

THE WHOLE HORSE AND NOTHING BUT THE HORSE

"I consider the whole Horse" What a wonderful approach to equine care, you're hired!....

S t o p!!! Back the wagon up. This is not enough information to be hiring someone to take physical care of your Horse, be they a vet, farrier, dentist, or voodoo witch doctor! I just returned from a seminar (Nov '08) in which an internationally renowned farrier association hosted a "Whole Horse" clinic. There were several farriers from around the U.S. talking about "whole Horse care," yet not one -- not a single one of these farriers -- mentioned the animal and its care above the fetlocks. There were several vets at this clinic, as well, and not surprisingly, not a single vet talked about bone and muscle alignments.

Over the two-day period of this show not one speaker stood up to talk about the interaction of how one professional caregiver can affect the condition another caregiver is responsible for. Yet each and every speaker stood on the stump and claimed "they consider the whole Horse". When I finally couldn't stand it anymore I asked the question *"how often should I check a client's (the Horse) teeth while caring for its feet?"* When the roar of laughter died down, the speaker was aghast that a farrier would ever lower himself to be a dentist, to which I explained I was not a dentist and only possessed a sophomoric knowledge of the Equine oral system. The speaker went on with much self satisfying humor to explain there was not a correlation between the teeth and the shoeing of a Horse. (see article on Teeth)

By the way, this speaker is the president of this farrier association and the leader of this "whole Horse clinic". So I resigned myself to sit still, shut up and just wait for the lunch break so I could stop by the store and buy the nippers I went there for in the first place.

Horse lovers, if you hire a professional to care for your Horse because he or she claims to consider the Whole Horse, it's up to **you** to make sure they do. Ask questions NOT related to their field of expertise. If they can't explain what they are doing and how that will aide in another area of care, chances are they really have no idea of Whole Horse Care.

Let's say you call a new farrier and he claims to consider the whole Horse. You invite him to the barn, he gets out of the truck shakes your hand and heads straight for your Horse. Once they meet (and the Horse accepts him as he is a well-meaning human) he picks up a foot or two and proceeds to explain that your



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Horse needs a "corrective shoeing" to fix the cracks in the side of the hoof. He then explains extraordinary care may be necessary to fix these cracks. You being an above average owner ask this farrier "so these special handmade shoes won't hurt anything else on my Horse?" to which he explains "Lordy no, we need to fix the feet to help every thing else". FOLKS, this farrier, as I have learned, believes he is a whole Horse care giver and he is the furthest thing from that!!!! He's a farrier that is maybe an unwilling participant in an age old practice, of doing "old school" practices while charging "new school" prices. What this farrier is NOT doing is practicing Whole Horse Care.

He may have well been right in saying we have to fix the feet BUT without a complete evaluation -- complete meaning every aspect of your Horse and its environment -- a true and honest Whole Horse Care program cannot exist. Again it's up to **you, the owner**, to speak up for **your** Horse if you can or you can then expect the same never ending issues to plague your Horse. If you do speak up, you will quickly understand this guy may be concerned about your whole Horse but he doesn't understand HOW to affect the Whole Horse.

So now what do you do? Well, you're doing it. You are looking for new answers. You are looking outside the shoe box. You're seeking information that makes sense!

Am I "your man"? Maybe, but you need to ask me questions. And if you don't like my answers then **no**, I am not "your man". Keep looking! Someone is out there who has your answers! Just know this: **YOU**, not anyone else, is responsible for **your** Horse's health, **your** Smokey Joe trust you to learn about him, **your** Smokey Joe has willingly placed his trust in **your** human understanding and he expects **you** to deliver on **your** promise to not only love but to protect him!

I would very much like the opportunity to be "your man" and I really do practice Whole Horse Care. To see this in action, all you need to do is contact me and introduce your Horse to my spirit! As my "Services" page states, my Evaluations are 100% Free!!! Even if you decide to not use my services, maybe my information will **help you** make **your** farrier a better Whole Horse Care Giver!



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