



At home *with*

Elizabeth Whiter shows Kate Delamere around her East Sussex home, the centre of her energy healing world

In the paddock next to Elizabeth's house, you can just make out the tops of two heads bent over a large tray of herbs, so close together it's difficult to see where the blonde mane starts and the brown one ends. Then Betty, the Irish Holsteiner-cross horse, gently nudges Elizabeth's face aside to nibble on some nettle leaves.

'She has intuitively chosen a tonic for herself, an excellent blood cleanser and conditioner,' says Elizabeth, sliding a loving arm around Betty.

The idea that animals self-medicate when they're instinctively drawn to certain plants is known as zoopharmacognosy. It's something Elizabeth has been practising for 14 years, and it's part of the animal healing clinic she runs at her home in the South Downs National Park.

Her herb garden next to the paddock is filled with culinary plants she uses in food preparations for her three dogs, as well as to treat clients' pets. These healing herbs include thyme, sage, parsley, nettle, mint, chives and chickweed.

'I believe health prevention is better than cure,' Elizabeth explains. 'The horses self-select and eat them raw, the dogs and cats choose herbs, and I make up recipes such as vegetable broth to keep them healthy. For instance, sage has antibiotic properties and is good for mouth infections, so I make sage toothpaste for dogs, while thyme has anti-fungal and antibacterial properties, so I use it for treating gingivitis in animals. I also run a cancer clinic for dogs, and use herbs as part of their wellbeing rehabilitation.'

She got into the science of zoopharmacognosy after her spiritual soulmate, a prized Danish-bred gelding called Wow, broke his neck in three places after bolting from his paddock during a storm in the autumn of 1996. Elizabeth refused to take the vet's advice to put him down.

'In an effort to calm Wow I placed my hands on the body parts I knew were broken,' she recalls. 'A pulsating sensation ran through my hands, my body felt different and I experienced calmness and strength. A low-frequency hum vibrated from my palms and a wave of euphoria swept over me, then Wow visibly relaxed.'

Elizabeth repeated this routine for the next few nights, letting her hands and sixth sense guide her to the areas where the bone was damaged. Sometimes her hands felt hot, tingly or throbbled,

Elizabeth's horse, Betty, self-medicates with a nettle tonic



a healer



Picking flowers to create one of her elixirs



Making a herbal broth while Frank looks on with hungry eyes



Lily tries one of Elizabeth's healing tinctures



The memorial to Wow, her spiritual soulmate



Her sister Susie gave her this pendant of Wow



Publishers Hay House presented her with a token of remembrance



Rosie the rescue cat also has a shrine in the garden



Lily often joins Elizabeth for meditation next to the Buddha

and at the end of each session, Wow gazed into her eyes as if he was thanking her.

Along with treatment from an equine osteopath in London, Wow made a full recovery and lived to the age of 23, before he died in March 2010.

Not long after Wow was back to full health, a healer told Elizabeth she had a natural gift.

'If it wasn't for Wow, I'd never have gone into healing or be where I am today,' she says, heading over to where he's buried next to the paddock.

The memorial sculpture on his grave is adorned with a quartz, thought to be the master healing crystal and used to optimise healing energy.

'I had a telepathic connection with Wow after his accident,' she says. 'I could interpret his body language, but after the accident we actually talked to one another and I telepathically communicated with other animals. Even though I was married to

'A hum vibrated from my palms and euphoria swept over me'

Brian for 20 years, Wow is my spiritual soulmate. In the stables at night Wow loved me to play the Tibetan singing bowls and dance – his ears would prick up and he'd whinny. He would tell me to play more and work less, and was the joy of my life.'

Next to Wow's memorial is a small brown stone bearing his name, and beside it is a rose quartz that represents unconditional love. The stone was given to Elizabeth by the publishing company Hay House after she wrote her autobiographical book, *The Animal Healer*, in 2010.

Each day at home, Elizabeth holds the stone and meditates on her soulmate to remember the good times. Sometimes she reflects by the stone Buddha under a tree next to the herb garden, and is invariably joined by her 10-year-old Norfolk terrier Jack Russell cross, Lily. She's Elizabeth's shadow and accompanies her when she does her healing work, which often takes her to care homes where she gives energy healing to pensioners ➤

suffering from low spirits, joint pain or sadness at being separated from their beloved pets. Elizabeth also gives regular animal healing demonstrations and talks at Mind Body Spirit events.

'Lily loves to meditate with me, and when I close my eyes she does too,' she says. 'We meditate five times a week together – it stills my mind, grounds me and centres my energy. I also meditate when I'm riding in the nearby forest. I go into my own world and escape the hustle and bustle of daily life.'

Wow's grave is beside the resting place of Elizabeth's rescue cat, Rosie, who died aged 14 after being run over in 2011.

'Wow and Rosie told me where they wanted to be buried before they died,' Elizabeth explains. 'One of the toughest decisions of my life was letting Wow go because we'd shared so much together.'

Elizabeth believes Wow is still with her in spirit.

'Like Einstein said, energy can neither be created nor destroyed. Our physical bodies may be gone, but our souls never die. After Wow died I'd see white

'Wow and Rosie told me where they wanted to be buried'

feathers everywhere, and I believe it was a sign he was still with me. Sometimes I hear his voice in my head talking to me, telling me to slow down.'

Wow also acts as her protector.

'In 2011 I was going to Tokyo to teach animal healing after the Japanese tsunami and was worried about the radioactive fallout.'

The earthquake and tsunami tore through coastal towns in Japan and set off meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

'My family were concerned because the wind was spreading radioactivity and people were wearing masks to protect themselves,' she says.

Elizabeth took a necklace pendant with a photo of Wow in it, given to her by her sister, Susie.

'Shortly after I arrived I held the pendant in my hand and sent a prayer out to the universe, asking Wow to protect me on this trip. Then I saw on a massive billboard, in huge red letters, the word "WOW" and broke down in tears because I knew he was telling me not to worry.'

It took Elizabeth eight years of training before she was finally able to heal animals and humans professionally. Now a qualified complementary therapist in animal healing and nutrition, kinesiology and zoopharmacognosy, Elizabeth practises hands-on energy healing and telepathically communicates with animals.

In 2005 she founded the non-profit Healing Animals Organisation, where she gives talks and demonstrations around the world, training people in animal welfare skills including anatomy, physiology and behaviour. Elizabeth has taught 400 graduates in the past 10 years.

Some of her work takes place in her healing barn next to her house, where a large painting of Wow by local artist Sara Abbott takes pride of place on the wall.

Beneath it is a horseshoe from the First World War, belonging to one of the six million horses on both sides of the conflict that died. It was given to



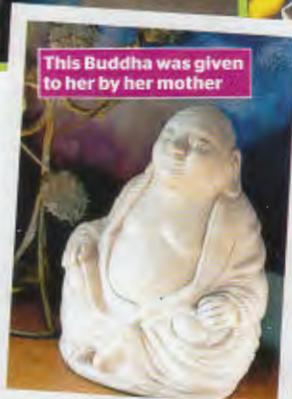
Elizabeth finds peace of mind in her healing barn



A horseshoe from the First World War



The carved antler and purse are reminders of a healing trip to Mongolia



This Buddha was given to her by her mother

Elizabeth when she went to the Somme region in France for the centenary of the war in 2014, to pay respects to the horses that died.

It has special meaning for her after Wow confided during one of their many conversations that he was a reincarnated horse from the Great War.

'I accepted the information as he told it to me and didn't doubt what he was saying. He told me he'd only been reincarnated as a horse, but some animals can come back in different forms.'

Elizabeth's belief in reincarnation is epitomised by the Buddha statue in a corner of the room that her mum Marion, 92, gave her.

'Mum believes, like me, that life is infinite and nothing dies,' Elizabeth explains.

Today in the barn, she has a queue of animals waiting for healing, including a nervous chinchilla and an anxious pug.

'I tune in to what the creature is feeling, and images pop into my head telling me what's wrong with them,' she says. 'Both these creatures are rescue animals. The chinchilla's owners didn't realise it was a nocturnal creature and it kept them up all night. It was in a cage in the kitchen

next to their bedroom, and it was never handled, so it was jumpy. The pug's owners split up and it became very depressed and unsettled.'

When Elizabeth works her dogs are never far from her side. Along with Lily, she owns Claude, a Cyprus terrier she brought home from a rescue centre in Cyprus in June 2015 after it was run over and suffered a fractured leg, and bullmastiff Frank, who was a rescue dog from her local RSPCA branch in 2012. Elizabeth visits the branch every month to give energy healing to the animals.

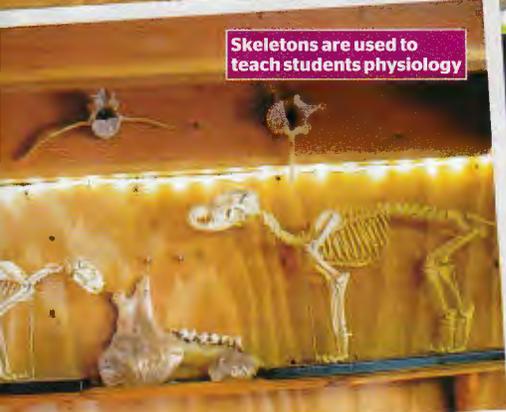
'The healing rebalances energy, eases anxieties, combats sluggish energy and is a complementary, holistic approach to health,' she says.

Around the barn are plastic skeletons of animals that Elizabeth uses to teach her students anatomy and physiology. There are also mementoes from her travels around the world.

Through a window, you can see a beech tree with a purse hanging on it, and the carved reindeer



Skeletons are used to teach students physiology



Preparing dinner for the animals



Hands-on healing a nervous chinchilla



A framed picture of animal homeopath Francis Hunter



St Francis of Assisi cares for all creatures great and small

antlers Elizabeth was given during a 2012 trip to heal reindeer in northern Mongolia, as a gift from a nomadic shamanic tribe.

'They taught me how reindeer can make milk and cheese. We were from other sides of the world, but we had lots in common. Like them, I believe connecting to nature and working with it is about magic.'

Elizabeth spends much of her time in the kitchen making herbal elixirs. She's watched by a wooden carving of St Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and the environment, standing on the windowsill.

'In 2006, I gave energy healing for a year to a pensioner called Margaret from Brighton,' she recalls. 'She'd always had dogs and I used to see them around her in spirit as I gave her healing. The statue belonged to her and her sister gave it to me after she died in 2007, saying Margaret wanted me to have it.'

A large painting of a unicorn hangs on the wall, too.

'In 2014 I bumped into the angel expert Diana Cooper at my publishers in London. She looked at my pendant necklace of Wow and told me he'd now received unicorn status in the afterlife. You don't doubt the words of Diana Cooper,' Elizabeth laughs.

A jar of orange marigolds and a bowl of marigold oil – known to be a rich source of vitamins A and C – sit on the windowsill. She adds the oil to many of her recipes to heal skin problems.

An abundance of dried herbs, including flat-leaf parsley, lies on the kitchen table waiting to be used in recipes. A photo of Francis Hunter, a founding

father of treating animals with homeopathy and acupuncture, is in a corner of the room next to an olive wood Tau Cross, the symbol of the monastic order founded by St Francis.

'Francis Hunter was a graduate on my course in 2011 and was amazing,' says Elizabeth. 'He gave me the cross because he wanted me to be safe and remind me that St Francis was always with me, and said I meant so much to him because of the work I was doing. He sadly died in 2014 when he was in his eighties.'

But Elizabeth believes Francis's spirit, just like Wow's, is never far away. To highlight this

'I asked Archangel Michael to help me find stray dogs'

there are two angels on the kitchen windowsill, representing her belief in the spiritual realm.

'Angels have been written about through the ages, from the Bible to the Koran,' she explains. 'I sense and feel them around me when I do my healing work, especially Archangel Michael, a healing angel and protector.'

'In 2008 I was in a village in the Troodos Mountains in Cyprus looking for stray dogs to rehome. I strayed into a local church and there in front of me was a huge stained-glass window

with an image of Archangel Michael on it. I asked him, "Please help me find the dogs." Suddenly, I found myself walking out of the church and down to the village square, where I immediately saw dogs in need of my help. I felt strongly it was Archangel Michael who guided me there.'

Animals are clearly this woman's favourite company, and it's time for me to leave and for Elizabeth to head back to the paddock and her four-legged friends – her spiritual companions and the creatures she intuitively understands best. In the sunlight you can almost convince yourself of a golden glow in the shape of wings that belong to Archangel Michael, fluttering above her head.

Up ahead, Betty plays with her offspring, Dancer and Iris. Just before Elizabeth reaches them, she turns and smiles.

'If I have a "god", it's nature, the great healer. That's what I connect to when I give energy healing to bring animals and humans back to their natural healthy state of being,' she says.

And then she's gone – her blonde mane masked by a nuzzling triad of brown heads. ■

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

You Can Heal Your Pet: The Practical Guide To Holistic Health And Veterinary Care by Elizabeth Whiter and Dr Rohini Sathish is published by Hay House, priced £14.99. For more information, visit healinganimals.org

PHOTOS LAURA ASHMAN