



Biophilia

The biophilia hypothesis asserts, "the existence of a fundamental genetically based, human need and propensity to affiliate with life and lifelike processes."

Indigenous Wisdom and the Harmony Way

"Many Native Americans understand the wisdom of living out shalom because it is a parallel concept to the harmony way of living that was given to our own people. We see harmony reflected in creation. We notice our own hearts have power to align with God's intended ways of living. We know, as all people know, to honor the Creator and treat others in the way we want to be treated"

Woody




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Elizabeth Johnson, Ask the Beasts, p.2



"When you look at a rabbit and can see only a pest, or vermin, or a meal, or a commodity, or a laboratory subject, you aren't seeing the rabbit anymore. You are seeing only yourself and the schemes and appetites we bring to the world."

proclamation

Matthew Scully, *Dominion*, 3.



Recovering the Relationship

The challenge

- **Dominion** (kingdom, domesticated)
- **Drive to Differentiate**
 - Dualisms
 - A drive to differentiate themselves from the animal world as being at the top of the ladder or the capstone of creation or as having a quality/characteristic/attribute/capacity that is related to being made in the image of God and, as such, better than non-human animals, consider the great chain of being.
- **Dramatic Backdrop**
 - A misunderstanding of our role in the world related to anthropocentrism where non-human animals and earth don't seem to matter

A different vision

- **Kin-dom**
 - Beyond stewardship
 - "Yet one aspect that seems essential relates to the worldview of belonging—a way of being human that acts as if we belong to a community larger than our own family, race, class, and culture, and larger even than our own species" (Loorz, *Church of the Wild*, 21).
- **A Community of Creation**
 - A communion of subjects rather than a collection of objects
 - "We are only talking to ourselves. We are not talking to the rivers, we are not listening to the wind and stars. We have broken the great conversation." Thomas Berry.

My take




If we are not concerned with the welfare of all parties, then what we are doing is not therapeutic.

Have you heard these before?


- "Tell him who's boss."
- "Don't let them know you are afraid."
- "Ask, tell, then demand."
- "Make him respect you."
- "He's a dangerous horse."
- "That mare is stubborn."

Hierarchy or Heterarchy

Hierarchy
clear roles defined with more power given to those at the top



Heterarchy
members are unranked, or rankings are fluid and changing




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| <p>Partnership (heterarchy model)</p> <p>Allows all parties to have a say Permits everyone to be heard Listens to requests Respects other's opinions Hears not just words, notices behaviors as communication Offers discernment, not judgment</p> | <p>Dominance (hierarchy model)</p> <p>Only the leader is in charge What others think doesn't matter Does not take time to listen or understand because their mind is already made up No respect for a different opinion or new idea</p> |
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What's the difference?

Horses ask us: Are you safe?


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| <p>Old way of thinking ~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Are you a leader? | <p>New way of thinking ~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Do you regulate me? ◦ Will you alert me to danger? ◦ Will you provide for my needs? ◦ Can we groom each other? ◦ Will we have interesting experiences together? ◦ Can we be friends? |
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Mutualism & Reciprocity is the Goal, along with being in a State of Congruence






So, what now?
How does this
apply to EAS?



"Training techniques – there may be a million or more, but principles are few. The one who grasps principles can successfully select his own methods. The one who tries methods, ignoring principles, is sure to have trouble."

Warwick Schiller,
The Principles of Training



Mindfulness and
Present Focus

"They know when you
know, and they know
when you don't."

Ray Hunt, as the grandmaster
knew his horse's hip

Desensitize and Disengage in a New Way

Desensitize exposure therapy for horses

- Successive approximation
- Within the context of trust
- Not from a human-centric domination perspective
- With understanding of the horse's personal triggers
- Gradually increasing intensity
- The horse has a say when to stop

Disengagement surrendering the hind end removes option for flight

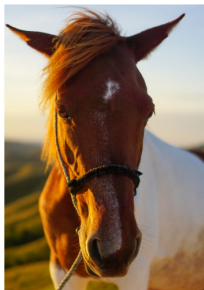
- Can be forced or over-used
- Practice within the context of trust
- Don't take from them what is theirs to give (Josh Nichol)
- Be mindful of your own energy to keep horse in a state of calm
- Your projections can intensify this experience for the horse

How do I "do" this right?

Octavia Brown, co-founder of NARHA, PATH Intl Master Instructor and expert in EAS said:

"There is truly no one correct way of doing anything. We can only hope to learn from each other and together strive for excellence."





Applications to "Partner" Thinking

- Education/Learning
- Onboarding new program equines
- Daily care
- Turnout & Herd life
- Human/Horse relationships for care & work
- Physical needs
- Movement
- Interesting experiences
- 3 F's – forage, friends and freedom