

Presenter's name: Metka Demšar Goljevšček

Degree, affiliation: Master's Degree, Pedagogy and Sociology

Curriculum vitae:

Metka Demšar Goljevšček, a pedagogist and sociologist of culture, skillfully intertwines her professional expertise with a passion for horses, fostering lifelong learning opportunities in natural settings. During her studies, she was involved in the establishment of the non-governmental organization "Nazaj na konja", where she later became regularly employed as the professional head of pedagogical, andragogical, and therapeutic activities. She has dedicated herself to the development of the educational system in the field of equine assisted interventions, where she lectures and coordinates educational programs for professionals. She is also the coordinator of the Family Center Objem (Hug), which operates within the framework of the "Nazaj na konja" institute. She has participated in numerous national and international projects and conferences, but she devotes most of her time to direct work with people.

Category: Oral presentation abstract

Topic: Disabilities & Symptoms: Social Skills and Communication

Authors:

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Title: HOW CAN A HERD OF HORSES SERVE AS INSPIRATION FOR CONVERSATION AND BONDING WITHIN A GROUP

Keyword 1: herd experience

Keyword 2: storytelling

Keyword 3: group work

Abstract:

Objective: Intense horse herd dynamic is witnessed on a daily basis which offers us insights into various situations and relationships among horses, analogous to what happens in human groups and social subsystems (such as kindergarten, classroom, family, peer group, social circle, work environment, etc.). In this article, we aim to present methods and some interactive didactic tools that we have developed for facilitating conversation while observing a horse herd. We use these tools when working with various groups of children, adolescents, and adults.

Results: The experience of the horse herd and the stories of individual horses offer us many insights and ideas: how to resolve conflicts; why it is necessary to adhere to certain rules to prevent anarchy; how to integrate into a group to be accepted; how to establish and maintain friendships; how to cope with difficult life situations without drama... The concept of "herd experience" is built on the theories of some renowned psychologists and educators (Csikszentmihalyi, Gogala, Kroflič, Maslow, Ziegenspeck, etc.), who argue that experience deeply impacts the depth of the whole person and

shows us the value of understanding through peak experience. Experience has the power to shape and reshape us mentally.

Design: PowerPoint presentation with interactive activities.

Conclusion: Horses provide us with powerful peak experiences of group dynamics. They inspire us with their ability to maintain a balance between expressing respect for the herd's rules and striving to preserve personal space. Structured conversation offers us the opportunity to become aware of these key experiences and guide users - regardless of their age, status, and life situation - through powerful experiences towards a deeper understanding of interpersonal relationships and group dynamics. This encourages them to transfer skills to important social groups.