

YODER SAYS...

Maybe you know my story. I was part of a driving pair pulling farm equipment in Ohio. Then my partner died and I landed in a sale barn. Hold Your Horses found me and gave me a new start in Minnesota as a therapy pony. This began a year full of transitions.

They gave me new food to eat, a stall for the night, and exposure to new things like the indoor arena, a mounting ramp, wheelchairs, and a team of people that sometimes surround me when I move. People started working with me on the ground, on my back, in the arena, and out on the trail. I just want to mention that there are a lot of wild turkeys here in Minnesota. Big, dull birds that fall out of trees and randomly rustle and bump in the corn fields. Exciting stuff. Anyway, I adjusted to my new diet and exercise routine (please see my before and after photos) and I learned to accommodate all kinds of noises and sensations from the team and my clients. Most importantly, I found my place in a new herd of horses. And you think you had a big year?

I didn't fight any of it. I am pretty stoic so I guess it would be understandable for my people to take all of this transition for granted. They did for a little while. "He's so cool," they said. "What an easy-going guy," they said. Then they saw the spot in my stall where I was gnawing the wood boards. This got their attention. They increased my exercise and hung some toys for me to play with in my stall. The nights can get long and I am so happy when the first bit of daylight peeks into the barn along with a wonderful person who leads me outdoors. I am feeling better now, and I like that they are paying attention.

Routine is important for me. When my five "T's" are under control (teeth, training, turnout, temperament, and toes) I can flow easily with my work here which can be, well, unpredictable at times. That established routine is my foundation for serving our clients. They are all facing their own life transitions and many without the stability of a routine. One small person is recovering from a hip surgery. Another is learning to talk. Yet another is learning to solve problems without fighting. I am happy to be rooted in my routine and good care so I can be present for my people.

We are always growing and changing here at the farm, but we value the importance of a routine like a tree values its roots. That way, when the winds of change come, we can move a bit but still provide shelter for people in need. I am grateful for my new life...and can I just say how amazing it is to receive fresh produce from a child instead of having to drag it in a cart behind me in a field?

Thanks for reading and I wish you a good transition into the next season.

~Cheers, Yoder



YODER

THE THERAPY PONY, FEATURED COLUMNIST

You can email me through
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(Please write Yoder Says in the subject line)

BEFORE



AFTER

