EPONAQUEST BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

Signs of Unhealthy Boundaries in and out of the Roundpen

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- Working too close to the horse; not using the tools to maintain a safe and respectful distance,
- Failing to maintain appropriate and safe space, i.e., person between the horse and fence, getting too close to the hind legs of the horse,
- Saying 'No' verbally yet displaying incongruent body language and emotion,
- Not asking for help when you really want or need it,
- Setting a rigid, inflexible boundary (not allowing for flexibility by reading the signals sent by the horse),
- Pushing emotion or attention on a horse who is not inviting it (through touch or attention),
- 'Falling in love' with a horse without knowing him/her or who is first inquisitive about you,
- Allowing a horse with questionable intentions to enter your space,
- Not setting a boundary because of a fear that the horse won't like you,
- Deliberately overriding your body's signals in order to be nice to the horse,
- Not noticing when the horse invades your boundaries or personal space,
- Accepting touch that you don't want or that doesn't feel safe,
- Using the horse for your own reassurance or emotional needs,
- Allowing the horse to use you for his/her own needs,
- Letting others define your reality with their values, needs and opinions,
- Believing the horse or another person knows or can anticipate your needs,
- Falling apart in the hope (conscious or unconscious) that someone will take care of you -- being the 'child' or 'victim',
- Ignoring or failing to notice the horse's signals for his/her boundaries.

As you go about your daily life, consider how the points raised might be relevant in your interactions with the people in your life.