

GROUNDWORK

Identity Grounded Leadership through Horsemanship



The Problem

Anxiety and disconnection are a growing reality for people today. For those navigating instability, hardship, fear, or difficult relationships, troubling behavior is often the result. The challenge is not simply learning a new behavior. It is learning that they can experience safety, connection, agency, and a sense of who they are within their relationships.

A Different Starting Point

Groundwork addresses the foundation. Each person carries a unique set of hardwired strengths and gifts that mean each person has inherent value that can never be taken away. Unique identity is knitted into our very being and confirmed in community. This isn't something we invent, it's wired into our DNA like our fingerprints. There is no one who can contribute exactly what someone else carries. When people learn who they are, and that they can't lose that no matter what happens, a confidence can begin to form. People who know who they are develop a quiet confidence and become less likely to be bullied and less likely to become a bully, they are less likely to be influenced by peer pressure, and they begin to become the change in the places they live, work and go to school. Lasting change becomes possible when the framework underneath the behavior becomes solid—when people develop greater self-awareness, learn to recognize what they are carrying, understand their own worth, and experience relationships where truth, boundaries, trust, and connection can coexist.

Why Horses

Horses, like humans, seek connection, safety and a sense of peace. Horses don't lie, and reveal what it looks like to function in disconnection, anxiety and fear. Conversely, we can see what the shift looks like when anxiety dissolves into peace and connection strengthens through trust.

Observing and working with horses reveals the difference of fear responses and the confidence and presence that comes with peace. They can show us how to identify behavior that is fear-based, and how to consider if the fear is present or coming from past experience. When we respond instead of react, we can be thoughtful and creative and this changes over time the environments we exist in. Horses respond when we approach them in clarity of communication, consistency, and confident leadership. These are the same strengths that help us navigate the human spaces we work and live.

How It Works

- Teaching — A session (group or individual) introduces the core framework: how fear quietly runs most of our reactions, how identity (not performance) restores real confidence, and what it looks like to start living from that place.
- The Round Pen — Participants observe an unscripted, live interaction between horse and handler, watching fear, choice, trust, and freedom play out in real time — then are invited to experience for themselves, hands-on (*as they are comfortable*).
- Debrief — We connect what participants witnessed and experienced back to their own lives, classrooms, and homes — turning insight into something they can carry forward.

What Participants Walk Away With

- A personal sense of their inherent unique identity to continue to unpack as they move forward living out of the truth of who they are.
- The transformational understanding they cannot earn this identity and cannot lose it- which brings confidence and peace to challenging interpersonal situations they face.
- Renewed understanding of clear, honest communication; what clear boundaries are and are not; how to influence instead of pressure or bully; and increased self-awareness (how to consider how those around us experience us).
- Increased peace- which is more than an absence of conflict but a wholeness and sense of well-being that is greater than the circumstances. People who carry internal peace bring that peace to their environments.
- A transformation from within that changes the culture of where they go. Exploring identity encourages a culture where people are valued for who they are and are able to contribute out of their strength.

About GROUNDWORK

Groundwork is offered through Hope Horsemanship, built on a horsemanship philosophy of connection over compliance — drawing the horse's mind and building trust rather than seeking performance by force. The same truths of connection, trust and confidence apply to human relationships, and is the foundation of this work. Groundwork is based on the truth of human experience and can be presented in both faith-based and non-religious language. The training format can be adjusted to fit any group's need.

Interested in bringing GROUNDWORK to your team, staff, or students?

Contact Jaime to explore GROUNDWORK for you:

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