



## Basic Safety Guide

All experiential learning programs with horses emphasize creativity and responsiveness in relating to horses. The only rules we stress are safety rules. Anyone who knowingly or maliciously breaks these rules is a safety risk for the entire group and, as such, will not be allowed to participate in the program. Horses are prey animals and easily startled into a flight or fight mode. The following guidelines will prevent serious mishaps and make the experience more enjoyable for everyone involved, including the horses.

1. Please do not feed the horses, unless you are invited to do so by your facilitator. Hand-feeding can lead to sore fingers!
2. When leading the horse, never wrap the lead line around your hand or other parts of your body. Do not lay the line over your neck or shoulder.
3. Avoid standing directly in front of or directly behind the horse. When walking behind the horse to get to the other side, put your hand on the horse's hindquarters and move around him with your body close to his body. This allows the horse to know where you are and keeps you from stepping into kicking range (about two feet out from the horse's body). When two people are working with the same horse, it's best to stand on the same side of the horse.
4. Never strike, kick or yell at a horse. Physical violence only escalates the horse's impulse to run or fight.
5. Stop what you are doing and stand quietly near the horse when your facilitator calls 'Hold Your Horses' or 'Time Out'. Wait quietly for further instruction.
6. If a horse begins to panic, give him some space. Do not try to restrain him. If the panic escalates, LET THE HORSE GO! Call "Time Out" or "Loose Horse".
7. As prey animals, horses are very sensitive to the feelings of herd members as well as the human beings who interact with them. Feelings are a primary source of information to them. Pay attention to your feelings and how these feelings are changing. If you get frustrated, fearful, or angry, call your own 'Time Out' and reassess the situation. Do not hesitate to ask for help.
8. It is not uncommon for human handlers to pick up feelings that actually belong to the horses. If you have distressing feelings that you cannot name or have no logical reason for, call your own 'Time Out' and consult a facilitator. Many instances of horse panic can be avoided by listening and responding to these feelings before they evolve into extreme reaction.
9. Keep your breath flowing. Horses give and receive information through the quality and frequency of their breathing. Holding your breath or producing quick, shallow breaths convey feelings of stress and fear to the horses and can cause them to become stressed or fearful.
10. Please keep gates closed and securely fastened at all times.

### Property Policies

1. Drive 10 miles an hour on driveways.
2. Absolutely NO SMOKING on premises.
3. Please respect the owner's privacy and stay in areas designated for your workshop.

I have read the safety guidelines above and will listen to the accompanying demonstration. I agree to follow these rules to the best of my ability and ask for help when I am having trouble with any of the action-learning activities with horses facilitated by Amanda Madorno and her assistants. I agree to be responsible for my own safety and thus contribute to the safety of the group. If I do not adhere to the above Property Policies I understand I can be dismissed from the program at any time with no refund/compensation.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_