



## Gully's Learning Ranch

APRIL 2024



# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Welcome!

Welcome to our monthly newsletter e-mail chain!

Each month, your e-newsletter is delivered right to your inbox – delivering important information regarding upcoming events and programs, interesting information from the world of equine assisted learning and experiential learning, and all things Gully's Learning Ranch – plus a monthly coupon!

We look forward to bringing you all the latest news from around our ranch – please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions for future installments.

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### April

By: Brittany Matthews

April is a special month,  
A month of new beginnings.  
Flowers bloom and green grass  
grows,  
Causing joyous feelings.

Ladybugs and butterflies,  
Flying all around.  
Birds gathering for their nest,  
Dry grasses from the ground.

April is the time for rain,  
Helping flowers grow;  
April showers bring May  
flowers,  
A phrase that many know.



## Save It For A Rainy Day — Tips For Staying Positive

Working with horses means working in ALL kinds of weather, whether rain, snow, ice, or beautiful sunshine, we must look at the positives of all types of weather. April showers often make us think of the words “dreary” and “gloomy”. Thinking in this way can affect, not only our moods and emotions, but also our motivation and creativeness. We need to start thinking of a rainy day as a positive experience. Rain calms, cleanses, and allows for growth. The positives outweigh the negatives associated with a wet day. Let’s go through all the ways in which rain is beneficial to us, so we can refer back when we are feeling negative towards the next rainy day.

Rain helps to calm us. While we may be inside during a storm, we can still appreciate the calming qualities of rain. Many people use noise machines to artificially hear rain tapping against a roof or window. This is because the white noise created by a storm is rhythmic and calming. If we are lucky to have the opportunity to cuddle into a warm blanket on a rainy day, we instantly feel the cozy calmness that comes over us while it’s raining. There is no denying the peacefulness of a day spent relaxing during a rainstorm. If it is warm enough to be outside in the rain, we can enhance the grounding (or earthing) of our energy by utilizing the water’s conductive properties. An individual’s grounding experience is more powerful while it’s raining because, with the ions being exchanged between the Earth and us become enhanced with the water, allowing for greater energy exchange. Storms are also nature’s way of releasing pressure – and it can help us release the pressures of life too!

Rain cleanses. We all know of the importance of water to all living beings. Water has many purposes – it nourishes us, cleans us, refreshes us, and calms us. The pure nature of water’s properties means it plays a significant role in cleansing – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Water physically cleanses everything it touches. Used as the first cleaning product ever, water is the universal solvent. Water cleanses us mentally and emotionally due to its pure, calming and positive nature. When it’s raining, or when we are under any running water, the water will cleanse our electromagnetic field of negative energy that has accumulated. Spiritually, water has been used in many faiths since ancient times, including during blessings and rituals. But even without organized religion, water has been seen as the ultimate healer and ensures overall wellness.

Rains allows for growth. Without rain, all the seeds in the world would remain dormant in a dark, cold space. We may even think of ourselves as that seed. Unsure of what the future may hold, knowing you can’t stay in this place, wondering what the next step is. Rain, in all it’s pure, positive, calming ways, is the catalyst for sprouting, for growth, and for moving forward. Without the dark days, we can never appreciate the light. Although a rainstorm brings clouds that cover the sunshine, we can still see the positive side of these types of days. We can see them for a time to self-reflect, check-in with ourselves, and decide what our next step in life will be. Beginning to look at dreary days as cleansing and calming is personal growth.





## UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

**April 2024 Events:****6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program****Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup> (11am-12:15pm)**

Our 6-Week Curriculum Program focuses on the development of life skills / interpersonal communication skills. Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively- driven exercise with their horse teacher. Skills include creative problem solving, effective communication, appropriate assertiveness, fair negotiation, teamwork, leadership, and more – all while having fun!

**Open All-Ages Horse Meet & Greet****Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> (3pm-3:45pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

**May 2024 Events:****Spring OPEN HOUSE****Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> (1pm-3pm)**

Come out for to meet our horse, pony, and donkey teachers. Learn more about our programs and take a tour of our facilities. Refreshments Included.

**6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program****Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Our 6-Week Curriculum Program focuses on the development of life skills / interpersonal communication skills. Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively- driven exercise with their horse teacher. Skills include creative problem solving, effective communication, appropriate assertiveness, fair negotiation, teamwork, leadership, and more – all while having fun!

**Open All-Ages Horse Meet & Greet****Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration in advance is required.

**Authentic You Women's Workshop****Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup> (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? Our unique empowerment program guarantees results that LAST with sustainable change within yourself coming from the self-discovery of problem solving and coming up with the answers yourself. ~5- hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

**June 2024 Events:****6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program****Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> – Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Our 6-Week Curriculum Program focuses on the development of life skills.

**6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program****Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup> – Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Our 6-Week Curriculum Program focuses on the development of life skills.

**Authentic You Women's Workshop****Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

**Open All-Ages Horse Meet & Greet****Saturday, June 29<sup>th</sup> (11am-11:45am)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

**\*\* Please note that dates and times are subject to change \*\***

**July 2024 Events:****Authentic You Women's Workshop  
Saturday, July 6<sup>th</sup> (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

**Open All-Ages Horse Meet & Greet  
Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

**6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program****Saturday, July 13<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup> (11am-12:15pm)**

Our 6-Week Curriculum Program focuses on the development of life skills.

**Open All-Ages Horse Meet & Greet  
Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

**6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program****Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup> (1pm-2:15pm)**

Our 6-Week Curriculum Program focuses on the development of life skills.

**Authentic You Women's Workshop  
Saturday, July 6<sup>th</sup> (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!



## 6-Week Curriculum – Our Most Popular Program!

Our 6-week curriculum is our most popular program, especially with youth and teens. Each experiential learning lesson is objectively-driven to develop life skills. Life skills are intra/interpersonal communication skills – essentially social and emotional skills. As prey animals, horses react to the stimuli within their environment as a safety mechanism – and this includes the stimuli that we bring to them. When working with horses, we are able to physically see the reaction from our horse when they are startled. This allows us to self-regulate our emotions and behaviours to respect our horse’s boundaries and keep them calm, which in turn, allows the horse to respect and trust us. These lessons are easily paralleled to everyday life, allowing the skills to be utilized at home, at school, and in the future! Each week, the team works together with their horse teacher and makes their way through an objectively-driven obstacle course. Below is an outline of our 6-Week Curriculum Program, where we build on each skill every week.

### **Week 1: Orientation Objective: Knowledge**

Before we can start a journey, we must first gain the knowledge we require to accomplish our goals. This week, we focus on learning about what Equine Assisted Learning is and how horses will be the teachers. We go through our horse’s body language. We will also have a safety demonstration to ensure we are all safely working with our horses.

### **Week 2: Starting The Journey Objective: Building Relationships**

Building a new relationship is similar to starting a journey. This week, we are truly on our way and starting our journey of developing essential life skills – especially with the knowledge gained in the prior week. We will focus on continuing to build relationships with our horse teachers, with each other, and ultimately, with ourselves. Horses can remember us, and the experiences we have had with them, by our smell. Each time we work with a horse, these experiences build. Building a relationship with a horse is a powerful parallel to building a friendship with a human being.

### **Week 3: Push Me Pull You Objective: Communication**

Communication plays a major role in the way we build relationships with others and express ourselves. This week, we focus on how we must develop effective communication skills in order to work as a team and achieve our goal. Without boundaries, effective communication cannot exist. We will learn how we must respect personal space while communicating. Horses have strong boundaries and will let their team know if they are uncomfortable with the situation. We can start to recognize how human beings show their boundaries to us.

### **Week 4: Who’s The Brain? Objective: Articulation & Active Listening**

The words we say and the way we listen are incredibly important. This week, we continue to develop our communication skills, we will focus on articulation and active listening. The team must work together, some as “hands” and the others as “brains”. The Brains must clearly articulate instructions to The Hands, who must be actively listening in order to respond and complete the task set out by The Brain.

### **Week 5: Do You Have Common Sense? Objective: Problem Solving**

Creatively problem solving is the key to finding solutions that last. This week, we focus on problem solving plan development and practicing our communication skills while coming up with solutions. Each obstacle has a problem that needs to be solved. We learn that problems are easier to solve if we come up with a plan. We also learn that problem solving can be easier in a team, where we can brainstorm a solution together.

### **Week 6: It’s All Up To You! Objective: Choices**

Life is a series of choices and these choices steer us in different directions. This week, we learn the importance of making the “right” or “good” choices for the outcome, or consequences, that we are looking for. We can begin to recognize the important of making positive choices in our lives, especially if we are a leader of a team. When we are a leader, we must ensure that we are making choices that will allow our team to succeed. Horses are always looking for this sort of leadership and decision making.





## News 'Round The Ranch

### *Children's Treatment Centre – CK FUNding Fair!*

Last week, we had a great time participating in the Children's Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent's FUNding Fair. We met lots of new people and hope to spread the word around of our amazing horse teachers! Did we see you there? Welcome to the new eNewsletter subscribers!

### *Ranch Birthday!*

During the month of March, our horse teacher Dreamer celebrated a Birthday! Dreamer has turned 14-years-old. Dreamer is a kind, compassionate, and caring horse who teaches her students perseverance, self-confidence, and the importance of teamwork! Dreamer is easily spotted (no pun intended) amongst her herd with her beautiful coat.

### *Happy Easter!*

From our family to yours, we want to wish you a very Happy Easter! Did you know the late great Lilly's full name was Easter Lilly? Lilly was rescued on Easter Monday in 2018! We hope you had a peaceful and joyous Easter weekend filled with family, friends, and food!

### *Annual Bird Migration Begins!*

Gully's Learning Ranch is a hub for the annual bird migration that makes its way through the region during the warmer months. We have already started to see some of the earlier migrators, including Robins, Raptors, Starlings, Red-Winged Blackbirds, and our personal favourites, the Killdeers! You may hear the Killdeers' distinct call, which they are named after!



# COUPON

Special Newsletter Coupon – Each month, there will be a coupon at the end of the newsletter. To redeem the coupon, mention the code below when booking your next program!

This month, our coupon is 10% off ANY upcoming 6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program registered for in April 2024.\*

**CODE: YOUTH10**

\* Valid only when registering for a Youth/Teen Curriculum Program paid in full in April 2024. Program can be any date.



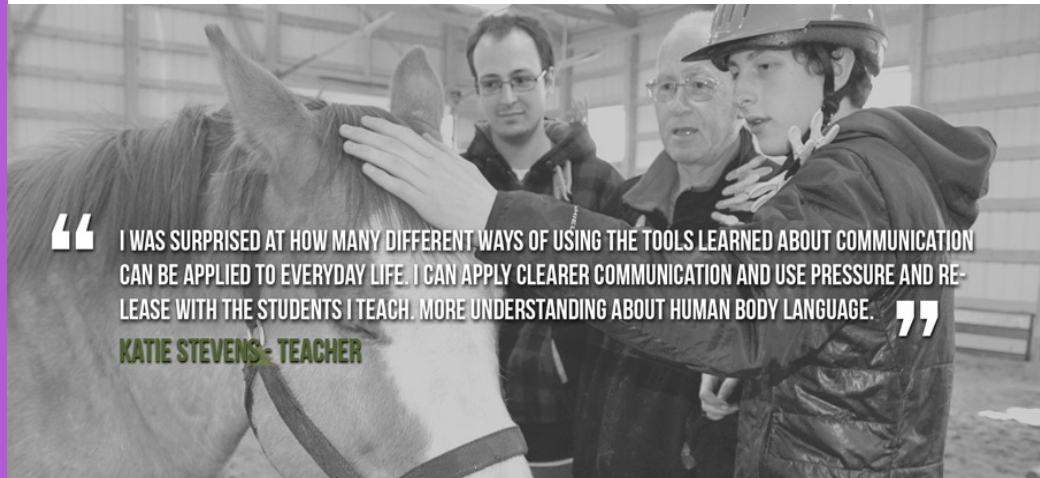
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## APRIL'S FOOD FOR THOUGH

“If you want to invest in something with minimum risk and a guaranteed big return, invest in yourself.”

- Unknown



“ I WAS SURPRISED AT HOW MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF USING THE TOOLS LEARNED ABOUT COMMUNICATION CAN BE APPLIED TO EVERYDAY LIFE. I CAN APPLY CLEARER COMMUNICATION AND USE PRESSURE AND RELEASE WITH THE STUDENTS I TEACH. MORE UNDERSTANDING ABOUT HUMAN BODY LANGUAGE. ”

**KATIE STEVENS - TEACHER**

## Gully's Learning Ranch

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