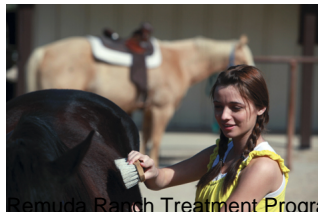


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**Dr. Dena Cabrera, psychologist and director of educational outreach for Wickenburg's Remuda Ranch, shares the healing power of equine therapy.**



Remuda Ranch Treatment Programs has been working with women and girls suffering with eating disorders and obsessive compulsive disorder for more than 20 years. The value of experiential therapies, including equine therapy, are powerful tools in the healing process.

Horses have been an important part of Remuda Ranch since 1926. In fact, the word "remuda" refers to the group of horses used to give rest and provide a fresh start for the journey ahead. The Ranch's equine program includes instruction in horse care, grooming procedures, saddlery, harness driving and basic

equitation. Once deemed medically stable, each patient is paired with a horse based on her previous riding experience and individual needs. She then participates in two 75-minute sessions per week, including a trail ride and an arena session.

Remuda Ranch horses are gentle, affectionate creatures who display a natural curiosity about the world around them. A patient may come into the program with a fear of horses, or fear related to other areas like commitment or responsibility. As the bond between patient and horse develops, these fears and other feelings of anger or inadequacy often dissipate. What's more, as a patient cares for a horse, it helps reduce her focus on herself. Spending time together, whether riding, grooming or communicating on any level, the two develop a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

Working with these large animals gives our patients an opportunity to learn healthy new skills. Each patient discovers how to practice effective communication and achieve the proper response from her horse. One success builds on another, and in no time, her feelings of self worth, confidence and effectiveness return.

Horses have always played an important role at Remuda Ranch. Yesterday, it was to provide a fresh start on the dusty trail; today, these extraordinary creatures help women and girls get a fresh start on the road to recovery.



**Dr. Dena Cabrera:** Psychologist and Director of Educational Outreach for Remuda Ranch.

### TO LEARN MORE

Remuda Ranch

800.445.1900, [www.remudaranch.com](http://www.remudaranch.com).

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