



INTRAINING

PART 1 IN A SERIES

By Bruce Anderson with Julianne Neal

Recently I took my three year old filly to a local show to “hang out.” While watching a class, a woman approached me to ask the question, “What should I do about...?” In this case, her horse would fly backward every time she approached to put on the bridle. And so, the questions, “What should I do? Why is he doing this?” As always, difficult questions to answer. #1, the horse tells me when to do, how to do, what to do in any given situation. There is no formula for “If he does this, then I do this.” #2, what the horse is actually physically doing may not be the problem; it could be the by-product of the problem. What you do know is that what he is doing is not “acceptable behavior.” The real issue leads back to mindset: the horse’s mindset and even more so, the person’s mindset. In other words, it isn’t necessarily what you’re actually doing that the horse has a problem with, it is the pressure created by what you’re doing, which in turn triggers a response; in this case, raising his head and flying backward. The horse is using something that Nature’s View calls the “tyrant mindset”: in other words, freeze, flee or fight is his natural instinct. When he is in this mode, the horse is actually saying “I want to do what I want to do.” Sound familiar? There is nothing wrong with this “mindset;” in fact, in the wild, in “Nature’s World,” the horse would depend on it for his own survival. The problem is that in our world that mindset isn’t beneficial to him and if he continues down that road, someone is likely to get hurt.

So, back to the first question, “What should I do?” The first thing to do is introduce the horse to a new mindset: one called the “alpha mindset.” This isn’t necessarily the same “alpha” that you may have heard of in other horsemanship methods. With Nature’s View, the alpha is simply using the mindset of “How can I help you?” With the tyrant mindset that we mentioned before of “I want to do what I want to do,” the horse decides what to do or the person decides how much pressure to apply (usually evoked from past situations, so you may over or under react). The alpha mindset, the other side of the pendulum, is defined as “whatever the resistance from the horse is in any given situation determines the amount of pressure that is applied ... plus a little bit more.” (There is a clause to that...we’ll discuss that some other time). This mindset calls for dealing with the moment, riding the horse beneath you, not the one four strides ahead or behind. Remember, we teach and learn by example, so which mindset would you rather your horse use: alpha or tyrant?

In any case, there are four basic things that we use to accomplish a task or goal: movement, direction, rhythm and track. These are actually the “seen” things: in Nature’s View we use “seen” things to work on the “unseen” or underlying things (things like problem-solving,

timing, listening, etc.). This is actually true for us as well. Think about it: to get ready for work in the morning, first you have to move...then you need to move in the direction of the kitchen for breakfast... but back to the situation with the horse. As an example, within a segment of work, if we’re asking a horse to go in a particular direction and the horse decides on his own to change direction, the amount of pressure that you apply is equal to his resistance, plus a little bit more. If you pay attention to the horse and let him tell you what to do in applying that pressure, more than likely, the horse will change back to the original direction. Each time you apply pressure you are raising what we call his negative pole. The poles within (both negative and positive) are those feelings that let you know when a situation is beneficial or not to your well-being. If the resistance continues and you keep increasing pressure (remember, using the alpha mindset), finally, what they are feeling from you will be greater than what they are imagining (the pressure to change direction). As soon as you feel that they have switched to the new mindset, you should release the pressure. Don’t get caught up in watching for an action. Remember, as soon as you feel the horse switch to the new mindset that is when you release the pressure.

So back to the questions... we use the bridle (the goal) as the reason for the journey (creating a relationship with your horse) to practice the “unseen” (timing, feel, anger management, listening skills) which allows you to develop a whole new “alpha mindset” or way of thinking...a lot to think about, isn’t it?! Just like jumping the jump, crossing the creek or loading into the trailer, putting the bridle on or taking it off is one of the many “seen” things that we do with our horses; but the icing on the cake is having a willing partner in any task that we attempt. It’s not about accomplishing the goal, not even about the journey; it’s about the mindset needed for both. The goal is simply the reason for the journey. Within the journey, we are allowed to practice the mindset, and the more proficient we are at the mindset we will be able to follow our passion: whatever that may be (dressage, hunter/jumper, trail rides, western pleasure...). So instead of putting the cart before the horse and focusing on the goal or even the journey, we first need the alpha mindset. ■

You can contact Bruce and Julianne at 803-713-8470 or visit their website at www.equusencounter.com.

by Bruce Anderson

You've heard the expression, "the straw that broke the camel's back"? Maybe you've had a problem at work, at home, at the barn, and all of a sudden it's the "last straw." Whether it's a temper tantrum or a melt-down waiting to happen, the results aren't pretty. The incident in question isn't really the problem; it's the entire set of events leading up to it. It isn't really the straw that broke the camel's back, it's the load that he's carrying.

Have you ever been in a situation with your horse in which the pressure builds and builds until finally, the explosion happens? It certainly isn't much fun to ride in that situation. Maybe you're heading out for a horse show, tense and nervous, and you just can't understand why your horse, who normally walks right up the ramp, refuses to load. Or you head out for your first hunt, and the excitement builds with the hounds, the field, the surroundings, until your horse explodes. You've taken him out every week, all summer with no problem. It isn't the surroundings; it isn't the crowd, it isn't the situation, it's the pressure caused by the situation that causes the problem.

How can you learn to deal with pressure so that it doesn't have such a negative impact? How can you teach your horse to do the same? Remember, your horse is a prey animal, therefore, naturally inclined to freeze, flee or fight when a pressure situation comes along.

The tyrant mindset is "I want to do what I want to do", where the horse decides what to do or the person decides how much pressure to apply (usually evoked from past situations, so you may over or under react).

The alpha mindset, the other side of the pendulum, is defined as "whatever the resistance from the horse is in any given situation determines the amount of pressure that is applied, plus a little bit more". This is a mindset of "how can I help you?" will be much more beneficial for both of you once you learn to use it when a pressure situation arises. First you'll have to learn to push past your pressure threshold (the amount of pressure that you can handle before the explosion happens).

On any given day, your threshold for what you may be able to

Applying pressure and the alpha mindset

handle could change, depending on the circumstances. A rough day at work may cause you to have a melt down a lot sooner than you would in the same situation on a good day. Your horse is the same; depending on the situation, his pressure threshold may change. In order to raise his threshold to a higher level, giving you a better ride under stressful circumstances, you may need to go back to the basics.

We use the safe environment of the round pen. The training that takes place here will carry over to the outside world. The tools that you learn will help you with your reactions. First, remember that there are no mistakes in the round pen. If you are really using the "alpha mindset," you will consider mistakes an opportunity. It's hard not to try to "get it right" or to be upset if your horse doesn't work with you. We are all want to do our best; to try to accomplish the goal.

In this case, it is actually better for the horse to make a mistake (in other words, he is using "the tyrant mindset") so that you can teach him consequences. The pressure of being perfect or getting it right is your pressure issue to deal with in the round pen. If the horse doesn't get it right, how do you deal with it? Can you build your threshold so that you truly hope for "mistakes" in order to have a teaching moment? This is the perfect place to practice that mindset. In the round pen, it isn't about the goal, it isn't even about the journey; it is about the mindset needed for the journey.

Now about that pressure that

you apply on your horse: how should you apply it? There are numerous tools available for you to use; lariats, lunge whips, etc. But perhaps the best tools are the ones that are always with you: your body and your voice. If you've ever worked with a horse with nothing attached, you may realize already that you don't need the extras, although they do come in handy in certain situations; a lariat can be an extension of your arm so that you don't need to get too close or get yourself into an unsafe situation. Actually, you'd be surprised at how quickly most horses will move if you just start a set of jumping jacks.

An important part of the Nature's View system of horsemanship is using your body to apply pressure and to communicate with the horse; your placement and body language can actually ask him to slow down, stop or even turn around. If you're using the alpha mindset, you will work with the horse and let him tell you what to do and how to do it, depending on what you would like to accomplish. It's a great way to practice the mental tools of problem solving and timing.

Now, the other important part of the equation is your voice. If you are going to use the new mindset outside of the round pen after you finish your classroom lesson, your voice will be the best tool of all. Remember your mother when she caught you with your hand in the cookie jar? That "ah, ah, ah" that you heard back then still works wonders. If you use it, along with

the pressure that you apply with your body or other tools, the horse will associate it with the consequences that follow.

Therefore, when presented with the pressure situations on the outside, your tone of voice can help him to remember to keep his "how can I help you attitude" intact. The pressure of noise can be difficult for some people to apply. One misconception is that the tyrant (opposite of alpha) mindset is one in which you always apply too much pressure. In fact, someone who doesn't apply enough pressure is also a tyrant: in both cases, too much or too little pressure, the person isn't listening to the horse to let him tell them what to do.

To make the most of your classroom lesson in the round pen, the pressure that you apply will help you to increase your own pressure threshold and to allow you to learn more about your horse's reactions to pressure. This can help you measure how much pressure he can handle and increase his pressure threshold, so that he moves from the negative to the positive side of the pendulum.

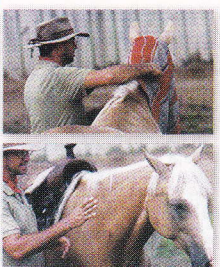
— Bruce Anderson is a full time equine consultant, trainer and clinician located in Camden, South Carolina. He helps businesses improve leadership, communication, problem solving, team building, and teamwork skills, with and without horses, to overcome mindset and behavioral obstacles to success.

To learn more, visit www.naturesview1.org or www.equusencounter.com.

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NATURE'S VIEW with Bruce Anderson

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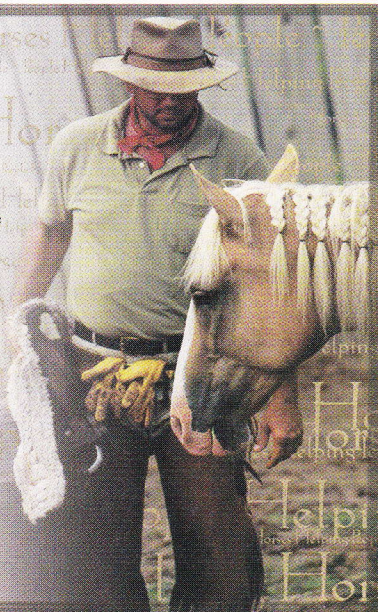
Session certified by the SC Department of Criminal Justice for Officer Recertification. For more information, contact Bruce and Julianne at:

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A HELPING HORSE

Equine assisted psychotherapy is gaining in popularity. Here's a look at what it is and how it works.

BY DONNA CAMPBELL SMITH

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

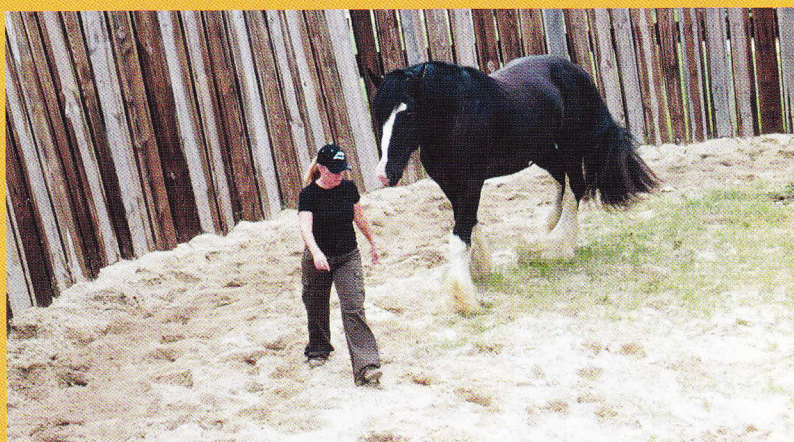
1) Teresa Wadford was having a hard time coping with the unexpected death of her mother and with other life stresses. She'd tried counseling and medication for her depression, but found these treatments slow at best, completely ineffective at worst.

Teresa says of her experience at Nature's View, "The round pen was beneficial in getting me out of the depression. It woke me up to living life in a much more engaged mindset. I had been in sort of a disconnected state. I had come to the conclusion that the best part of my life was behind me.

"Now I have decided the best part of my life is today! Living in the moment and looking forward is a huge change and improvement for me. I am still working on many issues, but from a place of purpose, energy, confidence and an 'I can do this' attitude. I am doing things I never would have even tried before."

"Equine assisted psychotherapy has changed my life forever," she says.

2) "I went for a day seminar at Horse Sense and came away with a lifetime of knowledge about myself," says Dr. Jennifer Oliver, Blue Ridge Chiropractic. "The beauty of this great work is located in the eyes of the horses and their exceptional staff. They coach you through ways of working through your stuff and bringing you to action. I can honestly say Horse Sense is one of the most powerful growth experiences I've had. I recommend it for everyone."



Teresa Wadford in the round pen during an EAP session at Nature's View. "Equine assisted psychotherapy has changed my life forever," she says.

"There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man." We've all seen this quote; some of us have it painted on a plaque and hang it on our tack room or office wall. Sir Winston Churchill is credited with the observation, although we who work with horses don't need a famous statesman to tell us what we already know: horses are just plain good for our mental health.

For decades, Pony clubs, 4-H and other youth volunteers have recognized the benefits of pairing kids up with horses so that the horses can teach them responsibility, compassion for others, and communication. We all have felt the comradeship with other horsemen when gathering at clinics, shows, trail rides and other horse events. But, many horse owners confess they find their greatest sense of peace while just sitting in the barn listening to their horses munch hay, or while grooming and otherwise caring for them. It is not just about the fun of riding, it's about the relationship.

Equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP) takes that knowledge to a higher level by using the horse as a tool for psychotherapy. It is an experimental approach to teaching emotional growth and mental well-being.

Horses are used as a tool to teach people about themselves—some call the process mirroring. Joan Rieger, MA, LPC Psychotherapist, explains on her website, "Horses, like humans, are social animals that live together in herds with defined hierarchies, very similar to our family systems. Each horse has a specific role and respon-

Equine assisted psychotherapy and equine assisted learning practiced at Horse Sense of the Carolinas does not involve riding, but interactions between horses and humans from the ground.

sibilities within the hierarchy. A horse's nature is always to be in response to humans; therefore, people receive direct and immediate feedback on their intentions and behaviors. Clients will have the experience of the horse acting as a mirror to their own internal process." Rieger, who is on staff as the youth program director at the Medicine Horse Program in Boulder, Colo., gives a long list of the benefits of EAP and who can benefit from the therapy.

Because EAP is new and experimental, there is a wide range of ways it is being used.

Bruce Anderson, director of Nature's View in Camden, S.C., offers a variety of programs with "horses helping people and people helping horses." Anderson says he discovered that in his quest to help horses under his care and training, the horses were in turn helping him. Anderson took that realization and developed it into a business—Nature's View. He uses the round pen and Shire horses. One of the more innovative of his programs is police training. The policemen learn to convince the horses to obey commands with voice and body language. Anderson says the sheer size of the Shire horses is at first intimidating, and that this helps his clients empathize with how people feel when confronted by a police officer. Anderson also works with school children and teachers, corporations, families and individuals.

Anderson says, "People can relate to horses in a way they don't with any other animal. Perhaps because of the long association man has had with the horse as a helpmate, transporting him and his belongings, lending its strength, stamina and speed, the horse has helped human beings survive in the world." He goes on to say that he feels horses are more important now

than ever before—"Working with horses brings the human back in contact with the natural world."

Since EAP is in its experimental stages, a need arose for an industry standard and code of ethics. As one can easily guess, this is a branch of the equine industry that is open to misuse and abuse. The fulfillment of the need for standardization has materialized in the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA). This association offers a certification program with training workshops for various levels. They

have established standards of practice, ethics and safety for the field of EAP. EAGALA conducts annual conferences and provides educational materials such as books, videos, and newsletters. They also work to get professionals in the mental health field to accept EAP as a valid tool.

In EAP, participants are not riding the horse, but working from the ground in various exercises with the horse. According to EAGALA, non-verbal communication, assertiveness, creative thinking, problem solving, leadership, work, responsibility,





Bruce Anderson discovered throughout his career in his quest to help horses under his care and training, that the horses were in turn helping him. Bruce took that realization and developed it into a business —Nature's View.

teamwork and relationships, confidence, and attitude are tools used in EAP. EAGALA goes on to say EAP is a powerful and effective therapeutic approach that has an incredible impact on people.

EAP succeeds, in part, because it offers a challenge in a non-threatening way, breaks down defense barriers, provides immediate cause-and-effect situations, catches and holds a client's attention, and promotes change from dysfunctional patterns to successful ones.

According to EAGALA, EAP programs should be made up of a team that includes the horse(s), a facilitator and a qualified mental health professional.

IN PRACTICE

Horse Sense of the Carolinas, Inc., is a 90-acre farm in Marshall, N.C., run by Shannon and Richard Knapp. The Knapps moved here from Dallas, Tex. Previously a college teacher, Shannon left her academic career to care for and rehabilitate abused and neglected horses.

In 2001, she began pairing these horses with people. As she explored the relationship between horses and people she discovered EAP. She realized this was a calling and, today, the

Horse Sense of the Carolinas, Inc., team includes seven staff members: Shannon and Richard, two mental health professionals, and three equine specialists. The team also includes 14 horses, many of them rescued from neglectful or abusive situations or retired because of physical injuries. Since the program does not include riding, this gives the horses a new purpose. Shannon is Level 2 certified by EAGALA, and is working on obtaining Level 3. Richard is certified Level 1 as an equine specialist and has earned Level 2 in the Pat Parelli program.

Shannon says, "Horses that have been abused or neglected have an incredible ability to reach out to people with similar problems. The horses give clients the opportunity to learn about themselves and process mental and emotional issues without judgment."

Bruce Anderson says EAP can increase the productivity of the horse professional's business by developing new programs such as police training, corporate leadership training, family relationship training, as well as programs for athletes and for individuals. Adding an EAP program to an established riding or training program can be a natural progression. Participants are not restricted to horse owners or even horse enthusiasts, so adding this kind of program helps bring an entirely new demographic to your barn door.

Even if horse business owners are not inclined to develop their own program, they can benefit by renting their facilities and/or horses to an outside EAP professional to conduct a program. Anderson conducts his program from Rainbow's End Farm, owned by Roxanne Thrower. Thrower breeds Shire horses and Anderson uses her horses in his program.

Thrower says, "Bruce came to my farm to help me train my horses. Since I had an ideal round pen, he asked, and I told him he was welcome to use it and bring whomever he wanted out, and to use my horses. He felt the horses were very safe, and it was more exposure to different peo-

ple and situations for my horses—a win-win for both of us. Bruce has since taken the horses to different activities, which is more exposure for both his work and my horses."

Getting an equine assisted psychotherapy and Learning Program off the ground can require funding beyond that of running a training or lesson barn. Qualified staff, suitable horses, and fees for training are some of the expenses incurred. Often, the very people such therapy can help the most, such as at-risk youth, may not be able to afford the fees. Many program leaders are finding grant money is available to help with the expenses and to provide scholarships for participants. Grants can be used to hire staff, purchase horses and supplies, and provide scholarships for those who may not be able to afford to participate. EAGALA's website has some sample grant proposals to use as models. Shannon Knapp teaches a four-part series of Tele-seminars on how to find grant money, gain community support, and write the grant proposal.

Equine assisted psychotherapy programs are becoming more and more accepted across the country. It can expand the traditional horse program and benefit both the horse professional and the community as horses continue their role of making life more fulfilling for people. [sm]

FOR MORE INFO

EAGALA
1-877-858-4600
www.eagala.org

Horse Sense of the Carolinas, Inc.
(828) 683-7304
www.HorseSenseotc.com

Medicine Horse Program
(720) 406-7630
www.medicinehorse.org

Nature's View
www.naturesview1.org
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Bruce Anderson: Movement, direction, rhythm and track

by Barbara Childs

For Bruce Anderson, the road that led to the Foothills of Upstate South Carolina and Polk County, N.C., began in the West Indian Islands of Trinidad and Tobago.

It was there on his family's cocoa and coffee plantations that Anderson began his life-long relationship with horses.

Anderson learned to ride on the estates where there were no roads – only trails. Since the farms were on a mountainside, the horses and donkeys were used to check the work that needed to be done.

Anderson's first horse was named Kim, a nondescript bay mare, Creole bred. He remembers riding in a western saddle as a child with his father across the plantations to their home on the far side. His father would have Kim available for Anderson to ride home to the farm's yard after school.

Anderson remembers coming home late one evening so late that Kim missed her dinner. He hung on tight coming down the mountain at a high rate of speed and when he let her go she



BRUCE ANDERSON

jumped a ditch into the orange field, and at a flat-out gallop they came to a fork in the road. Kim went left and Anderson went right – straight into the orange tree!

As he walked toward home crying and dragging his crop, a neighbor picked him up and took him home. His

father cut his shirt off his back and walked him out to the yard and up to Kim.

Anderson realized that the

Spotlight on Local Equestrians

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BRUCE ANDERSON

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task ahead was to get back on Kim. Thus began a life-long learning experience.

Later, Anderson and his family had horses that people could rent on their estate. He spent the days riding both the horses and a green Land Rover, shipped from England, to bring out the crops on all the new roads on the plantations.

Anderson later represented his country on the National Show Jumping Team. From there he moved to the breeding farms at home, in the U.K., and in the U.S.

While in England he earned his agricultural degree at Merist Wood College, and in the United States he worked with thoroughbreds and the racing world in Florida. He eventually moved to the hunter jumper show circuit.

Anderson and his wife Julianne currently make their home in Camden, S.C., where Ander-

son started his present path in the evolution of his business, Nature's View. They both work in Camden and in the Tryon area and around the southeastern U.S. with counselors and mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies. Anderson says he enjoys working with horse owners and trainers in assisting them to build better relationships with their horses.

Anderson took clinics with many famous clinicians, but the one he said "turned the light on" was Monty Roberts. Roberts started Anderson along the path leading to round pen work.

The first clinic Anderson attended was with John Lyons. During the three days he was impressed with the John Lyons method. Anderson also took clinics from Pat Parelli, Chris Cox, and Chris Erwin.

As he learned things to do he also learned things not to do.

And he said his greatest teachers were actually the horses. Anderson's goal has always been to help horses survive in the world they have created – and what better teacher than a horse!

Anderson says his love of nature came from his mother and he dedicates all his work to her memory.

Spotlight on Local Equestrians

your full potential in anything that you aspire to do. Using the system, Anderson works with the horse, which is really not a horse, but a metaphor for infinite possibilities. An important piece to the puzzle is that one isn't working on a particular goal or task, but the mindset needed for the task and the journey.

Even more importantly, Anderson works on the mental tools needed for the journey. That is one reason that he needs

Anderson's business, Nature's View, is an experiential system that gives you the opportunity to reach

and uses the horse. The horse is a prey animal, not a predator, and when the work is done with nothing attached to the horse, the pressure levels will be high on both horse and human. Survival is the main human instinct and the horse's instinct as well, which brings us out of our comfort zones, thereby intensifying the experience.

To accomplish any goal, Anderson believes we must accomplish four things – movement, direction, rhythm and track. Working with a horse on these four things presents many difficulties, because when a horse doesn't understand something his instinct tells him to freeze, flee or fight (just as ours does).

People have been programmed to accomplish goals in their lives. When students are given a goal or task in the round pen (Anderson calls it a "picture"), they find out quickly that using the mindset they have been programmed to use isn't

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BRUCE ANDERSON

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beneficial to their well being, because of the response of the horse.

Not only that, when the picture isn't accomplished, students are reminded of times in the past when they have not accomplished "pictures," or pressure that they have received from the past, causing them to follow the freeze, flee, or fight responses, thereby fulfilling the prophecy.

Realizing that the response isn't beneficial to the environment, Anderson helps students change their process from working on the goal to working on the mental tools. This takes away the pressure to accomplish the goal.

When the horse uses the tyrant mindset, instead of completing the "picture" and following their own instincts that they are in danger (that survival

instinct), students work on the mental tools and that no longer happens. Instead, patience, timing, feel, etc. are in order. If the horse doesn't react in the tyrant mindset, students don't have the opportunity to practice with the tools.

Anderson's goals have been to show how horses help us mentally, allowing them to take us on a journey of self-discovery that gives us respect not only for the horse, but for ourselves.

The greatest mistake Anderson has made, he says, was not listening to the horse and paying for it with injuries – broken legs, back, aches and pains. The greatest mistake was not a true mistake but an opportunity to listen to the horse and really hear what was happening then.

"Sometimes we think we are listening but don't really hear what the horse is telling us," Anderson says.

Anderson feels there are no mistakes, only opportunities – and some with happier consequences than others.

When not at the barn and working with horses, Anderson spends time building a pond outside the screened porch of his home with Julianne – complete with a waterfall, brook, and goldfish

along with volcanic rock.

Anderson spent some time in Edisto, S.C., with Julianne's family and went fishing every day or kayaking to a nearby island. He says he loves taking care of all the animals on the farm as well as spending time with Jackie, an Aussie Blue Healer who actually helps him with his work.

There is also a family of

chickens (complete with an attack rooster), peacocks (a mom, dad, and three babies) and numerous goats that all claim attention and care. On a day off, Anderson may be resting on the porch in a hammock.

For years Anderson has been searching for something – from home in the West Indies, to Europe, to America.

After his mother passed away, Anderson says his life seemingly fell apart, but in reality the breakdown that he had at the time was the beginning of a new journey.

From that time he has been on an emotional roller coaster. The one constant, he says, is that he truly believes this system works and this belief has kept him whole and going forth. The more people he shares this system with the more people believe in it, too.

Anderson values greatly the work he does with people and horses in life. He says he loves showing that horses can find a new mindset, which is his life's work.

Spotlight on Local Equestrians

People Helping Horses - Horses Helping People

Do you know anyone who has problems with communication, patience, or anger management? We all know it's easy to see these issues in other people, but do you possess a problem as well?

As a parent, isn't your goal to help your child learn the tools to survive? As a teacher, isn't your goal to help your students learn the tools to further their education? As a manager, isn't your goal to enable your team to be productive in a safe fashion?

Unfortunately, many times we do our best in these roles, only to find that our children, students or employees come up short. Possibly, you can see their potential but find that they are their own worst enemy.

Do you get angry or upset when they do not accomplish the task or picture that you've given them? Do you over or under react? Do you blame yourself? Blame them? Would you like to help them by giving them the necessary tools to be able to accomplish the tasks that are needed to survive in this world

selves. The fact is that if the task isn't being completed; it doesn't matter whose fault it is. We aren't very proficient at some of the mental tools needed to accomplish certain things.

Also, our pressure threshold, or the amount of pressure that we can actually handle without "blowing up" or shutting down is fairly low. If the pressure of the situation is greater than your pressure threshold, the odds of completing the task aren't so good.

In other words, there are three things holding you back and keeping you from accomplishing your task: one, the pressure of your task is greater than your pressure threshold, therefore you "shut down"; two, you perceive that you are making a mistake; and three, because of past experiences, when you feel that you are making a mistake, you feel inferior, fulfilling what you perceive as your "prophecy." These feelings become a "restrictor plate" of sorts, holding you back from performing at your highest level.

relationship. Since we work with nothing attached to the horse, we allow him to make decisions without being physically controlled; he is allowed to make his own decisions. We use a round

pen for the sessions, which represents the world, allows for constant motion and allows us to provide a safe environment for horse and human (safety, safety, safety). Furthermore, we work

with nothing attached to the horse, which increases the pressure. In order to accomplish any task, we need to be able to juggle

See HORSES, page 8



that we have created (people's world)? Without the tools, how could someone complete the journey that is needed to even get to the task or picture?

It is not the journey or the picture (ie. situation) that is the problem in the first place; it is the pressure created by the situation. There is added pressure if someone doesn't complete the picture if this has already happened in the past; in other words, made a mistake (this may even cause you to feel that you have also made a mistake by not helping them enough).

Your main picture (especially as a parent) is to help your child survive; you also don't want them to go through the negative situations, or the pressure of those negative situations, that you went through. Unfortunately, the way that you respond can either be to overreact or underreact in these situations, thereby making a bad situation even worse, in so doing actually causing them to go through what you went through: Self fulfilling prophecy. In the same way, a teacher or a manager could overreact or underreact in any given situation, possibly blaming the other person, or even blaming them-

So, how can you develop the mental tools needed to raise your pressure threshold and remove that restrictor plate? The more proficient you are at communication, timing, problem solving, anger management, etc. (your mental tools), the more pressure you can handle in a situation allowing you to see your self worth and thereby raise your level of self esteem. Finally, you will be able to give up control, thereby being in control.

How can we accomplish this focus on the mental tools? Enter the horse.

Keep in mind that in this case, the horse is not merely a horse, but represents infinite possibilities. In a session for law enforcement...the horse may represent a perpetrator; in a session for educators...the horse may represent a student; for parents...the horse may represent the child; or a new job, coworkers, your spouse, etc.

In working with the horse, our goal becomes to teach him (or her) about the tools needed to survive in our world (people's world); in others words, to deal with fencing, barns, trailers, cars, our expectations for behavior, etc. It becomes about developing a

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four "seen" things: movement, direction, rhythm and track/path. These seen things are used to work on the "unseen" things: timing, communication, problem solving, anger management, etc.

Sound familiar?

These unseen things are the mental tools that we mentioned earlier.

In working with a horse to accomplish a task, we use the four seen things. For example, ask the horse for movement, on the rail clockwise at a walk. To accomplish this, you will use pressure to communicate.

The question is...how does the horse deal with this pressure? If he over or under reacts, he won't accomplish the task. There is nothing wrong with this response. It's just that in this world, it isn't beneficial to his well being. It isn't the seen things, but the unseen thing, the mindset that the horse is using at that moment that causes the problem.

In Nature's View, we call that the tyrant mindset. The alternative is what we call the alpha mindset. These terms

are merely titles: they aren't necessarily good or bad in and of themselves. The alpha mindset refers to the fact that the horse is doing exactly what the task calls for. In using the tyrant mindset, the horse may over or under react, thereby not completing the task. We, therefore, are making a mistake.

Or are we?

Instead of considering it a mistake, consider it an opportunity. The more the horse uses the tyrant mindset, the more you get to practice the unseen things (remember the mental tools?). When the horse isn't doing the task, we now have a problem. Perhaps you need to problem solve, maybe you need to work on your timing, etc.

In any case, as you work with the horse, you are allowed the opportunity to work on all of the tools mentioned above. The more committed the horse is to using the tyrant mindset, the more opportunities you have to practice the alpha mindset, therefore becoming more proficient at using the mental tools. Through

the horse you will then be able to see your self worth.

Nature's View offers a variety of workshops for parents, teachers, managers, law enforcement personnel, and individuals.

For more information, please visit www.equusencounter.com, call (803) 713-8470, or email naturesview@aol.com.

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