

Ask the Horse!

Themes: choices, control, purpose, habits, influences

Inspired by: Buddhist parable

Opening Words

Are you ready for a story?

From now on keep your eyes looking down.

Let's turn this upside down.

Now we have time to breathe.

In a circle of trust we listen and explore feelings.

There's space to wonder and play, in love.

Your story, my story, our story. Let's be curious about this story.



Words

Actions (storyteller's perspective)

There are two people who will fit onto the horse - the walking person is best to use as you can jam them onto the horse and they won't fall off. But you can also use the person with their legs outstretched and arms in the air. You can choose to set the person up on the horse before you start the story or be ready to do this quickly when the horse comes into the story. Create a meandering path from 3 o'clock to 9 o'clock and then a curved path from one third of the way along to about 12 o'clock.

There was once a person who was wandering along.

Place a person at the end of the path and move them slowly along to where the paths meet. Stop and look around, then take them up the path towards 12 o'clock. Before the end pause, turn them around and bring them back to the first path. Have them continue until they are just past half way along. Move them very slowly so that there is a contrast with the galloping horse.

Then suddenly a horse came galloping past with a person hanging on tightly.

Start the horse and rider at about 7 o'clock. You want to jump them up and down to appear like they are going very fast, but you want to make time for the conversation.

As the horse approaches the person, jump the person backwards to the previous disc - out of the way.

The person jumped out of the way just in time and asked "Where are you going?"

Continue galloping the horse towards 12 o'clock. Then turn the person as if looking at the horse. Keep the horse galloping during the conversation.

"I don't know. Ask the horse!" came the reply.

Leave the horse and rider on a disc of the path at the edge of the cloth.

Please see our training resources or come on an OutoftheBox course to develop in the art of holding a safe and brave space for contemplation, reflection and dialogue.

Wondering

You are now engaging with the group so look up, and say: Let's be curious about how we feel.

I wonder what part of this story you like?

I wonder what part you don't like?

I wonder what the story reminds you of?

Community Play .

Facilitate play with the materials to further explore feelings and to focus on an issue or idea, e.g.

How are you feeling? or What does your day look like? or What does your community look like?

What horse are you riding?

Where is the horse going?

Can you get off the horse?

Do you know where you are going?

Where are you going?

What is deciding your direction of travel?

Can you choose where you are going?

You may invite people to place themselves in the picture using one of the wooden figures.

Closing Words

Before the story is put away, ask: Is there anything else that needs to be said or done?

Hold out your hands as you say: For all that's been said and for all that's not been said - thank you.

Invite participants to remove the objects they put down, then put the other objects away in reverse order.

Personal Response

Time to play and contemplate, e.g. in movement, art & craft, writing, playing with the story materials.

Celebration

Share food and drink to allow people to connect socially and prepare to leave the session.