

Observing with Integrity

Over the past years different influences, primarily led by the horses, have provided inspiration for aspects of horsemanship that end up effecting who we become as humans. They are simple themes...Developing self-carriage and self-confidence ~ Riding for lightness ~ Reflecting on service and humility. These topics are so indicative of our journey with horses, in that they appear simple, but applying them is not always easy.

This year we have tired to 'Observe with Integrity', and then share what we have noted through 'kitchen table' discussions with clients and like-minded friends. For me personally, 'Observing with Integrity' has taken on many revelations both with the horses and with my human interactions. Here are a few of the observations I recorded during our 2010 clinics and riding experiences:



Balance is so much more than just physics. It is a finding a balance with the horse mentally, emotionally, and in harmony with rhythm, timing, and feel.



Clarity and consistency, applied with patience that gives the horse 'time' to find your picture, will set things up for success.



Mistakes are OK! Especially when you recognize them!



Rather than pushing through the brace, re-direct or interrupt before you create the brace.



Simply remembering to use "Please" and wait for a response to say "Thank You" puts the steps of the 'Horseman's Protocol' into two words. Now to apply it to everything I do!



We should always strive to keep the 'nature' and the 'desire' in the horse, while developing a partner in our lives. Then the jobs we need to accomplish with our horses are effortless!



Mules rule! Work diligently to build on the relationship to allow the horse (the mule!) to follow through with fluidity.



From my friend and fellow aspiring horseman ~ Don Thompson, who looks at life through 70+ years of living: "Observing the horses to gain insight, feel, setting it up clearly so that my intent becomes the horses', and one day, so that I become worthy of them."

It is a never-ending emotional challenge to strengthen and ennoble our character in the service of the horse."

Ethic and Passions of Dressage
by Charles de Kunffy

As with years past, I cannot begin to express my appreciation to all you and your horses, in setting it up for me to 'observe with integrity'. The value of taking time to simply watch with a kind eye and open heart, without judgment, or need to impress, and always with the development of the relationship between horse and rider in mind. Once again I am blessed...by all of you, by your horses (and mules!), by the time you give me, by the place that I live. Thank you for allowing me to:

- ~ Watch with honesty and honor;
- ~ See the truth
- ~ Seek horsemanship with veracity and uprightness
- ~ and to ultimately Observe with Integrity!

What a Year it has Been! 2010 in Review

Small but mighty could easily sum up our clinics in 2010. The winter Horse Courses saw many of our 'ol timers returning for more punishment! With the Monday class focusing on the "basics" applied with relaxation and finesse, I 'observed' a new softness in horse and riders. The Wednesday class continued their "dressage" focus, ending most days with a training level test. My "Simple Thing" for this class...The wisdom of pursuing Classical principles to develop your horse, whether the final job is a dressage test, a day working cows, or hitting the mountain trails.



March Colt Starting

What a great time we all had in observing the progress our horses achieved in the Spring - Colt to Horsemanship class. With three Hispano-Arabs, and one nice big Quarterhorse, we not only saw the differences in age and size, but also breed characteristics. My "Simple Thing"...Take time ~ Smile at the 'nature & natural desire' of the horse ~ Strive to maintain that curiosity, and aspire to never put a brace into the situation... instead redirect!



April Work in Hand

Marvelous goals were achieved during the Work in Hand clinic with folks echoing last year's theme of 'Trust in the Path'. What I saw were ladies truly following a road that they are building, with fluidity, less and less reliance on the reins, and all the while 'listening' to the horse while providing good leadership.



Cow Clinics ~ MOOOcho Fun!

We had so much fun in both our spring and fall Cow Clinics. It was the first time that the weather forced us inside, and somehow indoor cows look different to the horses! Observations include the simple fact that cows help build confidence and build a life-long relationship between horse (or mule!) and rider.



Trail Clinics at Eastern Slope

New toys were discovered by both horses and their riders as we held several weekend clinics on the excellent trail course at Eastern Slope Ranch near Baker City. Combining a format that allowed participants to practice some critical basics in the morning, and then kept everyone busy on the challenges of the trail course in the afternoon, we made sure everyone's goals were met. I observed the great fun that the elements of the trail course presented in the smiles of the humans, and the reality that attitude is contagious...especially when positively applied while riding!



Plan ~ Watch ~ Play in 2011

Susan and I are excited about the plans for new elements to be added to the T&T Horsemanship menu in 2011. Don't panic...we are not making changes in the delicious healthy culinary offerings Susan and Marion cook up! We are talking about some new approaches to clinics both here at the ranch or at away clinic locations that will keep your continuing horse education affordable, accessible, and FUN!

- **Tip for the Ride ~** How about tuning into the T&T Horsemanship blog (www.horsemanshipjourney.blogspot.com) to watch short videos of Alice demonstrating and discussing a variety of issues. Subjects will range from specific exercises such as the 'Look-n-Go' maneuver, demonstrating how to prepare the elements first on the ground, then applied to while under saddle. As always, Alice will present not just the 'How' of the exercise, but also clearly discuss the When, Where, and Why to exposure your horse to a specific maneuver. Simply become a follower of the Horsemanship Journey blog.
- **Build Your Own Clinic ~** Schedules are tough to coordinate, so how about getting your own personal group of horse friends together for a personal and private clinic with Alice? You can totally sculpt the focus and the timeline to fit your goals and desires.
- **Girlfriend Getaway Weekends ~** Gather your girlfriends and join Alice & Susan for a couple of days of horseplay, fun, and more than a few laughs! We may have a specific focus planned for a weekend, such as working with cows, or Doma Vaquera, or Work in Hand, or Dressage...but we can through you and your gal friends right into the mix. Or...choose a topic for your 'Girlfriend Getaway', mix in some free time for shopping & touring in Historic Baker City, and rendezvous back at the ranch the sharing of tales in the evening. Learn a little...

Play a lot!

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Or visit the website for more details:

tnthorsemanship.com