

TAIL END

Dare to Live is a life skills programme for those suffering the effects of trauma, depression or addiction. Here **Hugh Forsyth explains how working with Ko Li, facilitated by Sun Tui, helped him regain confidence and fulfillment**

This was like winning the lottery!

My name is Hugh Forsyth. I served in the Royal Engineers for 12 years with the high risk bomb disposal teams in Northern Ireland and Bosnia. It was my job to find improvised explosive devices. As a result of what I experienced, I developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which left me scared, depressed and virtually housebound.

In January 2012 I received a call from the charity Dare to Live. This is a programme run by the International Federation of Equine Assisted Learning (IFEAL). They asked if I would like to spend time with the horses at their base in Hartfield, Sussex. It was there I met Sun Tui and the team on her unique workshop which made me feel like one of the family. I worked through two

HOPE THROUGH HORSEMANSHIP



Hugh has found reason to smile again with Ko Li

days of equine assisted therapy which activated an almost instant neurological switch within me.

You see, all those years of being on high alert had affected my biological and neurological systems. This allowed me to cope and survive at the time but I no longer needed those skills; in fact they were ruining my life. One of the six horses at the farm, Ko Li, chose me, and I do mean chose me. She taught me the way to become myself again. In a very short time and with the guidance of Sun Tui, the horses gave back the calm stillness that I had sought for years.

Throughout 2012 instructor Jenny Eichner taught me about horses from head to hoof, the natural approach to

horse care and natural horsemanship. Some beautiful interactions began to happen and soon I was enjoying the way of the herd. For me this was like winning the lottery.

The Dare To Live programme is now a huge part of my life and I am slowly becoming more confident and fulfilled. I am mentoring other PTSD sufferers and helping them on their way to recovery. I am also joining the equine facilitator training programme in June with IFEAL. This is all down to the horses at Dare to Live and of course the humans there too.

www.IFEAL.me