

## Horse (hòrs)

A large hoofed mammal (*Equus caballus*), having a short-haired coat, a long mane, and a long tail, domesticated since ancient times and used for riding and for drawing or carrying loads. \*\* From The Internet Dictionary\*\*

While this is a non-emotional description of Horse, we live in a world full of emotions, and if you have ever shared time with an *Equus caballus*, you are very much aware of the emotions a single Horse can generate within us. It is these emotions WE have to learn to deal with as our Horses "see" and respond to our emotions, sometimes to their own detriment.

This is not to say we should have Mr. Spock-like emotional control, but rather awareness that we do project our hopes, dreams, and fears to our empathic hoofed friends. A prime example of the Horse's empathic abilities is when we go to a new Horse that everyone says is a dream to ride. Being a lowly human and not always comfortable with new experiences, we are a little apprehensive about riding the "unknown". So in walks this dream Horse...and all of a sudden, he is not so dreamy. This causes our apprehensiveness to increase. And now this once calm, dream of a Horse "just get nuts". At this point the owner is wisely postponing your ride on Dream Walker. Unfortunately, most owners will at this point try to discipline the Horse, when all that is needed is an understanding of HORSIENESE (Language of the Horse).

It is my lifelong belief that the best Horse handlers are those very rare humans that can understand their own emotional makeup and how that affects communication with the empathic Horse, and control their own emotions to the point that the Horse only "sees" calm confident leadership. However, the more humans understand they project their unseen emotions on those around us and the animals in our lives, the better we humans can start to understand why animals regard us in the different ways they do.

Being frustrated, angry, threatening, or any other negative aggressive mindset is a prescription for further negative emotions to boil forth, leading to a never ending cycle of time not well spent with our friends, because our Equine friend is nervous or just downright anxious about our "bad mood". At the same time, being TOO happy and excited can cause our hoofed buddies to get overexcited themselves and hard to live with.

What I have seen over the years that seems to communicate best is calm, even-handed, neutral emotions, those that say, "Howdy, glad to see ya. Can we sit



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and talk awhile?" This mental mindset calms our emotions and thus reassures our Horse we may be here to work, but we understand the work is to be shared without blame or anger.

Another thought on this subject: Is it okay to get "mad" at our Horses? Absolutely it's okay, as long as we realize what we are mad at, and understand when we have reached the point of being mad, it is US that needs to walk away - - not the Horse. By the way, it is also very important to understand our Horse friends can and do get mad at us. This is the time THEY need to walk away or at least be left alone without fear of punishment. Just remember Horses "get over it" much faster than we do, and this is what makes them such a good friend!!!!

Next time you're with your Horse try this simple little experiment. I bet you're gonna be surprised. Clear your mind of the day's problems. Look your Horsey in the eye and just say: Thank You. Watch the ears. Your Horse WILL relax. Thank You is a peaceful emotion. You can't resist a smile when you say it. And your Horse can't resist a ..... YOU'RE WELCOME. This simple little thing will show you just how emotionally communicative your Horse is.



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