

“I’m OK, You’re OK”

by Sue Clark

Have you ever experienced a time in your life when everything came into place as though it were a beautiful gift which transcended from heaven? It was like that for me the day I rode a horse named, “OK” in the Tom Poulin clinic at Pine Knoll Farm.

I came to Pine Knoll after looking for an instructor along with a safe and trustworthy school horse who could help me achieve my strong desire to simply grow in my riding ability. Several years prior to finding Pine Knoll I had been kicked by a brood mare while caring for her. I was in the wrong place at the wrong time when she sprang to her feet and kicked me resulting in a ruptured spleen. It takes time to heal – my body needed time to heal both physically and emotionally from being hurt again. It is easy to cave into fear and I had certainly done so after my accident with that mare, especially when combined with other past traumatic events. I knew it would be a long journey ahead after the injury. My body soon began to heal physically, but over time I realized that the emotional scars remained. I am a strong believer that our body can heal itself given time and positive tools. I sought out massage therapy, chiropractic care and a Feldenkrais practitioner. I also knew instinctively that I needed to ride.

Finding Pine Knoll and meeting Cathy Fox, the riding instructor there was the special piece that enabled further healing for my body and soul. On my first lesson I was introduced to the special horse named, “OK”. OK had been rescued from a bad situation and came to Pine Knoll very angry and aggressive. Just as OK had to develop trust with humans I was developing trust with horses and regaining the confidence that I had lost. After several lessons riding OK and under the instruction of Cathy I had been led to a point of experiencing many breakthroughs. After each lesson, the tension in my body decreased and I knew I was growing in just “letting go”. The ultimate breakthrough came with my ride at the Tom Poulin clinic.

Tom’s gentle and kind voice coached me every step of the way. During that lesson I had the awareness that I could truly sit up and sit back allowing the horse to carry me and enjoy the ride. I was no longer tipping over, caving into fear. I believe it was in that lesson that both OK and I learned that we could trust one another. I believe it was no coincidence that our paths crossed. I can smile now when I ride. The communication between the two of us is as though we are saying, “I’m OK and You’re OK”.