



## *Danielle Vetsch - Horses as therapy*

Danielle I've been back for five years in France, after leaving Switzerland, and as I have horses and animals, I was looking for place with pasture and just green grass, and I also, about 20 years ago, I did a voyage with my husband, through Brittany and I really loved it because it's very, the landscape can be so different. You drive on a hill and just around the corner you have a different landscape. It's that reminds me a bit of Switzerland.

Animals are part of, of the world and they're part of us humans, and if you are well, the animal is well. It's a very close bond and we have domestic animals, we have the chance to have that bond. A lot of people don't have it. And even the respect towards the animal world is in the end is also the respect towards us as a whole, as a human being.

I'm a horse breeder, and the breed is what I have, the horses, American horses. they're Morgan horses. And the Morgan is a horse that is very related to the human being. And is always very curious, will come up to you and look for contact, which is quite unusual of a horse because usually the horse will first watch you and then ... but a Morgan will already at birth as a little foal when it is standing on its four legs will come towards you instead of to the mother, and it's very easy then to show a foal where the milk bar to have milk from the mother. And I am the kind of person that thinks it's the horse that will teach you what you ... the discipline you are in, because I realised I was riding more dressage, and I came upon this Morgan mare by chance in the north of Vermont and I bought her and I realised she doesn't like that much to be ridden, so I started to learn how to carriage drive. And I started to compete in carriage-driving and this is how I realised how much fun it can be, being in unity, mentally, with your horse.

And then, through that, people asked me more and more if I would work with children that had sometimes contact problems towards other children or wanted to learn about the horse differently. All were having problems because there were difficulties ... just parents divorcing, and were not sure about themselves any more, and didn't know how to position themselves, and I started working with my horses and then the children and then also with adults. And this is how I decided to work. Slowly, it was by chance that I started working therapeutically. I realised that horse therapy not every horse is made for that, and that's why the Morgan is made for it because he will be able to adjust to the person. The horse-breeding was because I liked the breed, more a passion, but my business is actually working with my horses in therapy, in a therapeutic way.

Jon Have you started that business yet?

Danielle Yes. I've been working in the Maine et Loire with it, but now I realise that I don't want to work alone any more. I find it difficult as a therapist to really work alone. And this why a friend of mine and I are creating an association, beginning of next year, 2020, and this association will actually be open to any therapist that wants to work with the animal and people, and combine it. And the name of the association is: *l'animal et moi en harmonie*.