

# Karen Rohlf Dressage Naturally Clinic

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## Day 1

\*tension spills out front, ends up in mouth last

- show them what the can do
- overshoot the target → relax
- relax all the way
- neutral* release in motion
- get 100%

- Relaxation, Energy, Balance of rider
- Clarity
- Dwell Time
- Go TO your horse for relaxation

Expression:

- “Be happy **now**!!” doesn’t work
- ears totally forward → not listening
- pinned → angry
- back, but not angry → happy

## Day 2

“Diagonals apply, even in Parelli” ☺ (haha)

\*Go through the point you usually stop and see what happens” (FOCUS)  
“you will be here forever” (ie. no agenda)

“Fluidity” as a check → movement goes THROUGH your body, doesn’t come ‘out’ of it

Think of horse as a ball of clay you can shape into your ‘picture’

Don’t just correct, *direct* a clear idea

Embody your different neutrals

Pick up the reins just so that there’s no slack

Go to the opposite of the issue = pass through the middle

“Half Halt”

- normally a memorized set of aids rather than finding the individual needs of the horse
- whatever it takes to rebalance that particular horse
- feel* of it
- people know the aids, but not what it’s for, what they want, etc.

\*over correct if needed

\*walk to the point you could trot in ANY moment

Maintain forward during downwards transition

Connection with the head, but not holding

“If you could tell your horse something, what would it be?”

“What’s the biggest missing piece?”

Truth comes out when you ask for more

Ie. bucking when you ask for more energy could mean your energy was leaking out the back and now is REALLY leaking out the back

Combing the rein when horse backs off

→ -combing the rein teaches horses to go to contact, snatch at reins  
-good if a horse is backed off (BTV) and not watching to go to the bit

\*Trying to replicate artwork going off of description of final product will not create a masterpiece.

-You can analyze stroke, colors, etc. of a painting but it won’t look like the real thing  
-You can’t START with the art, that’s the final product

Whoosh exercise- yield to a stop

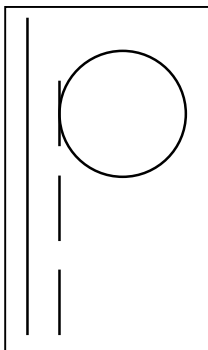
Get the horse to relax IN \_\_\_\_ position, stay forward

“I wonder what would happen if I keep going.....”

Calm down during moment of leadership

Hands directly above the withers= good rein length

Think of a ‘hinge’ at the girth area



Shoulder off wall and start a circle

Get into HI, SI by moving either end (not very 'classical', but true)

Yield shoulder, haunches to each side, bend and counter bend in each yield

### Day 3

\*Soften head/neck-body can follow

BUT- if you mess up head/neck you've got a bigger mess

Horses learn what feels good and go there on their own

Sustain tricky place- horse can feel release DURING it, then take pressure off when horse relaxes themselves.

Reins are for:

~info/energy= information through the reins, the O of energy

~refined communication regarding shape/length of neck

Roundness= result of rest of body

“freestyle” is like dancing w/o touching someone, you can be a crappy dancer and still survive

“finesse” if like making contact with someone while dancing (ball room dancing), mistakes show up

Follow rein/ flexion @ standstill, then if happen w/movement you know what it comes from

School in hackamore then when things are pretty good, bit for + feel of it

Slobber straps good for warning before pressure, later just become noise

### Bits

\*Myler comfort snaffle (Ovation likes it, doesn't lean on it and it's jiggly and playful)

\*\*"Confidence Snaffle"

Cradle might break cycle of brace, BUT....

It's a leverage tool.

Where is 'tongue relief' going? → Roof of mouth... so where's the tongue?

Leather reins =

+ direct

snappy- gone/ there

have to close hand more to hold= tension in arm

good when things are 😊

Play online with different balances and energy levels

Massage in motion= touch → happy/positive response  
Relax under 'pressure'

"You go first!" → stick2me and circling, horse doesn't have to go first

Freedom to goooooo

Horse pushes against, just *hold* 'pressure'

Rein connection → up and out, not back/"give me that!"

Horse supplies movement, you keep up

### *Lateral Yields*

Disengage HQ puts all weight on FH

#1- Get taller in our body, keep feet moving, hand up a little= hind end steps away and front end keeps moving

\*keep your picture in your head!\*

#2- Forehand yield with hind still moving

stand @ z4 (butt), yield zone 1 (head) while urging z4 over to keep going  
*check for a good z1 yield from z3/4*

specific postures to differentiate

### **Mind, [flexion, weight], feet**

Flexion and weight often come together

### Connection with Reins

\*back up 'freestyle' → prove that you don't need the reins

\*transition: soft touch walk → freestyle backup w/no reins

soft touch walk → freestyle backup → soft touch back up → freestyle back up → soft touch walk

Horse assumes lateral flexion= "nose to toe"... So- random flexion!! "don't have to put your head anywhere, just make yourself comfortable!"

\*slack out of reins w/o hose 'noticing'/ changing anything

\*not round? Play with movement in body

\*leg yield each side off wall

\*hands in weird places means your wishing body was somewhere

“hands both move right is universal sign for ‘I wish my horses shoulder were to the right!’ so MOVE shoulder right if that happens!

Make sure *something* is happening if you ask for something. If it looks like junk, you can tidy later.... But get SOMETHING!

Hands relate to his shoulders

Outside rein receives energy

“Oh, by the way \_\_\_\_\_”

Reins as another point of connection

\*Serpentine

- Prepare the bend
- Prove you don't need inside rein
- Enjoy and maintain ‘state of readiness’ and STAY THERE
  - active neutral
- Perpetual motion machine

Listen to your hands!!

Keep your horse's withers under your hands

\*Canter circle → trot → walk → sideways → walk -> canter

Take what's not working and just do a little of it. Set it up so it's in the best possible moment for it.

Seat slides in space, but horse comes with it, so you're not sliding across saddle

#### **Day 4**

\*Posting exercise: up for 2, down for 1= you're probably balanced

\*Exercise from dancers- leading and following

person A mirrors movements of person B

A can pass leadership to B w/o telling them

B can take leadership from A w/o telling them

No talking

-prep it

-to follow, picks up on the *tiny* differences to match

-fall behind to take lead OR follow- intention!!

NLP is cool stuff!!

~Transitions~

initiation → lifting from hind end

what's your canter aid on ground?

- match picture of horse (not weight down, nose up, go)
- weight back, feet carry body
- look @ back end for transition
- prep for transition

intention and body = default

“embody” what you want

Matching @ liberty: practice invisible human → isolate, separate and recombine

\*Clap same tempo: + energy and – energy

\*Horse SUPER sensitive to deep breathe= stop, so she sings while she rides... anything with constant breathe, etc.

Prepare transition during stick2me

**Finding Sweet Spot**

Relaxation

Energy

Balance

Flexibility [+ suppleness]

Bending R + L

Stretching/Shortening the Posture

Serpentines, Figure 8s

Changing Bend on A Circle

Mobility [+ straightness]

Lateral Positions @ halt, walk, trot, canter

Transitions in + out of lateral positions

Collectibility [+ carrying power, cadence]

Frequent transitions w/quality

Decreasing size of circle, keeping energy

Transitions to weight back

Elevating the front legs (lift)

## Connection

Freestyle in finesse (reins are not to get 'x' done, they're to get info)

Human balance

Art of holding reins to *receive* posture created in body

## \*Serpentines

change of bend

add transitions

## \*Transitions

walk shoulder in → trot → canter → trot → WSI

walk → 5 step back up → trot 10 steps → walk 5 steps (and variations)

## \*Leg Yield Zig Zags

plus canter transitions

leading to counter canter

## \*On a Circle

stretched posture ←→ shoulder in

## Visualization Exercise

Stretch your right arm around behind you and gaze out over your fingers. Repeat 5 times, each time noticing how much farther you get and the associated sensations in your body. Then do it once with your left arm. Now, *imagine* doing it 3 more times in your head. Picture EVERYTHING about it. Take it slow. Then, try doing it once more with your left arm, and notice what it's like even though you only did it two times.

**our brain doesn't know the  
difference between thinking something happened  
and it actually happening**

“Everything your hand wants, see if you can do it with something else.”

→ rider posture

→ balance issues/alignment

## WRAP UP

(Shared happy thoughts of what we liked that people accomplished)

“it's not what they have, it's what they do with it...”

“What do you want to say to your horse at THAT moment?”

-good for focus

-keeps your breathing

-releasing

What's the result you want? Figure out how to get THAT.

Not teaching "in aids"

Brain comes up with 'excuses to not 'go there' ... always stopping at same point- what happens if you go PAST that point??

Balance preparation between quality of response and quickness of response

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