

Connected Riding®
NEWCOMERS

*Do you want to dance with your horse?
All right then, let's begin.*

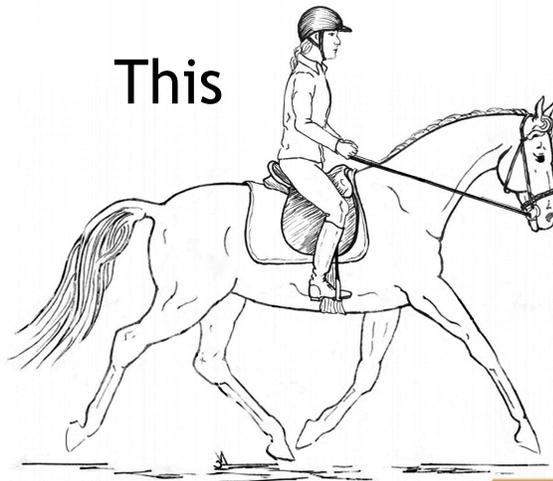
1. Notice how horses move.

2. Notice how your horse moves.

6. Ride in balance & connection.

5. Rebalance yourself.

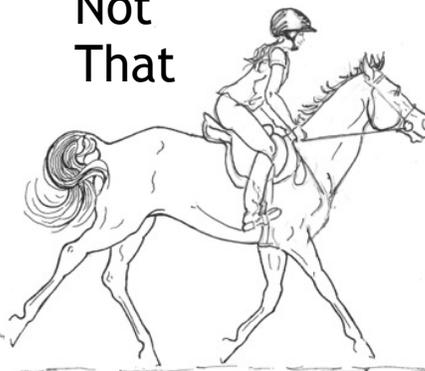
This



3. Notice how you move.

4. Rebalance your horse.

Not That



1.
Notice how
horses
move.



What do you notice about the posture of each of these horses?

Which horses are

moving with hollowed backs?
Which are telescoping their necks
and rounding their backs in a

good way? All horses have patterns of disconnection. The more you help your horse learn how to rebalance himself when an imbalance occurs, the more quickly he will develop his rebalancing response.

(Left to right, top to bottom: hollowed- 2,3 & 5. rounded- 1 & 4)

Introduction

Connected Riding® has helped hundreds of trainers enable their students to interpret instruction better and perform more freely and effectively—regardless of discipline. After all, what we’re talking about here is human body movement being connected to horse body movement in one harmonious dance. Different disciplines are just different dances with riders and horses wearing different costumes.

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2. Notice how your horse moves.

*“The eye of
the master
maketh of
the horse.”*

- anonymous

Assessing the Walk: A Baseline Exercise

[Adapted from “Connect with your Horse from the Ground Up” by Peggy Cummings]

Studying your horse’s movements and reactions is a first step to improving balance.

At the halt observe your horse’s posture.

1. Is his head higher than his withers?
2. Is he standing squarely, or are his hind legs camped out behind?
3. Are the neck and topline muscles smooth, bulging, or sunken?
4. Does he continuously rest one hind leg, or alternate resting both hind legs?
5. Does he ever stand squarely without being asked?

Now walk your horse out, then turn and come back.

6. Is he dragging his front or hind feet?
7. Do the front feet seem to have a firmer footfall?
8. Does one front foot land heavier than the other front foot?
9. Does one hind foot land heavier than the other?
10. Is he eager to walk with you, or does he walk ahead or lag behind?
11. Are his hind feet stepping up into (or behind) the prints of the forefeet?
12. Is he focused and tuned in, or distracted and shut down?

Most horses are not symmetrical. By assessing the walk you see how different a horse can be from one side to the other. With Connected Groundwork exercises the horse becomes more even and symmetrical.

Rider Position Quiz

Many of my students have had extensive training and find they can easily incorporate Connected Riding® into their performance with great success once they've mastered awareness of their bodies.

Number 1-24, and answer yes or no to each question.

1. Do you hollow your back?
2. Do you ride with a fairly straight arm?
3. Does your leg go back to cue?
4. Do you put weight on the stirrup to get your heels down?
5. Do you clench your jaw? Do you hold your breath?
6. Does your pelvic position vary from front to back?
7. Do you have low back pain?
8. Are your feet placed in front of your hips?
9. Is it difficult to get your horse to listen to your cues?
10. Do you have pain in your shoulders or discomfort between your shoulder blades?
11. Do you slump or arch in different situations?
12. Do you squeeze your hands or bend your wrists?
13. Is your pelvis positioned back?
14. Do you separate your hands to get the horse to round?
15. Do you constantly lose one stirrup?
16. Do your hips rock back and forth trying to absorb the horse's movement?
17. Do you ride "chest up," shoulders back?
18. Do you sit against the movement, especially in transitions?
19. Do you slump your sternum and rib cage when you sit?
20. Is your pelvis positioned forward?
21. Do you press in stirrups, especially in transitions?
22. Do you have discomfort in your hips, knees or ankles?
23. Do you ride with long stirrups?
24. Do you have any muscle pain when you ride?



Connected Rider



Arched Equitator



Pocket Sitter



Gumby

3.

**Notice
how you
move.**

Connected Rider:

Neutral pelvis.

If you answered "no" to more than 20 questions.

Arched Equitator:

Pelvis tilted forward.

1,3,4,5,7,10,12,14,
15,17,20,22,24

Pocket Sitter:

Pelvis tilted backwards.

2,5,8,13,18,19, 21,23,24

Gumby:

Pelvis is hyper-mobile.

6,9,11,16,24

4. Rebalance your horse.



Connected Groundwork[®]

The Benefits of Rebalancing Your Horse

We know that most horses, when standing, place more weight on the forehand. When a horse is on the forehand, his movement is compressed and limited. Connected Groundwork enhances a horse's ability to experience greater freedom of movement with ease.

The Connected Groundwork exercises are described in the book
Connect With Your Horse From The Ground Up
by Peggy Cummings.



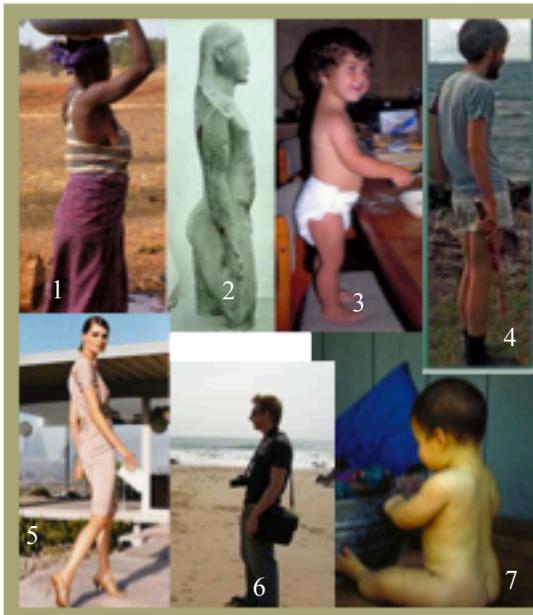


5. Rebalance yourself.



Are you aware of your postural habits?

Have you ever noticed stress, fatigue or exhaustion in your back, knees or hip joints after standing, walking or riding? Many of us unconsciously brace to counterbalance our body. Our static position, our stiffness and our tightness are then transmitted to our horse. The first step toward learning to become “live weight” and dynamic in our posture is to become aware of our postural habits and patterns.

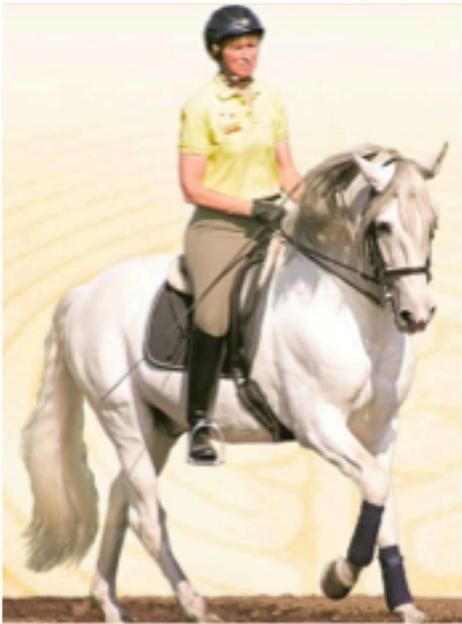


What do you notice about the posture of each of these people?

Which are arched, slumped or aligned?

Left to right, top to bottom:
 arched- 2,
 slumped- 4,5,6,
 aligned- 1,3,7





6. Ride in balance & connection.



Not That

Movement inhibited by compression

This horse is actually falling on the forehand. The hindquarters are not engaged, the back is hollow, the withers are dropped, and the neck is inverted. This posture results in lack of free movement, and the rider's posture is not helping the horse.

The correct Cycle of Connection

There is a direct cause and effect correlation in the movement patterns of horse and rider. When horse and rider align into functional postures, their bodies connect and travel in sync.

This -

Beate and her horse Sky

Beate is an adult rider who is teaching Sky how to stretch his topline. Sky was extremely down in front and out of balance.

Moving forward, stopping and turning were all major issues for him. He was like riding a deflated basketball. He had no energy. The walk to trot transition was nearly impossible in the beginning. This picture was taken about a year into the Connected Riding® program.

We see him moving quite nicely, balanced, forward and relaxed. Sky is stretching into the contact and Beate does not have to work to get forward movement.



FAQ's



Q. I was balanced in the saddle. What should I have learned from that?

A. Self-checks to find Neutral Pelvis posture, independent seat and stability in movement.

Q. What is Connected Riding®?

A. A biomechanical system that synchronizes horse and rider in motion.

www.ConnectedRiding.com

Q. How is it different from any other kind of riding?

A. It takes you through a whole body experience of "Finding Feel."



Q. What is "Feel"?

A. Elegance, ease, longevity, harmony brought about by impulsion without resistance, and rhythm without bracing.

Q. Can you show me a video?

A. Search Youtube for Peggy Cummings Connected Riding

Or go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/h683vec>

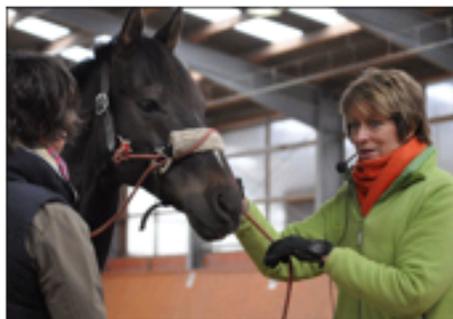
Q. How do I get started?

A. www.ConnectedRiding.com

Books & tools

Practitioners and Instructors newsletters, clinics, expos

info@connectedriding.com



Q. I am already a riding instructor. How can Connected Riding® help me?

A. It offers tools to integrate into your programs to synchronize students with their horses.

Q. What is the School of Connected Riding®?

A. A non-profit organization with the mission of improving the way riding is taught and horses are ridden.

For more information on Peggy's background and philosophy visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/h683vec>