

When we look back on our nation's history, there are few men of greatness. Those who have been identified stood in positions of authority, leaders of our country's people. Their actions and words were witnessed by thousands, transcribed into our history books to be contemplated, remembered and likely cherished for hundreds of years to come.

How is a man measured; the qualities that extend him beyond the others? This question of course, could be reduced to asking more specifically about the domain in which we are evaluating the man.

Such that, the "great" men are identified by the sample size they belong too; wealthy entrepreneurs of the business market, internationally recognized scientists of research, the top album seller in music production. In each specialty, a certain number of individuals will emerge as leaders.

What I am asking, however, is what defines whether a man, just one of billions living and breathing, exists as greatness.

I believe I met a man of such credential this week. A character of average frame, he inhabits a remote region that is hidden from those who would otherwise be able to transcribe his brilliance to hard copy. This gentleman redefines humility. He is a man of few word; silent when questions bear no absolutes. He strives to extinguish, within himself, any practice of speaking ill toward another living soul. He grieves when he fails and yet is relentless in his quest.

He seeks beauty and contentment in life's simpler gifts—a sunset or the flight of an eagle. He wishes for nothing, and yet remains appreciative of what he has. He lives with a freedom to experience each day as a new opportunity for something great. He accepts everything in its own time, whether it's a minute, an hour or a lifetime.

Whatever energy is brought forth he graciously accepts, whether that energy is of anger, fear, or sadness. Each step is the beginning of a new journey, with recognition that the previous step was not nearly as important to the here and now as the one in which he stands. What made yesterday is gone to this man; his attention is on today, the one moment he is in. His philosophy of the human race is that we are here, on this earth together, to take care of each other; no more, and certainly no less.

Some may define him as a chronic caretaker, working to gratify a drive to be needed. But what I witnessed was a man who is driven by the unwavering commitment to his philosophy. We exist to take care of each other. He offers himself, his wisdom, attention and regard, with no expectations for reimbursement. Each morning is yet another opportunity to hold the hand, support the spirit, and instill hope for any individual that chooses to cross his path.

He is a horseman. I'm not certain the origin of his life philosophy, or which came first—horses or caretaking. What I do know is that watching him partner with a wild horse was a mystical experience for me as an observer.

There were no fireworks, dramatic music, or flashy gear. It was a just a man and a horse speaking the same language, filled with subtle communications and peaceful coexistence. He treats the horse from the same heart as he treats his family, friend, neighbor or stranger. There are no exceptions.

That is greatness. And to be witness to such greatness was the most awesome experience for me to date.