

# A Memoir of Undiagnosed PTSD and the Healing Power of the Horse-Human Relationship

In the tapestry of life, trauma can leave invisible scars that linger long after the initial wounds have healed. For many, these scars manifest as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a debilitating condition that can disrupt every aspect of daily living. For years, I lived with undiagnosed PTSD, its insidious grip holding me captive in a cycle of fear, anxiety, and isolation. It wasn't until I forged an unlikely bond with a magnificent horse named Spirit that I began to unravel the tangled threads of my past and embark on a transformative journey of healing.

## Unraveling the Trauma: A Journey of Self-Discovery

Growing up in a tumultuous household, I witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of violence and emotional abuse. As a child, I learned to suppress my feelings and numb myself to the pain, believing that vulnerability was a weakness that could be exploited. As the years passed, the trauma I had endured festered within me, manifesting as a constant state of hypervigilance, nightmares, and emotional flashbacks. I felt like a ticking time bomb, always on the verge of being triggered by the slightest provocation.



## Follow Me, Friend: A Memoir of Undiagnosed PTSD, and the Healing Power of the Horse-Human Relationship

Relationship by Cheryl L. Eriksen

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Lending : Enabled



Despite the turmoil within, I yearned for connection and a sense of belonging. I sought solace in various relationships, but my damaged self-esteem and trust issues sabotaged my attempts at intimacy. I felt like an outsider, unable to fully engage with the world around me. It was as if I were trapped in a prison of my own making, my past holding me hostage.

### **The Encounter: A Horse Named Spirit**

Fate intervened in the form of a remarkable horse named Spirit. Through a chance encounter at a local riding stable, I was drawn to his gentle eyes and quiet demeanor. As I tentatively approached him, I felt an inexplicable connection, as if he understood the turmoil that raged within me. With each subsequent visit, our bond grew stronger. Spirit became my confidant, a silent witness to my fears and struggles.

In the presence of this majestic creature, I began to feel safe and accepted. I could share my deepest secrets with him, knowing that he would never judge or betray my trust. Through our daily interactions, I started to challenge the negative beliefs that had held me captive for so long. Spirit taught me the importance of patience, forgiveness, and self-compassion.

### **The Healing Power of the Horse-Human Relationship**

Equine-assisted therapy, also known as hippotherapy, is a form of therapy that utilizes the unique connection between horses and humans to promote healing and personal growth. Horses are highly intuitive animals that can mirror our emotions, providing valuable insights into our inner workings. Through their gentle presence and non-judgmental nature, horses create a safe space where we can explore our vulnerabilities and begin to heal.

In my work with Spirit, I experienced firsthand the transformative power of the horse-human relationship. As I learned to communicate with Spirit through body language and subtle cues, I developed a deeper understanding of my own emotions and needs. Through our shared experiences, I discovered a wellspring of resilience within myself that I never knew existed.

### **Lessons from the Horse: Embracing Courage, Vulnerability, and Growth**

Spirit taught me the importance of facing my fears head-on. When I hesitated during our riding sessions, he would gently nudge me to persevere. His unwavering presence gave me the courage to confront my past and to break through the barriers that had held me back for so long.

He also taught me the value of vulnerability. In the presence of such a powerful and majestic creature, I learned to shed my emotional armor and to embrace my true self. Through our shared experiences, I discovered a strength that I never knew I possessed.

Most importantly, Spirit taught me the importance of growth and transformation. He reminded me that healing is a journey, not a destination. There would be setbacks along the way, but he never gave up on me. His

unwavering support empowered me to persevere, to learn from my mistakes, and to emerge from my trauma as a stronger, more resilient individual.

My memoir is a testament to the transformative power of the horse-human relationship. Through my journey with Spirit, I have gained a deeper understanding of myself, my trauma, and my capacity for healing. I have emerged from the darkness of PTSD into a life filled with purpose, meaning, and joy. While the scars of my past may never fully disappear, they no longer define me. With Spirit as my constant companion, I have found a path to healing and a renewed sense of hope for the future.

If you are struggling with the effects of trauma, I urge you to consider seeking help. You are not alone. There are resources available to support you on your journey of healing. Whether it's through equine-assisted therapy, traditional talk therapy, or other forms of support, know that there is hope. You can reclaim your life from the clutches of trauma and rediscover the joy and peace that you deserve.



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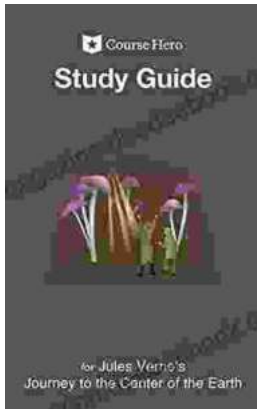
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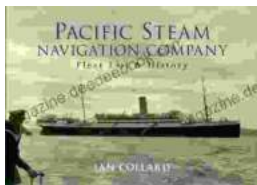
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