

MFTs are a No-Brainer for Recovery

by Bonnie Martin

Less than a year after a delicate twenty-two hour, two-part surgery for a benign brain tumor on her brain stem, Bonnie Martin went from barely being able to move even with the aid of a walker to being back with her fox trotters practicing Natural Horsemanship and coaching others.

“Horses have been very important in my life,” Martin states, “and a horse related incident even led to the diagnosis of my brain tumor. A young horse turned suddenly and I fell off, something that wouldn’t have happened to me in the past”. Casual mention of the incident at a routine doctor visit started the ball rolling for medical referrals, tests, and the diagnosis of a tumor that might have been growing slowly for years. The tumor was large and in a touchy spot, so Martin was referred to MD Anderson Cancer Hospital in Houston, TX, where they have done much more of that type of surgery.

“When I awoke after the second day of surgery, I was really distressed to find how disabled I was. I couldn’t see well, couldn’t talk, swallow, talk or move, and the left side of my face was paralyzed. The doctors were calling the surgery a success, but I didn’t think of it that way at that point!” Lying in the hospital bed able to do nothing, time really dragged. It was only because of support offered by Bonnie’s husband Gregg, her mother, and the innumerable friends and church families from back in Barnesville and other places, who were offering prayers and good cheer that she kept going and came out of her out of her pity party.

During the recovery period back at home, Gregg wouldn’t let Bonnie handle a horse, but he would put one in the round pen for her to play with while it was loose. That was some of the best and cheapest therapy she went through. “Horses can be such a source of comfort as well as great teachers”, Martin states. “If dealt with respectfully, and with understanding of their psychology, horses want to please and will try their hearts out for you. Unfortunately, there is still too much of the old way of handling going on that doesn’t recognize that, and those poor horses are either like robots or even dangerous.”

Martin says patience is one of the things she learned to work on after surgery and it is important for all aspects of life. Instead of trying to make something happen with horses, set it up and let it happen. It may seem like it’s taking forever, but the results will come and you won’t have to keep dealing with the same issues over and over. The same philosophy works for life in general. Get yourself prepared as best you can, and let God do the rest. Don’t try to force the issue, Martin says.

“Two families of wonderful home-schooled young people have come into my life this last year,” Martin states. They have been a blessing keeping me busy sharing what I’ve learned about horses and helping me with the chores and training. I’ve been doing Natural Horsemanship for several years now, but when I was ready and needed them is when the students came to me.”

Martin concludes by urging everyone who is experiencing something that doesn’t seem quite right about their body to bring it up to a doctor instead of waiting, and to work on developing patience and look for the good in life that will come even after something bad.

Bonnie and Gregg Martin own Gemara Farm Foxtrotters and Deck’em Pest Services, both located in Barnesville.

