

BUILDING WELLNESS

THROUGH COMMUNITY | FREE E-BOOK GUIDE



By Well Equestrians

BUILDING WELLNESS THROUGH COMMUNITY

WHY CONNECTION MATTERS FOR YOU
AND YOUR HORSE

What this guide covers

This guide shares the core concepts from our equine wellness talk, plus the practical step-by-step process we use to run successful monthly equestrian community meetups. Whether you're looking to deepen your understanding of how community supports you and your horse, or you're ready to start your own equestrian group, you'll find actionable insights here.



What will we cover?



**PART 1: THE SCIENCE AND
SOUL OF COMMUNITY**



**PART 2: HOW TO START YOUR OWN
EQUESTRIAN COMMUNITY GROUP**

Part 1: The science & soul of community

Connection is everything

The Harvard Study of Adult Development is the longest study of the same people ever conducted. Starting in 1938, researchers followed people from adolescence through old age, tracking their lives, relationships, and health outcomes.

After decades of research, the findings were clear: **The happiest and healthiest people were those with good, warm connections to others.**

What Good Relationships Do For You

People with strong connections experience:

- Better physical health and stronger bodies
- Sharper brains as they age
- Lower rates of depression and anxiety
- Better outcomes with disease management (less diabetes, heart disease)
- Faster recovery when illness does occur

But there's something even more crucial for us as equestrians:

Good relationships are stress regulators.

When you have support, when you have community, you feel calmer and more grounded.

You feel like you have resources and people to turn to. And your horse feels that. Horses are incredible at reading human emotional states.

The stress you carry, the confidence you have because you're not alone, the peace that comes from knowing you have people to call on, your horse absorbs all of it. We regulate each other.

When you feel better, your horse feels better.

When you have people to turn to, you show up differently. You make better decisions. You have better resources to care for your horse.

Community building isn't just good for you, it's part of horse care. It's wellness for both of you.

How Community Saved Cowboy's Life

Cowboy is my Quarter Horse. He came into our family 14 years ago, and when I moved from Texas to Pennsylvania, he came with me. A year into our time together, I had finally let go of fear I'd been carrying my whole life. Things felt good.

Then one night around 11 pm, my mom came to my room with urgent news: something was wrong with Cowboy. He wasn't breathing well. His lips were blue. His skin was cold. Another boarder at the barn had already offered to drive him to the emergency vet in the middle of the night, for a horse that wasn't even theirs.

When I pulled up to that vet clinic and saw them there with my horse, I nearly cried. I was so grateful They cared enough to show up.

But the story doesn't end there.

That same night, a neighbor behind the field heard a strange noise and called our barn manager. When the person on-site went to check the back field, they found Cowboy's two best herd mates standing at the gate. The mares led this person, who didn't know a horse from a hand grenade, all the way to where Cowboy was at the back of the field.

My relationships and the people I had around me helped save his life that night. But so did his relationships, his herd, the mares who knew him.

How Community Diagnosed George's Illness

My mom and I started Well Equestrians because we wanted **more community**. We had a nice group at our barn, but we wanted to meet more horse people in the area. So we started hosting monthly events with educational speakers.

Through those events, we met Dr. Sarah Young and Lisa Luongo. These two women became absolutely crucial in my relationship with George.

I filmed a professional trainer riding George one day and sent the video to Sarah and Lisa, excited about how well he looked. They watched it and immediately said: 'George looks like he has EPM!' EPM is a neurological disease. They were right.

Here's what matters: I would not have diagnosed that on my own. I would have kept riding him, kept working with him, and eventually something would have happened that hurt him before I realized something was wrong.

Because I had built a wonderful, knowledgeable community around myself, people who knew horses, who cared, who were generous with their time and expertise, George got diagnosed early. We got him treatment. We avoided a tragedy.

Community isn't just nice to have. It saved my horse's life and made me a better horse owner.

What about you?

Do you have someone you can call in the middle of the night when you need to take your horse to the vet?

Do you have someone you can call when something is wrong with your horse and you need a second opinion?

Do you have someone to call when you've had a bad day and just want to go on a trail ride with someone who gets it?

If the answer is no, the good news is that building community is possible right now. If the answer is yes, imagine what having even more people in your circle could do.



Part 2:

How to Start Your Own Equestrian Community Group

Why There's a Gap, And Why You Should Fill It

In most areas, there are no consistent monthly community-building events for equestrians. There might be competitions, clinics, or one-off workshops, but nothing that brings people together regularly just to connect, learn, and build friendships.

This gap is huge. Horse people are isolated. They're scattered across different barns, different disciplines, different experience levels. Many don't know their neighbors who also ride. Many have never met another horse person who gets their struggles, their passion, or their goals.

Starting a monthly group is the antidote to that isolation. And it's more doable than you think.

Who Comes to These Meetups?

Our audience is **anyone who wants to build community within the equestrian world.**

This includes:

- Complete beginners
- Experienced horse owners
- People in between (the majority)
- People of all disciplines (Western, English, mounted archery, trail riding, etc.)
- People from different regions nearby

Step 1: Find an Affordable, Accessible Venue

Your venue is the foundation of everything.

Here's what to look for:

- Affordable: Ideally \$75–150 per event (we spend about \$200 total on venue and snacks)
- Accessible: Located somewhere central that people from different regions can easily reach
- Spacious enough: Room for 30–50 people to stand, mingle, and sit during a presentation
- Has parking: Essential
- Flexible: Owner/manager is willing to work with you on timing

Where to look:

- Community centers or town halls
- Meeting rooms at libraries or local businesses
- Barn common areas or tack shops
- Brewery or restaurant backrooms
- Private farm common spaces from people in the community

Step 2: Keep Your Costs Low (and Have Your Community Help Cover Them)

Our model is donation-based. Here's our cost breakdown:

- Venue rental: \$150–200
- Snacks & drinks: \$50–100 (optional, but builds community)
- Total per event: About \$200

We ask for donations at the end of the event. People typically cover the cost. Anything left over goes

to a local equestrian nonprofit.

This model works because:

- People feel like they're giving to something meaningful (which they are)
- No one feels locked into a membership or fee
- The group stays lean and sustainable
- You're actively supporting the equestrian community

The two-hour event format

- 6–6:20 Mingling
- 6:20–6:25 Gather everyone and introduce the event
- 6:25–7:25 Speaker Presentation
- 7:25–7:35. Around the Ring
- 7:35–8:00 Raffle and Mingling

What Makes Around the Ring Special

Around the Ring is where the real community building happens. People introduce themselves and either offer something or ask for something.

Examples of what people share:

- I have a horse for lease
- I'm looking for boarding options
- I do equine massage
- I'm looking for an experienced trainer
- I want to start a trail riding group
- I want riding buddies
- I know about EPM or I'm looking for advice on feeding

This is where connections happen. People exchange phone numbers. They set up trail rides. They find resources. They realize the person sitting next to them has exactly what they needed.



Step 5: Promote the Event (Before and After)

Promotion is simple and mostly online:

- Facebook: Post in local groups, your own page
- Instagram/TikTok: Behind-the-scenes content from past events
- Word of mouth: Your attendees are your best promoters
- 2-3 weeks before: Post event details and speaker info
- 1 week before: Reminder post
- After: Thank people and tease the next speaker/date

What You'll Discover By Running This

By month three or four, you'll have a group of regular attendees. You'll know their horses' names.

You'll see friendships form. You'll get messages from people who met at your event and rode together the next weekend.

You'll become the person in your region who brings horse people together. That's powerful.



Building Your Community Starts Now

Connection is everything

The research is clear: community changes everything. It makes us healthier. It makes us braver. It makes us better horse owners and better people.

The question isn't whether you should build community. **The question is: when is your first event?**

Join our community online.

Want to stay connected with Well Equestrians?

Follow us on social media and join our online community.



www.wellequestrians.com