



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Passing Hope On to Others – Part 2

Guest(s): Troy and Kim Meeder

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute, supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome back to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh.

When one of my kids was going through a very, very difficult time when they were growing up, as a parent, it was tough. I didn't want them to experience pain. I didn't want them to go through the hard times the way that I had to when I was younger. Lots of us as parents want to take that suffering away from our kids, even when we know we can't. For most of us, it's unimaginable to think that someone, especially a parent, could inflict any pain or abuse on even their own child, and yet we live in a fallen world and that type of situation does happen. Fortunately, we know that God is good and there is hope for even the most challenging situations a person might face.

On yesterday's Family Talk broadcast, we heard about how the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch is working to restore the hearts and minds of children who have suffered abuse. Kids visiting the ranch may get special time and attention with one of the horses there. And many of those mighty animals, in fact, have also been rescued from abuse. It's deeply encouraging that the horse's compassion for the children is immensely therapeutic and comforting for the young boys and girls as well as for the animals.

Here is a recap of a story Kim Meeder shared on yesterday's program about a little boy named Adam.

Kim Meeder: Adam was grooming the pony, and then, all of a sudden, this pony did something I've never seen any horse do before or since. He just swung his nose all the way around this child so tightly that Adam couldn't move. The pony just held him. And I just blurted out "Adam, I think this pony's giving you a hug." And 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 hear him whispering, "He likes me. He really likes me."

Roger Marsh: Well, what a moving act of love indeed.

Now, the program you're about to hear was recorded several years ago and is the second part of a three-part conversation featuring Dr. Dobson and his guests, Troy and Kim Meeder. I'd also like to note that this entire interview is one of the most popular programs that Dr. Dobson has ever recorded and aired. So if you missed yesterday's broadcast, well, let me tell you a little bit about Troy and Kim. By the way, you can find all those programs archived on our website here at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

Troy and Kim Meeder founded Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch back in 1995. Their missional ranch reaches out to children and horses that have known abuse and neglect. Together, the Meeders have more than 50 years of combined experience in this mission. Troy serves as chief operations officer of the CPR Ministry. He's also an author, and his first book, *Average Joe*, was released in 2011. Kim Meeder is the author of six books, some of which include titles like *Hope Rising*, *Fierce Beauty*, and *Encountering Our Wild God*. She also serves as the chief communications officer for the CPR Ministry. And both Troy and Kim are accomplished communicators, and they travel nationally to speak at conferences, churches, and other venues to spread the message of hope. So let's join our own Dr. James Dobson and his guests, Troy and Kim Meeder, right now for this classic program right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Kim, I'm really anxious to hear some more of your stories. I can't tell you how much I appreciate you and Troy coming to be with us.

Right at the end of the program last time we were talking about your own tragic story where your father had taken you up the mountains, and you had sat on a cold day and looked down at the rocky mountain below, and you'd fallen in love with nature, and that's where you'd rather be today than any place else. But then you lost your mother and your dad. Your father was angry over a divorce that was in process, and he killed your mother and then shot himself, and the difficulties of you trying to cope with that. We only made brief mention of your grandmother, Mimi, who took you in and cared for you until you were 19.

Kim Meeder: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: And she has passed away, so you've lost your mother figure again.

Kim Meeder: I have. I have.

Dr. James Dobson: Tell me about Mimi. What did she contribute to you?

Kim Meeder: She gave me a life that I never thought was possible and such selfless love to say, "Here's my home, and you need one, and I have one, and I'm choosing to take you and your two older sisters so that you can grow up together and be a family."

Dr. James Dobson: And she was obviously not a young woman then, and she thought she had motherhood over with and all of a sudden, she's raising two girls.

Kim Meeder: Three.

Dr. James Dobson: Three girls. And you were nine?

Kim Meeder: I was nine.

Dr. James Dobson: And the other two?

Kim Meeder: I believe my sisters were 12 and 15 at the time.

Dr. James Dobson: That's a tough assignment. She's going to have three teenagers at once.

Kim Meeder: Yes, it was tough going for-

Dr. James Dobson: But she loved you.

Kim Meeder: ... a long time. But I tell you, love always proves what is true, and I think that she did that with her life. All of us are not perfect, and we make mistakes and grow and change, but she put it out there every day herself.

Dr. James Dobson: How did you lose her?

Kim Meeder: My grandmother passed away when she was just nearing 89. It's been difficult.

Dr. James Dobson: And you were still close to her?

Kim Meeder: Yes. I was with her and holding her hands and praying with her just until her very last breath. She gave her life for mine, and it was such a privilege for me to be there for hers through her process of leaving.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you couldn't give the kind of love that you give to children today had you not experienced it somewhere.

Kim Meeder: Truly.

Dr. James Dobson: And that grandmother is the one who taught you how to love.

Kim Meeder: Truly. One of the traditions that we started with, she was the first one to tell me about May Day. She said, "May Day is a day that people that love each other give flowers." And so I took that into a child's heart and I went out in our big field in front of the ranch and pulled up just handfuls of buttercups and mashed them all up into a mason jar, and I put them on the doorstep and knocked on the door, and then I ran and hid in the grapevines. She opened the door, and her surprise and her gratitude for this anonymous gift was something that just

fed me for a whole other year. Every year I continued that tradition for 36 years, and my grandmother never caught me. She never could prove it was me. She knew it was, and I knew she knew that it was me.

When she passed away, as everyone who has lost people that they love knows that the following year is a year of firsts, of being alone. I remember thinking, "Lord, I can do Christmas and I can do Mother's Day, but May Day is going to be really hard because that was just special between us."

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Kim Meeder: I remember thinking that, "God, you promised that you never give us more than we can handle and that your grace really is sufficient, and I believe you, and so it's going to be just fine."

I remember getting up that morning, and I was in my office and trying to get the day rolling and emails and phone calls and had grabbed my hat and my glasses and was barreling out the front door, and I just about fell down. When I opened the door, here were all these flowers on my doorstep and I don't know who brought them. I don't know where they came from. Now to this day, many years later, every May Day, someone puts flowers on my doorstep and I don't know who they are.

Dr. James Dobson: And you still don't know?

Kim Meeder: No. And so this precious tradition is kept-

Dr. James Dobson: Troy, you have any ideas where those come from?

Troy Meeder: I have no clue. In all honesty, I have not a clue.

Dr. James Dobson: This woman that you've married loves the out-of-doors, but she's got a heart about that big.

Troy Meeder: She does. She does. It's hard to put arms around the heart that big. Absolutely.

Dr. James Dobson: Put us into the ranch in that way, and describe for us what those children are like when they first come. They're scared, and they don't know if they're going to be made fun of or made to do something that'll hurt them. They're nervous, right?

Kim Meeder: They can be. I would say that perhaps 80% of the kids that come to our ranch are kids that really struggle in a social environment, and most of the kids that come are kids that, in any given group, are in the corner against the wall that have no friends.

Honestly, every wise thing I've ever learned has been from the kids that I work with. One of the things that I've learned is that before the kids arrive, it's really beneficial to have them work with us to do some little simple chore, and within the doing of that little chore is how I get to know what it is that's crushing their heart. And it's also my opportunity to get to impart to them how much I need you. This ranch needs you. And these little lambs who've never felt loved or needed by anybody, they start to change from the inside out that someone in this world needs me. We have to go to the ranch because they need my help.

Not long ago, I was in the tack room, I was getting tack and many kids were in there, and I was trapped. I looked out the window and there was this young girl that was coming up the driveway, and she was that kid that had no friends. She was kind of short and kind of chubby, and she had long greasy hair. And as I watched her walking up the driveway, I was just thinking how proud I was of her and how far she had come.

When she first came, she rarely spoke. Every time I'd ask her a question, she would look at the ground and I would always say, "Who do you think we should ride today?" And she would say, "Oh, I don't know. I don't know. You choose. You choose." I remember one day thinking, "Lord, I think today's the day." And so I asked her again after our chore was completed, "Who do you think we should ride today?" Same thing. "I don't know." I got on my knees in front of her, so she couldn't look past me, and I looked up in her face and I said, "Honey, we don't have a horse named I don't know. Let's choose again." And her eyes just went back and forth, back and forth, and they started to fill with tears. Finally, she just looked right at me and said, "I've always wanted to ride a spotted horse." It was like her desire was so much to ask for.

In that moment, something in her heart broke and all of her hopes and her dreams and her thoughts and her ideas and who she wanted to be and what she wanted to do started flowing out, and she started to blossom into this amazing, funny, precious little lamb that very few had taken the time to get to know.

God will use whatever you give. It's just up to you to give it.

Dr. James Dobson: That applies to all of us, doesn't it?

Troy Meeder: It does.

Kim Meeder: It does.

Troy Meeder: It does.

Roger Marsh: I'm Roger Marsh, just jumping in for a brief moment here on Family Talk. As you can hear from today's program, Kim Meeder is a gifted storyteller with heartfelt passion for the kids who come to the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch. Here's a quote from Kim that we featured on yesterday's program.

"Those kids know that this horse doesn't judge. This horse doesn't gossip. This horse cannot make fun of you for how you look or what you're wearing. This horse just loves because it chooses to."

Now, if you or someone you know is going through a challenging time, here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we want to walk alongside you along that journey. Feel free to reach out to us online at drjamesdobson.org, or call our customer care team at 877-732-6825 Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. Mountain Time. We would love to talk with you, to pray with you, and connect you with any of the resources that we have which might help you get through the hard times you're dealing with. Please reach out to us today and let us know how we can serve you or your family. Again, the number to call is 877-732-6825.

And now let's get back to the conclusion of part two of this hope-filled conversation featuring Dr. James Dobson and his guests, Troy and Kim Meeder, right here on Family Talk.

- Kim Meeder: I believe that receiving hope is only half of the process. True hope, authentic hope is only fully realized, not when we keep it for ourselves, but when we imitate Jesus Christ and give it away. That's when hope becomes mature.
- Dr. James Dobson: Troy, you're right there on the scene. You're seeing these kids. Is that touching your heart like it does Kim?
- Troy Meeder: I have to be this big strong cowboy manager type, and every now and then, I got to go behind the barn and just shed a tear, because there's just miracles happening and lives being changed every day. I had no idea. I hear the stories, and I was able to see and live vicariously through Kim in the evenings, but to be there and to see it happen and to be a part of it and feel it and to be dad to some of these kids, it's just changed my life.
- Dr. James Dobson: We are talking to Kim and Troy Meeder, who have a ranch for needy children and needy horses in Oregon, right near Sisters, Oregon. Is there a town closer than that that you could identify?
- Troy Meeder: That's the close one. The big one's Bend. Right close to Bend. Yeah.
- Dr. James Dobson: It's not a big place, but it is a place of love.
- The first book was called *Hope Rising*. Kim was here to do a broadcast with us, which turned out to be the number one broadcast of the year of 2004, and today we're talking about her new book, the newest one, *Bridge Called Hope: Stories of Triumph from the Ranch of Rescued Dreams*. That's very poetic, but you're sort of a poet at heart anyway, aren't you?
- Kim Meeder: I don't think I'd go that far.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, there's just one story after another that come out of the ranch about children and about horses, and they'll captivate you.

I want to tell you, you broke me up when you were here before. I got up early two days ago. It was 5:30 in the morning, and I was reading this new book, *Bridge Called Hope*, and you did it to me again. I was in tears reading one of these stories about these broken children and how they respond to the love of a horse and the love of a mother figure like you are, and Troy, you're more and more getting involved.

Do these kids go through a period of time with you and then leave, and do they come back to see you?

Kim Meeder: All the above.

Dr. James Dobson: Is there a family spirit that endures other settings later in life?

Kim Meeder: Yes. Troy and I have had the greatest privilege of seeing these little broken 10, 12, 14-year-old kids come to the ranch and fight for their life. And then some go off to school or on different ministries, and many have come back to the ranch and are now working there full-time as part of our staff. The family that Troy and I set aside to serve Christ, he has brought back to us in such a way that we could never know the love that we receive from these girls. I feel like the most blessed woman on Earth every day because of them. And so He has blessed us through and through.

Dr. James Dobson: What about the child who comes, who is so fearful and so hurt that he or she has gone completely within themselves and won't talk and won't respond and is just so deeply wounded that they cannot engage? Have you ever pulled one of those kids completely out and a flower of beauty begins to grow within them?

Kim Meeder: Yes. Over and over and over, and not by any grace or wisdom on our behalf. It really is what Jesus Christ is doing. We just have this incredible privilege of running this ranch and rescuing these horses and having these very, very broken children come. Really, we just kind of hold out all the pieces before the Lord, and he is the one who produces the healing and the growth and the bloom that we get to see.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, most of the work of the gospel is the Lord working through us and our inadequacies and our shortcomings and our selfishness and our failure to understand. And he uses all that. We're broken pottery, and the Lord somehow makes use of that.

The last story in this book, *Bridge Called Hope*, Troy, it's involving you. It is entitled "Coming Home." Explain. And then, Kim, you fill in the pieces.

Troy Meeder: Yeah, she said before yesterday that for 10 years I've had the joy of being able to serve outside the ranch, and that's being working and providing for our family, of course, and then for the ranch itself. Thanks to the generosity of so many wonderful people in this ministry and others, back in March of '06, I was able to come home and to shoulder with her and be at her side every day. It's been just absolutely amazing for me to do that. To be dad, to be a pastor, to be all the things that I had tried to be when I wasn't at the ranch, to see it and feel it and breathe it every day, has been a gift.

Dr. James Dobson: This is highly personal, but so is everything else we've talked about. How are you making it financially there?

Troy Meeder: We live by the grace of God, day by day. We're doing very well. I don't know how to really standardize that Dr. Dobson, but every month the power bill gets paid and God's providing for us to be able to financially pay our staff. So we're doing well. Are we storing up a lot for later? No, but we're moving forward.

Dr. James Dobson: In fact, you all have started ranches in other places, haven't you?

Kim Meeder: After the airing of this broadcast in 2004, we were contacted by hundreds of people who all were sharing this resounding theme that, "Oh my goodness, you are living my dream. I never knew it was possible until now. Will you show me how to do the same thing?" And in an answer to that request, we started having information clinics at our ranch, and people came from all over the United States and Canada to learn how to do something similar. And to date, more than 22 ranches are up and running, and 16 are in process, and they're going across Europe and New Zealand and Australia and Germany. You have no idea what your ministry, how it has blessed ours.

Roger Marsh: Well, it's truly wonderful to hear the success stories of children who have been helped by the ministry of Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch. As we read in Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble."

Today, on Family Talk, you've heard part two of an encouraging three-part conversation featuring Dr. James Dobson and his guests, Troy and Kim Meeder.

Now, if you'd like to learn more about Troy and Kim or the Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch, visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. That's drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. And if you or someone you know is going through a rough season right now, perhaps a major challenge that you just didn't see coming, I want to encourage you to get a copy of Dr. Dobson's best-selling book called *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. Now, we'll be happy to send you a copy of this book as our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

So drop us a line, click the link on the bottom of today's broadcast page when you go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk, or if you prefer to make your request

over the phone, a trained customer care team member will be happy to help you when you call 877-732-6825. We'll be happy to serve you any Monday through Friday 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. Mountain Time. Again, that number to call is 877-732-6825.

Do you remember the day when you pledged your love and undying devotion to your spouse, you pledged to have and to hold for richer or for poorer in sickness and in health, to love and cherish that special love of your life all the days of your life? Marriage takes a dedicated effort each and every day, and as time goes by, familiarity may settle into your life, and you might lose some of the sparkle that made things so great when your marriage was exciting and new.

Here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we want to walk alongside you on your faith journey in marriage, no matter what season you're in. And that's why I encourage you to get a copy of the classic devotional book written by Dr. James Dobson and his wife Shirley, called *Night Light for Couples*. This book contains practical and biblically-based lessons that are now also available on video as well. You can check those out, along with the *Night Light for Parents* video series, when you go to drjamesdobson.org/marriage-parenting. I pray that you'll be encouraged and inspired in your marriage, and as you parent your children. Again, drjamesdobson.org/marriage-parenting is where you'll find these new videos.

Now, as election day draws closer, stay informed on all the latest voter and policy related issues that affect you and your family simply by checking into the Dobson Culture Center. Visit drjamesdobson.org and click on the Culture Center tab at the top of the page. So many of us want to see positive changes in our communities and also all across the country, and I pray that we will all have the courage as believers to get out and vote during this season, and most importantly, to pray.

Now, when you go to the Dobson Culture Center, you can sign up to start receiving our free weekly newsletter called "Lighting Up Culture," written by Dr. Owen Strachan, who's the senior director of the Dobson Culture Center. Also be on the lookout for the brand new Dobson Policy Center Voter Guide, which we'll be releasing this week as well. You'll find all of these things at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute main page. Start there by going to drjamesdobson.org.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks so much for listening and for making Family Talk a part of your day, and be sure to join us again tomorrow for part three in the powerful conclusion of Dr. Dobson's conversation with Troy and Kim Meeder talking about passing hope onto others. That's coming up tomorrow right here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Announcer:

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

Dr. James Dobson: A growing number of kids today are suffering from an emotional characteristic known as a wounded spirit.

Roger Marsh: With today's Dr. Dobson minute, here's Dr. James Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: *The Wounded Spirit* is the title of a book written by best-selling author Frank Peretti about his own painful childhood experiences. Mr. Peretti was born with a tumor in his jaw that disfigured him and led to unmerciful taunting during his childhood years. Children called him a monster, and they treated him with disdain and rejection.

It's true that this kind of teasing and ridiculing has been going on forever among children, but today's kids are even more vulnerable to it, primarily because of the emphasis on beauty and the popular culture. Those with wounded spirits often gravitate toward drug addiction, violence, early sexual activity, and even emotional illness. It is our obligation as adults to protect these vulnerable kids as much as possible.

Roger Marsh: For more information, visit drdobsonminute.org.