

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Wendy Wilkinson
wilkinsonpr@comcast.net
Krista Schulz
Krista_wilkinsonpr@comcast.net
719/685-1723

Taking the Reins: Horse Sense for Challenging Times

Now that horses are no longer obliged to work in our fields and carry us to war, they're free to do something arguably more important: WORK ON US

Way of the Horse

Stress on the job and at home, fueled by recent financial upheaval and political change, leads to raw nerves, short tempers, and spinning minds. Yet in challenging times, when fear, anger and frustration run amok, a healthy dose of horse sense can help you stay centered, turning crisis into opportunity.

In a typical two-day introductory workshop at the **Epona International Study Center** located in Sonoita, AZ participants discover how to gain valuable information from emotions that previously sent them into a tailspin. They practice how to set effective boundaries with people who, consciously or unconsciously, try to push others around. Students also learn how to motivate without dominating or micromanaging, creating mutually respectful partnerships that allow them to dance with the changing needs and perceptions of clients, co-workers, family members, and the world at-large.

But a certain amount of horse sense can be learned and integrated into your daily life without having a horse beside you, or one in your immediate universe. Through the simple reflections and insights found in *Way of the Horse: Equine Archetypes for Self Discovery*, **Linda Kohanov**, best-selling author and founder of the Epona Center offers practical and easy to assimilate horse-wisdom to a broader audience.

For example: In working with horses, Linda realized there are actually two kinds of fear. “My herd made it clear that it’s important, and ultimately empowering, to discern between an external threat in the environment, which is fear as nature’s warning system, and the kind of fear I now distinguish as ‘vulnerability,’ which is an internal threat, a challenge to your self image, belief system, or comfortable habits,” she says. “The two feel the same, and most people treat them the same, but fear and vulnerability each call for a different response. With an external threat, you need to move to safety. With vulnerability, you realize you’re not in actual danger, but that circumstances are asking you to change and expand out of your comfort zone. Problems occur when people overreact as if their life is being threatened in response to the latter, and fail to realize their life *is* being threatened in the former. Take the current financial crisis. Some of us are facing the very real fear of having our homes taken away from us. Others are dealing with the vulnerability of having to change the ways we do business in this country, of having to step into the unknown and try something new.”

“A bit of horse sense could make all the difference in how well you handle the current financial crisis. Horses are highly adaptable and have a fluid way of dealing with change. If a lion threatens them, they run, and then they immediately go back to grazing, back to enjoying life. When change is on the horizon, they relax into it and adapt. If water and grass become scarce, they move on to greener pastures with their family groups. There’s a real sense of adventure in the herd when they move on, not resentment. Humans, on the other hand, sometimes don’t run when they should, and they often go into flight or fight mode when there’s no real danger. It’s as if we’re more reactive and fearful of change than of an actual physical threat. Much social strife is caused at home, at work, and between countries, by our inability to recognize the difference between fear and vulnerability.”

One of the Epona Center’s most loyal clients is an aerospace giant who sends its up and coming leaders to hone their management skills. Working on the ground with the horses allows them to fully integrate the key components for successful managers, including leadership, emotional and social intelligence skills, calm assertiveness and working together for the benefit of the entire team.

“These executives are really amazed how the horses non-verbally reflect back instantly both the challenges and the success of their personal skills,” explains Linda. “It’s now commonly recognized that only *ten percent* of human communication is verbal, and yet we’ve virtually become mesmerized by words as our social and educational systems teach us to ignore the nonverbal dimension of relationships. Horses teach people how to access that other 90 percent.”

Kohanov, a freelance writer, music critic, and radio announcer at the time she wrote her first book in the late 1990s, began investigating how and why these animals were so talented at teaching emotional fitness, nonverbal communication, and leadership skills, chronicling her initial findings in the 2001 book, *The Tao of Equus: A Woman’s Journey of Healing and Transformation through the Way of the Horse*. It quickly became a bestseller, leading to two more, well received titles, including *Riding between the Worlds: Expanding Our Potential through the Way of the Horse* in 2003. *Way of the Horse: Equine Archetypes for Self Discovery*, a 2007 collaboration with artist Kim McElroy, is designed to take horse wisdom into the home, the workplace, and other human environments, offering equine-inspired insights on relationship, leadership, emotional intelligence, creativity, and balance. Since 2003, Kohanov has also trained over 150 Epona Approved Instructors who offer workshops and private sessions worldwide.

For Further Information go to www.taoofequus.com