

*Lendon's goal for the horse is #1 Basic Obedience (one aid = for = one response)*

EXPECT horse to answer when you ask him a request/question \*\* 1<sup>st</sup> YOU must know what you are asking for\*\*

This making you and your listening horse partners

- Allow your horse to carry request out
- Just DO NOTHING until you are **ready** to ask your horse a question/request

Be precise with your request/question "SHUT UP" rather than chatter at your horse.

Elastic contact means being a part of the horse. **Give** to contact rather than *throwing away* contact.

In the canter – the arms give \*\*not your back\*\*

Relaxation isn't dull or sleepy.

Walk – at all times help him with excellence – to walk like an athlete.

Riders work on 20 meter circles TOO MUCH! Circles encourage crookedness. Trainers use circles as a crutch. They are a TOOL and useful for training youngsters.

An outside rein doesn't mean a locked rein – holding your horse up...he MUST carry himself.

*Dressage – taking any horse and making him better.*

Dressage is total control of his whole body – *ADJUSTABILITY*.....ask him to be bent, crooked, straight, up, down – ask him to be **ADJUSTABLE**.

- Play the neck a lot with a tight horse. Practice long & short = allow to the ends of your arms as for the length of a nice deep breath then back. Practice neck bend right/left for only one stride – the horse should answer with a quick "I'm with you Mom!" (*When giving a "bending" rein aid **raise** the hand UP to riders HIP not down to the saddle*)
- Play the bit to soften the jaw – do this by moving the bit sideways **not** backwards and **never** down.

A BAD horse habit – anticipating at the picking up of the reins. It doesn't mean "we go somewhere" it is simply picking up the rein!

On the bit really = on the aids.

To clear walk to trot confusion – aids for big walk = alternating legs. Aids for trot = both legs

Suppling exercise – leg yield left a few strides then slow straight a couple then leg yield right a few.

Half-go = half-halt. Observers will see a change in motion/activity. It is a **re-tuning** or a "YO-wake-up!" or a "GET-OFF my hand." The 'secret' is in the release/give. Quick half-halt = quick release. ALLOW horse to move out to go someplace.

Rein – your reins are there to make the NEXT stride different. "Drop him" release more often will keep horse honest – let the horse be – LET him move.

Pressure – you pull, horse is heavy – you release – horse is light!

*\*Do everything you can to set yourself up to be successful\**

Cantering after a complete work out and cantering will be tired and of poor quality/difficult. Raise the equality/ percentage of gaits ridden – the walk, trot, canter.

Don't settle for less than a power walk. Power ride your horse!

Horses learn what you have them practice.

Take up a jumping position A LOT – it will help establish correct rider position.

Exercise for horses on forehand in canter – do canter to trot to walk (one stride) to trot to canter.

Fitness - Power training – transitions make a horse fitter & cavaletti not to exceed 12 inches high – encourage horse to step up. ***The #1 & #5 horses on the Olympic selection are at Lendon's barn and they do cavaletti for fitness everyday!***

Re-approaching a “spooky area” – give him something positive to do...like a simple walk/trot transition in that area.

Pirouette – start small stride & go forward to bigger stride...you can always adjust the smaller. If you start too big, you can't adjust it.

*Edee's Notes – BIG W.B. double bridle*

Trot-walk-trot at “spooky place” in arena one/two steps walk. Horse anticipating listening to rider – instead of thinking about “spook”. Rider blocking flying changes by not following oscillations of the head & neck in the canter – Blocking hands are part of a stiff elbow – stiff hocks – only a symptom of fearfulness in the rider/frustrations./in the relationship/dysfunctional relationship – can be cured by constructive work – but the rider must let go to “past programming” that does not allow for new information.

Lendon says shoulder-in 1<sup>st</sup> then ½ pas to straight ahead. ½ pas to left – turned into leg yield right – turn into ½ pass left again – in ½ pass if horse make you feel like you need in-direct rein, then leg yield to repair the loss of balance.

Learn to control each individual step – walk pirouettes, very slow – even, balanced steps – walk straight and around – intermittently – straight & around – balancing the walk pirouette.

Lendon has 5 – 6 Spanish/Portuguese horses in her barn. She is impressed with them – Courtney King rides them with her – no nagging with leg – no heels up KEEP HEELS DOWN – knees down.

Working with young horse – lovely *soft* working trot – not holding mouth too ridged – breathing the lengthening of the reins – ***with young horses every single MOMENT is setting up a habit that will stay with them the rest of their lives*** – be SO aware of what habits you are pitting into the horse – be sure when you pick up the reins that horse does not trot – just keep walking – make sure when you teach your horse something you test them again to be sure they learned it. If you did something that required a “punishment” be sure you do it again soon and correctly so you can “praise” them for doing it correctly.

Touch your thumbs together quite often to be sure you use your hands as one unit – and NOT sawing or have one hand more dominant – but if horse hangs on bit – bracy – then a tiny shuttle/ quick left right/ motion to make bit more interesting. When you feel horse is “good” give hands forward a millimeter.

Cavaletti & trails GOOD on young horse's minds. Just nice soft riding for young horses. Transitions – mostly trot – not strong enough for a lot of canter work.

WE are the ones that teach horses to resist. We ASK for stuff they are not ready/properly prepared for. When horses are resistant – WE have to ask ourselves “why?!?” If we set them up for success then we will have success!! WE need to find the way to make them feel like a success – QUIT while we are ahead – do not ask for more, *more*, MORE when they are tired or they do not understand.

### *Heads up – heels & knees down*

When asking a question/request – for a movement – simply make sure it is rideable otherwise, don't do it until the horse is rideable.

Rather than telling a horse “don't do it” (whatever “it” is...i.e. too fast trot) tell them what to do i.e. “whoa!”.

Downward transitions – expect accuracy as you do in upward transitions i.e. too many strides accepted between trot to walk transitions.

Look around where you are going “it's much more interesting ☺”

Tense canter will make trot tense and vice/versa.

“No body backs their horse up enough” says Lendon.

Eyes up, heels down, soft feel, touch thumbs together.

Contact is simply connection – not a request/question for the horse. That you can simply be a part of the horse's mouth. Tense/tight contact/muscles can feel like taking/resistance to the horse. Release muscle tension by softening those ridged muscles. Open your hand when your arms feel tense.

*Trot – “if it's too comfortable – it's too slow!”*

*Dressage = developing the ability to communicate with horses.*

If you feel you can't step on your stirrups – they are too long.

Rooting/bracing horse – over bend the neck (a stride) to the inside during downward transitions to encourage neck lengthening/relaxation

To teach clarity:

- Very posting & sitting (sitting doesn't mean get ready to canter)
- Picking up the reins means nothing – horse doesn't anticipate or do anything. Practice this.

Basic obedience = the horse must answer when you ask a question/request.

It's key to find the most effective way to explain your question/request of the horse so that the horse understands.

“Give” doesn't mean drop.

- Give hands or follow with your arms towards horse's mouth not his ears.
- Your elbows give just as much as your hands...they move!

**Everything we do must make the next four (4) strides better!**

*The horse should be sparkling in it's movement & presence*

A correct trot is a “ready for it” trot – whatever “it” is - i.e. canter.

Work a horse a little then let him stretch.

Play the bit side to side before taking.

Ask for canter when giving and horse's head is down - isn't bracing.

The more you use your back in downward transitions & shortening strides...the more you save your hands for suppling horse.

Be "supple- clever" – think what you will need to do pirouette & work towards that GOAL – the haunches will need to be strengthened & able to bare weight. Be "supple - clever" so that your horse doesn't "lean" on you and come onto the forehand "supple – clever" means you convince the horse to carry himself because your supple feel doesn't BLOCK HIM with stiff grabby hands...introduce the advanced movements in a "babied-down" version so the your horse enjoys the input without feeling over challenged.

Lendon enjoyed repairing "flying changes" – she says "it's the only thing a rider can't train a little of – it either is or it isn't". Walk/canters are the only movement that is near the flying change – timing of the aids for the flying change is counter-intuitive (against your instinct). Changes after the count of three (3) – you need someone who knows how to have the timing it initiate the change BEHIND – a clean change is not always smooth – it has a jump...it can have a buck – late changes can be smooth, but with a clean change "Good Boy" a late change "Bad Boy".

Horse need to be PERFECT in canter – upwards/jumping into them – split second – in order to be able to have the ability to learn to do flying changes. Walk canters with haunches loading – straight – lightness – riders need timing & lightness...NOT blocking horses range of motion. Timing phase of the stride. Riders need to know exactly the moment to ask for change. Again – set the horse up for success – do it right the first time and horse learns correctly – **no problems** ☺

Lendon Gray Clinic 4-26-08

Ride the neck out in front of you – downward & upwards transitions need to be equal – quick responses = quick rewards. Ride corrections so the next few strides are better. Let the neck out and take it back up – small stretches – shorten stride with out shortening the neck. No tension. Long neck – short stride. As an exercise, play with reins – play with tongue. Horses can't be stuck – try up, down, sideways, suppleness, trust, communication, cooperation, horses need TOTAL BODY balance. Thrust of haunches needed for "medium".

- Remembers if it's nice & smooth – you're probably *too slow*!
- Medium trot on a short side is a good test a medium trot **should be available at all times!** Coiled spring ready to POUNCE! Hind legs need to dick in and push with power.
- Not use leg and hand at the same moments – too much!

Danger of stretching down too much is horses get on forehand.

Top horses are electric – they are hot!

Fun idea – "hairy" horse show – "freestyle" invent your own test & ride what you want....but good to perform – good to make a plan – good to prepare.

Always – each gait has to ability to do a transition within it – each walk can have a trot or canter in it. The trot can have a walk or a canter in it – the canter has a trot or a walk in it. SO you can make the transitions whenever you want!