



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Passing Hope On to Others – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Troy and Kim Meeder

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

**Roger Marsh:** Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Let me ask you a question. What does it mean to pass hope onto others? Is it by helping to bring someone a meal or babysitting for a single mom who just needs a break? Perhaps, it's helping someone who can't help themselves. The late President Ronald Reagan once said, "We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone." Imagine a world in which everyone would do something to help one another.

Well, over the next couple of days here on Family Talk, we're going to hear a previously recorded interview about a ranch that is changing lives not only for the young attendees, but also for the lives of the horses that call it home. These episodes have been some of Dr. Dobson's most listened to programs over the years, and if you've not heard them before, you will not want to miss the next three broadcasts here on Family Talk. Now, I must advise you some of the stories shared are difficult to listen to and they may not be appropriate for young listeners. So parental discretion is definitely advised.

Now, this place of healing and recovery we're talking about is called the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch. It was founded in 1995 by Troy and Kim Meeder. The ranch reaches out to children and horses that have known abuse and neglect. The mission of the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch is to restore children and horses and give them hope for a bright future. Troy and Kim Meeder have over 50 years of combined experience in this mission. Troy serves as chief operations officer of the CPR Ministry, as well as an author. In 2011, he released his first book called *Average Joe*.

Kim Meeder is the author of six books, including *Hope Rising*, *Revival Rising*, and *Encountering Our Wild God*. Kim also serves as chief communications officer at the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch. Both Troy and Kim are accomplished communicators and travel nationally to speak at conferences, churches and other venues to spread the message of hope. So now, let's join Dr. James

Dobson and his guests, Troy and Kim Meeder for this classic special edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Troy, you came last time when we did the broadcast with Kim, but you were not here in the studio, and I think it's about time you joined us.

Troy Meeder: Correct.

Kim Meeder: Yes, I agree.

Dr. James Dobson: Fortunately, now you are able to work on the ranch full-time.

Troy Meeder: To be there every day to see the kids and the horses and such.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, we haven't really explained what kind of ranch it is, but the essence of it is horses and children. It is abused horses for the most part that maybe nobody else wants, and you take them. It is children who have been abused and some of them are disabled and most of them are wounded, and you bring them to the ranch and somehow magic occurs. It's not magic at all. It's a touch from the Lord-

Kim Meeder: It is.

Dr. James Dobson: ... and bonds those children with the horses and they both get well. That's a marvelous thing. Explain it, Kim.

Kim Meeder: It is. I think that the healing that we see happen between the kids and the horses happens in part because they've lived parallel lives. Many of the horses that we have rescued are horses that have suffered in very, very similar ways to the children that come to the ranch. The kids and the horses know intuitively that they understand each other perhaps better than anyone can understand either one of them.

Dr. James Dobson: What is there about horses and children that are therapeutic to each other? I know that that's true because I've seen it in other contexts. But what is there about the two that bonds them together?

Kim Meeder: I think about that a lot, and perhaps, one of the only explanations I have is that Psalms says that all creation shouts the glory of God. I think horses do that with a voice that we don't hear with our ears. I think that children do that so much better than adults that Jesus said that you need to come to me like a little child because kids are so intuitive, perhaps on levels that sometimes adults lose as they grow older. But you're right, we have seen horses be able to reach out to children in ways that adults are not yet allowed and vice versa.

Dr. James Dobson: Does it not break your heart to see these kids who have been sexually abused or physically abused, and they're wounded, and they're hurt, and they don't know

who they are and don't think anybody cares for them or love them. Then you see these horses that are the innocent victims that have not been fed or have been beaten, and who knows what horrible experiences. How do you cope with that emotionally, because every case is its own tragedy, isn't it?

Kim Meeder: It is. I think it would be easy to be swallowed by that, but we serve a victorious Lord. I think that it depends on where my focus goes. If my focus goes on the pain and the suffering, I think I would fall down every day because I don't think you can not be affected by pain and suffering. But if we focus on Christ, all of a sudden, we look down and we're walking on water, and He's the one who gives us what we need to keep going forward.

Dr. James Dobson: Kim, when you were here last time, I think the first issue, the first story began with your having written about angels in horsehair, and that was the beginning of your book, *Hope Rising*.

Kim Meeder: It was.

Dr. James Dobson: I read it and it was very, very emotional. Rather than my reading it again, tell us about that story.

Kim Meeder: I'll try. The kids that wish to come and ride at our ranch, usually they need an appointment to make sure that we have a horse and a leader available for them when they come. I remember one particular day that the ranch was in full swing and all the kids and leaders and horses were all being used, and just this big halo of dust rising over the ranch. I remember a counselor walking up the driveway with a very small child, and she came unannounced and she came and asked me, "Is it okay if I bring him here today?" I said, "Of course, it's all right." I looked down at this little boy and my first impression of him is that his skin was just too big for who he was. He was just lost in his own skin, and he was so broken. Without speaking any words, you could just feel sorrow emanating from this boy.

Dr. James Dobson: He'd been through tragic circumstances, hadn't he?

Kim Meeder: I could feel that, yes. I asked him, I said, "Adam," she had already introduced him as Adam and I asked, "Honey, have you ever ridden a horse?" He just looked at the ground and just somberly shook his head, "No." We had one pony that was not in use at the time. I asked him, "Would you like to ride a horse today?" He looked up at me with this look of just complete disbelief that he would get to do something like all the other kids. I told him about this golden pony that we had that was behind the arena, just waiting for him to come and spend time with him. In that moment, he flashed a little grin to me.

I think from anyone else's perspective, that would have looked like a very normal moment. Yet from my perspective, I was just horrified at what I had just seen. He had run ahead and gotten a halter and was running back to where this

pony lived. I looked at his counselor and I said, "Is that what I think it is?" She was so angry, she couldn't even speak. We just walked side by side for quite some time. Finally, she looked at me and she said, "Kim, it is so much worse, than you can imagine, not only has the father, the man who is supposed to love and cherish and protect his son, smashed out all of his teeth with his fists. He gets drunk and he has him run around in the yard and he shoots at him with a rifle. It's a miracle. This child is still alive."

When Adam had smiled at me, I could see that all of his teeth, top and bottom had been broken. We brought the pony out, and together, we groomed him, and I would stand over him. He was so little that I could easily stand behind him and put my hands over his hands, and we would brush and we cleaned the hooves together. Adam was grooming the pony, and we finally came to a place of saddling the pony, and I had my hands over his and I was showing him how to put the bridle on, and I showed him exactly what I wanted him to do and exactly how I wanted him to hold his hands. Then I let go. I just took a few steps backward, and I really wanted him to have this little victory that he did it all by himself. He stood there for just a moment all alone, just contemplating what I had asked him. Then all of a sudden, this pony did something I've never seen any horse do before since.

He just swung his nose all the way around this child so tightly that Adam couldn't move. He was trapped between the pony's neck and his shoulder, and the pony just held him. Adam, I looked at him and he rolled his eyes upward and backward to look at me, and I could see that he was afraid. I didn't know what the pony was doing. I'd never seen him do this before since. I just blurted out, "Oh my gosh, Adam, I think this pony's giving you a hug." You could see his little eyes just bouncing back and forth trying to process this, that, "Something in this world would care to love me."

I could see his face start to relax and the pony was still holding him very tightly. He wriggled his arm out and he had his hand up on top of the pony's neck, and I could hear him whispering, "He likes me, he likes me," all to himself. "He really likes me." Then the pony started to relax and release his hug, and Adam put his arms around the pony's neck and was scratching him, and he started saying it louder and louder, "He likes me, he likes me." He turned around and he looked up at my face and he said, "He really likes me," and gave me this beautiful, jagged grin.

Dr. James Dobson: He couldn't believe it.

Kim Meeder: It was a golden moment in one of the beginnings of our ranch.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, there are golden moments every day for you all.

Kim Meeder: Truly.

Dr. James Dobson: You have how many horses now?

Troy Meeder: 26.

Dr. James Dobson: 26.

Troy Meeder: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: Where have you gotten them?

Troy Meeder: We get them from every situation that you can think of. Not every one of them was in a poor situation. Some of them came because it was just the right place to be, and they are truly angels in horsehair. God works through them every day, and we love them like our own little family.

Dr. James Dobson: Is it common for a horse to take to a child like this?

Kim Meeder: It is. I think that there is a difference with children because I think that children perhaps allow their innocence to lead them more than adults. With horses back to children, a horse cannot lie. It can only tell the truth. These kids know that, that this horse doesn't judge. This horse doesn't gossip. This horse cannot make fun of you and how you look or what you're wearing. This horse just loves because it chooses to, and the kids know that.

Dr. James Dobson: Would the word intuitive be relevant to horses?

Troy Meeder: Absolutely.

Kim Meeder: Every moment of every day.

Troy Meeder: Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: So they can sense when a little child is wounded and hurting.

Kim Meeder: Horses have far more intuition than we ever thought possible.

Dr. James Dobson: There are so many stories that come out of your ranch and that's what you've put in your two books, and they just captivate you. I mean, you can't put the book down once you get started reading. There is one that I would like you to share called Teva and Angela. Tell us what happened there.

Kim Meeder: I love to share this story because the Lord uses this and has used this in my own life and in others' lives, that suffering has a purpose. It's not just a random thing that happens when God's back is turned, that our suffering has a purpose. I remember one day, not long ago, an incentive group of girls had come up the driveway to our ranch, and they were all girls who were failing school, and they were brought to as an encouragement for them to finish school. Of these young

women, there was one who I could just feel sorrow emanating from her, and she was very, very small for her age. I thought, "Oh, I'm going to work with her."

I introduced myself and her name was Angela, and she was very, very small. She said she was 15, but she looked like she was maybe 11. Just a very, very small, very beautiful Hispanic young woman. We have all the kids help us do a little chore before they ride. In her broken state, I thought the only chore that I would wish for her to do would be to help me groom a horse that she's up for brushing. That was about it. So we brought out this very short older mare, and we were standing shoulder to shoulder, and I started to ask her a few questions about, "Oh, you live with your mom and your dad? Oh, just your mom?"

She said, "Well, I used to live with my mom, but we got in a fight and she kicked me out. So I moved in with my best friend, but her husband tried to have sex with me, and I knew that was wrong. So I left, and I'm living with another couple right now, and I know that they don't really want me. I just don't know what I'm going to do."

Dr. James Dobson: She's 15.

Kim Meeder: She was 15. I remember thinking, "Oh my gosh, Lord, I don't even know what to say. What was I worried about when I was in high school? It sure wasn't being homeless." I just blurted out, "Honey, what about your dad? Can you go live with your dad?" I saw her have this physical reaction that just went from the ground up, like a wave through her body. She put both of her hands on top of the horse's back to steady herself, and I thought, "Oh, dear Lord, whatever's coming out of her mouth next is going to be huge. Lord, I need some wisdom right now." I saw her just take a really deep breath and she kind of steadied herself, and she looked straight down and she said, "Last year, my grandmother and my father and both of my brothers were murdered. So I'm not going to be living with him anytime soon either."

I felt like I had just been steamrolled and God, I don't even know what to say. I could hear His voice, "Child, yes, you do. Yes you do." I said, "Honey, I'm so glad that you're here today, and I'm so glad that out of all the people on the ranch that you would get to be with me. I feel so blessed that we're together. I'm really glad that you're with me because I think that out of everyone here, I believe that I'm the only one that can look you in the eye and say, you're going to be just fine, and this is how I know."

I had a perfect opportunity to share with her the love and truth of Jesus Christ and how His hope is extended to us every moment of every day. All we have to do is reach out and take His hand. God will use our suffering... 2 Corinthians 1:3 and 4 says that, "God's going to give you his comfort in your time of need so that when others go through the same thing, you can give them the comfort that God himself gave you." So our pain has a purpose, which doesn't always seem like it when we're going through it, but if we can just hold on.

Dr. James Dobson: Kim, that is very relevant to your personal history.

Kim Meeder: It is.

Dr. James Dobson: Because you've had a lot of pain in your life too. In this book *A Bridge Called Hope*, you talk about your father taking you on a walk up the mountain. It's where you learn to love nature and to love the outdoors, which you love as much as anything on earth. He walked with you up the mountain. Tell about that experience and what happened afterward.

Kim Meeder: I remember at a very young age, my dad was the same stature as you. I remember putting my hands in the back of his 501 jeans and just holding on, and he would tow me up these mountains. I remember the very first time of sitting on top of a little volcano in Northern California, and I remember looking down, and it was as if the whole world had turned to stone and it was very windy. We were sitting with our backs against the stone wall and just thinking, "Oh my goodness, Heaven can't be more beautiful than this."

Dr. James Dobson: You were five, you said in the book.

Kim Meeder: I was five at the time, and that set into motion a love of the wilderness that is deep within my heart to this day.

Dr. James Dobson: But you lost your father-

Kim Meeder: I did.

Dr. James Dobson: ... and your mother not too long after that.

Kim Meeder: It wasn't long after that. As many families today, divorce is just a prowling monster in our society that seeks to divide and destroy. My parents were in the midst of going through a divorce. I loved my dad very much, and in many ways, I think he was an excellent father, and another ways, I think he was a very, very broken man. There came a time where I can only ponder that his thought process must have been along the lines that, "If I can't have a family with her, then I don't think anyone else should either." Sadly, there was a time when my dad took my mother's life and then took his own. So it was not an accident, unfortunately.

Dr. James Dobson: Were you close to him?

Kim Meeder: I think as close as a nine-year-old can be. That's still when your dad's the greatest dad and the whole world, and he has a cape and he flies, and you live in the castle of his love. Your dad can do no wrong in the eyes of a nine-year-old. So I loved my dad very much and do to this day.

Dr. James Dobson: How were you told that you'd lost both your parents?

Kim Meeder: I remember being picked up at my grade school by my dad's best friend, and we drove in silence and picked up my two older sisters. On the long drive out to my grandparents' house, nobody spoke. During that drive, all of us were crying to ourselves, and all of us knew that they were gone before we got there. I remember walking into my grandparents' house and someone was trying to hug me and tell me, "Your father's just shot your mother and then took his own life," and just fighting and fighting against them. I remember breaking away and running out the back door and just trying to run away from this horrific truth. "This can't be true. It can't be true."

I just remember running and running and running in a child's effort to just run away from the unthinkable. It was in February, and I was running through this orchard that had been plowed, and all the trees were fallow and brown. I remember just falling down in the dust, and it was like hearing it from a great distance away, just screaming and screaming, and realizing that's my voice. I just started screaming, "Jesus, help me. Jesus, help me." In that moment, I know that the Lord of all knelt beside a broken child and took a hold of my hand and He has never let go, never.

Dr. James Dobson: Kim, that is so relevant to the work you're doing now because the empathy that you have for hurting children comes right square out of that, doesn't it?

Kim Meeder: Yes. The comfort that Jesus Christ has given me is the very comfort that I give to the kids that come to our ranch.

Dr. James Dobson: In some ways, you are they now.

Kim Meeder: People ask me all the time, "What would drive you to write a book about hope?" Someone long ago invested hope in my life and my life was saved because of it. That was my grandmother.

Dr. James Dobson: Mimi.

Kim Meeder: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I tell you what, I want to hear about Mimi, when we start the second program. We want to talk to you again next time. Troy, you have to be proud of this lady.

Troy Meeder: She brings me to tears all the time. I'm sitting over here trying to wipe them away, as she's talking. I'm very proud.

Dr. James Dobson: She had a vision, a vision for a ranch, for a ministry, for a way to help. She took what she had and she let God use it to reach out to these children who are so desperately needy, and you have stood beside her. It's a pleasure to put you back on the air and to let our listeners know about this wonderful ranch and ministry, and I hope there'll be many other people that help you. Your ranch is only 9 acres, 9.2 acres, you told me.



Kim Meeder: Correct.

Dr. James Dobson: It's kind of rocky. It's not the most beautiful place.

Kim Meeder: It's a very polite way to say it.

Dr. James Dobson: You know what? They need a bigger ranch, and I hope there's somebody out there that might help provide it for them.

Troy Meeder: Thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: The Lord knows, and the Lord will provide.

Kim Meeder: Amen.

Dr. James Dobson: We're out of time for today. I just want you to know how much I appreciate you not only being here, coming all the way to Colorado Springs, but for the work that you do every day for those little children.

Troy Meeder: Thank you, Dr Dobson.

Kim Meeder: Thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: They're in such need and desperation, and you have found a way to put salve on the wounds and you do it through these wounded horses.

Troy Meeder: They bless our lives.

Dr. James Dobson: A great concept and I love it, and I thank you for being here and sharing some of your stories. I want to hear some more of them next time.

Kim Meeder: To God be the glory.

Troy Meeder: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Roger Marsh: It is truly amazing how the Lord has provided for the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch. What a powerful story indeed. We've been listening to the first part of a classic trio of programs featuring Dr. James Dobson and his guests, Kim and Troy Meeder here on Family Talk. If you would like more information about the Meeders or their ministry of the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch, visit [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). If you enjoyed today's impactful conversation, be sure to tune in again tomorrow and then again on Wednesday for the remaining two parts of this interview.

Here, at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we aim to walk alongside you along your faith journey, no matter which season you're in, whether you're just starting out in your faith or you've been walking with the Lord for quite some

time. For years, families have found daily direction and inspiration from the writings of Dr. James Dobson and his wife Shirley, especially their best-selling devotional series, *Night Light for Couples*, and *Night Light for Parents*. Both of these books contain practical and biblically based lessons that are now available on video as well.

If you'd like to check them out, simply visit [drjamesdobson.org/marriage-parenting](http://drjamesdobson.org/marriage-parenting) to watch them. Again, that's [drjamesdobson.org/marriage-parenting](http://drjamesdobson.org/marriage-parenting), and then you can watch them there. I'm Roger Marsh. May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper and stronger in your relationship with Him. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for part two of our powerful conversation with Troy and Kim Meeder right here on Family Talk.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.