



New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches

CORRAL

Winter 2023

Accountability Without Self-Awareness

By Heath Kull

"You gotta resurrect the deep pain within you and give it a place to live that's not within your body. Let it live in art. Let it live in writing. Let it live in music. Let it be devoured by building brighter connections.

Your body is not a coffin for pain to be buried in. Put it somewhere else." ~ Ehime Era

While some of you may appreciate the quote and some may prefer your quotes to come only through inspiration from above, I still believe, as the song says, "He's got the whole world in His hands." Therefore, the origin of the quote is less relevant to me than the corresponding truth within it.

Since we're on the subject of truth, another truth is that we often prefer our young people to be seen rather than heard. While I understand it, I just don't see any significant or positive outcomes from allowing children to suffer in silence.

As a result, I work to make this quote a reality all of the time; for me and for the kids who have had their life

turned upside down to the point of needing to be at The Ranches.

But what does, "...resurrecting the deep pain within you..." actually look like?

For many kids at The Ranches, it looks a whole like a kid trying to punish themselves for inheriting the darkness of their parents by honoring those parent's actions, behavioral style and life choices. When they reach us, the fertile soil that used to exist in their souls is often covered by the weeds of trauma, self-loathing, insecurity and sometimes even self-harm. So we do what we have always done and we go to work on preparing their soul to again be a field of fertile soil. To do that, we have to help them resurrect the deep pain within them so that we can help them see that pain and themselves differently.

If you believe that no child is born "bad" as I do, then you have to honestly look at the environmental factors in a child's life and work first to understand them before trying to help them understand anything. While it ain't easy work, it is what we do... now.

The Ranches Alumni

What memories do you have of Christmastime at The Ranch?

"The Shriners coming and giving us presents. That's why I always give when they are standing at a light or wherever I happen to see them. That was a long time ago I don't know if they still do that. It left a impression on me."

- Mike R.

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Rekindling HOPE for At Risk Youth - Since 1944

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Heath Kull

President

Howdy Partners!!!

For years, The Ranches had a program that we called our Partner Program that was designed - and this is where my bend towards honesty hurts me - to create passive recurring income. To be fair, it was a successful program and my only struggle with resurrecting it is that I want there to be some added value for those who sign up rather than just a monthly donation and a warm feeling.

So, we are resurrecting our Partner Program and offering it to anyone who wants to sign up for recurring monthly donations in excess of \$25 per month. In return, we'd like to send you a gift and occasionally email you some content that will be personally written by me in hopes that it will be helpful to you in your relationships. I've included a sample of the kind of content you'll receive as a Partner of The Ranches.

...“Sunday - Self-Awareness and Accountability”

We often talk about accountability while I am attempting to talk about self-awareness. For me, the two are linked as most adventures in accountability tend to stem from a lack of self-awareness. If you know what needs to be done, and you do it, accountability is far less necessary.

But within relationships, the same principle holds true. If you practice self-awareness, and that leads you to understand how your actions, behaviors and tendencies affect the people around you, accountability within relationships becomes much easier and far less necessary.

For instance, I am aware that I am difficult to deal with and that my tendency towards a “right way” juxtaposed against every other way, can be challenging for people. I also get that I move at a pace that is far too urgent for most. On top of those, I also value a hard truth over whatever made up reason people have to lie and I'd rather be hated for who I am than loved for who I am not. And lastly, I assume that people who work to avoid me and are content to live here without engaging me in meaningful ways are either cowards or less intelligent than your average mule.

I hold myself to these standards so I do not struggle to confront those who are failing to meet them.

But what about kids?

Is your goal for kids best described as accountability for compliance or are you more dedicated to teaching them a lesson in self-awareness each time they fail to meet an expectation of ours?

You see, compliance is just the first step towards an authority figure discovering the limits of the atrocities that they are capable of inflicting on children, or the start of their pathway to evil with kids as the receivers of their control fantasies and dictatorial dreams.

In order for accountability to matter, it has to teach the lesson necessary to avoid repeating the behavior that led to the need for accountability, or it fails to be about the child and only serves the ego of the adult.

“When you act this way...”

And...

“Your behavior is not getting you closer to the result you want. Let me explain how...”

These are both easy intros to a lesson in accountability that takes into account the opportunity to teach some self-awareness along with the accountability lesson. “...

To Become a Partner, please visit us at: THERANCHES.ORG/PARTNERS

Sincerely,

Heath Kull - President
heathk@theranches.org



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For years, we were willing to discipline and punish so that we didn't have to understand, but now we know better so we have to do better.

While social media is filled with every armchair expert's version of what we "should" do, I prefer to source my expertise from a slightly more eternal source. What would Jesus actually do?

If I am reading it right, discipleship, compassion, and some honesty that can't be overcome and turned away with anger or tantrums seems to be the best answer that I can find to that question. And so we work to do that as often as we can with kids...of all ages.

Discipleship - Everyone has an internal desire to feel like they are a part of something significant and having someone who cares enough about you to offer discipleship - even when it includes that root word discipline - is so needed for kids of all ages; from 8 to 80.

Compassion - Everyone I've ever met has those moments of imperfection where a little bit of compassion - from friends, family, or even strangers - goes a long way. We all need it sometimes and a little bit tends to go a long way. For the kids at The Ranches, sometimes we are the first in a really long time, to even offer it.

Honesty - We all, at times, love to let those darn commandments escape us and, in turn, defeat us. Honesty is often the easiest to let go of. I mean... it is challenging to always be honest when, "I'm fine" and "it's OK" and "No problem" are just so much easier than, "wow, that hurt" or "I didn't appreciate that" or "I need a minute to be hurt and angry before I can honestly forgive you...but I will honestly forgive you."

...that can't be overcome and turned away with anger or tantrums - and this is where I have seen so many good hearted and well-intentioned Christian folks lose the respect of a child. Most of the time, if you ask a child about their worst behavior and they answer honestly, they are being honest about their behavior being purposeful and intentional. They are often "testing" the adults to see if they can trust them even when they are angry. For kids of all ages, you can't trust who you can't trust, and you find out who you can't trust when you're at your worst and they have to respond; either with their worst or with something different and more mature. Sadly, those adults around them either join them in their worst or they courageously share the love that Jesus so freely offered, and they stop the chain reaction started by someone's worst. "We're all human" is the tired refrain, but we offer it to kids often when we fail them and are yet to have the courage to change our own behavior. For most kids, they need to see and experience something different in order to do something different. This often starts by offering love rather than allowing ourselves to offer our worst to combat their worst.

In order for any of these to be a part of what we do, we first have to do the hard work. And that hard work usually starts with,

"resurrecting the deep pain within us and give it a place to live that's not within our body. (We have to) Let it live in art. Let it live in writing. Let it live in music. Let it be devoured by building brighter connections.

And, most importantly, we have to really believe that,

" Our body is not a coffin for pain to be buried in. (And that we need to) put it somewhere else."





Gifting the Holiday Spirit

The holidays can be a little chaotic for us here at the Ranches. Many children in our care don't know what to expect upon returning home for the holidays, some haven't even experienced the celebrations we tend to associate with the season. This year, many individuals and organizations made it a point to deliver memorable moments and joy, and we would like to sincerely thank them.

December began with a Christmas party hosted by the National Sojourners who provided lunch, fun, and gift cards for the children. Several of our veteran friends spoke with the children about their mission to promote good fellowship, and the event concluded with some ice cream and activities.

The Albuquerque Breakfast Lion's club also donated a day of lunch, snacks, goodie bags and brand-new sports shoes for each resident. They spoke about their origin as an organization and about scholarship opportunities before singing Christmas carols with the residents. Members of both the Edgewood and Albuquerque NE clubs attended and provided, prepared, and served lunch. Both the Lion's Club and the Sojourners have been a part of the holiday season at the Ranches for decades; working to demonstrate their passion for the communities they serve and their love for this organization.



Many other groups, like the members of Faith Baptist Church in Artesia, Legacy Church, Buffett's Candies, the Believer's Center, ABQ Real Producers, Jennifer Bradley (sister of staff member Jaclyn) and the Doylestown Pennsylvania Hospital Staff donated either gifts or funds for gifts for the resident and they deserve a very special thanks. The season concluded with The Ranches Board of Directors event, with the board members providing gifts including monogrammed towels to each resident.

In addition to all these wonderful organizations who continue to show their support and love for the children in our care, we had one especially memorable addition this year. A previous resident attended The Ranches Board Members event. She brought gifts for current residents, stating that it was because of groups like those listed above. She attributed her visit and gifts to the kindness those groups had shown her while a resident that she wanted to give back; proving that the season for giving to our future generations pays forward in immeasurable dividends.

Thank you again to all of those who participated in marking another unforgettable year and for continuing to contribute to the rekindling of hope during a season dedicated to the same principle.



THEIR JOURNEY



Photos by Lani Kull and Dawn Goodrum



THE RANCHES

Transported to Bethlehem

On Thursday, November 29th, all the residents and employees of the Ranch were invited to attend a play at First Baptist Church of Rio Rancho entitled "One Bethlehem Night". The kind community of FBCRR welcomed us with open arms (and some much-appreciated snacks) before the show began and we were transported to Bethlehem.

The performance began with the interactive musical entrance of the people of Bethlehem. Various merchants, travelers, and a young couple you might be familiar with as being responsible for raising a man who would one day change the world, greeted the audience warmly as they ascended the stage. The story behind the birth of our Lord and Savior unfolded as the tale was told from the perspectives of the town of Bethlehem residents and visitors and those of a young couple entrusted with the care of the son of God, entertained and informed us all.

It can be easy, especially around the holiday season, to become enraptured by the gifts and celebrations and forget the reason behind the celebration. Thank you to FBCRR and a valued member of the Ranches community, Dawn Goodrum, for helping us all remember the reason for the season with an evening filled with music, incredible storytelling, and a few moments of carefully curated laughter. Both the residents and the employees enjoyed the experience and were grateful to be a part of it.





THE RANCHES



The Sky is the Limit!

In October, the residents attended the Annual Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta, thanks to the kind donation of tickets by the American Heritage Girls and Trail Life USA. The residents and staff began the day by watching the balloons light at sunrise and spent the remainder of the morning watching as balloons of all shapes and sizes rose into the air. In addition to this generous experience, the American Heritage Girls and Trail Life USA also donated puzzles, blankets, and coloring books to each cottage on campus for Christmas. Thank you again for this continued partnership and for gifting memories and experiences that will remain with our residents for years to come!



Thank you to all the businesses, organizations, and churches that made monetary gifts in excess of \$250 during the period of Oct 1, 2022 - December 30, 2022. We deeply appreciate your commitment to children and families!

THANK YOU

AAA Pumping Service, Inc.	Albuquerque	NM	New Mexico Gas Company, Inc.	Albuquerque	NM
AF & AM Temple Lodge 6	Albuquerque	NM	Reynolds Enterprises	Parker	CO
Alamo Ranch Company	Deming	NM	Richardson & Richardson, Inc.	Albuquerque	NM
Buck Duncan Construction, Inc	Albuquerque	NM	Slayton Foundation	Roswell	NM
Casa Dream Team, LLC	Cedar Crest	NM	Standerwick Real Estate	Rio Rancho	NM
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Greeman Ranches	Tishomingo	OK	Tom Netuschil	Santa Fe	NM
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JSCO, Inc	Albuquerque	NM	United Church of Los Alamos	Los Alamos	NM
Libby Holman Foundation, Inc.	New York	NY	VAMCO	Bernalillo	NM
New Mexico Acoustics and Specialties, Inc.	Albuquerque	NM	Wild West Braiding Co.	Farmington	NM



Become a Partner

Become a Partner

Have you ever wondered what it means to be a Partner of The Ranches? Our Partners commit to a montly gift which allows us to provide hope for the kids in our care. The Financial needs of an organization which is dedicated to providing HOPE for "the least of these" can be daunting. By making an affordable automatic gift, each month, you can help bring HOPE to the children who, through no fault of their own, have been hurt and have lost hope.

We want to make becoming a partner as easy as possible.
You can go directly to our website at
www.theranches.org/partners
or call us direct at 505-881-3363 or 800-660-0289
or fill out the form below, return it, and we will call you.

We appreciate your continued support of The New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches.

Help Us Share Our Story

Representatives of New Mexico Boys and Girls Ranches are available to meet with clubs, civic organizations and fellowship groups, either in person or via the web, to share our story of bringing hope to hurting youth.

If you are interested in arranging a speaking engagement for your organization, simply give us a call at (505) 881-3363 or (800) 660-0289.

YES! I would like to Become a Partner!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: You may contact me by email. My email address is:

My Monthly donation will be: (a minimum gift of \$25 a month is required to become a Partner)

\$25 a month (\$300 yearly)

\$100 a month (\$1200 yearly)

\$50 a month (\$600 yearly)

Other: _____

If you would like to make a Donation by credit card
please visit us at

www.theranches.org/invest-in-our-youth/
or call us direct at (505) 881-3363 or (800) 660-0289.

Please contact me at the number listed above to set up monthly payments by Credit Card or Electronic Funds Transfer.

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