

**THE PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC WORTH OF HORSE WHISPERING FOR THE  
AGGRESSIVE CHILD**

by

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I declare that THE PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC WORTH OF HORSE WHISPERING WITH THE AGGRESSIVE CHILD is my own work and that all the sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Mrs K Bronkhorst

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Date

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation employs a case study research design and reviews literature from the field of animal assisted therapy (AAT) with an emphasis on equine facilitated psychotherapy (EFP), as a possible therapeutic alternative for treating inappropriate aggressive behaviour in a young boy. The research suggests that Horse Whispering can indeed be regarded as a viable therapeutic technique when intent on breaking the aggressive behaviour cycle.

### **Key terms:**

Horse Whispering, Aggression, Animal Assisted Therapy, Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy, Bonding, Boys 6-8years, Disruptive Behavioural Disorders, Attachment, Assertiveness, Case Study.

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# Ode to the Horse

*by Robert Duncan*

Where in this wide world can men find nobility without pride,

Friendship without envy, or beauty without vanity?

Here, where grace is laced with power and strength tempered by gentleness.

He serves without servility, he has force without enmity.

There is nothing so powerful, nothing less violent.

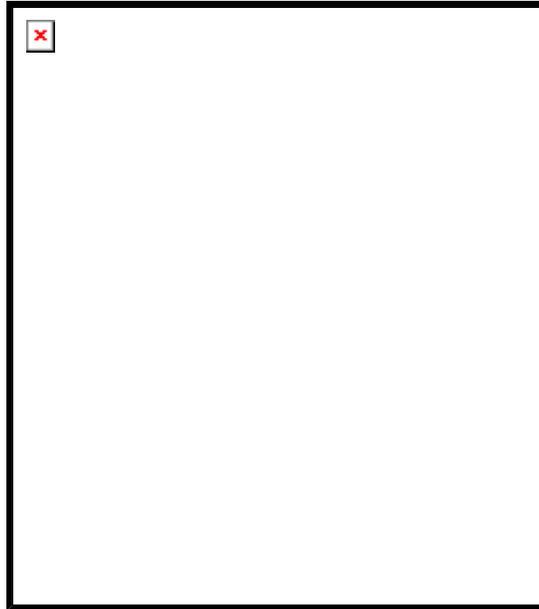
There is nothing so quick, nothing more patient.

Our pioneers were borne on his back,

Our history is his industry.

We are his heirs and he is our inheritance...

The horse.'



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION, ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM, AIM OF RESEARCH AND CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS.**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The notion of horse whispering is not new. A hundred years ago, the horse had a prominent place in family life. Its owners used it as co-worker and a method of transportation. To achieve optimal productivity the relationship between man and horse had to be positive. The components love (respect); language (communication) and leadership had to be present. Those people, who ignored them, never achieved partnership.

Monty Roberts, as quoted in Griffiths (2001:115), says, “in most (work) situations, we are asking humans to make choices that are generally unnatural, equally threatening... One of the goals in human-human join up then, is to create through communication and behaviour, situations where the satisfaction of co-operation outweighs the negative reaction to unnatural condition.”

Horse whispering suggests that horses, when engaged with love, language and leadership, can learn to trust, feel comfortable and respond appropriately to pressure rather than resisting it or running from it. The question could be asked whether this is also true for the aggressive child.

#### **1.2 ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM**

##### **1.2.1 INITIAL AWARENESS**

After watching the movie *The Horse Whisperer*, the researcher became interested in the technique of Horse Whispering and became a Horse Whisperer herself. During a play therapy session with a young child, the client presented with aggression. Later, when the researcher was whispering (to a horse), she thought that the process might have a therapeutic effect not only on the horse, but on the whisperer as well. When confronted with the choice of therapy with the aggressive client, the researcher wondered about the effect that horse whispering could have on the client.

## **1.2.2 THE NEED TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

The researcher turned to the literature for further investigation regarding horse whispering. In the preliminary literature investigation, it became clear that the technique has been widely adapted for whispering to people.

Interestingly, Pieratti (2004:1) states that this technique is for “horses and people because not only does it change the horses after you work with them but it also changes the person”.

Evidently, therapists have not researched the specific curative value that participating in horse whispering has on the aggressive child. The researcher then thought it would be interesting to conduct research on this matter. It is also true that equine facilitated psychotherapy is an emerging field and the literature on practice is greater than that on research and theory. This presents a major obstacle for the field to be established as a method of treatment. It is therefore necessary that further scientific research be undertaken as mental health practitioners who introduce horses in therapy are in need of evidence of efficacy.

The researcher spoke to teachers at a local primary school. The ten teachers all identified with the problem of dealing with aggressive children in the class situation. They all agreed that the aggressive child shows inappropriate social behaviour and that the child does not communicate effectively verbally and nonverbally. The aggressive child is not popular with his peers, and is often isolated and rejected by teachers and peers alike.<sup>1</sup>

The researcher also spoke to an occupational therapist, teacher and a veterinary assistant (a horse whisperer in own right) who use horses in therapy with people. They were all of the opinion that horse whispering would most certainly have an effect on the whisperer himself and that it could have very definite positive effects.

The researcher thinks that this validates research, as it could have a positive impact on the social interaction of the aggressive child.

## **1.3 EXPLORATION OF THE RESEARCH FIELD**

### **1.3.1 PILOT STUDY**

The researcher conducted a pilot study to establish whether further research is viable.

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<sup>1</sup> The researcher implies both genders and henceforth he should be read as “he or she”.

The pilot study was conducted with a 7-year-old boy, exhibiting extreme aggressive behaviour towards his mother, his teacher and his peers. The researcher worked with him for five sessions, including a final feedback session to determine what he felt he had gained from the therapy.

The boy said that the “nicest part of the sessions was to touch and hug the horse”. He said that he did not like it to stand still so long when he worked with the horse. He felt that the horse had taught him to work with horses and to “handle her with respect and touch her softly”. This was a problem at the onset of therapy as he used to hurt people when he hugged or touched them. He reported that it was the nicest thing to look into the horse’s eyes and when he was working with her, he only thought of her. He concentrated fully for an hour. He also said that he knew the horse loved him because she looked at him kindly and she put her head on his shoulder. When she licked and chewed, she said that she loves him. He then made a drawing to represent his work with the horse. This drawing is included in Addendum A.

The researcher noticed that working with the horse facilitated certain changes in the client’s behaviour and therefore felt that further research was viable.

### **1.3.2 LITERATURE STUDY**

Underlying most cases of aggression is repressed emotions (Janov 1990:17). For example feelings of being unwanted, not being good enough or feelings of being controlled. When people’s emotional (or indeed physical) needs are not met, they experience emotional pain. This pain is a signal to the person that something is missing in his (emotional) life.

Dr Arthur Janov argues that pain “directs us to get what we need” (Janov 1990:17). Should we not get what we need, and the need is ultimately to be loved, we develop certain coping behaviours to get what we need to survive emotionally. The coping style can take the form of anger, aggression, sickness and many others, depending on which style achieves the best response. The development of a coping style according to Dr JO Steenkamp (Steenkamp 2002:9), “results in an imbalance, since some areas of the self are not equally represented: the life energy is directed into that which succeeds, and the process denies that which fails to produce results”.

People act ‘in’ or ‘out’ when they experience emotional pain. Acting out becomes evident in behaviour such as aggression or stealing. Acting in leads to depression and other similar mood disorders.

Acting out behaviour is not necessarily the result of one single trauma. It can also be because of many small disappointments, or emotional traumas, that “summate into a meaning, such as “They want me out of the way. No one wants me. I don’t belong” (Janov 1990:140). Both Janov and Steenkamp refer to continual traumas as “chronic stress”.

Janov (1990:213-214) interprets stress as a “system...under assault”. He argues, “Pain is the key stressor”. The “first stage stress response” is “fight or flight” which is an attempt to ensure (emotional) survival. “If fight is possible the response mode is aggression”.

The need is for love: unconditional love and acceptance. Love from the parents in the first instance and then from others in the child’s world. As the child develops, he must be allowed to be himself. Very importantly the child “needs to be allowed to express his feelings – to be angry, to be negative, to say ‘no’ and not to have to obey instantly when someone gives him an order” (Janov 1990:7). The child learns quickly after being born which of his behaviours elicits the required responses. “From birth they are all feeling, and sense every nuance of their parents” (Janov 1990:10). The child quickly learns that he is not ‘accepted’ for the person he is, and has to create a new person. He surrenders his personal power to have his behaviour dictated by other people. Ken Wilber, as cited in Tramutt (2003:12) agrees with this statement and explains that there are parts of the self that starts to “hide from itself”. In other words, “the self begins lying to itself”. “What many learned at a young age is that in order to be loved, certain parts of the self that primary care givers were not comfortable with needed to be suppressed. This leads to non-acceptance of the self, and the fear that being one’s self will ultimately lead to being alone or in some cases not surviving” (Tramutt 2003:12).

According to Cusack (1988:12), “pets provide unconditional love and acceptance. They offer spontaneous affection”, which brings us to his next point, that intimacy with an animal can be achieved “instantaneously” while with people this takes much longer.

The therapeutic use of animals has been widely researched and documented. Especially concerning the psychological and physiological effects of owning and loving a pet. Larry Dossey is quoted in Lucas (1993:472) as saying, “something resembling mental communication goes on between humans and animals, something that is profound and that cannot be explained by known physical interrelationships”.

Stuart Hutton states in Cusack (1988:20) that there are certain similarities between companion animals and social workers. They both

- break down barriers and establish meaningful communications.
- allow people to experience the feeling of being someone “of worth”.
- can be involved in healing the emotional traumas of everyday living.
- tend to help people use their own inner strength to help themselves.
- have a cathartic effect, enabling people to get things off their chests, releasing repressed emotions.

Freud believed that by “relating to animals, we once again become part of nature and thereby heal many of the rifts in our souls” (Cusack 1988:26).

The use of the horse in recovery from illness is not a new concept. The Greeks prescribed riding to improve the morale of convalescent clients (Cusack 1988:197). Therapeutic riding was also prescribed for clients suffering from gout and neurological disorders. The therapeutic use of the horse however focused on riding. The new movement in horse whispering focuses on working with the horse when both the horse and the trainer are on the ground. Tramutt (2003:2) states “Equine-facilitated psychotherapy is a powerful, illustrative therapy modality that cultivates relationship between client and horse and helps people gain self-awareness and bring self-acceptance to parts of themselves that have been denied or repressed”. Martin Taylor (2001:17) states that this type of therapy “involves reflection, instruction, insight, cognitive and emotional process. The therapist acts as a catalyst. The client takes emotional, cognitive and psychological work from the therapy session back to everyday life and through a process of practice and reflection, change may occur.”

Like dogs, horses are social animals that aim to please. They would rather be with peers and can often appear stubborn. Each horse has its own distinct personality, attitude and behaviour pattern. Whispering makes use of the horse's natural tendencies toward socialization to restore the animal's trust.

Perry Wood states that his experiences of horse whispering led him to “see horses as a mirror: they reflect back very clearly whatever it is that you are communicating to them” (Wood 2004:4). This also provides for quick feedback as this powerful animal immediately mirrors what the person's body language is communicating to him. In Wood's opinion, people are the same. They reflect nonverbal communication in the same manner. This communication is

difficult to interpret because words, judgements and preconceived notions sometimes act as a “smoke-screen”. According to Wood (2004:4), horses do not use words and they do not judge. They “are noble, quick-witted and very powerful; they sense true intentions, integrity and have an innate sense of justice.”

We often close ourselves off to communicating with others because we tend to be judgemental towards others, as well as towards ourselves. As Wood sees it, judgement creates a vicious circle. If “every time we do something we are judged for it, we will become less willing to take action, take risks, be creative, attempt things or allow things to flow because we think we will be judged again” (Wood 2004:14). It causes a person to ultimately, become stuck in this vicious circle. This, in turn, causes him to start behaving in ways that are not really true to what or who he really is.

The child with behavioural difficulties experiences feelings of failure, anger, unhappiness, confusion, frustration and many other destructive emotions. The child’s verbal and nonverbal language can be correctly interpreted, or more importantly misinterpreted, by others in his world. The other person may then choose to mirror those messages and can respond in the negative. This increases the possibility of miscommunication and is likely to damage further relationships.

It is no wonder then that Cooley (Ferreira 1992:67) states, regarding the development of the social self-concept, “what becomes the self is what we imagine that others think of us, of our appearance, aims, deeds, character, and so on”.

According to Holubecki (2001:109), “aggressive children are sensitive to verbal and nonverbal messages, waiting, from experience perhaps, for something to be hurtful, confusing and contradictory.” Thus, it would seem that the focus should be on communication – sent and interpreted- by the aggressive child.

In essence, “horse whispering is based on body language” (Pieratti 2004:1). Whispering is used to restore the horse’s trust and establishes a strong bond between the horse and its trainer. This has an effect on both the horse and the trainer.

Professor Tudor Rickards of the Manchester Business School, conducted research and found that the most “powerful differentiator between successful and unsuccessful leaders, was a trust-based

style” (Rickards 2004:1). They found that there certainly was a parallel between the way horses react to certain behaviours and how people react to different “management styles”. Studying the techniques of horse whispering, the participants in the study found it easier to distinguish among being tough, being assertive, being supportive and being soft.

Since horse whispering means simply listening to what a horse’s body language is telling you and responding in kind, teaching this technique to the aggressive child might result in the child being aware, of not only his body language, but also the body language of others. This could lead to fewer misinterpretations and less aggression.

Then “if we let our bodies become physical representations of inner stillness and peace, this will give the appearance that we are untouchable. This can have a very calming affect in heated situations, almost as though the body becomes a fire blanket, damping down the flames of the exchange” (Wood 2004:40).

#### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The main question that the researcher wishes to explore is:

**If an aggressive child is taught the technique of Horse Whispering, and is able to achieve join-up with the horse in a gentle and non-aggressive manner, will the aggressive child then realise that there is other non-aggressive ways to assert himself and that it is ‘safe’ to form attachments or relationships with other people?**

#### **1.5 RESEARCH AIMS**

##### **1.5.1 GENERAL AIMS**

The researcher’s aim is to determine if the technique of horse whispering will have a positive effect on the interpersonal interactions of an aggressive boy.

##### **1.5.2 SPECIFIC AIMS**

###### **1.5.2.1 Research questions**

Some of the more specific research questions that the researcher will try to answer are.

- Will a boy showing aggressive behaviour be able to form a nurturing bond with a horse?
- Will using the technique of horse whispering enhance the aggressive boy’s understanding of nonverbal communication and assist him in correctly interpreting nonverbal cues?

- Will creating a bond with a horse enable the aggressive boy to improve his social skills and therefore form positive social bonds?
- Will the technique facilitate psychological growth in the troubled child?

### 1.5.2.2 Exploration of questions

The research questions will be explored by means of:

- ✍ Interviews
- ✍ Literature study
- ✍ Document and artefact collection
- ✍ Therapeutic sessions (Horse whispering sessions).

## 1.6 DELIMITATION OF RESEARCH FIELD

For the purpose of this particular study, the researcher has decided to limit the research to the following:

Boys

- In grade 1 or 2 (six to eight years old). Aggression at age 8 correlates 0.46 with aggression at age 30, therefore, it is necessary to intervene before nine years of age (www.mentalhelp.net). According to Webster-Stratton and Reid (2003:1) treatment of conduct problems “prior to 8 years interrupts progression of aggression and without early intervention it can become crystallised patterns.”
- Who have had unsatisfactory bonding with their mother
- Show aggressive behaviour towards his peers and/or teacher/s
- Without a history of cruelty to animals
- With ADHD excluded.

## 1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

### 1.7.1 AGGRESSION

*Ag.gres.sion: e\_’gre\_shen, noun*

1. a forceful action or procedure (such as an unprovoked attack), especially when intended to dominate or master.
2. the practice of making attacks or encroachments, especially unprovoked violation by one country of the territorial integrity of another.
3. hostile, injurious, or destructive behaviour or outlook, especially

when caused by frustration (DeBord 2000:1).

The research focuses on aggressive behaviour that is representative of poor parenting skills, ineffective communication and an absence of secure attachments. This aggressive behaviour includes kicking, biting, hitting and destructive behaviour towards peers.

### **1.7.2 HORSE WHISPERING**

Pieratti describes the process of Horse Whispering in the following manner: “Mimicking methods of discipline that horses use in the wild, the trainer uses his physical stance to either drive the horse away from him or allow it to come and connect with him. In physical terms, this usually takes place in a round pen, where the trainer uses his arm movements and sometimes a rope to get the horse moving around him in a circle. The method is called gentle, because little to no physical contact is used. Instead, eye contact is heavily relied upon. When the trainer takes an aggressive stance towards the horse, the animal will instinctively flee, feeling that it is being sent away from the herd for something it has done wrong. The horse continues to avoid the trainer until it decides to repent, and asks forgiveness by lowering its head, slowing its pace, and performing a number of other body movements that indicate its submission to the trainer. The trainer has now taken on the position as Alpha Mare in the horse's herd. Once the trainer notices that the horse has accepted its role, he changes his stance, becomes less aggressive, often by changing eye position, or even turning his shoulder to the horse. At this point, the horse's reaction can be dramatic. Ideally, the horse stops moving, turns towards the trainer, even walks to him. This moment is often referred to as joining up, hooking on, or coming in. Whichever term the trainer chooses to use, the effect is the same, a strong bond of trust and devotion that provides a foundation for further training” (Pieratti 2004:1).

### **1.7.3 ATTACHMENT**

Attachment is defined in Hanselman (2001:163) as “lasting psychological connectedness” between the child and caregiver, which provides the child with a secure base for future relationships.

The fundamental assumption in attachment theory is that sensitive responding by the parent to the infant's needs result in an infant who demonstrates secure attachment, while lack of such sensitive responding results in insecure attachment.

According to Hanselman (2001:163), a “high percentage of children that have behaviour problems have disruptions in their attachment to a significant caregiver. This disruption in early life often leads to emotional loneliness and an inability to develop appropriate relationships with peers”. Animal Assisted Therapy can assist the child in forming secure attachments and regaining trust in other people.

#### **1.7.4 ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY (AAT)**

Bizub *et al.* (2003:378) quotes the Delta Society’s definition of AAT: “this endeavour fosters the accomplishment of psychosocial goals via the inherently therapeutic bond between animals and humans”.

AAT is thus any therapy that is undertaken where the animal plays a therapeutic role. Therapists use many kinds of animals in AAT, such as dogs, cats, cows, goats, dolphins, turtles and horses.

According to Odendaal (2002:165-177) the minimum requirements for AAT is that the therapist must be qualified for and familiar with the technique.

He further states that there are certain preconditions for AAT:

- Hygiene: the animal used in therapy, and the place of therapy, should be clean.
- Zoönoses: The animal should be free of diseases, dewormed and regularly vaccinated.
- To avoid injuries to client and animal, the correct species, breed and animal should be selected for therapy.
- Allergies: Some clients could be allergic to dust or animal hair. This should be taken into consideration and the necessary precautions should be taken.
- The client and animal should be suitably matched. Selection should take place prior to the beginning of therapy.
- Necessary emotional and psychological support should be available should the animal die.
- The therapist should know as much as possible about the background of the animal. The more you know, the more predictable the animal’s interactions.
- The programme should be properly planned (as any other intervention programme). Continuous evaluation and adaptation should be an integral part of the programme.

“If the conditions and preconditions are met, animal-facilitated psychotherapy can take its rightful place along with any other therapeutic regimes in psychiatry” (Odendaal 2002:188).

### **1.7.5 EQUINE FACILITATED PSYCHOTHERAPY (EFP)**

Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy refers to the inclusion of a horse in the psychotherapy session. It is a technique where the psychologist works together with the horse, as co-therapist, to facilitate the client's healing process.

It is not to be confused with hippotherapy, which is a physical, occupational, or speech therapy session that includes the horse, or therapeutic horsemanship/therapeutic riding. The EFP horse is specially selected and trained. The psychotherapist has a trusting relationship with this horse and has to be very comfortable with and knowledgeable about horses.

The horse provides a psychological catalyst for change. Many of the client's problems and the solutions therein, are played out through interaction with the horse. The client learns to identify, and correctly interpret the horse's behaviour. Then the client has to work in harmony with the horse to motivate the horse to respond. These behaviours are then processed to reveal similar trends in the client's life (Rector 1992:1).

### **1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

The researcher chose to do qualitative research due to the setting and participants used in the study. The need for the researcher is to understand the concept of bonding from the child's perspective. This research would thus provide a narrative representation of the participant's ideas, feelings and thoughts. The participants include one boy exhibiting aggressive behaviour, the therapist and the horse as co-therapist.

The mode of inquiry will be interactive. McMillan and Schumacher define interactive researchers as researchers who "describe the context of the study, illustrate different perspectives of the phenomena, and continually revise questions from their experience in the field" (2001:35). According to these authors, there are five interactive modes of inquiry: ethnographic, phenomenological, case study, grounded theory and critical studies (2001:35). For the purpose of this research, the researcher will make use of a case study design as she wishes to focus on a single phenomenon: one boy showing aggressive behaviour that makes it difficult for him to form meaningful relationships in his life. The study will provide a detailed description of the case, an analysis of the themes or issues and the researcher's interpretations. These interpretations may be called "lessons learned" (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:37).

The researcher further decided to make use of purposeful-sampling to “select an information-rich case for an in-depth study” (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:400).

Data collection strategies include formal and informal interviewing, observations, field-notes, drawings and mechanically recorded data. The researcher will also make use of a literature study to obtain all related information concerning the research topic.

The researcher hopes that the research conducted would contribute to the practice of psychology.

### **1.9 PLAN OF STUDY**

The researcher plans to conduct the study as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction to the research study
- Chapter 2: Literary discussion of Equine Therapy and Aggression
- Chapter 3: Discussing the research design
- Chapter 4: Discussing the empirical investigation
- Chapter 5: Providing a summary of the research and making further recommendations

### **1.10 CONCLUSION**

It is essential that this study be well researched and documented to test the assumptions on which the field is currently operating. The researcher hopes to contribute towards the emerging field of Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy by providing scientifically valid research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **EQUINE THERAPY AND AGGRESSION**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

A certain degree of aggressive behaviour is normal or acceptable for the preschool child. However, at age four to five we expect the child to have gained control over his negative emotions and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive manner. What we should be concerned about is inappropriate use of aggression. In the following sections, the researcher discusses what inappropriate aggression looks like, types of aggression and its causes. The researcher will also explore Equine Facilitated Therapy as an alternative method of intervention for the aggressive child.

#### **2.2 AGGRESSION**

The DSM-IV-TR (APA 2000) refers to externalising behaviour problems collectively as “Disruptive Behavior Disorders and Attention Deficit Disorders”. There are three subgroups related to this category: Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Conduct Disorder (CD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). As Conduct Disorder is rarely diagnosed before the age six, most young children with externalising symptoms fit the criteria for ADHD and/or ODD. Since ADHD is excluded in this dissertation, the researcher focuses on ODD and CD.

##### **2.2.1 DIAGNOSING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR DISORDER**

A diagnosis of Disruptive Behaviour Disorder can only be made when:

- The child displays persistent, non-transitory antisocial and aggressive behaviour for more than six to twelve months.
- The clinical manifestations cause significant impairment in social, academic or occupational functioning for the child.

##### **Oppositional Defiant Disorder**

A psychiatric disorder characterized by aggressiveness and a tendency to purposefully bother and irritate others. The criteria for ODD are:

- a) A pattern of negativistic, hostile, and defiant behaviour lasting at least six months during which four or more of the following are present:
  - Often loses temper

- Often argues with adults
  - Often actively defies or refuses to comply with adult's requests or rules.
  - Often deliberately annoys people.
  - Often blames others for his or her mistakes of misbehaviour.
  - Is often touchy or easily annoyed by others.
  - Is often angry and resentful.
  - Is often spiteful and vindictive.
- b) The disturbance in behaviour causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning (APA 2000).

ODD is rarely diagnosed on its own. There usually are co-morbid disorders such as ODD plus ADHD (which is very common) or ODD plus depression and/or anxiety.

It is important to differentiate between ADHD and ODD. Simplistically ODD is characterised by aggressiveness but not impulsivity. The child with ODD annoys others purposefully while the child with ADHD is usually not as purposeful. In addition, children with ODD can sit still, while those with ADHD rarely do.

### **Conduct Disorder**

In many ways, CD is just a worse form of ODD. Children with ODD seem to have worse social skills than those with CD.

CD is

a) a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major society rules are violated. At least three of the following criteria must be present in the last twelve months, and at least one criterion must have been present in the last six months.

### **AGGRESSION TO PEOPLE AND ANIMALS (AACAP 2000:1)**

1. Often bullies, threatens, or intimidates others.
2. Often initiates physical fights.
3. Has used a weapon that could cause serious physical harm to others (for example broken bottles, knives, guns and so on).
4. Is physically cruel to people or animals.
5. Steals from a victim while confronting them (as in muggings, armed robbery etc.).

6. Has forced someone into sexual activity.

#### DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY

7. Has deliberately engaged in fire setting with the intention to cause damage.

8. Deliberately destroyed other's property (other than by fire setting).

#### DECEITFULNESS, LYING OR STEALING

9. Has broken into someone else's house, building or car.

10. Lies to obtain goods or favours or to avoid obligations.

11. Stolen items of nontrivial value without confronting a victim (such as shoplifting, forgery etc).

#### SERIOUS VIOLATION OF RULES

12. Often stays out at night despite parental prohibitions (beginning before thirteen years of age).

13. Runs away from home overnight at least twice.

14. Is often truant from school (beginning before thirteen years of age).

b) The above problem causes significant impairment in social, academic and occupational functioning (APA 2000:98-99).

CD in younger children is characterised by temper tantrums, hitting and kicking people, destruction of property, disobeying rules, lying, stealing and spitefulness (Scott 1998:202). These children are usually not content, typically have a low self-esteem and believe they are bad.

### **2.2.2 CAUSES OF AGGRESSION**

Aggression is largely a combination of personal, familial and environmental stressors. Few people merely act aggressively because they derive pleasure from hurting people

According to the literature, there are certain events that predispose children to aggressive behaviour. It should be emphasised that it is not normally a single aspect that leads to aggressive behaviour, but rather the combined effect of more than one event.

#### **2.2.2.1 Environment and genes**

Twin studies suggest a large shared environmental effect as well as a moderate genetic effect. It would seem that genetically vulnerable children may be especially susceptible to

unfavourable family conditions (DeBord 2000:1), especially those children with difficult temperaments or cognitive and language delays.

Housing (especially overcrowding), schools, neighbourhood (especially those with a high crime rate), poverty and gangs have been shown to increase the possibility of aggression. According to “Hidden Anger” (www.mentalhelp.net), there are a variety of events that could increase our anger, and simultaneously also our aggressive behaviour. The article mentions foul smells; cigarette smoke; fear; depression; unattractiveness or handicaps in others; expectation of pain; boredom and general discomfort.

Ursin and Olf (1995:16) states that a person who perceives his environment as hostile can interpret an “undesired event as indicative of malice on another’s part”. Should this perceived malice be answered with aggression it could result in real hostile reactions and thus “confirm the initial beliefs of the projector”. This may ultimately lead to a vicious cycle of aggressive behaviour.

Other sociodemographic characteristics of family life – such as parental educational level and family structure, are also considered by Overton (2004:14) as risk factors for aggression.

#### **2.2.2.2 Parental rearing styles**

Overton (2004:7) states that “lower levels of proactive parenting and higher levels of parental negative affect “does not support emotion regulation and control of disruptive and aggressive” behaviour.

It would appear that negative parenting facilitates aggressive and noncompliant behaviour in children. The absence of positive parenting has been linked to aggressive behaviour and non-compliance.

Strong parent-child relationships facilitate socialisation and include the regulation of emotions such as anger. Negative parenting, however, serves as a model for aggressive behaviour (Overton 2004:16). The following are aspects of negative parental rearing styles shown to be associated with antisocial behaviour (Scott 1998:203; Gullone 2003:163):

- a) Poor supervision and monitoring.
- b) Erratic, inconsistent and harsh discipline.

- c) Low positive involvement in the child's activities.
- d) Parental disharmony – according to El-Sheikh (1994:1) marital discord is the biggest predictor in CD, anxiety and aggression.
- e) Rejection of the child or parental neglect.
- f) A prenatal maternal problem, such as poor adjustment, health or substance abuse puts the child at risk for an irritable temperament and cognitive deficits (Gullone 2003:163).
- g) Poor family problem solving skills.

Parents who are overly strict and harshly punitive, who do not reason with their children and strongly show their anger to their children, model aggressive behaviour to their children.

### **2.2.2.3 Parent-child interaction patterns**

Aggression is enforced in relationships where parents do little to encourage polite and considerate behaviour. When the child yells or has a tantrum, he gets attention. The parent eventually gives in and the child wins - starting a vicious cycle of aggression and non-compliance.

Negative, punitive parenting characterised by unresponsiveness to the child's communication and emotional needs, "can exacerbate these coercive cycles that fuel the parent-child conflict and child non-compliance" (Overton 2004:16).

The attachments formed between a child and his primary caregivers play a determining role in future interpersonal relationship. Children who have formed secure attachments have the ability to form positive social relationships. They tend to be socially competent, responsible, successful in school and high in self-esteem. Those who have not formed secure attachments have difficulty reading small cues that other people send out in social situations (Steinberg 2001:2).

The authoritarian parents tend to be overcritical and strict disciplinarians. They frequently rely on physical punishment and withdrawal of affection to shape their child's behaviour. These children tend to rate lower than their peers in appropriate social assertiveness and higher in aggression (Steinberg 2001:2).

In addition, authoritarian parents seldom encourage expression of the child's feelings or wishes. The child then becomes frustrated when he cannot express himself. Because he cannot cope with the growing levels of anger and frustration within, he 'acts out' or becomes aggressive.

The disorganised or poor attachment patterns, cause the child to experience fear, anger and distress. When children feel unsure and have not learned constructive conflict management they often believe that aggression would be effective and rewarding. Aggression helps them feel in control and lets them feel good about themselves (Steinberg 2001:4).

As children, we learn that there are certain parts of ourselves that are unacceptable or 'bad'. This causes a feeling of self-hatred. Parents who are rejecting, overly punitive, neglectful, over-demanding, overprotective or overbearing increase this self-hatred within the child. "I'm not good enough", becomes an integral part of the self-concept.

#### **2.2.2.4 Difficulties with friends and at school**

Prinz, Blechman and Dumas (1994:19) state that "weak bonding to school" and "association with deviant peers" place the child at a high risk for aggressive behaviour. The aggressive child lacks the necessary skills of self-control to manage their anger and become aggressive when frustrated. This aggressive behaviour leads to poor peer relations and rejection quickly ensues.

#### **2.2.2.5 Culture**

Children are bombarded with violence on the television and in the community. Not to mention video and computer games. They learn through watching television that they can solve their problems with physical violence. Even the 'hero' of the story reverts to aggression to overcome the evildoers. For his aggressiveness, he is praised as a hero. When we take into consideration how much time the average child spends watching television, and how violent and lifelike these scenes have become, it is no wonder that aggression seems a worthwhile option when being angry or frustrated.

According to Chandler (2005:23) children who play many video and computer games "aren't as nice to others". Children who play violent games are "more physically aggressive and are not as intelligent."

To conclude, when dealing with CD and ODD and its accompanying aggressive behaviour, the following can be regarded as primary precursors (Gullone 2003:162):

- Difficult temperament (argumentative, defiant, vindictive etc.)
- Failure to form strong bonds with primary caregivers
- Low intelligence (IQ) and/or brain damage
- Poor coordination and motor skills
- School failure
- Impulsivity or hyperactivity
- Irritability
- Traumatic life experiences such as child abuse
- Underdeveloped capacity for empathy and guilt
- Negative, critical attitude of parents towards child.
- Parents permit the child to use aggression to gain power.
- Parents who use power tactics (punishment, threats and violent outbursts) to get their way.

### **2.2.3 TYPES OF AGGRESSION**

Moyer in Decaire (1999) identifies eight distinct kinds of aggression:

#### **a. PREDATORY AGGRESSION**

These are motivated attack behaviours. The aggression is directed to natural prey. Its forensic implications are that some deviant persons might see other humans as lesser beings and may not have moral issues with stealing from or hurting such individuals.

#### **b. INTERMALE AGGRESSION**

This represents physical violence between males. Possible reasons for such violence could be perceived competition for resources or ego threats.

#### **c. FEAR-INDUCED AGGRESSION**

Biologically programmed responses to any form of forced confinements.

#### **d. TERRITORIAL AGGRESSION**

Threat or attack behaviour towards an invasion of one's territory. The loss of power in relationships that can lead to spouse abuse could possibly be explained by this model.

e. MATERNAL AGGRESSION

When an intruder is in the presence of one's children.

f. IRRITABLE AGGRESSION

Aggression and rage exhibited when the aggressor is frustrated, hurt, deprived or stressed. Some individuals who do not have, or use, appropriate outlets could have a spill over of aggression onto others.

g. SEX-RELATED AGGRESSION

Besides the obvious jealousy-violence reactions, some individuals may associate sexual desire with violence and dominance.

h. INSTRUMENTAL AGGRESSION

Aggressive behaviour displayed because it previously resulted in a reward or payoff.

When dealing with the young, aggressive boy, one would expect to find that he shows predominantly fear-induced-, irritable- and instrumental aggression.

On a broader scale, Brown *et al* (1996:1) distinguishes between reactive and proactive aggression. Reactive aggression is considered "any defence response to a perceived threat, fear or provocation". According to Berkowitz in Brown (1996:1), aggressive behaviour is "always preceded by frustration". Thus, negative affect of any kind will activate anger-related feelings and thoughts, and ultimately evoke an aggressive response.

Proactive aggression is an "unprovoked, aversive behavior intended to harm, dominate or coerce another person." Two types can be distinguished:

- a. Instrumental – proactive aggression: governed by reinforcement principles such as use of aggression for object acquisition. This is similar to covert antisocial behaviour such as lying and stealing.
- b. Hostile – proactive aggression: tends to over-evaluate the outcome of aggression and to underestimate its impact on the victim.

It is important when dealing with the young boy exhibiting aggressive behaviour that one should investigate whether the aggression was justified or unjustified.

Unjustified aggression is seen as behaviour where a child or group of children insult, hit, socially exclude, or threaten others without motive. Victims are attacked physically, verbally (e.g. name calling, insulting), or psychologically (e.g. putting someone down, embarrassing) (Monks, Ruiz & Val 2002:460). It is this type of aggression, which causes other children and adults to view the aggressive child as 'bad' or delinquent, rather than mentally ill.

It is evident that intervention should take place as early as possible. History of aggressive behaviour during childhood substantially increases the likelihood of aggressive and non-aggressive delinquency during adolescence (Tremblay & Schaal 1996:192). Kazolin in Gresham *et al* (2000:1), states, "unless we intervene prior to eight years of age, we no longer are in the prevention business but rather in the management business".

How does intervention take place?

Up to now, interventions with childhood aggression have focused on peer relations, with emphasis on interpersonal problem-solving training and cognitive strategies, otherwise referred to as social-skills training. Parent training (parenting skills and management) and child anger management have also received a lot of attention.

Another therapy option is Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) – specifically therapy using horses: Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP).

## **2.3 ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY**

Reflecting on own experiences with animals, the researcher believes that the relationship with an animal can closely (if not entirely) represent the ideal therapeutic relationship. The central characteristics of a therapeutic relationship should be unconditional positive regard and acceptance. Companion animals, and those used in therapy, provide exactly this – unconditional love and acceptance as well as unwavering support.

### **2.3.1 WHY USE ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY?**

Odendaal (2000:276) uses the term *attentionis egens* to describe the need for attention on "a normal, basic emotional level as a prerequisite for successful social interaction". Deviations from this norm are aimed at getting excessive attention. We appropriately refer to this kind of behaviour as 'attention-seeking' behaviour. The successful human-animal interaction fulfils

*attentionis egens*. Therefore, the much-needed positive interaction between human and human can easily be replaced by human-animal interaction.

Bizub *et al* (2003:378) support Odendaal's view and see Animal Assisted Therapy as a technique that "fosters the accomplishment of psychosocial goals" via the therapeutic bond between animals and humans.

People (especially children) form relationships with their pets akin to that of parent-child relationships. For the child (especially the child with behavioural difficulties), the pet can become representative of the nurturing parent. As Hanselman (2001:160) states, "Pets carry the idealized attributes of the mother". In being loved or 'mothered' by the pet, the individual recreates "the faith of the infant in abundant love". Restoring the basic faith of being worthy of love. On the other hand, a pet can also represent the child itself. Through loving and nurturing the pet, the child is actually mothering himself. When doing this the individual can "relive life as a child" through his relationship with an animal. Pets can requite love when human love has failed.

In therapy, the client becomes more relaxed and less defiant in the presence of animals. Defiance or opposition are obstacles that most definitely have to be overcome when dealing with the CD or ODD child. The presence of animals further increase feelings of happiness, security and self-worth and in addition to that reduces feelings of loneliness, isolation and stress. For that reason animals are "crucial to children's social and cognitive development" (Martin & Farnum 2002:657).

Animals offer the following in the therapeutic relationship:

- Non-judgemental, unconditional love and affection.
- Opportunity for touch and contact comfort.
- Chance for laughter and play.
- Opportunity for development (especially concerning social skills).
- Outlet for nurturing (makes the child feel needed).
- Enhancement of self-esteem and emotional security.
- A link to the natural world (Walshaw 1996).
- A confidant.
- Better physical health, as animals reduces stress, anxiety and alleviates depression. They also decrease feelings of loneliness.

### **2.3.2 THE BENEFITS OF ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY**

Considering the scope of the dissertation, the researcher found Martin and Farnum's opinion very motivating. According to them, interaction with animals is "associated with reduction in symptoms in children with severe ADHD and Conduct Disorder" (2002:658).

Children whose relationships with others have been characterised by a sense of abandonment, powerlessness and mistrust and who have not formed strong attachments with caregivers, may have the chance to develop a sense of mastery and competence during therapy with an animal.

Animals can assist children with attachment issues to form secure attachments with other people and with their environments – including the school environment. These animals act as transitional objects, allowing children to first establish bonds with the animals and then extend these bonds to other people (Martin & Farnum 2002:657). These pets themselves can be regarded as significant attachment figures (Hanselman 2001:164).

One of the many benefits of AAT is that the animal directs the child's attention outward, which gives the child the opportunity to perceive the behaviour of others "more accurately" (Katcher & Wilkins 1998:200).

Other benefits of AAT are summarised by Phillips Parshall (2003) and Barker (1999):

- The client gains more confidence and self-esteem.
- Greater ability to concentrate (as the client has to focus on an unpredictable animal and have to be ready to act accordingly).
- Increased social skills.
- Less oppositional behaviour.
- Stimulates cognitive, perceptual and language development.
- Reduces apprehension and thus leaves the child open to therapeutic intervention.
- Development of basic trust through the pet's constancy, security, reliability, love and affection.
- Develops a sense of autonomy and initiative through the pet's serving as an active playmate and encouraging patience and self-control.
- Developing a sense of identity through the pet serving as a companion and confidant, and providing social and emotional support.

It could be argued that this might be true for dogs, cats or even cows... but horses? What evidence is there that using the horse in therapy could have any of the above-mentioned results?

### **2.3.3 WHY THE HORSE?**

Currently horses are used in working with cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, multiple sclerosis, Down syndrome, mental retardation, autism and spina bifida. This form of therapy is called hippotherapy, which is a physical, occupational, or speech therapy session that merely includes the horse. Equine Facilitated Therapy (EFT), on the other hand refers to psychotherapy session in which the horse is actively included and in which the horse is allowed to heal human beings.

EFT can take many forms: riding, stable management, grooming, vaulting or as the researcher proposes horse whispering. EFT horses are carefully selected and continually schooled as co-therapist. The psychotherapist herself also needs to be knowledgeable of and comfortable with horses.

The key aspects of EFT are touch, accurate nonverbal communication, being confronted with fear, dealing with aggression, mirroring, empathy, compassion and mutual trust. In addition to this, horses provide beautiful metaphors to work with in therapy.

A metaphor is the language of the right brain which implies that the therapeutic metaphor allows direct communication with the “imagistic, implicative, contextual and fluid half of the brain”, the side that processes information in a “simultaneous, holistic, and implicative fashion” (*Vidrine et al 2002:592*). This approach is surely more children-friendly than insight-orientated therapy techniques.

Horses are a lot like humans to some extent. They are social animals that aim to please and who enjoy the company of other horses – their peers. Each horse has its own distinct personality, attitude and moods. Like us (and even more so the child with ODD or CD) they are sometimes stubborn and even defiant. Many clients can associate with their instinctual hyper vigilance and tendency to flee when afraid. One can almost see the thoughts running through the horse’s brains: should I run or should I kick? This lessens the client’s sense of being isolated or different. As one client in Bizub and Davidson (2003:382) states, “I know that they get scared and they run and I found out it’s just like me. When I get scared, I run away and hide”.

The horse becomes a symbol of the power of human consciousness and a symbol of time. The client experiences images of the magical, the brave, the loyal, the strong 'horse' that can be found in the human psyche (Vidrine *et al* 2002:592). Archetypal aspects of the horse used in metaphors in therapy are the worker/bolter, helper/victim, imparter of vitality/destruction and instinct/panic.

Horses are not only considered as metaphors, but also as mirrors. They create a consciousness of our own behaviour by reflecting the behaviour. They offer immediate, unbiased nonverbal feedback. They mirror exactly what the human body language is telling them. The horse's role in facilitating congruency between verbal and nonverbal communication becomes clear. If you get it wrong, you have to face an enormous, scared and powerful animal.

Congruency in both verbal and nonverbal communication could improve the client's social skills and make him conscious of the message he wishes to convey. It would also result in a better understanding of the reactions of peers and/or their nonverbal language.

Working with this huge, powerful animal can also present a natural opportunity to overcome fear and gain confidence. In this regard, Vidrine *et al* (2002:600) reports that abused children or children from violent homes reported feeling comfort in the presence of such strength. Ultimately, the client learns to trust the horse, to have empathy with it and to respect it.

Trust in other people is learnt when the child forms secure attachments. If a sense of trust is created by the parents, the child develops a healthy personal and social identity that prepares the child to handle subsequent developmental crises in childhood. This, however, is hardly ever the case with the child diagnosed with ODD or CD. Developing a relationship with a horse could restore this trust and create a secure attachment. Schultz (Vidrine *et al* 2002:590) describes ways in which a "holding environment" is created in the horse-human dyad. This environment creates feelings of safety, belonging and nurturing. McCormick and McCormick (Vidrine *at al* 2002:591) even describes parallels between human-infant and horse-human relationships. They state that the "Equine Experience... sweeps us into a realm of feeling ... we are able to circumvent our entrenched defences and habitual reactivity ... we become far more receptive to new ideas and behaviors".

According to Marx and Cumella (2003:144), EFT has the following psychotherapeutic benefits:

- i. EFT enhances clients' self-confidence.

- ii. Learning to communicate and achieve harmony with a large animal promotes the experience of self-efficacy instead of helplessness.
- iii. Clients develop a more realistic view of themselves through the awareness of their size in relation to the horse.
- iv. Horses' sensitivity to nonverbal communication assists clients in developing greater awareness of their emotions, nonverbal cues and the role on nonverbal communication in relationships.
- v. The client learns to place their trust in another living being.
- vi. Clients are able to put aside the absorbing focus of their mental illness and direct their attention outwardly toward safe and caring interactions.
- vii. Reduces physiological anxiety levels.
- viii. Horses' unconditional acceptance may invite clients into relationship and enable them to practice nonverbal relationship skills.
- ix. The need to communicate with a horse calmly and non-reactively promotes the skills of emotional awareness, emotion regulation, self-control, and impulse modulation. Client agitation and aggressiveness are reduced and cooperativeness and behavioural control are increased.
- x. Communicating effectively with horses requires that clients demonstrate assertiveness, direction and initiative, potentially enabling clients to express their needs and rights more effectively on other relationships.
- xi. Many clients have experienced prior relationships as controlling or abusive. Healing may take place as the patient becomes aware of the fact that therapy occurs in the context of a respectful relationship between client and horse.

Tramutt (2003:3) adds that

- xii. The person also develops the ability to access information from intuition, body sensations and intellect.
- xiii. EFT facilitates the cultivation of healthy relationships.

All, Loving and Crane (1999:2) reports that children demonstrated gain in self-perception, social interaction and confidence, as well as improvements in social skills. Improvement was also noted with regards to motivation, self-confidence, self-esteem, co-operation and enthusiasm.

Being confronted with their genuine feelings – and not the mask other people see- people are required to act congruently to these feelings. The horse reacts to this congruency and thus people are able to experience what they genuinely think and feel. Horses respond by wanting to

engage in a relationship, which can lead to clients “having a corrective emotional experience”. This cultivates happiness, intimacy and mental health as the “true self is being honored” (Tramutt 2003:2).

Horses generally provide unconditional positive regard and are not judgemental. “Spending time with the horse, it felt like unconditional love...you connect with the animal and you connect with yourself” (Bizub & Davidson 2003:381).

Nilson (2004:42) describes the effect horses have had in her life as follows: “As I spent time with the horses, my spirits lifted. I found myself feeling lighter. I was climbing out of that black hole back into sunshine. I could breathe again”.

Many parents, teachers or even peers involved with aggressive children, pray for a miracle to happen. They pray for the child to become fun to be with, patient, obedient, empathetic, compliant and generally ‘nice’. EFT might just be the answer to those prayers. “Put horses and humans together. Miracles will happen. Lives can be altered” (Nilson 2004:42).

## **2.4 HORSE WHISPERING**

When one hears the term horse whispering, there is certainly one person that comes to mind and that is Monty Roberts. As a young man, Roberts took a trip to the desert where he had to capture wild horses. He noticed that the herd had very specific social behavioural patterns. The herd was controlled by a single mare that had to, amongst other things, keep the younger horses under control. Roberts tells of watching the mare deal with the “problem behavior” of a young colt, perhaps 20 months old, which had been kicking and biting at the other horses in the herd. “After several such incidents, the dominant mare responded by driving the colt about 300 yards away from the herd. The mare maintained a “squared-up” position relative to the colt, and drove him off again if he made any move to return. Eventually, the colt began engaging in a pattern of “submissive” behavior. Behavior that (in Roberts’ view) signalled that the colt was ready to rejoin the herd and accept the established dominance hierarchy. These submissive kinds of behavior included a turning of the ears, licking and chewing motions with the mouth, and a dropping of the head. The dominant mare reacted with her own set of responses. First, she changed position from the dominant squared-up stance, turning sideways toward the colt and exposing her flank. In response, the colt slowly returned to the herd and engaged in social grooming with the mare. The technique, which Roberts calls “join up,” places the trainer in the role of the dominant mare and the horse in the role of the adolescent colt. The trainer uses a

“behavioral language” similar to that used by the mare, and watches for submissive behavior from the colt (Farmer-Dougan & Dougan 1999:140”).

Roberts’s technique is based on positive reinforcement and his recognition that horses have a behavioural “language” that he refers to as Equus (Farmer-Dougan & Dougan 1999:146). Communicating with horses certainly has certain parallels to communicating with people. Roberts quoted in Jutkins (2002:1), says you have “to imagine the horse is deaf. And people, too. Both see you lips move but they never really understand a word you’re saying. You have to rely on other forms of communication that go beyond language.”

The essence of horse whispering is nonverbal communication. The point of origin is to understand and interpret the horse’s nonverbal communication in such a manner that the whisperer can communicate effectively with the horse.

As mentioned, the aggressive child very seldom has secure attachments with parents, peers or teachers and is very likely to misinterpret nonverbal communication. He lacks the social skills to form positive relationships and because of that is often socially rejected.

Bull (2001:645) states that nonverbal cues are “important in emotional communication, they have also been regarded as central to interpersonal relationships”. Affectionate expressions are extremely important in the development of relationships. According to Fatt (1999:1), eye contact and gesture can be especially beneficial or detrimental to credibility and thus also to communication. Nonverbal communication, however, can be risky as the intended meaning of the sender can be misunderstood. This particular risk is even greater between strangers.

Congruency between spoken and nonverbal communication is important when we want others to receive the true meaning of what we are communicating. It can only be achieved when, as Rector says (1992:1), the message is “aligned with the mind, body and spirit of inner feelings”. Many of the children with Disruptive Behavioural Disorders have learned to do one thing and say another, while completely ignoring what they feel in order to survive. When engaged in horse whispering, the person is forced to align his inner feelings with his body language. “A horse is looking for simple and clear commands, and a child... can carry these out very effectively” (Martin Taylor 2001:18).

Horses are willing to accept us as we are, “as long as we are emotionally congruent: honest about our emotions, rather than masking them. When we are incongruent the horse walks away” (Neimark 2004:1). On the other hand the “more precise the patient communicates the message, the quicker the horse responds” (Rector 1992:1).

Effective communication with people rests on the same basic principles as those of horse whispering. Wood (2004:60) states that the “people whisperer takes full responsibility for being understood by other people... the people whisperer delivers every message in such a way that it can be received easily and without confusion”. According to Wood, we need to be able to speak the other person’s language – just as the horse whisperer needs to speak Equus.

He provides the following guidelines – not unlike those of horse whispering- to assist in effective communication (Wood 2004:63):

1. Honour how the person feels by allowing your body to ‘listen’ to the energy levels of their body. Accept the “state they are in” as this will enable you to relate to that person more successfully.
2. People’s bodies, by and large, mirror how they feel. By mirroring their body posture and movement, we can consciously make the other person feel that we understand them. We are speaking their language with our bodies. We have to listen with our whole body.
3. Speak from the heart reflecting our true feelings and unique individuality. Then our voice will carry a message of “passion, conviction, belief, truth, compassion and love” (Wood 2004:71).
4. When we are truly listening, we are calm and patient, and sense when it is appropriate for us to speak, if we need to speak at all.

The successful communicator is “aware of the messages that his or her body communicates to others and is likewise attuned to other people’s body language on both the physical and subtle levels, so that he ‘hears’ much more than just the spoken word” (Wood 2004:38).

Our bodies, thoughts and emotions are intrinsically linked. By influencing our nonverbal language, we can consciously communicate, influence, change or manage our emotions and the way we feel. This congruent communication will also affect our communication with others.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the aggressive child needs to develop skills to communicate congruently. This will enable him to form positive attachments and relationships with others in his life. As Wood (2004:197) concludes: “we all have a people whisperer inside us: an adept, sensitive and skilful communicator who is often hidden behind a mask of conditioning and automatic responses born out of fear, social expectations and limiting beliefs, or buried under the weight of coping with everyday life.”

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this chapter is on the purpose of the research, research method, research design, data collection and data interpretation.

#### **3.2 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

The general aim of the research is to determine whether the technique of horse whispering will have a positive effect on the interpersonal interaction of an aggressive boy. Part of this process has also been a literature study and a pilot study (refer to section 1.3 in chapter 1). The research purpose as well as method of the study is therefore descriptive-explanatory: where little known phenomena are studied.

The specific purpose of the research is to find possible answers to the following research questions:

- i. Will the aggressive boy be able to form a nurturing bond with a horse?
- ii. Will using the technique of horse whispering enhance the aggressive boy's understanding of non-verbal communication and assist him in correctly interpreting nonverbal cues?
- iii. Will the technique enable the boy to improve on his social skills and therefore form positive social bonds?
- iv. Will the technique facilitate psychological growth in the child?

#### **3.3 RESEARCH METHOD**

##### **3.3.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

The researcher makes use of qualitative research as this method of research “is concerned with understanding the social phenomena from the participant's perspective”. In essence, qualitative research narrates the participant's meanings for the situation. To determine if horse whispering has any effect on the client, it is essential that these ‘meanings’ be thoroughly analysed. These meanings include his “feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions” (McMillan & Shumacher 2001:396). As horse whispering revolves around nonverbal communication, the analysis of actions or nonverbal behaviour is of extreme importance. The nonverbal behaviour of the client, as well as that of the horse, should be closely scrutinised.

In qualitative research, the research strategies are flexible and the researcher can use various combinations of techniques to obtain valid data. It is an interactive mode of inquiry as it is an in-depth study using face-to-face techniques to collect data from people in natural settings. The specific interactive mode of inquiry the researcher employs is the case study.

Case study design is especially appropriate for exploratory and discovery-orientated research. Exploratory studies examine a topic in which there has been little prior research and is designed to lead to further inquiry (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:399). This is certainly the case with Animal Assisted Therapy and Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy, where little scientific research has been conducted because it is still an emerging field. In this case, the qualitative research can possibly contribute to psychological theory and practice.

### **3.3.2 CASE STUDY**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:36), a case study “examines a ‘bounded system’ or a case over time in detail, employing multiple sources of data”. The study provides a detailed description of the case, an analysis of the themes or issues, and the researcher’s interpretations of the case.

Qualitative researchers become “immersed” in the situation and the phenomena studied. Researchers assume interactive roles in which they record observations and interactions with participants. Researchers working in the field choose their research roles beforehand. The roles vary in terms of how the researcher’s presence affects the person under study. The researcher will mainly choose the roles of participant observer and interviewer. “The observer as participant stance enables the researcher to participate in the activities as desired, yet the main role of the researcher is to collect data – hence generating a more complete understanding of the activities” (Kawulich 2005:7).

The researcher obtained permission from the riding school’s owner to use her horses, the child under observation’s family and the child himself. After obtaining permission from all participants, the researcher then established her research role with each participant. The researcher interviewed the client’s aunt, class teacher and the client himself.

Case studies for research can be selected because of its uniqueness or to illustrate an issue. Horse whispering as possible therapeutic technique for aggressive boys certainly qualifies as unique and can provide an alternative when dealing with aggression.

### **3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN**

As already discussed the researcher follows an interactive mode of inquiry, using the case study to explore the psychotherapeutic worth of horse whispering on the aggressive boy, which would possibly lead to further inquiry or research.

#### **3.4.1 SELECTION OF SAMPLE**

According to “Sampling” at [www.southalabama.edu](http://www.southalabama.edu) “sampling refers to drawing a sample (a subset) from a population (the full set)”. The usual goal with sampling is to produce a representative sample (in other words a sample that is similar to the population, except that it includes fewer people because it is a sample rather than a complete population. The article states that, “sampling in qualitative research is usually purposive” and that the “general goal is to select information-rich cases”.

The researcher applied purposeful sampling as a “selection of information-rich cases for an in-depth study” (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:39). This type of non-random sampling “involves selecting a convenience sample from a population with a specific set of characteristics” for the research study ([www.southalabama.edu](http://www.southalabama.edu)). The sample is chosen as it is likely to provide knowledge and information about the phenomena the researcher is investigating (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:39). In this case, the phenomenon investigated is aggressive behaviour in a 6 to 8 year old boy.

The site where research events will take place is at a local horse riding school. The horses at the school are all well trained and well behaved. There are no overt aggressive tendencies present in any of the horses. This makes them ideal for use as co-therapists. The researcher also felt that the natural farm setting will enhance the bonding between client and horse. This is a setting the boy feels comfortable with as he enjoys life on a farm.

There are several specific purposive sampling used in qualitative research. Accordingly McMillan and Schumacher (2001:402) states, we can also sample according to case type. The researcher chose this case as it represents an ‘intense case’, which is intense but not extreme.

This particular case would almost certainly qualify as intense because the client is unable to bond with adults and exhibits aggressive behaviour towards his peers. This implies, at the most fundamental level, the existence of problems with peer relationships. The aggressive behaviour occurs often, but not every day. The researcher does not think this is an extreme case as the

client does not exhibit excessive aggressive behaviour. He can function in a social group, to a certain extent, and has the most basic communication skills. It is also true that this case can not be regarded as a typical case because, aggressive behaviour has various causes and individuals react differently to being abandoned.<sup>2</sup>

The sample thus includes one boy, aged 8, who acts in an unjustified aggressive manner towards his peers on a regular basis and the horse as co-therapist.

### **3.4.2 DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher collects data while participating in the study as a participant observer.

DeWalt and DeWalt (2002:92) believe that “the goal for design of research using participant observation as a method is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate as possible given the limitations of the method”.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:437), participant observation is really a “combination of particular data collection strategies: limited participation, field observation, interviewing and artefact collection”.

Limited participation is necessary to obtain acceptance of the researcher’s presence even though she is not obtrusive. In this case, acceptance of the researcher is even more important as the researcher will take part as observer and co-therapist.

#### **3.4.2.1 Interviewing**

Unlike quantitative interviewing, “qualitative interviewing tends to be flexible, responding to the direction in which interviewees take the interview” (Warren & Karner 2005:313).

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:444), the purpose of the interview in qualitative research is to:

- Obtain present perceptions of activities, roles, feelings, motivations, concerns and thoughts.
- Obtain future expectations or anticipated experiences.
- Verify and extend information obtained from other sources.
- Verify or extend hunches and ideas developed by participants or researcher.

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<sup>2</sup> See section 2.2.2 in chapter 2.

Qualitative interviews can take several forms. The researcher however focuses on the following two forms, as they are relevant to the research process:

- a. *Informal conversational interview.* In this type of interview, the questions emerge in the immediate context and are asked during the natural course of events. There is no predetermination concerning the topics or phrasing of the questions. Sewell (<http://ag.arizona.edu>) states that the “major advantage is that the interview is highly individualised and relevant to the individual. Thus, it is likely to produce information or insights that the interviewer could not have anticipated.”
- b. *Interview guide approach.* Topics for this type of interview are selected in advance. The researcher decides on the sequence and wording of questions during the interview itself. This makes the interview flexible and the researcher can adapt to the direction the interview is taking. As stated in Warren and Karner (2005:314), in “this semi-structured interview the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply”.

During, and after the therapy sessions there were many opportunities to conduct informal conversational interviews with the client. The researcher would also have informal conversational interviews with the client’s aunt and his class teacher to enquire on the client’s experience of therapy and changes in behaviour – if any. Notes of these interviews were then integrated into the reflex notes. These interviews could rather be regarded as conversations than interviews.

Before onset of the first horse whispering session, the researcher had interviews with the client’s class teacher and his aunt (who has protective custody of the client). The researcher used the interview guide approach. Topics for these interviews were decided on in advance but the researcher determined the questions and phrasings during the interviews.

Topics for these interviews were:

1. general impression
2. the client’s social interactions
3. the client’s nonverbal communication
4. the client’s aggression
5. possible triggers for the aggressive behaviour.

These interviews were all audio taped and transcribed. Audio taped interviews are less intrusive than videotape and it avoids bias on the side of the researcher with regards to the interviewee's physical appearance.

The disadvantage of verbatim transcripts seems to be that they take up considerable time and effort. "It is best to allow five to six hours for transcription for every hour of speech" and that it leads to "daunting piles of paper to work through" (Warren & Karner 2005:321). No wonder Lofland and Lofland, in Warren and Karner (2005:322), advise "the analysis of qualitative data should not be left until all the interviews have been completed and transcribed".

The advantage of these transcriptions however, are that they

- help to correct natural limitations of the researcher's memory
- allow more thorough interpretation of what people say
- permit repeated examination of the interviewee's answers
- open up the data to public scrutiny by other researchers
- allow the data to be re-used in other ways from those intended by the original researcher (Warren & Karner 2005:321).

#### **3.4.2.2 Field observations**

As previously mentioned in section 3.3.2, the researcher chose the role of participant observer.

Field observations are the direct observations and recordings of events as it takes place in the field. This is an active process, which includes recordings of facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, body movements and other nonverbal actions. This not only refers to the human child involved but, just as importantly, to the horse's nonverbal behaviour.

DeWalt and DeWalt in Kawulich (2005:2) state that, fieldwork involves "active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience".

The researcher thus participates and observes in the technique of horse whispering and writes extensive field notes describing what occurs while in the field. To ensure that the researcher does not become subjective, the researcher will act with empathy and not sympathy. However, since the horse functions as co-therapist, it is most probable that the researcher will have personal experiences as well. The researcher will integrate these reflections into the analysis.

To ensure validity and reliability, videotaped recordings will be made of all sessions and all verbal comments recorded verbatim. The researcher will make field notes during the sessions and will write reflex records immediately after leaving the site.

The researcher decided on doing four horse whispering sessions. These sessions would take place every second week to allow for internalisation and integration of previous sessions. Two interview sessions for reflection and feedback from the client were incorporated a day after the third and again after the fourth session. This was decided as it is difficult to draw or write at the specific site where the therapy would take place.

### **3.4.2.3 Documents and artefact collection**

In contrast to the interview, document and artefact collection is a non-interactive strategy for obtaining qualitative data with little or no reciprocity between researcher and participant. “Artefact collections are tangible manifestations that describe peoples’ experience, knowledge, actions and values” (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:451).

The following two types of artefacts are important in this specific case:

- a. *Personal Documents*: This is any first-person narrative, which describes individuals’ actions, experiences, and beliefs. Examples of such documents would be diaries, letters or anecdotal records that can surface anytime during the interview or participant observation.
- b. *Official Documents*: These documents include the more formal record, such as the student’s record at school or the client’s case history. These records provide an institutional perspective on the child and are more objective in nature.

The researcher makes use of both these types of artefacts or documents. The researcher firstly consulted official documents. Before onset of therapy, the researcher researched the client’s history by reading school records and his case history.

The client’s psychological case history included reports written by the social worker overseeing his placement and previous psychological evaluations done by an independent psychologist.

Personal documents were consulted during the research process.

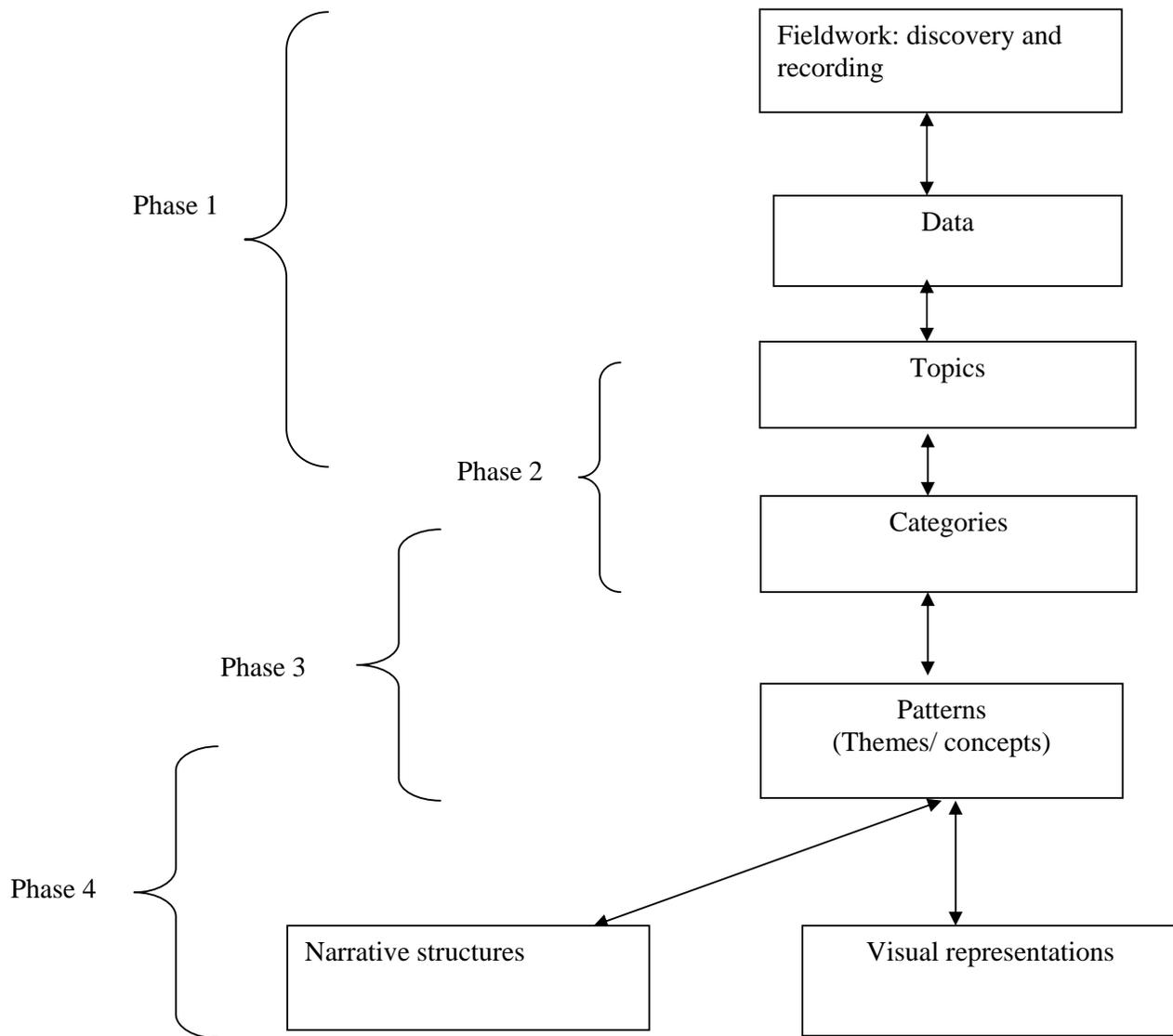
The researcher asked the client's aunt to keep diary entries after sessions, to describe the client's frame of mind, his feelings, thoughts, experiences and beliefs. The researcher also asked the client to make drawings and/or write letters to the horse after sessions three and four. These drawings or letters were regarded as an expression of the client's experiences and feelings and also as a reflection on what he had gained through participating in the horse whispering process.

### **3.4.3 DATA INTERPRETATION**

Analysing qualitative data is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying relationships among the categories.

Qualitative analysis is a “relatively systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting to provide explanations of a single phenomenon” (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:462).

The process of data-analysis can be illustrated by the following diagram:



The researcher scanned all the data for possible topics and gained a global perspective on the range of data topics. The researcher then looked for recurring meanings that may become major themes. She then organised the data into categories and relevant themes.

The main analytical instrument used was comparison. By comparing and contrasting, the data was divided firstly into topics and then into larger clusters or categories. The researcher then coded the data.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 467) defines coding as a “process of dividing data into parts by a classification system”. Initial codes derived from the research questions and interview guide were used. These codes were reviewed during the analysis and additional codes were

added where necessary. In fact, the whole system of data-analysis was continually revised to enable the most efficient analysis.

To conclude the researcher identified patterns or relationships among categories. The major pattern(s) served as the framework for reporting the findings and organising the report.

### **3.5. CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the researcher discussed her research design to validate the scientific basis of the research. This chapter can also be regarded as foundation for the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EMPIRICAL STUDY**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a discussion on the results of the study. The researcher will discuss the results obtained from the horse whispering sessions as well as interviews and documents collected. The researcher also interprets the data and discusses the research results.

Since all the interviews and horse whispering session were recorded in Afrikaans, the complete verbatim transcriptions of all interviews and therapeutic sessions can be read in Addendum B. The researcher uses selected translations from these transcriptions as representations of the data.

#### **4.2 INTERVIEWS**

The researcher made use of the interview guide approach, where topics are selected in advance but the sequence and wording are decided on during the interview. The topics for the interviews were as follows:

- ✍ General impression of the client
- ✍ The client's social interactions
- ✍ The client's nonverbal communication
- ✍ The client's aggressive behaviour
- ✍ Possible causes for the aggressive behaviour

The researcher interviewed the aunt, who had approached the researcher for help with the client's aggressive behaviour. The researcher also interviewed the client's class teacher.

##### **4.2.1 INTERVIEW WITH AUNT (GUARDIAN)**

###### **GENERAL IMPRESSION:**

I: Adam was extremely confused. He had no discipline, religion, emotional or educational background. He was an empty shell.

###### **INTERACTION WITH OTHERS**

I:<sup>3</sup> Adam is very quiet and does not communicate voluntarily. He is completely withdrawn. He is spontaneous with Pieter, but is extremely unsure of himself. He copies everything Pieter does.

T: *How does Pieter handle Adam?*

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<sup>3</sup> The letter T refers to the Therapist and the letter I to the interviewee.

- I: Pieter sometimes gets irritated with Adam and then they start arguing.
- T: *Arguing?*
- I: Yes, they would scream at one another and sometimes they would even wrestle.... It is very difficult for Adam to leave Pieter's things alone. Adam will even hit Pieter.

#### DESCRIBING ADAM'S AGGRESSION.

- I: Adam becomes aggressive when he has to express himself emotionally....
- T: *Express himself emotionally?*
- I: Yes.... when he wants attention or love, when he is irritated and even when he is unhappy he reacts in an aggressive manner.
- T: *Can you describe his aggression?*
- I: He will start hitting and screaming... you know... he will even start jumping around. He also loves breaking his toys. After we removed him from his home, his dad refused to send his toys. We gave him new toys, you know, so he can feel that he also has toys and that this is his house too. Because he wants to play with Pieter's toys and Pieter is very protective of his cars and things.
- T: *Are there any specific times that he would behave in an aggressive manner?*
- I: He is extremely aggressive when his mother phones him and sometimes after visits with his father.
- T: *And further?*
- I: Also when confronted with things that happened that are unacceptable...
- T: *Could you explain what kind of things?*
- I: For example, uhm... fighting at school ... things that he has in his possession that does not belong to him ... then he becomes aggressive immediately.
- T: *How would you describe his aggression?*
- I: Well, he would not scream at grownups. But in his manner of speech and his behaviour, he is aggressive.
- He will speak of hitting someone or ... uhm ... he will slam things down or slam the door, you know?
- Sometimes when I ask him to do something he would say: "I am not your servant"... something his mother used to say. You know in the household he comes from it is not unusual.
- Everybody was aggressive in that house. His mother always hit him, for any reason ... and there were many times when his mom and dad would hit one another ... I cannot tell you how many times he would get on his little bicycle and ride to our house when they

were fighting and arguing. I think that is the reason why Adam did not pass grade 1 because he was also very aggressive in class.

#### DESCRIBE ADAM'S NONVERBAL BEHAVIOUR.

I: ... he seldom makes eye contact with people. Especially when he is sad or guilty of doing something wrong. He will make eye contact on occasion, but only for a second. He basically avoids making eye contact.

T: *And his body language?*

I: It is like ... how can I put it ... he gives you the impression that he wants to be invisible.

#### DO YOU THINK ADAM HAS FORMED A BOND WITH ANYONE?

I: Not with his mother. Karin, it's unbelievable. When he wants to sit on her lap, she would push him away and say that she doesn't want him near her. There were many times that she locked him in his room because he had done something that she didn't like. Often because he wanted to kiss or hug her and then she was drunk and she would push him away from her.

During the years, I think, Adam developed a lot of trust in us, especially in me. When they were arguing at home he would ride to us on his bicycle and come cry there. He was only five then and he often wanted to sleep over because he was too scared to go home. He would say that he is very scared when his mother and father argue and then he would refuse to go home if I don't go with him.

Adam is like my own child and I want to give him a happy childhood. I think we've had a bond from the beginning; it just isn't very strong yet.

#### 4.2.2 INTERVIEW WITH CLASS TEACHER

##### GENERAL IMPRESSION:

I: When he first came to me he was unsure and aggressive. He used to bully everybody. He couldn't concentrate. He battles to do basic work. He is also dependable. He always helps. He does what you ask him to do... just not his schoolwork. He is very creative. He also has a strong influence on the other children in the class.

T: *Tell me more?*

I: They easily follow him ... he is a real leader ...

T: *And?*

I: When he leaves the class he gets wild. He hits, boxes, bites and swears... I get many complaints about his aggression between 12:00 and 13:00 (after school when he waits for his aunt to come pick him up.) He hits the other children ... and he swears a lot. I have to keep my eye on him because if I do not, he gets like a wild thing.

#### INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

I: Adam wants to take control. It is difficult for him to share. He will co-operate with the other kids in the class.

I don't think that the other kids reject him. He is rather popular with the other kids.

#### DESCRIBE ADAM'S AGGRESSION

I: He has a silent aggression ... It is rather interesting ... when I am there, he isn't aggressive. When I am not there he takes his chances.

When I am in the class when he builds his puzzle there are no problems. Should I however leave the class and I come back, I find that he is involved in a wrestling match or that ... someone is crying and Adam had something to do with that.

T: *What do you mean with a silent aggression?*

I: He has a very short temper ... He will hit others ... hurt them ... he will hit them with his fists, especially the boys in the class.

#### WHEN DOES ADAM BEHAVE AGGRESSIVELY?

I: I can't tell what happened for him to become aggressive. He disrupts the group that he is working in, which leads to aggression. He would for example break the puzzle or hide a piece of the puzzle...

T: *Are there specific children that he gets aggressive with?*

I: It is usually the same two children (boys) with whom he is always fighting. He also likes to play with them ... They are also boys who like to play rough. They would play rugby and someone always has to get hurt ... It would usually end with them fighting.

#### DESCRIBE ADAM'S NONVERBAL BEHAVIOUR.

I: He doesn't make eye contact with me. If you touch his arm he will draw back or continually move his arm. When I confront him, he doesn't look at me and I have to tell him to look at the chalkboard or to look in his book. He makes eye contact with the other children when he is serious and he tries to explain something.

## HAS ADAM FORMED A BOND WITH YOU?

I: I don't know... we have a good relationship. He doesn't speak about his mom and dad. He talks about his aunt, but very little about his uncle. He doesn't talk much. He helps me a lot in the class. There are times that he is very quiet and he just stares ahead... The other children often complain that he swears at them...

### **4.3 FIELD OBSERVATIONS**

The following are summarised, translated transcriptions of the horse whispering sessions. The reader can refer to Addendum B for the complete original transcriptions. The following excerpts are highlights of the original transcriptions. Photographs of the horse whispering sessions can be viewed in Addendum C.

#### **4.3.1 SESSION ONE**

This was the very first session that Adam had with the horses. In this session, we concentrated mainly on meeting the horses and making Adam feel comfortable in the horses' presence.

During the 5km drive to the riding school Adam only talked when I spoke to him directly. He was very quiet and subdued.

On our arrival, we met all the horses. A small foal came up to greet him. He spontaneously touched the foal. The 'mother' (mare) immediately came closer when Adam started touching the foal. After a little while the mare pushed the foal away from Adam. He looked surprised.

**T:**<sup>4</sup> Why do you think she did that?

**C:** She thinks I am going to hurt her... or kill her.

The foal immediately came back for more. Adam spontaneously reached out and touched her. She licked Adam's hand.

**C:** Hey, ... don't bite me. (In a soft and warm voice)

He's licking me... (He sounds excited. He is completely at ease.)

**T:** She is saying hallo.

Once again the mother steps between the two and pushes the foal away. The little foal wouldn't stay away and this time the mare very aggressively pushes the foal away from Adam. Her ears are pulled back and her whole body language says 'this is the last time I tell you not to come close to this human'. Adam seems scared at the mare's reaction.

**T:** Why is the mom doing that?

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<sup>4</sup> The letter C represents the client's dialogue and the letter T, that of the therapist

- C:** The mom wants to protect him so he doesn't get hurt...
- T:** How do you feel when the mom takes away the foal?
- C:** Not nice...  
She's not nice. (The mare)
- T:** Why does she do it?
- C:** I don't know... (he looks sad)... ... She must be scared that I will hurt him... that I shoot him or something...

The mare and the foal are now standing at a distance.

- T:** Do you think she is scared that you are going to hurt the foal?
- C:** Yes, she thinks I am going to shoot it or something...
- T:** Why do you think the mare is pulling her ears back?
- C:** ... ... She must be angry...
- T:** Yes?
- C:** That I hurt the little one or... touch her (the foal).

We move on to greet the other horses. Adam spontaneously walks up to a gelding. He holds out his hand and the horse walks up to him, neighing. The horse nudges Adam in the neck. He laughs, but doesn't pull back. Adam strokes the horse's nose.

- T:** How does it feel to rub his nose?
- C:** It feels as if his nose is of ... ... soft.  
Hey...you are tickling me... (Both the horse and Adam reacts spontaneously towards one another.) He allows the horse to nibble in his neck and doesn't push him away.
- C:** Hey, do you want to bite me?
- T:** Do you think that he wants to bite you?
- C:** No... he just tickles me... his whiskers are tickling me.

He allows the horse to stand as close to him as the poles will allow and seems at ease.

He walks up to the second gelding and strokes him. He laughs when the horse nibbles him.

- C:** Hey, are you biting my finger?

The horse licks his hand and gently nibbles his fingers. Adam strokes the horse.

- C:** Hey, you are biting my finger... Ouch. (Adam does not get aggressive and merely pulls his finger from the horse's mouth. He then walks back to the first gelding to stroke them.

- C:** Hallo... Don't bite me. (He sounds slightly worried.)
- T:** How does it feel to be so close to a big horse like that?
- C:** Nice...

Adam comes to sit next to me on the ground. He looks up at the one gelding who is staring at other horses in an adjacent paddock.

**T:** What do you think he is thinking?

**C:** I don't know...

**T:** Look at him, what do you think he is feeling?

**C:** He... .. he looks... tired or sad..."

**T:** I wonder what made him feel sad?

**C:** ... .. I don't know...

**T:** Which horse would you like to work with next time?

**C:** That one. (He points to the horse that bit his finger. The one he said looks sad and tired.)

**T:** Then it might be good if you tell the horse that you are going to work with it next time.

Adam walks up to the horse who immediately responds to his presence by nibbling at his shirt.

**T:** Ask him why he feels so sad.

**C:** Why are you so sad? (He continuously strokes the horse's nose.)

The horse turns around and walks away from Adam. Adam looks upset.

**T:** How does it feel when the horse walks away?

**C:** Not nice... sad...

Adam came to sit with me and seemed to have lost interest in the horses.

**T:** Let's say goodbye to the horses.

Adam walks up to the horses and strokes them one by one. He says to the gelding.

**C:** Bye... I will come and work with you.

On the way back, he couldn't stop talking and spontaneously talked about their farm.

#### **4.3.2 SESSION TWO**

On arrival Adam immediately greeted the foal. We lead the horse he had chosen to the ring. He looks very unsure of himself.

In the ring

**T:** When the horse is licking or chewing, what does it say?

**C:** That he knows I won't hurt him.

**T:** Yes and everything we do today will revolve around this. When you work with a horse you must concentrate to see if he licks or chews.

**T:** I want you to ask the horse to trot around in the ring. When you want him to trot faster, you stretch out your arms and fingers like this. (Demonstrate)

Now you do it.

(Adam does as I demonstrated) Excellent. When you want him to go quicker you just walk up to him and stretch out your arms like this.

It is important that you keep him moving. Let me show you how we do it.

I move the horse around and show Adam how to get the horse trotting faster.

**T:** Now it's your turn. I'll walk with you.

I walk with Adam but the horse keeps on stopping without licking or chewing. Adam's body language is very soft and not at all assertive.

**T:** Let's try again.

Adam tries again but the horse still keeps on stopping. Adam is very unsure and does not make eye contact. This is extremely important as it is the body language and the eye contact that makes the horse move.

**T:** Look at his eyes Adam. You must keep your eyes on him. You have to keep the horse moving until he licks or chews. Then he will know that he has to listen to you.

Adam is extremely unsure and not assertive enough. He made the mistake of getting too close to the horse's hind legs. Twice I warned him and he pulled back, but the third time the horse kicked out at him and nicked his arm. He sat down on the ground and started crying.

I took him in my arms and consoled him. He was happy to sit like that for quite a while.

**T:** You just sit back and cry as much as you like... ..

Did you have a big fright?

**C:** Yes...

**T:** Tell me what happened.

**C:** The horse simply kicked me.

**T:** And you had a big fright.

**C:** Yes... I thought the horse was going to kill me...

He sat there in my arms crying for a while.

**T:** Tell me what it felt like when the horse kicked you.

**C:** Not nice... sad...

**T:** Sad?

**C:** Yes, because he kicked me.

**T:** Let us go make peace with the horse. Tell him how you feel.

**C:** You hurt me very much... (To the horse.)

**T:** And?

**C:** I am very sad that you kicked me. You hurt me very much ...

The whole time he was stroking the horse's nose. The horse licked.

**T:** There... He says that he is sorry.

I think it will be a good idea if we take the horse back to the paddock.

Adam leads the horse back to the paddock. He is very quiet. We sit beside the paddock. I take him in my arms again. He allows it.

**T:** Why do you think the horse kicked you?

**C:** He was angry.

**T:** Angry... What do you think he was angry about?

**C:** I don't know.

**T:** Do you also feel like you can hit or kick a person sometimes?

**C:** Yes, sometimes at school... or Pieter.

**T:** When do you feel like that?

**C:** When I am irritated.

**T:** Do you think the horse was irritated?

**C:** Yes

**T:** How could the horse have told you that he is irritated?

He thinks for a while.

**C:** ... I am irritated... leave me alone!

**T:** Do you sometimes tell people that?

**C:** No.

**T:** What do you do when they bother you, or when you are angry?

**C:** I go and play with the dogs or listen to music.

**T:** What can you tell Pieter when he irritates you?

**C:** Leave me alone.

**T:** Will you ever say that to Tannie Ottie?

**C:** No... I can't...

**T:** Why not?

**C:** She'll hit me.

**T:** When you tell her that you are irritated and that she must leave you alone?

**C:** Yes... she will hit me.

**T:** What do you do at school when you want the other kids to leave you alone?

**C:** I'll leave them alone ... and sit alone...

**T:** Do they leave you alone then?

**C:** No.

**T:** And what happens when they keep on bothering you?

**C:** Then I get mad ... I'll hit them.

**T:** Do you think this is what happened with the horse today?

**C:** Yes

**T:** He couldn't tell you to leave him alone so he kicked you?

**C:** Yes...

We sat there for a while. I was rubbing his back and shoulders the whole time. He didn't pull away. (This is a child diagnosed with Tactile Defensiveness. He doesn't let anybody touch him.)

**T:** What will you tell Pieter next time he bothers you?

**C:** ...I'll tell him to leave me alone...

**T:** Sometimes people don't know when to leave us alone nê?

**C:** Yes

**T:** But if we then tell them, they know and they can let us be?

**C:** Yes.

**T:** Will you try it next time with Pieter?

**C:** Yes...

**T:** What will you tell him?

**C:** Leave me alone...

**T:** That's good. I think he will leave you alone then.... Will you also try it with your friends at school?

**C:** Hmmmm... (positive)

**T:** Let me show you a horse that will not kick you.

We walked up to Alphi and she immediately came closer. Adam is anxious. She immediately licks her lips and chews.

**T:** What is she saying?

**C:** She won't hurt me...

**T:** I think so too.

Alphi snorted in his neck. Adam laughs.

**C:** She's tickling me.

We stood by Alphi for a while and then he said that he would rather leave.

### **4.3.3 SESSION THREE**

Adam was mad at the horse and at me, but more so at the horse, because of what happened in the previous session. Alphi was waiting in the ring when Adam arrived. I asked him to stroke Alphi until she licks or chews. He was extremely tense.

The moment Alphi turns her head at him he says:

**C:** Hey, don't bite me.

**T:** Don't worry, she only wants to see what you are doing. Just keep on until she chews.

Adam makes no eye contact with Alphi and the moment that she chews, he immediately steps back and stands next to me.

**T:** Please do the same on the other side. Stroke her until she licks or chews.

When she turns her head to look at him, he thinks that she is going to bite him. His body language illustrates his anxiety. He looks ready to run away.

**T:** You are doing great Adam. She is taking a little longer on this side. Just keep on going until she licks or chews.

When Alphi licks, he immediately leaves her side and stands next to me.

**T:** I am now going to ask you to walk with Alphi in the ring. I want you to keep going until she licks or chews.

He walks with her but is extremely uncertain and soft in his body language. She is leading him around. He doesn't make any eye contact with the horse. She bumps against him repeatedly.

**T:** Remember yóu tell her where to go.

You're doing good... Just keep going until she chews.

Adam smiles and looks at Alphi. He pushes her away and she listens. He also leads her to the other side. He walks round twice and then Alphi licks her lips.

**T:** Excellent Adam... I would now like you to stroke Alphi's nose. Tell me what you feel when you touch her there.

Alphi puts her head down for Adam. He looks more relaxed. His shoulders are softer and he strokes with his whole hand, not just the fingertips as before.

**T:** How does it feel?

**C:** Soft and smooth...

Alphi moves closer and puts her head on his shoulder.

**C:** Hie, hie... I like it when these whiskers tickle me. He laughs aloud.

**T:** Do you like it?

**C:** Yes, it tickles.

**T:** Do you think she likes it?

**C:** Yes

**T:** How can you tell?

**C:** She is chewing and standing ...still.

Alphi licks and Adam stops immediately.

I asked Adam to stroke Alphi on the neck both sides as well as the chest.

**T:** Now I would like you to stroke her tummy and her bums. (I demonstrate)

You see, she doesn't kick.

Adam stands next to me and strokes her tummy and her hindquarters. She immediately starts licking.

**T:** You are doing very well. When horses are in the wild, they are extremely careful that something shouldn't touch them there... That is the place that tigers or lions attack.... so when Alphi lets you touch her there... it means that she absolutely trusts you... Do you know what it means when someone trusts you?

**C:** No

**T:** It means that she knows that you won't hurt her... she can relax.

There... she licks again. What is she saying?

**C:** That she tr... I won't hurt her... she won't hurt me.

**T:** Lovely.

Adam stands back and Alphi immediately stands closer to him. She puts her head down and he strokes her nose.

**C:** Ja... must I stroke you?

At his moment the little foal comes into the ring. She is still easily frightened and then runs away. She stops a distance from Adam. He starts walking closer, with his hand outstretched. She trots away. Adam stands still and waits for the foal to come closer. When she eventually does, he pets her nose and mouth. After a while, he lets her out of the ring to rejoin her mother.

**T:** Do you remember last time we were here the mommy pushed the little foal away from you?

**C:** Yes

**T:** Why did she do it?

**C:** So the foal doesn't get hurt.

**T:** That must be what Oom Costa is doing too?

**C:** Yes... he was very angry... he doesn't want me to get hurt.

Alphi pushes against him and he pulls away. He had a fright.

**C:** Do you want to bite me?

**T:** She wants to see what you're doing. She is curious.

He shows her the stick he was using to draw with in the sand.

**T:** Adam I want you to come and stand close to Alphi, look in her eyes and tell me what you see.

He looks at her eyes but he finds it difficult to maintain eye contact.

**T:** What do you see?

**C:** I see black.... ( He looks away)

**T:** What else do you see?

**C:** (He looks closely)... Myself... (he pulls away from Alphi)

**T:** Look again... Do you think she is a vicious horse or a loving one?

**C:** (he looks closely)... A loving one...

Alphi puts her nose in his neck. He pulls away.

**T:** Remember that day the horse kicked you, we said when someone bothers you, and you must tell them? How will you tell Alphi that she's bothering you?

**C:** I'll leave her alone. (He stands back)

**T:** Yes... and when she comes too close to you, you can lift up your hand quickly and she will pull away from you... Do you want to try it?

He quickly lifts his hand and she pulls her head away from him.

**T:** There, you see... it worked. Now give her a pat so she knows that you are not mad at her.

He pats her and she licks. He also hugs her around the neck. Alphi turns around and walks away from him.

**T:** How does it feel when she walks away like that?

**C:** Nice

**T:** Are you glad that she is leaving for a bit?

**C:** Yes.

Adam then tells me how his cousin chased him around with the BB gun and that Adam told him to stop. Pieter stopped bothering Adam. So it worked to tell Pieter to stop.

Adam then took Alphi back to the paddock. His body language and his voice were assertive and he took control. Complete the opposite of the beginning of the session.

At the paddock I asked him to say thank you to Alphi.

**C:** Thank you, you naughty horse... You listened to me, thank you, you naughty... (While he gives her a hug.)

Alphi nibbles his neck and he laughs aloud.

On the way home he talked non-stop about a wide variety of topics.

#### **4.3.4 SESSION FOUR**

On the way to the horses Adam told me that his uncle told him that if he ever works with a horse again, his uncle would kill the horse. He was very stressed and worried.

Before we started with his session we watched as the children saddled their horses to go on an outride. The owner told us about the mare (with the foal) who was badly abused and who never wanted anyone to come close to her. She would kick anyone attempting to come close. While we stood there a horse bit me. I immediately slapped him on the nose. (In the wild, horses immediately bite other horses when they do something unacceptable. Biting the dominant mare is totally out of the question. So is biting humans!) Adam watched this wide-eyed.

In the ring I asked Adam to lead Alphi around the ring. He is extremely unsure of himself and shows no confidence. He seems very tense and does not make eye contact with the horse at all. His body language testifies to this nervousness.

**T:** Are you feeling a bit scared today Adam?

**C:** Yes... (voice is high pitched)

**T:** What do you think will happen?

**C:** Nothing...

**T:** Alphi can feel that you are a bit anxious... that's why she takes such a long time to chew. Alphi tries to walk away from Adam. She also looks very tense. Adam looks relieved when she walks away.

**T:** Adam, hold her so she doesn't walk away from you.

He keeps on stroking her, but he is extremely tight and uncomfortable.

**T:** Adam, come stand here next to Alphi... Excellent. Put your hand on her shoulder... now breathe in deeply and ... out...

He is extremely anxious.

**T:** Wonderful ... now again ... breathe in ... and ... out ... And once again...

His body relaxes and his shoulders soften. Alphi immediately licks her lips.

**T:** Excellent...

Adam I would like you to lead Alphi around the ring. When you get there (show)... stop ... wait a second ... and walk on to there (show) ... stop Alphi and then walk on.

Adam leads Alphi until he reaches the first stop. He walks very slowly and looks back at Alphi the whole time. He's almost walking backwards. His body language shows his uncertainty and his lack of confidence. His shoulders are sagging and his head is hanging. When they reach the first mark, Alphi doesn't want to stand still. He shows no assertion. He continues to the second mark and again Alphi does not want to stop completely.

**T:** Thanks Adam... Just have a look when I lead her... (I demonstrate) ...See, I walk quickly and have my back to her when I walk. I walk quickly because her legs are longer than mine. I look in front because I don't want to fall over something. (He laughs). I come

to the first mark and stop. Alphi stops completely. I demonstrate a second time. And once again Alphi comes to a complete stop.

**T:** Now I would like you to try again. I will walk with you.

Once again Adam's body language shows his lack of assertiveness and his discomfort. Alphi mirrors his body language. She also seems unsure what to do and unwilling to walk with Adam.

I take Adam, by the shoulders and guide him forward.

**T:** Let's walk a little faster so Alphi's long legs can keep up ... Now we are going to tell Alphi to stop... stop. (She gives two strides and then stops.)

**T:** Excellent, now we are going to do it again.

I walk behind him again, gently pushing him forwards by his shoulders. We stop again and this time Alphi gives only one step.

**T:** Well done. (He smiles). Now I'm going to stand in the middle and watch how you do it. Adam walks on. His shoulders are squared and he leads with more confidence. He walks slowly, but does not look back.

**T:** Well done, Adam. Remember her legs are long you must walk quickly... When you are ready you can stop.

Adam stops and Alphi stops with him.

**T:** Excellent Adam... Now do it again.

He walks on and this time he does everything right. He walks quickly and his shoulders are squared. His head is lifted up and he looks determined. When he stops Alphi immediately stops. He does it once more successfully.

**T:** Wonderful... Now I want to show you how to make Alphi stop without pulling on the leading rope. (Adam makes eye contact with me and smiles).

This time you are going to take the rope only in your left hand. I am going to walk forward... you see I only lead with one hand.

**C:** Yes (He looks at me closely)

**T:** So when I want her to stop I turn around and stand in front of her. It is very important that you look in her eyes...

I will now... ... stop.

I turn around in an assertive manner and Alphi comes to a standstill.

[It is very important in this exercise that the trainer's body language must be assertive and dominant without it being aggressive. Eye contact plays a huge role.]

**T:** Did you see what happened?

**C:** Yes.

I demonstrate it again. He watches me closely.

**T:** Now you can try... Remember to walk in front of her and then turn around.

Adam leads with determination. He turns around but doesn't make eye contact. Alphi gives one step forward.

**T:** Well done Adam.

He pulls back his shoulders and smiles. I ask him to do it again.

**T:** Make sure you look at her eyes when you turn around.... Whenever you're ready...

Adam turns around and makes eye contact with Alphi. She stops immediately and licks her lips.

**T:** That was 100% Adam. Look she's licking her lips... well done.

Adam still keeps eye contact with Alphi, and smiles.

I ask him to repeat the whole process and he did so with confidence. I then asked him to bring Alphi to the middle and pat her.

**C:** Hey... you listened well. (To the horse)

We sit on the ground and Adam tells me about his uncle who always pesters them. While he is talking Alphi comes to stand close in front of me.

**T:** Adam, Alphi is now bothering me. Do you remember last time we said that when someone bothers you, you have to tell them?... What do you think we can do to tell Alphi that she is standing too close?

**C:** We can tell her 'go away'. (Voice is determined)

**T:** Yes... or we can do the following.

I put my hand on Alphi's chest and say with determination 'back', while I push her away. She gives one step backwards.

**T:** Now she's stepped back ... Let me do it again. She gives one step back and licks her lips. Adam looks interested.

**T:** Did you see what she did?

**C:** She licked.

**T:** That means?

**C:** She won't hurt us.

**T:** Yes, and she'll listen to us. Now you try it.

Adam jumps up and puts his hand on her chest. He says 'back' with a determined voice. Alphi steps back.

**T:** Well done Adam, she stepped back ... Do it again.

He repeats the exercise and Alphi takes another step back.

**T:** You did that well, Adam ... when you use a strong voice like that she listens.

What you did with Alphi, you can also do with people ... Let's say someone stands too close to you or bumps against you... what can you do?

**C:** Say 'leave me alone!'

**T:** And if they still stand too close?

**C:** Push them away.

**T:** Yes... show me how you would do that ... Push me away as if I am bothering you.  
I bump against him and he laughs at me. He pushes me away gently.

**T:** That was a good beginning... Remember how hard you had to push Alphi?... Push me like that.

This time he pushes me away with more determination. He feels very uncomfortable with the exercise.

**T:** Well done. That was just enough. Now when someone bumps against you, you can say and do?

**C:** Leave me alone...

**T:** Yes, let's do it again.

He tells me to back up and pushes me away with determination.

Our conversation turns to the mare, which used to kick, and her foal.

**T:** You know Adam, some horses are like that. When humans hit them a lot, they don't want anybody to come close to them ...They are so used to get hurt...

He turns away his face

**T:** Do you think it happens with people too?

**C:** Yes (very softly)

**T:** When the kids are hit a lot they are scared when someone comes too close to them?

He nods.

**T:** You remember the horse that bit me?... I had to smack him on the nose because he was naughty ... But when he licked, I pat him.

**C:** Yes

**T:** Sometimes horses have to get a slap when they bite... and sometimes children also get a hiding?

He tells me that his aunt gives them hidings when they have been very naughty.

**T:** When Tannie Ottie gives you a hug are you scared that she is going to hit you?

**C:** No, I wasn't naughty!

**T:** Then it's OK to let people come close to you?

**C:** Yes, but I don't always like it.

**T:** Of course. What can you do about it?  
**C:** Tell them to leave me alone!  
**T:** And?  
**C:** ... and push them away like I did with the horse.  
**T:** In other words, we can decide who we want close to us and who not?  
**C:** Yes.  
**T:** Do you think Alphi likes having you close to her?  
**C:** Yes (he looks into her eyes)  
**T:** How do you know that?  
**C:** She licks.  
**T:** Yes...  
Sometimes it is nice to have people close to us nê?  
**C:** Yes... not always.  
**T:** Not always.

After a while Alphi turned away and I suggested that we take her back to her paddock. Adam thanked her once again for co-operating and gave her a big hug. During our drive home he talked incessantly.

When we arrived home, his aunt gave him a big hug. He looked very uncomfortable and finally said, "Leave me alone, don't hug me." He then walked away and went to play with his cousin. He was very assertive when he said this to the aunt.

#### **4.4 DOCUMENTS AND ARTEFACT COLLECTION**

##### **4.4.1 OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS**

The following is a summary of the background information as noted in Adam's school record as well as the social worker's background information.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: ADAM<sup>5</sup>

AGE: 8 years 8 months

Grade: one (repeating)

Summary of background:

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<sup>5</sup> NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT CLIENT

Adam is the only child. He lived on a farm with his mother and father. His childhood has not been a happy one. Since birth, his biological mother abandoned him. Adam's development as child was slow. He only started speaking after two years old. There are also other developmental delays such as motor development, speech development and perceptual development.

Adam's mother has been addicted to alcohol and pills from before Adam's birth. She would lie around the house in a drunken-trancelike state ignoring Adam's pleas for love and affection. Adam's father is also an alcoholic and does not pay any attention to Adam.

Adam's mother and father fights violently with one another. They would sometimes throw each other with knives and threaten each other with guns. When these fights occurred, Adam would get on his bicycle and ride over to his uncle and aunt's house, approximately one kilometre on the other side of the farm. He was four years old.

There were many times when there was no food in the house and Adam would go hungry. Whenever he tried to get some affection from his mother, she would swear at him and tell him to leave her alone. These attempts for love and affection would many times end in violent corporal punishment and his mother would send him to his room afterwards. Adam spent many days locked in his bedroom because he 'misbehaved'. His misbehaviour was often because he tried to hug his mother or sit on her lap.

In December 2004, Adam's mother decided to leave. She got into a taxi and left while Adam was in school. She did not say goodbye.

Subsequently, Adam was placed in foster care with his aunt and uncle. He still has limited contact with his father, but has had only contact telephonically with his mother.

Adam does not take part in discussions in class and is often involved in aggressive incidents. He is aggressive towards his classmates and towards his cousin (10 years old) with whom he lives. He likes to break his toys and continually pushes his peers around. When his aunt disciplines him, he often sulks for days and avoids speaking to her.

The social worker determined that he has not formed any bonds with primary caregivers or any other people (both adults and peers). He avoids physical contact and withdraws into his own

inner world when upset. His occupational therapist has, amongst other things diagnosed him with Tactile Defensiveness.

## **4.4.2 PERSONAL DOCUMENTS**

### **4.4.2.1 Aunt's Diary**

The researcher requested that the client's aunt make short notes on what the client said and experienced after horse whispering sessions. The translated entries are documented below.

#### AFTER THE FIRST SESSION

After the session, I asked if it was nice, if he rode on the horse, and if he likes horses. He said that he first answered the questions and then he chose a horse to work with. He stroke the horse and the horse bit him.

I asked what the lady asked and if he liked the horse. He said that the lady asked many questions that he cannot remember and he likes the horse but not so much after it bit him. He did not want to elaborate. He did say that he also stroke another horse.

#### AFTER THE SECOND SESSION

Adam was excited this morning because he thought that he would ride on a horse today.

When he got home he did not want to talk much, he only said that the horse had kicked him.

I asked more and he said that he had fetched the horse but that he was scared. He felt as if the horse would step on him. Then the horse kicked him and he does not like the horse anymore.

He says he does not want to go again.

I asked him if he was angry at the horse or Karin, and he said that he was a little angry with Karin, but he was very angry at the horse.

I told him that he must make peace with the horse and he said that he already did. I suggested that the next time he goes I will go with him. He said that he would then go.

#### AFTER THE THIRD SESSION

I took Adam to the riding school but he was very anxious and did not want to relax with Karin.

I decided after a while that I would leave. He felt that it was OK.

When I asked him the afternoon how it had gone, he only said that this was a better horse and she does not bite him. She only pouts her lips and nibbles his jacket. He also said that he rubbed her nose, which she liked. He also told me that he had stroked her bum and she did not want to kick him. She walks very fast and lightly pushes him away with her shoulder.

When he saw that I was writing everything down, he said now Tannie Ottie is making notes like the other lady. Why do you do that?

I told him that Karin sometimes forgets things and when she wants to remember, she can just read the notes.

I am making notes for her on what you say about today, if it was nice or not and I write it on paper so when she forgets, she can read it again. He thinks we are very dumb to do that.

#### AFTER THE FOURTH SESSION

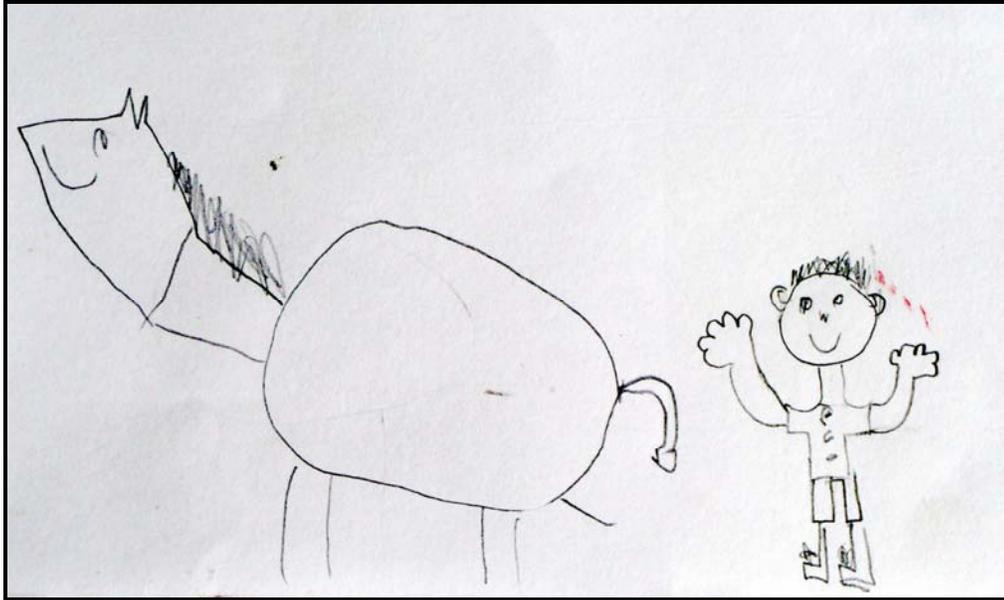
Adam started talking about the session spontaneously tonight. He told us during supper how he pet the horse and how he led it in a circle. He said that he was scared at first but he worked with Karin's tame horse. He said, "I will never again chase a horse, but the lady's horse will not kick me. She is tame. She plays with my hair. She nudged me when I sat on my haunches, she did it with the lady too, and I fell on my bum just like the lady did." I asked him if he enjoyed it and he said that it was nicer than other times. He told me that the horse bit Karin, while she was holding it for another girl, and that she slapped him. He said, "I told her that I will not work with that awful horse again." He started talking about his birthday.

Adam later said that he does not want me to hug him in front of Karin because he does not like it. He said I could do it when our family is alone or when we are at Marietjie. Just not in front of other people. His aunt later told me that she had observed him with the other children at his birthday party. She said for the first time she saw him pushing someone away softly but firmly and telling them that he did not like what they were doing. He also told them to leave him alone.

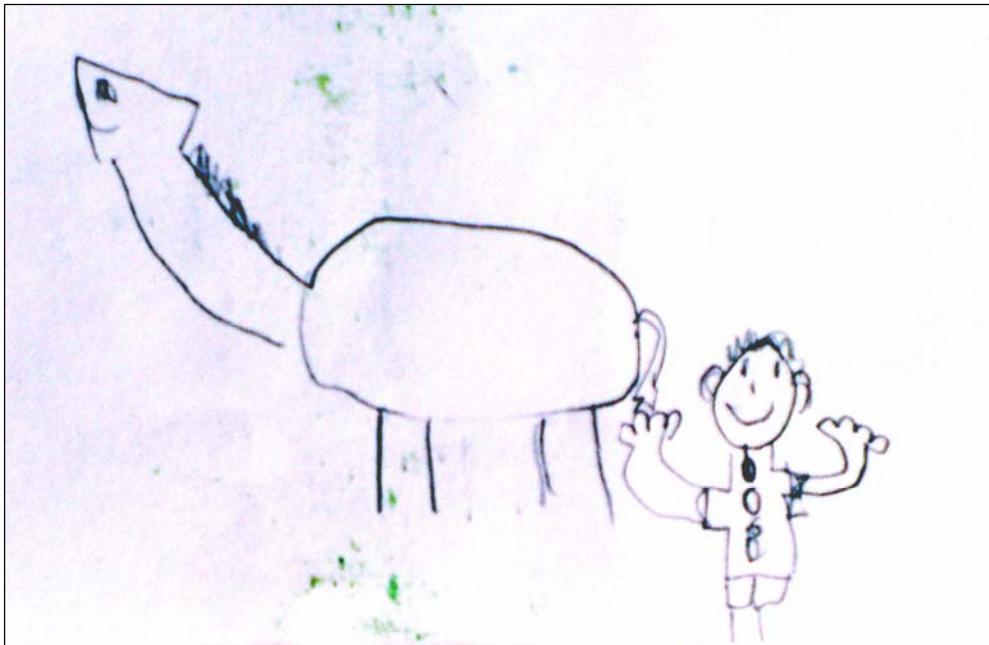
#### **4.4.2.2 Client drawings**

The researcher asked the client to make a drawing of his experiences with the horse after session three and again after session four. The first two drawings were done after the third session. I asked Adam to draw what he felt or remembered best after the three sessions.

**Drawing A: Adam's drawing of session two**



**Drawing B: Adam's drawing of session three.**



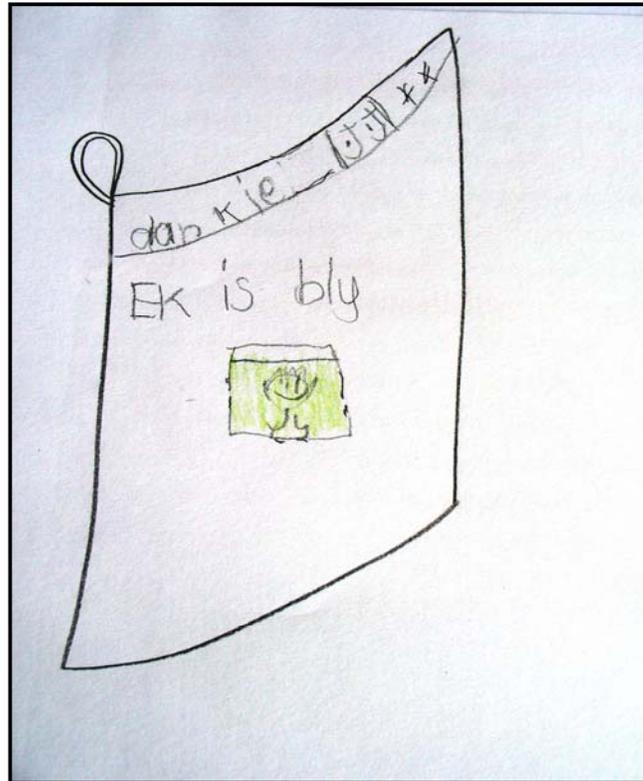
After the fourth session, I asked Adam to draw what he remembered about our sessions. He drew the following picture:



Looking closer



I also asked whether he would like to say something to Alphi (the horse). He said that he wanted to say thank you. He said that he would like to give Alphi some grass or maize to eat. He then drew a card especially for Alphi to thank her.



Adam said that he feels happy and wishes to say thank you to the horse. The picture on the card is a bucket with “nice, green grass or maize” in. He would like to give this to Alphi to say thank you for being such a good horse. He drew a face with a big smile on the bucket to show Alphi that he was happy.

When I asked Adam what he learnt from Alphi, he said it was to tell people to leave him alone when he is irritated and to push them away when their physical closeness makes him feel threatened or uncomfortable.

#### **4.5 INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

After coding the data, the researcher identified the following categories:

- Aggression
- Nonverbal communication
- Bonding

The researcher identified themes from the data and the following represent illustrative examples of these themes.

#### **4.5.1 AGGRESSION**

This section does not focus so much on the client's aggressive behaviour, but more so on the way he perceives aggression from the horses. A recurrent theme throughout all the sessions was Adam's expectancy of aggression directed towards him. When any of the horses licked his hand, came too close or nibbled in his neck, he expected them to bite him. He said many times while working with the horses, "Hey, don't bite me..." In his later sessions when the horse turned her head to look at him, he kept turning her head away saying "Hey...no...turn away your head. Do you want to bite me?"

Adam interprets the mare's protective behaviour of her foal as a reaction to what she thinks he is going to do. "She must be scared that I will hurt him... that I shoot him or something..." When all that she is doing is protecting her foal as a mother would. Adam thinks she believes that he will hurt the foal. Even in his day-to-day life, he expects aggression. Because of this, he cannot set boundaries. He says for example that he cannot tell his aunt that she must leave him alone when he feels irritated because, she "will hit me".

There are many instances during the actual horse whispering sessions that Adam reacts to the horse's touch as if he had a fright. It happens especially when the horse touches him unexpectedly. When Alphi touched him while he was busy with something else, he pulled away and asked, "Do you want to bite me?"

Adam withdraws from this perceived aggression. He gives a step back when working with the horses or immediately withdraws his touch and involvement. When he was actually involved in an aggressive incident, where the horse kicked out at him, he expected to be killed. He said, "I thought he would kill me". An understandable reaction to being kicked by a big, strong horse, but also possibly a real fear of being physically hurt when people act aggressively. There must have been times in the past where he really did feel that his mother or father would kill each other, or kill him when they fought.

Not surprisingly, Adam exhibits aggressive behaviour at school and at home. He exhibits overt aggressive behaviour as he kicks, bites and punches other kids. His aunt mentioned in a conversation, that Adam also vents his frustration on the dogs by teasing or pinching them. When he feels frustrated or angry, he slams the doors and he loves to break his toys. He also exhibits passive aggressive behaviour. He sulks when his aunt disciplines him and refuses to talk to her for days. He swears a lot – especially at his peers. He also teases his cousin, and

peers, and frustrates them. He would for example hide his cousin's cars or hold a piece of puzzle to himself, refusing to give it up so the group can finish the puzzle.

Although Adam was never overtly aggressive with the horses, the researcher did feel that there were undertones of passive aggressive behaviour. An element of this aggression, for example, becomes visible when he tickled the horse, in her nose, with a blade of grass. He got a lot of satisfaction from her reaction. When the researcher asked him whether he thought the horses liked that, Adam said "No". He did say that he liked tickling them.

#### **4.5.2 BONDING**

The social worker, who evaluated Adam for placement with foster parents, found that Adam had formed no bonding with any people, especially his primary caregivers. The researcher experienced during the horse whispering sessions that this was not because *he could not* bond.

Adam immediately bonded with the little foal. He went ahead spontaneously and touched the foal. She also bonded with him as she kept on coming back to him, against her mother's wishes. Even later on in the third session when Adam was working with Alphi, the foal came into the ring by herself to greet Adam. When the foal licked his hand, Adam did not pull back at all and rather enjoyed it. Remember that this is a boy who was diagnosed as tactile defensive by the occupational therapist! He also had no problems allowing the other horses to nudge him or nibble his neck. He laughed loudly and said that, "the whiskers are tickling him." He stood his ground and did not pull away. He seemed relaxed and at ease when this happened.

Another example of bonding with the horses during the first session, was his identification with the gelding he chose to work with. He projects his own feelings at the horse and says that the horse is feeling "sad...or tired..."

The horses also bonded with him. The little foal immediately came to say hallo to him and would not leave. Both the geldings and Alphi greeted him and made physical contact with him in some way. In later sessions when the client worked with Alphi, she put her head down so he could hug her. She showed her bonding with Adam by licking and chewing and submitting to his control. He allowed Alphi to come close to him, into his personal space. There are many instances where he would hug her, or put his head against her head or just stroke her lovingly on the nose while talking to her. He also perceives her as a loving horse and says that she enjoys his company.

In the second session, the unfortunate accident facilitated bonding between the therapist and the client. Adam allowed the therapist to console him and hold him in her arms. He did not pull back and allowed physical contact. The bonding also became evident after the third and fourth session when the client communicated freely with the therapist and shared anecdotes from his personal life. Something his class teacher says he hardly ever does. He did not share intense personal feelings or happenings, but she felt that this was progression as he had never volunteered any information before.

Adam had contradictory reactions to being separated from the horses. It became evident that Adam did not like the separation when he wanted the physical nearness and attention of the horse. When the mare pushed the foal aside, he said that he did not like it that she was gone. He said that it felt “Not nice ... Sad ...” However, when he experienced the physical contact as threatening or invasive, he was only too glad to see the horse leave. When Alphi walked away from him in the third session, he said it felt good when she moves away from him

#### **4.5.3 NONVERBAL BEHAVIOUR**

One of the first statements made by both Adam’s aunt and his class teacher was that he struggled to make eye contact.

In the first session, Adam made eye contact with the horses. When touching the horses he would look into their eyes and his body language showed that he was relaxed and at ease. He avoided making eye contact with the researcher. He was very polite, but when the researcher spoke to him, he looked at the ground or stared into the distance.

In the second session, Adam had to act in an assertive manner towards the horse. He found it extremely difficult to make eye contact with the horse. This resulted in Adam not being able to read the horse’s nonverbal communication. The horse in turn reacted with confusion and did not react to Adam’s requests.

In the third session, the therapist specifically asked Adam not only to make eye contact with the horse, but also to describe what he saw there. He found it difficult initially but persevered. He said that he saw “black” and when looking closer he said that he saw “himself”. The horse became a mirror for the client. Later on in the session, he found it easier to make eye contact, but could only do so for a short period. The researcher did notice that when they were driving

home, Adam found it easier to make eye contact with the researcher - even though it was only fleetingly.

The final session started out with Adam feeling very unsure. He again had to take on an assertive role and he could not make eye contact. Alphi responded by not stopping when he asked her to and by bumping into him. As the session progressed and Adam became more confident, he found it easier to maintain eye contact. He behaved more assertively and the horse responded positively. For example, when he turned round to ask Alphi to stop, he made immediate eye contact and his body language was assertive. She stopped immediately.

During the reflection session (after the fourth horse whispering session), the researcher noticed that not only could he make eye contact with the researcher, but he could also maintain the contact for a while. His teacher also reported that the client made more eye contact with her in the classroom.

The client's history suggests that he has no experience of physical contact being nurturing and loving, but only as the predecessor of aggression and pain. He only experienced rejection when seeking and making physical contact with his primary caregivers – especially his mother. It is therefore understandable that the occupational therapist and his class teacher experienced him as tactile defensive. The class teacher states that when she touches his arm, he would pull away or move his arm the whole time. The client's aunt also mentioned that he does not like it when she wants to hug him and that he did not hug her spontaneously. He would pull away when she hugged him.

The researcher expected that the client would find it difficult to be close to the horse. However, from the first session, the client enjoyed it when the horses touched him and nibbled his neck. During the fourth session, he spontaneously hugged the horse.

It must be said, that although he allowed the horse to touch him and tickle him with its whiskers, he did experience a deal of tension. Especially in the earlier sessions, Adam always expected the horse to bite him when it came close to him or turned its head to look at him.

After further enquiries, the researcher established that he also expected that people, who come close to him, were going to hurt him physically. When people come too close to him, Adam becomes anxious and reacts in an aggressive manner. It would seem that Adam has a huge

personal space around him. He feels threatened when this space is invaded. In response, he reacts in an aggressive manner.

The success of horse whispering lies partly in the interpretation of the horse's nonverbal behaviour. It also lies in the assertiveness of the trainer. "In natural horsemanship, the handler asks the horse to 'join up' in a partnership based on herd-behavior dominance and respect for each other" (Martin Taylor 2001:9). If the horse does not respect the client, he will not achieve join up. This respect is earned through assertive behaviour, and not through aggression.

In the second session Adam's lack of assertiveness caused the horse to feel confused and irritated. The horse mirrored Adam's body language and feelings at that stage. It was trotting aimlessly around the pen, without assertion or direction from Adam. ["I walk with Adam but the horse keeps on stopping without licking or chewing. His body language is very soft and not at all assertive. Adam tries again but the horse still keeps on stopping. He is very unsure and does not make eye contact. This is extremely important as it is the body language and the eye contact that makes the horse move." <sup>6</sup>]

However, the session provided excellent material to work with. The aggressive behaviour of the horse – that was nothing more than fear – became a mirror of the client's aggression. The client could see himself as the horse, kicking, when people invaded his space. That space being the boundary that kept him safe. He could identify with the horse. The client states that sometimes he feels he can hit people, especially when he is "irritated".

Through role-play, the idea was integrated that we have a right to set boundaries and tell people to "leave us alone". Adam clearly felt uncomfortable with being assertive.

His lack of assertion became obvious again in session three and four. At the beginning of session three, Adam could not assert himself at all. The moment that Adam had to be assertive he would withdraw, avoid eye contact and completely shut down. He was unsure of himself. His shoulders were sagging, he was avoiding eye contact and he was almost whispering. At the end of session four however, the client acted in a more assertive manner. The horse mirrored his assertive manner by reacting immediately and licking her lips.

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<sup>6</sup> Horse whispering session two – verbatim transcriptions: Addendum C

The client's aunt mentioned, after the fourth session, that she noticed more assertiveness in Adam's behaviour. This assertiveness is crucial, as Adam seems to battle with setting boundaries. He does not know how to be assertive and instead reverts to aggressive behaviour to protect his personal space.

The client's aunt mentions after the horse whispering sessions were completed, that Adam hugs her, out of his own free will. He is however, still uncomfortable when it occurs in front of strangers. When the researcher took the client home, after the fourth session, his aunt hugged him. Adam said, "Leave me... I don't like it". A huge step forward for the boy who said that he cannot tell his aunt to leave him alone when he feels irritated, because she will hit him (session 1).

Because Adam does not have the knowledge or the ability to act assertively and set his own boundaries, he had to employ defensive strategies when there was a possibility of getting hurt. Physically and emotionally. The particular defence mechanisms Adam employs are withdrawal and avoidance.

After the horse whispering sessions, Adam now has the self-assurance to assert himself. His aunt states that he does not copy his cousin anymore and does not merely do what Pieter wants him to do anymore. At Adam's recent birthday party, she also noticed that he could set his boundaries and tell his friends that they are bothering him.

Adam's withdrawal has not completely evolved into a dissociation of feelings and involvement. Throughout the last two sessions, Adam showed that he wanted to be actively involved in the horse whispering process. The researcher feels that this implies a positive prognosis for continued therapy, as he wants to be part of his own healing process.

The positive feedback he received during the sessions, from the researcher and the horse, seems to have improved his self-confidence and self-image. In the ring, he experienced success when working with the horse. He also experienced how it felt to have control and to set personal boundaries. The researcher also noticed these changes in his body language.

#### **4.6 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS**

From all the interviews, reports and especially horse whispering sessions, the researcher now attempts to answer the research questions posed in chapter one (section 1.5.2.1.)

#### **4.6.1 Will a boy, showing aggressive behaviour, be able to form a nurturing bond with a horse?**

Combining human aggression and therapy with animals surely raises questions on viability and safety. Especially when working with a big, strong animal such as a horse.

The researcher not only questioned if bonding was possible from the client's side, but also from the horse's side. Horses are very sensitive interpreters of nonverbal communication and the researcher wondered if the horse would allow the boy to enter its space – without kicking or running away. It seemed in this case that it is possible for a boy exhibiting aggressive behaviour to form a bond with a horse.

The little foal and the client bonded instinctively on our arrival. It was a spontaneous outreach from both sides – the foal and the client. The researcher got the impression that they immediately felt comfortable in each other's presence. The little foal came closer by itself, licked its lips and pushed his head through the fence to lick the client's hand. The client smiled, spoke to the foal and touched it. More importantly, the client allowed the foal close to him and even allowed the foal to lick his hand and nibble his neck.

There are many other instances during the sessions with Alphi, where the client allowed the horse to touch him and be close to him. The researcher emphasises touch because the client normally withdraws completely from physical touch and even physical closeness. He becomes irritable when people touch him or when his aunt tries to hug him. Alphi has a warm, sensitive, caring personality. Not unlike the qualities, we normally associate with a typical mother, and very unlike that of his mother. The client could feel safe with her and could read her nonverbal communication. He also managed to see the parallels between her behaviour and the behaviour of humans.

The thank you card he created for her (section 4.4.2.2) illustrates the client's bond with Alphi.. He says on the card that he is "happy" to have worked with her. He even draws himself smiling so the horse can see how happy he is. The green represents sweet grass he would like to give to her to thank her.

The researcher asked the client which horse he felt closest to, and he said to Alphi. He also told his aunt and class teacher all about Alphi. The class teacher commented that she was surprised

when he told her about the horse, because the client hardly ever volunteers information about his personal life.

When the client chose to work with the gelding, the researcher felt confident that the child and the horse had formed a bond. The gelding surely greeted the client profusely, allowed the client to touch him and nibbled the client's ear, neck and his fingers. The client identified with the gelding and projected his feelings of sadness and loneliness onto the horse.

It can be argued that the session with the gelding was not successful. The researcher, however, disagrees. Had it not been for the fact that the horse had kicked him, he would perhaps not have opened up about his own frustrations and anger at people around him. These revelations provided the researcher with insight into the client's experiences and a possible reason for his aggressive behaviour. The client was later able to identify with the horse's frustration and understood why it ultimately led to aggressive behaviour. With some assistance, he could draw the parallel between the horse's behaviour and his own aggressive behaviour. The incident also provided the researcher with an opportunity to 'mother' the client. The researcher was able to physically touch him and console him – something the client normally avoids because he seems to have negative connotations with being touched.

The fact that the horse kicked the client was not because there was no bond or relationship between them, but that the client's nonverbal communication with the horse (while in the ring), was uncertain and not assertive enough. This not only confused and irritated the horse, but also scared it. The horse went into 'fight or flight' mode. This then leads us to the next research question.

#### **4.6.2 Will using Horse Whispering enhance the aggressive boy's understanding of nonverbal behaviour and assist him in correctly interpreting nonverbal cues?**

The researcher introduced the client to nonverbal behaviour by initially focusing on one aspect of the horse's nonverbal communication. The researcher asked the client to focus on the horse's mouth and lips. When the horse licked or chewed, he was sending the message that 'everything is ok'. The horse was feeling relaxed and would not 'attack'.

The client could identify when the horse was communicating this right from the beginning. He tended to miss a lot of nonverbal behaviour however, because he rarely made eye contact, but kept his gaze averted. This was definitely an area to work on.

The researcher noticed that the client could not make eye contact with the horse or the researcher, when he needed to act in an assertive manner. He could easily make eye contact with the horse outside the ring, but had difficulty doing so inside the ring. When he needed to act assertively, he withdrew and averted his gaze.

Throughout the Horse Whispering sessions, the therapist focused on this aspect. By the last session, the client not only managed to act assertively by using his body language, but he could also make eye contact with the horse. The researcher also noticed that the client made eye contact with her voluntarily. The client's aunt commented that the client could make eye contact with her for a longer period than before. She also commented that his body language was more assertive in general.

According to the researcher, this is a positive improvement. Making eye contact and 'seeing' the nonverbal communication is the first step towards its interpretation.

Where initially the researcher proposed that the Horse Whispering sessions could assist the client in interpreting other people's nonverbal communication, it became clear that the client's need was firstly to understand his own nonverbal behaviour. He had to learn to identify the emotion he felt during his sessions and act congruently.

Congruency in communication is one of the prerequisites when working with horses (Tramutt 2003:2). Especially when the emotions suppressed are negative emotions. Linda Kohanov writes that the "common habit of suppressing negative or socially unacceptable feelings is notoriously unsettling to a species that survives by being able to gauge a predator's presence and intentions at a distance. A person who is "emotionally incongruent", who acts one way while feeling the opposite, appears dangerously out of focus to the equine awareness system" (2001:33).

During the Horse Whispering sessions, the therapist and client focused on aligning his emotional experiences with his nonverbal communication. When the client, for example, feels that a person is violating his personal space, he should use assertiveness and effective verbal and nonverbal cues to ask the person to move away. With the help of the horse, the client and researcher role-played this action. The client found it empowering and gained a lot of self-confidence.

As therapy progressed, the client managed to interpret the horse's nonverbal behaviour with growing ease and skill. There is still a great deal to improve on, however.

The researcher hopes that understanding his own nonverbal behaviour will assist the client in soundly interpreting other people's nonverbal behaviour. The full effect remains to be seen and no clear-cut answer can be provided to this question. The researcher feels that with continued therapy, the client will also master the skill of correctly interpreting other people's nonverbal behaviour.

#### **4.6.3 Will creating a bond with a horse enable the aggressive boy to improve on his social skills and therefore form positive social bonds?**

By learning to respect the horse and to communicate in a congruent manner, the client role-plays his social skills.

The researcher noticed that the client seemingly has a large personal space around him, but that he lacks the assertiveness to enforce his boundaries. As the client says he feels like he can hit people when they bump against him and irritate him. Role-playing the assertiveness with the horse provided him with the self-confidence to set his boundaries with other people. Becoming aware of his own boundaries also lead him to respect other's boundaries – such as the horse's.

His social skills improved in the sense that the client did not need to act aggressively in order to protect himself, but could vocalise his wishes and thus avoid aggressive behaviour. The researcher feels confident that the client's awareness of his own wishes will, in time, lead to sensitivity to other people's wishes.

In the researcher's opinion, the bond with Alphi managed to assist the client to behave with respect and empathy towards the horse. The client successfully practised this respect, empathy and assertiveness in his relationship with family and friends.

The researcher has to mention that the client had little experience or exposure to social skills during his earlier years and that much still needs to be done. It seems however, that the limited experience the client had with Horse Whispering did have a positive impact on his social functioning.

#### **4.6.4 Will Horse Whispering facilitate psychological growth in the troubled child?**

To illustrate whether there was any curative value to the Horse Whispering sessions, the researcher sketches a picture of the client as he presented before the onset of therapy.

The client presented with passive and active aggression towards his peers, cousin and aunt. His experience with parental aggression and negligence probably caused him to avoid physical touch. His verbal communication was limited and he had almost no self-confidence. Although he seemed to have bonded with his aunt, he did not have other significant bonds with people. He also took out his frustration on the family's dogs. He battled to concentrate at school and although his teacher described him as a helpful child, he avoided any structure. He had a restricted emotional vocabulary and avoided showing emotions such as sadness and fear.

At the beginning of the Horse Whispering Sessions, the client exhibited some discomfort when the horse came too close to him. Whenever the horse looked at the client, or came too close to him, he expected the horse to hurt or bite him. By the end of the fourth session, the client felt more in control and actually spontaneously sought out the horse's touch. Not only did he allow the horse to nibble and nudge him without withdrawing, he also hugged the horse and enjoyed stroking it.

When his aunt hugged him, the client allowed it and after a while asked her to let go. He said that it embarrasses him when she hugs him in front of other people. He would normally pull back when she tried to hug him, and now he allowed it for a short while. He even allows the researcher to hug him. Although he does not feel completely comfortable with people touching him yet, he does not immediately pull back. He also sometimes spontaneously hugs his aunt, keeping the hugs short and sweet.

He had also learnt to voice his frustration when people's touch made him feel uncomfortable. He now stops the contact before it leads to frustration and in turn to aggressive behaviour. After completion of the Horse Whispering sessions, he became more assertive with his friends. According to his aunt and his teacher, the client is now capable of setting his own physical boundaries in an assertive, yet non-aggressive manner.

Perry Wood (2004:106) describes boundaries metaphorically as "lines drawn around whatever we feel is acceptable to us, physically, mentally and emotionally. They are not barricades or

walls, but represent a reasonable way of saying to others that ‘This is what is acceptable to me’ and ‘This is not’”.

It seems that the client’s ability to say ‘This is not acceptable to me’ has empowered him and given him self-confidence. The client’s increased level of self-confidence has also become visible in his demeanour. He readily makes eye contact and walks with his shoulders straight and backwards. He certainly gives the impression of being in control.

The researcher also noticed a change in the client’s drawings. If his first picture, is compared to his last drawing (section 4.4.2.2.), it would seem that the client’s whole perspective has broadened. He progressed from a three-inch drawing at the bottom of an A4 page, to a picture across an A4 page. The first drawing was a simple monochromatic drawing, while the last picture is colourful and full of detail. This could probably be an indicator of the client’s emotional growth. Another indicator could be his newly found ability to express himself.

According to the researcher, this evidence points to the curative value of Horse Whispering, or Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy, for this particular client. The full curative value could be determined over a longer period, with more extensive therapy.

“It’s impossible for a person of any age to handle feelings appropriately if he doesn’t know what he’s feeling to begin with. Equine-facilitated psychotherapy works on both these issues simultaneously... horses respond to and draw out hidden emotions that even highly experienced human counselors aren’t aware of” (Kohanov 2001:236). The client experienced these hidden emotions and learnt to work through them, probably resulting in a better-adjusted individual.

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

The researcher believes that there is enough evidence to suggest that the technique of horse whispering will have a positive effect on the interpersonal interactions of this particular aggressive boy.

Linda Kohanov states that “equine-facilitated psychotherapy employs a form of biofeedback for practicing self-awareness, emotional management, and relationship skills that human role-playing exercises and discussion groups can’t begin to access” (2001:237).

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter functions as a summary of the research project and reflects the findings. Recommendations are made for further research and the shortcomings of this particular study are presented.

#### **5.2 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

The general aim of the research was to determine whether the technique of horse whispering would have a positive effect on the interpersonal interaction of an aggressive boy.

The specific purpose of the research was to find possible answers to the following research questions:

- v. Will the aggressive boy be able to form a nurturing bond with a horse?
- vi. Will using the technique of horse whispering enhance the aggressive boy's understanding of non-verbal communication and assist him in correctly interpreting non-verbal cues?
- vii. Will the technique enable the boy to improve on his social skills and therefore form lasting social bonds?
- viii. Will the technique facilitate psychological growth in the troubled child?

#### **5.3 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE AND EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION**

##### **5.3.1 LITERATURE SUMMARY**

“A wide range of emotions is experienced by children when interacting with animals. Disordered children can think through the animals about their own behaviours and needs which are not easily understood by them. Because they view the animal as a social being, the projection of material regarding peer interaction is readily available” (Martin Taylor 2001:19)

Therapy with animals has a wide variety of positive affects. They assist in forming secure attachments, help the client gain more self-esteem, teaches the client how to focus on one aspect, increases social skills, assist the client in feeling more autonomous and makes it possible for the client to develop a new identity. There is evidence to suggest that children easily identify with animals. Because of developmental stages, children may see themselves as animals, which have been rejected and abused, and more readily identify with the perceived vulnerability of animals

than with adults. Children and horses share a “commonality of a prey relationship” (Dyer 2000:30). As mentioned, the aggressive child very seldom has secure attachments with parents, peers or teachers and is very likely to misinterpret nonverbal communication. He lacks the social skills to form positive relationships and because of that, is often socially rejected.

Bull (2001: 645) states that nonverbal cues are “important in emotional communication, they have also been regarded as central to interpersonal relationships”. Affectionate expressions are extremely important in the development of relationships. According to Fatt (1999), eye contact and gesture can be especially beneficial or detrimental to credibility and thus also to communication. Nonverbal communication, however, can be risky as the intended meaning of the sender can be misunderstood. This particular risk is even greater between strangers.

The essence of horse whispering is nonverbal communication. The point of origin is to understand and interpret the horse’s nonverbal communication in such a manner that the whisperer can communicate effectively with the horse.

“Working with the horse provides the therapist with an object in the space (other than the self) on which to promote projection and identification” (Martin Taylor 2001:18).

Horses are a lot like humans to some extent. They are social animals that aim to please and who enjoy the company of other horses – their peers. Each horse has its own distinct personality, attitude and moods. Like us (and even more so the child with ODD or CD) they are sometimes stubborn and even defiant. Many clients can associate with their instinctual hyper-vigilance and tendency to flee when afraid. One can almost see the thoughts running through the horse’s brains: should I run or should I kick? This lessens the client’s sense of being isolated or different.

Horses specifically act as mirrors. They create a consciousness of our own behaviour by reflecting that behaviour. They offer immediate, unbiased nonverbal feedback. They mirror exactly what human body language is telling them. The horse’s role in facilitating congruent spoken and body language becomes clear. If you get it wrong, you have to face an enormous, powerful and scared animal.

Congruency between spoken and nonverbal communication is important when we want others to receive the true meaning of what we are communicating. It can only be achieved when, as

Rector says (1992), the message is “aligned with the mind, body and spirit of inner feelings”. Many of the children with Disruptive Behavioural Disorders have learned to do one thing and say another, while completely ignoring what they feel in order to survive. When engaged in horse whispering the person is forced to align his inner feelings with his body language.

Working with this huge, powerful animal can also present a natural opportunity to overcome fear and gain confidence. In this regard, Vidrine *et al* (2002:600) reports that abused children or children from violent homes reported feeling comfort in the presence of such strength. Ultimately, the client learns to trust the horse, to have empathy with it and to respect it.

Congruence between spoken and nonverbal communication is important when we want others to receive the true meaning of what we are communicating. It can only be achieved when, as Rector says (1992), the message is “aligned with the mind, body and spirit of inner feelings”. Many of the children with Disruptive Behavioural Disorders have learned to do one thing and say another, while completely ignoring what they feel in order to survive. When engaged in horse whispering the person is forced to align his inner feelings with his body language.

Our bodies, thoughts and emotions are intrinsically linked. By influencing our nonverbal language, we can consciously communicate, influence, change or manage our emotions and the way we feel. This congruent communication will also affect communication with others.

In conclusion, the aggressive child needs to develop skills to communicate congruently. This will enable him to form positive attachments and relationships with others in his life.

### **5.3.2 SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION**

After conducting the interviews, reading all the artefacts and having four horse whispering sessions, the data was coded. The researcher identified that the main categories were aggression, nonverbal communication and bonding.

A recurrent theme throughout all the sessions was the client’s expectancy of aggression directed towards him. When any of the horses licked his hand, came too close or nibbled in his neck, he expected that they were going to bite him. He kept on telling them not to bite him. He even thinks that the mare expects aggressive behaviour from him. She expects him to kill her foal. The client expects aggression in all his relationships, and because of this, he cannot set

boundaries. He says for example that he cannot tell his aunt that she must leave him alone when he feels irritated because, she “will hit me”.

The client withdraws from this perceived aggression. He gives a step back when working with the horses or immediately withdraws his touch and involvement. When he was actually involved in an aggressive incident, where the horse kicked out at him, he expected that the horse would actually kill him. An understandable reaction to being kicked by a big, strong horse, but also possibly a real fear of being physically hurt when people act aggressively towards him.

The client exhibits overt aggressive behaviour and kicks, bites and punches other kids. His aunt mentioned in a conversation, that Adam also vents his frustration on the dogs by teasing or pinching them.

### **Bonding**

The client had formed no secure attachments with his primary caregivers. The researcher experienced during the horse whispering sessions that this was not because *he could not* or did not want to.

The client immediately bonded with the horses. He also had no problems allowing the other horses to nudge him or nibble his neck. He stood his ground and did not pull away. The client projected his own personal feelings on the horse, which helped him verbalise and recognise these emotions.

The horses also bonded with him. The little foal immediately came to say hello to him and would not leave. Both the geldings and Alphi greeted him and made physical contact with him in some way. In later sessions when the client worked with Alphi, she put her head down so he could hug her. She showed her bonding with Adam by licking and chewing and submitting to his control. He allowed Alphi to come close to him, into his personal space.

The therapist and the client also bonded through the horse whispering process. The client allowed the therapist to console him and hold him in her arms. He did not pull back and allowed physical contact. He also conversed with her in a spontaneous manner after the sessions.

Adam had contradictory reactions to being separated from the horses. It became evident that Adam did not like the separation when he wanted the physical nearness and attention of the horse.

### **Nonverbal behaviour.**

One of the first statements made by both Adam's aunt and his class teacher was that he struggled to make eye contact.

When the client had to act assertively, he initially could not make eye contact with the horse. This resulted in Adam not being able to read the horse's nonverbal communication. The horse in turn reacted with confusion and did not react to Adam's requests. As the sessions went by, the client found it easier to make eye contact with the horse and with the therapist. He acted more assertively and had more self-confidence. When he communicated his requests with assertiveness and self-confidence, the horse immediately responded. This made the client feel empowered and confident.

The client's history suggests that he has no experience of physical contact being nurturing and loving, but only as the predecessor of aggression and pain. He only experienced rejection when seeking and making physical contact with his primary caregivers – especially his mother. It is therefore understandable that the occupational therapist and his class teacher experienced him as tactile defensive.

The researcher expected that the client would find it difficult to be close to the horse. However, from the first session the client welcomed the horses to touch him and nibble in his neck. During the fourth session, he spontaneously hugged the horse.

After further enquiries, the researcher established that he also expected that people, who come close to him, were going to hurt him physically. When people come too close to him, Adam becomes anxious and reacts in an aggressive manner. It would seem that Adam has a huge personal space around him. He feels threatened when this space is invaded. In response, he reacts in an aggressive manner.

Through role play the idea was integrated that we have a right to set boundaries and tell people to "leave us alone". At the end of session four, the client felt confident enough to act out this assertiveness with his family and friends.

In conclusion, the researcher feels that she has realised the original goal. The researcher's aim was to determine if the technique of horse whispering would have a positive effect on the interpersonal interactions of an aggressive boy. The boy managed to set his personal boundaries with assertiveness, which dramatically lessened his aggressive behaviour.

Some of the more specific research questions the researcher answered are.

- This boy, showing aggressive behaviour, was indeed able to form a nurturing bond with a horse.
- Using the technique of horse whispering did fundamentally enhance the aggressive boy's understanding of nonverbal communication.
- Creating a bond with the horse enabled the aggressive boy to improve his social skills and therefore form positive social bonds.
- The technique of horse whispering, or Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy, did seem to have a curative value on this particular troubled child.

#### **5.4 SHORTCOMINGS OF THIS STUDY**

- The researcher feels that the four equine-facilitated psychotherapy sessions were not enough and that more sessions are needed to determine the overall effect it had on the client.
- The researcher also acknowledges that the period over which the therapy took place should be extended. Instead of nine weeks, the therapy should stretch over months or even a year. Making use of a longitudinal research design to determine whether the effect witnessed in this research was temporary or long-term would provide the scientific facts to harness this particular form of therapy in the psychological profession.

#### **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

- It would be interesting and informative to study which personality type is most suitable to work with horses and more specifically practicing equine facilitated psychotherapy. Specifically what kind of characteristics does a person need to be able to do Equine Facilitated psychotherapy?
- The researcher recommends that the effect of equine facilitated psychotherapy be researched for the treatment of AIDS orphans and children diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.
- The researcher recommends that further longitudinal studies be undertaken to determine whether the effects of equine facilitated psychotherapy (EFP) is temporary or long-term.

Could this type of psychotherapeutic intervention, using equine facilitated psychotherapy break the cycle of aggressive behaviour passed on from parents to children?

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, “It’s about recognising that animals, especially those animals that are healers, have a sense of what people need. They’re a lot more empathetic than we give them credit for, and they have a willingness to care for those who need help in ways that most people have to be medically trained to do” (Kohanov 2001:203).

And yes, if an aggressive child is taught the technique of Horse Whispering, and is able to achieve join-up with the horse in a gentle and non-aggressive manner, the aggressive child will then realise that there is other non-aggressive ways to assert himself and that it is ‘safe’ to form attachments or relationships with other people.

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**ADDENDUM A**  
**Pilot study. Client's drawing**



## ADDENDUM B

### Verbatim transcriptions: original

**1. Hoe sal jy Adam se algemene voorkoms beskryf?**  
**Wat is die algemene indruk wat jy van Adam het?**

Toe hy by my aangekom het was hy onseker en aggressief. Hy het almal afgeknou. Hy kon glad nie konsentreer nie. Hy sukkel om die basiese werk te doen. Dit is nou sy tweede jaar in graad 1, mens sou verwag dat hy dit kan doen. Hy is baie taalarm.

Maar ook baie... hoe sal ek sê, 'n seuntjie wat 'n staatmaker is. Hy is altyd ... behulpsaam. Enige iets wat mens hom gee om te doen, doen hy... behalwe sy skoolwerk.

Hy maak die mooiste sketse van karretjies... As mens hom die geleentheid gee, teken hy karre. Hy is 'n seuntjie wat uit papier iets kreatiefs kan maak.

Hy het ook 'n ... sterk invloed op die ander kinders in die klas.

*Vertel my meer van hierdie invloed wat hy op ander kinders het?*

Hulle volg hom maklik... hy is 'n regte leier...

*En nog?*

Hmmm... wanneer hy uit die klas uit gaan, word hy wild.

*Wild?*

Ja, hy slaan, boks, byt, praat in tale.... Ek kry veral tussen 12:00 en 13:00 baie klagtes van hom dat hy aggressief is.

*Vertel my van daardie aggressie.*

Hy slaan en boks die ander kinders... hy gebruik ook vuiltaal. Ek moet my duim op hom hou anderster word hy wild.

Ek het hom in 'n groepie laat sit om hom te boost. Hy het niks werk gedoen nie.

*En toe?*

Toe het ek hom geskuif en hom voor by my laat sit.

*En die resultaat?*

Niks... geen invloed... hy het selfs minder gedoen.

**2. Hoe sou jy Adam se interaksie met sy klasmaats beskryf?**

Met sy maatjies... hmmm.. hy laat hom nie onderkry nie. Hy wil graag die leiding neem.

Dit is vir hom moeilik om mededeelsaam te wees.

In 'n groep sal hy 'n gesprek aanknoop en met maats saamwerk.

*Sou jy sê dat Adam aanvaar word deur sy maats?*

Ek kry nie die gevoel dat hulle hom verwerp nie.  
Ek moet sê... 'n mooi eienskap van Adam is dat hy sal deel as iemand iets nodig het...  
Bv. 'n skerpmaker... hy sal vir 'n maatjie gee ... Maar as ek sê hulle moet die boeke  
inneem, wil hy nie deel nie. Ek dink hy het die erkenning nodig...

Hy is ook 'n kind wat ek kan stuur om vir iemand iets te gee. Ek kan hom nie met 'n  
mondelinge boodskap stuur nie want hy dra dit nie reg oor nie... Hy is heel populêr  
onder sy maats.

### **3. Hoe sal jy Adam se aggressie beskryf?**

Hy het 'n ... stille aggressie...

Dit is interessant... waar ek by is sal jy dit nie kry by hom. Wanneer ek nie daar is nie  
en hy onder my uit is, neem hy sy kanse waar.

*Soos byvoorbeeld?*

Wanneer hy legkaart bou in die klas waar ek daar is, is daar nie 'n probleem nie.  
Maar sou ek byvoorbeeld gou kantoor toe gaan en ek kom terug sal ek vind, jy weet,  
dat hy byvoorbeeld in 'n stoeigeveg by betrokke is of dat.... hy... iemand huil en hy  
daarby betrokke was.

*Wat bedoel jy met 'n stille aggressie?*

Hy het 'n kort humeur. 'n baie kort humeur...

Hy sal ander fisies slaan... hulle seermaak... Hy sal hulle slaan met die vuis...

*Seuns of meisies?*

Weet jy, spesifiek die seuns... Wel hy het dogtertjies ook geslaan ,maar meer die  
seuns.

### **4. Kan jy bepaal waarom Adam Aggressief optree?**

Ek kan nie agterkom wanneer hy aggressief is, wat gebeur het nie. Hy ontwrig  
byvoorbeeld die groepie waarin hy werk en dit lei tot aggressie. Hy sal byvoorbeeld  
die legkaart opbreek of 'n stuk van die legkaart vat....

*Ja?*

Toe ek gesê het hy mag nie meer op die mat legkaart bou nie, was dit beter... Hy mag  
sy legkaart by die tafel bou, maar nie op die mat nie... Dit was beter...

*Is daar spesifieke kinders met wie hy in konflik kom?*

Dis gewoonlik met dieselfde kind.... Daar is 2 maats (seuns)... met wie hy altyd  
baklei. Hy speel ook graag saam met hulle... Hulle is ook seuntjies wat hou van  
rowwe speel. Hulle sal rugby speel en iemand moet val en bloei voordat hulle  
ophou... Hy sal met hulle speel... en op die einde met hulle baklei...

### **5. Kan jy Adam se nie-verbale gedrag beskryf?**

Hy maak nie oogkontak met my nie.

As jy aan hom vat, aan sy armpie, sal hy sy arm wegvat of hy sal sy armpie heeltyd  
beweeg...

*Is dit net met jou wat hy nie oogkontak maak nie?*

Ek kan nie sê nie... hy kyk en gesels met die dogter wat langs hom sit. Wanneer ek hom konfronteer, kyk hy nie na my nie... Ek moet ook gedurig sê “kyk op die bord” of “kyk in jou boek”....

In ‘n mate maak hy oogkontak met die maats... wanneer hy meer ernstig is sal hy vir hulle kyk en verduidelik....

#### **6. Dink jy dat Adam ‘n band met jou gevorm het tot dusver?**

Ek weet nie.... ons het ‘n goeie verhouding. Hy praat nie oor mamma of pappa nie. Hy praat oor Tannie Ottie, maar min oor Costa... Hy vertel so nou en dan wat by die huis gebeur het... andersins is hy stil.

Hy is altyd op die verkeerde plek.

Hy help my baie in die klas... Wanneer ons verf hou hy daarvan om werkies te doen en die water in die emmer te gooi om die kwassies te was. Wanneer die ander kinders verf kan hy glad nie op sy werk konsentreer nie... Hy wil kort-kort die water gaan uitgooi en ander ingooi.... Maar ek weet dit sal gedoen word as hy dit moet doen.

Daar is tye wat hy baie stil is en net voor hom uitstaar... Die ander kinders kla dat hy hulle gevloek het.... Daar is dan ‘n opmerklieke verskil, ek moet heeltyd vir hom sê dat hy moet werk....

---

### **INTERVIEW WITH CYNTHIA**

#### **1. ALGMENE INDRUK**

ADAM was baie verward. Hy het geen dissipline, godsdiens of emosionele sowel as hmmm opvoedkundige agtergrond gehad nie.

*Ja?*

Hy was ‘n leë dop... as ek dit so kan beskryf.

#### **2. BESKRYF VIR MY ADAM SE INTERAKSIE MET ANDER MENSE**

ADAM is baie stil en kommunikeer nie sommer vanself nie. Jy weet. Hoe kan ek sê... in sy hele menswees is hy teruggetrokke.

*Met almal?*

Met Pieter is hy tog spontaan, maar baie onseker van homself. Hy sal Pieter na-aap in alles ....

*En hoe hanteer Pieter ADAM?*

Soms is ADAM vir Pieter irriterend en dan kry hulle gou stry.

*Stry?*

Ja, hulle sal sommer skree vir mekaar, en partykeer stoei hulle. ... Dit is vir ADAM baie moeilik om Pieter se goed uit te los. ADAM sal selfs vir Pieter slaan.

#### **3. HOE SOU JY ADAM SE AGGRESSIE BESKRYF?**

ADAM raak gou aggressief as hy hom emosioneel moet uitdruk....

*Emosioneel moet uitdruk?*

Ja.... hetsy aandag, liefde of geïrriteerd is, selfs as hy hartseer is tree hy aggressief op.

*Beskryf vir my sy aggressie.*

Hy sal begin skree of slaan .... jy weet, selfs rondspring. Hy is ook baie lief om sy speelgoed te breek. Jy weet toe ons hom weggevat het, het sy pa geweier om sy speelgoed saam te stuur. Ons het toe vir hom nuwe speelgoed gegee, jy weet, dat hy darem net ook speelgoed het en voel dit is sy huis ook.

*Ja*

Want anderster wil hy met Pieter se speelgoed speel en hy is baie gestel op sy karretjies en goed.

*Is hy aggressief op enige spesifieke oomblik?*

Hy is aggressief as sy ma telefonies kontak gemaak het en soms na besoeke wanneer hy en sy pa tyd spandeer....

*En nog?*

Wanneer hy gekonfronteer word oor gebeure wat nie na wense is nie....

*Verduidelik vir my wat jy daarmee bedoel.*

Byvoorbeeld.... uhm... bakleiery by die skool.... goedere in sy besit wat nie aan hom behoort nie.... dan is hy dadelik aggressief.

*Hoe sou jy sy aggressie dan beskryf?*

Wel, hy sal nie teenoor grootmense skreeu of trippel nie, maar in sy praat en maniere is hy aggressief.

*Ja?*

Ja, hy uhm.... hoe kan ek sê.... hy sal praat van iemand somer slaan of.... uhm.... hy sal dinge hard neersit of die deur hard toemaak, jy weet?

*Ja*

Partykeer as ek vir hom vra om iets te doen sal hy sê “ Ek is nie jou myt nie”... iets wat sy ma altyd gesê het.....

Jy weet, uit daardie huis wat hy gekom het is dit nie snaaks nie...

*Ja?*

Ja, almal was aggressief daar. Sy ma het hom altyd geslaan, vir enigiets.... en daar was baie kere wat sy en Adam se pa mekaar geslaan het....Ek kan nie vir jou sê hoeveel keer hy met sy ou fietsie na ons toe gery het wanneer hulle mekaar geslaan en geskreeu het nie. Ek dink dit is daarom dat Adam graad 1 gedruip het want hy was baie aggressief in die klas.

#### 4. BESKRYF VIR MY ADAM SE NIE-VERBALE GEDRAG.

.... hoe kan ek sê.... hy maak ook selde oogkontak met mens.

*Vertel my meer?*

Hy doen dit veral nie wanneer hy hartseer is of wanneer hy skuldig is aan iets of verkeerd is nie...

*En verder?*

Hy sal soms oogkontak maak, baie vinnig, maar vermy meestal oogkontak.

*En sy liggaamshouding?*

Dit is... hoe sou ek sê... jy weet, hy lyk amper of hy nie wil hê mens moet hom sien nie.

## 5. DINK JY ADAM HET 'N BAND GEVORM MET IEMAND?

Wel nie met sy ma nie. Karin, dis ongelooflik, as hy op haar skoot wil sit dan stoot sy hom weg en sê 'f-of' ek wil jou nie hier hê nie. Daar was baie kere wat sy hom in die kamer toegesluit het omdat hy iets gedoen het wat sy nie van hom nie. Dit was baie kere gewees dat hy haar wou soen of druk en sy was dronk dan het sy hom van haar skoot afgestamp.

Adam het so met die jare volgens my na mate sy opgroei, baie vertrouwe in ons (veral my) gehad... As daar rusies tuis was sou hy met sy fietsie na my toe ry en kom huil, toe was hy maar vyf en as hy bang was wou hy by ons oorslaap om nie by die huis te wees nie....

*Uh-hu*

Hy kon van kleins af sê hy is baie bang sy ma-hulle baklei en sou om die dood nie wou huis toe sonder dat ek by hom is nie....

*Hmmmm*

Vir my is Adam soos my eie kind en wil ek hom graag 'n gelukkige kinderlewe gee. Ons praat met hom as hy onredelik was.... Ek dink ons het al aan die begin 'n band met Adam gehad dit is net nie so ver ontwikkel nie.

---

## HORSE WHISPERING SESSIONS

### SESSIE 1

Ek het vir ADAM gaan oplaai by sy huis vir die eerste sessie. Hy was stil gedurende die 5 km rit na die ryskool en het net geantwoord wanneer ek hom iets gevra het.

Toe ons daar aankom het ek voorgestel dat ons eers al die perde gaan groet.

'n Klein vulletjie van omtrent 3 maande oud het spontaan na Adam aangeloop. Ons het buite die kamp gestaan.

Die merrie het nader begin stap toe Adam aan die vulletjie vat.

Na 'n rukkie het sy tussen Adam en die vulltjie ingestap en die vulletjie weggedruk van Adam af. Adam lyk verbaas.

*Hoekom dink jy doen sy dit?*

“Sy dink ek gaan hom seermaak... hom doodmaak.”

Die vulletjie draai terug en kom staan weer by Adam. Adam steek spontaan sy hand uit en die vulletjie kom nader. Die vulletjie lek Adam se hand.

“Hey, moenie my byt nie.” (Hy praat in 'n sagte, warm stemtoon.)

“Hy lek my....” (Adam klink opgewonde. Hy is gemaklik en ontspanne)

*Sy sê nou hallo.*

Die merrie kom haal weer die vulletjie. Druk tussen Adam en die vulletjie in en stoot haar weg.

Net as die merrie weg is, hardloop die vulletjie weer terug na Adam toe.

Die volgende keer druk die ma weer die vulletjie weg, maar hierdie keer trek sy haar ore terug teen haar kop so asof sy wil sê: Dis nou die laaste keer wat ek jou hier gaan wegvat. Adam lyk skrikkerig wanneer sy so kwaai optree.

*Waarom dink jy doen die mamma dit?*

“Die mamma wil hom beskerm sodat hy nie seerkry nie...”

*Hoe voel dit vir jou as die mamma die vulletjie so wegvat?*

“Nie lekker nie....”

*Hmmm?*

“sy’s lelik” (verwys na die merrie)

*So hoekom doen sy dit?*

“Ek weet nie.... (hy lyk hartseer)... Sy is seker bang ek maak hom seer..... ek skiet hom of iets....”

Die merrie en die vulletjie staan nou ‘n ent weg en eet. Hulle sterte waai heen en weer soos hulle die vlieë wegjaag.

“Ek laaik dit as hulle sterte so waai...”

*So jy dink sy is bang jy maak die vulletjie seer?*

“Ja... sy dink ek gaan hom doodskiet of iets...”

*Is dit lekker wanneer die merrie haar vulletjie wegvat?*

“Nee...”

Adam draai om en vertel vir my van sy tannie se perd. (Hy praat nooit oor sy ma nie – volgens sy klasjuffrou en sy tannie)

“My ma se .... uhm.... ek weet nie hoe om te sê.... soos Tannie Ottie maar nie daai tannie nie....”

*Jou ma se sussie?*

“Ja... haar perde het my altyd gebyt”

*Hmmm?*

“Ja...”

*Waarom dink jy het hierdie mamma haar ore so terug getrek?*

“.... Sy is seker kwaad....”

*Ja?*

“As ek die kleintjie seermaak of haar.... vryf.”

Hy kyk peinsend na die merrie en vulletjie. Hulle staan nou aan die ander kant van die kamp. Die merrie hou die vulletjie fyn dop en laat haar nie terug gaan na Adam toe nie.

*Wat sê jy ons gaan sê vir die ander perde ook hallo?*

“Ja...”

Ons stap na die ander perde wat in ander afsonderlike kampe staan en wei.

Adam loop spontaan na ‘n reunperd. Hy steek dadelik sy hand uit en die perd kom nader. Hy runnik (die perd)...

“Hallo....”

Adam vryf die perd. Hy is baie stil en lyk peinsend. Hy lyk egter op sy gemak. Adam staan aan die buitekant van die kamp terwyl houtpale hom van die perde skei. Die perd druk sy neus liggies in Adam se nek.

“Dis kielierig...” (Hy lag maar beweeg nie weg nie.)

Hy vryf die perd se neus.

*Hoe voel dit om sy neus te vryf?*

“Voel of sy neus van ..... is sag.”

“Hey.... kielie jy my....” (Hy praat in’n singende stemtoon. Lyk of hy dit geniet. Die perd is ook spontaan. Adam laat ’n paar keer toe dat die perd hom in sy nek kielie.

Hy lag telkens lekker en druk nie die perd weg nie)

“Hey, wil jy my byt?”

*Dink jy hy wil jou byt?*

“Nee, Tannie.... hy kielie my net.... hierdie baarde kielie my...” (Ek sien hoe gril hy as die snorbaarde hom kielie.)

Hy beweeg nie weg van die perd nie en laat toe dat die perd naby hom staan. Hy lyk op sy gemak.

*Dink jy hierdie perd het nog ‘n ma nodig soos daardie klein vulletjie daar anderkant?*

“Ja.... om babas te maak.”

*Dink jy hy het sy eie mamma nodig?*

“Nee... “

*Ja?*

“Hy is nou klaar groot?”

*Wie dink jy beskerm hom dan?*

“Hy doen dit self...”

Hy beweeg na die tweede reun toe. Hierdie perd kielie hom ook in die nek en hy lag spontaan en hardop.

“Hey, byt jy my vinger....” (Die perd het met sy lippe aan Adam se vinger gevroetel)

Adam vryf die perd se neus. Die perd lek sy hand en weer vat hy saggies aan sy vinger.

“Hey... jy byt my vinger... Eina” (Adam is gemaklik en raak nie aggressief nie. Hy haal sy vinger stadig uit die perd se lippe uit en trek sy hand terug.”

*Het hy jou vinger gebyt?*

“Ja, Tannie..... net saggies.”

“Tannie as ek en my nefie op die plaas is, ry ons met die baaiks....”

*Ja?*

“dit is ‘n 4x4 baaik en hy is baie groot vir my.... ons ry wild ek en my nefie... my niggie moan altyd en sê ons ry vir haar weg... sy’s ‘n regte sussie...”

*Is dit?*

“Ja.... maar ek wou nog altyd op ‘n perd ry.... maar perde wat my nie byt nie.... Daar is ander perde altyd gewees wat my gebyt het...”

*Uh-hu?*

.”My tannie se perde.... niemand ry op hulle nie.... hulle byt mens altyd...”

*Dit is seker nie lekker nie?*

“Nee.....

Ek gaan gou weer die ander vryf.....”

Hy stap terug na die eerste reun: “Hey man.... hallo” (Die perd beweeg nader aan Adam en gaan staan met sy neus op Adam se skouer.)

“Moenie my byt nie...”

Hy klink effens bekommerd, maar nie gespanne nie.

*Hoe voel dit om so naby so groot perd te wees?*

“Lekker, Tannie...”

Adam kom sit by my en kyk na die tweede reun wat in ‘n ander rigting kyk.

*Jy sê daardie perd het jou gebyt?*

“Ja, Tannie....”

*En toe?*

“Toe sê ek Eina.... en toe los hy my vinger.....” (Hy lag saggies terwyl hy praat)

*O... toe jy vir hom sê eina toe los hy jou vinger?*

“Ja....”

*So toe jy vir hom sê jy hou nie daarvan nie, toe hou hy op?*

“Ja.....”

Adam sit en speel met ‘n grassie.

“Tannie ek laaik dit om in hulle neuse te kielie met so grassie...”

Hy staan op en gaan kielie die eerste reun in die neus met die grassie. Die perd ruk sy kop weg en nies. Adam lag lekker.

*Dink jy dit was vir hom lekker dat jy hom met die grassie in die neus gekielie het?*

“Nee, Tannie....”

*Lyk my het nie daarvan gehou nie...*

“Nee.....”

Adam kom sit weer langs my en speel met die grassie. Hy kyk peinsend na die tweede reun wat staar na die ander kant van die skool.

*Wat dink jy dink hy Adam?*

“Ek weet nie.....”

*As jy so na hom kyk, wat dink jy voel hy?*

“Hy..... hy lyk of hy ..... hartseer of moeg is.....”

*Ek wonder wat sal hom so hartseer maak?*

“.....Ek weet nie.....”

“Tannie, daar op ons plaas is daar rooi grond.”

*Hmmmmmm*

“Ja..... my nefie se klere is altyd vuil....”

*Ja, mens sukkel om daardie rooi grond uit die klere te kry.*

“Ja, die ander dag het hy met sy wit broek op die grond gaan sit. Hy het nie geweet nie, maar hy het op moerbeie gesit...”

*Aai... toe was sy broek seker baie vuil nê?*

“Ja... toe hy opstaan was sy broek rooi van die moerbeie en die rooi grond. Dit is nie grond soos hierdie hier nie... dit is rooi amper .... my oom sê dis kleierige grond...”

*Jou tannie het seker geraas met jou nefie toe sy broek so vuil was?*

“Nee.... sy het net gesê “kyk hoe vuil is jou broek”...”

*En het sy toe seker gesukkel om daai broek skoon te kry?*

“Nee,.... sy het hom nie gewas nie....”

*Nie?*

“Nee.... sy het hom sommer weggegooi...” (Hy lag lekker)

*Ja... mens sal sukkel om so broek weer skoon te kry.*

“Mens sal nie kan nie..... Gelukkig is hierdie nie sulke rooi grond nie.”

*Gelukkig nie.....*

*Wanneer ons die volgende keer kom, met watter perd sal jy graag wil werk?  
"Daai een Tannie" (Hy wys na die tweede reën wat sy vinger gebyt het en wat hy sê hartseer lyk. Hy identifiseer met hierdie perd.)*

*Miskien sal dit dan goed wees as jy vir daai perd sê as ons weer kom gaan jy met hom werk.*

*Adam loop na die perd toe wat dadelik na hom draai en aan sy hemp knibbel.*

*Vra bietjie vir hom hoekom hy so hartseer is?*

*"Hoekom is jy hartseer?....." (Hy praat met die perd terwyl hy sy neus streef)*

*Die perd loop weg van Adam af. Hy staar hom agterna. Hy lyk effens ontsteld.*

*Hoe voel dit as die perd so wegliep van jou af?*

*"..... Nie lekker nie..... hartseer....."*

*Adam kom sit weer by my en speel met die grassie.... Hy lyk nie meer geïnteresseerd in die perde nie.*

*So wat sê jy ons groet al die perde dan is ons klaar vir vandag.*

*Adam loop na al die perde en vryf hulle.*

*"Baai... ek gaan met jou kom werk....." (Aan die tweede reën)*

*Hy vryf die ander perde en loop saam met terug kar toe.*

*Oppad terug gesels hy baie oor die plaas en hoe alles afgebrand het in 'n onlangse veldbrand. Hy wys ook na druiwe langs die pad en sê die oom moet sy druiwe skoon maak daar is baie bossies. Die ander oom se druiwe langs die pad is mooi skoon. Hy klink opgeruimd en praat aanhoudend.*

*Dit is vreemd vir Adam want hy praat nie graag nie. Mens moet vrae vra en dan antwoord hy. Vandag praat hy uit sy eie... baie...*

## **SESSIE 2**

*Ek het vandag weer vir Adam opgelaai. Hy praat baie vandag oor wat hy vir Tannie Ottie gesê het van die perde en wat sy nefie gesê het.*

*Daar aangekom het Adam uitgeklim en dadelik die vullietjie gaan groet.*

*Ons het die perd wat hy gekies het om mee te werk gaan haal en na die ring geneem. Hy lyk effens onseker wanneer hy die perd moet lei. Adam is baie behulpsaam. Hy laat hom deur die perd lei en neem nie die leiding oor nie.*

*In die ring*

*Nou goed, Adam, vandag gaan ons met hierdie perd werk wat jy gekies het.*

*Ek wil graag hê dat jy na die volgende vir my kyk:*

*Wanneer die perd lek of kou sê hy nou weer wat?*

*“Dat hy weet ek gaan hom nie seermaak nie.”*

*Pragtig.*

*Alles wat ons vandag gaan doen gaan hieroor. Wanneer jy met die perd werk moet jy heeltyd kyk wanneer hy sy lippe lek of kou.*

*“Ja, Tannie,”*

*Ek wil nou graag hê dat jy vir hierdie perd sal vra om in die ring rond te hardloop.*

*Wanneer jy wil hê dat hy vinniger hardloop strek jy jou arms só uit en maak jou vingers só reguit.... (Demonstreer aan Adam hoe om die arms uit te strek)*

*Doen jy dit nou vir my.*

*Adam strek sy arms uit en sprei sy vingers.*

*Pragtig.... Wanneer jy nou wil hê dat hy vinniger beweeg stap jy nader aan hom en strek jou arms so uit.*

*Die idee is dat hy aanhou beweeg totdat hy lek of kou...*

*Dit is baie belangrik dat jy heeltyd na hom sal kyk en heeltyd agter hom sal aanloop om seker te maak dat hy nie gaan staan nie. Verstaan jy?*

*“Ja, Tannie...”*

*Kom ek wys gou vir jou hoe ons dit gaan doen.*

*Ek beweeg agter die perd aan en laat hom in die ring hardloop. Ek wys vir Adam hoe om die perd vinniger te laat hardloop deur my arms uit te strek.*

*Nou is dit jou beurt, Adam. Kom ek doen dit saam met jou.*

*Ek stap saam met Adam en help hom om die perd rond te laat hardloop. Die perd stop egter kort-kort en kyk na Adam sonder om sy lippe te lek.*

*Die perd fokus eerder op my as op Adam. Adam se liggaamstaal is baie sag en hy neem nie die beheer oor nie.*

*Kom ons probeer weer. Hierdie keer gaan ek hier in die middel staan sodat die perd vir jou kan luister.*

*Adam laat die perd ‘n paar rondtes ombeweeg, maar wanneer die perd nie meer lus is nie, gaan staan hy stil sonder om te lek of kou. Dit is baie belangrik in hierdie stadium dat die perd moet lek of kou om Adam se dominansie te bevestig. Solank die perd dit nie doen nie, sal die perd homself nie aan Adam onderwerp nie.*

*Adam se liggaamstaal is baie onseker en hy maak glad nie oogkontak met die perd nie. Dit is ook baie belangrik. Dit is die liggaamstaal tesame met die oogkontak wat die perd laat beweeg.*

*Kyk vir my die heeltyd na sy oë Adam. Jy moet hom goed dophou.*

*Adam beweeg weer nader aan die perd en kry hom aan die beweeg. Hierdie keer hou hy oogkontak vir ‘n rukkie.*

*Mooi so.*

*Wanneer die perd egter gaan staan, staan Adam ook en beweeg onmiddellik weg.*

*Adam dit is baie belangrik dat jy die perd vir ons aan die gang hou totdat hy lek of kou. Hy gaan vir jou sê hy weet hy moet na jou luister.*  
“Goed, Tannie...”

Adam se liggaamshouding sê dat hy onseker is en dat hy nie graag oogkontak wil behou met die perd nie.  
Hy lyk egter positief wanneer hy die perd aan die gang moet kry en voer die instruksies pragtig uit. Hy konsentreer goed op die perd, maar sukkel om hom aan die gang te hou. Hierdie perd is uitdagend. (Onthou dat hierdie ‘n perd is wat nog nooit voorheen so mee gewerk is nie. Omdat Adam so ooglopend met hierdie perd identifiseer het, het ek gedink dat hulle goed sal saamwerk. Martie het my verseker dat hierdie perd nie aggressief is nie.)

Twee maal het Adam té naby aan die perd se agterpote gekom.  
*Oppas Adam, jy kom te naby aan die perd se agterpote. Jy moet eerder by sy skouer bly.*

Hy het dit dan weer reggestel. Adam gee egter gou op en hou nie die perd se beweging aan die gang nie.

Adam kom weer té naby aan die perd se agterpote. Hierdie keer skop die perd uit en skop Adam teen die uitgestrekte arm. Hy het onmiddellik op die grond gaan sit en begin huil. Ek het by hom gaan sit.

“Eina..... dit is seer.....” (Hy huil)  
*Wys my waar die perd jou geskop het.*  
“Hierso.....” (Hy wys na sy arm)  
Ek kyk na die arm. Gelukkige het die perd hom net skrams getref.  
Ek gaan sit agter Adam en hou hom in my arms vas.

*Het jy groot geskrik?*  
“Ja, Tannie.....” (Huilend)  
*Vertel my wat gebeur het.*  
“Die perd het my sommer net geskop.”  
*En toe skrik jy sommer groot?*  
“Ja.... ek het gedink hy skop my dood.”  
*Ek kan dink dat dit vir jou so gevoel het....*  
Ek laat hom toe om te huil terwyl ek hom in my arms vashou. Hy is tevrede om so te sit. (Hierdie is ‘n kind wat glad nie van fisiese aanraking hou nie. Hy skram heeltyd daarvan weg.)  
*Sit jy maar net rustig so en huil maar lekker oor al die seer.*

Na ‘n ruk hou hy op en ek vra weer *Dit was nou’n groot skrik nê?*  
“Ja.... die stoute perd...”..... “As dit my nefie was, was hy nou dood. Hy het harsingskudding met die rugby gekry en as sy kop weer seerkry sal hy sommer doodgaan...”  
*So jy is ‘n taai outjie?*  
“JA”

*Hoe het dit vir jou gevoel toe die perd jou geskop het?*

“Nie lekker nie ..... hartseer.....”

*Hartseer?*

“Ja.... omdat hy my geskop het....”

Ons het nog so ruk so gesit en ek het hom vasgehou. Die perd het gaan stilstaan in die tussentyd en met een oog na Adam gekyk.

*Lyk my die perd hou jou dop.*

“JA”

*Kom ek stap saam met jou dan gaan maak ons vrede.*

Adam beweeg sorgvuldig nader en steek sy hand uit na die perd. Die perd kom nader geloop en lek sy hand. Adam vryf sy neus en trek toe sy hand terug. Hy wil nie naby die perd kom nie.

*Vertel bietjie aan die perd hoe hy jou laat voel het toe hy jou so geskop het.*

“Jy het my baie seergemaak”.....

*En nog?*

Adam se stem is sag: “Ek is baie hartseer oor jy my geskop het.”

*En nog?*

“Jy het my baie seer geskop...” (die heelyd wat hy met die perd praat vryf hy die perd se neus. Die perd lek sy lippe.)

*Sien jy hy sê vir jou hy is jammer?*

“Ja, Tannie...”

*Ek dink dit sal goed wees as ons die perd weer terugneem kamp toe. (Adam is bewering: dit was vir hom en my ‘n groot skok.)*

Adam lei die perd terug na die kamp toe. Hy is baie stil en praat nie.

Na ons die perd in die kamp gesit het, gaan sit ons langs die kamp.

*Kom sit hier by my Adam. (Ek neem hom in my arms en laat hy teen my sit. Hy laat dit gedwë toe.)*

*Waarom dink jy het die perd jou geskop?*

“Hy was kwaad, Tannie...”

*Hy was kwaad?..... Waarom dink jy was hy kwaad?*

“Ek weet nie, Tannie.”

Hy sit vorentoe. Ek vryf sy rug.

*Voel jy ook partykeer of jy iemand kan skop of slaan?*

“Ja, Tannie.... Partykeer by die skool.... of vir Pieter.”

*Wanneer voel jy só?*

“Wanneer ek irriteerd is.”

*Dink jy die perd was dalk geïrriteerd?*

“....Ja, Tannie....”

*Hoe kon die perd vir jou op ‘n ander manier gesê het hy is geïrriteerd?*

Hy sit ‘n rukkie en dink.

“Ek is geïrriteerd... los my uit”

*Sê jy partykeer vir ander mense só?*

“Nee, Tannie...”

*Wat doen jy as hulle jou pla of jy kwaad is?*

“Ek gaan speel met die honde of gaan luister musiek.”

*Wat kan jy vir Pieter (sy neef) sê wanneer hy jou irriteer?*

“Los my uit”  
*Sal jy ooit vir Tannie Ottie so sê?*  
“Nee..... Ek kan nie, Tannie.”  
*Waarom nie?*  
“Sy sal my slaan.”  
*As jy vir haar sê jy is bietjie geïrriteerd sy moet jou net bietjie los?*  
“Ja..... sy sal my slaan.”

*Hoe sal jy maak met die maats by die skool wanneer jy wil hê hulle moet jou uitlos?*  
“Ek sal hulle uitlos..... en alleen gaan sit....”  
*En los hulle jou dan uit.*  
“Nee....”  
*En wat gebeur dan wanneer hulle so aanhou met jou speel?*  
“Dan word ek kwaad .... ek slaan hulle sommer....”  
*Dink jy dat dit miskien is wat vandag met die perd gebeur het?*  
“.....Ja, Tannie.....”  
*Hy kon nie vir jou sê los my uit nie, toe skop hy.*  
“Ja.....”

Ons sit net ‘n rukkie terwyl ek sy rug en skouers vryf. Verbasend laat hy my toe om dit te doen. Ons bly ‘n rukkie stil terwyl hy na die perd en na sy voete alternatiewelik kyk.

*So wanneer Pieter jou weer pla wat sal jy doen?*  
“.....Ek sal vir hom sê hy moet my uitlos....”  
*En wanneer hy vir jou sê dat jy hom pla en dat jy hom moet uitlos, wat sal jy doen?*  
“Ek sal hom uitlos.....”  
*Dan sal jy weet dat jy hom bietjie moet uitlos nê?*  
“Ja.....”  
*Partykeer weet mense nie wanneer om ons uit te los wanneer ons geïrriteerd is nie.*  
“Ja....”  
*Maar as ons dan vir hulle sê, los my uit, dan weet hulle.*  
“Ja....”  
*Dink jy, jy gaan dit volgende keer met Pieter probeer?*  
“.....Ja, Tannie...”  
*Wat sal jy vir hom sê.*  
“Los my uit....”  
*Dit is mooi. Ek dink hy sal jou dan uitlos. .... Gaan jy dit ook met jou maats by die skool doen.*  
“Hm.....” (bevestigend)

Ons sit weer ‘n rukkie in stilte terwyl ek die healtyd sy rug en skouers vryf.

*Dink jy, jy sal kans sien om weer hiernatoe te kom?*  
“Nee, Tannie....”  
..... *Wat van as ons met ‘n ander perd werk wat jou nie sal skop nie?*  
“..... Ja, Tannie.....”  
*Kom ek gaan wys vir jou watter perdjie ons dan mee gaan werk.*  
Ons staan op en ek gaan wys vir hom Alphi. Sy stap nader om hom te groet. Hy lyk skrikkerig. Sy byt en lek haar lippe.

*Wat dink jy sê sy Adam?*  
“Sy sal my nie seermaak nie...”  
*Ek dink ook so.*

*Vertel vir haar dat jy volgende keer met haar gaan werk.*  
“Hey... as ons weer kom..... ek gaan met jou werk.....”  
Sy sit haar neus in sy nek en blaas.  
Adam lag “Sy kielie my...”  
Hy staan ‘n rukkies en vryf haar. Hy maak seker dat hy nie naby haar staan nie.  
Gelukkig is daar pale tussen hom en Alphi. Adam tree terug en kom staan by my.

*Hoe lyk dit, voel jou arm al beter?*  
“Ja, Tannie....”  
*Wil jy nog ‘n rukkies bly?*  
“Nee....”

Ons het teruggestap en ek het hom huis toe geneem. Hy was doodstil en het glad nie gepraat nie. Dit was vir hom ‘n groot skok.

### **SESSIE 3**

**Cynthia sê hy wou nie vandag sonder haar kom nie. Hy was bang om alleen te kom. Sy het na ±10 minute gery en hy was tevrede daarmee.**

Adam was kwaad vir die perd wat hom geskop het. Vir my ook – maar volgens Cynthia meer vir die perd.

Het vandag eerder vir Alphi gebruik. Ek het haar gaan haal en na die ring gebring voordat Adam gearriveer het.

Adam was aanvanklik onseker en teruggetrokke. Hy het op my aandrang die ring binnegekom en by Alphi kom staan. My eerste opdrag aan hom was om Alphi se skouer te vryf totdat sy lek/kou op die manier wat Adam nou al gewoon was aan.

*Onthou jy wat sy sê as sy lek?*

“Nee, Tannie.”

*Sy sê sy aanvaar jou en dat sy jou nie sal seermaak nie.*

Adam het ver gestaan. Hy het Alphi gestreel. Hy lyk gespanne. (Gesig strak, skouers hard en regop, raak skaars aan Alphi met die punte van sy vingers.)

Wanneer Alphi haar kop na hom draai sê hy: “Hey, jy moenie my byt nie.”

*Toemaar sy kyk net wat jy doen... Vryf haar totdat sy kou.*  
“Ja, Tannie.”

Adam sukkel om oogkontak te maak met Alphi.  
Alphi lek – Adam tree onmiddellik terug en staan nader aan my.

*Nou gaan ek jou vra om dieselfde aan die ander kant te doen.*

“Goed Tannie.”

*Vryf haar weer totdat sy lek of kou.*

Adam staan nog steeds ver van Alphi af weg. Weereens draai sy haar kop na hom toe.

“Hey, wil jy my byt?...”

(Hy lyk gespanne en onrustig. Sy hele liggaamstaal wys dat hy reg is om weg te hardloop.)

“Moenie my byt nie.” (Hy klink gespanne en onseker)

*Jy doen goed Adam. Lyk my sy vat bietjie langer aan hierdie kant.* (Dit is te wyte aan Adam se gespanne liggaamshouding. Alphi neem langer omdat sy die spanning in hom aanvoel)

“JA”

*Hou maar net so aan totdat sy lek/kou.*

Alphi draai haar kop om te kyk na haar skouer waar Adam haar vryf. Hy staan effens terug. Hy fokus heeltemal op die skouer wat hy vryf en lyk gespanne. (Frons op sy voorkop en skouers hard).

Alphi kou en Adam tree onmiddellik terug en kom staan by my.

“Tannie ek het my nefie gewys watter perd my gebyt en geskop het...”

*Ja?*

“Ja,... hy sê dit is somer ‘n kak perd.” (Adam praat baie vinnig).

Adam tree weereens weg van Alphi wanneer sy ‘n tree nader staan aan hom. Hy lyk verlig om klaar te wees.

*Adam ek gaan nou vir jou vra om met Alphi in die ring te loop. So al om die buitekant van die ring. Ek wil hê jy moet aanhou stap met haar weereens totdat sy lek of kou.*

Adam wat die leitou by my en begin met Alphi stap. Hy lyk baie onseker en laat eerder toe dat sy hom rondlei.

*Jy doen baie goed Adam. Probeer haar bietjie wyer sirkel te laat maak. Onthou sy loop waar jy vir haar sê om te loop.*

Adam druk Alphi na buite en sy gehoorsaam. Hy maak geen oogkontak met die perd nie. Hy kyk op die grond voor hom en loop net aan. Alphi stamp hom liggies kort-kort met die skouer. Sy liggaamstaal is onderdanig en hy laat toe dat sy hom rondlei.

*Onthou jy is die een wat sê waarnatoe sy moet loop...*

Dit gaan effens beter. (Gebruik baie aansporing terwyl hy met haar in die ring loop).

*Jy doen baie goed ADAM. ...Jy kry dit nou mooi reg om haar te lei. Hou nou so aan totdat sy kou....*

Adam glimlag effens en kyk na Alphi. Hy stoot haar effens weg van hom en sy luister dadelik na hom. Hy kyk na haar terwyl hy haar lei.

*As jy nou kans sien, kan jy haar na die ander kant om laat loop...*

Hy loop na die middel toe met die perd en draai om na die teenoorgestelde kant.

*Pragtig ADAM. Jy het dit baie mooi gedoen. Jy het haar duidelik laat verstaan dat jy in beheer is en dat sy na jou moet luister.... Dit was goed gedoen...*

Adam loop twee maal om die rondte en toe lek Alphi haar lippe. Hy bring haar terug na die middel toe en gaan staan 'n entjie weg van haar af.

*Uitstekend Adam... nou wil ek graag hê dat jy vir Alphi hier kom vryf (wys na die neus.) Wanneer jy haar hier vryf vertel my wat jy voel...*

Adam stap nader en streel Alphi se neus. Hy staan voor haar. Alphi laat sak haar kop vir hom dat hy beter kan bykom. Hy lyk meer ontspanne. Sy skouers is sagter en hy kyk na haar neus. Hy vryf met sy hele hand en nie net met sy vingerpunte nie.

*Hoe voel dit vir jou?*

“Dit is sag en glad...”

Alphi beweeg nader en sit haar kop teen sy skouer.

“Hie, hie... Tannie ek laaik dit as hierdie... snorbaarde my hier kielie..” Hy lag spontaan met hele gesig en wys na sy nek waar die snorbaarde hom gekielie het. Ek lag ook.

*Is dit vir jou lekker?*

“Ja, dit kielie.”

Adam vryf haar nog so rukkie. Hy lyk meer ontspanne en staan met sagte skouers naby aan Alphi. Alphi beweeg nog effens nader en hierdie keer laat hy dit toe. Hy bly vir haar neus kyk en glad nie vir haar gesig/oë nie.

*Jy doen pragtig ADAM... Dink jy dit is vir Alphi ook lekker?*

“Ja...”

*Hoe kan jy sê?*

“Sy kou en staan... stil.”

Alphi kou en Adam hou op vryf.

*Nou wil ek hê dat jy haar hier kom vryf (wys na die nek regs). Sê vir my wat jy nou voel.*

Adam beweeg na die kant en vryf haar nek 'n paar keer.

*Voel dit anders as haar neus?*

“Ja, Tannie.... Dis... sag en .... hard.”

*Pragtig.*

Adam beweeg weg van Alphi af.

*Kom staan nou vir my aan die ander kant en dan vryf haar hier op dieselfde plek.*

(Wys na die linker kant van die nek.)

Adam beweeg dadelik om en vryf Alphi se nek.

*Voel dit anders as die ander kant?*

“Dit voel sag.... en krapperig.... en hard.” (Hy sê dit terwyl hy die maanhare vryf.)

Adam trek die maanhare deur sy vingers en volg dit af tot op die skouer. Hy kyk stip na die maanhare.

*Hoe voel dit as jy hier vryf? (Wys na die skouer)*

“.....Hard, Tannie....”

*Hmmmmmm...*

“Want hier is bene....”

“My nefie wou nog altyd perdry.”

*Hmmmm?*

“Maar toe sê ek vir hom... jy moet weet wat jy doen anderster..... trek hy jou rond...”

*Jy is heeltemal reg ja.... Mens moet weet wat jy doen... Jy praat waar.*

Adam vryf nog 'n rukkie Alphi se skouer.

*Kom staan nou vir my hier en vryf haar hierso. (Na die bors)*

Hy beweeg gemaklik onder haar nek in en streel die bors tentatief. Alphi staan doodstil en laat dit toe.

*Hoe voel dit?*

“Sag.... en hard....” Hy druk met sy vingers teen die spiere. Adam lyk baie geïnteresseerd.

*Van al die plekke waar jy nou al gevryf het, watter was die lekkerste?*

“Hierso.... haar neus...”

*Ek wil nou ook graag hê dat jy haar teen haar maag na haar boude sal vryf. Ek demonstreer. Sien jy... sy skop nie.*

Adam staan langs my en vryf haar maag op na haar boude toe. Sy begin dadelik te lek.

*Jy doen nou baie goed. Weet jy wanneer die perde in die wild is is hulle baie versigtig dat iets hulle maag of boude raak.... Dit is die plek waar leeus en tiere en sulke goed hulle vang... en op hule spring.... so wanneer Alphi jou laat haar daar vryf... beteken dit sy vertrou jou..... Weet jy wat dit beteken as iemand jou vertrou? “Nee, Tannie”*

*Dit betken sy weet jy sal haar nie seermaak nie.... sy kan maar net rustig staan.*

Adam knik sy kop en vryf weer. Alphi kou weer.

*Daar doen sy dit weer...wat sê sy vir jou?*

“Dat sy my ver.... ek sal haar nie seermaak nie... sy sal my nie seermaak nie...”

*Pragtig...*

Adam staan weg van Alphi af en sy staan onmiddellik nader. Sy laat sak haar kop en hy vryf weer haar neus.

“Ja... moet ek jou vryf?”

Op hierdie oomblik kom die vulletjie die ring binne en kom na Adam aangestap.

Wanneer hy na haar draai en na haar beweeg, kou sy energiek.

*Wat sê sy nou Adam?*

“Sy sê ek sal jou nie seermaak nie.”

“Hallo.... kom jy hallo sê?” (Sy stem verhoog en hy praat soos met ‘n klein kindjie. Sy laat toe dat hy haar neus kielie, maar wanneer hy nader beweeg stap sy weg.) Hy laat sak sy hande en staan stil. Hy lyk of hy graag sal wil nader gaan, maar is onseker.

Die vulletjie loop na Alphi.

“Nou kom sy vir Alphi ook hallo sê. Sy wil kyk of Alphi ook melk het soos haar ma.”

Alphi skop na vulletjie.

*Daar sê Alphi nou vir haar los my uit ek het nie melk nie.*

Adam lag lekker.

Die vulletjie hardloop weg en gaan staan ‘n paar treë weg van Adam af. Hy loop onmiddellik nader met sy hand uitgestrek. Die vulletjie draai om en hardloop weg. Adam loop agter haar aan en sy hardloop nog ‘n entjie weg. Adam gaan staan. Ek gaan sit by Alphi.

*Dis reg, Adam. Staar stil. Laat sy na jou toe kom.*

Adam is totaal gefokus op die vulletjie. Ek en Alphi ook.

*Staan net doodstil.*

Adam praat nie. Hy staan met sy hande langs sy sye en wag.

Die vulletjie kyk om na Adam. Draai om en stap nader na hom. Hy wag tot sy by hom staan en vryf toe haar neus.

“Haai moet ek jou neus vryf?” (Weer in ‘n hoë stemtoon)

Hy staan 'n rukkie en vryf. Heeltemal ontspanne en gemaklik... Sy stap na 'n rukkie weg en gaan staan by die hek.

*Maak maar vir haar oop Adam sy wil seker na haar ma gaan.*

“Wil jy na jou ma gaan.... Wil jy uitgaan?”

Hy maak die hek oop en kyk hoe sy bedees uitloop. Hy maak weer agter haar toe.

Hy kyk haar agterna. Na 'n rukkie stap hy terug na my en Alphi toe.

“Kyk wat doen sy Tannie... Sy eet die grassies.” (die vulletjie)

Hy kom sit by my op die grond by Alphi.

“Ons klein hanskalfie doen dit ook. Hy kan nie mielies uitlos nie. Hy vat die blik se deksel... dan vat hy die onderste ding (wys na lip)... en tel hom oop. Dan eet hy”....

*Hmmmm*

.... “Stoute ding”....

*Hmmm*

“Tannie, my oom het gesê as ek weer naby 'n perd kom slaat hy my dood.” (klink gespanne)

*Ja?*

“Ja... Hy weet nie ek is hier nie. Ek sal mos lankal terug wees as hy 13:00 by die huis kom?”

*Ja, jy sal.*

Hy krap in die sand met 'n stokkie... Ignoreer heeltemal vir Alphi.

*Onthou jy laas Maandag toe ons hier was het die mamma perd die vulletjie so weggedruk van jou af?”*

“Ja, Tannie.”

*En wat het jy toe gesê... hoekom doen sy dit?*

“Sodat die vulletjie nie seerkry nie.”

*Ja... want sy is lief vir hom en wil hom beskerm.*

“Ja...” (Hy kyk peinsend na Alphi)

*Dit is seker wat Oom Costa ook doen nê?*

“Ja... hy was baie kwaad... hy wil nie laat ek seerkry nie.”

Adam krap in die sand... Alphi druk haar neus teen sy kop. Hy ruk weg. Hy het geskrik.

“Wil jy my byt?”

*Sy wil sien wat jy doen... sy is nuuskierig.*

Adam spring op en wys die stokkie vir Alphi.

“Dis 'n stokkie...”

Ek staan op en gaan staan ook by Alphi en Adam.

*Adam ek wil graag hê jy moet in Alphi se oë kyk en vir my sê wat jy sien.*

Hy staan nader met sy hand op haar neus en kyk na haar linker oog. Dit is duidelik vir hom moeilik om oogkontak met haar te behou. Sy laat sak haar kop en hou oogkontak met hom. Hy kyk weg.

*Vertel my wat sien jy.*

“...Ek sien swart...” Hy kyk weg.

*Wat sien jy nog?*

“.... (Hy kyk stip in haar oog)... Ek sien myself...”

*Hmmm?*

“Ja” Hy tree weg van Alphi af. (Die fisiese nabyheid is te veel vir hom)

*Kyk weer vir my na haar oë en sê vir my of sy na 'n kwaai perdjie lyk of na 'n liefdevolle perdjie.*

Hy kyk weer in haar oog.... “’n Liefdevolle ene”  
Hy beweeg om en kyk in haar ander oog.  
*Wat sien jy?*  
“Myself.”  
Alphi druk haar kop in sy nek in.  
“Nee, man...” (Hy sê dit egter met ‘n sagte stem)  
*Onthou jy die dag toe die perd jou geskop het, het ons gesê dat as iemand jou pla dan moet mens vir hulle sê?*  
“Ja Tannie...” Hy tree weg van Alphi af.  
*Hoe dink jy sal jy vir Alphi sê sy pla jou?*  
“Ek sal haar uitlos.” Hy tree verder terug.  
*Ja, jy kan. En as jy voel sy is te naby, kan jy net jou hand vinnig ophou en sy sal haar kop wegdruk... Wil jy dit probeer?*

Adam lig sy hand vinnig op en Alphi ruk haar kop weg.  
*Daarsy.... Sien jy toe jy jou hand vinnig ophou, toe ruk sy weg.*  
“Ja, Tannie.”  
*Nou kan jy haar weer vryf sodat sy weet jy nie vir haar kwaad is nie.*  
Adam vryf vir Alphi totdat sy kou. Hy sit sy kop teen haar neus en vryf dit heen en weer.  
*Dit lyk of sy graag ‘n drukkie wil hê?*  
Hy beweeg gewillig in en Alphi laat sak haar kop. Hy druk haar kop vas. Hy is meer op sy gemak as met die eerste drukkie.  
Alphi draai om en loop weg.  
*Hoe voel dit as sy só weglou?*  
“Lekker Tannie”  
*Lekker*  
“Ja, Tannie.”  
*Is jy bly sy gaan nou ‘n bietjie weg?*  
“Ja, Tannie.”  
Ons gaan sit op die ring se pale. Adam hou Alphi stip dop.  
Hy begin spontaan met my praat.  
“Tannie, my nefie het my gisteraand weer met die BB-gun gejaag...”  
*Ja?*  
“Ja, Tannie.”  
*En wat het jy toe gedoen?*  
“Ek het gesê hy moet ophou...”  
*Soos wat ons nou die dag oor gepraat het?*  
“Ja...”  
*En wat gebeur toe?*  
“Toe hou hy op.”  
*So dit het gewerk toe jy vir hom gesê het hy moet ophou?*  
“Ja, hy het my uitgelos.”  
*Pragtig.*

Ons het ‘n rukkie nog gesit wat hy vir Alphi en die vulletjie dopgehou het.

*Adam, Sal jy vir my vir Alphi gaan haal dat ons haar kan terugvat kamp toe?*  
“Ja, Tannie” (Sy stemtoon sê natuurlik)  
Adam loop na Alphi. Sy wil aanvanklik nie saam met hom loop nie.

“Kom nou....” (In ‘n besliste stemtoon en houding. Nie hardhandig nie. Sy stap saam.)

*Jy doen goed Adam.*

Hy maak die hek oop.

*Sal jy vir Alphi teruglei?*

“Nee, Tannie” (Hy is duidelik bang dat sy kom sal trap of stamp)

*Asseblief ek wil graag die ander hekke vir jou oopmaak.*

“Ja, Tannie.”

Soos ons terugstap wil een van die ander perde Alphi groet en sy gaan staan stil.

“Kom nou... loop nou....” (Baie beslis) Sy loop verder.

*Pragtig gedoen Adam... jy het nie toegelaat dat sy besluit wat sy wil doen nie. Jy het met jou stem haar laat luister.*

(Dit gebeur nog drie keer en Adam hanteer dit op dieselfde wyse.)

By die kamp gekom: *Sê vir haar dankie dat jy met haar kon werk en dat sy so mooi na jou geluister het.*

“Dankie dat ek met jou kon werk, jou stoutert.... Dankie dat jy geluister het, jou stoutert... “ (Sy stemtoon is hoog en sag. Hy sê dit terwyl hy haar kop vasdruk onder sy arm. )

Alphi knibbel in sy nek. Hy lag uitbundig... Hy lei Alphi in en maak haar halter los.

Adam het my gehelp om alles terug te pak in die kar en het oppad huis toe aanhoudend gepraat oor allerhande dinge.

## SESSION 4

- Adam vertel my dat oom Costa gesê het as hy ooit weer ‘n perd jaag, hy die perd gaan skiet.
- Adam moet buite die ring werk en nie in die ring nie. Oom Costa sal die perd doodskiet.
- Voor ons begin het, het ons staan en kyk hoe die kinders die perde opsaal om te gaan ry. Die eienares het my vertel van ‘n perd wat altyd geskop het wanneer mens na aan haar kom. Adam het met groot oë staan en luister.
- ‘n Perd het my gebyt terwyl ons daar staan en praat het. Ek het onmiddellik sy neus geklap. Perde byt mekaar wanneer die dominante perde die jonges dissipliner. Daarom moet die perd onmiddellik nadat hy gebyt het, op nie neus geklap word.

Ek het vir Adam gevra om die perd vir my na die ring te lei. Hy was baie onseker. Hy het gesukkel om Alphi tot in die ring te kry – omdat hy so onseker is.

Toe vir Adam gevra om vir Alphi te vryf om haar te groet. Hy vryf tentatief en staan ver van haar af weg. Wanneer sy haar kop na hom draai, druk hy onmiddellik haar kop terug en sê: “Hey, vat jou koppie weg.”

Sy draai haar kop en hy druk haar weg (3x)

Adam lyk baie gespanne en onseker. Hy maak geen oogkontak met Alphi nie en kyk op die grond. Sy liggaam is skuins weggedraai van Alphi af.

*Is jy bietjie bang vandag, Adam?*

“.....JA, Tannie...” (stem is klein en hoog.)

*Hoe voel jy vandag?*

“Skrikkerig.”

*Wat dink jy gaan gebeur?*

“Niks nie....” (stemmetjie nog steeds klein)

*Ek sien Alphi voel vandag jy is bietjie skrikkerig... dit is hoekom sy so lank vat om te kou.*

Alphi probeer wegloop van Adam af. Hy laat haar loop en hou haar nie terug nie. Hy lyk verlig wanneer sy wegloop.

*Adam, jy kan haar om jou laat loop, loop net saam met haar. Hou haar vas sodat sy nie wegloop nie.*

“Ja, Tannie...”

Hy vryf hierdie keer weer vir Alphi en hy konsentreer pragtig op haar. Sy draai haar kop weer na hom. “Hey, nee... draai weg jou kop.”

Hy vryf haar nek en skouer en sy lek.

“Kyk daar, Tannie.... sy het gelek”.

*Het sy gelek?*

“Ja, Tannie...”

Hy hou oombliklik op en staan ‘n tree weg.

*Dankie Adam.... kom ons gaan staan weer in die middel.*

Adam lei vir Alphi na die middel. Hy lyk steeds ongemaklik en gespanne. Hy maak nie met my of Alphi oogkontak nie. Liggaamstaal is onderdanig. Sy skouers en sy kop hang.

*Adam ek wil graag hê jy moet hier langs Alphi staan...*

Hy staan huiwerig nader.

*... pragtig. Sit nou vir my jou hand op haar skouer.*

Hy sit sy hand op haar skouer....

*...pragtig... haal nou vir my diep asem in... en uit.... (hy haal hortend asem).*

*Pragtig, nou weer.... asem in.... en uit.... en weer....*

Hy haal asem in – meer gemaklik- en asem uit. En weer.

Sy liggaam ontspan. Skouers is sagter en hy glimlag effens. Alphi lek onmiddellik.

*Pragtig Adam....Ek wil graag nou vra dat jy Alphi in die rondte lei. Wanneer jy daar kom (wys) ... stop jy ... wag ‘n rukkie... en loop dan verder tot daar (wys)... stop vir Alphi en stap verder....*

*Verstaan jy wat om te doen?*

“Ja, Tannie.”

*Kom ons kyk of Alphi sal luister.*

Adam lei Alphi aan die binnekant van die ring tot by die eerste merk. Hy loop baie stadig en kyk heeltyd om na Alphi... Hy loop amper agteruit. Sy liggaamstaal is onseker en hy druk heeltyd haar kop weg van hom af. Toe hulle by die eerste punt kom, wil Alphi nie gaan stilstaan nie. Sy loop aan.

“Stop nou Alphi.” Hy sê dit in ‘n baie sagte stem. Hy klink baie onseker – geensins beherend nie.

*Goed Adam, lei haar nou na hierdie kant toe.*

Adam lei haar weer op dieselfde onseker wyse. Hy kyk heeldyd terug na haar voete en haar kop en loop baie stadig. Wanneer hy by die tweede punt kom, wil sy weer nie onmiddellik stop nie.

*Dankie Adam... Ek wil graag hê dat jy nou kyk wanneer ek haar lei hoe ek loop...*

Ek neem die leiband by Adam. Hy staan vinnig terug.

*Kyk mooi hoe vinnig ek loop en hoe ek met my rug na haar kyk as ek loop.*

“Ja, Tannie...”

Ek neem die leiband en lei vir Alphi.

*Sien, ek loop vinnig want haar bene is baie langer as myne. Sien jy?*

Hy knik bevestigend.

*So ek loop nou voor haar en ek kyk voor my dat ek nie oor iets val nie.*

Hy lag lekker.

Ek kom naby die eerste punt.

*Wanneer ek nou wil stop, trek ek só terug aan die leiband.*

Ek wys hoe – Adam hou my fyn dop. Alphi gaan staan onmiddellik.

*Daarsy...*

*Nou gaan ek weer tot daar loop....*

*Sien jy ek loop voor haar, met my rug na haar toe....* Hy knik bevestigend. *Nou gaan ek stop...* Alphi gaan staan dadelik stil.

*Nou wil ek graag hê jy moet weer probeer.*

Adam kom nader en neem die leiband.

*Ek gaan saam met jou stap.*

Adam begin loop – sy houding is besluiteloos en sy skouers hang. Alphi is ook besluiteloos en loop nie rerig saam met Adam nie. Hy wil kort-kort omdraai en na haar kyk.

*Wag so bietjie, Adam. Kom ek loop saam met jou.*

Ek neem hom aan die skouers en loop agter hom aan. Ek stoot hom saggies vorentoe.

*Kom ons loop nou bietjie vinniger sodat Alphi se lang bene kan byhou.*

“OK, Tannie....”

Ons loop vorentoe en Alphi volg. Ek hou Adam se skouers weg van Alphi gedraai.

*Nou gaan ons stop.... sê vir Alphi stop...*

Adam trek die leiband en gaan staan stil. Alphi gee nog twee trêe.

*Mooi.... nou gaan ons verder stap.*

Ons loop verder, Adam kyk op die grond. Ek loop steeds agter hom en druk hom vorentoe.

*Kom ons probeer weer stop... sê vir haar stop.*

Adam trek aan die leiband en gaan staan stil. Sy gee nog een tree.

*Mooi so Adam. (Hy glimag) Nou gaan ek hier in die middel staan en kyk hoe jy dit doen. Ok?*

“Ja, Tannie”

Adam loop vorentoe. Sy skouers is vierkantig en hy lei Alphi. Hy loop bietjie stadig, maar kyk nie terug nie.

*Mooi so Adam. Onthou haar bene is lank, jy moet vinnig genoeg loop hoor.*

Hy knik bevestigend.

*Wanneer jy reg is, kan jy maar stop.*

Adam gaan staan en Alphi stop ook dadelik.

*Pragtig Adam.*

Hy glimlag.

*Doen dit nou weer....*

Hy loop vorentoe en hierdie keer doen hy alles reg. Hy loop vinnig genoeg en sy skouers is vierkantig. Hy kyk nie terug nie. Sy kop is opgelig en hy kyk nie meer op die grond nie.

*Wanneer jy nou dáár kom (wys) kan jy haar stop.*

Hy loop nog 'n entjie en stop dan.

*Mooi gedoen!!*

Hy glimlag breed.

*Doen dit vir my nog een maal.*

Hy herhaal die proses suksesvol. Hy loop meer doelgerig.

*... En wanneer jy reg is.... stop.*

Adam gaan staan en Alphi kom onmiddellik tot stilstand.

*Dit was pragtig.*

Ek stap tot by Adam...*Nou wil ek vir jou wys hoe om vir Alphi te stop sonder om aan die leitou te trek.*

Adam maak mooi oogkontak met my en glimlag.

*Ek gaan vir jou wys hoe om dit te doen... Gee vir my die leiband.*

*Hierdie keer gaan ek hierdie hand (wys R) afhaal van die leiband en net met hierdie hand (wys L) vashou... ek gaan vorentoe loop (loop 'n ent)... sien jy ek hou met een hand vas?*

“Ja...” Hy hou my belangstellend dop.

*Wanneer ek nou wil hê sy moet stop gaan ek omdraai en voor haar staan. Dit is baie belangrik dat jy na haar oë moet kyk...*

*Ek.... gaan... nou.... stop.*

Ek draai beslis om. Staan reg voor Alphi en kyk in haar oë. Sy gaan dadelik staan.

[Dit is noodsaaklik met hierdie oefening dat die liggaamstaal van die mens moet beslis wees, sonder om aanvallend te wees. Oogkontak is 'n belangrike deel hiervan.]

*Het jy gesien wat gebeur?*

“Ja, Tannie.”

*Ek gaan dit nou weer doen sodat jy mooi kan kyk wat gebeur.*

Ek lei Alphi en herhaal die proses.

*Sien jy, sy het dadelik gaan staan.*

Hy knik bevestigend.

*Wil jy nou probeer?*

Hy knik en stap nader.

Hy neem die leiband.

*Onthou om voor haar te loop en dan om te draai.*

Hy neem die leiband met die regter hand ook.

*Net jou linker hand.*

“Ja, Tannie... ek wil net hê sy moet begin loop.”

*Goed.*

Adam loop vorentoe en Alphi volg. Hy lei haar met die linker hand en loop met besliste treë voor haar.

*Wanneer jy reg is....*

Adam draai om en Alphi gaan staan dadelik, maar gee dan 'n tree vorentoe. Adam maak nie oogkontak met Alphi nie en kyk na haar voete.

*Pragtig Adam.*

Hy trek sy skouers terug en glimlag.

*Doen dit nou weer.*

Adam draai om en lei Alphi in die rondte.

*Hierdie keer wanneer jy omdraai, maak seker dat jy in haar oë kyk.*

Adam loop nog aan.

*Wanneer jy reg is....*

Adam draai om en kyk direk in Alphi se oë. Sy gaan onmiddellik staan en lek haar lippe.

*Dit was 100% Adam. Kyk sy kou ook sommer... pragtig.*

Adam knik sy kop. Hy hou nog steeds oogkontak met Alphi.

*Doen dit nou nog een maal.*

Adam loop vorentoe met Alphi. Hy loop vasbeslote en sy skouers is regop. Hy gaan staan, draai om en kyk direk in Alphi se oë.

*Pragtig Adam... Jy kan haar nou middel toe bring.*

Hy loop met Alphi middel toe.

*Jy kan haar nou vryf.*

Adam vryf Alphi. "Hey... jy't mooi geluister."

Ons staan by Alphi. Sy druk haar neus teen Adam se kop.

"Hey, wat.... wil jy my byt?"

*Dink jy sy wil?*

"Nee, Tannie..."

Adam gaan sit op sy hurke. Ek gaan sit by hom.

"Tannie, my oom het gesê hy gaan die perd sommer doodskiet."

*Ja?*

"Ja.... Hy sê as ek weer met 'n perd werk gaan hy die perd kom doodmaak.... hy gaan hom (sluk)... kom skiet...."

*As wat gebeur?*

"As ek weer hier binne met die ring werk."

*O?*

"..... Ja, Oom Costa pla my en Pieter altyd."

*Doen hy?*

"Ja... dan lag hy."

*So hy terg julle?*

"Ja...."

*Dink jy dit is gevaarlik om met Alphi te werk?*

"Nee, Tannie" (stemtoon sê natuurlik nie) "Ek weet mos sy is mak, sy is tannie se perd."

*Ja, sy is.*

Alphi staan baie naby aan my.

*Adam, Alphi pla my nou. Onthou jy laas keer het ons gesê as iemand ons pla moet ons vir hulle sê?*

“Ja, Tannie...”

*Wat dink jy kan ons doen om vir Alphi te sê sy staan te naby?*

“Ons kan vir haar sê ‘gaan weg’” (stem is vasbeslote)

*Ja...*

*Of ons kan só maak.*

Ek sit my hand op Alphi se bors en sê hard en duidelik ‘Back!’ terwyl ek met my hand teen haar bors druk. Sy gee een tree terug.

*Daarsy... nou het sy bietjie terug gestaan.*

“Ja”

*Kom ek doen dit weer..... ‘Back’ terwyl ek haar terug druk. Sy gee een tree terug en lek. Adam kyk belangstellend wat ek doen.*

*Sien jy wat maak sy?*

“Sy lek.”

*Ja, sy sê nou?*

“Sy sal ons nie seermaak nie.”

*Ja, dis reg .... en dat sy luister wat ons vra.... Kom jy probeer dit nou.*

Adam spring dadelik op, sit sy hand op haar bors en sê “Back” met besliste stem.

Alphi gee ‘n tree terug.

*Mooi gedoen Adam. Sy het teruggetree.*

*Doen dit nog ‘n keer.*

Hy sit sy hand weer op haar bors en sê “Back” vasbeslote. Alphi gee weer ‘n tree terug.

*Jy het dit goed gedoen Adam.... Wanneer jy so sterk stem gebruik en haar wegstoot luister sy...*

“JA...”

*Onthou jy ons het laas gepraat oor wat om te doen wanneer maats ons pla?*

“Ja... ons moet sê los my uit.... Tannie, Pieter wil nie altyd luister as ek dit vir hom sê nie. Dan pla hy my eers...”

*Ja?*

“Hy stamp sommer teen my”

*En wat doen jy dan?*

“Dan sê ek ‘los my uit man’ (hy lag) of ek wil hom sommer slaan.

*Hmmmm, partykeer stamp mense aan ons nê.*

Hy knik bevestigend.

*Wat jy nou met Alphi gedoen het, kan jy ook met mense doen....*

*Sê nou iemand kom staan so styf teen jou of stamp jou .... wat kan mens doen?*

“Sê.... los my!”

*En as hulle nog steeds teen ons staan?*

“Stoot hulle weg.”

*Ja!.... Wys vir my hoe jy dit sal doen.*

Ek stamp met my skouers teen sy skouer.

*Stoot my weg as ek jou pla Adam.*

Hy stoot my baie saggies weg.

*Dit was ‘n goeie begin. Onthou hoe hard moes jy vir Alphi stoot sodat sy kan terugstaan?*

Hy knik ja.

*Stoot my só hard.*

Ek stamp weer met my skouer teen syne en staan baie naby aan hom. Hy lag ongemaklik. Hy vat meer ferm aan my skouer en druk my terug.

*Pragtig, net hard genoeg....*

*Nou as iemand teen jou staan kan jy dit doen en sê?*

“Los my uit...”

*Ja!... Kom ons doen dit weer.*

Ek staan teen Adam. Hy stoot my ferm weg en sê “Los my uit!”

*Dit was mooi gedoen.*

Ons gaan sit weer op die grond. Adam kyk na ‘n ander merrie. (Die eienares het aan die begin gesê dat hierdie perd baie geslaan is en dat sy aan die begin net wou skop as iemand naby haar kom.)

*Jy weet, Adam... party perde is so, as iemand hulle baie geslaan het wil hulle nie hê iemand moet aan hulle vat nie.*

Hy knik.

*Hulle is so gewoond as iemand naby hulle kom, kry hulle seer...*

Sy gesig word strak en hy kyk op die grond.

*Dink jy dit gebeur met mense ook?*

“Ja” sê hy baie sag.

*AS die kinders baie geslaan word dan is hulle bang as iemand te naby kom?*

Hy knik.

*Jy onthou daai perd wat my gebyt het?*

“Ja...”

*Ek moes hom op sy neus slaan om vir hom te sê hy was stout.*

Adam knik.

*Maar toe hy kou het ek hom gevryf nê.*

“Ja”

*Partykeer moet perde so hou kry as hulle byt en .... partykeer kry kinders ook pak nê?*

“Ja... Tannie Ottie gee vir my en Pieter pak as ons stout was.”

*Ja?*

“Ja... ons sê nie met die plathand nie, dit hou aan brand... eerder met die belt of die skoen...”

*So slaan Tannie Ottie julle heeldag?*

“Nee, net as ons BAIE stout was.”

*So as Tannie Ottie jou ‘n drukkier gee, is jy bang sy gaan jou slaan?*

“Nee, ek was nie stout nie!”

*Dan is dit OK as mense naby ons kom?*

“Ja, maar ek hou nie altyd daarvan nie...”

*Natuurlik....*

*Wat kan jy doen?*

“Vir hulle sê los my uit!”

*en?*

“... en hulle wegdruk soos ek die perd weggedruk het.”

*Ja*

“Maar, Tannie.... partykeer kan mens nie anderster. ... soos in Checkers.... almal druk teen mens...”

*Ja?*

“Dan klim ek en Pieter onderdeur die trollie om weg te kom.” (ernstig)

*Dis ‘n goeie plan.*

“Ja” (Hy lag)

*So ons kan **besluit** wie ons naby ons wil hê en wie nie?*

“Ja”

*Dink jy dis vir Alphi lekker as jy naby haar is?*

“Ja” (hy kyk in Alphi se oë)

*Hoe weet jy dit?*

“Sy lek haar lippe.”

*Ja.... en partykeer is dit lekker ok as mense naby ons is nê?*

“Ja... nie altyd nie.”

*Nie altyd nie.*

Ons het nog gesit in stilte. Alphi het weggestap.

*Kom ons vat vir Alphi terug kamp toe.*

“Goed...”

Adam het vir Alphi teruggelei en gesê: “Dankie,,, jy het mooi geluister.”

Adam het al die pad huis toe gepraat uit sy eie uit.

**ADDENDUM C**  
**The first day Adam met the horses.**

Adam meets the little foal (mommy watches closely):



Adam chooses his horse:



## SECOND SESSION

Adam comes too close:



## THIRD SESSION

Adam meets up with a new horse



Adam gets a visit from the foal:



## FOURTH SESSION

Adam and Alphi bond:



Adam is happy:

