

**THE CONNECTED HORSE PROGRAM:
HOW IT BENEFITS THE HORSE**

PATH INTERNATIONAL REGION 11 CONFERENCE
SUNDAY MAY 21, 2023 11:45AM - 12:45PM



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CONNECTED HORSE INTRODUCTION




Purpose

- To acquaint attendees with an exciting evidence derived program with equine guided engagement for people living with memory loss or dementia and their care partners.
- Highlight the benefits of purpose-driven work for horses



**UC DAVIS
HEALTH**

DEMENTIA IS A NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CRISIS- AND IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE

The increasing number of people diagnosed with dementia have the desire to stay active and engaged and most importantly, maintain a sense of control over their daily lives.



- 5.8 million Americans have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease, or a related dementia
- 82 million worldwide by 2050
- 10 - 20 % of people aged 65 and older have Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Every 65 seconds someone in the US is diagnosed with dementia

ACTIVATION AND HOPE: DON'T BECOME THE DIAGNOSIS



According to current thinking, dementia is 1/3 genetics and 2/3 lifestyle.



Most people receive the diagnosis with very little support from the medical community.



Connected Horse was started to offer creative, non-pharmaceutical support for Care Partners and Persons Living with a dementia diagnosis.



The Connected Horse program was created by a gerontologist and a social worker both of whom have worked with older adults for 30 years. Both are horse lovers and lifetime equestrians.

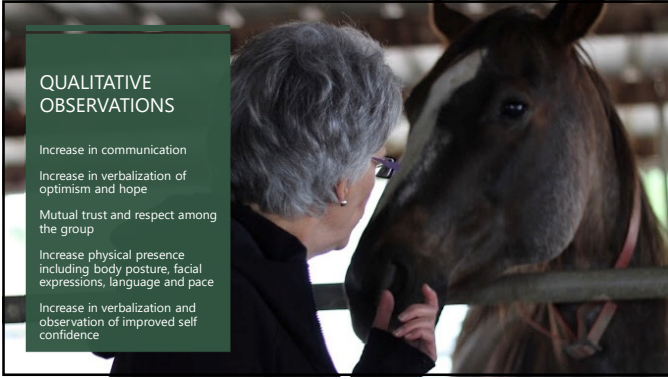
2015-2019 PILOT PROJECT

The Equine Guided Support Pilot Study measured the effectiveness of equine-guided workshops on stress reduction and quality of life indicators for people living with early - stage dementia and their care partners.

The three 5-hour sessions of equine facilitated workshops used cues found in typical herd behavior, and the natural environment to elicit multi-sensory responses from care partners and persons living with dementia.

The pre/post test design utilized neurocognitive instruments to measure feelings of depression, burden, mood, sleep and social support. We found after 3 sessions participants had reduced feelings of depression and anxiety and better quality of sleep.

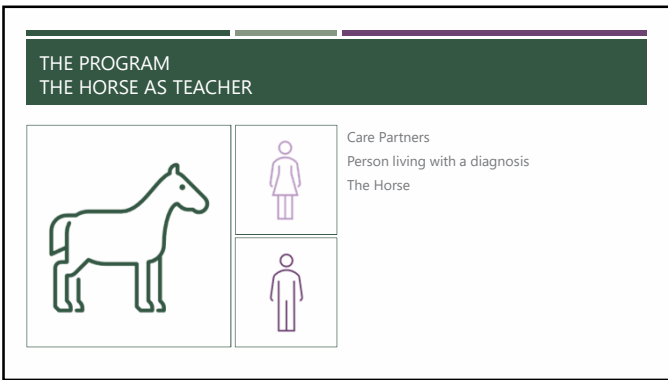
Stanford University & the University of California, Davis



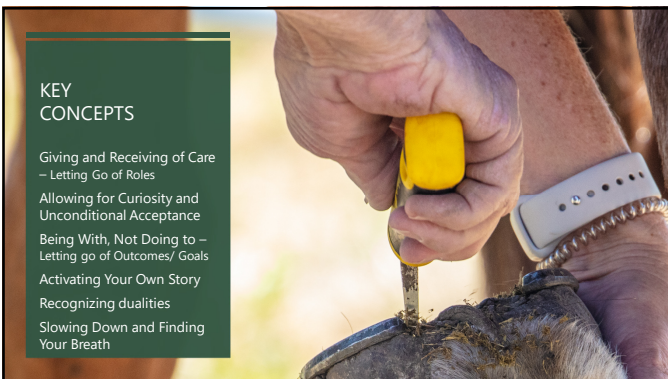
QUALITATIVE OBSERVATIONS

- Increase in communication
- Increase in verbalization of optimism and hope
- Mutual trust and respect among the group
- Increase physical presence including body posture, facial expressions, language and pace
- Increase in verbalization and observation of improved self confidence

**THE PROGRAM
THE HORSE AS TEACHER**



Care Partners
Person living with a diagnosis
The Horse




KEY CONCEPTS


- Giving and Receiving of Care – Letting Go of Roles
- Allowing for Curiosity and Unconditional Acceptance
- Being With, Not Doing to – Letting go of Outcomes/ Goals
- Activating Your Own Story
- Recognizing dualities
- Slowing Down and Finding Your Breath

WORKSHOP EXERCISES: THE HORSES ARE OUR PARTNERS AND OUR TEACHERS


All activities are intended to encourage opportunities for deeper connection, self-awareness and self-regulation through tactual experiences and nonverbal communication for both the care partner and the person living with dementia.




Observing herd behavior



Grooming



Leading



Connecting over the fence



THE BENEFITS "ACTIVATION"

We have observed that many of our participants "get activated" as a pair after attending a Connected Horse program

The care partners take better care of themselves and the persons living with dementia start going out with friends, traveling and enjoying life.

THE UNWANTED HORSE

- US Horse population 2019?
- 1-2% of national population -UH
- Old, injured, fail to meet owner expectations, finances
- Rescues support approx. 12,000 per year
- US Horse population 1920?
- Lack of societal familiarity with the horse- access



HORSE BENEFITS

- A funded home for the unwanted horse
- Daily grooming, handling, enrichment, socialization
- Enhanced societal role- key member of the community
- Non-athletic soft place to land
- Suitable for all types and ages



WHAT TYPE OF HORSE ?

- Horse screening tools- Scoring system, suitability
- Horse temperament –Different roles within the program
- Horse age, does it matter?
 - All ages teach
 - Age and experience factor into safety for handling roles



SAMPLE HORSE CRITERIA

PERSONALITY
MANNERS
WORKLOAD
EXPERIENCE

| Criteria | Score | Notes | Rating | Weight |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| 1. Is the horse well handled? | | | | |
| 2. Is the horse well trained? | | | | |
| 3. Is the horse well behaved? | | | | |
| 4. Is the horse well socialized? | | | | |
| 5. Is the horse well groomed? | | | | |
| 6. Is the horse well conditioned? | | | | |
| 7. Is the horse well handled? | | | | |
| 8. Is the horse well trained? | | | | |
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FACILITATOR, STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Connected Horse® believes that each person is an individual and is looking for their own unique experience. Just like any equine-assisted activity, staff is neutral and nonjudgmental allowing the participant to feel relaxed, confident, and happy in the moment.



PATH CENTER PARTNERSHIPS IN REGION 11

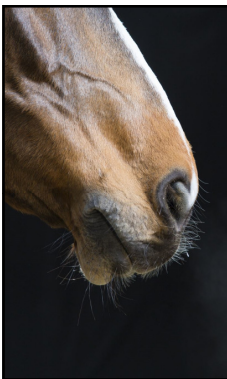
2017 Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center
Orinda, CA

2019 Kids & Horses
Minden, NV



CONNECTED HORSE & PATH BARN

How to use your success as a PATH Certified Center to expand your community services and to expand your service reach to begin to serve the older adult population in your community



BENEFITS FROM THE EYE OF A FACILITATOR



REACHING OUT

PATH has developed a multitude of equine related activities that support the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of its clients.

Connected Horse® adds another dimension to your center's services by offering those with an early-stage dementia diagnosis, and their care partners an environment where they can safely interact with horses and others to build trust and confidence and try a new experience, together.





CONNECTED HORSE TRAINING ACADEMY

Learn more about working with people living with memory loss and dementia and their care partners

Receive Recruitment and screening tools

Receive horse and barn evaluation tools

Practice the program with peers



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Remember to stay in the moment"

"This gave us hope again"

"Energized us to find things to do together"

"Taught us about nonverbal communication"

"We have more tools to help us go forward"

"I faced my fear, I'm not angry anymore"


"You helped me find the love for my husband again"

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Currently, we offer:

- Workshop programs located in Pleasanton, Orinda, Calistoga CA, & Minden NV and we are looking more partners.
- The Barn Connection Programs
- Facilitator Training Academy for new Barn Partnerships

For additional information please reach out and contact us:
Paula or Nancy Co –Founders Connected Horse
Info@connectedhorse.org





THANK YOU
QUESTIONS?

CELEBRATING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HORSES AND HUMANS

Lassos with Love 

JULY 7, 2023
5 P M - 8 P M
FIVE STAR EQUESTRIAN CENTER
PLEASANTON, CA

July 8, 2023
Equestrian Clinic

Kansas Carradine - Cavalia, world renowned equestrian and trainer, actress and Connected Horse supporter
