

Speaker 1 ([00:00:07](#)):

You're listening to the journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick is a horseman, trainer, international clinician, and author, whose mission is to help people achieve a deeper connection with their horses and therefore themselves and everyone around them. Through his transformational training program, Warwick offers a free seven day trial to his comprehensive online video library. That includes hundreds of full length training videos and several home study courses at [videos.warwickshiller.com](https://www.videos.warwickshiller.com)

Robyn Schiller ([00:00:43](#)):

Welcome back to the journey on podcast. This is Robyn Schiller and today I get to share with you another incredible woman. Crissi McDonald. Crissi is an author certified Masterson method, equine body worker, and horsemanship clinician. She also just so happens to be married to GRAT. I hope that you enjoy our conversation as much as I did. So I started doing some of the interviews with spouses of some of work's original podcast guests. And I knew that this, that it would be a great addition. What is half is that we've just confirmed that these women don't need to be known as the wife of anyone cuz they are so incredibly talented on their own. So today I have another incredible woman, Crissi McDonald who just happens to be married to Mark Rashid. So welcome Crissi.

Crissi McDonald ([00:01:38](#)):

Thank you for having me. I'm very pleased to be here

Robyn Schiller ([00:01:41](#)):

And I honored because you told me before we started rolling that you don't typically grant interviews or podcasts. So I don't

Crissi McDonald ([00:01:49](#)):

<Laugh> so thank you. I'm not way too way too. Self conscious. I'm trying to not say shy so much anymore, but I do get self conscious as many of us do.

Robyn Schiller ([00:02:00](#)):

Yes. As many of us do I do too. You know the podcast has been a little bit of stepping outside of my comfort zone and into, you know, the unknown. So I'm right there with you. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> you know, we'll talk a little bit about you and mark, but really this is about you. So why don't you tell us your story, you know, where, where did you grow up and how did you get involved in horses and, and just take it away. I'll I'll interject with some questions, but yeah, it, the floor is yours.

Crissi McDonald ([00:02:31](#)):

<Laugh> okay. So I grew up in town. We never had horses when I was a kid, but I met my first horse. When I was two years old, it was little Shetland pony. And I have a picture of me standing in diapers, holding onto a lead rope of this Shetland pony. And it was down at a ranch in Eastern Southeastern Arizona, a place called Sanders. And there was a guy down the road from my grandparents who had horses and I, my parents took me down there when I was two and in the picture, the, the Shetland pony, the lead rope is actually a rope and it's made into a halter that's around the Pony's head and I'm standing there and I've got a hold of this pony, big smile on my face. I still diapers on and a t-shirt. And I don't, I only have the picture.

Crissi McDonald ([00:03:26](#)):

I don't have the memory of that, but I remember going to that ranch whenever we would go down that was my big draw on holidays. I didn't really wanna hang out with everybody. I wanted to go see the horses. So, you know, as I was growing up, there were, we would go when I lived in town that was still okay to have horses in your backyard. And we didn't have a horse in our backyard, but three blocks over. I rode my bike and there were horses in the backyard. So mostly it was just me really wanting horses and finding them on my own. I'm a big reader. I love horse books. And so we go to the library and any book on horses, I would read it, Steve Chini, the black stallion series. Margaret Henry is wonderful. I read all her books and by the time I was 11 my mom had a coworker at horses and she started giving me lessons.

Crissi McDonald ([00:04:21](#)):

And the first three months of my lessons, I was on a lunch line. So I wasn't allowed to touch the reins. I just had to work on sitting. And so from that I progressed to, when I got older, I would babysit her kids in exchange for lessons. And then, and as her horses were older and they weren't able to do much anymore. So she would take me to a local ranch there in Arizona and I would get lessons from Cowboys and it didn't matter to me. I mean, I was on a horse. It didn't matter what satellite I was wearing or I don't even think I listened to what they were saying very often. <Laugh> because I was on a horse. So I did that. And then as I got into high school, I started cleaning stalls and cleaning trailers and brushing horses and cleaning tack and doing chores.

Crissi McDonald ([00:05:14](#)):

So I could ride other people's horses. And that's what I did until I was 24. So I got, actually got my first horse when I was 20. I started training that same year, started giving lessons that same year I was certified through the CHHA I think it's camp horsemanship association. So I got that certification and then ran a girl scout program for two summers as a writing director. And it just really pretty much the only thing I wanted in my life was to have horses. And so I did everything I could to do that. And I've been very fortunate that I've been able to have horses. Okay. So that, that takes us to age 24 <laugh> yeah, I went into dressage. I had a teacher who wasn't, she was very knowledgeable, but her teaching style didn't really mesh with my learning style because I tend to be a very sensitive learner.

Crissi McDonald ([00:06:20](#)):

And as a lot of people are, and she was kind of a hard teacher, she taught the German style dressage. And after a year I pretty much quit massage and got out of it because I was convinced that I couldn't ride and I was a completely awful horrible rider. And so my horse and I went on trail rides, I got three more horses. Restarted, two of 'em just kept going on trail rides with friends. Really. I go to shows every once in a while, but I didn't really enjoy it. I tried hunt seat quotation rode Western road. Our back just really did a bunch of everything because I was curious about it. And when I was training horses, I originally started training because I saw John Mayans and I started, you know, buying his DVDs and got the books and went to clinics and started learning how he was working with, which was completely different from how I'd been working with horses.

Crissi McDonald ([00:07:23](#)):

So I was brought up more, you know, you have whips, you have crops, you have tie downs, you have German Martin gales. You put the horses in these things and that's training. And no matter what the horse had to say, you were the boss and the horse had to do it. So you had to make them do whatever

walk chalk can. We had to make them do these things. And you know, I loved horses. I loved being around them, but after a while, I didn't really love how I felt, especially when I came to my own horse, but it was the only thing I knew. And so I started hearing about these different people who were teaching about horses and I would go and watch. And then I started training horses using, you know, the John Lyon's techniques. And, you know, I had learned a bunch, but there was, there were a couple horses who didn't respond the way that other horses responded.

Crissi McDonald ([00:08:19](#)):

No matter how much of the, a technique I did cuz I thought, well, if I do six circles, maybe 12 at work, right. This is my early twenties. And and I was still at the point in my career where I was reconciling, okay, I'm the trainer, I'm the one people are hiring to do a job. And here's a horse that I'm not helping. I'm not getting the job done. And I had to give up a couple client it's because I, at that stage of my career, I was, I, I didn't know. I said, I, you know, they got a little better, they got manageable, but I wasn't happy and I didn't have the answer. So I started after that, I started looking around even more. And that's when I found Mark's work. And I had a friend who had written with every clinician you could name <laugh>.

Crissi McDonald ([00:09:08](#)):

And I went in and I said to her, look, I'm super frustrated. And I'd like to find someone one who is the same person inside the cause. Round pen work was big at that time. I said, I want someone who's the same inside the round pen as they are outside the round pen. So I don't want some guy telling me to be gentle and kind. And then he walks outside of the round pen and I see him beating on his horse or treating people like, you know, not treating people. Well, I said, I want the, I want a person who actually lives what he teaches. And she mentioned mark. And she said, here's, I didn't know who he was. She handed me his first book considering the horse. And I read it and these are the days before internet. So I couldn't go on YouTube and watch him or anything. And I read the book and I liked the book and I signed up, tried with him. I didn't know who he was. And I went to ride with him and that's a whole nother section of the story. So that brings us up to 2001. <Laugh>

Robyn Schiller ([00:10:10](#)):

Okay, well you got you're so lucky because you know, we work and I both, it took us a lot longer to get that point of well finding the horse that didn't respond and had us looking somewhere else. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> and the horsemanship for me, it didn't come along till a lot later because I was, I was a competitor mm-hmm <affirmative> I had that. I, I had that instructor that you as a Western instructor, cause I've always done Western, but I had that person when I was five. Oh yeah,

Crissi McDonald ([00:10:44](#)):

Yeah. My very first, the very first lady who taught me, who put me on the lunch line, she was, she was lovely. She wasn't a, a riding instructor. She was just a woman who had horses. And she really took me under her wing and she was very with me. So, you know, when I, by the time I got to the dressage instructor, I, it really shook me up because I thought, oh my God, I must really be horrible if she's talking to me like this <laugh> so I'm sorry to hear you had one since you were five.

Robyn Schiller ([00:11:13](#)):

Yeah. Well, I mean, I didn't stay there, but yeah, that was my introduction to it. And I came up through the four H you know, the four H program, which was really great, you know, they did, they did teach you

all about the horse and how to take care of them and, and such, but, but my first riding instructor was crazy. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> put your hand, you know, just very, very drill Sergeant like, and ruthless, ruthless to a five year old. Oh, <laugh> sorry. Anyway. Yeah. Well

Crissi McDonald ([00:11:46](#)):

You learn about, I mean, at least for me, I thought I will, if I ever become a teacher, I'm never gonna talk to people like that. Right. And I try very hard not to. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Robyn Schiller ([00:11:56](#)):

All right. So let's talk about, let's talk about mark and let, let's talk about your first introduction to mark since you married him. So <laugh>, what did that look like? Did you, was it, was it love at first sight? Was it

Crissi McDonald ([00:12:10](#)):

No, no, no, it wasn't. He was married at the time and I was married. We were married to different people. He was in Colorado. I was in Arizona and it was a four day clinic and I didn't have a saddle that put my horse. So I rode in bareback. And he said, as he still does, what would you like to work on? And you know, here's me miss 20 something trainer I'm like, well, I don't, I don't know. He said, well, why don't you ride around? Let's take a look at your halt and make your walk. He of course I rode was a Missouri foxtrotter and he said, so why don't you go ahead and just ride around. Let's just see what we have going on. So I Rodee around. And he said, well, he doesn't look very soft. And I thought, oh, soft.

Crissi McDonald ([00:12:52](#)):

I know that. And so I, you know, grabbed the reigns and I had him, had my horse, put his head down, like, okay, now we're soft because in dressage instruction, light and soft are used interchangeably. The horse can be light and a horse can be soft. And there's no difference between the two. And there's a little pause, you know, I was feeling quite well. Finally, I know something. And mark said, well, he looks light, but he's not soft. And that really confused me. And that's when I sat up and I went, there's some, what <laugh>, I don't get it. And he said, light is on the outside of the horse and soft is on the inside. So when a horse is soft, you can get things with much more subtlety than you can if you're just using technique, which is lightness, I'd never heard any of this.

Crissi McDonald ([00:13:50](#)):

And it was, it was a revelation to me because that what started easing me away from the kind of dominance based horsemanship that I'd grown up with, that I, it was all I knew and into seeking a relationship with horses rather than seeking to dominate them. And so I wrote in their clinic for four days. And I tell this story a lot. I was, I had already written, it was the afternoon of the last day, and I'm sitting up on the fence and I'm watching a lady riding her Steiner NA and their precinct George, I think. And she was having trouble with Tempe changes with changing strides, the canner. And so I was sitting on the fence and I was watching them. And the first day, this woman in her horse, the woman would have to almost ring herself up out of the saddle and shift her weight to the other side, to get the horse to change.

Crissi McDonald ([00:14:50](#)):

And by the fourth day she was changing by her. She and her horse were changing in time with the rider's breath. Wow. Yeah, it was a completely different picture. It was like, dressage has always known. It could be. And mark calls out from the middle of the rainy, sees me on the fence. He says Chrisy. And I looked over at him and he said that softness softness is joy. He's like, okay, I'm done. <Laugh> sign me up, sign me up. And so I would ride or audit one or two clinics a year <affirmative> and in between I would watch, I bought DVDs. I bought his books. There wasn't a lot out there at that time. Cause he, you know, he wasn't, I think he had four or five books out at that time. He was 14 now. And so I read and I watched DVDs and then I went out to my horses.

Crissi McDonald ([00:15:54](#)):

I tried to practice what I learned and it took about five years before I noticed a shift in my own horsemanship. And that shift was instead of going into the mindset of you do what I say, because I say it it's okay, this isn't, but my horse isn't hearing me or my horse is confused. How can I be clearer? How can I be better? And that is a monumental shift. And that's the fundamental shift. I think that we're seeing in the horsemanship world is this shift from you do what I say because you, because I'm the human near the horse I know better. So you do it to, Hey, you know what? I'd like to have a better relationship with my horse. And what that includes is, is me listening, not only to myself, but to my horse and you know, so I think after five years he asked me to be a student instructor for him, which means that I could come to any clinic and I could help teach.

Crissi McDonald ([00:17:01](#)):

And then a few years after that unbeknownst to me, he, he and I were, both of our marriages were kind of falling apart at the same time. And neither of us talked about that because we were friends and he, his marriage ended up ending about six months before mine. And so he was looking for a new assistant, which is a person who travels around with him and helps out at clinics. And I came up to shortly after divorce in my husband, I came up to Colorado and we started working together, started spending more time together. And that's when each of us went, oh, this is more than a friendship. And it was easy. You know, it was the easiest relationship I've been in. It was it's and it still is. It's very supportive. It's very calm. There's not a lot of trauma. We work together. Well, I feel incredibly fortunate to have been given a chance to be with horses in ways that I would never have imagined because we see thousands of people and hundreds of horses a year. And I love it. And I, I mean, my life has taken a completely different turn because of the choices I've made, you know? So that's it. I feel like I've been talking

Robyn Schiller ([00:18:34](#)):

<Laugh> that's the purpose. <Laugh>, that's why we're here. Yeah. okay, so that was how many, so that was two early two thousands.

Crissi McDonald ([00:18:45](#)):

We got married, we got together in 2007. We married in 2008.

Robyn Schiller ([00:18:51](#)):

Okay. And so you live in Colorado? Yes. And since 2008. So how has, how has the business evolved with your, with, with the addition of you?

Crissi McDonald ([00:19:04](#)):

Oh I don't know what it was like for him before me, but I will say that we no longer eat at truck stops <laugh> because I either cook meals and take 'em with us or I shop, so we have good meals on the road. That's changed. I'm a little bit of a particular about my food, so we don't eat just anywhere. He no longer pulls over and overnights in truck stops because they're too loud. <Laugh> no. So he was, it was far simpler when it was just him on his own. But now we actually go to a horse motel and we put the horses in a pad and we hook up and we have a nice, so it takes a little bit longer to get to where we're going, maybe by eight hours or so, but we're both much more relaxed when we get there.

Robyn Schiller ([00:20:05](#)):

And how many days do you spend on the road?

Crissi McDonald ([00:20:10](#)):

These days, I would say it's about 90. When he and I got together is anywhere between 240. And our longest stint on the road was in 2015 and we had about 300 days on the road. Wow. Yeah. Yeah. That was the year we made our movie out of the wild, so okay. We weren't home a lot.

Robyn Schiller ([00:20:31](#)):

And is it more, is it due to your always not to be on the road as much? Or is it, I mean, obviously COVID S had a, an effect on that, but will you go back to that many days on the road or you, you like where it is now?

Crissi McDonald ([00:20:49](#)):

We like where it is now. We're both getting to the, he's been on the road over 30 years. I've, I've been teaching 30 years, but I've been on the road since 2007. So, and I don't know how he's done it 30 years. It's I love my job and I love what we do, but getting there is, as we get older is getting a little bit more strenuous. And probably the schedule right now are, is the one we'll keep. And the, the, our clinic areas are shrinking. So we used to clinic from California to New Hampshire. That was our basically, and then Washington to floor, right. It was, we covered a huge area and now we go to California once a year or this DC, we go is North Carolina. We recently had to make the decision to give Florida up, which was really difficult because we long our Florida people. But it's extra driving. So yeah, we're still trying to get on the road and, and cover areas. But I think as we get older, it's, I would be surprised if it got as big as it did even five years ago.

Robyn Schiller ([00:22:00](#)):

And who do you have employees who work for you as well? Like who does all that coordination? So

Crissi McDonald ([00:22:07](#)):

I schedule the clinic, I'm the clinic schedule, and then we have a business manager who manages the finances and shipping out orders and everything, except for clinic scheduling. And then our daughter, Lindsey takes care of the horses when we're on the road. So.

Robyn Schiller ([00:22:26](#)):

Okay. Yeah. That was another question. Do you have kids, kids together and kids from

Crissi McDonald ([00:22:31](#)):

We Don don't have kids together. I, I say our kids because I love them all. But he has he and his wife, Wendy have three kids and two of them now have grands. So we're 10 times grandparents. Wow. Or no, it eight I'm <laugh> I'm reading into the future thinking, well, maybe have two more <laugh>

Robyn Schiller ([00:22:56](#)):

How is that? I can't, I, I can wait because Tyler's not old enough. We only have the one, but I'm excited. Yeah, I'm excited for the grandkids.

Crissi McDonald ([00:23:07](#)):

It's fun. They're good kids. I really enjoy them.

Robyn Schiller ([00:23:11](#)):

That's great. Yeah, I can. And where do they live?

Crissi McDonald ([00:23:15](#)):

Four of 'em live here in tu spark and four of 'em live down near Loveland.

Robyn Schiller ([00:23:19](#)):

Oh, nice. So not too. Yeah. Close enough. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> yeah, it's kind of a wild card where Tyler's gonna end up. So we always he's in Hawaii now, so I don't know. He's only 20, so yeah,

Crissi McDonald ([00:23:32](#)):

He's got time.

Robyn Schiller ([00:23:33](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Crissi McDonald ([00:23:35](#)):

Lot of time. I got first, my first I got married first time when I was 23 and I look back now and I think, oh my gosh, I was so young. <Laugh> I didn't know anything, but at the time, you know, I graduated from college, I'd studied overseas. I got a, you know, I had all it's like, okay, I did all this stuff and okay. I'll get married. <Laugh>

Robyn Schiller ([00:23:57](#)):

Okay. So you brought that up. So let's talk about that. I wanna know about your, what you went for college and, and where you went overseas. So let's talk about that.

Crissi McDonald ([00:24:07](#)):

I got a bachelor of arts and philosophy with minor in German, from Northern area Theona university in Flagstaff.

Robyn Schiller ([00:24:14](#)):

So why

Crissi McDonald (00:24:15):

German? Because my favorite philosopher was German. Great. Okay. His name is Dicken Stein, and I wanted to read him in his own language. And so I started studying, I had studied German in high school and then got out of it. And so I picked it back up in college. And then I was an exchange student for six months in Germany. And I even was ambitious enough to take a beginning philosophy course in German, which I don't recommend <laugh> it was crazy. I mean, philosophy is mind bending enough sometimes to take it in a language that you don't speak, you know, or your

Robyn Schiller (00:24:53):

Language as your first language,

Crissi McDonald (00:24:53):

Right? Yeah, yeah. Yeah. It was very ambitious, but I'm still glad I

Robyn Schiller (00:24:57):

Did it well. And German is, oh, German to me is one of, seems like it's one of the hardest languages would be. Yeah.

Crissi McDonald (00:25:05):

I think the indigenous languages would be harder. I think I grew up in Flagstaff near the Hopi Navajo reservations and those languages to me. They use different sounds and you use different sounds in different parts of your mouth and throat. And I think those would be harder, but probably yeah, of the like Latin based languages, French, Spanish, German, Italian, I, yeah. German. I could see how German would be a little trickier.

Robyn Schiller (00:25:34):

And did you, did you, were you able to, to ride any horses in Germany? Not one,

Crissi McDonald (00:25:40):

Not one. Okay. Not one, no. I saw them. We would go by a riding school and I'd they were doing, you know, they were ride riding dressage, big, big warm bloods. But no didn't ride any horses. I didn't in the last two years I was in college. I didn't really have much to do with horses.

Robyn Schiller (00:26:00):

Yeah. I did that in high school. <Laugh> I skipped horses in high school unless the boys wanted to come over and see my horse. I didn't really, yeah. I had one, we only had one at the time and he was old and I, I think it, he actually, we ended up having to put him down during high school, so yeah. So, but then once I graduated right back to it,

Crissi McDonald (00:26:23):

I was gonna say, what brought you back to them? Yeah,

Robyn Schiller (00:26:26):

Just I missed him and my mom, my mom's still very involved and she was breeding them. And so yeah, I had the time and I was still at home at that point. And then yeah, got back into the competition part of it and they bought me a nice horse and then I met work. <Laugh>

Crissi McDonald ([00:26:46](#)):

Mm-Hmm <affirmative>

Robyn Schiller ([00:26:47](#)):

Nice.

Crissi McDonald ([00:26:48](#)):

Yeah. Where did you guys meet?

Robyn Schiller ([00:26:52](#)):

Well, that's interesting because if you ask me, we met at one show and if you ask him, we met at a different show. So we actually did in a little town called Reedley in the central valley of California at a court horse show. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> it was on Easter. And I remember seeing him and, and telling my friend, see him, I'm gonna marry him. Oh, wow. So you knew just kind of flippantly, but and we, there was a group of us and Warwick was he had these ears bunny ears on and he was playing around with a carrot and making rude comments about the carrot. And <laugh> how can you forget that? I, I couldn't forget that he did, he forgot about that. He says he were remembers meeting me the next weekend. We were at another show that was a coup about 500 miles away. But he says he remembers meeting me there, so it's okay.

Crissi McDonald ([00:27:54](#)):

Yeah. He met, that's see, we

Robyn Schiller ([00:27:57](#)):

Met. Yeah. And yeah. So so how many horses do you have now? Six,

Crissi McDonald ([00:28:05](#)):

Six. We used to have 12. Okay. When we were, we used to give weeklong clinics in Loveland at our friend Dave Siemens place. Dave Siemens is an equine chiropractor. He's been inducted into the chiropractic hall of fame, I think. Wow. He's yeah, he is super famous. He lives in the UK now, but that mark that's where mark learned about equine chiropractic and how pain in horses gets overlooked because we think it's training issues. And so he learned from Dave and we when we had programs there, we had extra horses. So people who came from Europe or Australia or wherever could come to a clinic, but not AF you know, and have a safe horse. Right. So once Dave moved, we found some of those horses, good homes and kept some of them. And then we've finally gotten down to six, three of our six are on the senior side. So mark has two clinical courses and I have one. OK.

Robyn Schiller ([00:29:12](#)):

And you're both, you're both writers.

Crissi McDonald ([00:29:14](#)):

We are.

Robyn Schiller ([00:29:16](#)):

Did you, were you a writer before you met Mark or an aspiring? Yes. Okay. No,

Crissi McDonald ([00:29:22](#)):

I wrote my first book when I was eight years old. Oh, wow. A complete knockoff, a of king of the wins <laugh> because I loved Arabs. And then I wrote poetry through junior high and high school. And then once I got into college, my my minor originally was English lit. And so I had a lot of writing courses. I had creative writing courses. I have write stories, short stories, fiction, poetry. And then I've always had a journal I've always written, but I've never had the confidence to actually anything about it. And so for various reasons so when you know, I've been, I I've just been writing, I write all the time, just little snippets, you know, little things just for myself. I would take notes at clinics and I would write poetry sometimes. And it wasn't until after I had a wreck in 2014 where a horse we were at a standstill and she fell on me.

Crissi McDonald ([00:30:38](#)):

She reared up, fell over on me and it was a physical thing. It was wasn't her fault at all. But it, it wasn't until after that and having gone through my recovery, which took about two years, and I started to talk, started talking to people about building confidence and how to get over trauma and how to find your way back to a horse after you've been really scared. And I realized that I couldn't do that in three days, you know, an hour session over three days, there was just too much information. And so I distilled it down as much as I could, but it, I never felt like I gave him pieces that would help, but I never felt like, okay, here's, what's really helped me. And you know, it, it's not a formula, but at the same time, I see so many people who say, when I was in my twenties, I used to write anything.

Crissi McDonald ([00:31:33](#)):

I could jump. I could do all this stuff. And now 40 years later, I'm terrified. And sometimes they're terrified because wreck, sometimes they're just terrified and they don't know why. And so I really started to explore that and, you know, I went to therapy and I saw all different kinds of practitioners after this accident and did all kinds of research around trauma and started writing a blog. That was my first step into being a public writer, was having a blog. And I realized when I was writing the blog, I thought, you know, I think this is a book. So I started writing a book about my own experience as a horse professional and almost giving up horses and then how I found my way back. And that was my first book. It took four years to write because I would get to a point and I'd put it down, cuz I hadn't yet really healed that part, that needed healing.

Crissi McDonald ([00:32:38](#)):

So I couldn't really write about it at least not comfortably. And then I'd pick it up six months later and I'd write a little more. And so I think it was four years and finally published it. So that, that was my first book that's called continuing the ride. I'm very proud of that one. It's I, I wrote it so I could, you know, give it to people and say, look here, I've written everything down. Here's everything. I know there's resources, you know, please give this a try. So I I'm very, very pleased with that book.

Robyn Schiller ([00:33:14](#)):

And you mentioned before we started recording that you're working on the sequel.

Crissi McDonald (00:33:20):

No. The second book is called getting along with horses that one's out. Okay. The book that I'm writing now is a fiction book and I haven't written fiction since college. So I have the first book out it's in the rewrite and editing process and I've started the second book. So got it. Okay. Yeah.

Robyn Schiller (00:33:37):

And what's it a, can you tell us what it's about?

Crissi McDonald (00:33:40):

The title is north to home and it's mainly about two people. One is a woman from Texas who goes through a divorce and decides to completely change her life. She has a secret that she's hiding from herself. So she discovers what that is. And the other is a man who lives on it's set on orcas island in the San Juan islands in Puget sound, Washington. Okay. And he lives and she ends up being his neighbor and he has a secret too, but he know he completely knows what he is, but he doesn't want anyone else to know. So these two characters end up together. And it's basically about making peace with the parts of ourselves that we aren't very comfortable with and think others won't be comfortable with either this magical realism type. That's the genre it's it's fiction, but it's it's has a little twist in it.

Robyn Schiller (00:34:41):

Right. I like it sounds good to me. Yeah.

Crissi McDonald (00:34:44):

Yeah.

Robyn Schiller (00:34:46):

Yeah. I, I like to read, I like to read fiction too. I, I mean, we both read a lot. We both read a lot of fiction for most of our marriage. And I'd say the last six years it's shifted. Yeah. Mm-hmm <affirmative> more self-help and mm-hmm, <affirmative> all

Crissi McDonald (00:35:06):

Of that. Yeah. Yeah. I, I did that too. I went through a non-fiction phase that lasted about 10 years and I read as much as I get my hands on and now I'm back to fiction. So <laugh> so, you know, when work and I were chatting about books, it was a nice refresher to realize that there's a lot of good stuff. That's come out since I've been reading fiction. So it was a nice reminder to kind of kinda explore some of those topics that I'm interested in.

Robyn Schiller (00:35:37):

We, I, I chuckle because most of, most of, until about 2014, I worked outside of the business. I didn't mm-hmm <affirmative>, I mean, I helped him here and there, but and a lot

Crissi McDonald (00:35:49):

Of the books that I read for work cause I was a manager mm-hmm <affirmative>, you know, NA in the last couple years, Warwick will read something. He, you ever read this? I'm like yeah. Read, read that a while ago. <Laugh> is Steven Covey

Robyn Schiller (00:36:02):

On that list? Yeah. Stephen Covey Malcolm Gladwell actually blink, well, Malcolm Gladwell. Yeah. Blink was one of the ones that I read for work and yeah, yeah.

Crissi McDonald (00:36:11):

Yeah. I I worked for w gore before I could support myself as a full-time horse trainer. I had part-time jobs and one of the part-time jobs I had right off college was working in the dental regenerative department of w gore, which was fabulous because I got like 50% off of their jackets <laugh> I got Goretex jackets, you know? Right. And Steven co, they sent us to a Steven Covey seminar and I remember it was, it was kind of a big deal. I didn't, all that stuff was made very explicit, very conscious, you know, how to consciously be in the workplace. And I really enjoyed it. I ate it up.

Robyn Schiller (00:36:50):

Yeah. I didn't have that. Didn't wish I had, I wish, you know, if I could go back and, and take what I know now back into the workplace. Yeah. I'd be a way better manager. I was never a really, I was never a really confident manager. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> I was very good. I'm very competent and confident in my administrative ability. But the management, I always had to work at it and yeah, it was always kind of a struggle. Yeah.

Crissi McDonald (00:37:20):

I had a job where I was after five years of being there, she offered me the position of manager and, and I turned it down because I am the same way I am. So you give me a task I'm hundred thousand percent confident, do the task. I'll do everything around the task. You tell me what you want me to do and I'll do it, but I don't have a lot of confidence being able to then manage other people. So I hear you. Yeah, totally the

Robyn Schiller (00:37:48):

Same. I, I would be better at it now, but, but now I don't want to <laugh>. Yeah. You know, I've been, I've been through the bene brown dare to lead training. Yes. Luckily my, that, that well, what got me into that accepted into that program was my years in human resources. I wow. Called upon that to get in there and you know, went through that training in 2019 and it's great stuff. I just don't wanna do it. I just don't wanna train managers. I don't wanna go back into corporate. Yeah. I, and I'm, I'm toying with how I can, yeah. I don't know how I can bring it to where we are now.

Crissi McDonald (00:38:27):

I was just gonna ask you, what was the impetus behind you pursuing that training?

Robyn Schiller (00:38:32):

Well, I had just gotten certified in the E so equine assisted learning and I thought, well, Renee brown. Yeah, this will be awesome. Yeah. Great addition. And did another E course in actually 2020 went and helped. I've done a few retreats. I've done a few. I've helped out on a few corporate E type things. Yeah.

It just doesn't, I don't know. It's not sparking for you. Mm-Hmm Nope. Still what really just sparks me is I, I really love the part of what we do. Like the behind the scenes organizing, you know, getting him ready for a trip, getting the clinic organized. I love all that. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> I love the tra actually the travel arrangement. That's what I, that's what I love doing that, that part is, it's so fun for me. And we just haven't had a lot to do in last 18.

Robyn Schiller ([00:39:36](#)):

Yes. So looking forward it's looking like it's, it's getting back to more normal. I'm starting to plan some things and, and then we're gonna do this big podcast summit next November that I'm hoping mark and you will be part of, hopefully you can plan your California trip around that and that'll be great. So that'll be really, really fun to do. I'll be, I'll be up to my eyeballs and that, and that'll be, that'll give me the passion I need. So is that like a zoom conference? No, it's gonna be an in person. It's gonna be live. We've got a, so what the, the idea was was to, you know, we've had all these great P people on the podcast, let's bring 'em together and have a live event. So it's, so that sounds really fun. Yeah. So we've, we've reserved Rancho Marietta, which is in near Sacramento.

Robyn Schiller ([00:40:32](#)):

Mm-Hmm <affirmative> next November the fourth through the sixth mm-hmm <affirmative> and I've got I'm pretty sure mark said he was in <laugh> I'll have to go back through the, I sent questionnaires out to to, I don't know, 30, 30 of the guests and got responses back from nearly everybody. So yeah, I'll have to double check that, but it, it seems like it's going to be a great. Yeah. It's gonna be great. So it's gonna be more, I'm not meaning to take over here, but yeah, pretty excited. It's gonna be kind of a combination of an expo and a and a summit. So it's the thought is that there's gonna be one thing at a time going on. Maybe, maybe the, their presenters can be doing one-on-ones, but, but it's not gonna be an expo where there's five guys doing five different arenas, so right. And people have to bounce between them to see everyone. Yeah. And it'll, they'll be con con you know, they'll be collaborations Uhhuh. So, so that'll be, it'll be really good magic

Speaker 2 ([00:41:34](#)):

Lies with the, if you are loving the journey on podcast with Warwick, we know you'll benefit greatly from his online video libraries, showing footage of real time training sessions, you will learn how to approach situations with your own horse in an empathetic and effective way. The video library has been life changing for tens of thousands of people and horses all over the world. Warwick invites you to check out the seven day free trial at videos dot war, chiller.com.

Robyn Schiller ([00:42:03](#)):

I'll get to some of my questions here. What are some of the things that you do? I think I know the answer to this, and probably everybody knows the answer to this, but ask you anyway, what do you do outside of horses? What do you do together? Hobbies outside interests?

Crissi McDonald ([00:42:20](#)):

Well we walk the dogs every day. <Laugh> we have border collies. So I don't think I need to say anymore than that. No. How many? Two border collies and one Husky mix. Okay. So we do that. We both play music. I haven't played in a while because I've been writing you writing my book so much. I play the fiddle. Oh, nice. Yeah. Mark plays guitar. He has recorded three CDs with his friend, Brad Fitch. He records them, sends them off for mastering and ships them out. He builds guitars. So he's now custom

building electric and acoustic guitars. Our life is really pretty quiet. We don't, you know, we watch movies sometimes, but there's something that interests us. I'm really glad streaming is a very, because I'll be, you know, going into a theater right now, even now is a little spooky.

Crissi McDonald ([00:43:20](#)):

Yeah. yeah, it's pretty quiet. I, we, we do martial arts. I do martial arts. Yes, we do. We offer martial arts classes. So I've been doing martial arts since 2005 and that was another that was another practice that really changed my life and sent it off in a different direction. I had gone to India in 2000 and celebrated my birth, my 30th birthday at an ASRA meditating for or five hours a day, you know, doing service. It was really, I shaved my head <laugh> cause you know why that's what you do. <Laugh>, that's why you do. It was a really, really amazing time in India. And I got back and I was, you know, that was the middle of reading all the nonfiction books and really looking at how I wanted to be in the world and was I the person that I wanted to be.

Crissi McDonald ([00:44:24](#)):

And if I wasn't, how could I get there? And I started training in Aikido in 2005 and I trained three times a week and there were two hour training sessions and we had three different instructors, which was brilliant because there was no ego tripping. There was no show boating. They were all there just to teach what they had learned from their teachers in Ike. And so it was very, it was a wonderful dojo. And I, I trained there for until late 2007. And that we were talking about confidence earlier. Ike was the thing that I always go back to is remembering giving me my first dose of tr through confidence. You know, when I was with horses, when I was training and teaching I never came from a place of, oh, I know it all. So I'm confident. Right. But I always felt at home with horses and I always felt at home sharing knowledge with people, but everywhere else in my life, personal interactions, jobs, whatever. I was completely not confident. I was faking it a lot. You know, I'm an introvert and I'm easily overwhelmed and I just, I spent a lot of my life faking it. And did

Robyn Schiller ([00:45:50](#)):

You ever have this thought cuz I did a lot. They're gonna figure out that. I don't know what the hell I'm doing.

Crissi McDonald ([00:45:57](#)):

Yes, but not with horses. No, no. If I was training, if I was working with a horse that never occurred to me, cause I thought, well, if something's not working, I'll just try something else. I meant at

Robyn Schiller ([00:46:07](#)):

Work. I meant like outside of the horses.

Crissi McDonald ([00:46:10](#)):

Yeah. Yes. If it wasn't with horses huge imposter comp. Yeah. So but when I got to Aiki and I started finding out that what, how disconnected I was from my body, because I had spent all these years meditating and meditating and meditating and meditating and never feeling, you know, being a, a called at the thoughts of my head and I can't hold my attention for more than five seconds. So you know, all this beating up on yourself. Right. And I spent a lot of years doing that and I got to ICU and I realized how disconnected I was from my body, which is really funny because horses are so physical horses are

all physical. I've never been good at sports. I've never been coordinated. I was never good in dance class. I was, I mean, any of it, right? And so, but horses, I could, I could get along with horses.

Crissi McDonald ([00:47:07](#)):

They didn't care if I tripped or if they didn't care. If I had two left feet <laugh> but out in the world, I was completely withdrawn and disconnected from my body. And I relied completely on my brain to get me through life. And I got into IQ and I, the more you think the worse IQO gets, it is a body centered way of going through the world. It's a martial art, but it's also a way of life kind of just like horsemanship <laugh>. So it, after the first two months I trained, I hated it couldn't stand it. I felt off cord and backward. And I, I just, it, it was mind blowing. I can't believe I can't raise my left hand and take a step with my right foot. <Laugh> just, and you know, in our classes, I see people doing this the same, the same thing.

Crissi McDonald ([00:48:05](#)):

And they're like, oh my gosh, this looks so simple, but it's so hard. It is hard if you're disconnected. And the thing that happened that really showed me the value of being centered in your body was I was riding in a clinic and I was on one of Mark's horses and we were just jumping. We were jumping. And when I say jumping, it's maybe like a foot, <laugh> it, wasn't a big jump, but she'd never done it. And I'd done it very little. And we went over a jump and she got tight and my tightened up and she went to the right and I thought we were going to the left. So you know what happened? So she went over, we went over separately. I'll <laugh> and she came down and I came down and at, I fell on my left side and you know, my right RA my, I was holding onto the reins and I was falling.

Crissi McDonald ([00:49:04](#)):

And as I was looking at the ground, this is after two months of ICU training where we learned to roll and fall, that's all we did. And I looked at the ground and I swept my arm underneath me. And I landed flat on my right side. And I got up dusted myself off and got back on. And I knew the only reason I didn't break my wrist to my arm, you know, by bracing against the ground was because I had trained an ICU. So I kept training, even though I would cry after every class <laugh> cause it was, oh, it was so hard. But you know, kind of bringing us into present day with Mark's classes, the Ikea for horseman, which we call IBO, that is our purpose as horse people, how can we become more connected to ourselves physically so that we can then better meet our horses?

Crissi McDonald ([00:49:58](#)):

Cause horses are all physical that are they, they are sheer physicality and the more in touch with our bodies and the more connected we are to our bodies. I think that, you know, it's not an insurance policy against get, but I think it takes us to a whole different level of skill, honestly. And for me having that background in IQO the little bit that it is rocketed my confidence up in myself, in my life. So I knew that I could at least defend myself. If something, if, you know, if someone was trying to hurt me, I could, at the very least defend myself, I could at the very least think my way through it. And yeah, that was a huge, huge turning point.

Robyn Schiller ([00:50:53](#)):

Anita just emailed us about next October. I think you're gonna be there doing one. Yes. Yeah.

Crissi McDonald ([00:50:59](#)):

Yes. Yeah. You

Robyn Schiller (00:51:02):

Be nice to come. You can fit in the, the summit. You'll just stay a little, few, little weeks longer.

Crissi McDonald (00:51:07):

Yeah. Why not?

Robyn Schiller (00:51:11):

All right. I'll, I'll get into a few more questions. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> what do you think? No, let me ask you a different question. Do you, do you take instruction from mark, with the horses?

Crissi McDonald (00:51:25):

No. <laugh>. And so mark and I, at the beginning of each of our clinics, we ask our participants to not give any unsolicited advice. And we say, you know, if someone asks you for your opinion, you can give it, but unless you're asked don't and unless someone's in danger, you have to step in because you're the one who's there. We would ask that you don't give any unsolicited advice to your fellow participants. And it's a good rule. Yeah. It's a great rule. It, that same rule exists between mark and I. So if I run into something where I need a different perspective or a different point of view, I'll ask him and I'll tell on me same goes for him because I'm a little bit I enjoy nutrition and supplementation and looking at diet and I have a, you know, kind of a, I got certified as an herbalist.

Crissi McDonald (00:52:28):

And after I came back from India, an herbalist for people and horses, and I don't do that as a business anymore, but that knowledge is really helpful when we have a horse who comes in, who maybe needs some support in different ways. And so he'll ask, you know, horse, he'll say, oh, the horse is doing, you know, he seems to be doing this thing. Do we have something we could give them that you think would help with this? And so we'll, you know, we'll look around for some nutrition or some herbal solutions that may be help helpful for our horse. So it goes both ways. But unless we're asked, we don't say anything, it's just, it's too sticky.

Robyn Schiller (00:53:15):

It is sticky. We're still working on that work. Hasn't learned that one yet. <Laugh> he's he is getting better, but he change takes a while. He still, yeah, he still gives a lot of unsolicited advice. He, he can tell by the look on my face, I think now though, when he needs to stop <laugh> <laugh> I think with him, you know, I I spent 2016 campaigning, two horses. I was, you know, showing in the raining and he was, he was off doing clinics a lot. So I went to a lot of, I was doing all of the maintenance at home and I think I, you know, I felt pretty good about it. I had a great year and, and I had the horses going pretty well and just not sure he, yeah. And then getting my horse ready for the world across games. I was able to do that. And yeah, I think I still have some convincing to do to him that I, that I kind of know what I'm doing.

Crissi McDonald (00:54:14):

Yeah. It's an age old story, isn't it? Yeah. Yeah. We were I have a funny story. So this was, I think the first year we were on the road and you know, our rig is 50 feet long. You, you guys have a big living quarters rig too. Yeah. And we were at a venue where we had to pull through a big workshop in order to get out.

So we got in a certain way, but we had to go out through this workshop and, you know, it was huge. It was huge wide doors and it was really tall. And, but when mark pulled the rig through, there was only about an inch of space on each side of the trailer and I'm standing there, you know, I've got my hands up and I'm kind of ringing my hands and, and I'm, you know, kind of going from side to side, checking, checking, checking, and he's going really slow.

Crissi McDonald ([00:55:02](#)):

He's taking it careful. And a friend of mine is standing there and I stop myself and I went, you know, he's been doing this for decades without me. And before I married him, I thought this man can do anything. And then after I married him, suddenly he can't do nothing. <Laugh> it's like, I, I don't know what happens when we, when I'm sure there's answers. I haven't explored them. But somehow when you marry somebody, you know, it's, we forget that they have their own experiences known things they're good at. So ever since that day, I, I, I try very hard to not interfere. <Laugh>

Robyn Schiller ([00:55:45](#)):

I don't know. There's something about hooking up a horse trailer that changes of the dynamic and trying to park it. Oh

Crissi McDonald ([00:55:52](#)):

Yeah. I let mark do that. I, I too, I tried. He's done it for decades. Yeah, I,

Robyn Schiller ([00:55:57](#)):

Yeah, I try. But then when he asks for my help, I'm never in the right place and I, yeah, it just that's. Yeah. It's like put the, put the video camera in my hands. It never goes well either. So I'm very, very grateful for our employee Kendall and my son who, who do that

Crissi McDonald ([00:56:15](#)):

Anyway?

Robyn Schiller ([00:56:16](#)):

Yes, yes. I was gonna something you said about training in, in her herbs. I have to say herbs and not herbs cuz the Australian in me comes out. You can say herbs,

Crissi McDonald ([00:56:30](#)):

Herbs. So tell me about that. I'm curious, where did, what does that look like? Getting turned? There was a little school in flag stuff Arizona. And after I came back from India I was feeling a little, I had a job, you know, it was, it was fine. And my marriage at that point, wasn't fine. And, but I had horses and I had, you know, I taught and I trained and I, you know, trail road with friends, it was a good life, but I just, I like learning. I, if I could be in school for the rest of my life, I would be I'm my, you know, her Mays, like my archetypal hero, cause for many reasons, but one of them, because she loves school as much as I do <laugh> and I saw an advertisement for herbalism for people. And so I went and took the first course.

Crissi McDonald ([00:57:32](#)):

I really liked the instructor. She was a local medicine woman who had learned her knowledge from another medicine woman. So it was all plant based, mostly in Arizona. And I went on nature walks and

plant walks and I just kept going to the courses because they felt good and plant knowledge feels good. It's a very old knowledge that is important to keep alive. I think this is back in, I think it was 2001, two was a big year. And so I would go to school and then I was far enough into it that she, you know, and I was asking questions about herbs for horses. And so she would find the answers and then she'd help me. And so I ended up through, through that process, educating myself about herbs and horses and herbs and people. And I, I love my knowledge it's I don't use it as much anymore.

Crissi McDonald ([00:58:35](#)):

I use it mostly for mark and I and our own horses, but it feels very grounded to me feels very important integral, you know, integral it's. So I had a business for seven years where I was doing, I was starting COLS giving lessons, training and offering herbal consults for horses. And usually what I did is I would ask my clients to make sure they got a diagnosis from a vet because we're not allowed to diagnose if you're not a vet. And once they had that diagnosis to talk to their vet about trying some herbal remedies and the vets in our area were fine. They, they didn't believe it would have any effects. So they're like, yeah, do whatever you want. And you know, I had to learn about cross reactions between medications and herbs and, but for seven years I, I, I would go owner would call, this is, this is really fascinating.

Crissi McDonald ([00:59:39](#)):

This is something I really loved an owner would call and say my, my horse just had a colic episode and my vet treated it in again. And I I'm doing everything my vet says, and my vet says he doesn't have anything else. And I wanna try plants. And my vet says, do whatever. Okay. So I would gather up some plants, you know, I'd ask some questions and I'd gather up some plants and a big bag and I'd go over to the barn and I would offer the horse, you know, I'd have big jars and I'd let the horse sniff them and the horse wanted to eat it, that went into the formula. And if they didn't, I left it out. So a horse ended up making up their own formula. Sometimes horses were feeling so off, but nothing appealed to them. And so that's when I would try and put together something, you know, gentle to kind of get their system kick started. But that, that is stuck with me, that primal knowledge of what the body needs. And it's just another, another indication to me of how in touch with themselves horses are and how out of touch people have gotten with themselves. Not because we want to, just because of life, you know, technology and cars and planes and all these ways, we separate ourselves from nature and horses don't do that. And I think a lot of us have horses in our life because we like to feel rounded in that way.

Robyn Schiller ([01:01:11](#)):

Yeah. There's nothing better than the smell of them. Even for me, they're the best therapy there is. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>

Crissi McDonald ([01:01:20](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. We owe them a lot.

Robyn Schiller ([01:01:23](#)):

You mentioned also that you're, that you, that you do that for your, for you and mark and that you, you focus more on the diet of you, you said when he was on the road, that you've changed that about you. So mm-hmm <affirmative> so that's interesting to you too. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>

Crissi McDonald ([01:01:41](#)):

Yeah. Diet and health are really important because if you, if you nourish your body and you feed your body and that's not just food, that's thoughts, that's exercise, that's things, you look at people you surround yourself with, if you nourish your body in ways that support it. I think even though chronologically we age, I think biologically, we can slow that down. So that's, it's a huge interest area of mind, how to keep the balance, especially, you know, last two years been in the middle of a pandemic and everyone's panicked and the world feels divisive and scary. And how do you keep your balance in that? That's because if we can all keep our balance, I think we can change the course of things. Yeah. If we all fly off the handle, <affirmative>, you know, then we're all just flying off the handle. Like I think as horse people, one of the things we learn is it's good not to panic because someone's gotta be in charge <laugh>, you know, so, you know, if we have a horse is panicking or a horse is scared, the worst as a horse person, all, most of us know the worst thing you can do is at scared with them.

Crissi McDonald ([01:03:00](#)):

Yeah. So that's the time to be, you know, to remain as in equanimity as much as possible. And that's why we keep going to clinics and courses. So we can learn how to have that, that kind of equanimity, where at least in the situation we can navigate it. And we may fall apart after word, which is perfectly okay. But in the situation we can help guide the horse and ourselves to a place that isn't so dangerous or doesn't feel so horrible. And I think if we support ourselves through all kinds of nutrition in the ways I mentioned, I think it's easier to do. I think it's harder if we're not feeding our bodies and we're reading too much news and we're, you know, not taking walks in nature without our headphones on, if we're not, you know, if we're, if we're just continually removing ourselves from the world, I think it makes it harder to be with horses because they're so in the world.

Robyn Schiller ([01:03:59](#)):

Yep. I think that's a great segue. And to me asking you the questions that work asked mark, you know he, he sends out 20 questions to all the podcast guests and let lets them choose. And I think you chose them for mark <laugh>. I think I read that anyway. So I'll ask you the same that you chose for mark and can answer. So the first one was what has been your biggest failure and what did you learn from it? Mark said, mark. He said a lot. Let me summarize it. Okay. So to sum up what mark said about failure is that he doesn't look at things as failure is very often with that. So that sounds right. Yeah. So what is, what has been your biggest failure and what did you learn from it?

Crissi McDonald ([01:04:53](#)):

Well, I would say that earlier in my life, I viewed a lot of things as failures because that's the mindset I was in. I had almost no confidence in myself. Yeah, a lot of disappointments in myself, a lot of trying something and, and not doing well. And so I stopped trying things. So I didn't try things. I couldn't fail, but the, probably the biggest failure, the one that sticks with me the most is I had a student who was seriously injured and she was so graceful about it. She was so kind and so forgiving. And I have it's taken a lot of years, but I have come to a place of forgiveness too, cuz it was an accident. It wasn't intentional. There were a lot of factors that fed into it. We weren't doing anything crazy and she got really hurt and that, I don't know if I'd call it a failure, but I for are a lot of years I felt as a failure as an instructor because I thought I should have seen it coming.

Crissi McDonald ([01:06:03](#)):

But the fact of the matter is, is the horses are fast and they're faster than we are and they're bigger. And there are times when no one will see anything coming and I've made my peace with that. But I would

say that from that I have sought to become a better instructor. I have sought to become more perceptive, more aware and I've become even more conservative than I was, which is saying something <laugh> <laugh> so yeah, I would say that one sticks in my mind. Okay. Since I've made the changes I have in my life and since I've been pursuing I keto and we talked about my confidence growing, I'm closer to what mark is saying too. I feel like anything, I try as an experiment and if it doesn't work, I can either keep trying and get better or I can move on to something different.

Crissi McDonald ([01:06:59](#)):

So, so I'm getting closer to that mindset. It, it, mark is a wonderful example of that kind of mindset and that, you know, he's a good reminder of that. It's, it's really good to have that front and center instead of immediately defaulting to, oh, I'm a failure or I failed or whatever it is. Cause mistakes just mistake. It shows you tried. And if you're interested in something, you'll keep trying it. And then if you try it enough, you get better. And as you get better, there's less mistakes. So it's all, I don't know what our mistakes phobia is about, but a lot of us have it in doing my best to let go of it. <Laugh>

Robyn Schiller ([01:07:47](#)):

Good. I like that. All right. What is the most worthwhile thing you've ever put your time into and some or something that has changed the course of your life? And mark said my family the time I've spent with my kids and my family, helping them grow and hopefully being able to do the right thing. And he's really proud of all of his kids.

Crissi McDonald ([01:08:10](#)):

Mine is ITO for the reasons previously. Yeah. That was a huge turning point in my life on so many levels. Yeah, that changed me. That, that, that changed me big

Robyn Schiller ([01:08:27](#)):

Time. I'm gonna have to look into it. Although the falling part, I have vertigo. And so I'm really protective of how I move around in the world. <Laugh> yeah.

Crissi McDonald ([01:08:37](#)):

You don't have to roll and fall. Okay. I will agree. Yeah. Good dojo will work with you on that. That's what our dojo did. They, they worked with people who were 70 years old, all the way down to 10 and you know, of course the 10 year olds can roll around like yeah, crazy. I was kind of in the middle. I, I, at first I could only do one or two roles without getting dizzy, but then as I trained more, I could do multiple roles. But if you ever to go a good dojo will say, well, you don't have to roller or fall.

Robyn Schiller ([01:09:07](#)):

I am determined to fix it. I just, yeah. It's just one of those things where I think you have to, like, I have to find a time, I guess I should have done it in the last year and a half. <Laugh> when I didn't have to go do anything. But you know, I think there's some there's gonna be some wonky days if I really go to try to fix it with however vestibular, whatever I have to do to get it fixed. I'm sure there's gonna be some days I'm not gonna be able to do much, but anyway,

Crissi McDonald ([01:09:35](#)):

Well, the other thing is too. And what we talk to people about is because they like the body center practice is you can do TA Chi. You can do. I Doong.

Robyn Schiller ([01:09:45](#)):

Yeah. I love Doong

Crissi McDonald ([01:09:46](#)):

Can Doong you can do things that are body centered without having to roll or fall or work with a partner. The benefit of working with a partner, especially when we do our I bottle horses is, is we're honing the ability to listen, not just with your ears, but with your, with sensory sensory listening. And that to me is that's what helps you get better at being with horses is now all of a sudden you're tuning into the world similar to the ways they do. And yeah. So it's I, yeah. Chigong is awesome.

Robyn Schiller ([01:10:20](#)):

Yeah. I do a I every day I do either a Kini or, or chigong nice.

Crissi McDonald ([01:10:27](#)):

So yeah.

Robyn Schiller ([01:10:29](#)):

All right. So next question. What advice would you give people about to enter your occupation? Mark said, don't take yourself too seriously. Learn as much as you can and give stuff away.

Crissi McDonald ([01:10:39](#)):

Yes. And I would say the same thing. If you don't have a horse and you're interested in horses, not even if you're looking at being a trainer, there are lots of ways to be involved with horses. You could find a horse rescue, they're all over the place you volunteer. You. If you have friends, friends always need help with horses, cleaning, and rooming. Read, read, read, watch as many people as you can and figure out who you like and whoever you like, most trainers have resources that you can go to. They have online resources, they have videos. They have books spend some time and learn from them and then go out to the horses and try it, try what you learn. Don't be afraid of mistakes. A mistake means you're learning. Not that you're horrible.

Robyn Schiller ([01:11:33](#)):

Absolutely. All right. Last one. What quality do you admire in a person? Mark said, people who are honorable and are honest and trustworthy that they're bringing their best selves to whatever situation they're in at any given time.

Crissi McDonald ([01:11:49](#)):

I value curiosity. I enjoy people who are curious about the world, who like to learn about what's in it, who like to learn about all different kinds of people. All different perspectives, ways of seeing knowledge. Yeah, I, I would say off the top of my head, curiosity is a big deal for me.

Robyn Schiller ([01:12:17](#)):

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Great. All right. Well that, that sums it all up. I think I really liked where we ended before we got to the questions. I thought that was, yeah, that was I was thinking as you were talking, I'm like, oh, this is perfect. <Laugh> well good. So, so we'll keep it there. And I, I'm just so happy that you agreed to, to come on the journey on podcast with me. And thank you. Look forward to meeting you in person someday, hopefully at the summit and or before that. And if people wanted to find you, where do they find you?

Crissi McDonald ([01:12:54](#)):

They can find me at christina.com. That's C R I SSI, mcdonalds.com. I have a blog and links for my books and information on the website.

Robyn Schiller ([01:13:07](#)):

Great. Well, thank you again. Yeah. Thank you. It was a pleasure. Yeah.

Crissi McDonald ([01:13:11](#)):

Thank you, Robin. It was really nice chatting with you. You too magic.

Speaker 2 ([01:13:16](#)):

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