

Horsemanship, A Look In The Mirror

Look in the mirror. That's where it's all at. Know that what you see is what you get and what you get is fantastic.

When it comes to playing with horses, and really about anything else I can think of, we are really working with ourselves. Any trouble we may be having as we work with our horses is something to be excited about because it's an opportunity to learn. Where we struggle is where we grow, stretch, and become more. Too often it seems that people look at struggle or being uncomfortable as a bad thing. It is actually a good thing, something to maybe be grateful for. The only way to never have troubles or stress is to be dead. Learning is an ongoing series of feelings. You know when you're trying to accomplish something with your horse and it's difficult you're in a major learning curve, yippee!!! You're progressing and moving forward. We can choose to be excited and fascinated or frustrated, mad, and sad.

Horsemanship is a process of discoveries and having a program can help you read a horse and develop the skills like feel and timing. I often ask people, "What are the two things that horses love more than anything in the world?" You can't buy them. You're not born with them. Nobody can give them to you. But you can develop them. Those two things are feel and timing. You have to work at it but it can be very fun, fulfilling and rewarding if you view it that way.

We don't know what we don't know which is just fine. There is no way to know until we get some guidance from someone or stumble across it on our own. Then we know but there will still be a lot of other things we don't know.

Once we discover something we don't know then you can start the process of trying to be able to actually do it. I have people that really would like some help with the horsemanship skills but are so worried that someone might see them learning so they never get the help that they so badly want. Other people do show up but say things like, "I can't," or, "This doesn't't work and that doesn't't work," or "I'm totally messing up everything," meanwhile I just watched them do the exact thing they think they can't do. Other times the person is so close to getting a major breakthrough but won't stick with it. They might be two tries away or 1 minute from getting something accomplished but they give up just before it happens. Then they start again and give up again just before it happens. They might spend hours or weeks doing the same thing but stopping 30 seconds too early. If we haven't accomplished some of these things often, we don't know that many are just right there – a breath away. If we are learning, we might not know that we just got something amazing because we are looking for something else.

I like to tease folks when they say, “I can’t go to a clinic because I don’t like people watching me.” I tease them and ask them why they think they are so important that everyone came to watch them.

Other folks say, “I can’t do anything right.” That’s obviously not true so why even say it? It only causes your brain to try and prove you right and look for reasons to backup what you said. Even if that was true, which it is not, then fantastic: you’ve got lots of things to learn and just think how amazing your world will be as you start doing things right. I’ve started over 2000 colts and I’m still learning. That’s why I’m so passionate about what I do because thanks to the horse I get to always discover more ways to improve and grow. “Learning” is moving forward, being progressive, and strengthening the mind and body, which is something to be admired. Our horses are thrilled when we go out and learn and improve our skills because they benefit from it. We need to always remind ourselves that the only way to not make any mistakes is to not do anything. The more forward and progressive you are, the more you might stumble.

Support yourself in your learning with positive thoughts and comments. Know that hiding from or staying away from difficulties doesn’t make them go away. The more we learn, the more exhilarating it becomes and our horses become. All of a sudden there are great horses everywhere. Be your own best and have fun doing it.

Glenn Stewart

What is your dream with horse? Whatever your dream may be, if you have the horsemanship, you can live the dream. It’s just that simple. Join us The Horse Ranch this summer and live the dream! Now accepting bookings for the summer horsemanship camps and High and Wild Adventure. Glenn offering year round educational horsemanship programs at his facility near Fort Saint John, BC and is available to travel and conduct clinics. Long-term study and professional programs are now available. For more information visit www.thehorseranch.com.