

Lead Like a Lead Mare, Charlie Botting book summary, Charlie

Lead Like a Lead Mare is the first book in Charlie Botting's Lead Mare series. The concept of a Lead Mare developed from living and working closely with a horse herd and understanding their herd dynamics. In horses, experienced mares take turns leading the herd in a calm, stable and reliable way which means to lead from behind instead of use power over others. From here, the concept of a Lead Mare was born, an empowered female leader who takes responsibility and initiative, leads by example and acts from a place of collaboration and egalitarianism. This is to lead by empowering others, not using power over others.

Charlie shares the stories of seven lead mare horses and how they display their leadership styles. She then identifies some biological factors that apply to women and men. History of women in leadership and men's role as empowered men is also discussed.

Charlie identifies twenty Lead Mare qualities including conscious and aware, calm, stable and reliable, responsibility, empowerment, flexible and adaptable and positivity. For someone new to the Lead Mare concepts, who Charlie describes as a Lead Mare-in-training, there are many books that are summarized which can be used to fast track her development as a Lead Mare.

Lead Mares-in-training develop these skills alongside taking opportunities to practice their leadership skills. Just like lead mare horses, Lead Mare women each have their own unique styles of leadership. These styles are based on collaborative leadership where everyone plays to their strengths instead of having a single leader, empathy where the team seek to understand each other and all can share their mistakes and learnings, mentoring others so everyone can learn everything, responsibility which is expressed by being a role model by holding herself accountable and leading from behind so leadership isn't tied to being in the spotlight or for ego.

Being a Lead Mare is tied to the concept of an empowerment culture and spiritual partnerships. An empowerment culture is where Lead Mare women and empowered men work alongside each other as equals. It is a culture based on mentoring and sharing with a focus on personal growth and contributing to a bigger picture. Spiritual partnerships are created when two or more people make a commitment to their own spiritual growth, supporting each other's growth but knowing they can't grow for each other. Spiritual partners only stay together as long as they grow together.

Charlie also illustrates the opposite of an empowerment culture and spiritual partnership, which she defines as unconscious relationships. These are relationships based on power over others, where people are either victims or abusers as they fight to get what they want or feel they are constantly denied it.

Charlie then describes how a woman can be a Lead Mare in five different areas of her life and how to handle these situations when she faces resistance to the Lead Mare concept.

At work, a Lead Mare is clear on her interests, goals and purpose for working and is looking for a job that contributes to something bigger than herself. Her values align with that of the company and she is

part of a holistic team. If the organization doesn't align with her values because they are growing in different directions, she can leave the job with no resentment, knowing it was time to move on.

In her community, a Lead Mare is here to contribute to the bigger picture, such as contributing to conservation, promoting a healthy lifestyle or creating a supportive community. Again, there is a strong alignment of values among community members. If a Lead Mare finds her values no longer align with those of the community, she is able to leave amicably with no hard feelings.

With her friends and family, a Lead Mare strives to create spiritual partnerships where everyone can grow together. However, she understands that friends and family are not always ready or willing to commit to a spiritual partnership. With friends, the relationship can dissolve and each moves on. However, family is often harder to leave. A Lead Mare is compassionate and knows she cannot grow for another person. As such, she is still able to have a relationship with her family, but understands it will be at a more superficial level than a spiritual partnership.

With her intimate partner, a Lead Mare forms a spiritual partnership before a physical relationship. This means both partners understand each other and are committed to their own growth on a deep level before initiating a physical relationship. This allows both partners to be sure they are together for the right reasons and can create a strong partnership. Leaving an intimate relationship if values no longer align can be emotionally difficult, but a Lead Mare understands in the long term it will be best for both partners.

As a parent, a Lead Mare raises her children to be spiritual partners and models for them how to be empowered women and men. With her daughters, a Lead Mare models how to interact with men and how to handle situations of discrimination so her daughters grow up empowered and able to handle challenges. With her sons, a Lead Mare shows them how to create an equal relationship between men and women. There is no walking away from being a parent, a Lead Mare understands that if her children do not want to be Lead Mares or empowered men, she cannot force them and will support them in their life decisions.

Looking to role models is a great starting point and is important on every stage of a Lead Mare's journey. Charlie shares the story of Gerry Bracewell, the first female guide outfitter in BC and Charlie's own Lead Mare role model. She explains how Gerry overcame discrimination and disbelief from her male colleagues and clients, sticking to her belief that she could do it and so proving she could.

Every woman has the ability to become a Lead Mare and it is never too late to start. Although this book focuses on women as leaders, there are many concepts that are universal to men and women, who are both needed to create an empowerment culture and spiritual partnerships.

This book is available from fortress-press.com