

Why I do it



By
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Have you ever gotten an autistic 6-year-old boy laughing so hard he was gasping for air, just because you walked a horse over a wooden bridge?

Have you ever heard him laugh?

Have you ever heard the JOY and EXCITEMENT in his father's voice to see and hear him responding?

Have you ever gotten a teenage boy who is 90% unresponsive to the world and so mentally challenged that he still wears diapers, and wears a helmet for seizures, to crack a smile, or actually reach out and hold your hand?

Have you ever given a teen age paraplegic girl who has never walked in her life the gift to feel like she is?

Have you ever held a 7-year-old's hand and helped him overcome his fear, and give a horse a treat for the very first time, and heard him giggle when the horse's lips tickled his hand?

Have you ever had sole control over an animal more than thrice your size, and kept it under control and calm even though it's scared and yet it trusts you to lead it through a door built for a man, or over a bridge just barely wide enough for the both of you.

Have you ever looked in a horse's eyes and known there was something in there more than just a collection of responses to instinct; or seen 2 others so happy to see her when she returns after just 2 hours of being away that they run up to greet her with whinnies and nays.

Have you? I have. ...yeah it's worth it.

It's worth the trekking through muck to catch a horse that doesn't quite want to work yet. The occasional near miss when a horse steps on the back of your shoe. The boots that are starting to fall apart and not quite comfortable to walk in for 2 or 3 hours. The God only knows how many miles of walking in circles.

It's worth, the manure shoveling 3 – 6 times an hour. It's worth, the "hop-scotch" over puddles of urine so that the side-walkers don't have to. The sore shoulder(s) after hours of holding onto an rider with your arm raised at shoulder level or higher; some of which have little to no sense of balance, and you have to hold onto them with all your might.

It's worth it all.

To see a boy smile... To hear another laugh... To make a girl walk...

Yeah my knees hurt, and threaten to collapse out from under me if I take one more step.

SO WHAT!