



# Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

## August 2022

YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO

CREATED & EDITED BY HEATHER CARDER

## Intelligent Problem Solving

By Heather Carder

*A short essay on the parallels of problem solving in our professional and recreational pursuits. .*

When I was younger and working in Corporate America, I had the opportunity to take a workshop with a man named Robert Cooper who taught creative problem solving. I often thought that learning to look at a challenge or problem differently, with fresh eyes, was a skill I would really like to have, not only for my professional life but for my equestrian life too.

On the final day of the workshop we were introduced to the haunting sound of a pianist named Art Tatum, a jazz pianist who was born in 1909 in Toledo, Ohio. Tatum had impaired vision but was finely attuned to the piano, playing by ear with amazing memory and technical ability. The rift that was played at the workshop sounded like multiple people playing, so intense were the chords and melody it sounded like a monsoon of notes, each building on

the first with wicked speed and unfathomable technique.

Art Tatum was played for us as a demonstration on how what we know can limit us. It is true that he was regarded as one of the greatest in his field, and that his technique was considered extraordinary. Many pianists attempted to copy him to no avail, or when they compared their own skill to his they often, ultimately, found another instrument to play. He introduced what is now known as Virtuoso piano technique, but back then it was just Art Tatum jazz piano.

History aside, here is the important thing: Art Tatum learned to play on a piano roll, practicing on a player piano at the downstairs bar that he was allowed to use before school each day. What Tatum did not know is that piano rolls are made for 2 people, not one – meaning 4 hands, not 2. He did not know that what he thought was normal piano playing was virtually impossible for one person. And because he did not know, he had the freedom to learn at a higher level; he created his own

reality on what he could achieve. And this reality was way beyond what anyone else could see. This moment made a huge impression on me, because I had a glimpse of the power each of us has to do amazing things if we just learn to ignore what we think we know, or at least file it away momentarily.

Sun Tzu was a military general and philosopher and was most often credited for writing *The Art of War*, and one of his famous quotes is “When he is united, divide him”. When it comes to problem solving, slice and dice is one way to come up with solutions. When I was bringing my first dressage horse up, I would often encounter problems that I was not sure how to solve. Was the resistance going to the left because it was physically hard for her or was there another attribute I should consider? When I lost the feel of the bit in her mouth was she telling me she had enough or was there something physically wrong? Why was it so difficult for her to come down after she was spun up? Although I *thought* I knew what the

*Continued on page 11*

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Tech Stirrups is an innovative company that is part of GM Production, a manufacturing company working in the field of mechanics, sports and design and based in Italy. They design stirrups for dressage, evening, racing and hunting to name a few disciplines.

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[www.techstirrups.com](http://www.techstirrups.com)

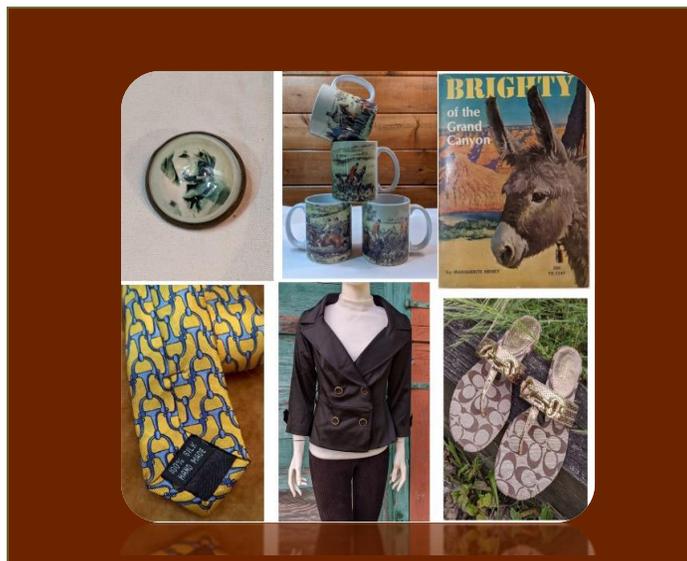


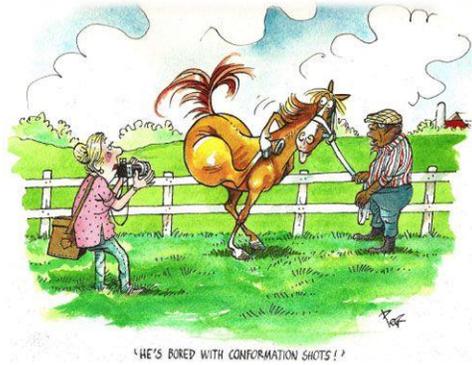
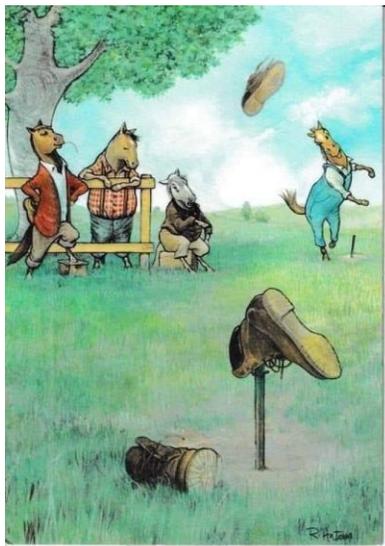
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-Marijke de Jong



**“It is the horse’s gift to connect us with heaven and our own footsteps.”**

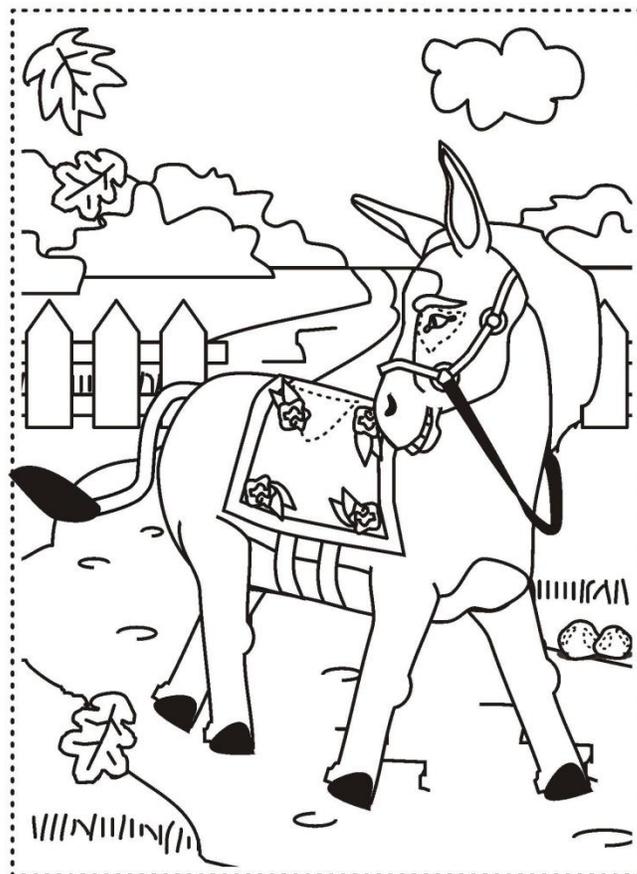
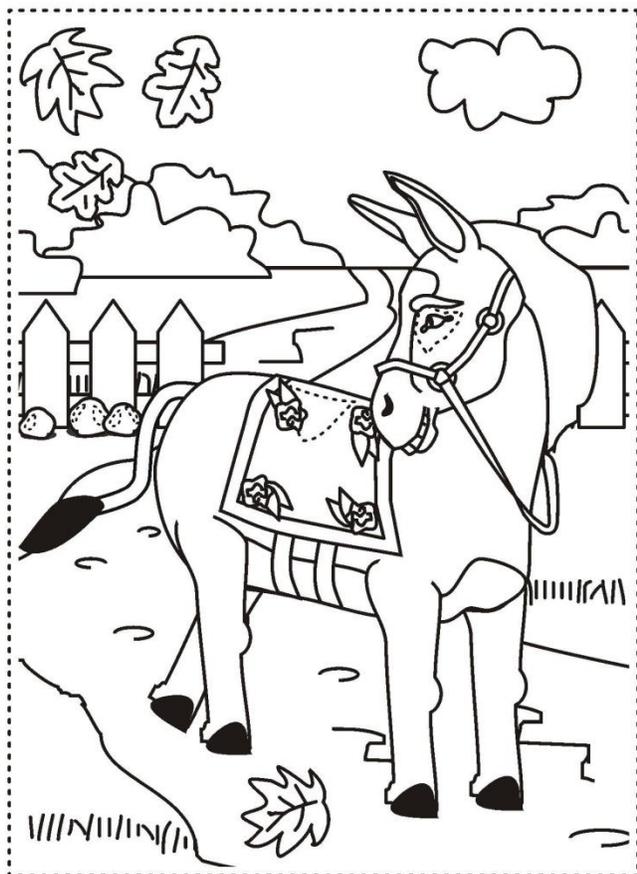
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Find the ten differences between the two pictures.



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# Nutrition Corner

## DIGESTIVE SYSTEM LIMITATIONS

Horses are *non-ruminant herbivores* (hind-gut fermentors). Their small *stomach* only has a capacity of 2 to 4 gallons for an average-sized 1000 lb. horse. This limits the amount of feed a horse can take in at one time. Equids have evolved as grazers that spend about 16 hours a day grazing pasture grasses. The stomach serves to secrete hydrochloric acid (HCl) and pepsin to begin the breakdown of food that enters the stomach. Horses are unable to regurgitate food, so if they overeat or eat something poisonous vomiting is not an option.

Horses are also unique in that they do not have a *gall bladder*. This makes high fat diets hard to digest and utilize. Horses can digest up to 20 % fat in their diet, but it takes a span of 3 to 4 weeks for them to adjust. Normal horse rations contain only 3 to 4 % fat.

The horse's *small intestine* is 50 to 70 feet long and holds 10 to 23 gallons. Most of the nutrients (protein, some carbohydrates and fat) are digested in the small intestine.

Most of the vitamins and minerals are also absorbed here.

Most liquids are passed to the *cecum*, which is 3 to 4 feet long and holds 7 to 8 gallons. Detoxification of toxic substances occurs in the cecum. It also contains bacteria and protozoa that pass the small intestine to digest fiber and any soluble carbohydrates.

The large colon, small colon, and rectum make up the large intestine. The large colon is 10 to 12 feet long, and holds 14 to 16 gallons. It consists of four parts: right ventral colon, sternal flexure to left ventral colon, pelvic flexure to left dorsal colon, and diaphragmatic flexure to the right dorsal colon. The sternal and diaphragmatic flexures are a common place for impaction. The small colon leads to the rectum. It is 10 feet long and holds only 5 gallons of material.

Creating a feeding program that undertsands your horse' limitations is excellent preventative maintenance.

## WILDWOOD FARM AND TRIPLE CROWN FEEDS.

Our partnership with Triple Crown began in 2014 through a promotion with the USEF encouraging farm members to compare their current feeding programs with Triple Crown products. We have found the TC products to be superior over other products primarily because of the EquiMix technology and the research support of a leading edge team including independent representatives of Equine Universities, Medical clinics and top level riders and trainers

## Meet Izzadorable!

Izzy was born on April 29, 2021 and she was certainly a surprise to us in many ways!

Her mother, Sami, was a mare we rescued from a feed lot in Eastern Washington in March 2021 ( she has been the subject of a couple of essays in this newsletter over the past year). Although we knew she was pregnant we really had no idea when she was due, if she would give us any clues, when her milk would come in, etc. So when Izzy was born that morning with no complications or concern, we were happy and relieved.

Our second surprise was with her color! She was dun with a black dorsal stripe and creamy white mane and tail, and with her mother being a solid red chestnut we at least had an idea what the sire looked like. Izzy was built super solid with nice bone and muscle, she looked like a horse weeks older than she was.

As she grew older her cream-colored hair started to turn more coppery and her mane and tail had a silver tinge, with faint striping on her legs. Unfortunately Izzy also had another less-favorable hereditary trait: She had severe club feet in the front.

When Izzy was weaned at 8 months old she was essentially a cripple, with the left front being completely buckled over and the right front at a 90+ degree angle. Although this did not stop her from running around and being a normal foal, we knew we had to do something to assure she had a promising future.

With the help of Dr Hansen of Mt Vernon Veterinary Hospital, Izzy underwent surgery on both front feet in January 2022



The surgery included the cutting of both the deep flexor and suspensory tendons to allow the hoof to drop down to a normal, flat position. The procedure was a complete success and with the help of our farrier, Izzy was fitted with plastic extended toes to help encourage her to put more weight on her heels. This little girl learned to load, haul, be handled by numerous vets and technicians, go through rehab and stay confined in a stall all in a matter of weeks. She has come out from it all beautifully and is now a sassy yearling with lots of energy and loves to gallop around her pasture with her tail flagged and neck arched. The only clues she had anything wrong with her is some noticeable thickening of the tendon, particularly on her right leg, due to the healed scar tissue. Izzy definitely is living up to her name!



### **HORSES CAN'T VOMIT OR BURB!**

While most vertebrate animals are able to vomit, horses have lost this ability over time. They have a very strong muscle ring called the cardiac sphincter at the entrance to their stomachs. This structure makes sure any food that enters the stomach cannot go back out. What's more, the vomiting reflex is very weak in horses, which is another reason why they can't throw up. They are also physically unable to squeeze their stomachs with their abdominal muscles to force food back up the esophagus. The only way food is able to escape a horse's stomach is in the event of a stomach rupture, which is usually fatal in horses.

### **THERE ARE OVER 600 HORSE BREEDS!**

Due to extensive selective breeding over the past few centuries, there are over 600 horse breeds in the world today. According to a 2017 genetic study, all modern horses descent from two ancient horses breeds: the Arabian and Turkoman horses. While the Arabian horse still exists today, the Turkoman horse that is similar in appearance to the Akhal-Teke is now extinct. All existing horse breeds fit into these five categories: hot-blood, warmblood, cold-blood/draft, pony, and miniature. Hot-blooded horses include the Arabian, Thoroughbred, and Barb breeds with origins in the Middle East. In contrast, cold-blooded (heavy) horses and ponies developed in northern Europe. A warmblood refers to any horse breed whose ancestors were crosses between hot-blooded and cold-blooded/pony type breeds. Finally, miniature horse breeds are scaled-down versions of their big cousins with a specified maximum height.

### **THE TALLEST HORSE EVER MEASURED WAS 21.25 HANDS**

A Shire horse called Sampson, born in 1846 Bedfordshire, England, stood at an impressive 21.25 hands. Included in the list of the biggest horses ever, he was over seven feet tall at the withers, which hasn't been surpassed ever since. He also weighed a jaw-dropping 3,360 pounds! Until recently, the tallest living horse was a Belgian Draft gelding called Big Jake, who stood at 20.2 hh. He lived at Smokey Hollow Farm in Wisconsin, USA with Jerry Gilbert and his family. The big chestnut passed away in June 2021, at 20 years of age.

### **THE OLDEST HORSE EVER WAS 62 YEARS OLD!**

Old Billy (1760-1822) holds the record of the oldest horse in history. He was an 18th-century barge horse from Woolston, Lancashire, England. His exact breed is not known, although he

was most likely a Shire-type horse with a brown coat and a white blaze. At the time of his death, Old Billy was approximately 165 years old in human years! Surprisingly, he had a very active life and continued working until his late senior years. His head has been preserved and is currently on display at the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery and Bedford Museums.

### **THE AVERAGE HORSE LIFE SPAN IS 25-30 YEARS!**

As equine care and veterinary medicine improve, domestic horses are living longer and healthier lives. Although genetics, nutrition, and environmental factors still limit the maximum age a horse can reach. In general, ponies tend to live longer than horses, and many will live beyond 40. Some horse breeds also have a higher than average life expectancy, such as the Haflinger, Appaloosa, Icelandic Horse, Quarter Horse, and Arabian breeds. Interestingly, there isn't one multiplier that tells us how old a horse is in human years. This is because horses develop at a much faster rate up to 3 years of age and then slow down as they get older. To illustrate, a 3-year-old horse is 18 in human years, while a 20-year-old is 60.5, and a 40-year-old horse is 110.5 in human years.

### **HORSES ONLY HAVE ONE LESS BONE THAN HUMANS!**

With 205 bones in their skeleton, horses only have one less bone than we do (206). However, this isn't true for all horse breeds. Arabian horses have one less pair of ribs, lumbar and tail vertebrae, meaning they only have 201 bones.

### **HORSES HAVE AN ALMOST 360-DEGREE VISUAL RANGE.**

Because of the position of their eyes, horses can see roughly 350 degrees around themselves. This is nearly four times our visual range! However, horses see the world very differently from us. They can only see 55 to 65 degrees with both eyes; the rest of their vision (190-230 degrees) is monocular. This means that their depth perception and ability to see details are quite poor. On the other hand, horses are exceptionally good at detecting motion, which is how they survived for millions of years. As soon as a predator came into their visual range, they were able to run instantly. But because they can't make out moving shapes in their peripheral vision clearly, horses will spook at just about any sudden movement.

### **HORSES CAN SLEEP BOTH LYING DOWN AND STANDING UP**

Horses have a unique survival adaptation called the stay apparatus that allows them to completely relax and sleep standing up. It's comprised of a series of tendons and ligaments that connect the stifle to the hock and lock them in place. This is the reason why horses can't move their knees separately from their hocks. The point of this special ability is to enable horses to run at the first sign of danger. However, they still need to lie down for short periods of time to achieve deep (RAM) sleep and complete their sleep cycle. As a matter of fact, horses can't lie down for too long as that would put undue strain on their bones and internal organs.

# The Most Fantastic Horse Braids



# Widcombe Fair Horse

## Widcombe in the Moor, England

**This painted wooden sculpture depicts the characters of a popular Devon folk song.**



**TUCKED AWAY IN THE SOUTH** transept of a 14th-century church is an animated model showing a medley of men sitting atop a gray mare. Though its wheels do indeed work, the horse, riders, and dogs nipping at the steed's heels are enclosed in glass, trapping the toy in stillness. The model depicts a man named Uncle Tom Cobley and his friends. Their tale is famous throughout Devon, as it has been immortalized in a popular folk song.

According to the song, a man named Tom Pearse lends a group of seven men his old gray mare so they can journey to the Widcombe Fair. But tragically, the horse falls ill and dies before the trip is complete. After his faithful mare fails to return, Pearse sets out to find her, only to discover her in her final moments. The horse then becomes a ghost that haunts the moor on cold, windy nights.

Though the ghost mare may not be real, many suspect that the men mentioned in the song were. Their names can be traced to families who lived nearby in the early 1800s. The animated model that depicts the popular folk song was hand-made by a retired sailor named Harry Price. It took him two years to finish the piece, which was displayed at the 1959 Widcombe Fair, the very event the characters in the song attempted to attend.

### Know Before You Go

The church is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It's easily accessible via public transport, but if you do drive, there's ample parking in the lot near the church. You can reach the town via the 271 and 672 bus services. The nearest train station is Newton Abbot.

If you're interested in adding an additional equestrian element to your trip, head over to Hollowcombe Bottom, the site of a mysterious pony massacre in Dartmoor National Park. If you have access to a car, it's a roughly 25-minute drive along the B3212 and B3387.

# Gallop to Glory

## Louisville, Kentucky

**This hidden jockey “walk of fame” celebrates the winning riders of the Kentucky Derby.**



**EVERY MAY, THE “MOST EXCITING** two minutes in sports” draws crowds to Louisville, Kentucky. Spectators, donning their finest hats and sipping mint juleps, gather to watch Thoroughbreds tear around the track in the Kentucky Derby.

Practically hidden in plain sight at the Galt House Hotel, you’ll find a small installation that celebrates the exciting equestrian event. Gallop to Glory is to jockeys what the Hollywood Walk of Fame is to A-list celebrities. It’s a chance for them to literally cement their accomplishments into history.

The installation was unveiled in 2005. Any jockey who rides their mount to glory in the Kentucky Derby is invited to preserve their handprint and signature in this easily overlooked part of the Galt House Hotel. A steel rose, which pays tribute to the blanket of red roses draped around the neck of the winning horse, is then placed on their square. The growing collection of squares surrounds a Gallopalooza horse sculpture.

Gallop to Glory isn’t the only bit of Derby Day excitement you’ll find at the hotel. As the Official Host Hotel for Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby, it offers a variety of race-themed festivities.

### **Know Before You Go**

Gallop to Glory is to the left of the main entrance to Suite Tower. If you’re interested in staying at the Galt House Hotel, see its website for booking information. If you’re planning to be there for the Derby Day festivities, it’s recommended to book far in advance.

Answers were, there were a lot of mistrials and mistakes on my part, and I learned that to be an ignorant human was one way to improve the communication with her. I also learned to slice and dice the problem, reducing the whole picture into smaller slices that I could effectively work on.

One of the ways to illustrate this is to imagine that you are tasked with renovating a house with many rooms. Each of the rooms is part of the function of the house, and we tend to think of one "house" instead of a building composed of many different rooms. Just like we think of the horse as a whole horse, not an animal with many different attributes.

But in this house, each room is separate from the others, and we may think of them as separate entities: bedrooms, bathrooms, garage, living room, den, kitchen and so on. Looked at this way they are separate attributes that together constitute a house.

To change the nature of the house you do not blow it up and start building a new and different one. It is much more productive to shift your focus from the one "house" to the many separate "Rooms" and improve or change one room at a time. Every problem is a house with many different rooms. To stimulate new ideas, identify and list the various attributes of a problem and work on one attribute at a time.

With this in mind, I took one challenge I was having with my horse: ***she was way too rushed and tight***. And I created a list of attributes of horses in general, which included:

*Prey animal*

*Lives in wide open spaces*

*Have hair all over their body*

*Are warm-blooded*

*Have a herd mentality*

*Intuitive instinct*

*Live in the moment*

I looked at each attribute separately, trying to find ideas to solve my problem. And then one stood out – *Live in the moment*. My horse only knew the present, she did not conceive of the future the way I did. When I was riding her the goals I had took me from the present to the future, the future show or clinic. I was moving forward fast in my mind, not paying attention to the here and now. I was so focused on my goals I literally left her in the dust, and she was desperately trying to keep up, and it made her anxious, which in turn made her tense. And, it goes without saying that I was also tense; not enjoying the work as much as I was enjoying the *potential* of the work—grand visions of half-passes and canter pirouettes, without the grounding needed to make those visions a reality. I was literally trading her well-being in for a dream disguised as a goal. Finally understanding this made me a better horse person and ultimately made her a much more relaxed, open partner.

When I learned to ignore what I thought I knew, particularly when it came to my riding, the softness that was so elusive for so many years was suddenly there. Softness means trust and it comes from the inside, not the outside. Softness is an offering, an understanding, a marker of trust. Going through the motions, however impressive I thought they were, was nothing compared to that deep understanding and connection. She ultimately gave me everything she had with a willing heart and more "try" than I deserved, and I never forgot the lesson that the Slice & Dice technique taught me.

Sometimes ideas are just new information grafted onto an attribute and spliced with another thought. Learning to let go of what you know can spark new ideas that allow you to slice and dice challenges into separate, simple

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attributes and then combine them into new, more complex structures. It is not easy, for sure, but it can change the internal chemistry of your brain and allow you to be more open to learning – particularly learning how to solve problems.

It reminds me of an exercise I did in art class when I was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, just learning to draw. I was so frustrated because I really wanted to draw horses but every one I drew either came out with super long legs or short necks or some other incorrect conformation. My art teacher told me to look at the image of the horse upside down, which he told me would reduce the mental conflict I was having trying to get the image perfect. He explained that we are all left-hemisphere dominant and that the reason I was having problems is that I was taking the image of the horse literally. I was insisting I draw what I knew to be a horse and this challenge was causing me to seek perfection. He told me that I needed to develop my R-mode (right brain) and that when the image was turned upside down it was no longer recognizable as a horse – my brain saw it as just lines and shading and shapes and my left-hemisphere was not really interested. At some point the drawing began to seem like an interesting puzzle, and I started to understand that everything I needed to know in order to draw horses was right in front of me. It was the shift from left brain to right brain that I was missing.

Some lessons in life definitely have a permanent impact, and being able to see how these relate and can be carried over to multiple aspects of your life is, well, life-changing. I don't think I would have sought out these parallels if I was not involved with horses, it took that relationship and the desire to really decode the mystery of true communication, not to mention the respect for a different point of view, to bring it in to focus for me. I owe most of my education to the relationship I have had with the horses in my life; they were the motivation and ultimately the enlightenment.

There is a final story about Art Tatum that reminds me to always be open to learning: One night Art and a colleague were listening to a pianist in a nightclub. The colleague didn't think the pianist was very good and asked Art if they could go somewhere else. But Tatum said that he was enjoying the guy's playing and wanted to stay and listen. This colleague couldn't understand why the great Art Tatum would want to listen to this unaccomplished pianist play. The next night, however, he heard Tatum play something that was clearly influenced by the pianist they had heard the night before. Art Tatum had heard something special in the guy's playing that his colleague had missed. Tatum learned from everyone!