



The Way of the Prey



Why does a horse not scream when you beat him with a stick?

Horses are prey animals, every one knows that. However, not many people seem to realize what this actually means. And that is a real shame for if one does not understand what being a prey animal means one shall never grasp the very core of the horse upon which he always acts without so much as a blink of an eye. And if one can not foresee these acts huge problems are inevitable.

Showing Weakness = Death

Predators and other none prey animals like lions, bears, humans and dogs who live in groups or packs, show pain and weakness to each other. Their group members will give them some slack and watch over them. Mostly they have a relatively safe home or shelter like a cave or trees. They sleep their illness off. There is relatively little to fear anyway. This way the ill animals will regain strength and the group shall remain strong.

As opposed to prey animals, who have to spend their life in the open for they always need room to flee. Preys are under a constant watch of predators, and they are fully aware of that all the time. Therefore prey animals never sleep deep and long like predators do. Their herds have a very clear hierarchy amongst them. And that is the reason why they are so sensitive to every token amongst their kind, the reason they react so explosive to every uncertainty.

As such animals of prey are under a constant surveillance of predators... but



why do predators survey preys? Why don't they just grab the one that is most near or looks juicy? Just like burglars, predators have the highest chance of success if they first study their victim. Thus, predators scrutinize a herd in the hope to spot weakness.

Any sign of weakness from a prey means a higher chance of catching that very prey as opposed to one that is fit and healthy. So you see why it is so important for prey animals like horses to never ever show their weakness, pain or inconvenience for it means sure death. This is the very core that made the horse successful as specie for millions of years. This will never go away and wishing it so will help as much as wishing your eyes would turn a different colour!

Therefore we can conclude that a horse undergoes numerous things without a lot of objection while as a matter of fact it can be very uncomfortable for him not to mention painful. That is also the very reason why a horse when he goes lame, it is so difficult to fix, for if he does go lame, the problem has been there for a long time and is now too severe for a horse to conceal. With



a dog, with the slightest inconvenience you know something is not right and you can act at once.

Is it still hard to imagine that an incorrect trim or incorrect hoof form could cause more harm than we could possibly imagine, just because there is no obvious sign that it actually hurts?

Resistance

On the other side, a prey animal will show directly or better, act directly



when he feels his movement restricted. Logical, a prey needs to be able to speed away at any time, all the time. And second, the prey, in this case the horse, will always react to the loss of balance. He wants to keep, maintain and regain his balance at all time, for balance means being able to speed away most efficiently. Thus, a horse will always react within seconds to get away from any circumstance where he either loses balance or when his movement is restricted in anyway.

So, resistance in a way does not exist. There is only information. When a horse resists, you as a horse handler should be happy, for your horse tells you very valuable information. You now know that you need to adjust your action. For you can trust on your horse's instinct, ideal isn't it?

Force

'The way of the prey' is now a tool which you can use in your interaction with horses. If you fully grasp the basic truth behind it, it is easy to see how fast a horse handler can force a horse. And it does not take a rocket scientist to understand that regular force inflicted on a body over a long period of time will cause serious damages. You can probably imagine since it is so easy to force a horse with just a chain and a whip, the results with further restrictive gadgets can be disastrous.

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