Where Hooves Meet Healing

Nurturing Social and Emotional Growth in Ugandan Youth

Sylvie Ouellet

Equus Soul – Uganda

My Story

- Leaving everything….
- Need a change….
- Find my path…

Where it started…


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100 mi
100 km
N
UGANDA
LOW / PLATEAU / HILLS / MTS.
Ethiopia
White Nile
South Sudan
Dem. Rep. of the Congo
Albert Nile
Arura
Gulu
Uganda
Kenya
Achwa River
Moroto
Murchison Falls Nat. Park
Lake Kwania
Lake Albert
Soroti
Lake Kyoga
Kibale Forest Nat. Park
Victoria Nile
Mbale
Mt. Stanley
Katonga River
Kampala
Jinja
Tororo
Entebbe
EQUATOR
Port Bell
Lk. George
Lake Edward
Mbarara
Sese I.
Kenya
Tanzania
Lake Victoria
Tanzania
Rwanda

Context

- International School offering supervised Student Support Services
- Multidisciplinary team that provides Therapy & Counseling

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Age: 13 to 16 years old	Age: 9 to 11 years old	7 to 10 years old
2 sessions per month 3 students per session 3 teachers	1 session per month 6 students per session 2- 3 teachers	1 session per month 6 students per session 2- 3 teachers
signs of intellectual or developmental challenges	emotional regulation social awareness relation with peers low self-confidence struggle with instructions anxiety	emotional regulation social awareness relation with peers low self-confidence struggle with instructions overwhelmed in academic setting

Why This Work Matters

- “Healing is the journey from hurt to wholeness, restoring balance, trust, and connection.”
- Quiet environment, in nature/ slowing down
- Sharing space with horses/ shift of energy
- Let go pressure and performance/ Let them be
- Let connection unfold naturally/ at their own pace

Introducing Horses Where They're Unfamiliar

- Slowing down and feel energy: adaptation and flexibility
- Simplify vocabulary/ Use visual "Posters"
- Support expression of feeling/ without fears to be judged
- Respect different mood/each session is different
- Encourage curiosity about horses/ openness step out comfort zone
- Sharing feeling after sessions/ what I like the most…
- For me: Be totally Present/ Trust my intuition/ Trust the horses

Walk through Sessions:
What we focus on

- **Safety rules**
- **Observation**: Pay attention to the horses/ What you see
- **Horse sensitivity**: Feels what I feel/ Need to feel safe:

  Breathing exercise/ Be calm, gentle

  Ice breaker**:** Blind Fold exercise/ Feeling of trust/Awareness of sensing
- **Communication:** Understand Horse Body Language

  Meet the horses: Say hi/ Introduce myself

  Horse can say no/ Respect/ Give space/ Patience/ Give time

Walk through Sessions:
What we focus on

- **Caring:** Horses needs/ Pay attention what the horse says

  Grooming/ Feeding / What the horse like
- **Leading your horse:** Clear your mind/ Be responsible/ Talk to the horse

  Walk through path with obstacles
- **Asking for help:** Not always your way/ What if not feel comfortable…
- **Sharing with others:** My time with the horse
- **End of session:** What I like the most today

What we see happens:

- Quotation from Hearts Rescued Film:

  “ remind us what’s possible when we slow down, listen deeply, and allow ourselves to be transformed by connection.”

- It’s the magic and beauty when we are in the presence of Horses…

What we see happens:
Small Shifts, Big Meaning

- Consciousness of own feeling and feeling of others
- Self-regulation and self-confidence with horses
- Expression of feeling and thoughts: what I like today, how the horse is feeling, where I will apply the skills I practice with horses
- Awareness how my behavior affected others
- Bonding/helping and sharing with others
- Shift of energy over the session/ more calm, gentle

Reflections from students

- I can take big risks even if I never done it before
- I learned how to calm myself down
- I can do it if I believe in myself
- I can control myself when I am feeling angry
- I know now how to talk to people more nicely

Reflections from parents

- He always comes back calm and happy
- He has a better mindset for interacting with others
- He said the horse is very kind to him
- He is more empathetic towards everyone at home
- He reads more books about animals

Lessons learned

- Keep my purpose
- Confident of my Authenticity/ my I Am
- Moving forward through challenges
- Keep open heart to see new opportunity
- Don't be on the way
- I am not alone...

What Next…..

- Answer comes from Let it Go

Let keep in touch

Sylvie Ouellet

Equus Soul

Uganda

sylvieouellettanzanie@gmail.com

+256 778 475 253