

**Illuminating Veterinary Women's Retreat**  
**The POWER of Confidence; #JustBE**  
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**Learning Objectives**

1. Design awesomeness every day by learning to live more in the moment
2. Outline ways to boost confidence by staying focused on strengths
3. Detail how conscious choices positively impact life and career
4. Putting together presence, confidence, and consciousness to learn how to become a more centered and powerful leader

**Overview**

While there are many great ways to learn leadership, one of the best ways is to experience it. Nothing compares to leading a 1200 pound prey animal as a predator. We are required to learn communication, present moment awareness, trust, and confidence. A horse is an incredible partner in the coaching process as they are not only very intuitive creatures having evolved alongside humans for many years, but they also serve to reflect our ways of being and how they work or don't. In this experiential process, we believe that how you do one thing is how you might do anything. Therefore, participating in groundwork exercises with horses can quickly illuminate what is and isn't working in our approaching to leadership.



Many veterinarians and the industry at large never received specific leadership training in vet school or elsewhere and yet are often asked to lead practices, CE events, other staff, and especially client service. Therefore, the understanding of what makes leadership more authentic, heart-centered, in-the-moment is critical and priceless. Horses won't be led unless we are clear with them and we begin to embody confidence because otherwise prey animals don't easily trust predators.

First, we will work on Learning Objective #1 to become more present to the moment. This is where horses live and also where we can live if we weren't always worried about the future or feeling bad about a past. There is a lot of power in the present moment and that is where we can bring our focus when we learn specific tools. For instance, we will work with the practice of short meditation, breathing exercises, and feeling into our bodies and feet. Participants will be asked to stay aware of what happens when they are in the moment versus in their heads. They will learn to become a neutral observer of the herd of horses, each other, and most importantly themselves and their own thoughts. By creating more willingness to be in the present moment through this simple yet profound exercises, they will begin to see how awesome life can be and how more joy can happen when they delight in small things and ways of being versus stress about them.

For Learning Objective #2, we will practice asking and inviting a horse to move without tack/equipment and also with only a halter. Participants will learn where they lose their confidence and how long that might take and where and how they can access more confidence. They will learn what it takes to become centered in their feet, body, and how to set intentions and visualize an outcome they want. They will learn about how joy is the attractive force with horses and the world to gain partnership. Each participant will have their own experience with an equine from the herd and learn specifically about leadership from both my coaching questions and the horses' feedback. They will also each journal on their innate strengths that they are aware of and ones they want to cultivate more of through a process similar to that of StrengthsFinders and we will talk about a solution-focus to life and leadership. I will share resources (i.e. the book "The Confidence Code") and also stories of what overcoming fear and stepping into authentic confidence can look like for them as well. Everyone will learn the way to grow confidence is to acknowledge themselves more for facing fear, embracing the unknown, taking healthy risks, and stepping more into themselves and their goals/dreams for work and life.

With Learning Objective #3, we will focus a little bit more on self-leadership and how self-care and compassion toward self and other is all about conscious choices and a way of being. Releasing perfectionism and embracing acceptance of themselves and others is one of the goals. I will share how everything is a choice and how the horses will always choose what feels good, not what they should do or have to do. We will do some gentle brushing of the horses so they can also come more into the moment, regulate their own nervous systems, and slow down so they can hear their own inner voice that can help guide them to best choices (i.e. a salad and protein smooth after work instead of three glasses of alcohol). We'll discuss how present moment awareness and a commitment to our inner why can help us to create more conscious choices.

Finally, we'll tie together all that we learned with Learning Objective #4 so each person can share with the group some of their action items they plan to bring back to the home life and work life. They will put together a self-care list and joy list for themselves so they can bring more balance and happiness in their life. They will share commitments with the group so we can all support the new intentions they are inspired to create from working with me and the horses.