



There is a better way

An unstarted horse is like a blank canvas waiting to be transformed into something more. The human's quest is for a better relationship and clearer communication between themselves and their horse in a kind and natural way. Like any creative endeavour, the process is accumulatively progressive; it involves a clear vision, patience, self-discipline and an ability to work through any number of unforeseen obstacles with an open mind.

This is my philosophy with horse education and I believe that horses and people are never too old to learn new ways or change old habits.

My Philosophy

An un-started or un-educated horse is like a blank canvas waiting to be transformed into something more. The human's quest is for a better relationship and clearer communication between themselves and their horse in a kind and natural way. Like any creative endeavour, the process involves a clear vision, patience, self-discipline and an ability to work through any number of unforeseen obstacles with an open mind.

There are as many opinions about horse training as there are horse trainers. Any body and every body who comes in contact with a horse is a horse trainer, whether you think you are or not. The reason for this is we are influencing horses every minute of every day that we are around them. This comes in the form of our body language and physical contact. Believe it or not, all training methods work! The catch is - on some horses.

The good news is, contrary to common belief, there are some methods that will work on **ALL** horses. Fortunately, horses and humans are never too old to learn new ways or change bad habits. My concern isn't about what the horse has done before or what possible negative experiences the horse may have had in the past. The horse's past is helpful in developing a lesson plan but from the day we meet, I deal with today only. We can't change the fact that someone has mistreated the horse or that someone has trained it badly, so it's pointless spending time dwelling on it. The problem is **NOW**. Sometimes we get so caught up in the cause of the

problem that we lose focus on what we can do to change the horse for the better, **TODAY.**

"Keep a molehill, a molehill. This too shall pass, look for a solution."

The horse is a very adaptable animal, more so than a human, and quite capable of changing its behavioural patterns once given the opportunity to make it's own decisions. Horses by nature will always look for the easy way out of an uncomfortable situation. So by releasing the pressure when the horse offers the desired response and allowing the horse to relax and think about what has just taken place, this is how we are able to educate and establish desirable behavioural patterns with the horse.

The great trainers from all disciplines believe that no horse is either vicious or beyond being educated. Educating horses is a cumulative journey, each step will build on the information presented in previous lessons. I believe patience, knowledge and forgiveness are the only traits we need to educate a horse. **Patience** that our horses give us in all the mistakes we make and most of the time we don't even know we are making one. Normally, when we run out of **Knowledge** we generally run out of patience and **Forgiveness** in the horse is the very quality that allows us to ride them, change their past, or even shape a bright future.

Horsemanship to me is about keeping an open mind to the information presented, the situations we're placed in, the teaching styles available and the different types of horses I come across every day. I would like to acknowledge the great horseman and horsewomen who have influenced me over the years from all around the world.

Remember:

***"I know no more than you do about horses and horse training,
I just know different things." J. Lyons***

What do I do?

Starting young horses

My methods of educating a horse is so effective because I educated the horse's mind in a kind and progressive way, so the horse ultimately has a clear understanding of life in a human's world. The benefits to you and your horse is a life long relationship through an open channel of communication developed from day one. That's all that any horse or human is looking for.

Thoroughbred Racing

There's nothing more exciting than going to the races and being drawn into the hype and adrenaline of Thoroughbred Racing. I have extensive knowledge and experience within the industry having worked in studs and now in business for myself. When I start or pre-train a race horse they learn to be a horse first before they learn to be a race horse. They are shown how to trail ride on a loose rein

amongst cows, stand still to be shod or saddled and you will even be able to steer them.

Horsemanship Clinics

Horsemanship skills are only part of the overall package. To be successful at any level with horses it takes more than loving these amazing animals. It's a journey of personal development, vision and goal setting that will challenge every emotion possible. My programs are a step by step accumulative journey where you and your horse will gain confidence in the process of trying new things with your horse.

Competition conditioning

If you're someone with competition aspirations, my educational process can enhance specific areas of your horse's performance. There's nothing worse than riding a horse with a hollow back. Muscles like brachiocephalic, latissimus dorsi, cervical trapezius and splenius are all major carriage muscles. Some times when a horse is having trouble with a movement, it can be physical. Developing the right muscles across their top line is so important for the horse to move forward confidently, thus promoting natural self carriage and improving your competition aspirations.

Foals, yearlings and halter training *"You ride the horse you lead".*

90% of your success in the long term with your horse comes through foaling down, handling through the yearling year and then halter training. I encourage 5-10 sessions after they are weaned to develop a forward attitude that's going to benefit you both in the long term. Your horse won't know what it's like to pull or brace because I will never ever pull on your horse, I will drive them from the hind quarters. The benefits to you can be lightness on the end of the lead rope, patience at standing still when you groom them, easily being able to pick up their feet and the most stressful situation of all for some people, float loading. These are all life long exercises you don't want to have to be teaching every day! So spend the time with your horse when it counts.

Challenging horses

Everybody at some stage of their horse owning career comes across a challenging horse or situation. This is a **GOOD** thing. They have come to us to teach us something, and we must view this as an opportunity to better ourselves not show the horse who's the boss. Think deeply at what the horse is trying to tell us **NOW**, and what we can do to help them for the better today. Challenges such as float loading, scary objects, mouthing issues, rearing, bolting, pulling and so on, are all issues you can and will overcome through positive re-enforcement, patience and knowledge.

Staff education

Time is money! Up skilling your work force is a never ending process if you want to stay ahead of your competitors. Highly trained staff members mean greater productivity and happier horses. Government departments such as local laws officers, thoroughbred industry and the mounted police have improved their

operations through my step by step program which is delivered in a written manual format and DVD presentation for your staff to refer back to at their convenience.

Equipment

Equipment can be bought from many outlets at different prices. The equipment I make and sell is important and are seen as professional educational tools. Each piece has a specific purpose to make you and your horse's life easier. Not to mention it's supporting Australia's future. Ask Jason about the range of halters, lead ropes and reins available or **visit: www.equineonline.com.au**

Challenging Horses

Everybody at some stage of their horse owning career comes across a challenging horse or situation. This is a **GOOD** thing. They have come to us to teach us something, and we must view this as an opportunity to better ourselves not show the horse who's the boss. Think deeply at what the horse is trying to tell us **NOW**, and what we can do to help them for the better today. Challenges such as float loading, scary objects, mouthing issues, rearing, bolting, pulling and so on, are all issues you can and will overcome through positive re-enforcement, patience and knowledge.

The most valuable characteristic that the horse can offer us in terms of education, is the ability to forgive us. The horse will recognize when our behaviour changes and will adapt to it on a daily basis. These characteristics in the horse enable us to make mistakes in our learning journey, but lucky for us, the horse doesn't hold a grudge. We've all heard of horses with head shy issues and not being able to get a halter on them or specific fears like spookiness. If we were aware of it, we have a responsibility to help them over it. These issues for us all have lasting effects on us mentally, emotionally and physically. They don't just get over these issues over night and we shouldn't think for a moment that the horse has forgotten about those experiences either.

The horse is adapting to new conditions the owner or trainer is presenting to them on a daily basis. As the conditions become more consistent, the horse doesn't hold the past against us even if they were in an uneducated environment. If the owner or trainer can change their habits and way of thinking, the horse can move on and not be held in the past. If we reflect a little more and listen to the signals our horses are giving us, shaping their future will become a rewarding experience.

Catching, loading, pulling back, bucking, lack of respect, nervousness, rearing, drenching, clipping, bolting are all common issues for some people. No matter what stage, breed, sex, age or history of your horse, measurable success in a reasonable time frame is achievable if your committed to working through the issue together.

Remember, "Don't hold your horse in the past, because the past does not equal the future."

Horsemanship and what it means to me.

Horsemanship was born out of a desire to help humans to communicate with horses. There's no science degree attached to the skills needed to become good with horses and I would go as far to say it's not a Olympic discipline but it's a foundation discipline. Today's horsemanship is about reinterpreting knowledge that's been around for centuries and adapting it to modern day circumstances and eventually using it at your chosen discipline.

Being able to interpret horse's actions and reactions enables us to understand how the horse behaves. It's essential to bear in mind that everything a horse does is dictated by its nature. It is untrue and unfair to say that a horse acts against its rider, its simply acting according to its nature when it has not understood what is being asked from its human.

The horse has evolved over millions of years simply through the ability to defend itself against yesterday year predators like the lion and tiger. Today's predator, the human, is trying to develop a partnership which isn't a natural one to the horse, and therefore the communication between horse and human needs to be presented in a way in which the horse understands, and it makes sense to them. Once this understanding has been developed (set of guiding principals), anything can be achieved with your horse.

"You create your own universe as you go along." W. Churchill

Performance Training

Performance training to me has two meanings. We all ultimately want our horse's to perform to their highest level for their ability at the stage of their training and development. Most of us are focused on the end goal of performing an exercise, race or test that's going to help us achieve our goals, such as a dressage test.

I first like to think of encouraging the horse to **"perform"** in incremental steps, such as moving off to the right of the round yard. Getting the horse to move off is the performance part of the exercise. When the horse is capable of doing this in a calm and relaxed manner I will ask the horse to **"perform"** the next step. When the horse can combine a series of steps in a logical sequence you can then say their performance is being trained.

You can contact Jason McInnes at:

Avalon Reign Stud and Training Centre.

659 Yarck Road, Yarck, Victoria 3719

Tel: (03) 5773 4236

Email: Jason@jasonmcinnes.com.au

www.jasonmcinnes.com.au

For Jason's personalised training equipment visit:

www.equineonline.com.au