

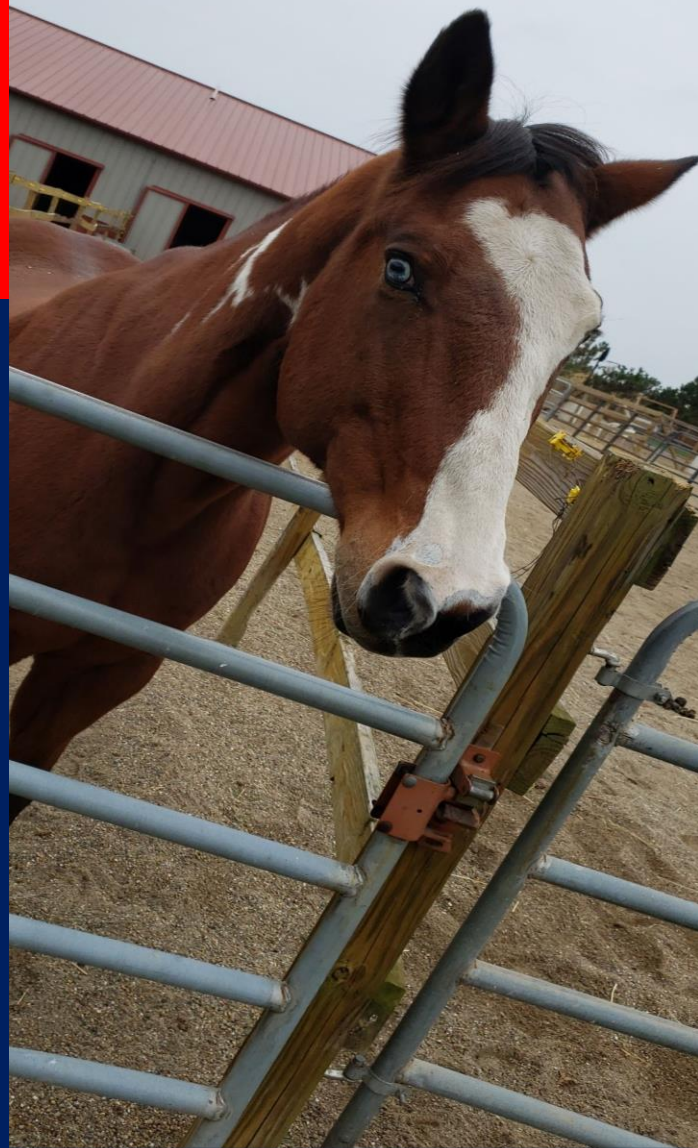
**MENDED HEARTS
NEWS LETTER
FEBRUARY 2021**

Mended Hearts Stable

*Helping People Mend Their Lives and
Relationships!*



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FEBRUARY 2021

**To everything there is a season, and a time to every
purpose under heaven...**

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Calm

Often during times of despair, stress, sorrow, loss, disagreements and imbalance we struggle to find a sense of calm. Especially with the world's current chaos that everyone has been affected by. We do have a choice and say in our calm.

CALM

- **Choose** to physically remove yourself from the situation
 - Take a walk, go to another room, step away
 - If you cannot get away then turn away, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths
- **Accept** that there is a bigger picture, look for it
 - There are rewards to staying calm, think of those things
 - There are costs to not saying calm, think of those things
- **Learn** to choose to stay calm
 - Yes, it is a choice and yes you will have to repeat that choice
 - Focus on the says, pictures, things that inspire you to be your better self
 - This takes time, do not quit – you are worth it
- **Mold** yourself into the stable, reliable person, family member, coworker that others need
 - Emotions have power, do not use that power to control the situation or others
 - You do not win anything of value when you bully others to get it
 - Become the person that you would be grateful to rely on

From Julie

Be resilient mentally! Do not let other's views, opinions, or negativity affect you! You are MORE than their words! You are a human being, you have potential to do anything you set your mind to, gifts to share with the world, and a better future ahead! At times it can be difficult but remember that nothing great is accomplished with ease! Patience is a teacher. Find your calm, cherish your calm, and help others find their calm!

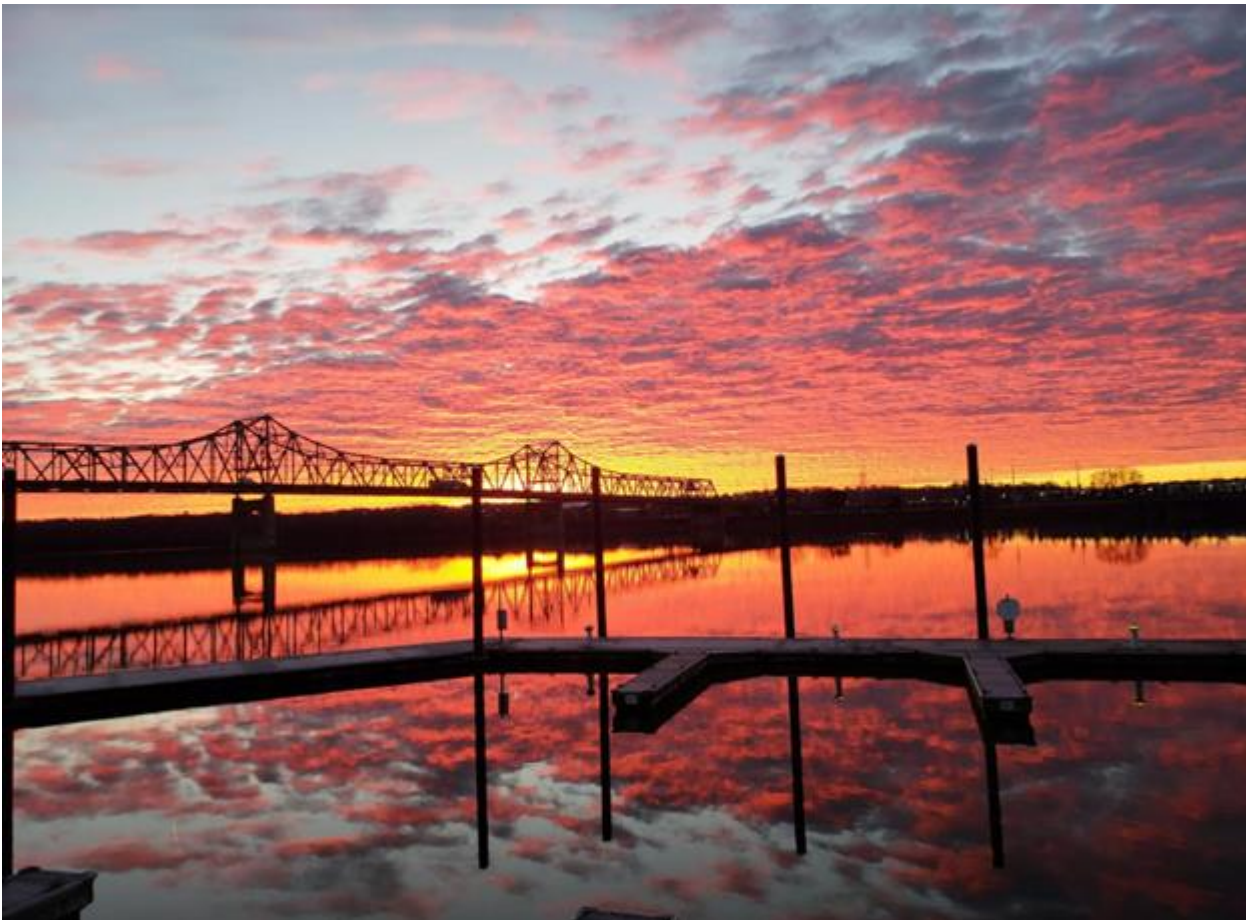


BREATHE!

Looking for the Good

A few years ago, I left the gym after a morning workout and my car would not start. I was in a hurry and I had lots of work to do at the office. Yet, all I could do at that moment was to walk to work. It was about a mile and it was the fastest way to get to work at that moment. I was really unhappy about it and did NOT want to walk that far after being tired from the gym. On my way, I took a picture of the sunrise on my cell phone. It was a sky full of red colors with one of the bridges in Peoria and the Illinois river in the picture. The colors of the sky were reflecting off of the water. That picture is hanging in my living room and I love it. It was a great moment in a miserable morning. Looking back now a few years later I do not remember what I worked on that morning. I do remember the beauty that surprised me on my walk to work, and I got a picture of it! Look for the good in life, in others, and in yourself. It is there and you can find it. Once you find it, remember it because that is what is worth remembering.

-Frank Disney



Perspective Gains

Dianna Raab wrote about gaining perspective during trying times, and our need to cope. How they are fostered from habitual experiences as we grow from being a child then diving into adult hood full force. We can always learn a new way to cope. She revealed in her article that after suffering a horrible loss in her family she started journaling. At the top of each page was an inspirational quote that gave her something to look forward to. She states that we need to take control of our mind, foster kindness, regard all experiences as mere experiences, be creative, and laugh more in our lives. Doing these can allow us to be more open to trying to understand or gain perspective as well as cope better with the more troubling issues in our lives that we encounter during struggles.



1. *Take control of your mind.*

“The energy of the mind is the essence of life.” —Aristotle

By maintaining a sense of emotional well-being and balance, we have the power to be in charge of our thoughts. Thinking about the here and now is very important for remaining in the moment. When we’re fearful, we’re living too much in the future or focusing too much on the past. Engaging in proper breathing techniques can help us with our mindfulness practice.

In his book, [Instant Calm](#), Paul Wilson says, “By being able to control your breathing, by harnessing this incredibly powerful life force, you can control the way you feel. You can find calm in moments of stress. you can easily cope with almost any pressure.” Try doing the 4/7/8 breathing technique, which involves breathing in for a count of 4, holding your breath for a count of 7, and exhaling for a count of 8. It really works. This technique brings great energy to the mind, body, and soul. When controlling our thoughts, we’re self-aware while being in the present moment.



2. Foster kindness.

“Great acts are made up of small deeds.” —Lao Tzu

Studies have shown that acts of kindness can be a path to better psychological health and can also strengthen the immune system. Being kind also takes the focus off our own immediate problems.

Humans are social beings who need to feel a sense of interconnectedness. During these challenging times, acts of kindness can mean anything from sending an email to someone who has been isolated and lonely to donating to, or volunteering at local food banks. When we are depressed or feeling nervous, one of the best things we can do is reach out to someone in need.



3. Regard all experiences as... mere experiences.

"It is important to expect nothing, to take every experience, including the negatives ones, as merely steps on the path, and to proceed." —Ram Dass

While many of us tend to look at experiences as good or bad, Buddhists view them as mere experiences without categorizing them. To some, this is a healthy way of being. What we often perceive to be negative experiences can actually be our best teachers.

Think about what the quarantine has taught you. Did it make you realize what is most important in your life? Did it help you understand what you can be grateful for? For many people, this alone time has taught them to look inward, something they might not have had a chance to do before. This Buddhist prayer speaks to the importance of equalizing all experiences: "May all experiences serve to awaken heart and mind, especially those circumstances I deem challenging, and may my life be of benefit to all beings."

So many of us run from negative situations to avoid the pain and discomfort associated with them. Try to allow space for experiences that are positive, negative, joyous, and/or painful. Sit with the discomfort, and pray, or do whatever you need to do to bring about peace of mind.

As Viktor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor who endured many traumatic life experiences, said, "Everything can be taken from a man, but one thing: the last of human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." It's not so much about the experience you had, but rather, how you reacted to it and how it affected the person you became.



4. Be creative.

“Great art is the outward expression of an inner life in the artist, and this inner life will result in his personal vision of the world.” —Edward Hopper

Being creative gives you an opportunity for self-expression. It is also an effective anxiety reducer. Perhaps you did not have time before the pandemic to do something creative, but maybe you’d always pondered engaging in some sort of artistic endeavor—painting, knitting, music, or writing, for example. This might be a good time to think about what really resonates with you.

This will not only give you a sense of purpose and improve your attitude, but it will also bring about a sense of accomplishment and pride. In addition, you may have the opportunity to connect with others who enjoy the same type of activity.



5. Laugh.

“Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face.” —Victor Hugo

You’ve no doubt heard the saying “Laughter is the best medicine.” Laughter is a feel-good activity, and although sometimes it’s difficult to laugh because life can be so difficult, there is always something you can find humor in. Turn on the TV or search the internet for comedy outlets. If you like reading, check out some satirical novels or books by humorists.

Laughter is a great stress reliever. According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), it can stimulate your organs, as it improves the intake of oxygen and enhances your heart, lungs, and muscles while at the same time increases the endorphins released by your brain. It can also enhance your immune system by releasing neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially serious diseases. Humor helps us deal with difficult situations and improves our mood. So have a laugh today!

Maybe this is a good time to gain perspective by thinking of yourself up in Space looking down on Earth. What’s happening here is serious, but in the context of what’s occurring in the universe, it can all be perceived as relatively insignificant. Taking this bird’s-eye view can help us with day-to-day coping strategies.

Please Adopt a Therapy Horse at Mended Hearts Stable!

To work out the way to adopt that is most convenient for you, call us at (309) 383-4323 weekdays 8:30 am - 5:30 pm.

Mended Hearts is a non-profit counseling agency that uses horses in therapy for children and adults. The therapy is provided by a credentialed mental health professional who uses the horse to facilitate the therapeutic process.

Each of our therapy horses costs \$500 a month to feed, shelter, and care for. That comes out to \$6,000 a year for each of our 6 therapy horses. Any amount you decide to give to adopt part of a horse would be awesome! We need partners who will help us cover the cost of this care so that we can continue to provide this type of unique and valuable therapy in our area.

What you give towards adopting a horse goes to pay for:

Grain, hay, bedding, vet bills, water, salt and other miscellaneous supplies, heating for the stables and arena, stable help, medicine, and medical supplies.

Any amount that you give to help support the cost of our horses is greatly appreciated and adds up with others towards adopting all of our horses.

Come visit the horse that you have adopted by scheduling a visit. We would be happy to show you around and help you get to know the horse that you are helping us to care for!



Rocky



Boone



Apache



Jesse James



Brat

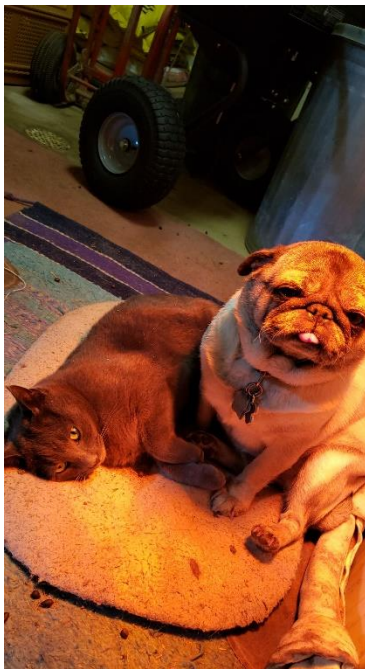


Sally



Daffy's Corner: Thoughts from Underfoot

Hello lucky readers! My name is Daffy (aka Daffer, Daffer Dill, Daffer Dilly-Bobber) and I am the pug here at Mended Hearts Stable! I have 2 favorite spots to sit and/or sleep! Spot 1 is on the wicker chair that has a super comfy pink pad! Occasionally I have one of the cats up here with me, or I am happy to just sit and observe Julie and the other staff members here work. I notice when I sit here a lot can be happening with all the people moving around, or sometimes I may notice my sisters running back and forth when they play fetch. They tend to have a tad more energy than myself. This spot helps me keep calm even when there is a lot of noise or movement going around. Spot 2 is used mostly used for sleeping next to my sisters under the heat lamps or when my sisters aren't around sometimes one of the cats will come and ask to take a nap with me.



When I am sleeping under the heat lamps with one of the cats near it is just as calming over here for me when there is a lot going on! It's even nice to have company occasionally in a calmful spot. I feel as if Boujie can relate to me in this photo. I notice that Julie uses the words calm and peaceful frequently while she's working. She brings a lot of smiles to this place inspiring that peace and calm that people sometimes search for. Makes me happy knowing that I can share my calm with the cats sometimes when we share a spot cause when you think about it we are both there for the same reason. I am not only happy to share my calm with the cats, or other animals here. I love when

people come here to experience a sense of peace and calm. Come down and I am more than happy to share my calm with you!!!!

