



The Eight Responsibilities of a Partnership

The Four Responsibilities for the HORSE

1. Don't act like a prey animal – a mad one, scared one. Act like a partner.

This means that when your horse is acting that way, you need to help him change his behavior. Don't allow it to go on. Get control, get them to relax. You cannot teach or perform with a horse in this emotional state.

2. Maintain gait

This is the horse's job, not yours. Don't keep pushing him to keep going, and don't hold him back when he's going too much. Allow the horse to make the mistake of breaking gait, and then communicate: *"You should be... trotting/cantering/walking/standing still, etc."*

Use patterns and clear boundaries to teach the horse to be in harmony with you. *"Not that! This."* The horse has to know when he's right and be clear on the goal.

Correct and re-direct with love... not aggression or frustration.

3. Maintain direction

If the horse strays from the direction, put him back. If his nose is going the other way put it right, if his hind end is crooked straighten it, etc. Make brief corrections - with love – and be sure to let the horse know he's right immediately. Do not hold onto the rein or stay strong with your leg, this will only make the horse dull and stop him from thinking and taking responsibility next time. Again, *"Not that, this."*

4. Look where you are going

It is the horse's job to watch out for obstacles in his path and either jump them or avoid them or negotiate them in the appropriate way. Don't do it for him, and don't add pressure right when he's going to do it! This is when he has to concentrate. He does not need us distracting him or making it difficult to concentrate.

The Four Responsibilities for the HUMAN

1. Don't act like a predator – a mad one, a frustrated one, a scared one. Act like a leader and a partner.

Be mentally and emotionally fit. Think before you react. Have a plan, be clear and fair. If you're afraid or nervous, you're in no condition to lead. Get in a safe place first so you are not in danger. If you're emotional, try 5 deep breaths. It will lower your heart rate and stabilize your emotions – must be 5!

2. Have an independent seat... and feet.

Use your feet and hands on purpose, not unconsciously. Become aware of how much you move them and how much this affects the clarity of your body language. The less you move your hands and feet, the easier your horse will understand you – whether on the ground or riding! Use your body language, ride more like a 'torso' with your seat and energy and body, not your hands and heels. Do in your body what you want your horse to do in its body, physically and energetically.

3. Think like a horse, before you think like a human.

See things from the horse's perspective, not just yours. *"Hmm, how interesting!"* will help you take a moment to consider WHY your horse might have reacted that way and then you have the chance to use the appropriate strategy to correct or change it. Remember – Horses are just like computers; they never do what you ask but they always do what you tell them... or what they are programmed to do!

4. Use the natural power of focus.

This is not just about where you put your eyes, it's about your goal, your plan. When you are clear about what you want, how you want it, where you are going, how fast, how slow, what quality, in what state of mind... then your horse has a chance to get in harmony with you. This is about good leadership – calm, assertive, friendly, clear.