

## **“COOL, CALM, & CONNECTED: CONFIDENCE THROUGH BODY CONTROL”**

### **CLINIC OUTLINE**

- ***Introduction to body control***
  - Learning to control your horse fully in any situation is vital in maintaining confidence and avoiding anxiety and fear.
  - Goals: to gain as much nose to tail control as possible in any situation presented.
  - We need to control every inch of our horse, not just through the bridle but through the shoulder, ribcage and hip.
  - Yielding to pressure is the biggest element in body control.
  
- ***In general, all exercises are taught from the ground first.***
  - Yielding of the jaw: In a rope halter or snaffle bit, stand next to your horse with your arm over the saddle/back of the horse. Apply light pressure, do not pull, until the horse releases its jaw and brings its head around to you. If your horse moves, move with them, do not release the pressure. The horse will yield, depending on the horse it may take quite a bit of time but be patient, do not resort to “tug of war” this needs to be a trained decision not a forced response. Repeat until the horse yields both directions, right away, with no resistance or delay.
  - Hindquarter disengagement: With your horse’s head yielded, place your hand where your leg would be positioned under saddle and apply pressure and cluck until your horse steps its hip away from the pressure. We are looking for the horse to “cross over” in the back by stepping its inside hind in front of and crossing over the outside hind leg. We are looking for the horse to stay soft in the jaw and step away from the pressure quietly, not to brace against or run away from the pressure.
  - Whoa: In general, whoa should mean stop what you are doing and await further instruction, whatever the situation, whatever the mindset, whoa means whoa. If your horse does not respect “whoa” on the ground, do not expect control under saddle. Reinforce the stopping of all movement when the command “Whoa” is given. Do not allow the horse move again until they are asked to. If they do put them back where they were firmly in reverse of how they got there.
  
- ***Repeat all exercises under saddle.***
  - Once all exercises are successfully done on the ground and under saddle, move on to steering and speed control exercises.
  
- ***Steering exercises through cones and poles, degree of difficulty depending on level of horse and rider. Do NOT ride the rail to improve confidence and control!!!***
  - General figure eights, figure eights with halts, figure eights with poles.
  - Squares
  - Zigzag patterns
  - All patterns done at different gaits and speeds, transitions at key places in patterns.

