



Paul Dufresne

TRAINING FOR COURAGE

CLINIC INFORMATION



Paul Dufresne has been working with horses of all breeds for decades. Paul has found that training many a challenging horse has often paled in comparison to the huge job of re-educating horse owners to communicate with their horses in a language the horse understands.

The term, "Training for Courage" was coined by friends of Paul's who observed his methods early on. Paul's approach is to build courage in the horse and the handler in everything they do together – from basic respect exercises, simple to complex riding skills, confidence-building tricks (Circensic Dressage), Spanish reining skills, and even High School. Paul begins at the same place with everyone but where he goes with each participant will vary depending on their abilities, their desires, and what they are each ready to do.

When you want to improve your riding skills, go see a riding instructor. If you need to improve the co-operation between you and your horse, to help him to follow your suggestions safely and to gain the confidence that you are in control, go see someone who trains people to lead horses in the way of the horse.

Safety, Confidence, and Leadership Keys to a Productive Relationship

In order to be an effective handler and rider, Paul feels that it is the responsibility of everyone who owns a horse to understand some basic training principles for their own safety, and the safety of people and other horses around them. Avoiding situations we don't know how to deal with is prudent, but not finding out how to change rude or dangerous behaviour is not.

Letting a horse be a tyrant is not a safe or happy situation. For this reason, Paul does not focus on teaching people to ride, but rather how to



Endotapping for Relaxation

In recent years, Paul has integrated into his training method a new age technique called "Endotapping." This method employs a whip with a foam ball at the end, which is used to tap horses rhythmically, while standing or moving in positive shapes. This tapping causes the release of endorphins in the horse's body, relaxing the horse. A horse who is feeling good is always much more willing to consider a human as his leader.

In order to begin to explain how Endotapping works, it is important to make the distinction between a lead horse and a boss horse, and to explain that as handlers, we must strive always for the lead position. A lead horse needs his follower to be compliant, but allows him time to process instructions and make the right decisions and feel ok about himself in the process. A boss horse imposes his will on the other horse, regardless of how this makes the other horse feel. The Endotapping technique is a tool which can be used to help a horse along in the process of ac-

cepting us as his leader because it makes him feel good.

Paul teaches people how to use some of the horse's natural reflexes, which allow him to relax, and then turn these reflexes into faithful cues which can be used to take the horse to a happy and safe place whenever needed. The more a horse is allowed to feel good about his attempts, the less he will be worried about trying new tasks, even if he may have a natural apprehension of the task. Taking the negative tension out of any situation liberates the horse's natural ability to be athletic by keeping his emotions in a good zone where he can be his intelligent, curious self!

To learn more about these techniques, visit the articles section of the Training for Courage website for a six-part series on Endotapping, which can be found at: <http://www.pkequestrian.com/articles.html>.

have the confidence to ride, by having control of their equine partners in a healthy and productive relationship governed by the rules of natural horse behaviour. Once a rider gains control and understands how to guide their horse in an accepting manner, it is amazing how their seat will change to a more natural and balanced position where they don't hang on the horse, impeding his movement.

There are many instructors who train by teaching people how to ride. Paul believes that before anyone is ready to refine their riding skills, they must first learn to operate with their horse as a team, with the handler leading and teaching the horse, and the horse following calmly and with acceptance. First and foremost, horse owners must learn what is safe. Paul sees his role as an educator of people learning to

work and play with their horses in a positive leadership role while building courage, confidence, compassion, and understanding in both partners. The process is rewarding for both horse and human, and is instrumental in developing more owners who are happy with their horses.

Paul does not try to teach people how to ride until they can lead their horses well enough to know how to be safe. All the riding technique in the world won't save you if your horse is out of control emotionally, physically, socially, or intellectually. When leaders know they are safe they generally relax, and once people can relax, proper seat and balance are much more positively influenced. This is the time to refine riding skills by applying the successful skills learned first on the ground and lending them to a riding format. Everything we do on the ground relates to things we will need in the saddle.

Groundwork

The Foundation of Leadership in Any Discipline

Paul's clinics are based first on developing a good foundation on the ground, and then later, on illustrating how these skills and exercises can be transferred to any discipline. First a horse has to learn to be respectful, then to be obedient, and then later and more significantly, to act responsibly. To do this positively one must temper the learning experience with the knowledge of what makes a horse comfortable, and ensure, above all, to reward even the most minute try in learning a new skill. When a horse feels his handler is fair and kind, with strong leadership, he will usually start to follow their lead co-operatively.

From there, Paul focuses on the need to get the horse responsive in his yields to pressure in all directions with lightness and feel. Participants learn to be able to create a bubble of space



The Security Box

A crucial skill Paul teaches to prospective leaders in his clinics is how to set up a "Security Box." A security box can be stationary, or it can move as needed. The point of the security box is to create a space where the horse is safe from any other outside influences when he complies with his handler's simple requests. Our requests need to be understandable to the horse, and everything else outside the box is our responsibility so the horse doesn't have to worry about anything except staying inside the box. Outside commotions, scary objects, herd dynamics, other hors-

es, etc – none of these things exist for the horse when he is inside the security box. Leaders need to prove to the horse that we can do this for him, and then in return, the horse will be a reliable, safe, and happy follow.

For more information on the Security Box, visit the articles section of the Training for Courage website, which can be found at: www.pkequestrian.com/articles.html.

around their bodies, ensuring their safety. A horse who thinks he can push through you or crowd you like he would another horse is an accident waiting to happen. The horse needs to be a respectful follower, not intruding into his handler's bubble unless invited to do so, and the size of that bubble needs to be changeable in various circumstances.

Paul says often, "The horses don't care what hat or tack you ride in but rather the way they are allowed to be comfortable and secure." The difference in most disciplines is the degree to which a skill is developed and expressed. The start is usually the same, and then the expression, embellishments, and fortitude may change. One of the most common road blocks encountered is that people don't know where to start in gaining respect, where they began to lose it in the first place, or what are the building blocks which lead up to more complex skills. Paul's purpose is to act as a guide – to assist participants where they might need it, but to

adds to our personal flavour, builds confidence and athleticism, and expands the limits of what we can do. Paul's purpose is to teach participants to think of what they could do – not



what they can't. For this reason, he loves to teach children ... or to teach adults to be more youthful!

Guaranteed, participants in a Paul Dufresne clinic will learn to expand safely what they thought were their limits. In

the horse be injured on the journey.

Clinics for All Ages and Skill Levels

Often, people question why Paul includes in his clinics participants

with such a wide range of skills and experience. He embraces these situations, as people with varying levels of knowledge can teach and learn from each other. The novice can see where they might want to go. On the other hand, the novice without negative prior experience often excels with their horse because they are a blank state and can show more experienced horse people how

much can be done if we have an open mind and don't let past experience get in the way.

Experience can be good or bad. Good experience is always of value. Bad experience is only of value if we learn to never repeat it. People come to clinics to be inspired, but also to realize that an exceptional relationship with a horse is for everyone who is willing to pursue the journey. Doing so with the support of like-minded people is a blast! These clinics are about helping you to be the best you can be – so when you are on your own you have enough confidence to enjoy your horse safely and creatively.

If you need more information, please visit trainingforcourage.com, or feel free to email Paul directly at:

paul@trainingforcourage.com.

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allow them to struggle just enough to develop self-sufficiency for when he is no longer there. Everything a rider can do in the saddle begins on the ground.

Creativity & Expanding Your Limits!

Creativity is one of the key components needed to develop a harmonious relationship between a human and a horse. It prevents boredom,

doing so, Paul's primary responsibility is to troubleshoot where owners have not been reading their horse's language appropriately, and may not be aware that the horse is stressed or threatening. At these times, he is there to help by offering suggestions or handling the horse for a few minutes so people can see how to deal with such a situation safely. It is imperative that neither the handler nor