

Natural HORSE

M A G A Z I N E

WHEN HOOVES GO BAD,

LOOK UP!

WHOLISTIC REHABILITATION

Shiatsu:

HEALING from HEAD TO TOE

**HOOBOOT FIT,
NOT FITS!**

RELOCATING?

Help your horse
(and yourself!) with

essential oils

**HOLIDAY
GIFT
GUIDE
INSIDE**



REGAINING YOUR CONFIDENCE AFTER A RIDING ACCIDENT

by Anke Johnson

For most of us, the physical healing of a post-traumatic accident is the easy part; it's the mental and emotional healing that many times leaves us wanting. Fear can linger and interfere with our confidence when back in the saddle.

When we ride with fear, our physical and mental bodies are very much different from those of the relaxed rider. The relaxed rider is consistent, soft, balanced, breathing rhythmically, and supple – able to move with the horse as one unit, providing leadership so that the horse can look to us for guidance. The fearful rider has tense muscles, stiff joints, and is perched, rather than balanced, on the horse. If the fearful rider is breathing at all, she's ahead of the game – most of the time we hold our breath, waiting for the inevitable to happen. When we hold our breath, our very sensitive horses feel this and also become hyper alert to the prospect of danger; they become more reactive and are more apt to spook. So now we have a vicious cycle of fearful rider, fearful horse, rider riding fearful horse and becoming more fearful...you get the idea!

Breaking the Cycle

To break this cycle, it's paramount that your horse can depend on you to be his leader in, and out of, the saddle. This means that there are several things that YOU can do to help yourself and, consequently, your equine partner. Coming back from an accident

doesn't need to be difficult; in fact, it can be part of a journey that helps you to grow inwardly. And the more you grow the more tools and skills you'll have to further your passion with your horse activities!

Find your threshold.

Start by finding your own threshold. When do you start to feel that tightening of your stomach, the sweating of your palms, and the fluttering or rapid beat of your heart? When do you hear yourself making up excuses for why you shouldn't be riding? Find this threshold and come back to just south of it. This place will bring you back into your comfort zone. Just like our horses, if we continually push past a threshold, we're not building confidence, we're eroding it. By starting (and staying) within your comfort zone, you're giving yourself permission to trust yourself again and allowing yourself to regain confidence with a mind set up for learning, not for reacting. A calm mind learns (horses using their "left brain") while an anxious mind reacts (horses using their "right brain").

Breathe.

Next, check your breathing. Are you breathing at all when you *think* of riding (notice I didn't say when you *are* riding)? Most of us hold our breath quite often when we ride or are working with

our horses in any capacity. Start by consciously setting yourself up to breathe rhythmically as you walk with your horse on the ground. Maybe a fenced in area will make things even more conducive to your success – make this decision based on your threshold.

Expand your comfort zone.

Now you can start to play “yo-yo” with your comfort zone to expand your learning without eroding your current level of confidence. Go back to your threshold, and then move out of your comfort zone just by one little step. It could look something like this: If your threshold is on the mounting block next to your horse, you may want to do the following. First, make sure your horse’s mind is where it needs to be. This means that he will stand quietly, balanced and waiting for you to mount; it also means that he is not walking off! Place your foot in the stirrup and then take it out again. Do this as many times as it takes for you to start thinking “this is ridiculous! I’m ready to get on!” You’ve now expanded your comfort zone from being “okay” on the mounting block, to “being ready” to mount! All of this was accomplished with a simple comfort zone game. This new threshold is now your new comfort zone – congratulations!

Take small steps.

Continue to challenge yourself by expanding your comfort zone little by little. You might progress from mounting to riding at a walk in an enclosed area. Next, advance from walking on a lunge to walking independently. Now, move from an enclosed area to an open area. Again, use your best judgment; and, most importantly, give yourself the time to allow these small steps to become small successes. By honoring your thresholds, moving forward with what I call Ridiculously Small No-Fail Goals (RiSNG™ to success), you’ll have no other option than to gain confidence!

Learn from the slips.

If you slip back to where you’re feeling your confidence erode, that’s okay! You’re not failing, you’re learning, and it’s all part of the growth process. I like to call a failure a “slip” because that’s all it really is – an opportunity for you to right yourself, be aware of what got you there, and regain your balance to move forward. Learn

Washington Homeopathic Products
Everyday 20% Veterinarian Discount
Remedy Kits
Single Remedies
Books on Animal Health
Ointments
Mention Promo Code NH10 for a 10% Discount
We also carry the full line of EquioPathic Combination Products
www.homeopathyworks.com 800-336-1695

from the experience by being aware of what precipitated the slip in the first place, and what you can do differently to encourage further growth.

Coming back from an accident doesn't need to be difficult; in fact, it can be part of a journey that helps you to grow inwardly.

Reward every success.

Reward yourself as you move forward. We tend not to want to reward ourselves for accomplishments until we’ve accomplished something “big.” By rewarding the small successes, you celebrate your accomplishments frequently and thereby self-motivate yourself into an upward spiral of success that’s unstoppable. Much better!

Overall, by moving forward with RiSNG goals that are honored by your inner self – and celebrating accordingly – you will move to where you wish to be at a speed you may not have thought possible. Most of all, the confidence gained will be long lasting because of the strong foundation that you’ve built. Your horse will be an intricate part of this process, and will gain confidence in you as his passive leader and partner – and that’s exactly what you want to bring the enjoyment back to your riding! ♡



About the author:
As a Certified Health and Life Coach for the equestrian,

published author on topics such as De-Spook You, Wizardry of Change, Weight Loss for Riders, and Building a Foundation for Success, Anke’s contributions to equestrians continue to help them become the best partners for their horses that they can be.
www.naturalsolutionsbyanke.com
608-467-0008, info@naturalsolutionsbyanke.com