



## What does leadership feel like?

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There are five primary ways we experience the world, we can see, feel, hear, smell and taste. At any moment we are receiving and processing analogue input from all of our senses, even if we are not consciously aware of it. What we actually perceive are representations or models of what each of our sensory organs transmits to us; when we build these models we attach the digital systems of language and other social constraints to our experiences.

Feeling is the kinaesthetic system and can include many different somatic sensations. However, in our language we have identified other kinds of feelings that we call emotions; when a person says “I was hurt” they may be talking about pressure or pain on their skin or they could be talking about some “internal state” called an emotion. The two meanings are actually very similar; the combination of several associated somatic sensations and other thought processes could be labelled as emotional “hurt”. It can be useful to consider those feelings we call emotions to actually be derived feelings.

So, what does the derived feeling of leadership feel like and how can you experience it? This is where Equine Assisted Learning can help!

Leadership should be based on the approach that asks, “who are you and why should I follow?” Not the leadership of positional power.

Performing a task such as leading a horse around an arena, but without any ropes or tack of any kind can be a very rewarding and revealing experience. It



allows you to strip away everything that isn't associated with actual leadership and allows you to focus your mind, energy and beliefs on your connection and relationship with the horse. The horse will act as a mirror: your thoughts will be translated into actions that the horse will translate into an outcome, allowing you to test the relationship and gain valuable insights. For example if you hesitate at a key moment, so will the horse; however this may be the first time you have actually realised your behaviour and experienced the associated emotion. That feeling can then act as a catalyst to allow you to transform your leadership style and understanding.

Every individual is unique. Learning is a chaotic, non-linear process. Telling someone something does not mean they learn it; learning is making sense of your experiences and fitting them in to your model of the world. Learning involves confusion; it involves being lost and it can seem to be a very lonely place. Leadership development should always support the individual as they seek to uncover the unique contribution they can make within an organisation or team.

Inspired Equine Assisted Learning CIC offers a range of bespoke Corporate Training Programs to businesses that wish to explore, develop and improve leadership, communication, personal growth, corporate culture and teamwork within their organisations. See [www.inspired-eal.co.uk](http://www.inspired-eal.co.uk) for more details.