

If a horse and rider have no connection, it can feel frustrating for both. Building a real bond takes time, patience, and intentional effort. Here are some of the ways Julie will help a rider develop a deeper connection with their horse:

1. Groundwork & Relationship Building

- Spend time with your horse outside of riding (grooming, hand grazing, etc.).
- Practice leading exercises (stopping, backing up, turning) to establish respect and trust.
- Use liberty work or round pen exercises to create a partnership based on body language.

2. Improve Communication & Feel

- Focus on subtle cues—use less rein and more seat and leg.
- Be consistent with your aids so your horse understands your expectations.
- Develop better timing by releasing pressure the moment your horse responds correctly.

3. Ride with Softness & Awareness

- Stay balanced and centered in the saddle; avoid gripping or stiffening.
- Match your energy with your horse's—calm when they need calm, energized when they need motivation.
- Pay attention to your horse's feedback (ears, tail, breathing) and adjust accordingly.

4. Develop Trust & Confidence

- Be a fair leader—firm but kind, setting boundaries without fear or aggression.
- Expose your horse to new environments or obstacles gradually to build confidence together.
- Give your horse time to think rather than rushing corrections or demands.

5. Prioritize Your Horse's Well-being

- Make sure your horse is comfortable—check saddle fit, soundness, and overall health.
- Recognize when your horse is mentally or physically tired and adjust your training.
- Allow for playtime and relaxation, not just structured training sessions.

6. Ride with Purpose & Connection

- Set small goals for each ride, making progress together.
- Focus on quality over quantity—short, positive rides are more effective than long, frustrating ones.
- End each session on a good note to reinforce trust and confidence.

7. Work on Yourself

- Improve your body control through fitness, flexibility, and riding lessons.
- Manage your own emotions—horses sense fear, frustration, and impatience.
- Be fully present with your horse rather than distracted or rushed.