

IN BALANCE

Being a balanced rider is the kindest thing you can do
for your horse. Being balanced also keep you safe
on your horse!

Lizzy



TAIJI HORSEMANSHIP
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www.TaijiHorsemanship.com

OPENING FREESTYLE

USE OF SKILLS

GOALS & BENEFITS

For rider to develop excellent balance.

For rider to learn not to interfere with the horse.

PREREQUISITES

- Lunging and Basic Hobble Exercises
- Quiet horse with slow and/or rhythmic trot that lounges really well
- Handler that has complete control of horse and horses gates on the lounge line, so rider can focus on their riding including much work with hands to the side

Equipment

- Lounge Line
- Lounge Whip

KEY POINT - Athletic Stance

In sportsthere is something called the athletic stance. The athletic stance is can also be applied to horseback riding as well. You want all of your body parts aligned and balanced over each other. Your joints then act as shock absorbers absorbing movement up and down. Maintaining an athletic stance gives you maximum agility in any direction.....like in preparing to return a tennis serve, preparing for an attack in wrestling, balancing over skis to ski a mogul field or preparing to field a ball as a shortstop on a baseball field.

You want to maintain an athletic stance in your saddle irons. By placing the ball of your foot on your iron and pressing down through your heel, having some angulation through your ankle and heel, while keeping a light,soft seat you are maximizing your balance on your horse allowing you to effectively absorb your horse motion. This results in a softer ride, pleasant ride and straightforward ride for your horse.

KEY POINT - Body Angles

Angles throughout our body allow us to soften the ride on our horses!

KEY POINT - Length of Stirrup and Foot Position

Pressing down through your heel helps to keep you balanced on your horse!

KEY POINT - Rider Aids

Some say there are four aids...I say there is five! It is important to understand these use of these riding aids and how it impacts your horse.

- Hands - taking the reins away
- Legs -
- Eyes -
- Seat - with contact but light, with weight distributed down through your leg for balance and safety
- Voice - handler controlling horse

KEY POINT - Everything you do effects your horse

In every movement you make, your horse feels it and responds. Every movement and your behavior and demeanor all communicates something to your horse!

- balance
- energy - diffuse it, create it, direct it, use it
- voice
- mood
- busy or quiet
- soft or fractious
- gentle or rough
- kind or nasty

KEY POINT - Need to learn not to interfere

You need to first learn how not to interfere, before you can become an effective rider

KEY POINT - Balance is important for safety!

Even the best of horses spook. A rider lacking balance will have difficulty dealing with a spook. There lack of balance can actually make the horse spook even worse and can unsaddle that poorly balanced rider resulting in them getting hurt. For this reason we require the riders in our lesson program to be very proficient at these balance exercises before allowing them to ride much off of the lounge line.

KEY POINT - Being balanced is kind to your horse!

Being balanced is one of the kindest things you can do for your horse - Be balanced!!!

REVIEW / SUMMARY OF LOUNGING

Three types of Exercises

- Lounge line balance exercises
- Field riding balance exercises
- Ring work balance exercises

PRESENTATION OF BALANCE EXERCISES

Lounge Line Balance Exercises

Field Riding Balance Exercises

Ring Riding Balance exercises

LOUNGE LINE BALANCE EXERCISES

To begin, rider should stand in irons to find your athletic stance. Rider can use stirrup leather around the horse's neck to assist with this exercise

- Post at the walk
- Post two stride, sit two stride at walk
- Touch toes on same side
- At walk touch right hand to left toe, then left hand to right toe
- Touch chin to neck
- Repeat exercise at trot

FIELD RIDING BALANCE EXERCISES

Incorporate riding in a two point or an athletic stance into trail riding or hill work. This is an excellent way for an advanced or trail rider to improve their balance

RING RIDING BALANCE EXERCISES

Ride the In Tune exercises without stirrups. This is an excellent way for an advanced rider to continue to improve their balance

MOUNT SUITABILITY

TROUBLESHOOTING

SUCCESS CHECKLIST

SUMMARY / CLOSING

NOTES



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