friendly, even inviting.”<sup>4</sup> Monty also said that his father “had been brought up in a tough and sometimes cruel world of the American pioneer, so much has changed during those early decades of the twentieth century that the single generation between my father and me felt like a great chasm. During his [Marvin's] childhood, he would have faced almost daily the natural law of ‘kill or be killed.’”<sup>5</sup>

Although, Monty often speaks about his father's abusive, aggressive side, he also points out that as Marvin aged he was no longer the cold, rigid man that had once terrorized Monty. The fight (anger) that had once fueled Marvin to lash out at his oldest son, Monty, was gone. Marvin showed a tenderness to Monty's

wife and children that Monty never saw growing up.<sup>6</sup> Monty's children remembered Marvin to be a fine grandfather.<sup>7</sup>

Marvin trained horses through a process called “sacking out”<sup>8</sup> to break the will-power of the horse.<sup>9</sup> This process of training frightened Monty. He could not believe that such treatments were considered appropriate—even with so called troubled horses. Monty believed that there must be a reason for a horse's misbehavior, horses are not the monsters Marvin painted them to be, but that there existed logical reasons for the misbehavior. Even at his young age, Monty wanted to “figure out what was the behavioral problem.”<sup>10</sup>

Regardless, Marvin wanted the boy to learn how to “break in” a horse, which terrified Monty. Yet, Monty agreed but asked Marvin to wait for three days so that he could practice. However, Monty did not use the techniques as taught by his father. He wanted the time to learn about the horses.<sup>11</sup>

As Monty observed the horses, he began to learn how to befriend the animal. After three days Monty managed to place a saddle on the back of one of the horses.<sup>12</sup> This Monty felt, was something spectacular, and he desired to show Marvin. Yet, when he showed his father what he had accomplished, he did not get the approval or accolades he expected. Marvin angrily responded “What the hell am I raising!” Marvin jumped off of the viewing platform, with a chain in hand, and proceeded to beat Monty.

“I was left in a pitiful, grieving state. He whipped horses into submission and now he was giving me the same treatment, and I felt the same anger and sense of failure that the horses must have

felt.”<sup>13</sup> Monty was brought to the hospital where his parents explained to the staff that the injuries were caused in a horse related event.<sup>14</sup>

In talking about the abuse Monty states “the beatings continued weekly for three more years before finally starting to taper off when I was 10. Only when I was 15 did they cease altogether.”<sup>15</sup>

Abuse was not the only tragedy Monty had to endure. During World War II the United States confiscated the Salinas rodeo grounds to convert the grounds to create a Japanese-American internment camp.<sup>16</sup> The horses that once had called the camp grounds home, to include Monty’s personal horse Ginger, were sent to be processed for meat in order to feed the Soldiers fighting in the war. The Roberts family moved to the city of Salinas. In order to provide for the family, Marvin Roberts became a police officer.<sup>17</sup> A career that he would hold for twelve years, and a career where Monty would see another side of his father that would shape the remainder of his life.

At eight years of age, Monty witnessed his father kill a man. Monty was working on a few horses with his father when Marvin received a call from the Salinas dispatcher in regards to a robbery in progress. A twenty year old black man was attempting to steal from a bartender. Marvin answered the call and brought Monty with him.

Once at the bar, Marvin told Monty to remain in the car while Marvin left to attend to the crime. Marvin walked up to the suspect and told the man to drop his weapon and give up. The robber, knife in hand, lunged at Marvin. Monty’s father disarmed the man, knocking the robber unconscious in the process. After

cuffing him, Marvin, with his full weight, dropped his knee upon the unconscious man's chest, then drug the injured man to the converted police car.

Looking behind him from the front seat Monty was able to see the unconscious man. He could hear strange sounds coming from the man, and blood foaming from the man's mouth. Once at the police station Monty's father dragged the unconscious man inside where he would continue to teach the injured man a lesson. The next morning the young man was found dead, where the police claimed that pneumonia was the cause of death.<sup>18</sup> This event only solidified Monty's anger and fear of his father.

As Monty grew older he became stronger, that is to say he weighed 190 pounds and had a 48 inch chest. Monty's size created a new dynamic between Monty and his father. "We were like two bulls, and through the younger one still feared the older, time, as it always is, was on the side of the young."<sup>19</sup> It was about this time when Monty traveled back and forth to Nevada learning the language of Equus, and the process of what would become Join-Up.



## Monty's History with Vets

Monty Roberts' interactions with Veterans began in 1954 when he was nineteen years old. He decided that he wanted to go to college in order to study animal behavior. However, he quickly found that no schools were offering such a degree, instead Monty went to the psychology department at California Polytechnic State University and began to study human behavior.

Dr. Applegarth, one of Monty's supervisors at the school, suggested that Monty volunteer as a first responder. "He told me 'If you want to learn about human behavior then volunteer as a first responder at Silver City. That will teach you more about true human behavior.' Believing that I would only be called two to three times per week to go help, I volunteered to work with these returning Veterans."<sup>20</sup>

Silver City was a plot of land, located near the campus of California Polytechnic State University, established as a location to house returning Korean War Veterans and their families while the Veteran used their GI Bill benefits to work on a degree in engineering or agriculture.<sup>21</sup> Silver City received its name because of the little aluminum teardrop trailers set into place by the state of California to house returning Korean Veterans. Eligibility for housing depended on marital status and number of children.<sup>22</sup>

Instead of being called two to three times per week, as Monty believed would be the case, he found himself being called two to three times a night.<sup>23</sup> When talking about his experience Monty states "men would wake up in the middle of the night and their wife and children would no longer be safe. Some of these Veterans were coming home from the chaos of war, and from

taking mind alternating drugs. Like it or not, Korea was really the first war that we fought on mind altering drugs.”

While deployed Veterans had found that some of the drugs found in Korea aided them in staying up longer, work harder, and do their job to defend themselves and their friends. The drug also helped the Veteran to laugh and tell jokes, but these drugs were also causing other side effects.

Monty states, in 1954 there was no diagnostic help available for Veterans. “Shell shock, battle fatigue. There were a lot of names. But really, most of the people who were dealing with those [Veterans] from our government’s side, just said ‘Get yourself by the boots and pull yourself together and get going. You’re making excuses for yourself. We don’t have time to mess with it.’”<sup>24</sup>

Every time there was domestic violence, Monty was called in: “I mopped up a lot of blood. I saved some lives. And I lost some lives. And I hated it. I absolutely hated it. I didn’t know what to do about it.”<sup>25</sup> Although Monty did not know what to do, he still did what he could.

It was during the Silver City experience that Pat and Monty Roberts began fostering children. After all Monty was familiar with what it was like to survive his own personal war with abuse as a child: “Now mind you, from 1939 until around about ’48, ’49 I was in a war. My father broke seventy-two bones in my body before I was twelve years of age.”<sup>26</sup>

## History of Join-Up

Join-Up is a nonviolent method of communication to establish a partnership with a horse, and can also be applied to communication between people—it allows one to see and understand that violence and confrontation are not the answer.<sup>27</sup>

Monty Roberts communicates with horses through an advance-and-retreat system “that draws on most animals’ conflicting tendencies—first to flee an apparent threat, then, out of curiosity, to investigate it. A horse, for example, feels security in numbers. Isolate him and he will want to ‘Join-Up’ with another creature, even a human, if the trust is there.”<sup>28</sup>

At thirteen years of age Monty would lay on the Nevada soil and watch wild horses for hours, striving to learn the way of the horse. For several months, over the next three years, Monty would become basically familiar with the language he would later call Equus—the language of the horse. As he watched the animals, he noticed how a horse’s ears informed him on where the animal’s attention was focused.<sup>29</sup>

During the second year, Monty would watch as the Matriarch of a herd would discipline an unruly young colt. The colt would act out, like kicking or biting other mares, or foals. By the fourth attack the dun mare scolded the colt knocking him on to the ground.<sup>30</sup>

Monty states: I vividly recall how she squared up to the adolescent. No longer full of himself, he knew exactly what she meant. Three hundred yards from the herd, the outcast would know by her body position when he could return to the fold. If she faced him, he could not. If she showed him part of her body’s long

axis, he could begin to consider it. Before her act of forgiveness had to come signs of his penitence. The signals he gave back to her—the seeking of forgiveness—would later be fundamental to a technique I would develop to introduce young horses gently to saddle and rider. It was the mustangs who taught me their silent body grammar, and the dun mare was my first teacher.<sup>31</sup>

To the colt this was a frightening punishment. “For a flight animal, this was tantamount to a death sentence; the predators will get any horse long separated from the group.”<sup>32</sup> This was not the last time the colt acted up and had to be punished as such, over-time the young horse learned what right looked like.

Throughout Monty’s observations, he saw that each time the horses spoke to one another the signals were always the same. “I learned that in the equine universe, every degree of a horse’s movement has reason. Nothing is trivial, nothing is to be dismissed.”<sup>33</sup>

Monty was able to witness such subtle communications between the horses because Monty is color-blind. Lawrence Scanlan points out that “Monty is not just color-blind—born with a confused sense of color as many men and women are. He is what an ophthalmologist would call achromatopic: he sees no color at all, but a rich array of black, whites, and tonal grays. And Monty wonders now if he ever could have learned the pure, silent language of horses had he not been born with this so-called ‘deficit.’”<sup>34</sup>

Monty states that “Military camouflage, is a confusion of color. It stirs the eye up so you don’t see the shape. The color blind just see the shape, but it also means we see so much more than

the normally sighted.”<sup>35</sup> Through these color-blind eyes, Monty was able to see the minute patterns of communication between wild horses.

Many of the healthy wild horses that Monty observed on the Nevada landscape were gathered and brought back to Salinas California for the wild horse race event during the Salinas Rodeo. The event consisted of a team of three men holding a horse in place while one of them struggles to get on the horse’s back and ride the horse around a half mile track; this event is brutal for both man and animal. Several men would find themselves hospitalized and many of the horses would suffer various injuries, such as broken bones.<sup>36</sup>

Typically after a rodeo, several wild horses would be killed and made into a food product, that Monty called “crow’s bait.”<sup>37</sup> When talking about the event Monty would state “I lived the excitement as would any thirteen-year-old raised in the culture of rodeo, but at the same time I recoiled against the mad cruelty. There were some crashing falls, and I felt the impact of each and every one of them as though it was happening to me.”<sup>38</sup>

Because Monty supplied the horses he was permitted to keep those that survived in order to “break” in the horse, instead of having the animal simply eliminated. However, Monty did not like to call it “breaking” in the horse.

“I changed the nomenclature. From that day on, I called my method ‘starting’ horses. If traditional breaking was designed to generate fear in the horse, I wanted to create trust.”<sup>39</sup> To bring about this trust Monty began using what he had learned of the horses own language.

While starting the wild horses, Monty realized that he found something exciting. A method that enabled him, in a matter of minutes, to get a wild horse to accept a saddle and a rider, a process that typically would take his father three weeks.<sup>40</sup> This new method, was born from the language of Equus, where Monty would apply the dun mare's communication to the colt. Telling the horse to flee, and then, when the horse shows the signs that it is done running, calmly turn away to tell the horse that it can trust you. This method requires no violence, and opens up communication between both parties involved in the process.

This new method, Monty called "Join-Up."<sup>41</sup>

## History of Horse Sense and Healing

After his time working with the returning Korean War Veterans, in Silver City, Monty had no desire to work with the military Veterans. The reality of the Veteran's pain and suffering were all too real for Monty. He had seen the worst conditions of PTSD before there was diagnostic criteria. "I hated working there I never wanted to deal with this again."<sup>42</sup>

In 2001 an Army chaplain stationed in Fort Stewart Georgia, called Monty. Chaplain Boatright stated "I need twenty-three copies of Monty's film made by BBC 'Monty Roberts: A Real Horse Whisperer.' And they said, 'Why do you need twenty-three copies of this film?' 'I'm going to train twenty-three chaplains about this concept that gentleness is powerful and I will use Monty's film as a metaphor to teach that principle.'"<sup>43</sup>

Monty realized that when it came to helping people improve their lives and eliminating violence, he could not say no. He not only sent the twenty-three copies of the film, he sent his training manager Michael Drummand—a retired Air Force E7 Master Sergeant—to Fort Stewart to help train chaplains and chaplain assistants.

Nine years later the Discovery Military channel approached Monty, explaining that they had read about his work with Veterans in Silver City, and asked if he would be willing to put together a military clinic for Veterans dealing with PTSD.<sup>44</sup> Discovery explained that he would have ten returning Veterans for a thirty day period.

Monty agreed and began working on a thirty day training schedule. Consequently, Discovery changed their plans, they

did not have the funds for ten Veterans for that length of time.<sup>45</sup> “I wanted to succeed, but discovery changed their plans a week before shooting to three Veterans and three days. I didn’t think it could be done in three days, I thought it was unfair and that I would fail.”<sup>46</sup>

Monty reexamined his approach to the program and took what he saw as the most important aspects to create a new curriculum. He had also called Chaplain Boatright and asked if the Chaplain would be a military advisor for the film.

Monty requested that Veterans only with PTSD be used and not those who suffered from traumatic brain injury (TBI). Monty had completed two doctorates in behavioral sciences, which worked with the psychological aspects of the brain. “I am not a brain surgeon. I don’t know how to fix broken brains physically. Give me a broken brain, but only psychologically or in trouble. Injuries physical to the tissues of the brain, I don’t know what to do.”<sup>47</sup> Yet, out of the three Veterans that would be presented to Monty, one had TBI, who did not want to be near the other two Veterans.<sup>48</sup>

The filming of the three day military clinic was a success, even more so than Monty had expected. The Veteran suffering from the TBI became a professional horse trainer.<sup>49</sup> It is because of positive outcomes like this that Monty decided to continue with his program.

Due to the positive outcomes Monty decided to continue with the military Clinic. However, he wanted to include the family and support of the Veteran in the treatment. “The discovery channel only wanted Veterans because they only had cameras



for the Veterans. They didn't have cameras to put on the family members. And I didn't care about cameras. They did though.”<sup>50</sup>

The first clinics were called “Horse Sense and Soldiers.” Monty changed the name to “Horse Sense and Healing,” so that all Veterans from across the Armed Forces can feel that this program includes them. Thus he created a program where military Veterans can learn the nonviolent principles of Join-Up.



## About the Veteran

There is no solid description of what a veteran is, looks, acts, or thinks like, besides the common factor of service in the Armed Forces. There are many factors that goes into those that serve, such as socioeconomic status, race, sex, age, education, and geographic location. “When you look at all of those [factors], you find that the force is really quite representative of the country. ... And where it doesn’t mirror America, it exceeds America”<sup>51</sup>

According to Jim Garamone the military force is more educated than the general population, and has more service members between the ages of eighteen to twenty-four with more college experience than their civilian counterparts.<sup>52</sup>

Garamone, also pointed out that “on the socioeconomic side, accordingly to the Armed Service Press Service, the military is strongly middle class, with recruits from poorer families actually underrepresented and trends showing the number of recruits from wealthier families and suburban areas increasing.”<sup>53</sup>

Lynn Hall explains that “Military members come from across America, from small rural towns, decaying urban cores and close-in suburbs, as well as minority and immigrant communities... Today’s all-volunteer, professional military is a uniquely modern tribute to the egalitarian ideal of the American dream”<sup>54</sup>

Likewise, Kristin Henderson states “the U.S. military is thrillingly American.... The military is the one institution in America that has come the closest to achieving Martin Luther King Jr.’s dream of rewarding people for the content of their characters, not the color of their skins.”<sup>55</sup>

There is a shift in population support for military action “Twelve percent of the total population participated in WWII, two percent in Vietnam and less than one percent in Iraq and Afghanistan.”<sup>56</sup> However, these are not the only major shifts in military service since Vietnam. There are more women and minority populations serving in the military, more married service members with children, and more dual-military marriages.<sup>57</sup>

Through the demographics of the military we can see that there is no one set group or stereotype of military service personnel. A Veteran can be anyone from any location, and background.

However, the 2012 demographics still show that almost half of all Armed Forces members serve in the Army, 85.4% are Male, 70% recognize themselves as Caucasian, 56.1 are married, 42.7% are under the age of 25, and 19% have a bachelor’s degree or higher education.<sup>58</sup>

When speaking with military personnel it is important to recognize that there are not only five branches (Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard), but that within each of these services there are three categories of rank; officer, warrant, and enlisted “All commissioned officers outrank all warrant officers and enlisted members, and all warrant officers outrank all enlisted members.”<sup>59</sup> Warrant officers are typically former enlisted members who have chosen a career where they can focus on being an expert in their particular field.

Within each category of rank is a scale of rank/pay grade: Officer, O1 through O10; Warrant Officer, WO-1 through CW-5; and Enlisted, E-1 through E-9. The rank scale helps to determine “a service member’s status and authority in comparison to others”<sup>60</sup> the title for each individual varies from service to service, yet pay

grade does not. “Grade is used for personnel and pay functions, as all personnel across the service receive the same pay based on their rank and time-in-service.”<sup>61</sup>

RANK INSIGNIA OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES											
ENLISTED											
E-1	E-2	E-3	E-4	E-5	E-6	E-7	E-8	E-9	JUNIOR GRADES		
ARMY											
Private 1 (Pvt1)	Private 2 (Pvt2)	Private 3 (Pvt3)	Corporal (CPL)	Sergeant (SGT)	Staff Sergeant (SSG)	Sergeant First Class (SFC)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1SG)	Sergeant Major (SMA)	Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)	Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)
MARINES											
Private 1 (Pvt1)	Private 2 (Pvt2)	Private 3 (Pvt3)	Corporal (CPL)	Sergeant (SGT)	Staff Sergeant (SSG)	Sergeant First Class (SFC)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1SG)	Sergeant Major (SMA)	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SMA)	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SMA)
AIR FORCE											
Airman 1 (Amm1)	Airman 2 (Amm2)	Airman 3 (Amm3)	Senior Airman (SrA)	Staff Sergeant (SSG)	Technical Sergeant (TSgt)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1SG)	Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt)	Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt)	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSgt)	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSgt)
NAVY											
Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (S)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Fleet or Force Master Chief Petty Officer (FMCP)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON)
COAST GUARD											
Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (S)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Fleet or Force Master Chief Petty Officer (FMCP)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPON)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPON)
RANK INSIGNIA OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES											
OFFICERS											
O-1	O-2	O-3	O-4	O-5	O-6	O-7	O-8	O-9	O-10	SPECIAL	
ARMY - AIR FORCE - MARINES											
Second Lieutenant (2LT)	First Lieutenant (1LT)	Captain (CAPT)	Major (MAJ)	Lieutenant Colonel (LTC)	Colonel (COL)	Brigadier General (BG)	Major General (MG)	Lieutenant General (LTG)	General (GEN)	General of the Army (GSA)	General of the Army (GSA)
NAVY - COAST GUARD											
Ensign (ENS)	Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG)	Lieutenant (LT)	Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)	Commander (CDR)	Captain (CAPT)	Rear Admiral Lower Half (RDML)	Rear Admiral Upper Half (ADM)	Vice Admiral (VADM)	Admiral (ADM)	Fleet Admiral (FADM)	Fleet Admiral (FADM)
W-1 W-2 W-3 W-4 W-5											
ARMY											
Warrant Officer (WO1)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO4)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO5)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO6)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO7)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO8)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO9)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO10)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO11)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO12)
NAVY - COAST GUARD											
Warrant Officer 1 (WO1)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO4)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO5)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO6)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO7)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO8)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO9)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO10)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO11)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO12)
MARINES											
Warrant Officer (WO)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO4)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO5)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO6)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO7)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO8)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO9)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO10)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO11)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO12)
AIR FORCE											
NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT	NO WARRANT

## Why They Serve

There is a variety of reasons why military personnel chose to serve. Hall explains that “the military is an attractive option for many young people who don’t yet know what they want to do. It is seen often as a transition for young people who will use the military as a place of service, as well as a time to decide what they want to do for the rest of their lives.”<sup>62</sup> Several of these Veterans chose to serve in order to earn education benefits that can help them pay for their schooling, others use the military as a means to leave their old lives as they search for a place they belong.<sup>63</sup>

Hall states that “on a deeper perhaps more psychological level, many who join the military feel a need to “merge their identity with that of the warrior.”<sup>64</sup> The Armed Forces provides Veterans with an extended family system that is unlike any other “there’s

no place in the world where you can have a job like that. It's a brotherhood that's deeper than your own family."<sup>65</sup>

Another group of Veterans to consider are those who were in search of adventure and excitement. Not all Soldiers sign to serve in the military to inherit education benefits or a home away from home. Some even serve for the adrenaline rush. A 2006 RAND study found that "Many military service members are eager to go to war, and say the experience is exciting and meaningful, and allows them to use their training."<sup>66</sup>

## **Understanding Posttraumatic Stress Injury**

The United States Armed Forces specializes in preparing Service Members for the trials of combat to meet the "worldwide strategic challenges against the full range of threats within highly varied operational theaters."<sup>67</sup> The military must be prepared at any time to fight battles of unprecedented scope and intensity.<sup>68</sup>

To accomplish this level of preparation military commanders guide their personnel through rigorous training events designed around worst-case scenarios.<sup>69</sup> These training exercises allow commanders to create an environment in which their unit can learn to deal with stressful situations affecting both physical and mental fitness. The commander can increase the amount of time, as well as the intensity of stress to fit within the scope of their mission.

Stress is a natural occurrence that happens in people's lives. It is the process for dealing with uncertain change or danger. "Stress involves the accompanying emotional responses and the automatic perceptual and cognitive processes for evaluating the uncertainty of threat. These automatic processes may be

instinctive or learned.”<sup>70</sup> Fear of the unknown can be a significant source of stressor in combat.

In the Vietnam War, individuals scheduled for combat, were observed, to report an increase in vague medical complaints with no identifiable physical causes.<sup>71</sup> The elimination of stress is both impossible and undesirable in either the military’s combat or peacetime missions. In combat, stress can be the difference between life and death.<sup>72</sup>

Combat stress includes all the physiological and emotional stresses encountered as a direct result of the dangers and mission demands of combat, whether due to enemy action or other sources, as leader actions, and operational tempo.<sup>73</sup> After a traumatic event, either in or out of combat, Service personnel often give various internal and external symptoms signifying their experience. For about 85% of uniformed personnel, the symptoms are manageable and fade with time.

These symptoms vary in intensity in accordance with individual resilience, degree of trauma, and experience level. Other factors that can contribute to the likelihood of developing PTSD is lower socioeconomic status, education, and social support; exposure to prior trauma or adversity during childhood, genetic inheritability.<sup>74</sup>

Gender also plays a significant role. “PTSD is more prevalent among females than among males across the lifespan. Females in the general population experience PTSD for longer duration than do males. At least some of the increased risk for PTSD in females appears to be attributable to a greater likelihood of exposure to traumatic events, such as rape, and other forms of

interpersonal violence.”<sup>75</sup>

The other 10-15% of Veterans that had persistent symptoms from the traumatic event were left to question what was wrong with them. “Unfortunately, little was understood about traumatic stress and almost nothing was known about its treatment, prior to World War I.”<sup>76</sup>

## History

Evidence of prolonged stress from combat can be seen as early as 2,500 B.C. in the Epic of Gilgamesh. After witnessing his best friend suffer and die from wounds received in battle Gilgamesh continues to have reoccurring, intrusive thoughts. Gilgamesh suffered the anguish of observing his friend and one time enemy, Enkidu suffers in sickness and in pain as death slowly over took him.

The once strong and mighty Enkidu, became only a shell of his former self. Watching this, Gilgamesh knew for a surety that he too would also suffer the fate of all mankind as did his friend, that his strength and beauty would eventually leave him. When questioned about his depressed affect, Gilgamesh replied,

*Why should my cheeks not be hollow, my face not sunken, my mood not wretched, my visage not wasted? Should not sorrow reside in my heart, and my face not resemble one come from afar? Should not my features be burnt by frost and by sunshine, and should I not wander the wild in lion's garb? [Signs of his grieving]. . . Six days I wept for him and seven nights, I did surrender his body for burial, until a maggot dropped from his nostril. Then I was afraid that I too would die, I grew fearful of death, and so wonder the wild. What became of my friend was too much to bear, so on a far road I wander the wild.”<sup>77</sup>*

During the Civil war, attempts were made to bring about some understanding of the same phenomenon that haunted Gilgamesh. Soldiers were diagnosed with a heart condition called “Soldiers Heart, Irritable Heart, Da Costa’s syndrome, or Disordered Action of the Heart”<sup>78</sup> which was believed to originate from a variety of sources.

Dr. W.C. Maclean, Esquire, Deputy Inspector-General and professor of Military Medicine wrote: “I had not been long in the position I have the honour to fill in the public service, before I became profoundly impressed with the vast losses sustained by the prevalence in the army of consumption and diseases of the circulatory system, that is, of the heart and great vessels.”<sup>79</sup>

He explains that in one year 1860-1861 13%, and the follow year 14% were discharged from the service at Fort Pitt due to heart disease.<sup>80</sup> “...the great bulk of the cases being young men returning to the civil population, and incapable of earning their bread in any active employment.” Dr. Maclean goes on to argue that alcohol, smoking, and the Soldiers load bearing equipment impedes the proper functioning of muscles, arteries, veins, and nerves which damage the heart and causes a Soldier permanent impairment.

Other contemporaries of Maclean, like Arthur Myers also agreed that the load bearing equipment caused heart conditions. Myers also argued that violent manual labor was among possible causes,<sup>81</sup> but maintained that clothing played more of a vital role in the cause of aneurism, or heart condition/failure.

*“The great exertions made whilst leaning bodily over the*



*yards in reefing, hauling at ropes, and lifting heavy weights, are among the chief causes producing aneurismal dilatations in sailors. But however, violent their work may be, there is no mechanical obstruction to their circulation by tight clothing, and consequently they suffer less from aneurism than the Army...*"<sup>82</sup>

After the war, one doctor began to look over his case studies and found a pattern that he could not ignore. Dr. Costa, identified that there was a difference between a Soldier with a legitimate heart condition and a Soldier who had some other unknown condition that affected his performance. "I noticed repeatedly, that improvement in general health did not go hand-in-hand with improvement in the cardiac condition."<sup>83</sup> This unknown health condition bore his name, Da Costa's syndrome.

During World War I medical professionals began to see what Da Costa had pointed out nearly 50 years prior. "Sir James Mackenzie and Dr. Wilson suggested that the malady should be regarded in an altogether different light. They have examined about 400 Soldiers who have been certified and treated as having heart affections. In their opinion, "in at least 90 per cent. of these the heart is not primarily at fault, and the treatment suitable for them is widely different from heart failure."<sup>84</sup>

Mackenzie believed that the Soldiers were dealing with an infection that affected the heart. Regardless of his argument other doctors grew in support of psychiatric care with individual one-on-one sessions to help the Soldier deal with the malady found by Da Costa.

The new term "shell shock" began to be used. This diagnosis is best described by a committee led by Lord Southborough in 1922 to distinguish what Shell Shock is and is not. It was agreed

that the diagnosis for Shell Shock was as follows:

- 1) Genuine Concussion without visible wound as a result of shell explosion. All witnesses were agreed that the cases in this class were relatively few.
- 2) Emotional shock, either acute in men with a neuropathic predisposition, or developing slowly as a result of prolonged strain and terrifying experience, the final breakdown being sometimes brought about by some relatively trivial cause.
- 3) Nervous and mental exhaustion, the result of prolonged strain and hardship.<sup>85</sup>

It was not until after the Vietnam War that the diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder came to be. In 1977, when making revisions to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) for the fourth edition, that American Psychiatric Association (APA) was approached by advocates (psychiatrists) on behalf of Vietnam Veterans.<sup>86</sup> Ben Shepard states that “the psychiatrists working with Veterans managed to shake off the impression of being a special interest group by creating a wide category of trauma and shrewdly presenting their case in a way designed to appeal to the new psychiatry.”<sup>87</sup>

For the first time in history, Soldiers and other trauma survivors were legitimately recognized as suffering from a mental condition and inherited the right of treatment.

### **Stigma of PTSD:**

Monty Roberts is not the only person to believe that the diagnoses

of PTSD needs to be changed to Post-Traumatic Stress Injury.<sup>88</sup> In 2011 General Peter Chiarelli, at the time Army Vice Chief of Staff, approached the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and requested that the word “disorder” either be dropped from PTSD or be changed to “injury.”

General Chiarelli believes that the term “disorder,” stigmatizes those who have been diagnosed with PTSD, and that changing the term of PTSD may convince Soldiers to seek treatment.<sup>89</sup> “‘It is an injury,’ Chiarelli said. Calling the condition a ‘disorder’ perpetuates a bias against the mental health illness and ‘has the connotation of being something that is a pre-existing problem that an individual has’ before they came into the Army and ‘makes the person seem weak,’ he added.”<sup>90</sup>

Nevertheless, Dr. John Oldham, the APA president at the time, did not change the name of the disorder for the new edition of the DSM (DSM-V). The APA found no supporting evidence that changing the name would limit or eliminate the stigma associated with the diagnosis, even if the name had been changed “the discriminatory practices linked to the PTSD label could be easily transferred to the new label.”<sup>91</sup>

Although, the label of PTSD has not changed, the stigma associated with the disorder is still a concern. Little research has been conducted on the stigma of PTSD.<sup>92</sup> Conversely, the stigma associated with mental health,<sup>93</sup> substance abuse,<sup>94</sup> and depression<sup>95</sup> have each been studied in great detail and can give insight into the stigma of PTSD.

A small study conducted by Dinesh Mittal and associates found that those diagnosed with PTSD were often labeled as dangerous,

violent or crazy, showing that Veterans are concerned about how the public perceives their diagnosis, and in doing so would often self-stigmatize—that is to say become what the public perceives of those with the diagnosis.<sup>96</sup> For example “Those with PTSD are crazy and unpredictable, therefore I must be crazy and unpredictable.

Michael Fisher and Terry Schell point out that although limited studies have been conducted, the stigma associated with PTSD still negatively affects the lives of the Soldiers who are dealing with the stigma from their diagnosis, even in scenarios where the diagnosis should have little or nothing to do with a particular area of the person’s life.

For example: “A PTSD diagnosis may be used against an individual in court to suggest that he or she should not be given custody of a child, despite the fact that the diagnosis itself does not require any assessment of parenting skills or competencies.”<sup>97</sup>

Likewise, discrimination may also be seen in an employer’s decision in the selection for work assignments, or promotion. PTSD manifests itself differently. “The mere presence of a diagnosis provides no reliable information about how broad or narrow the impairment may be.”<sup>98</sup> Fisher and Schell contend that “PTSD-related discrimination may persist even if individuals with PTSD were generally admired or seen as heroic.”<sup>99</sup>

Unfortunately for the Veteran the military is not without its own bias. Psychiatric diagnoses and mental health treatment are part of a Soldiers periodic health assessment to see if a Soldier is fit for duty. This assessment is accessible to the unit commander in order for him/her to manage their unit personnel in preparation

for future missions. However, “the DSM criteria for PTSD do not require any assessment of an individual’s ability to carry out his or her military occupation, nor do the criteria address how the individual would respond to deployment. The PTSD diagnosis does entail some functional impairment, but for some individuals, the impairment may be limited to nonoccupational situations.”<sup>100</sup>

Although the name of the diagnosis did not change, military personnel have created their own non-clinical terms to lessen the impact of PTSD. Terms such as Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Combat Stress Reaction (CSR).

PTS is similar to that of PTSD, it is when diagnostic criteria for PTSD are present but does not meet full criteria for diagnosis.<sup>101</sup> CSR is defined as “the expected, predictable, emotional, intellectual, physical, and/or behavioral reactions of service members who have been exposed to stressful events in combat or military operations other than war.”<sup>102</sup>

Both PTS and CSR have similarities with the diagnosis of Acute Stress Reaction (ASR). Michael Fisher warns against the use of these terms and those similar to these terms because it “fails to convey this distinction between a normal stress response and a problematic one (which persists and is functionally impairing).” A Soldier believing that he is only dealing with PTS may not go and receive the help he needs, nor would he receive the benefits of a full PTSD or ASR diagnosis.<sup>103</sup>

The creation of the term PTSD was not designed to create a stigma against those who are suffering from the diagnosis but was created in order to separate PTSD victims from other mental

disorders, and acknowledge that these people are in need of help. Before the inclusion of PTSD in DSM-III there was little care provided. Veterans who sought out medical attention found themselves lacking criteria to receive help from therapists using the DSM-II. “The DSM-II functioned as a substantial barrier to mental health treatment for Vietnam-era Veterans.”<sup>104</sup>

Veterans who decided to visit the VA, were telling stories of combat experiences and episodes of aggression, the VA doctors were misdiagnosing them as schizophrenics and prescribing these Veterans anti-psychotic drugs.<sup>105</sup> Creating an official diagnosis for the condition opened up an avenue for suffering people to obtain treatment. “On July 13, 1979 President Jimmy Carter signed Public Law 96-22 to establish the Vietnam Veterans’ Outreach Program.”<sup>106</sup> These new changes allowed organizations to establish treatment center for Veterans and thus facilitated greater access to mental health treatment.

For Veterans who suffered from the result of a traumatic combat experience were also suffering from other labels, and stigmas associated with their experiences. This negative image only worsened the Soldiers mental condition leading to high numbers of Vietnam Veterans suffering from PTSD with suicide ideations.<sup>107</sup>

Those Veterans who had found help often had to pay the financial aspect of therapy themselves. With the classification of PTSD, Veterans became eligible for “benefits designed to offset the financial impact of their disabilities associated with the disorder.”<sup>108</sup>

Now that there existed a criteria for the disorder, psychologists began to realize that proceeding a traumatic experience there

was still a dire need to get people to treatment sooner. So in 1994 with the creation of DSM-IV a new disorder was included to provide much needed support before a person could qualify for PTSD.

Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) was established “to categorize individuals suffering from problems stemming from exposure to a traumatic event for more than two days but less than four weeks after the event.”<sup>109</sup> It is believed that ASD is the best way to provide earlier treatment for those who suffered from a traumatic event, and possibly mitigate future diagnosis of PTSD.<sup>110</sup>

In 2013 the 5<sup>th</sup> version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders altered the criteria for PTSD and ASD by removing how a person responded during a traumatic event. How a person handles an event as it goes on is not as important to how the person cognitively remembers and reacts afterwards. With the creation and improvement of the DSM criteria for PTSD other tools have been created such as diagnostic questionnaires and psychometric devices, which are used to identify the viability of treatment, track symptoms over time, and improve therapeutic interventions.<sup>111</sup>

Unfortunately for the Veteran who sought support in order to combat the stigma of the “war Vet” and show that they have a legitimized problem, the stigma did not go away, it simply changed.

***..Monty states that “If all learning is 0-10, then the most important part of learning is 0-1. Join-Up and follow-up represent 0-1 phase.”***

***--Monty Roberts***

## Notes



## Post Traumatic Growth

Before turning to the modalities of PTSD treatment it needs to be mentioned that for any treatment or coping skill to be of value there is a belief that a person, even after a traumatic event can continue to grow in positive ways.

When a young child reaches for a flame and feels the intense heat the child pulls back their hand, and will continue to inform all who will listen that the flame is hot and should not be touched. In much the same way people who are dealing with a persistent traumatic event can learn to discover who they are and what is meaningful in their lives.

*“In meeting the range of complex struggles that PTSD survivors experience, strengths can emerge that may otherwise have remained outside of awareness. Combat Veterans sometimes can recall instances of courage and leadership that were overlooked during their times of anguish.”<sup>112</sup>*

Stanley Krippner gives a great example of someone who has experienced a series of traumatic events. “The life of John McCain, who was imprisoned in North Vietnamese POW camps for many years, is a prime example of post-traumatic growth, as he went on to become a U.S. senator and presidential candidate.”<sup>113</sup> Another example of post-traumatic growth is Monty Roberts, who suffered years of abuse as a child developed and created a program to teach nonviolence.

## Diagnostic Criteria:

In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition* (DSM-V), PTSD is found under the trauma and

stressor related disorders. The major clinical definition of PTSD as described “is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to one or more traumatic events.” PTSD is not restricted by age, trauma and its effects can occur at any age, beginning after the first year of life.<sup>114</sup>

The diagnostic criteria for PTSD has significantly changed from DSM-IV to DSM-V, the number one change is that in Criteria A. DSM-IV criteria A stated that the victim had to experience the event with intense fear, helplessness, or horror.<sup>115</sup> However, it was found that this is not always the case. Some people face a traumatic ordeal with professionalism such as military, and first responders. Changes to the DSM can be found in Appendix A.

### **PTSD Checklist 5 (PCL-5)**

The PCL-5 is a 20-item self-report measure that assesses the diagnostic criteria of PTSD. This tool is used to screen people with PTSD, monitor change throughout therapy, and to help make a provisional diagnosis.

There are several ways to measure the outcome of the checklist. A total symptom severity score can be obtained by summing the scores for each of the 20 items. These scores will be compared to the before score to give an assessment. If there is at least a 5 point shift in

The PCL-V is a revision of the PCL for DSM-IV, which had three different versions a civilian (PCL-C), military (PCL-M) and a specific (PCL-S). Each of these variations had slightly different wording in regards to the questioning. THE PCL-V has no other versions.<sup>116</sup>

The PCL-5 questions have five possible answers, each with a corresponding number/score: Not at all (0), A little bit (1), Moderately (2), Quite a bit (3), and Extremely (4).

#### PCL-5

**Instructions:** Below is a list of problems that people sometimes have in response to a very stressful experience. Please read each problem carefully and then circle one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

<i>In the past month, how much were you bothered by:</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>A little bit</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>Quite a bit</i>	<i>Extremely</i>
1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?	0	1	2	3	4
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?	0	1	2	3	4
6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?	0	1	2	3	4
8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people, or the world (for example, having thoughts such as: I am bad, there is something seriously wrong with me, no one can be trusted, the world is completely dangerous)?	0	1	2	3	4
10. Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful experience or what happened after it?	0	1	2	3	4
11. Having strong negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame?	0	1	2	3	4
12. Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?	0	1	2	3	4
13. Feeling distant or cut off from other people?	0	1	2	3	4
14. Trouble experiencing positive feelings (for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you)?	0	1	2	3	4
15. Irritable behavior, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively?	0	1	2	3	4
16. Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm?	0	1	2	3	4
17. Being "superalert" or watchful or on guard?	0	1	2	3	4
18. Feeling jumpy or easily startled?	0	1	2	3	4
19. Having difficulty concentrating?	0	1	2	3	4
20. Trouble falling or staying asleep?	0	1	2	3	4

## Notes

## Modalities of Treatment

### *Cognitive Processing Therapy*

Cognitive Processing Therapy was originally developed to treat victims of sexual assault, it has been “successfully used with a range of other traumatic events, including military-related traumas.”<sup>117</sup> CPT is a combination of cognitive therapy and prolonged exposure therapy.<sup>118</sup>

The aim of CPT is to help identify and alter negative cognitions and beliefs related to a traumatic event; such as survival guilt, self-blame, or feelings of inadequacy.<sup>119</sup> This is done through psycho-education; identification of cognitive distortions; recognizing the relationships between thoughts and feelings; challenging and maladaptive thoughts; focusing on themes of safety, trust, power, self-esteem and intimacy;<sup>120</sup> and helping the patient understand that the traumatic event can change a person’s belief and how they view the world.<sup>121</sup>

CPT evidence based brief form of therapy, usually lasting only twelve sessions.<sup>122</sup> “Before examining the trauma in depth, the client is taught to label emotions and recognize the connection among events, thoughts, and feelings, then is asked to write a detailed account of the worst traumatic event and read it to her or himself every day.”<sup>123</sup>

In session the client shares with the therapist the written account, and together they look for stuck points, or negative cognitions. For example, a Soldier who believes that he or she would have stopped an attack, if only they were paying better attention, and because of their inattentiveness they are to blame for the outcome.

Through questioning techniques the therapist challenges the client's beliefs of the event, pointing out distorted thoughts and overgeneralized views. "Clients are asked to focus on any self-blame they have regarding the trauma and the effects of the event on their beliefs about self and others.

This statement is used to understand how they may have distorted the cause of the event of overgeneralized its meaning, such that their functioning has been compromised."<sup>124</sup> Before the end of the twelve sessions, the therapist teaches the client how to identify their own maladaptive thoughts and ways to solve their own problem.

This style of therapy has been proven to significantly improve diagnostic criteria for Military Veterans,<sup>125</sup> victims of rape,<sup>126</sup> and other varies of interpersonal violence,<sup>127</sup> with approximately 50% of people who have completed therapy showing progress.

## *Prolonged Exposure*

Prolonged exposure (PE) is a fusion of Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Emotional Processing Therapy, designed to help a client “confront feared objects and situations repeatedly until the fear is no longer a problem.”<sup>128</sup> This style of therapy “posits that anxiety disorders, including PTSD, reflect specific pathologic fears of places, situations, or objects that are safe but are perceived as dangerous, and therefore, are avoided”<sup>129</sup> Through the use of psycho-education, deep relaxation techniques, imaginal or in-vivo (live) exposure, PE helps a person confront the “feared situation, object, thought, or memory; the exposure is continued until the anxiety is reduced.”<sup>130</sup>

“In layman terms, exposure is essentially similar to ‘Facing one’s fear’ or ‘Getting back on the horse.’ No matter what idiom is used, the implication remains the same: Persons are exposed to that which makes them feel afraid, and through facing such fears repeatedly, the reaction of anxiety is reduced.”<sup>131</sup>

PE operates on the notion that overreaction to a feared stimuli is maintained by continued avoidance or disassociation from their experience.<sup>132</sup> For clients with PTSD, the focus is on thoughts and memories that cause a “maladaptive, and inappropriate response to what would commonly be deemed a benign threat by others.”<sup>133</sup>

The client is not expected to start with the most difficult aspects of their fear. The client is asked to identify and list fearful situations, ranking each situations in order of least to worst. “The hierarchy is used to guide the exposure practices throughout the treatment. Clients are encouraged to practice easier items first.

As the fear of these items decreases, clients then move on to more difficult items on the hierarchy.”<sup>134</sup>

This style of therapy works best when the techniques taught are used daily, and for prolonged periods.<sup>135</sup> This will enable the client to face the emotions and situation long enough to decrease the stress response. “During exposure, clients are encouraged not to fight their feelings of fear; they may even be encouraged to purposely intensify the feeling if the fear level is too low to obtain any benefit. Clients are also discouraged from relying on distraction, safety cues, overprotective behaviors, and other subtle avoidance strategies.”<sup>136</sup> However, “high arousal usually cannot be maintained for more than an hour or two,”<sup>137</sup> which is why PE sessions are around 9-12 weekly or biweekly, 90 minute sessions where the client faces their fear for no less than 45 minutes.<sup>138</sup>

Prolonged Exposure “is the most studied psychotherapy for PTSD, and it is accepted as a gold standard”<sup>139</sup> Although, PE is a proven therapy for PTSD it is nonetheless difficult for many clients to accept. “It is known that approximately 30% refuse exposure-based treatment, if it is offered, because of the demands that it puts on individuals, and close to 20% may drop out or end prematurely because the treatment is too challenging.”<sup>140</sup> Another condition that renders PE ineffective besides the avoidance of the stimuli, is when a client is unaware of the nature of their fear.<sup>141</sup>



## ***Stress Inoculation Training***

Stress Inoculation Therapy (SIT) is one of the earliest modalities, created as an anxiety-management treatment to provide help to rape trauma survivors.<sup>142</sup> SIT uses a combination of therapeutic interventions from cognitive restructuring and exposure therapy to teach a variety of coping skills, such as “relaxation training, breathing retraining, positive thinking and self-talk, assertiveness training, and thought stopping.”<sup>143</sup> The hope is that through these coping skills a client can learn to overcome their fears.<sup>144</sup>

Therapy is “tailored to the individual problems and needs of each client, so it is flexible and can be used in individual or group settings.”<sup>145</sup> Granting, SIT has no set number of sessions it is still considered a brief form of therapy. “

Studies have demonstrated that the effectiveness of SIT generally increases as the number of sessions increases... Whereas a single session can somewhat improve resistance to stress, more frequent sessions appear to be optimal for obtaining maximum benefits from SIT.<sup>146</sup> On average “four and seven sessions of SIT appear sufficient for reducing performance and/or state anxiety.”<sup>147</sup>

Stress Inoculation Therapy is typically divided into three phases.

First phase is conceptualization and education where the client and therapist can come to an understanding of the anxiety, trauma, and its consequences.”<sup>148</sup>

Second phase of therapy is coping skill acquisition and rehearsal where the client learns various skills to decrease their anxiety.<sup>149</sup>

Last phase of therapy is application and follow-through, where the client can apply their training to in-vivo or imaginal situations “while simultaneously incorporating cognitive and relaxation strategies previously learned.”<sup>150</sup>

Edna Foa, one of the creators of Stress Inoculation Therapy, and Prolonged Exposure therapy, had conducted a comparison of exposure therapy, stress inoculation training, and their combination for reducing posttraumatic stress disorder in female assault victims. Edna Foa found that although all three modalities were beneficial it was PE that had a larger success rate.<sup>151</sup>

## *Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing*

Out of all the listed modalities of treatment EMDR is the most controversial. Unlike other modalities EMDR “evolved not from theory or application of effective techniques for other disorders, but from a personal observation. As originally developed by Shapiro, EMDR was based on a chance observation that troubling thoughts were resolved when her eyes followed the waving of leaves during a walk in the park.”<sup>152</sup> Shapiro realized that through lateral eye movements and cognitive behavioral therapy, negative cognitions associated with a traumatic experience could be alleviated.<sup>153</sup>

Cognitive behavioral therapy is an important facet of EMDR however, it is not the primary. The main component is found in the desensitization technique where the client’s attention is directed “to an external stimulus while he/she simultaneously concentrates on an identified source of emotional disturbance.”

154

To do this the client is first asked to rate the distressing memory on a 0-10 scale. Then the client is expected to visualize the distressing memory, rehearse the negative cognitions, concentrate on the physical sensations of the anxiety, and visually track the therapist’s index finger. “While the client does this, the therapist rapidly moves his or her index figure back and forth from right to left, 30 to 35 cm from the client’s face, with two back-and-forth movements per second. These are repeated 24 times.”<sup>155</sup> Then the client is asked to blank out the memory and take a deep breath.”<sup>156</sup>

This process only lasts 30-50 seconds<sup>157</sup>. Immediately following

the client reassesses the memory and assigns a new rating. The process is then repeated until the rating is between a 0-1.<sup>158</sup> “

During this time, new insights, associations, emotions, and images rapidly emerge into consciousness. The client is instructed to report on anything that comes to mind, and that material becomes the focus for the next set of eye movements”<sup>159</sup>

To augment the desensitization other methods of coping, such as mindfulness has been included.<sup>160</sup> Due to its unquestionable uniqueness EMDR has been subject of scientific inquiry with a primary focus on PTSD. David Barlow states that “PTSD has been an area of particular interest for many researchers, and after many well-controlled studies, EMDR is now well recognized as an effective treatment for PTSD. In 2000, the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies officially designated EMDR as an effective treatment for PTSD.”<sup>161</sup>

EMDR has shown itself to be a contender. When comparing EMDR with the leading method of therapy, Prolonged Exposure Therapy, EMDR has comparative results.<sup>162</sup> However, EMDR treatment is shorter and/or requires no homework compared with the 1 to 2 hours of homework per day required for exposure therapy.<sup>163</sup>

## *Equine Assisted Psychotherapy*

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (AP) is a method of psychotherapy that includes horses in the treatment process. Through the horse's unique ability to understand and read body language, the horse can act as a mirror for a client—providing a distinctive type of insight.

Sara Gilling in her study found that horses possess several valuable characteristics that can be used for therapy: 1) Horses are prey animals, with heightened sensitivity to their environment. 2) They are herd animals and therefore aware of behaviors and emotions of others in their herd, and 3) as they have interacted with humans for centuries, responding well to human behavior.<sup>164</sup>

By applying these valuable characteristics in a therapeutic environment EAP can be used to address “self-esteem and personal confidence, communication and interpersonal effectiveness, trust, boundaries and limit-setting, and group cohesion.”<sup>165</sup>

Unlike the other modalities of treatment there are no standards established to define what equine activities are part of therapy. EAP can include a variety of activities such as horse handling, grooming, riding or none riding tasks. This non-standardization gives freedom to the therapist and horse handler to incorporate the horse as they see beneficial for the client.

All activities with horses require a person's full attention as horses are very responsive animals. Equine-supported psychotherapy of any kind is therefore suited for training attention and focus on being present in the moment.

*The hostile and defiant street smarts of adolescent gang youth erode quickly in the presence of an assumed adversary (the horse) that the youth is unequipped to control or overthrow. Such adolescents are invariably shocked as they begin to understand that openness and vulnerability are more likely to elicit positive behavior from the horse than displays of defiance and aggression.*<sup>166</sup>

However, like people, horses have their own personality, “Because all horses are different, they each require different treatment from participants to successfully complete tasks. Through their experience with the horse, individuals learn to observe and respond to behavior.”<sup>167</sup>

EAP has been proven to work with children who have experienced intra-family violence.<sup>168</sup> Yet little work has been conducted with EAP in regards to combat Veterans, however, the popularity of its use is growing, more and more organizations are calling upon the horse to help heal unseen wounds in military personnel, programs such as “Horse Sense for Healing” by Monty Roberts in Solvang CA, and many others are showing up around the United States. For a small none-exhaustive list of different equine programs for Veterans look in appendix C.

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## Notes

## Process of Join-Up

### *Instruction of Join-Up:*

To instruct Join-Up, Monty has created a process, used in Horse Sense and Healing, to help people learn how to communicate with the horse. Monty first explains what Join-Up is and what it would look like. He then brings the participants to the round pen where they will watch Monty demonstrate the process of Join-Up with a horse.<sup>169</sup>

To help mitigate possible fear a Veteran might have with interacting with a 1,200 pound animal, Monty asks the participants to go out and meet some of the horses up-close and personal, where the Veteran will have the ability to pet the animal and ask trainers questions pertaining to the horses.<sup>170</sup>

After meeting the horses, Monty then breaks down communication into its simplest form “yes-no,” and explains that the participant can communicate with anyone to accomplish any given task through these two simple words.<sup>171</sup> To prove his point, Monty has the participants play a “yes-no” game, which will be further explained in the following section.

Now that the participants have met Monty’s horses, and understand the basics of communication, the participants are brought to the round pen where they can practice Join-Up with one another.<sup>172</sup> This gives the trainer time to explain the process on an individual level, and insure that each participant has the knowledge necessary to achieve Join-Up with a horse.

After Join-Up with a person, the participant is finally ready to try Join-Up with the horse.<sup>173</sup>

Once the person has completed Join-Up their experience is not over. Monty believes in follow through, and has the participant, with a horse, traverse a few obstacles. This shows the Veteran that through Join-Up the horse trusts enough to be lead through different situations.





## ***Step-by-Step Process of Join-Up***

First introduce the horse to the center of the circle, facing the animal towards the 12 o'clock position (the opposite side of the gate), then 3, 6 (the gate of the round pen), and 9.

Lead the horse to the 2 o'clock position of the round pen.

Offers the horse the opportunity to leave. He/she squares up on the animal and snaps their eyes directly to the horse's eyes, What Monty calls "eyes on eyes."<sup>174</sup>

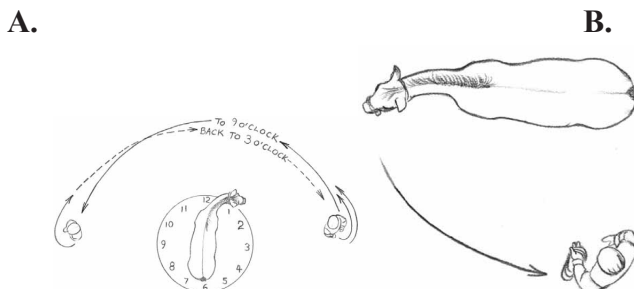


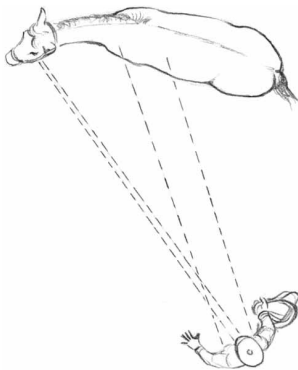
Figure A. Join-Up Arching to Invite the Horse Figure B. Join-Up Drive Away

Drawings from Monty Roberts, *From My Hands to Yours: Lessons From a Lifetime of Training Championship Horses* (Solvang, CA: M and P. Roberts, 2002). Figure A: 143, Figure B: 129.

The horse will run from you, as you follow behind the horse "eyes on eyes" in the center of the pen. While silently telling the horse "you made the choice to go away and that is fine, but don't

go away a little, go away a lot.”<sup>175</sup>

**C.**



**D.**

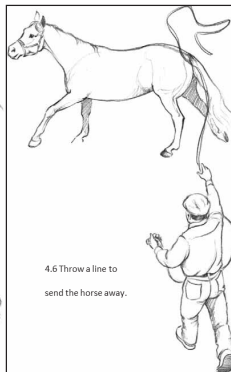


Figure C. Send Away Figure D. Drive Away [Eyes on Eyes]

Drawings from Monty Roberts, *From My Hands to Yours*: Figure C: 130, Figure D: 132.

“The first one I virtually always see is that he will lock on me the ear closest to me. It will point my direction. This means ‘I respect you. I don’t know who you are or what you are up to, but I will show you respect and attempt a negotiation.’ Second, he will come off the wall and try to come closer to me, near the middle of the pen. I remain shoulder square, eyes on eyes, which effectively keeps him away. The next gesture I usually observe is that he licks and chews—language, in effect, that conveys he does not fear me and believes I will not hurt him. The fourth and last gesture that I wait to receive is when the horse drops his head down near the soil and allows it to bounce along. This says, ‘if we could have a meeting to renegotiate, I would let you

be the chairman.”<sup>176</sup>

**E.**



**F.**



**G.**

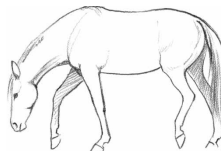


Figure E. Join-Up  
Ear Locked On  
Meeting

Figure F. Join-Up  
Licking and Chewing  
Chairmen of the

Figure G. Join-Up  
Chairmen of the

Drawings from Roberts, *From My Hands to Yours*, Figure E: 135, Figure F: 136, Figure G: 137.

Once all four of these gestures are given, take your eyes away from the horse's eyes, turn slightly to the right away from the horse, and set your shoulders at “a forty-five degree angle to the body axis of the horse.”<sup>177</sup> Now wait for the horse to choose to either follow you or to go away. If the horse chooses to go then send the horse away again. If the horse approaches you with its nose out, then you have achieved Join-Up. The horse, a flight animal willingly chose to follow you—a predator.<sup>178</sup>

### ***Human-to-Human Application***

As Monty traveled the globe teaching his nonviolent approach to horse training, he noticed similar reactions that people would have during his demonstrations. One would be angry towards Monty for tricks and lies they believed he was spreading. Two, entertainment with no desire for change. What Monty had to

show was indeed interesting but had little to no impact. Three, wunderstanding.”<sup>179</sup>

During a corporate session, where Monty was instructing an organization on the principles of Join-Up the people found that Join-Up allows bucking to occur, expects resistance, keeping the pulse rate down, establishes trust and keeps the dialog glowing.<sup>180</sup> As with horses Human-to-Human Join-Up cannot be faked.<sup>181</sup>

Like all forms of communication, the human language requires some time to master.<sup>182</sup> This mastery is not found in the etiquette, grammar, or the sophisticated manner the words are presented, but in the bond of acceptance between to opposite people. Monty states that “If all learning is 0-10, then the most important part of learning is 0-1, Join-Up and follow-up represent 0-1 phase.”<sup>183</sup> As people learn to communicate they too can facilitate an environment of change.

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## Notes

## Notes Cont'd

## **Usuing Motivational Intervieing**

This Instructor Handbook is based on the concepts of Join-Up as developed by Monty Roberts.

Monty's work with Veterans and their families, utilizes his concepts in innovative ways to provide opportunities for healing from Post-Traumatic Stress Injury.

This Handbook also utilizes the concepts of Motivational Interviewing developed by William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick. Their book, "Motivational Interviewing – Helping People Change – Third Edition" (Guilford, 2013,) is a very useful resource for those wishing to work more effectively with people. It is highly recommended for Monty Roberts' certified instructors.

Bill and Monty have a long history of working together and each has identified similarities in the work being done by the other. After a visit to Monty's farm in 2000, Dr. Miller wrote an article describing the similarities between his work with people and Monty's work with horses. The parallels between what Bill and Monty were both working on independently are striking! For more information, please refer to "Motivational Interviewing: IV. Some Parallels with Horse Whispering" by William R. Miller, Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy, 2000, 28, 285-292, Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom.

We are deeply grateful to Bill Miller and Stephen Rollnick for granting permission to utilize some of their concepts for working successfully with people in this Guidebook.

## Motivational Interviewing

Defined by William Miller and Stephen Rollnick, Motivational Interviewing is “a collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication with particular attention to the language of change. It is designed to strengthen personal motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by eliciting and exploring the person’s own reasons for change within an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion.”<sup>184</sup>

MI was born from a combination of the Carl Rogers’ client focused therapy and CBT. The objective is to help “sort out what they [the client] believe and who they experience themselves to be, not by providing education, but by helping them feel more comfortable with who they are and hear their own voices more clearly.”<sup>185</sup>

Motivational interviewing was created in the early 1980s. As a student Dr. Miller began to work with and learn from people who were dealing with substance abuse. He noticed that several therapists were negatively characterizing their clients as “pathological liars with formidable immature personality defenses, in denial and out of touch with reality.”<sup>186</sup>

Dr. Miller had a different opinion about the people who were searching for help—that is to say he found them to be “open, interesting, thoughtful people well aware of the chaos ensuing from their drinking.”<sup>187</sup> He noticed that “openness versus defensiveness, change talk versus sustain talk was very much a product of the therapeutic relationship.”<sup>188</sup>

While studying counseling, Miller noticed that there was a belief among therapists that a person could be forced, coerced,

or persuaded to do the right thing.<sup>189</sup> Those going through these treatments did not seem to get any better. It was because of this apparent chronic return to the abhorrent problems that clinicians began to negatively label their clients. “This phenomenon is not unique to addiction treatment. Echoes of this pattern, and the associated judgments and labels about poor motivation, can be found in many settings across health, social care, and criminal justice.”<sup>190</sup>

### ***What is Motivational Interviewing (MI)?***

MI is not simply about being nice to people. Although they are looking for help, people do not need a “yes man” or someone to nag them to change.<sup>191</sup> Relationships lay at the heart of MI.<sup>192</sup> The process of MI begins by engaging with another person (client), which requires effort from all people involved in the conversation for change. Together they focus on a direction for positive growth, which the client has identified.<sup>193</sup> Even if the client has selected a direction, it does not mean they will follow through.

With people looking for change, there is a level of ambivalence to consider. “People who need to make a change are ambivalent about doing so. They see both reasons to change and reasons not to. They want to change and they don’t want to, all at the same time. It is a normal human experience.”<sup>194</sup> This can be seen in how the person talks about their problem.

Change talk, is “the person’s own statements that favor change,”<sup>195</sup>

Sustain talk is “the persons own arguments for not changing.”<sup>196</sup> While focusing on change talk the counselor works on



encouraging or evoking the client to act on this change, or “having the person voice the arguments for change.”<sup>197</sup> As the process for change continues to move forward the counselor and client can begin to create a plan in order to sustain forward momentum.<sup>198</sup>

The process of MI is not necessarily a step-by-step process to be learned. Components of MI (engage, focus, evoke, and plan) can be in a constant flux which is why a counselor needs to always be engaged with the client, and believe in the partnership.

The client is the expert in their own life, not the counselor,<sup>199</sup> which is why “This partnership aspect of MI spirit bespeaks a profound respect for the other. In a way, the MI practitioner is a privileged witness to change, and the conversation is a bit like sitting together on a sofa while the person pages through a life photo album.”<sup>200</sup>

MI is not a therapeutic style in and of itself, yet it can be combined with therapeutic techniques that strengthen the therapeutic alliance with a client. MI is a manner of working with people,<sup>201</sup> which is done through compassion<sup>202</sup> and open ended questions, designed to help the counselor and client to better see the situation and work through the ambivalence.<sup>203</sup>

“MI involves a lot more than asking questions, it requires high-quality listening.”<sup>204</sup> There is no time limit to MI, it can be either very brief, as a five minute meeting in a hospital room, or a phone call. MI can also be a series of long term sessions to aid someone deal with difficult life situations.

## ***Motivational Interview Groups***

MI can be applied in many other scenarios and contexts, to include the group setting. Therapeutic groups or groups like Horse Sense and Healing “helps members regain perspective and broaden the way they think about their lives’ possibilities.

Groups can help people connect with others in positive ways, often in the shadow of isolating trauma or shame.”<sup>205</sup> Through the group process a person can identify with others who are also dealing with hard times, such as PTSD.

One goal of operating in a group is to help those in attendance to gain hope that they can change. This hope “comes from hearing others’ success stories and witnessing their change, experiencing others’ support and experiencing the general optimism that develops in a positive group climate.”<sup>206</sup>

Wagner states that “although informational components can be woven into MI groups, MI groups are not primarily educational in nature.”<sup>207</sup> These groups are primarily concerned with helping people make needed change in their lives through eliciting change talk.

A group aids its members in the process of healing. The group leader is simply there to guide the on the path, and is responsible for ensuring that the group remains a safe place to share thoughts, emotions, and concerns.

Group settings can feel difficult, the leader is dealing with several different people at one time instead of just one. What is easily applied in a one-to-one session is not the same in a group.

If one person is missing or a new person arrives in the middle of group meeting it can change the dynamic of the group process. Nevertheless, the principles of MI remain the same. The leader will still engage with the group and aid the group in changes that occur.

The goal of the leader just like the one-on-one session is to do the least amount of talking and allow the group to flow naturally, only interjecting to ensure the group remains on course, and remains safe.

### ***Similarities with Join-Up***

So how does MI relate to Horse Sense and Healing?

Horse Sense and Healing is based on the nonviolent principles of Join-Up. Unlike the horse, people “struggle between the need to be an individual and the need to belong to a group. Both needs are natural and healthy, but the struggle between them is at the heart of much of the difficulty of organizational, family, and social life. We want to be an individual, but we resist being isolated.”<sup>208</sup>

Monty explains that “by acknowledging the power of people to choose, and by learning to communicate without coercion, the philosophy of Join-Up provides a way to resolve tension and struggle. By presenting the invitation and by freely allowing people to make choices as to how to be, we honor them and allow them to fulfill themselves and their role and responsibilities of Join-Up; we honor both needs.”<sup>209</sup> Like MI, Join-Up is based on communication between people, acceptance, and the assumption that people are good and generally want to be good.

William Miller states that “both methods emphasize a collaborative rather than adversarial working relationship, seek to enhance intrinsic motivation, and produce positive change in a briefer period of time than traditionally thought to be possible. Both respect the other’s autonomy and choice, and more with rather than against resistance.”<sup>210</sup>

Dr. Miller explains that like the traditional perspective that trouble or problem horses just needed to be taught a lesson, and then are physically abused, is much like the traditional view of therapy. There was a time when Americans believed that harsh treatments like “boot camps, head shaving, group attack therapy,”<sup>211</sup> and programs like “Scared Straight” were needed to teach a person a lesson they would never forget and therefor stop the unwanted negative behavior. These treatments were only reserved for those who truly deserved it, like troubled youth involved in gang life, substance abuse, or criminals, so that the person could be broken in to fit into society.

Although not so prevalent in today’s therapeutic world, many still hold to similar thoughts, and terms like “pick yourself up by the boot straps;” “he just doesn’t want to change bad enough;” or “he hasn’t hit rock bottom yet, once he does that he will change” are still prevalent sayings in today’s society.

While searching for understanding in how MI works, Dr. Miller found Monty’s work. Dr. Miller was fascinated by what he saw. The similarities between Join-Up and MI were startling. On July 1999, Dr. Miller visited Flag Is Up Farms. During his visit he witnessed Monty working with an unriden horse:

*“I was also privileged to witness his Join-Up with an unriden*

*horse so extremely aggressive and dangerous that the Roberts ranch was the last stop before the slaughter house. From the horse's wild outbursts at any sudden movement toward his left side, it became apparent that he had been severely whipped by a right-handed trainer. Indeed, he left flank bore scars that preserved the link marks of a heavy chain. This animal had good reason to hate humans.*

*I saw only sessions 5-7, but even within this span of 3 days I could hardly believe it was the same animal. In session 5, as he reached slowly around the horse's left side to pick up a cinch the horse exploded into wild bucking and kicking that persisted for 5 minutes. From a seemingly quiescent standing state, suddenly and without warning all four feet were in the air, kicking wildly to heights of 2-3 meters. Two days later, the same horse was following Mr. Roberts around like a puppy, wearing saddle, bit, and a mannequin rider. The desensitization process was so complete that even an abrupt bodily charge against the horse's left flank yielded only a muscle twitch, rather than the violent outburst of 2 days before.<sup>212</sup>*

As Monty worked with the horse, Dr. Miller saw applications of positive and negative reinforcement at play. The horse, who showed signs of trauma, willingly choose to follow Monty. "After Join-Up, much of the training process involves the shaping through reinforcement of successive approximations to the desired behavior. There are no surprises there for behavior therapists, though one must admire the skill with which he applies principles of learning."<sup>213</sup>

Although Monty and Miller had different teachers, horses for Monty, and addicts for Miller, they both arrived at a similar conclusion: "A commitment to nonviolence and a rejection of

reliance upon coercive power (intimidation, subjugation, ect.). This view is based not only on the foreswearing of violence and coercion, but on the committed belief that there is a better way, a way that is not only more humane, but also more effective and efficient.”<sup>214</sup>

Both approaches have their similarities in working with people they also have their differences in purpose. The purpose of Join-Up is to build trust “you build trust when you are in a position where could do harm but you don’t: the same is true when you protect another person from something you believe could be harmful.”<sup>215</sup> The purpose of MI, on the other hand, is to find and support a person’s motivation for change. Both techniques of interacting with people can easily be combined with one another.



This handbook identifies the following similarities between motivation interviewing and Monty's work with horses and people.

- Both approaches emphasize collaboration and the development of relationship
- Each eschews violence as a means to change and there is a primary focus on respect and the welfare of the other – human or horse
- In MI as in working with horses, we want to establish a willing partnership rather than a dominant relationship. Coercion is not the answer in working with horses or people
- In both approaches the development of confidence and importance are important determinants of readiness to move forward
- If a human or a horse does not see a reason for an action (importance,) s/he will likely not do it
- Even if importance is established, confidence must also be present for a human or a horse to move forward. If the person or horse sees something as highly important but they lack confidence that they can do it, they will likely not display willingness (readiness) to perform the desired behavior
- With humans and horses, we must make it less possible for them to fail and more likely for them to succeed – “make the right thing easy and the wrong thing difficult,”

as Monty teaches

- In MI, we are directional rather than neutral. This is similar to being a leader with a horse
- Both Monty's approach with horses and MI. respect the other's autonomy and choice and aim for a collaborative versus adversarial partnership. Each allows for the development of intrinsic motivation
- William Miller describes that when the process is going well, the therapist or horse trainer is doing a minority of the work!
- In both approaches we take our cues from observing the other, horse or human. S/he will lead us if we listen and we can lead him/her through the tough decision-making process *because* we have listened and established trust (a willing partnership)
- Both approaches identify problems in the relationship as most likely stemming from the therapist or horse trainer. Monty says, "A horse trainer must keep in mind the idea that the horse can do no wrong; that any action taken by the horse, especially the young, unstarted horse, was most likely influenced by you." In Motivational Interviewing, resistant behavior being exhibited by the client is regarded as a likely problem in the therapist's approach



## Notes

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## Program Goals

- Provide opportunities for participants to Join-Up with a horse. Join-Up enables the person to begin the process of rebuilding lost or broken trust; trust: in the horse, the trainer, themselves, and eventually others
- Teach participants to manage their stress response by focusing on lowering their adrenalin (energy) levels
- Provide ongoing training & support to Monty Roberts Instructors involved in delivering the Horse Sense and Soldiers Program



**“Horses take me for what I am, but they judge me for what I do.”--MONTY ROBERTS**

## Desired Outcomes:

- Program participants will identify improvements in their ability to trust—starting with their equine interactions and then extending to their human relationships
- Veterans will identify that their sense of self-worth is improving
- Family members of Veteran participants will describe positive changes in the Veteran's life and/or their relationship with their Veteran
- Program participants will continue to return to Flag Is Up Farms for additional clinics.
- Program participants will describe significant levels of personal healing
- Reduction in PTSI symptoms and reliance on medications
- Some participants who have achieved significant growth and healing will eventually become Horse Sense and Soldiers Program leaders



- Monty Roberts Instructors will deliver the Program with increased skill and become specialized in their ability to work with those affected by Post-Traumatic Stress Injury

## **Why Use Horses to Assist Those with Post-traumatic Stress Injury?**

The benefits of using horses in therapeutic programs are very well proven. Horses are extremely gentle and forgiving when they are with children, humans of limited physical or mental ability, or those living with PTSD. They appear to “sense” the needs of the other and respond accordingly.

### ***Horses and Veterans have a lot in common***

Monty Roberts tells us that, “Like humans, many horses are also affected by Post-Traumatic Stress Injury.” They have endured, and resiliently recovered from, various hardships during their lives. Also like humans, many horses have suffered at the hand of humans. Some have also encountered highly stressful situations and been impacted by them – attacks by predators or snakebites, for example.

The flight response in horses is keenly honed, as it is in humans who are affected by Traumatic Material. Horses, as well as humans with PTSD are hyper-vigilant—they always ‘on guard,’ and respond to even the smallest movements and sounds.

### ***Horses are powerful teachers—We learn about ourselves through them.***

Horses respond to the energy levels of the people who are working with them. If someone’s adrenalin level is high, the horse will mirror this. As a person brings their energy level down, the horse responds in kind. Horses have the ability to serve as a powerful mirroring tool for Veterans and can help them learn to control their responses to stressors.

***Horses can see the good in us and help restore our self-worth.***

Horses have a remarkable ability to ‘read’ people. Monty says, “Horses read emotions first and they can also read intent – they are able to differentiate when someone has good intention and when they do not.”

Horses are very successful in working with Veterans because they see past the outward façade and read the true emotional cues underneath. The horse sees the intrinsic worth in the human, even though s/he may have lost (temporarily), his or her own sense of goodness and worth.

The horse is able to help the Veteran, who has been trained to be a “predator” (the first half of Monty’s described “D” shape) because he will Join-Up with that Veteran, clearly illustrating that he does not view him/her as predatorial. In fact, the horse’s willingness to Join-Up is because he has established that the human is *not* being predatorial. This is a very powerful step in helping the Veteran to reconnect with his or her own sense of self-worth.

Trust is also an important component of this relationship. The Veteran, who have lost trust in self or others, is learning to trust the horse. S/he is able to do this because the horse has illustrated trust *first*. Veteran, Dennis, told a similar story about how Monty listened to him first and that is why he was willing to listen to Monty.

The horse will take a chance on the Veteran – a leap of faith that s/he is intrinsically good and is exhibiting no ill will. This simple act of trust allows the Veteran to trust, too – first

himself and then the horse.

These actions on behalf of the horse begin the work of completing the second half of the “D” shape – helping the Veteran come full circle and return to a life without combat.

The two halves of the “D” are like the rings that attach to a bit. The thing in the middle that makes them work as one is the horse – such a remarkable animal in providing therapeutic service.



## Welcoming Participants

### *Works Optimally*

- Done by a Veteran, who is also a trained Horse Sense and Soldiers Leader
- A Veteran can use humor when welcoming participants in a way that others cannot. For example, Veteran Leader, Stephen made a joke about there only being a couple of vacant corners in the classroom so the participants would have to agree to share them. He was referencing the fact that those with PTSI like to have their backs to the wall.
- Humor relaxes participants and establishes an atmosphere of ease.

### *Here is an excellent example of a welcome and introduction done by Veteran Leader, Stephen:*

- Stephen talked about how he was personally affected by Join-Up and the environment of being at Flag Is Up Farms, which he described as both unique and special.
- Stephen told participants, “You will see people change.”
- Stephen acknowledged the Vietnam Vets and the fact that he saw them as setting the groundwork for future returning Vets to be assisted. He explained that before Vietnam, Post-Traumatic Stress was not a condition that was acknowledged or treated.
- He outlined the focus of the weekend being to enable



healing from PTSI.

- Stephen welcomed the family members and outlined the guidelines pertaining to children. He asked the adults present to keep the children quiet and still when around the horses or when others are around the horses.
- Stephen explained the guidelines regarding photography and video and the importance of asking permission prior to photographing others. He told those present that they could ask not to be photographed and that their choices would be respected.
- He talked about safety being of utmost importance stating that, “Everyone is a safety officer.” He indicated that helmets must be worn when grooming or working with the horses.
- Stephen advised participants that all their movements should be slow - like moving in heavy oil. He also indicated that movement by one might impact another (e.g. if one person is grooming and another moves quickly, it could startle the horse and the groomer.)
- He presented an overview of the program.
- Stephen described how one-on-one time with Monty worked and how to access it.

***Important Things for Program Leaders to Know:***

- If there are guests present, including volunteers or

observers, it is imperative to introduce them. It is extremely stress producing for those with PTSI to be in situations where they do not feel like they have any control. If we put them on stage in front of an unknown audience they will likely shut down and choose not to participate. Just like we introduce the horse to the round pen to familiarize him with his surroundings and increase comfort, we must extend this respect to the Veterans, especially those who are here for the first time.

- It is important to give participants permission to take care of themselves. Remember that some of these returning Veterans have been taught to be “other-focused” rather than “self-focused.” While they have keen survival instincts, many have been taught to “take one for the team” or to “suck it up” when they experience discomfort. Deliberate discomfort has often been a part of their training. Some of the participants may see it as a sign of weakness to take care of themselves, or to ask for help.
- Although it may seem unusual in men and women who have experienced significant fear in their military careers, please remember that some may actually be afraid of horses. Making it safe to admit a fear of working with horses is a critical first step. If an Instructor talks about their initial fear of doing some exercises with horses, it may free the participants to admit their own reservations (Burke).

### ***Things that Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSI:***

- This weekend is about you and the opportunity for healing that it presents for you and the others in your life.
- You are in the driver's seat with regard to how you take advantage of the opportunities presented.
- Participation is always optional and you have the choice to participate to the degree that you feel comfortable at all times. Watching is a very powerful form of participating!
- We ask you to take care of yourself. This may be easy for some of you who are used to being completely self-reliant. If you feel uncomfortable, or you just need a break, you always have options. We ask that you please talk with one of the staff if something is not sitting well with you.
- We all have a genuine desire to be part of your healing process. If something we are doing is “getting in the way,” please let us know. For example, if we are guiding you too much, tell us to back off; if we are chattering too much, please ask us to be quieter.
- We also love to hear from you when things are really resonating with you. Please let us know when things are helpful or when you experience a big “aha.”
- We are here for you. Our program gets better because you are here with us!

## *Leading a discussion following the welcoming*

You will notice that the “questions” are actually statements. These invitational statements are meant to minimize probing and inquisitiveness and to promote respect and freedom of choice. You might think this is like splitting hairs and you might even wonder if this could really make a difference. It’s a lot like folding your arm across your body when doing Join-Up. The subtle shift in body posture makes a huge difference in the language of Equus.

When it comes to working with people, especially those with PTSI, these small and subtle changes in how we approach are also hugely significant. They are truly the measure that differentiates a MRILC Instructor who is good with horses from one who is good with horses and people, too!

- Please feel free to respond to all the things that I have just told you. I’m interested in your thoughts about what lies ahead for you this weekend.
- I’d be happy to answer any questions that you might have. Please give me a wave if you would like to ask the first question.
- (If there are no “takers” to the invitation above,) Okay then, please give me a wave if you would like to ask the second question!!
- Please raise your hand if, like me, you might find the prospect of working with a 1,200 pound horse slightly daunting! (If you get some hands going up, please emphasize that participants will be supported to maximize their safety at all times. Also reinforce that

they can ask for an Instructor to be alongside whenever they wish.)

- Now, please raise your hand if you think that, like many Veterans joining us here for a return visit, it might be worth the leap of faith to push past your fear and do it anyway!
- (Directed to the returning Veterans, by name, if possible) Please describe your first experience here at Flag Is Up Farms for our newcomers.
- (Directed to one or two of the returning Veterans that you select by name) Please describe a big “aha” that occurred for you while you were here at a Horse Sense and Healing Clinic.
- Okay, we’re off to a great start. Now, let’s meet Monty!

Notes

## Join-Up Demonstration

### *Works Optimally*

- In the round pen with a seasoned Instructor
- Using a horse who has done Join-Up before and is familiar with the process

### *Points for Success When Working with Veterans*

- This activity is about completing a successful demonstration of Join-Up
- This is not about making the Veterans exceptional horsemen – in fact, some may never do this again.
- This demonstration will set the foundation for the success of the Veterans when they do their own Join-Up.
- Choose the things that you emphasize very carefully. Famous Chef, Stephen Yan, once said, “The secret of a good Chinese cook is not knowing what to put in, it is knowing what to leave out.” This is also very true now.
- You don’t need to tell the participants everything – instead, let them watch and learn and then *ask them to tell you* what they witnessed. You might do this in the debriefing that follows the demonstration or you might ask the participants to note their thoughts in writing.

- Let intrinsic learning work for you – many Veterans are very self-reliant and many have stayed alive because they are exceptional at watching and processing.



## **Things You Already Know to Tell Participants:**

### ***Before Bringing the Horse In:***

- Join-Up is a Monty Roberts concept, as learned from horses.
- It is a concept free from any use of violence.
- It is used to build a relationship with a horse and to communicate with him in his language – the language of Equus.
- Equus is a silent language of gestures, like signing for the deaf.

- It is the method by which Monty advocates that all horses should be started.
- Starting a horse is different than breaking a horse.
- At no time do we wish to break the horse's spirit – instead, we want to join with that spirit and work together in a willing partnership.
- This is the start of developing a trusting partnership with your horse.

### ***After Bringing the Horse into the Round Pen:***

- Because the language of Equus is a silent communication system, primarily made up of gestures, everything we do is noticed by the horse – please watch carefully as we begin the Join-Up process.
- How we use our bodies is critically important in the Join-Up process – start by focusing on how our Instructor is using his/her body.
- This is not all about us – we are really focused on the horse and his needs.
- We need to think and “speak” in the language of the horse.
- We start by making him comfortable and orienting him to the round pen.
- We think of the round pen as being like a clock,



with the door being at 6 o'clock.

- We show him 12 o'clock, 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock.
- We release the horse at 2 o'clock and encourage him to leave to the right.
- When releasing at 2:00 o'clock in the round pen, always ask the horse to go away to the right – the horse moves away from you in a natural direction. Monty has a reason for each step and this is one of those subtle, small points that make a huge difference.

***While the Horse is Running in the Initial Direction:***

- Initially we send the horse away from us so that he can make the decision, in his own good time, that he would prefer to be with us.
- To drive the horse forward, we keep our belt buckle pointed behind his ribs – it's trickier than it looks!
- Our eyes on his eyes mean, "Go away," in his language and that is what we are trying to accomplish right now.
- We keep our shoulders square and we walk with intention – as if we are really going somewhere and we are not dawdling along the way – we are on a mission.
- How we project our energy is a critical factor in

## Join-Up.

- Too much energy, or too little energy, will send a very powerful message to the horse.
- Notice how our Instructor is using his/her energy.
- Learning to control our adrenalin, our breathing and our pace is one of the most critical things – the horse will mirror our energy and synchronize with our adrenalin level!
- Watch the Instructor as s/he asks the horse to turn and go in the other direction – did you see the shifts in the Instructor's body language?
- Did you see the subtle shifts, as well?

## ***Making the Third Round:***

- We are going to turn the horse one more time, so that he is going in his original direction – he is moving away from us to the right.
- Now, we are going to create an environment in which the horse might make the choice to Join-Up with us.
- We are going to slow our pace and really lower our energy. If we raise our energy again, the horse will mirror this and pick up his speed. He is communicating with us.
- Join-Up is a predictable process because horses

have a predictable, discernable language – we can see it if we are observing carefully.

- When the horse has decided that we are not being predatorial, he will begin to demonstrate signs of wanting to be with us.
- We are watching for 4 signs that the horse is ready, and willing, to Join-Up with us:
  - His inside ear locks on to us
  - He demonstrates licking and chewing behavior, indicating relaxation
  - He begins to walk in a smaller circle, getting closer to us
  - He lowers his head, often almost to the ground, giving us the leadership role

### ***The Invitation to Join-Up:***

- When the horse has shown us the signs that he wishes to Join-Up with us, we invite him in.
- Watch as the Instructor averts his/her eyes, folds their arm against their waist, turns on a 45-degree angle, moves away from the horse and then stops.

### ***The Moment of Join-Up:***

- This is the magic moment – the one where the horse would rather be with us than away from us.

- He has made the decision that he wants to Join-Up with us and become a herd.

### *Asking the Horse to Follow-Up:*

- Now, watch as the Instructor asks the horse to Follow-Up, the true measure that the horse has Joined-Up and prefers to be with us.

### *Things That Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSI:*

- The horse is a flight animal. He views things that he is not familiar with as predatorial and his natural instinct is to go away – far away.
- The horse is extremely observant and he sees and hears everything – like many Veterans, he has a keenly honed survival instinct.
- Only when the horse has determined that it is safe and **that you are not being predatorial** will he consider Joining-Up with you.

### *How Watching a Join-Up Can Help Those with PTSI*

- Like many humans, some horses have experienced PTSI.
- Even the act of fleeing from a perceived predator can induce significant stress.
- Despite the fact that the horse may have suffered abuse at the hands of some humans, the horse is

capable of learning to trust again – like the Veterans.

- The horse's ability to read emotion and intention allows him to assess the individual human in the round pen with him.
- The horse learns to trust their instincts and experience – *the horse chooses to risk* trusting this individual.
- The horse is very resilient – he can bounce back from hardships – so can you.

### ***Leading a Debriefing of the Join-Up Demonstration***

#### **Tip – statements work better than questions!**

Tip – reflect back what you hear. Think about yourself as being like a mirror. Repeat back what the participant says so that they can hear it a second time – once coming out of their own mouth and once coming from you. Sometimes people say very profound things and they go unnoticed. Help them see their progress by helping them hear their thoughts again. All good insights are credited back to the participant. We want them to own their own healing.

Debriefing an experience together is often most powerful when done in a group. In this way, participants learn from each other.

You might also choose to use these discussion statements one-on-one with participants. You could even invite participants to consider one or two of the statements individually and write their responses in a journal.

Please do not accept what the participant *thought*. We are looking for *feeling* words – “I felt relief,” “I felt compassion,” “I felt a strong connectedness,” etc.

If someone does venture a thought, please accept it with an encouraging challenge. You could say, “That’s a good point and you are actually telling me what you *thought* about the moment of Join-Up. I’m really interested in knowing how you *felt*.”

Don’t be surprised if you get more thoughts. Please remember that many people with PTSI deal with stressful situations by avoiding their feelings – they simply don’t acknowledge them or they squash them down to avoid emotional pain.

You can help this participant to heal by staying your course. Keep a steady, patient pressure on the way you might with a horse – you are the leader. Give the participant a little encouragement – say something like, “It’s hard, isn’t it? But you have seen hard before and my sense is you’re up for the challenge. Please take another run at describing how you *felt*.”

Okay, you know how you always want to end on a positive note with your horse? If the participant really can’t come up with a feeling, it’s a good time to stop. Thank the participant for trying and tell them you would really like to hear from them if a feeling surfaces for them later.

Now, move on...to someone else or something else. The seed has been planted and the harvest may be reaped at another time. You may not even be there to witness the difference that you make but that certainly doesn’t mean you didn’t make it!

## *Questions That Can Help With the Debriefing*

- Please describe the things that stood out for you as you observed this Join-Up.



Notes

## **Up Close & Personal**

### **How Your and Your Horse Work Together**

#### ***Works Optimally***

- Outside
- One horse per Veteran

#### ***Things You Already Know to Tell Participants:***

- Grooming is an opportunity to build a relationship with your horse
- It is a relationship built on trust
- Please wear a helmet
- Stay out of the kick zone
- Move slowly and allow the horse to see you
- How to use different grooming tools

#### ***Things that Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSI:***

- Like many Veterans, horses are also hyper-vigilant – they are aware of your every move. You may already have something in common with your horse that others do not – the horse will know it and so will you.
- It is really important to be attuned and listening to your



horse – many of you will be really good at this as you have carefully honed watching and listening skills.

- Horses are all individual – they all like different things when being groomed.
- People with PTSI understand aspects of grooming horses that others may not. They understand sensitivity to touch, especially when stressed – how being touched can raise your adrenalin level. It is the same for the horse.
- While grooming, your objective is to listen carefully and quietly to the horse. Rubbing is always better than patting, for example. A horse likes it when you have constant contact with your touch – a slow, gentle rub where your hand does not leave his body. Patting the horse can actually raise his adrenalin and it is really akin to hitting. In the wild, his mother licks him when grooming or rubs him with her nose. She does not pat him. Try different things and watch your horse's reaction.
- Monty and the Instructors reward their horse when the animal does the right thing – a nice rub between the eyes in one of his most vulnerable spots. It builds trust and the horse likes it. While you are here, watch how different staff members and Veterans interact with the horses – you will notice when the horse likes the interaction and when he doesn't.
- Your goal is to build a relationship with your horse through grooming. If you get licking, chewing or

yawning, the horse likes what you are doing. If the horse stays with you, moving closer or standing still, he is comfortable with you.

- Listen to your own body language. Breathe more slowly, bring your energy down, slow your movements, and be gentle with your pressure on the horse's skin. Notice what happens in your horse. Notice what happens in you.
- The horse needs you to be calm. He is like your mirror – when you are calm, he will be calm. When you are tense, he will be tense.
- When you are building relationship, you are also building trust. The horse is learning to trust you and that is the start of you learning to trust him – and others.
- This is an opportunity for you to enjoy yourself and allow the horse to teach you – it is the start of healing.
- Give yourself permission to learn from your horse – he will allow you to try different things and he will tell you when he likes it or when he doesn't.

### ***Leading a Debriefing of the Horse Grooming Exercise***

**Tip – statements work better than questions!**

- Please describe the things you noticed while grooming your horse.
- Please talk about how changes in you resulted in changes in the horse.

- Please tell us about any big ‘ahas’ that occurred to you as you worked with your horse.
- Talk about how this might be useful to you when you are not working with a horse

### ***How Horse Grooming Can Help Those with PTSI***

#### **Tip – Elicit versus articulate!**

If you can get the participants to make these points during the debriefing, it is 100 times better than if you do it. You may absolutely make any points that does not come up in the debriefing,

- The Veteran with PTSI can learn to control his/her adrenalin level or “energy.”
- The horse can read the energy level of the individual and will respond to it.
- The Veteran can learn to monitor his/her energy level by watching for the horse’s response.
- When the PTSI participant can do this with the horse, s/he can do it elsewhere, too.



## NOTES

## **The Yes-No Game**

### ***Works Optimally:***

- With an Instructor who has played the game before, leading the exercise
- Outside or inside
- The Instructor will communicate the concepts s/he wishes to illustrate

### ***Things You Already Know to Tell Participants:***

- The objective of this exercise is to have fun together!
- The secondary purpose is to identify, through observation, what works when asking others (including horses,) to learn or relearn something
- All audience members who are observing must remain silent during the game – they are not permitted to assist in giving directions with their voice or their eyes
- This is similar to playing the “Hot & Cold Game” that many of you may be familiar with
- It is very usual for participants to become frustrated with the process!

### ***How to Play the Game:***

- The Instructor asks for two volunteers to play the game – they may be program participants or staff members. Player One and Player Two are given instruction on how to play the game
- It is Monty’s recommendation to instruct the person leaving the room that when they return they walk in and DO SOMETHING. Ask them to remain doing things throughout the course of the game. If your subject is static and simply looking straight forward for more than 20-30 seconds, it stops down the very principles of the game. The player can walk in different directions, move their body parts in different ways or choose to be active in whatever way they see fit. The object however is to constantly do something
- Player One is asked to leave for a few minutes
- While Player One is away, the Instructor, Player Two and the group come up with a series of task for her/him to complete
- When Player One returns, Player Two must help her/him complete the required task with Player Two only saying “yes” or “no” to guide their efforts
- If Player One hears nothing, s/he must keep moving in order to illicit a response
- If Player One moves to the right and is moving toward the desired objective, Player Two should be quick to give an emphatic “yes”. Good timing is clear communication

- It can be helpful to say “yes” or “no” often or many times in succession to guide Player One to success
- Ultimately, we want to help Player One to succeed rather than fail!
- When the task has been completed (it may take awhile!) the Instructor moves to round two
- In round two, the Instructor will select two new players from the participants or the staff
- The second round should take less time. When the task has been completed, the Instructor may lead a debrief of the entire exercise

***Things that Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSI:***

- “Learning stops where frustration begins.”
- The use of negative and positive in horses
- When working with horses, grey areas cause confusion
- “No” causes frustration in horses. Until the horse finds the release of “Yes,” he remains unsure
- This is like setting boundaries with kids, work, spouses, etc
- The power of the horse getting redirected vs. hearing more “No.”

- Let them DO something and then reward or correct.  
[critical point: Why is it so important to give the horse the choice to act prior to rewarding or correcting?]
- Monty emphasized that the YES's are the important part!

***How Playing the Yes-No Game Can Help Those with PTSI:***

- Through observation, the participants may see some clear differences between “yes” and “no”
- Participants will likely be able to observe that hearing too much “no” results in the player wanting to “throw in the towel” and quit trying
- It may be helpful for participants to see that both reward and redirection serve useful purposes. They will likely deduce that the power of “yes” is ultimately the most powerful teacher and reinforcer
- Participants will likely be able to see how their own experiences with yes and no have shaped their motivation, confidence, powerlessness, will to act, etc

***“When I came here, I had lost my purpose. Join-Up helped me find confidence and that gave me back a sense of purpose.”--Veteran, Jason***



## Points for Success When Working with Veterans:

- The power of “yes” is much stronger than the power of “no” when learning
- “Yes” acts to reinforce the desired behavior as it does with the horse
- When a Veteran loses the desire to act without direction, motivation is impacted
- The fear of negative repercussion may reinforce a sense of powerlessness for the Veteran. This is often where a lack of confidence commences
- Restoring the confidence to think and act independently without fear of retribution is an important step in the healing process
- The more often you can say “Yes” to a Veteran with PTSD, the more you reinforce confidence!

***“After 6 or 7 times here, I can say that being able to lay my hands on Trigger gave me a chance to know him. I have a true friend and he trusts me and I trust him.”--Veteran, Benny***

## ***Leading a Debriefing of the Yes-No Game***

**Tip – use affirmation with the participants.**

*Affirmation works like this:*

- Affirmation is a genuine and sincere acknowledgement of something that the participant has done, offered, said, realized, etc
- Good affirmations are specific and tied directly to the action that precipitated them - “It was such a good example of Monty’s principles when you took the time to do a thorough orientation for your horse before starting the Join-Up process.”
- Words like awesome, great job, good work are not specific enough to yield an affirmation outcome – they are effective as encouragers, so you would be on the right track if you were using them
- The timing of an affirmation is an important factor. The principle of “PIC/NIC” – positive, instant consequences and negative, instant consequences
- If you want to move from good to great, you can help the speaker to offer their own affirmations:
  - You: “Tell me please, what you did well or right to accomplish such an effective Join-Up with Shadow
  - Participant: “Well, I guess I just kept my breathing going, kept my belt buckle behind his ribcage and listened to the Instructor.”
  - You: “You have nailed it and you could clearly identify 3 things that led to your success. And, you did it with the confidence of someone who has done a lot of Join-Ups.”

- Done well, we give all credit for learning, progress and major ‘aha’ moments to the participant. Affirmation is best offered by those who are humble and willing to allow others to look good, smart, etc
- We allow the participant to own all successes! It could sound something like this:
  - Thank you for that point. It’s very useful because... (Explain why it is so useful.)
  - So, you could really see how your behaviors were impacting the outcome. That’s an important realization for you and I bet others may have had an ‘aha’ of their own based on what you just said
  - I’m so glad you said that. Until now, I had never thought about it that way and your perspective has really opened my thinking
  - Thank you for trying that. I know you were reluctant and you pushed past your fear and did it anyway
  - You know, that’s such a good point that I’d like to make sure everyone heard it. Please say it again so nobody misses out
  - Way to go! (This one is more of an encourager than an affirmation. Great affirmations are specific and descriptive. They are not generalized, like this example.)
  - That was an excellent illustration. (This one lacks specificity and may be received as “global” or insincere by the receiver.)
- We must be very careful with fake affirmation as, if it

is insincere, it usually backfires and has the potential to elicit resistance

- Affirmation is a very powerful tool because it relies upon and emphasizes the power of YES!
- It reinforces when others are doing something well, right, useful, helpful, etc.

***Some Possible Debriefing Questions:***

- Please describe how you felt during the Yes-No Exercises
- I'm interested in hearing about which word – no or yes - you thought worked best and why
- Please explain why you think “yes” is such an important concept for Veterans with stress injuries
- Please say more...
- I'd love to hear your thoughts on why you think we ask you to do this exercise in the Horse Sense and Soldiers program
- Describe how, if at all, this exercise had value for you

## Notes

## **Human-to Human Join-Up**

### ***Works Optimally***

- In the round pen with a seasoned Instructor who also likes to have a little fun!
- With a Veteran participant who is comfortable being observed by others early on. There may be more than one participant who wants to practice with another person before working with a horse

### ***Points for Success When Working with Veterans***

- The purpose of this activity is to make the Veteran participants more comfortable and set them up for success when they work with the horses
- Being in a vulnerable position leads to people feeling vulnerable. When a Veteran with PTSI feels vulnerable, hyper-vigilance increases. When vigilance increases, adrenalin goes up and that is counter-productive to doing a good Join-Up
- Practice, especially when it is successful, inspires confidence and that is noticed by the horse
- Confidence is also an important determinant of readiness to try an unfamiliar task or exercise
- Humor helps to bring down adrenalin because it results in laughter. Humor also inspires confidence because it sends the message that it is okay not to get

it 100% right the first time

***Things You Already Know to Tell Participants:***

- The purpose of Human-to-Human Join-Up is to set you up for success and allow you to practice with another person so you feel more confident
- Join-Up looks easier from the viewing platform. And, since you are looking down into the round pen (like a mirror image,) your experience of left and right can be distorted
- You may succeed better with a horse if you have practiced with a human first

***Things that Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSD:***

- Our goal is to help you relax your vigilance a little – or a lot!
- When you work with a real horse, he will likely be vigilant enough for both of you in terms of sensing when to flee and when it is comfortable to stay
- Confidence inspires your horse to feel safe. This exercise will increase your confidence so that you can, in turn, show your horse that he can be comfortable with you

***Leading the Participants through Human-to-Human Join-Ups***

- Ask a staff member to play the role of the horse. S/he will know how to respond in the same way the horse might if the Veteran makes common mistakes

like getting too far ahead or too far behind the driving line

- Ask for Veteran volunteers to practice Join-Up
- Since the participants, and you, have watched a demonstration of Join-Up with a real horse, you will all have the individual steps to successful Join-Up top of mind
- Walk several participants through the process being very careful to emphasize what the participant is doing well or right
- Be very deliberate and thoughtful in how you deliver corrective feedback. Telling the participant what *to do* will be a lot more helpful than telling them what *not to do!*
- Remove “no, no, no” from your vocabulary and replace it with “Your horse is stopping because... “You will get a much better result if you do”...
- Follow the corrected behavior with, “Now you’ve got it! Notice how your horse is doing exactly what you want him to do”
- Positive reinforcement works as well with humans as it does with horses! You will get more of what you reinforce – “right” leads to more right and “wrong” often leads to more wrong!



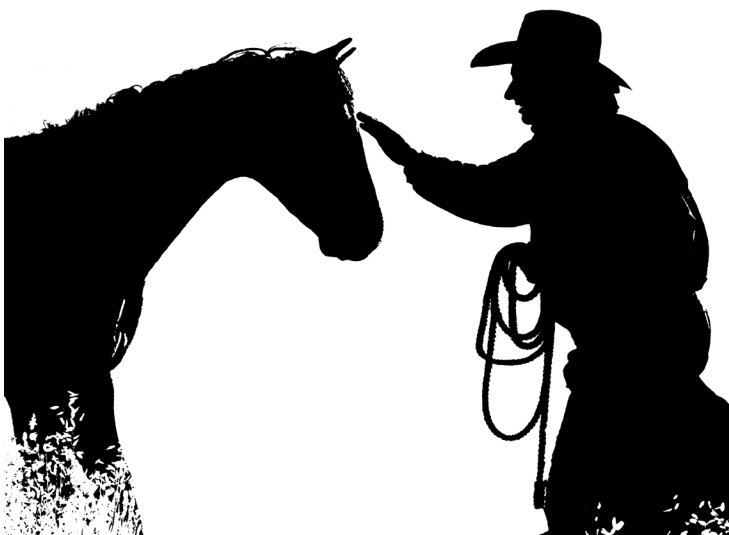
## ***How Doing a Human-to-Human Join-Up Can Help Those with PTSI***

- Practicing Join-Up with another human is a good way for the Instructor to gauge a participant's readiness to try this with a horse
- If a participant is really reluctant to try a Join-Up, even with a human, you will have to determine what is impacting their readiness (willingness,) to try
- Readiness to do something is made up of two components. The first component is Importance – how important is it to the participant to do the Join-Up? Sometimes it is highly important and sometimes it is not important at all
- The second component is Confidence – how confident is the participant that s/he could do the Join-Up successfully? Sometimes the participant is highly confident and sometimes s/he has almost no confidence
- When someone is reluctant to try something new, it is critical to determine whether your goal is to help raise the importance or the confidence
- When working with those who have PTSI, it could be either. For example, a Veteran may have high confidence in his/her ability to do a Join-Up but importance could be low if the person is skeptical that “horse stuff” will make a real difference in their lives. Allowing that person to watch others and listen

to their reactions might, in fact, raise importance and increase their readiness to try

- A participant may view doing a Join-Up as highly important, especially if s/he sees the impact it has on others. What may be lower is his/her confidence to do it well. In this case, working with the participant to increase comfort, safety and confidence will be especially important.
- Reading the participant is similar to reading the horse – each is individual and each requires different things to be a willing partner
- What you may find helpful to practice is looking for the language (both verbal and non-verbal,) from the participant that helps you select the right approach
- Here are some statements that you might hear that will help you practice gauging levels of confidence and importance:
- “I’ve watched so many of these that I get it. I don’t need to actually do a Join-Up to see the impact.”
  - “I really, want to try this but I have no experience working with horses and I’m afraid I might do something wrong.”
- “I could do this if I wanted to.”
  - “I don’t want to try a Join-Up. I don’t think I would be able to do it because there is so much to remember”
- “I used to have horses when I was a kid and I’m not afraid of them, so I’m willing to give it a go.”

- “I’ll let somebody else try. I’ve been here before so it’s only fair that the newcomers get a chance.”
- You will need to watch for the unspoken indicators of confidence and importance, too – is the person hanging back; is s/he breaking eye contact when you ask for volunteers; is s/he encouraging others to try first; is s/he looking bored and disinterested; is s/he looking timid or frightened; is s/he exhibiting bravado and experience but always allowing others to go first?
- This is one of those times when knowing when to increase pressure even ever so slightly (invite and encourage) and knowing when to release pressure (accept a ‘not yet’ answer) is critically important to the success of *your* relationship with the participant
- Please remember that watching is a very powerful form of learning. Allow the participant to be where s/he is, not where you want them to be!
- When you get this right, it is a powerful predictor of the success the Veteran will have with the horse. And, you know better than anyone the magic that happens at the moment of Join-Up for stress-injured individuals



## Leading a Debriefing of Human-to-Human Join-Up

**Tip – statements work better than questions!**

**Tip – reflect back what you hear.**

**Tip – allow the participants to own their own success.**

Debriefing Human-to-Human Join-Up is a way to help participants see that they can increase their own confidence by asking for what they need. They can also increase importance by examining their fears and reluctance and listening to their inner voice of excitement and desire to try.

- Please describe how trying Join-Up with another person has impacted your confidence to try it with a horse
  - A participant might say, “I feel more confident now because I have a better idea of the steps and I know what to watch for.”
  - You might reflect, “ So you were able to identify what had to happen to make you more comfortable and confident.”
- Talk about what, if anything, is increasing your desire to do a Join-Up with one of our horses
  - A participant might say, “I want to experience that moment that I see others experiencing when the horse walks right up to their shoulder.”
  - You might reflect, “So your desire to feel that special moment of connection is increasing the

importance of Joining-Up with a horse for you.”

- How we might encourage you to try a Join-Up with a real horse even if you are somewhat reluctant in the beginning
  - A participant might say, “I want to try it but I need to concentrate because too much noise or chattering distracts me. I think I could do it if I could just try it without too much coaching. I will ask for help if I need it and you can just jump in if I’m going to do anything unsafe.”
  - You might reflect, “You are so clearly able to see that *you* have the answers within *you* – it’s different for everyone, yet you know exactly what works for you.”

Notes

## **Join-Up Establishing, Trust & Partnership**

### ***Works Optimally:***

- When every participant can do a Join-Up
- When every participant is supported by a seasoned Instructor
- Using horses who have Joined-Up before and are familiar with the process

### ***Points for Success When Working with Veterans:***

- The primary objective is to allow the horses to speak to the Veterans and to make a decision to Join-Up with them because they are of good intention and their energy level is right
- This is an opportunity for the Veteran to learn to trust again. Please remember that s/he has likely learned to be dependent upon no one but himself. S/he may also have learned to be wary of everything and to trust no one. In order for the Veteran to be trusted by the horse, s/he must also be willing to trust. This is a partnership between two vulnerable participants
- The goal for you, as an accomplished Instructor, is to step out of your usual role of teaching Join-Up to horse people and to step into a role of therapeutic practitioner, using horses to assist people in finding their sense of trust and self-worth again
- This is a monumental moment for some Veterans –

it is life changing. YOU get to be an integral part of giving people back something that war has taken from them – you and, of course, the horses

- Choose your horses and your words wisely – this is big-ticket work that you are doing and only a select few can do it well

***Things You Already Know to Tell Participants:***

- We are here to support you in achieving a successful Join-Up with your horse
- Everyone is different – you might like a little support or you might prefer a lot of support
- Please tell us what you need so we know how to assist you best
- We are also here to keep you, and the horse, safe. We will step in to ensure safety
- Please wear your helmet

***Things that Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSI:***

- Remember that Monty tells us that the horse can read emotion and he can read intention. He absolutely knows it when you mean him no harm and your intentions are pure and good
- The horse is a better judge of character than most humans. When he makes a choice to Join-Up with



you, it is because he sees something intrinsically trustworthy in you

- If the horse does not Join-Up with you the first time, it does not mean that you are not a good person - it is most likely to do with technique and energy. If your intention is good and your energy is too high, the horse will not likely Join-Up with you
- Remember that the horse mirrors too much energy. You must learn to control your energy when you want to Join-Up with a horse. **That is within your control.** You can learn and the horse can teach you. We are here to help



Tentative, passive behavior is also confusing and promotes a lack of confidence in the horse for you to lead. A horse is looking for a leader, as he does in the wild, and he responds to your leadership

### ***Leading the Participants through Individual Join-Ups:***

- This is your time to shine. You know the horse part of this exercise inside and out
- Work on adding the people part of assisting those with post-traumatic stress injury a little bit at a time
- Start by focusing on the needs of each individual participant the way you would with a horse
- Monty says the horse will teach you. This is also true with people. Watch carefully for the cues and clues that what you are doing is working. Be attuned to how your own behaviors are affecting the participant – if their adrenalin level is too high, it might also be because of something you are doing that is inducing stress
- A change in your behavior will likely predict a change in the participant's behavior
- Allow your strengths as an Instructor to guide you now. Use your abilities with horses to become a powerful conduit between the participant and the horse s/he is working with. You can help them achieve a successful Join-Up

### ***How Doing a Join-Up Can Help Those With PTSI:***

- This is the start of allowing the participants to learn that they can determine their own future

- They are not powerless, they are powerful – we want the participants to own their own successes
- They have PTSI and they can heal from it

**Tip - Provide the participant more time with their horse after Joining-Up. They need time to just be together and enjoy their relationship. The moment of Join-Up can be life changing. Consider providing the participant the opportunity to walk their horse back to his stall and put him away (with a trained volunteer or staff person.)**

**Encourage intrinsic learning to take place within this newly formed relationship between the participant and their horse. Allow healing.**

**“There’s just something magical that happens when you let your heart go and you let the horses talk to you.”**

*--Stephen, Veteran*

### ***Leading a Debriefing of the Join-Up Exercise:***

**Tip – you might opt to do the debriefing with the small group of participants who have just completed Join-Ups with your assistance (3 or 4.) Doing this outside in an informal way might work really well. Doing the debriefing before putting the horses away, so they are present during the discussion, might also be beneficial.**

**Tip – the use of scaling questions is a great way to help participants articulate the things they are learning and see the progress they are making.**

Scaling questions work like this:

- First, define the scale. Measure only one thing. Please rate your experience... On a scale from 0 to 10, if “0” is not at all good and “10” is absolutely great
- Give the participant time to offer their rating
- Here’s the magic! Please tell me why you said a “4” and not a “0”
- Give the participant time to tell you about their rating. By asking the question in this way, the participant tells you what is working. This is one of those subtle things that make a huge difference. If you said to the participant, “Please tell me why you are a ‘4’ and not a ‘10,’” they would be telling you what isn’t working. We always want to focus on the positive rather than the negative when attempting to promote healing
- Okay, there’s more magic to scaling questions. If you are working with a participant who is really contributing to this conversation, you might also take it to the next level. Here is what that sounds like. “Tell me what would have to happen for you to be able to increase your rating from a 4 to perhaps a 6 if you were to repeat this experience.” Listen very carefully as the participant will actually prescribe their own solution!
- It is really similar to working with Monty’s Dually halter, where the horse teaches himself. The participant also knows what has to be done differently to improve an experience – s/he just needs to be

asked (invited, actually!)

***“There are levels of confidence in our life and they go from zero to hero”--Monty Roberts***

- Please describe your experience (give each participant an opportunity to contribute, if they wish)
- I’m interested in how you would rate your experience on a scale from 0 to 10 if “0” is that had no impact and “10” is that was a life changing experience
- Tell me why you said a “insert participant’s rating here” and not a “0”
- So, something shifted for you during the Join-Up process. Please tell us what you learned about yourself during the Join-Up
- I’m interested in how you might use what you learned about yourself when you are not with a horse – when you are back home, for example
- If you could say one thing to your horse about the impact he has had on you, please tell us what you would say

## Notes

# Partnering with Your Horse

## To Navigate Obstacles

### *Works Optimally*

- Using seasoned horses that are familiar with the obstacles to increase safety
- With a seasoned Instructor who can emphasize the safety precautions that will contribute to a successful outcome
- One horse per Veteran or Team
- With an Instructor or trained volunteer working alongside each participant/horse pair as they proceed through the obstacle course
- One Dually Halter and lead rope for each horse
- When obstacles are set up as follows:
  - 5 cones in a straight line, evenly spaced
  - “L” shape made with 4 x 4 posts as outside parameters of the “L”
  - square tarp carefully laid out on the ground so it is completely flat
  - bridge
  - cowboy curtain
  - jump – pole between two supports, set about 15 inches off the ground

### ***Things You Already Know to Tell Participants:***

- Navigating an obstacle course is an opportunity for you and your horse to develop trust and work together
- Your horse is looking for a leader – he is more likely to trust you and follow you through the obstacle course if you are not tentative
- Reiterate key terms from the Equus dictionary: eyes on eyes means “go away;” fingers open is scary, swinging arms and ropes can “put off” the horse
- Please make sure your horse’s Dually Halter has been properly adjusted so that it fits him comfortably and correctly
- Please wear a helmet

### **How to Conduct the Exercise:**

- Set up the obstacle course, in advance, making sure to space out the obstacles with enough room between them that more than one participant/horse pair can be in the arena at the same time, if desired.
- Demonstrate leading a horse through the obstacle course successfully, pointing out the things that are helpful to do
- This is where your expertise will be so very helpful to the Veterans. You know the right things to do to



get the horse through the course. Focus on the right things to do to get the participant and his/her horse through the course together, remembering that both may have a high flight response

- Walk with purpose, keeping your eyes on the course, not on the horse
- Allow a ‘smile’ in your lead line so that you are not dragging your horse
- Keep your leading hand at about your hip level
- Keep your hand on top of the lead rope, using a ‘motorcycle grip’ – this will allow you to exert pressure on the lead rope and school with the Dually Halter, if necessary
- When you approach the obstacle, please don’t stop or your horse will, too. Walk confidently over (or through,) the obstacle and your horse will be more likely to follow
- When your horse navigates the obstacle successfully, please reward him with a rub between the eyes
- Invite each participant to lead his/her horse through the course. Walk alongside, offering assistance and reassurance
- Ask the participant to focus on that moment when the horse follows him/her through, or over, the obstacle without hesitation. Participants with PTSI will be able to identify that moment and it will be impactful for them

***“It’s not about us, it’s about him. Build the confidence up in us and the trust up in the horse.”***

--Veteran, Benny

**Things that Are Helpful to Emphasize to Veterans with PTSD:**

- The purpose of this exercise is for you to lead your horse through the obstacle course with enough confidence that he will trust you and follow you without hesitation
- Your horse may be very reluctant to approach some obstacles, especially if he has never seen them before. His survival instinct causes him to fear things that are unfamiliar and his flight response will be very sensitive. This may be something that you will share in common with your horse. You might also be feeling rather tentative about leading him when he is skittish and reluctant to follow. Your own flight response will play a big part in his desire to follow you. Practice bringing your energy down
- This exercise is designed for you and your horse to work together as partners. You will need to trust each other in order to succeed. You will be able to feel when your horse trusts you. You can probably do this better than the civilian population because your keenly honed observation skills will allow you to feel the subtle nuances that your horse offers in his language. Awaken your emotions, listen carefully and you will hear him

- Your horse wants to follow you and you must communicate that it is safe for him to do so. You must project confidence. The horse will be attuned to your breathing, your heart rate, your movements and your very thinking
- Remember that your horse will act as your mirror. He will reflect your own psychological and emotional state. When your horse trusts you, you will trust him. Be aware of your thoughts and feelings. See if you can identify the moment when you begin to trust him
- Relax and enjoy yourself and this time with your horse. It's okay if you need to make several attempts to navigate the obstacles with your horse
- This exercise is not about maneuvers and it is not a contest. It is an opportunity for you and your horse to work together to get past initial fears and achieve success because you trust each other
- Regaining trust is the cornerstone of successful relationships. If you can do it here in the arena, you can do it elsewhere in your life – you are healing and the horses are helping you

***“You can encourage and support, but you can’t demand with your horse.”--Monty Roberts***

## How Leading Horses through Obstacles Can Help Those with PTSI

- Developing confidence is critical, especially for those who may have traumatic material and been immobilized by it.
- On the other hand, some participants may project too much confidence – a sense of bravado that they can do anything. Working with a horse who is very sensitive to energy and emotional states will help these participants to realize that bravado or a demanding stance does not instill confidence in the horse – confidence does!
- For those with a false sense of bravado, becoming more *other-focused* is a huge step. They must learn that it is not about them, but about focusing on the needs of the *other*, whether that is a horse or a person
- Becoming other-focused takes the participant with PTSI out of him/herself and gives them freedom from focusing on their negative emotional state, or what is *wrong* with them
- It is the start of focusing on potential rather than pathology.

### Leading a Debriefing of the Obstacle Course Exercise

**Tip – elicit versus articulate!**

**Tip – use the powerful tool of elaboration to encourage participants to expand upon the good points they are making. It is critically important for participants to own their healing and their progress. When they have ‘aha’ moments and make big discoveries, you can assist them to learn more about themselves by allowing them to explore their discovery even further.**

Elaboration works like this – you simply invite the person to tell you more! You do so by using ‘elaboration stems’ – simple phrases that keep people talking. The stems are phrased as statements rather than questions, which you already know is important.

Here are some useful elaboration stems to add to your repertoire. You can use them over and over. Choose stems that are comfortable with your own speaking manner. You likely already do this – pay attention to the phrases you use naturally:

- Tell me more...
- Such as...
- Please give me an example...
- And...
- Go on...
- What else...

Do not lose the power of the elaboration by making it into a question. You may need to work on ditching the “can you,” “could you,” “will you,” “would you” that many people put before the elaboration stem when they first get started.

For Example: “Can you tell me more about what you noticed?”

This is actually a closed question and it can be answered with a

simple yes or no. If you do this once in awhile, it's okay – you're on the right track by using elaboration!

Here's how a better-phrased elaboration might sound.

“That's a great observation. Please tell me more about what you noticed.”

Again, this is a subtle but powerful adjustment to your approach. This is the finessing that will make you great with people versus good with people!

- I'm interested in your thoughts about why we asked you to do this obstacle course exercise.
- And...
- Please describe your initial feelings when you first started walking your horse through the obstacle course.
- What else...
- Now, please talk about what, if anything, changed for you as you and your horse proceeded through the obstacles.
- Please tell me more...
- Please describe your confidence level at the start of the exercise.
- And, as the exercise progressed...
- I'm really interested in your observations about how this exercise might benefit you.
- Please go on...

Many of these elaborations begin with 'please.' This is one example of how we continually offer respect to the participant.

Monty teaches the importance of offering, and asking for, respect when working with horses. This is also extremely important when working with people, especially those impacted by PTSI.

Some of the Veteran participants may be very familiar with the concept of disrespect. Some may have lost their sense of self-respect, as well. Each time you offer respect, a little healing occurs. The participant with PTSI, who has been beaten down by their experiences begins to feel more worthy each and every time you extend respect.

***“When Monty asked what war had taken from me, I said, ‘I lost my nerve.’ Today, during my Join-Up, Courtney said, ‘Walk with confidence’ several times. I did and I’m getting my nerve back!”--Veteran, Elizabeth***

Participants with PTSI may be very uncomfortable with being touched. Allowing them to experience ‘good touch’ with their horse can be very therapeutic.

Ask the participants to thank and reward their horses with some quality time and a generous rub. You can expect that some participants may be very emotional during this touch session and crying is a usual expression of being deeply moved. Please allow free expression of emotion – healing is occurring and the horses are working their magic.





## Join-Up Observation

Please watch very carefully as your significant other is doing their Join-Up and record your observations. A lot happens very quickly and what you see can be very helpful to your family member/friend.

Describe what is happening at the start of the Join-Up (orientation to the round pen; sending the horse away)

For the Participant:

For the Horse:

Describe what happens when the participant brings his/her energy down & starts watching for the signs of trust (ear locked on; licking & chewing; smaller circle; head dropped down)

For the Participant:

For the Horse:

Describe what you see at the very moment of Join-Up

For the Participant:

For the Horse:

Watch what happens when the horse chooses to Follow-Up. Please pay particular attention to the emotions & body language you see in the participant. Please jot down a few thoughts:

Record the things you most want to say to your family member/friend about what you saw as s/he Joined-Up with the horse (of course you can use the back of the page!)

Please choose 3 words that describe what you have noticed  
in your significant other

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**Please keep your observations handy – we will be asking  
you to talk about them soon**

## **Helping Participants Understand PTSI**

**Here are some discussion starters that could open a conversation with a participants at the beginning of the second day of the Clinic:**

- Invite the participants to develop a list of characteristics or symptoms that someone with a PTSI might exhibit. List these on a flipchart as the group members contribute their thoughts.
- It can be helpful to use open invitations, reflective listening and elaboration to help participants expand upon their ideas.
- You can summarize the points made by the participants as well as adding any of the points listed below that might not have been mentioned.

Post traumatic stress injury (PTSI) is experienced by people in a myriad of ways. Even though there may be some similarities, there are also vast differences in how individuals experience or exhibit stress injuries caused by trauma.

Some withdraw and isolate, feeling extreme stress when venturing out beyond a safe haven they create for themselves.

Others mask the stress through humor, intellect or bravado. These are defense mechanisms that help the individual “hide” their injury in an attempt to keep them and others believing that they are okay.

Some exhibit extreme anger, lashing out at anyone, anytime,

often without provocation.

Still others internalize their stress and direct it inward. They experience depression, self-loathing, guilt and self-destructive behavior. They may attempt to self-medicate and seek escape through alcohol and drugs.

Those with PTSI may also become overly reliant upon others, sometimes to the point of total dependency.

Through all of this, people with stress injuries might exhibit erratic behavior, intense mood swings and heightened emotional responses that are out of proportion to the event that triggered them.

And then there are the trust issues. People who experience extreme trauma often become very self-reliant out of sheer necessity to survive. Trusting others can be very difficult as trusting is, in itself, an act of vulnerability.

People with PTSI may become hyper-vigilant, noticing every movement and every sound, no matter how small – they are always on guard, poised for flight or fight. This vigilance becomes first nature, like an instinct or a switch that is always “on.”

People with PTSI can find it almost impossible to relax, feeling like a tightly wound spring, under intense pressure and ready to ‘explode’ at any moment. They often crave quiet and are undone by too much noise or too much stimulation – these yield anxiety, stress and anger.

Sudden movements, too much movement or approaching from behind can all elicit a fight or flight response.

For family members and significant others all this erratic behavior is also highly stressful and sometimes downright dangerous. There is a burning desire to get back the person they used to know. Those with PTSI may not ever be able to be the person they used to be again. Often, they can't go back. But they can move forward and they can choose their path forward. They can succeed or succumb and it can be within their power to choose.

When Veterans succumb, they often lose all hope and feel a sense of total despair and desperation. There is a belief in Alcoholics Anonymous that when someone has lost all hope, we can lend him/her some of ours. This can also be true for those with stress injuries.

Monty talks about the use of a 'buddy' horse to help other horses that are being started or are highly stressed. An experienced horse that knows the ropes can offer a sense of comfort to another and help increase their confidence. This is also true of Veterans who may find comfort in a group of others who also have stress injuries, particularly if some members of the group have experienced healing. Knowing they are not alone, that others share similar feelings and that healing is possible, can also serve as a confidence builder.

It is important to help Veterans understand they have PTSI—it does not have them! It does not define them. It is **highly possible to heal from an injury**, as Monty tells us.

The horses can help – they can assist people to take a first step by opening a door of possibility. Horses do this because they 'get' traumatic stress injuries in a way no human can.

It is important to prepare the participants to accept the

## Endnotes

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3. Ibid., 36.
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5. Roberts, *The Man Who Listens to Horses*, 55-56.
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7. Ibid., 56.
8. Ibid., 39. Sacking out a horse in order to break its spirit is a process where “wild horses (as many as six at a time) are first driven through a ‘squeeze chute’ so a rope or halter can be looped around the neck. The horses are then tied to a post, and a heavy tarp or weighted sack is repeatedly thrown over the horse’s back, causing the legs to buckle. Inevitably, the horse shows fear responses such as kicking, rearing, and bucking. The beating is continued for several days. A rear leg is then tied up (so the horse cannot stand on that leg) and the ‘sacking out’ is repeated, and is repeated again with each of the four legs tied in turn. Eventually, the horse is fitted with a saddle, and sacking out is repeated with the saddle in place. The horse is then attached to a ‘long line’ and run in circles around the pen. Finally, when the horse is considered ready, its rear legs are tied to prevent bucking. It is repeatedly mounted and dismounted and is kicked and whipped if it misbehaves. From start to finish, it takes about 3 weeks to break a horse, with considerable risk of injury to both the horse and the trainer.” Valeri Farmer-Dougan and James Dougan, “The Man Who Listens to Behavior: Folk Wisdom and Behavior Analysis From A Real Horse Whisperer,” *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior*, Vol 72, No. 1, (July 1999), 141.
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31. Roberts, *The Man Who Listens to Horses*, 3-4.
32. Ibid., 19.
33. Ibid., 23.
34. Ibid., XXIII.
35. Roberts, *The Man Who Listens to Horses*, XXIV.
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37. Ibid., 4.
38. Ibid., 13.
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