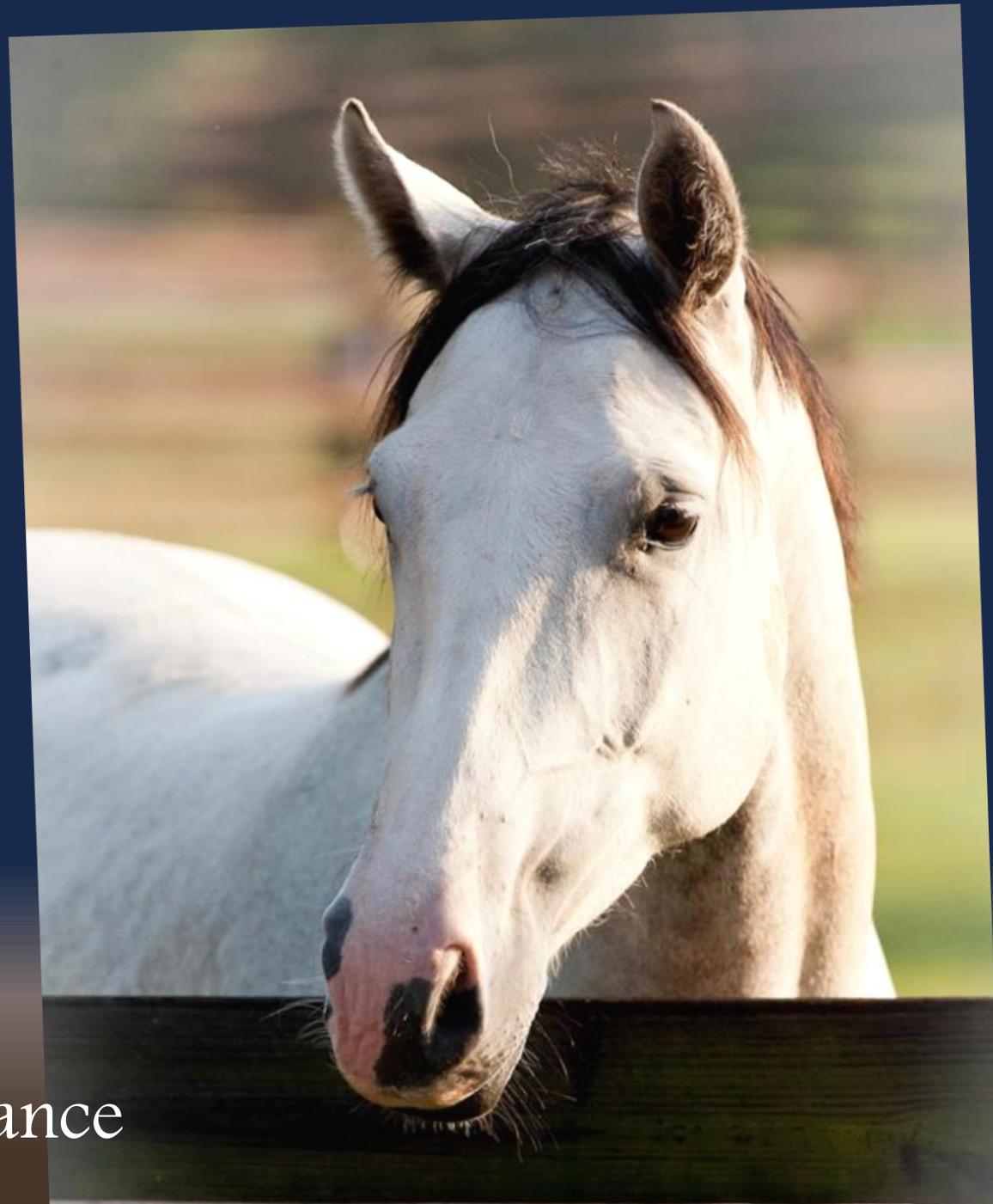


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Adult Theory  
Experiential Learning  
Colt Starting: A Second Chance



# Experiential Learning Theory Colt Starting: A Second Chance

- Friday, Preconference 6 hour workshop
- Location: Harmony Training Center in Denver, Colorado
  - Rescue 200+ abused and/or neglected horses
  - Retrain for adoption
- Experiential learning event had:
  - 160 participants in attendance from around the US
  - Myriad of experiences, educational specializations, career choices and job roles



**PATH**  
INTERNATIONAL

**CONFERENCE AND  
ANNUAL MEETING**

**DENVER  
COLORADO**

**NOVEMBER 8-10, 2019**

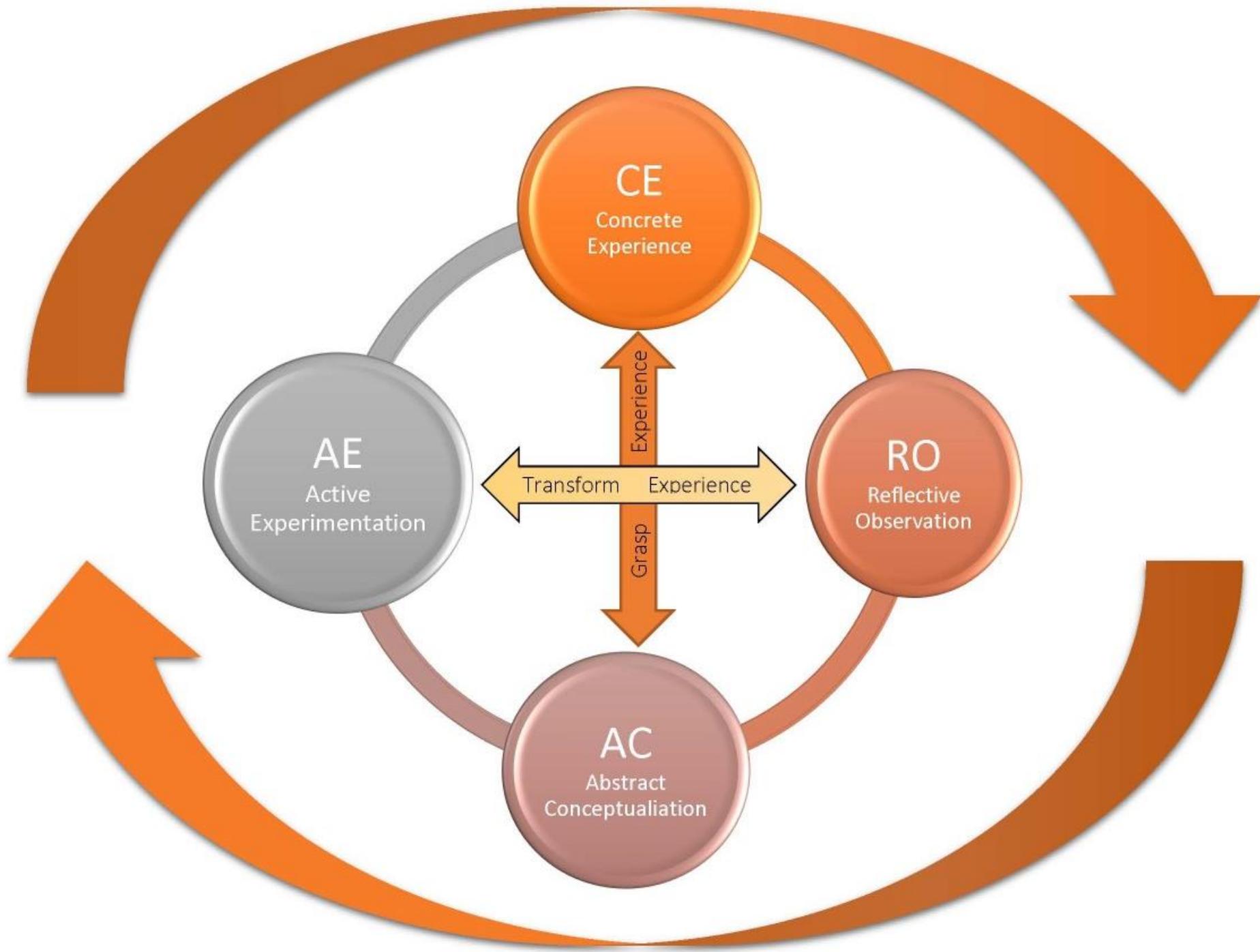


# Why Horses and Experiential Learning

- Like humans, horses are individually different.
- Like adults, horses build upon prior knowledge.
- Horses have a keen ability to detect intention and authenticity in people and are known to “mirror” behaviors they are picking up from others (Roberts, 1997, 2001).
- Documented research on effective therapy for human health.



# Kolbs 4-stage ELT Model



# Observations



- Large Stadium Arena with footing that was fresh, partition corral panels separated horses from participants who sat on aluminum bleachers
- Three cowboys in the arena. Two on horse back and one on the ground with a horse for demonstration.
- One cowboy positioned near the participants with a microphone explained what we were seeing in the demonstration
- Audience was quiet and very perceptive.
  - Various ages, gender and cultures
- No Safety Gear



# Grasping experiences

- Concrete Experience:
  - Mind receiving information through the senses:
    - Seeing, Hearing, Smelling
- Abstract Conceptualization:
  - Watching the progress of a horse in denial
    - Difficult and dangerous
    - To a horse that within 3 hours was backed and ridden by a cowboy.





# Transform Experiences

- Reflective Observation
  - Phenomenal results. Facilitators opened up discussions with participants. Questions arose from prior experiences and solutions were provided based on what the cowboys demonstrated.
- Active Experimentation
  - Some of the active experimentation came from watching a live event. Yet an area of weakness as the participant was not allowed to actively engage with a horse. Most likely as a result of liability. The active experimentation will come through self analysis and individual practice.



# Strengths and Weaknesses

- Strengths:
  - Went beyond professional education and provided a real life experience.
  - Interaction between the individual and the environment, and the experience itself contained a continuous flow of knowledge
  - Knowledge was shaped through the observation of training. Reshaped through a question and answer session
  - Event was well planned and facilitated.
  - Selection of participants was well matched to the environment.
- Weaknesses:
  - Reflection exercise could have been stronger. Time was limiting, with more time the participants should have been asked what they learned, and how they could apply it to their individual needs.
  - Active Experimentation was weak. Participants learned by observing yet they were not allowed to actually participate. Most like due to liability issues.



# Take Away, Lessons Learned

- Matching the right environment and safety for the participants was key.
- Knowledgeable facilitators demonstrating what they were teaching.
- Concrete experience, would have been nice to actually practice what was taught
  - Too many participants
  - Liability were issues
- Reflection exercise with questions and answers was great!
- The smell of the arena stayed on my jacket for days afterwards. The smell took me back to reflecting on the day.



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