

#25 Animals and Mental Wellness

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: [00:00:00] Welcome to Inner Challenge. I'm MJ Murray Vachon, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with more than 44,000 hours of therapy sessions and 30 years of teaching mental wellness. Join me as I have an unscripted conversation with guests just like you as we strive to take the mystery out of mental wellness.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Welcome to the podcast today. Today we're going to talk about the role that animals play in helping us cultivate mental wellness. Our guest today is Anne Cole. Anne happens to be my sister, and like many of you, she was born and I mean born an animal lover! It's safe to say that she loves all animals. Is that safe, Anne, to say that?

Ann Cole: Yes.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Her real passion is horses. She took that passion and turned it into a profession more than 50 years ago, and she's taught a lot more to young people than just how to ride a horse over [00:01:00] her professional career. She's going to share a little bit about that career from a mental wellness perspective today. I want to begin by asking you to tell our listeners a little bit about the work that you do.

Ann Cole: I own a facility and I have a barn with horses, dogs, and cats. I'm actually teach riding and train horses, but more than that, I have a place where people come to be with animals to help them feel better, to help them relax and find a safe place with all of their emotions, and they can just enjoy their selves at our barn.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: So, it's a lot more than riding horses and in a second we're going to come back to that. But Ann has a really unique perspective because pretty much seven days a week for, I don't know, 50 years, Ann, she has really observed the power of animals and how they help us in many ways. I want to begin, Ann, by asking you to share with our [00:02:00] listeners how you define mental wellness at this point in your life.

Ann Cole: For me, mental wellness is when I feel in balance, my life is in balance. My day I should go down to the hour of the day is in balance. I find as I get older, that's even harder than it was when I was younger. Mental wellness means that I can relax and that I'm comfortable in my skin and that I appreciate myself. And that's been really hard for me.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I think it's hard for most of us, and I think one of the things I really like about the work that you do is that it's whole body. It's not just a physical experience of get on the horse and ride. I think that's probably what most people think. And I think that's one of my first questions. When most people call you and they're like, we want to sign up to ride for a riding lesson, or we want to sign our children up what's their motivation typically?

Ann Cole: I think it starts [00:03:00] out to be, little girl loves horses and she wants to take riding. They think they're coming for riding lessons and they are, but then after they're there for a while and , the children hold the kitties that are in my office as they go into the barn or they start brushing the horse and they start hugging the horse and they're just sitting there hugging one of my horses. And then they realize it, oh, this is more than just riding, this is like spiritual.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: You used the word loving. What I remember about you as a little girl was you got your first horse at seven and is that right?

Ann Cole: I was nine.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Oh, you were nine, okay. I was seven . And it was that same feeling of love. I love horses and it seems to me like there's only two kinds of people in the world. Those people who love love horses and those people who might like them, but there's a special, I would say, calling for some people [00:04:00] with their energy, their love towards horses. Is that a fair statement?

Ann Cole: Oh yes, definitely. I think that horses take some of us into their lives and heal us, and they teach us so many life lessons that we might not have learned anywhere else but from the horse. They can be very strong-willed and they can be very gentle at the same time. And how do you handle all that? How do I teach this strong-willed horse to trust me or do something that I want 'em to do and he weighs a thousand pounds? So that's life lessons of just getting along with people that the horses have taught me.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: That brings up something I wanted to say that I've been in your barn hundreds of times and what's interesting to me is, I never notice the horses. And you have how many?

Ann Cole: Like 20.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: That's a lot of horses for me to not notice. And I am seldom at the barn where [00:05:00] there's less than 10 or 15 mostly preteens and teenagers, correct?

Ann Cole: Yes.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: And sometimes there are parents as well . What I notice when I'm there is the spirit between the young people there and what I notice are the life lessons that they're learning while they're also learning how to ride a horse. I wonder if you could talk from a mental wellness perspective. People aren't coming from mental wellness. This is an unintended consequence of learning how to ride a horse, I think. But once they're in your barn, they begin to understand that to ride a horse, you really learn all these other really important life skills and life lessons. I wonder if you could just share what some of those are.

Ann Cole: I think when you're around horses and learning to ride them, the patience that you have to have and the awareness of the animal. Not like a basketball, but the animal. What are his ears doing? We teach [00:06:00] that when the horse's ears flick back at you softly, that they're paying attention to you. So how do we know that horse is paying attention to us and just like a human, they're not paying attention to us. We have to know that when we walk into a room with humans, we want to know and be able to read their emotions and their state of mind and we teach the children how that horse is feeling by watching them and listening to them and seeing their emotions.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: It really is the relationship skill of paying attention to the other. And one of the skills is, the horse is irritated or upset or angry if the ears go back.

Ann Cole: That's one way to know that they're upset. And there's so many things just their ears do and their muzzle, which is like their lips, and they do all these little things with their mouth when they're happy and relax. We teach all that even before they brush their horse. Even when they're brushing their horses, sometimes these Kids [00:07:00] and adults, they are hard and they're rough and they push the brush too hard, and that's again, something that we teach that's too hard for that particular horse. He's telling you that. And I teach everybody that horses talk and they'll say, no, they don't. I said, oh, they do. And so, we teach that. Listen to your horse. When he's swishing his tail, he's not happy and you're pushing the brush too hard. So just little things like that of awareness of who you're with through the horse.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: One of the truths about childhood I often say is that children are exquisitely self-centered. And the role of parents and those of us who are adults who work with them is to gently pull them out of that self-centeredness. That is what I hear you saying happens is they come in, I'm going to ride, but they begin to form a relationship with this horse and they really begin to see the horse as another being. It's not just there for their own [00:08:00] purposes, their own pleasure. They're also there to be in relationship with the horse?

Ann Cole: Oh yeah. And I think horses, dogs, cats, they help these people because it's not just children. I have many adults that go through this process at our barn. They learned to nurture and I think it made me a much better mother. I raised two boys that are now adults with children, and I think through the animals, the horses, I learned so much more about discipline and fair discipline through my horses. And I think that really helps these kids and adults that come to learn to ride the horses. It just helps that nurturing side of you because you have to have it to get along with a horse.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: What happens if a child loves horses in theory, but comes and then is afraid?

Ann Cole: Again, the life lesson of fear is so real in all of our lives, and we have all been afraid. So, I always [00:09:00] say, if you've ever talked to any horse trainer that says, I've never been afraid, I always say they're probably lying because we've all been scared. I've been hurt by horses. I've been scared and I've been around them all my life. The cool thing is I can help these people with their fear because I've been there and I understand it. For me as a teacher to understand their fear, I can let them go as slowly as they want. If they don't want to touch 'em, that's okay. Just be here and be in their energy, which is amazing. And normally if they're there long enough, the energy of the horse will climb right into their bodies and then they'll at least touch them.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Oh, that's so interesting. That's really interesting. I've never thought of it in that way. The other thing I'm interested in just observing your work over the years, is the relationship to power that, every human being wants power. We want to be in [00:10:00] control. We want to feel empowered. I'm wondering what you think for the people, adults and children who come to your barn, what do they learn about that basic human need to be in control to feel empowered.

Ann Cole: I think they learn about being in control but not being controlling. I think that that's a pretty cool life lesson as well. The horses are huge compared

to us humans, and they're strong and they don't talk our language, so we learn their language. And I think learning any other language other than our own makes us feel empowered and more in control. The horses give you such confidence and they help you with that. They tell you when you're doing a great job being a leader, and you have to be a leader. That's by nature what they need. A horse is from the herd, and there's always a [00:11:00] leader, an alpha. So that's what they teach us, is to be a leader but not a jerk, if that makes sense.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Yeah. No and I think in today's world that's really important. Kids get a lot of messages that it's okay to be a jerk, but I would imagine horses don't let that go on. Parents might let it go on. Coaches might let it go on. Teachers might let it go on. But would a horse let a kid be a jerk for a long time?

Ann Cole: No, some are more tolerant than others, just like humans, but they really do teach, I will please you if you're fair. I will go down the path that you're trying to lead me to go, but you have to be fair and take the right amount of time for me to build that trust in a relationship. And without the trust, there is no relationship.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: What does a child or an adult who comes to your barn and learn about trust and [00:12:00] developing trust with a horse?

Ann Cole: I think by learning to slow down is part of it, because everybody wants something so fast. I want to learn to canter right now, and the parents say she should be cantering by now, but the horses teach us that we have to go step by step. We cannot miss steps or it does not work out well. The patience for the process is what I call it. I think that's one of the coolest things that we teach in our barn is the patience for the process.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Can you give an example of how somebody who was impatient when they first came. This process of learning how to ride a horse, increase their patience and help them understand to get good at anything, it's a process.

Ann Cole: Yeah. I think sometimes the adults have a little harder time than the children even, and not the understanding that a horse has feelings and their have physical feelings, mental [00:13:00] feelings. I'll see an adult rush in, say, to tighten up the saddle, and they were doing it really fast and hard because they're thinking, I want to ride! Instead of I have to slow down, this horse is talking to me and I totally missed it. Then I have to go in and help them

understand what's going on and that you don't need to rush right now. This is all slow and you can't hurry with horses.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: What happens if you hurry with horses?

Ann Cole: Many things can happen if you hurry with horses. A lot of times they'll Spook and jump sideways or run you over accidentally cuz you're in their way and they get scared. They're fear and flight animals like a deer. When we go too fast or they hear too much noise, too much loudness, too much chaos, it scares them and they react with fast movements running forward, stopping really fast. They might bite or kick or jump sideways. And if you're in their way they'll just run you right over. That's a part of being that [00:14:00] fear and flight animal by nature.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: One of the things that I often think people imagine when they come to a place like yours to ride a horse is that they'll just walk in the barn and get on the horse. One of the things that I think is really beautiful about the way that you teach is your students do a little bit of everything and that's part of the whole process. I want you to talk about what are the things that the typical student has to do before they even sit on a horse?

Ann Cole: When they get to the barn again, they usually start playing with the kitties, and that's just a warmup. I think the kittens are amazing. And we have an older cat, so that's a warmup into getting to the barn where the horses are. And then sometimes we have these little miniature horses, Clover and Oatmeal, and they're in their little stall when they walk in and they'll touch them and talk to them, I think that just helps people, kids, adults, relax. [00:15:00] So that when they go into the barn where the horses are that they're going to ride, they're already in a different state of mind than they were when they were in their cars. Then we go into the barn and we touch the horses, we approach them and we talk to them. All the kids have to say hello to the horse and how is your day? Then we talk about grooming or brushing the horses. So, it's this slow process where they really are becoming what I call thinking riders. We teach them right when they walk into the barn, to think about the horse, first of all, and to see how his day was, what his face and emotions look like. Is he happy? Is he sad? Is he sleepy? Is he just bored? Those kind of emotions and thoughts run through the horse's mind as well as ours. That's where it starts. Then they brush their horses. They learn to put the equipment on safely, slowly and in the right spot, the saddle on their back, the bit in their mouth, those kind of things. Then if the horse, oh dear, he went potty, [00:16:00] oh, then Johnny has to go get the pitchfork and pick up the manure from the horse that he's getting ready to ride. And there's another piece of the whole Process that we do at the barn is they get

to learn to take care of the horses. And we have programs that go into that where they get to work, take care of the horses on a daily basis.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Often, when I'm in your barn, I see, these kids are carrying brooms, pitch forks and often nobody's really telling them to do this or to that they seem that after they've been there for a while, they step into taking responsibility in a way that's pretty impressive to me. Is that a fair reflection of what's going on?

Ann Cole: Yeah, cuz sometimes they'll start out and they'll go, oh, I don't want to do that. And they complain and they don't want to pick up the manure and it's gross and it smells and all that kind of thing. And then when they start to do it, Have a day at our barn where they're really there for more than an hour or two and they get or come to our camps and we do a lot of [00:17:00] work at the camps. They feel so special and like I know something that no one else does and I'm proud that I know how to take care of a horse. They really enjoy it. Sometimes they'll go, can we go pick pens? Can we go clean stalls? And that's the work that we've taught them to do and they actually ask if they can do it. And that's really rewarding for me.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I know that when people walk in, the first thing that they're taken with are the kittens because who isn't taken with kittens and then the little ponies. But I would say the third thing is people are really struck that your barn is immaculate. Ann ran our barn from the time she was nine growing up in our childhood farm, and we had an immaculate barn and she was teaching all of us, even my siblings who were older than her, how to keep the barn immaculate. I think that says something to the people who come to your place about your respect for the animals. I wonder if people ever give you feedback about, why is your barn so clean? Your barn is cleaner than my house, which is probably true for most of [00:18:00] us.

Ann Cole: I think it rubs off on people, the fact that our barn is clean and that we take care of everything that we own. I think that's a huge life lessons. If you own it. Take care of it. I don't know where I learned that from. Probably my parents, my mother, I don't know. But I just feel that the animals deserve to live in peace. And when there's neatness and tidiness and we care for our surroundings or their barn, I think that helps them live in peace.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: When we talk about mental wellness, and I think that's a fair point to give our mom she was neat and tidy but not compulsive. There was an air of security and that's what I feel is a special part of your barn. I also think the young people that I often observe when I'm

noticing them and not the horses, are actually just helping cultivate that without you saying to them, do this, do that. Of course, you have to sometime, but a lot of the times I [00:19:00] just see a 12-year-old who probably isn't cleaning their room at home, getting this pitchfork and cleaning out the stall and talking to their friend and laughing. It's a normal part of what they do. That's very impressive to me because that's a life lesson. Not only to take care of what you have, but to move through that initial, oh, I don't like to do this. Oh, why do I have to do this? This is just routine and I can do it, With a pretty good attitude.

Ann Cole: Yeah, I think that it rubs off on them. The more they do it, the better they feel. Number one, a lot of the work is very physical and a lot of the work is outdoors in the cold and the heat with the flies in the summer and they learn to deal with the elements. They learn to deal with physical hard work that give you blisters on your hands. Who gets blisters on their hands these days? Not a lot of kids. So, I love it when they complain about their little blisters and I just think they are so [00:20:00] proud of themselves and they do laugh and have fun while they're working. Like we did at home doing the dishes we were in the kitchen with. Siblings doing the dishes and sometimes we were just cracking up laughing and I'm sure my mother didn't know what we were laughing about, but I feel that way with the kids at the barn. I had no clue what they're laughing about, but I'm just happy they're laughing while they're working.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: That's an incredible gift to be able to teach them. That is just a consequence of learning how to ride a horse. I'm interested because I know you've done both, you've worked with kids who have been very competitive and had a lot of goals when it came to showing and that part of horsemanship, horse woman ship, horse kid ship. You also have worked a lot with young people and adults who do it just for the joy of doing it. I wanted you just to think a little bit out loud about the value of the competition part of horses and then the value of just what [00:21:00] I'm thinking of is more collaborative, just more day in and day out. Enjoying it.

Ann Cole: Yeah. I think that both are so important and I did love the competitive side. I always have of the goal setting and I think what I have taught these kids about the competitive side is it's not about the horse show. Even though that's our goal. We're going to a horse show. We do want to win. We want to win and we want to be good and we want to learn, but if we don't love the practice, the journey, the steps that get us to that horse show, that get our horses ready, that get us ready. If we don't enjoy that piece, then there's no point in competing. And I think that's what I teach, because you can't. Without the practice, without the drills, without the hard stuff. I love the practice and I think I have put that on them and helped them understand that piece of

competition.[00:22:00] As far as recreational riding, again, I just think that helps your mental wellness. There's a lot of physical balance when you ride horses. The word balance is huge. It's used in our horsemanship lessons, but it just transfer over to our life. Balance. I had a little boy and he told Quincy that his dog died and Quincy's a pony and he's telling him all about his dog and his name was Winston. I was in the area and I was eavesdropping and I'd heard Patrick age 10 telling Quincy all about his dog. I think that's the other piece of just coming to the barn for recreational time with the horses that it just helps all of us emotionally, mentally.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Yeah. It's a really safe place. The other word you haven't used, and I don't know if this is my word, but it's a community and I want you to talk a little bit about, [00:23:00] because you do have a lot of preteens and teens who come and they go to different schools and they're from different walks of life. But they really become friends and they form what I think of as this little community of people. They're doing it through horses, but it just occurs because of the setup.

Ann Cole: The teenagers are so amazing that come to the barn. And the preteens. When they're the new girl or the new kid, mostly we have girls, but when the new girl comes in, that could be tough, but it seems like because of the horses, everybody's different. But that horse brings us together as this community. We all have that in common, and we all know how hard it is to be a real horse woman or horseman, how long it takes. They start to figure out, we're all in this together and we are going to learn together. We're not going to judge each other because somebody's better than [00:24:00] somebody else at horseback. I think that's the real beauty of the teenagers in the barn. They accept each other for who they are. and I think that is, again, all the horses are so different and accepting of us, and then the teens are the same way and I love to watch them as they get to know each other and work together. A lot of them end up working for me after their students for a while, and it's just a neat thing for me to view from the outside.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Yeah, it's really this process where they can come and take lessons, but for those who love it, and there's always those kids who, this is their passion, like it was your passion. Then they step into roles where they have some responsibility. Correct?

Ann Cole: A lot of them end up cleaning stalls and helping with my camps and my birthday parties that we do, and they just learn how to be part of a team and a family [00:25:00] and a community all in one.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I had a conversation once with a psychiatrist and there was someone I knew that was at your barn and cleaning stalls, and he said to me, I can't imagine that cleaning stalls is good for her mental wellness. I just think that is sending a message that you are only good enough to clean stalls and I love this psychiatrist. Probably the only time I've ever disagreed with him. Can you talk a little bit about why it is good for kids to get dirty, sweep, do hard work, sweat, get blisters, clean stalls?

Ann Cole: Oh, the barn work is so relaxing. Even though it's hard, it's quiet, it puts you in thinking time where you have time to think, you're just shoveling away and it's quiet. Nobody's around or maybe one or two people. When we do the barn work, it's usually a quiet time so many people that have worked for me have told me, oh, that's when I [00:26:00] get all my thinking time done when I'm cleaning stalls. I went out to lunch with a girl that I know, and she was talking about how depressed she's been and things aren't going well in her marriage. We got onto the stall cleaning subject and she said I just love cleaning stalls. It just makes me feel so good. So, there you go.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: It's one of the few things that has a beginning, a middle, and an end. So, you feel a real sense of accomplishment.

Ann Cole: You feel a sense of accomplishment, and you also feel like you're helping someone, which is the horse.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Yeah. And you are.

Ann Cole: Back to nurturing.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Everything you're saying to me is a metaphor of human relationships except that the, it's not a human that your students and you have a relationship with, it's a horse, but every one of the skills completely carries over to us learning how to be in good relationships with each other. Where we're aware of the other, we're listening to their, what isn't being said so much, but to their bodily cues. We're [00:27:00] actually trying to be power with not power over, not power under with another person. We're trying to be slow and be understanding and to be curious of what they need in the relationship that we are in with them. It's all exactly what we want to do with people. I'm wondering, as we begin to think about ending our conversation, if there's other things you'd want to make sure you would say.

Ann Cole: I think we; the horses do have we do have to watch for their mental wellness. Especially like what I'm doing right now, with the riding lessons, lots

of riding lessons, lots of children, lots of different people touching them and getting on and off of them every day. They go through stuff; they can feel our energy and we have to respect that. And I, as the leader of this ship, I have to really take care of their emotions and watch them. And I watch my horses. I go out and I look at them while they're [00:28:00] in lessons and see if they're happy. How are they doing? Are they getting tired of this program? Do they need a different job? Do they need to retire? So, there's all these things that I feel that is my responsibility for the horse's wellness.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I'm going to veer off a little bit, you might be listening and thinking, oh, that's nice of MJ, she's doing an extended commercial for Anne Cole's Training Center. But what I really was interested in is that part of what all of us do, whether we're doing it for our children or whether we're doing it for ourself, is we pick extracurricular curricular activities to be involved in, and I wanted to demonstrate today, That we should think about whatever we choose, especially for our children in a broader sense, not just, oh, I hope my child learns to play the piano, or I hope my child learns to do Taekwondo or soccer or [00:29:00] football. I think we should go to the 40,000-foot view because the reality is most of our children won't grow up to be professional pianists or professional horse trainers, but they will grow up to be people who take the lessons that they learned far beyond that one or two skill sets that you hope they learn when they sign up for an extracurricular activity. I think what you're telling us today, Anne in such a clear way, is you're giving parents the idea that they should really look at whatever the activity is as a program that teaches their children so much more than the one skill set of horseback riding or playing soccer. And you were a mom, and I want you to talk a little bit about how parents can look for people like you who are really invested in the whole child when they sign their child up for an activity.

Ann Cole: The choices that are out there are huge. There's so many things for these kids to do today, [00:30:00] and I think one of the things that I see is parents choosing maybe too many activities for them. Slowing that whole process down is an okay thing for parents. They don't have to feel guilty that, oh, she didn't do this, or I didn't let her do this. I think the people that are running the sports, I love team sports, they are so awesome for the kids, but I think the, who is the main thing? Who are these people that are with my children, maybe even more than I am sometimes.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: They may be superb at teaching whatever the skill is that the child wants to learn, but how are they at teaching the kind of person that you want your child to be? Because a lot of these activities take a lot of time. So, they're both important to learn the skill, but to do it in a setting that

supports self-confidence, respect, appropriate relationships with power, understanding patience with the process no matter what it is. Anything [00:31:00] else you'd want to say, Ann??

Ann Cole: No, I think this has been such a pleasure and I love talking about horses, as so that's always fun for me and doing it with my sister who I respect so much of her work. I thank you very much for having me.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Thanks so much, Anne. As you know, I often say that you are the best therapist in my family, even though you're not running a social emotional wellness riding center. Throughout the podcast, I kept thinking that all these things that Anne was saying about horses, we could easily replace the word horse with person or child, and the same wisdom would. So let me share with you my Inner Challenge Insights using Anne's words.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number one.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I think that horses take some of us into their lives and heal us, and they teach us so many life lessons that we might not have learned anywhere else but from the horse.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I think that [00:32:00] people take some of us into their lives and heal us, and they teach us so many life lessons that we might not have learned anywhere else, but from that person.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number two.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Horses can be very strong-willed and they can be very gentle at the same time and how does a rider handle all that? How do I teach this strong-willed horse to trust?

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Humans can be very strong-willed and they can be very gentle at the same time and how do we handle that? How do we teach strong-willed humans to trust

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number three.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: With horses, we want to be able to read their emotions and their state of mind, and we want to teach the children how that horse is feeling by watching them and listening to them and seeing their emotions. Isn't this the same for people?

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number four.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Anne's Wisdom could be an anthem for [00:33:00] all of us who are parents. I will please you if you're fair. I will go down the path that you're trying to lead me to go, but you have to be fair and take the right amount of time for me to build that trust in our relationship. And without trust, there is no relationship.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number five.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: All the kids have to say hello to the horse and ask, how is your day? Simple wisdom. Try this with each person in your family and workplace when you reconnect with each other.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number six.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Horses teach us about being in control but not being controlling. I think that's a pretty cool life lesson Anne said. Ditto Anne Ditto.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number seven.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: The horses are huge compared to us humans, and they're strong and they don't talk our language, so we learn their language. [00:34:00] And who doesn't feel empowered when they learn another person's language? Let's try to learn each other's language. Who are you? How are you doing? Please tell me. I want to listen and learn because I care about you.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number eight.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I feel that animals deserve to live in peace. And when there's neatness and tidiness and we care for our surroundings or their barn, I think that helps them live in peace. You feel a sense of accomplishment, and you also feel like you're helping someone, which is the horse.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: I feel that people deserve to live in peace, and when there's neatness and tidiness and we care for our surroundings, our homes, our offices, I think that helps us live in peace. You feel a sense of accomplishment and you also feel like you're helping someone.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number 10.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Patience with the process. Patience with the process. Patience with the process. [00:35:00]

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Thanks Anne. I don't know if we have future lives, but if we do in my next life, if I'm not lucky enough to come back as your sister, I definitely want to be one of your horses.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: Thanks for listening, and this week take a sibling or a friend to lunch. Try to learn their language, then sit back and enjoy the ride.

M.J. Murray Vachon LCSW: