

Ride Your Dark Horse “Light” ©

Humans acclimate to their surroundings from birth. As children we draw conclusions from what is taught to us by our culture, family, religion, government and educational system. We build an *internal* structure from *external* influences. Part of what we become is created through an evaluation system of our personal performance that is taught to us through these same channels. With our cognitive abilities we make assumptions that we believe as truths. 21st Century thinking fostered our belief in media and marketing rhetoric, veering us away from trusting the internal self, knowing the internal self, and making decisions from the internal self.

For many of us it is difficult to wrap our minds around and contemplate thoughts that are about how we think and process. It is an accepted belief that our minds run the show, navigating the structure of the world we see. It is also widely believed that, *what we see in our world creates who we are inside, how we feel and what our world consists of*. We are continually discouraged to think otherwise.

What If...

The reverse was true and your outside world is a reflection of your inside thoughts, beliefs and perceptions.

And...

What if another part of you could build a relationship with your horse that went beyond what the mind delegated as correct, acceptable, or even possible?

Horses are guided in their lives by instinctual behavior. The inwardness of who they are is intact. They make decisions drawn from the essence of who they are. Horses adapt to their environment, but **do not forget their core abilities**.

In learning from, and working with our horses, we observe the animal's behavior. We then attempt to fit **it** into how **we** have learned, through the decisions we have made about our life. We process information garnered from previous lessons learned from outside of us.

What our animals *feel* is part of their survival mechanism. They feel beyond our perception of what we have become accustomed to. They live by processing vibrations that surround them in their world. *They make many decisions from what they sense coming from you*. They will mirror and adapt to the vibrations they sense radiating from us which enables the relationship to be what it has morphed into.

In one particular session with a horse and rider, that reflection was never more clear. When going through the process of connecting, a woman became aware that her horse had been very lonely

even though it was in a barn with other horses. She was able to sense and understand the resonance of how her horse felt because she felt the same. She felt lonely in her world as well. As the woman came to understand her feelings of separation in her own life, her horse began what was ultimately 10 very large stretches and releases. The horse felt this woman's awareness of what the horse had mirrored, and their relationship began to shift from one of separation to one of mutual understanding. *With recognition came the freedom to change.* The owner commented to me a few weeks after the session that her mare very obviously now looked for her and wanted to be with her.

Any animal entering into a band, herd, gaggle, etc. will find its position in that grouping. In the case of horse and rider, the horse will respond to what it feels is acceptable in its human's world.

- If the human does not exhibit healthy boundaries in its life the horse will not respect boundaries in dealing with their human.
- If the human has been taught it is a follower and not a leader, the horse may take over and be the dominant partner in the relationship.
- If the human sees itself as a victim in the world, with their life being what it is because of outside influences, the horse will mirror being a victim to its surroundings and may appear in a downtrodden manner, act out, be fear-filled or whatever is appropriate to reflect the way the human feels victimized.

What if there is more to life and our relationship with our horse?

If we come at our relationship with our horse from the perspective that we have to *learn* to communicate, there is a strong possibility we will stay in the mindset that the horse doesn't already sense our unspoken forms of communication and react to them. The truth that we already possess the ability to sense our horses in myriad ways, is hardly ever explored. We have been taught to think everything is outside of us. What we have not been offered as a possibility is to develop our own inner sense and **feel** and what it might be telling us. We generally do not explore the many facets of what the words *to feel*, or *feeling* can encompass. We often auto respond from past experiences. To trust and explore what we **feel**, and see it is a clue and a place to start, is usually not considered in expanding our understanding in our interactions with our horse, and in our life. The vocal chords are not the only means of communication. They vibrate making sound that we as humans interpret as speech. **We rarely, if ever, take the time to sense that speech at its origin, as a vibration. Our horses survive reading vibrations; they read yours.**

We were taught in our society to keep our focus on our life circumstances being the **cause** of how we feel. How many times have you heard statements like "If this or that wasn't going on in my life I would **feel** better"? The focus being kept on what we feel comes from outside of us. We are also inundated by the media - that there is a quick fix, magic pill, or tool to **FIX** a **PROBLEM** we are having. From this, a natural progression of thought of how we are taught to process is:

- FOCUS on a PROBLEM that needs FIXING
- See whatever is out of balance between our self and our horse as a PROBLEM *they* are having
- The solution lies in correcting the *horse's* behavior to fit into what *we* have learned is acceptable
- The horse doesn't want to cooperate
- We are bad because we can't FIX it
- And a multitude of other ways to ensure discord stays active

What if the ways in which we have come to our relationship with our horse has limited the depths our relationship can attain?

What if you could *allow developing from the perfection and brilliance of your internal processing* making it your own and not just attempt to imitate someone else or take/give a magic pill or use a special tool?

When you meet your horse as 100% of your relationship, that relationship no longer requires that either of you to be *right* or *wrong* in what you present to each other. You open the exploration of wholeness of *self* for both you and your horse, and liberate your relationship from using auto responses that have not worked in the past. You can then expand the ways you **communicate** in the purest form from the heart of who you both are, giving you both the gift of:

- Building a relationship without judgment as a required processing tool
- Being present without past tapes running silently behind the scenes
- Being present *without a rating system* that tells us if either party has been successful, and/or good or bad.
- And releasing the need to stay hooked into problem and victim mentality.

At a recent clinic I facilitated, old patterns, judgment, and taking 100% responsibility for our half of the equation and supporting our horse in being 100% of their half was explored. An attendee, the driver of a Clydesdale/Hackney pair, had for many years driven a six horse hitch prior to the two she now drove. The woman had an excellent understanding of feel and intention in sending

information down the reins to all six horses especially her lead pair which were 45 ft away from her. Their relationship had transcended words and they repeatedly won competitions. Early in the relationship with the geldings she now worked with, the first of the pair was grounded and solid; the second horse's behavior appeared erratic and dangerous. I had previously worked with the trio and it was discovered in the first session that the gelding thought differently than any horse this woman had owned before. In the ensuing months the woman stayed present with the gelding without preconceived ideas and his incredible mind and athleticism was revealed. The road to their mutual relationship had begun to be paved. During the clinic, the woman stood between and in front of an unsettled pair of normally quiet horses. As we progressed through a guided connecting process, the woman, sensing the imbalance between herself and her pair, trusted what she felt and went and stood behind her horses as if she were driving. They immediately settled! What came from the deep connection was the realization of how important balance and our position in being responsible for individual parts of a whole picture can be. Up until the day of the clinic, the second gelding was still a bit out of sync, or so it appeared. The woman made the connection to what had been occurring, and it became apparent the gelding was finding it difficult and did not know what to do with the intensity of energy being sent by the woman. The strength to drive a six hand hitch did not apply to driving a pair, resulting in the appearance that the gelding was misbehaving. By the woman taking the time to be present, listen and feel the second gelding knew he had been heard in the only way he knew how to present the vibrations of what he was experiencing. The respect for each other, and the responsibility of self by each member of the trio, allowed for the creation of the experiences they share to be brilliant. The day following the clinic, I was blessed to experience the results of their new found balance and understanding. The drive we experienced was superb.

Each one of us posses a place inside of us that is unique. This place is Untouched, Unchanged, and waiting to BE Uncovered. It does not require that you buy a special tool or learn a secret technique. It does ask you to be present, take responsibility for self, begin to expand ways of thinking and ultimately to begin to use what is **FELT** inside to be explored, trusted and incorporated into expansion in new territory.

Beginning to develop self trust in remembering you are mirroring in your life what you have come to believe is you, and to not judge it, is a choice only you can make. We benefit from learning with others. But, if that experience does not have fertile ground in which to be processed, we often beat ourselves up for not being able to mimic what we thought we had learned. When we observe and try to incorporate, but have not explored how we, as an individual, can process it, we simply get more of what we profess we no longer want.

Contrary to what we are inundated with daily, change is not attained outside of us.

- It is developed within
- It takes committing to change from processing solely from old tapes
- It takes allowing for new possibilities
- It takes time

- It takes commitment
- And it takes not quitting when our old patterns and measures of safety are feeling threatened by the possibility of change

It took me 50 plus years to master fulfilling beliefs I had about myself and a year to begin to live an incredibly different life and to begin to know myself from and on the inside. I now cherish the relationship I came close to ending with my very draft style Haflinger, who only wanted me to know she felt like a ballerina inside, no matter what she looked like on the outside. She reflected my inner grace that I was embarrassed to play with and feel. I focused on the outside, presenting to the world what I thought of myself and having it reflected back to me by my mare.

Taking time and committing to the paths that open before you) does not fit the criteria of what we have been sold on how to live our lives. We have bonded to thoughts that require we search an old data base within us, believing we are looking within self for the answers.

*In the simplicity of transforming your relationship with your horse lies the perceived difficulty. What are you going to **CHOOSE**?*

- The quick fix?
- Belief in a perceived barrier?
- Staying bonded to old thinking?
- Resistance to Responsibility of Self?

Or

- The exploration of new perspectives?
- Incorporation of your own **Brilliance**?
- Liberation from what isn't working?
- Freedom from self judgment?

There is no quick, easy answer. In the exploration of your own personal, beautiful internal self are the building blocks to the development of your personal success with your horse. Self trust begins to pave the way in pioneering an expansive relationship with the quadrupeds that are so much a part of us.

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