

WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

What We Can Learn From Cows

I have been around cows for so long now, 40 years to be specific, that I have become intrigued by what they do and how they do it. I believe everything in our life offers lessons if we choose to consider them, so I decided to attempt to put into words some of my observations about our beautiful bovines.

How To Herd

I think the concept of “herd mentality” has gotten a bad rap. I used to think of following the herd as the total opposite of thinking independently and that independence was the best or only way to live one’s life with gusto. Hanging with our cows has been teaching me there are times when following the herd is a good idea.

It can lead you to a cool bath in the pond on a hot summer day, as well as to get a much-needed drink of water after hours of grazing. Following the herd can also lead you toward an open gate into a new pasture with freshly grown grass to satisfy your belly. It does seem there is a time when following the herd can lead to what is good for us.

How To Pasture

I love watching our cows when they graze a pasture. They are always searching for the fresh blades of new grass, and they don’t give up grazing until they are satisfied. Then again, they seem to know when it’s a good time to pause and get some water to drink as well as when to rest.

They are meticulously slow at chewing. I always feel like they take the time to enjoy every bite.



Hanging with her cows has been teaching Annette there are times when following the herd is a good idea.



Cows are always searching for the fresh blades of new grass, and they don’t give up grazing until they are satisfied. (Photos courtesy Annette Bridges)

They tend to focus on one section of a field at a time and don’t get overwhelmed by their many choices of where to graze. They take their time meandering around every pasture they spend a few days in. They also seem to know very well when it’s time to move on to the next greener one.

Caring For Calves

I am always in awe of our mamma cows. We have some amazing mammas. When their calf is ready to eat, they stop what they are doing and stand still for their baby to get its nourishment. There are times when we go around searching for a new calf that is hidden in some tall grass, but every single time when we fret and worry about where a calf is, we will watch the momma mosey right to where she knew her calf was taking its nap. Our worries are always needless.

Learning By Example

Calves learn by example of their grown-ups much like humans learn from theirs. They watch their mommas peacefully mingle with their herd sisters and contentedly roam from pasture to pasture. They learn essential survival skills and community behaviors. I appreciate their uncomplicated, straightforward daily life. Eat, drink, rest, and repeat.

I guess everything in our life can be instructive if we pay attention.

Even our darkest days can have much to teach. Of course, who wouldn’t rather learn from happy cows living their best simple life? 🐮