

Set Yourself Up For Success

Below is the full un-edited article I wrote for Horsemanship Magazine.



Is success inspirational triumph against the odds or is it achieved by those with rare talent? Are you dreaming of accomplishing horsemanship skills beyond your current capabilities? Sadly many of us live with the illusion that expertise is only for special gifted people and inaccessible to us. This is the first stumbling block to achieving your dreams.

Achievement of your goals can be done with a teaspoon of talent and shed loads of planned and purposeful practice. Top performers learn no faster; however they plan ahead and purposefully practice more to achieve their goals. It is quality of consistent practice that counts as we perfect what we practice most. If you practice a fault you will perfect this, it pays to take advice. Seek out like-minded people and an environment that encourages your chosen field of horsemanship to speed up your development.

You will benefit from learning from an inspirational horsemanship tutor to master technique. However attainment of success cannot just be taught, or handed to someone, as it is a developmental process requiring regular purposeful practice which will deepen knowledge and understanding for both horse and rider. Remind yourself that your personal horsemanship development is a rewarding journey not a destination.

Goal Setting

- Always consider your horse when goal setting and put the relationship first.
- Be flexible and open minded as you may need to alter your plans.
- A planned approach will accelerate your progress.

Ten tips for you to use when creating an action plan:

1. Use only positive language in your plan.
2. State clearly what you want to realistically achieve.
3. List what you need to do to work towards your goal.
4. Be specific with your goal, and break this down into small achievable chunks and concentrate on working on one small step at a time.
5. Write down what you know will be involved in achieving this. (For numbers 4 and 5 if you are not sure a professional can help you identify your goals and what is involved, plus support you).
6. What are the costs? Time, money, beliefs, values etc...
7. Refer to it regularly and use it as a working tool.
8. Review progress and adjust your plan if required.
9. Evaluate and celebrate success.
10. On achieving your goal set a new goal.

Tips for How to Do it and Get What you Want

- Focus on making your horsemanship sessions fun and you will tap into a strong internal motivational tool.
- Be willing to try different approaches, adjust your attitude, think outside the box and adapt. Extend your mind, become curious, and push yourself to learn.
- Refine your skills and constantly nudge your limits of technique. Strive for a goal that is just out of reach with the knowledge and support to bridge the gap. With quality, purposeful, deliberate practice the gap will disappear.
- Step outside your comfort zone and accept progress is sometimes built upon learning from failure. Failure is an opportunity to learn, grow and develop. Perfection can be inspirational however it can also appear to be unattainable.
- Being tutored, acquiring knowledge and feedback will propel you towards your goal. Seek out a support network and tutor / trainer.
- Work on building confidence and self-belief. This is a very powerful emotional tool that will greatly support you in achieving your dreams.
- Commit yourself to your personal challenge. Be persistent, as hard work and determination make a big difference. If you want your dreams to come true, be prepared to push and put in time and effort.
- Watch out for negative inner dialogue and replace with positive inner dialogue and observe the power of your words.
- Learn how to deal effectively with anxiety, nerves etc...by actively practicing and using relaxation.
- Patience is a virtue and you will need this to achieve your goals. This is a skill you can actively practice. Think of the everyday opportunities when you could practice being more patient.
- Surround yourself with sources of inspiration. (People, images, books, videos etc...)
- Take control of your emotions, the journey to your goal will be an emotional rollercoaster with the highs of achievements and lows of negative emotions. These lows can erode your outlook if you allow them. Actively focus on the positives and the total progress made.
- Use your structured plan to define the work you do with your horse for each session.
- Remember the old adage: nothing ventured, nothing gained. Find the courage to take the first step.
- Pursue your passion with optimism and self-discipline.
- Enjoy yourself and have fun.

