

## Grizzly Bear Captivity

Just imagine with me that you are captured by a grizzly bear. We'll call him Griz from now on. Griz stuffs you into a dark cave on wheels with the help of four of his friends to take you home with him. You are shaking and you have no idea where you are going or what is in store for you. Upon arrival at his home, after freeing you from the dark cave he leads you by a rope around your neck and head to your bedroom where he locks you in.

Griz unlocks the bedroom door a couple of times a day to bring you food and water. You do not trust his intentions, but you are hungry and thirsty, so you eat. The food is not bad, but in-between feedings your stomach begins to growl. Each time he leaves he locks the door behind him.

Next Griz takes you out of your bedroom every once in a while to dress you. He ties you up, either on both sides of your head or with a leg tied up, while he dresses you. Griz doesn't bother to ask permission to dress you nor is he concerned about how comfortable your clothes fit or how tight he makes the belt.

After dressing you he takes you to the gym for your workout and exercise program. You don't always understand what he is asking you to do, because he doesn't speak your language. So out of confusion, and fear you respond with your natural instincts. This causes Griz to get bigger and scarier. Finally, you must have done the right thing, because Griz settles down. You continue in this manner, Griz making demands in a foreign language and you trying to be safe and comfortable while you try to understand his language.

When the exercise program is over, Griz undresses you, realizes that you are sweaty and squirts you with water out of the mouth of a snake. It is cold and it doesn't feel like rain, which you are used to. You finally stand still for this treatment, but you are shaking in your boots.

Griz puts you back in your locked bedroom, thankfully with food and water. It appears that he is going to do this indefinitely but your not quite sure, because you live in the moment. Day after day, month after month, and year after year, you meet Griz at your door everyday. You begin to trust him and then one day he gets frustrated and angry with you and strikes out at you. You forgive him because it is in your nature, but you don't forget, and wonder when it may happen again, or perhaps you wonder why it happened in the first place.

One day Griz puts your rope on and asks a stranger to trim your finger and toenails. You get nervous and just can't stand still, so they put a chain around your nose, or twist your ear until you stand still because of the pain and fear. Now Griz has really made some withdrawals from building a relationship with you and you become skeptical of him again.

The next time he captures you he tries to put some awful tasting paste in your mouth. He keeps saying, "this won't hurt, it is good for you." You throw your head and try to avoid the fowl smelling stuff, but he wins and more withdrawals are made from the relationship account.

What would it take for you to begin to trust Griz?

What would it take for you to begin to love Griz?

What would it take for you to understand the demands and commands of Griz?

What would it take for you to want to perform well for Griz?

What would it take for you to be comfortable with your surroundings?

What would it take for you to be happy?

What would it take for you to have a positive, progressive, relationship with Griz?

What would it take for you and Griz to work and play harmoniously?

What would it take for you to become confident?

What would it take for you to not act like the prey of a predator?

What would it take for you to be responsible for tasks given to you by Griz?

What would it take for you to recognize Griz as your leader?  
What would it take for you to allow Griz to be your partner?

If you can answer these questions, then you have walked in your horse's shoes and you are ready to begin a brand new journey with your horse. It will transform your relationship, your attitude, and the way your approach problems and difficulties that you currently are having with your horse.

If you take an Oath to see things from your horses point of view and stop thinking like a predator and more like a prey animal then you will sore beyond where you can possibly imagine.

If you begin to understand your horse you will become more tolerant, accepting, consistent, and less critical.

If you start to feel what your horse feels you will develop an attitude of justice, respect the dignity of your horse, and offer your horse choices.

If you put the relationship before your goals you will remember that there are no rules only options, there are different ways to solve problems, and not to rush anything.

If you want a partner you will put more deposits than withdrawals into your account, you will learn to guard and protect your partner, and you will begin to read your horse.

I cannot take credit for the creation of this story. I first heard this story from one of my instructors and have added some of my own ideas to it as I pondered the philosophy of "thinking more like a horse!"

If you want to become a great horseman than you will take a long look in the mirror and "**KNOW THYSELF**". You will become a life-long learner, you will be more aware of your habits, and you will always go back to the basics.

If you want to be effective you must "**KEEP IT SIMPLE WITH SAVVY**", you will control your emotions and think, think, think!

By Sherry Jarvis 7-13-05