

What's your **NEW NORMAL** with your HORSE?

Your horse may ask, "Where have you been?" When you finally made it back to the barn, you were all wiggled out from the craziness of the world! Your horse turns the other way and canters back out to the field, thinking, "Who is that!" You just became a threat and without knowing it or meaning to, miscommunicated with the horse you love.

Does your horse feel the changes in the world? How could he not?!?

Anytime our emotional balance is being challenged, our horse senses it. So why does this matter?

What is the fundamental layer of being with a Horse?

~RELAXATION~

Relaxation is the state of being free from tension and anxiety

I don't know about you, but the past 2 months has been anything but relaxing.

This leads us to our discussion.

What do you inadvertently bring to your horse to cause him to canter back out into the field to his herd?

Well I know for me I have to do a self-check daily and moment by moment right now.

Even when I just go to catch a horse, I ask myself these things:

- Am I agitated?
- Can I be in the moment?
- Is there anger or sadness (or other emotional responses) in my mind and heart right now?

Emotional control is part of our leadership skills with our horse. The horse is after all, a horse. He doesn't understand human inconsistency. Human behavior often falls short by bringing our agenda, human emotions and intentions to our horse. Realizing how and when we attribute our emotions and behaviors, to our horse brings us from miscommunication to communication. Anthropomorphism is the attribution of human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities. That's not a "fair deal" to our horses. Adjust yourself to your horse and don't expect him to understand why you feel like a crazy person right now. If you can't control you, then seek out supervision, a buddy or take a lesson to help you sort out a positive focused interaction with your horse. Even an off the horse session will calm you down, change your perspective and help you exercise back toward balance. Practice accountability for positive interaction.

Our ability to have self-control and regulate our emotions, in turn, affects how the people around us and especially our horse, perceives us.

- Are we being fair?
- How do we separate out emotional responses and distinguish the transition from chaos in the world and into the peace of our horses' environment, so we are not perceived as a threat?
- What's your agenda?

If the emotion is appropriate to the situation and helps you feel better, there's no need to worry about changing the way you handle things. Laughing when others are laughing is one example of an appropriate reaction that helps you feel better. Expressing road rage on the way to the barn may also make you feel better, but it's not appropriate or particularly adaptive.

Emotional transitions are when an emotional state is altered for some reason (the transition may even be what alters the emotion). Examples might be missing your horse, frustration with an activity such as catching a horse, tacking up, another person in the barn or really any change, fear of new experience, too many stimuli, or the inability to express oneself with words.



Equotec
"In Pursuit of Harmony"

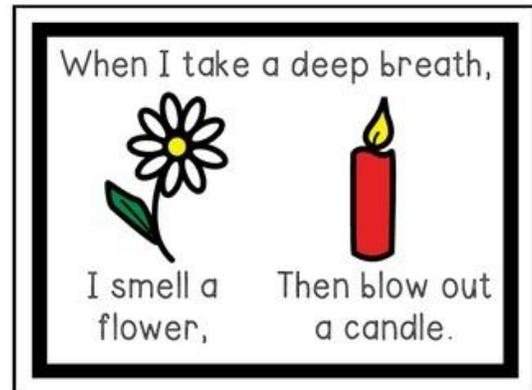
Your horse will feel the cortisol and emotional dump that just occurred. This is also true if you go to catch your horse after checking social media and reading all those negative current events. Your heart rate and breathing changed just with the mention of it.

Your horse can't help but feel your alerted state.

- What do you do?

You could express your anxiety, anger, fear, sadness and frustration in other ways that allow you to release those feelings, or instead try to find a way to calm yourself down.

Start a NEW NORMAL with self-control in your breath. For us horsemen and women, we can imagine breathing in the smell of our horse and the surrounding breeze, listening to the bird, and realizing we can embrace this moment as an opportunity to practice peace. Mindfulness of breath and peace will release you and your horse toward relaxation and harmony.

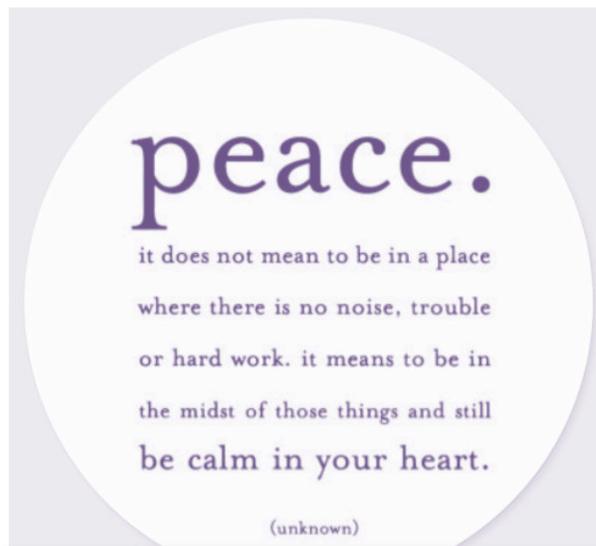


The first thing to consider is how to start a NEW NORMAL. Make a new routine TODAY. During a phase of life that is stressful, add in a stop interrupt.

- A sticky note at your grooming box to remind you to breath and smile
- Hang a picture in the tack room that reminds you of a happy place and time
- A spot in the barn designated where you breathe and stretch prior to getting your horse
- A friend you call that calms you down and makes you laugh on the way to the barn
- Music that makes you SMILE and sing out loud

Mindfulness is good place to start a new normal.

Ask yourself, "How can I adapt, interrupt negativity and set aside a positive emotional response to give my horse the time and energy that he requires for relaxation?" You are the human. You lead the dance. Take a breath, breathe in the flower, blow out the candle and plan steps toward a new routine that keeps the world from stealing your quality time with your horse.



An easy way to start a NEW NORMAL is to bring yourself into mindfulness. Breathe. Take the time it takes. HARMONY starts with getting in tune. Tune into your horse's needs, what's he trying to tell you, and how he feels. Listen. Mindfulness initiated with breathing becomes a self-check and preparation toward peace.

To make music and lead in harmony, the conductor sets the rhythm and tone. Sing your new normal, today.

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