

Re-Awaken Your Horse Q&A

October 19, 2022

	Questions	Panelist Answers
1	Do you think there are horses that are unable to come back from being shutdown?	I would imagine that could be possible, but I believe every horse can be reached in some way.
2	Horse in natural bridle does everything but needs to be encouraged to keep going How do you get them more forward we do lots of different types Riding trails cantering over poles dressage and drill as he does anticipate if you do the same thing	“Keep Going” is a challenge for some horses... Remember that it is considered an “extension” (go longer, farther, etc) so we need to make sure we use very small approximations. One step more, two steps etc. And remember also that straight lines are more conducive to go than turns and circles. So pay big for each improvement, and pay attention to the smallest improvement.
3	what are the main factors to consider when teaching a young horse vs an adult horse?	People always say don't overdo it with youngsters. I personally have found that the young horses are super-learners - and you are more likely to drill or overdo with adult horses.
4	I think my real focus is on helping the horse be willing to have a stranger touch them rather than the actual procedure itself.	Hi Pam! Dr. Jenifer has a whole program of “simulated vets” for her animals. Counter conditioning just coming into the area, perhaps holding a fake X-Ray device, etc. You can do this too. I have pictures of me playing the “vet” at her place.
5	My 20 year old Parelli-trained mare is able to do so many wonderful things - but taking an oral syringe is not one of them. I've tried molasses, applesauce, clicker training, approach and rereat. She'll accept the molasses and applesauce, but after all these years, refuses the real medicine. How would Jennifer approach this?	Hi Carol! I did some of this for a teaching program. What I discovered is massive amounts of applesauce, for just a single dewormer, and then right back to the good stuff - really helps. Also what Jen just said about “learned optimism” - letting them back away to be negatively reinforced - let's them feel less forced. Also, I rub the tube all over the horse, not just heading for the mouth.
6	Speaking of voluntary handling - would you always use a specific target/clue object for each particular handling - or could it be okay to include a few behaviors within the same session and with the same target/clue?E. g. vet needs to check several things - would you use for instance a nose target and adding words, or?	Hi CB! What they are saying now is related. It's good to name each body part, or activity you are about to do.

7	<p>Hello! I have a parelli L4 and academical dressage background. I have always used a cookie on top, but the last year, I have been diving into R+ more in the mustang maddy HCA academy. It has made me understand a lot more about how to use R+ and my horse is loving it, but I am getting a little insecure in my academic work and usual groundwork and liberty work, for which I do use R- (though I try to pay a lot of attention to thresholds and usually stay on a low phase, i am starting to question everything). Do you have any advice for people who already have a lot to build on without having to stop everything and radically restart? Or does combining them always set you up for poisoned cues?</p>	<p>f you have great stuff to build on, by all means you can add +R and create new and better relationships. If the horse is already shut down, then backing off the R- for a while would be indicated. But I don't think that's the case here. The concept of the poisoned cue, in my opinion, is a false one. Dr. Jenifer has told me that it is a zero sum game... the more you add R+ the more it removes any drawbacks of prior techniques</p>
8	<p>A few thoughts on arousal/ frustrations levels and building resilience?</p>	<p>Many, many, many tiny approximations. Take the step you were thinking of and break it down into 10 steps.</p>
9	<p>I have a Quarter horse who is 8 years. I have had him for a year. Will go on trails fine but does not like the arena. We have worked on groundwork for a year and now starting to ride but would love ideas on how to continue the fun but from the horse back. I am dog behavior consultant so well versed in science but trying to figutre out what would be the next step from the horesback. I have been riding from mat to mat with reinforcement and transferred the reveres roundpen with asking for cues, short sessions, ending on a good note...but I think he hated the riding in arena and when we started with him refusing to move so I am very cautious not to mess this up. Looking for fun exercise ideas.</p>	<p>Try opening the gates to the arena. Ride outside using all your R+ concepts, and occasionally ride through the arena out the other side. Over time more approximations of time in the arena compared to outside.</p>
10	<p>what is the name of the book david mentioned?</p>	<p>Dessa Hockley's book: Is Your Horse A Rockstar?</p>
11	<p>I have a rescue Standardbred registered name Cowboywithattitude. He was very shut down, but loved to play with his parelli ball. He loves to do things at liberty but is too forward. He wants to be too mouthy, but in a playful way, and he is very obsessed with human feet. I would like to get him to leave my clothes and feet alone, but I don't want to reverse the positive relationship we are developing. Do you have any tips?</p>	<p>Jenifer has this concept of "calm default" behavior before food is delivered. Can be taught in protected contact. So there's no value in mugging, tugging at clothes etc. If you contact me I can point you to some videos on that topic.</p>

12	<p>Sorry, I hit send by mistake. My question is about socialization. I had an upper level jumper who was very shutdown at times, explosive other times. I managed to bring him out of his shutdown and establish a strong connection with him (through Parelli program). However, this turned out not to be the best approach as he became quite interactive, but I was boarding him. I eventually lost him to a barn accident. I decided that I will not board horses anymore, as I cannot allow them to be who they are and be safe around people who cannot read their cues. So I am planning to have horses at home, but I will be restricted to 2 at most 3 horses. I am also planning to add a couple of donkeys. Is a small herd of a couple of horses enough to fulfill their socialization needs?</p>	<p>Absolutely!!</p>
13	<p>Have any of you had experience with a horse who was as a foal imprinted wrongly to fear humans? How would you help the horse reverse this?</p>	<p>This is the example of structured desensitization... helping the horse by small approximations find that the humans are not bad. Approach and retreat and lots of counter-conditioning. And then taking it further to where the humans are in fact great.</p>
14	<p>How to work with a horse that shuts down when being bridled (now Im using "permission game" which helped and introduced bitless birdle since I think the bit is the main problem) and is resistant to having energy under saddle. It is a better when lounged or at liberty but still a very strong habit of shutting down (resistant, lack of energy, tense, not wanting to be forward). We have a good connection on the ground, practicing liberty, going on walks, spending time mostly in different ways and in this spaces I feel connected and in good relationship but Im just unable to motivate him under saddle and in movement. Trying to keep sessions short, reward any willingness he shows me, but having almost no change. Any advice how to get through what seems like a lifelong habit of resisting movement under saddle? I would appreciate your help. He was checked by a vet many times, is under care of physiotherapist - both didnt find health issue. I am almost sure its mind-motivation problem. Thank you.</p>	<p>I like to help the horse by selecting straight lines - not turns or circles - and to establish a pattern on the ground, such as run over to that barrel from the corner, and get a cookie there. You can start 3 feet from the barrel and build up to all the way across. Once the pattern is established, then try the same thing riding. An Intermediate Bridge (IB) - which is a cheerleading, exciting continuous bridging - helps to inform the horse he's on the right track ("You're getting warmer, hotter... hot!")</p>
15	<p>I have two mares as my "herd." Is that enough?</p>	<p>I believe so. Pair-bonding is a thing, and should be quite satisfying.</p>
16	<p>Hi! Thank you for having this discussion. Any exercises/ activities that can help me keep the right mindset with relatively unresponsive/shut-down horses? Especially when spending time/riding those horses, the mindset that I was originally taught ("they have to do what we want") gets triggered, and I feel like I'm thrown back into that old mindset and corresponding behavior. Very challenging!</p>	<p>Jenifer often says to be joyful and amazed at how good they are, how great their effort is. Just a sense of Joy & Amazement about them overall.</p>

17	Sharon what were you holding in your left hand in the stall in the beginning of the video?	It was a target. But he was too scared, so I didn't offer it.
18	With these “personality books” like Dessa Hockley’s book, is it normal for horses to change their personality type (energy, curiosity) after reawakening work?	Innate tendencies will remain, but they will take on other characteristics as we progress through the relationship building.
19	Hello Dr. Jenifer, I joined your program after the last webinar we had and I love it. Would you please explain a bit more about the additional cue we should train ahead of the bridge since the bridge ceases the behaviour abruptly?	I think I can speak for her... what’s needed is a “Keep Going Signal” (KGS) - so useful in helping the horse know she is on the right track, but not quite done yet. Getting extensions (more, longer, farther) is always tough, so don’t ask for much - one extra step, for example. Once she understands the concept, you can apply it to behaviors that are tougher to extend. Start with something easy and work towards more challenging. The KGS sounds more continuous, where the Bridge is distinct and abrupt. Steady tone... can be “yeesss, yeesss...” or “goood, goood, goood”
20	With geldings, does dropping relate to shut down and if so how?	In my experience it's not shut down - more likely over-arousal (excited about food), and most likely frustration. In my experience.