



**The True Story Of
How A 9 Year Old Girl
Conquers Her Terror
And Focuses Her
Unmanageable
Buddy Sour Horse In
A Little Over An Hour**

Marv Walker

Contents

[Introduction](#)

[About Marv Walker](#)

[How I Meet Breyanna](#)

[They Burst On The Scene...](#)

[Starting With Breyanna First](#)

[The Leader Concept](#)

[The "Dumbo Effect" - The Magic Feather](#)

[Breyanna's Confidence Rises](#)

[Breyanna's Confidence Tested](#)

[Breyanna Hulks Up](#)

[Breyanna's Response](#)

[The Nagging \(Pun Intended\) Fear](#)

[I'm Dismissed](#)

[Breyanna's Mother's Thoughts](#)

[Some Time After...](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[It's All On Video!](#)

Introduction

This e-book is the no pictures text version of a [video](#) of what has to be one of the most rewarding horse experience I've had in my 70 years.

I'm an equine problem solver. I have a high traffic website MarvWalker.com filled with free information helping horses and humans around the world quickly past attention, trust, fear and respect issues.

I also have an email discussion list, [Marv Walker Horses](#) where folks can post their horse problems, communicate with other horse folks and get feedback.

At the time the *Marv Walker Horses* folks had been after me for years to do videos. I had checked into video production for another business and very quickly decided I didn't have any interest in producing videos. The costs and effort involved would have required a major part of my life and if the videos didn't sell, well... they would be hung around my neck for years before I finally sent them to the land fill.

My clients for my other business wouldn't accept that. They told me they would even buy homemade backyard videos as long as they contained the information they wanted. I agreed and they began sending me money before I even picked up the camcorder.

When the horse folk kept nagging (pun intended) for videos I made them the same deal, "I'll do videos but they will be backyard videos. What you see is what you get. They will be Wartz'nAll videos." And they began sending me money before I even started the first video.

Shortly thereafter I get an email from a local mother who has a 9 year old daughter who is absolutely terrified of her beloved horse. She wants to know if I work with kids and how much I would charge.

The answer is, of course I work with kids. My fee would be allowing me to video the session and signed model releases from all parties featured.

Breyanna and her horse, Jewel, a 7 year old paint gelding, along with her parents and Jewel's joined at the hip buddy, Breyanna's mother's Arab mare, arrive at the farm on a cold morning.

Breyanna's mother disappears into the gooseneck three horse and when she reappears she hurriedly thrusts Jewel's leadline at me and runs for safety and I'm thrust into the middle of the most memorable moments of my horse life...

© Marv Walker, 1996-2015. All rights reserved.

Email Contact Address For Marv Walker Marv@MarvWalker.com

Published By..

Marv Walker MarvWalker.com

1202 Old Agateville Road

Hillsboro, GA 31038

**THIS IS...
A WARTZNALL PRODUCTION
IT'S NOT INTENDED TO BE PRETTY
JUST POWERFULLY INFORMATIVE!**

[Contents.](#)

About Marv Walker



Marv Walker

For 60+ years I have had a love affair with horses.

The first horses I had any experience with were my grandfather's heavy draft horses. I can close my eyes and still smell and hear them, especially the times when he would harness them to skid logs, work the fields or gather ice for the ice house from the frozen lakes of Michigan's Upper Peninsula close to

the shores of Lake Superior in the winter. My uncles would saw huge chunks of ice from the thick ice at the surface and hook the horses to the chunks with tongs and then they'd skid the ice back to the ice house where it would be buried in sawdust for use in hot months like July & August.

When I was in school I tried everything I could think of to be able to ride because having a horse of my own was beyond our family's means. Money was so hard to come by the words of the Country song, "If the wolf woulda come to our front door he'da had to bring a picnic lunch," was us.

I struck a deal with a riding stable owner who assured me I'd be able to swap my work for riding. And I would have been able to had there been any horses that were not needed for paying clients to ride or horses that were tired from being ridden. Every riding stable I've ever had anything to do with became a riding stable because they had a herd of horses and the horses needed to earn a little of their keep. Most of the stables had about 40 horses of which 8 or so were rideable. The rest were vice-ridden or unsound.

When I asked about all the other horses out in the pastures I was given all kinds of reasons as to why those horses were unrideable. They were vice-ridden, had chronic physical issues or weren't broke to ride. It quickly became evident that if I was going to get much riding in I was going to have to do it on the sly and it was going to have to be the vice-ridden horses that I rode.

I guess it was that beginning that gave me my preference for vice-ridden horses. I learned a lot from them and over the years became fairly adept at solving problems.

For a long time I used the "force" method of getting a horse to comply with what I wanted. I always operated under the idea that the horse was just spoiled and I needed to show it who was boss. More often than not, I was able to show them. Sometimes, they showed me and that became the inspiration for my line, "I'm a Cereal Cowboy... I Snap, Crackle & Pop when I move."

Then I met Linda Tellington-Jones. I attended one of her clinics nearly 30 years ago and mere minutes watching LT-J convinced me there was a better way of dealing with horses and opened up a whole new world. I became aware that horses can have headaches, off days, physical problems that may not be obvious or may even have mental problems that prevent them from being able to give their best.

Since then I have eagerly devoured every bit of information I could find on the subject of horse awareness. Wherever I found it I weighed it against common sense, success, and whether or not it met my new criteria of working with the horse instead of working the horse:

- 1.) It had to be reasonably safe for the horse *AND* me;
- 2.) The horse had to accept it;
- 3.) It had to show positive results;
- 4.) It had to work every time I used it.

If it failed ANY of the tests I didn't use the technique.

I spent a lot of time in my life simply observing horses and watching how they interacted with each other. I saw they had a ranking or pecking order within the herd that set some individuals up as leaders and the rest as followers. I began working some of those things I observed the horses doing into the work I was doing with horses.

But it was a lot of hit and miss. Everything I tried seemed to work but the problem I had was trying to figure out how to time the steps.

I had developed somewhat of a local reputation for being able to get into a horse's mind. I was able to develop a bonded relationship with almost any horse I worked. I would keep working with a horse

until the horse screamed at me, "I'VE GOT THE PROGRAM, YOU MORON!!! I DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO TO CONVINCING YOU!!!"

At that point I'd slap myself on the back, "Good job, you did it again."

And then I read an angst-laden "horse training" tome written by one of the media darlings at the time. All I found were a couple little bits of information about horse behavior that I had noticed but hadn't quite grasped the significance of. Once I realized that someone else was aware of these behaviors I knew instantly why my system worked so well and I *KNEW* at that moment how to predictably duplicate my results in minutes instead of days, weeks, months, and even years.

My first horse after the realization I knew how to do in minutes what it took me so long to do before was a very annoying, dangerous-to-ride 19 year old broodmare and show horse we had. If you were still on her or in the cart at the end of the class, you usually placed first with a blue ribbon. Those who rode her considered it a religious experience - "Let me off and I'll never ask for anything again!!" It was described to me as riding a motorcycle with no brakes. When we retired from the show business and the trainer's brother brought her home, he handed me the lead rope and said, "I rode that horse, once." Leading her was no joy either. I was just tired of her antics and intended to put some leading manners on her as a test of my new revelation.

In about five minutes I had a totally different horse. She became my favorite all time trail horse. The rapid results I obtained with her gave me a sense of horse confidence that is pretty much unflappable.

Around that time the Horse Whisperer thing got started and someone called the paper about a local "whisperer" they knew of. The next thing I know I'm much better known and people are contacting me from around the world asking my advice on horse problems. Folks kept asking for clinics so I started doing clinics. I do clinics, private work around the country, consult with folks outside the country and sell a variety of how to solve horse problem videos around the world.

In addition I served as a long time president of a rather large saddle club. I was also actively involved in the successful Conyers, GA bid for the 1996 Olympic Equestrian Events which resulted in the construction of the Georgia International Horse Park. I published a world wide equine magazine. I was a long-time traditional freelance writer. I outfitted an entire therapeutic riding program for a large Georgia children's home by acquiring free horses while my horse friends scoffed.

I have learned a lot about horses just by observing them. They have taught me some powerful concepts about themselves, people and animals in the years I have been fascinated by them. This ebook contains the mechanics of one of their most instinctive abilities, self-preservation, and how to use their self-preservation instincts to make the horse human relationship dramatically better for each.

[Contents.](#)

How I Meet Breyanna

I got this email...

My daughter Breyanna who is almost 10, has a 7 year old paint gelding, that we are having an extremely hard time gaining his full respect. We do not have a round pen, so we have to do everything on a lunge line to narrow down the space. Whenever you ask him into different gaits, he gets angry and does anything from rear up, buck, strike out with his front leg or take off at a dead run and try to rip

your arm out of the socket. Also, when we try to go to horse shows together, if he can't see my horse he absolutely goes berserk. If he is in halter, he walks on her, screams, spins and makes her miserable. When riding if he can't see her at the show, he prances, screams and gets so excited she usually gets to afraid of him losing it so she just quits for the day. When at home he is usually pretty good on the ground at the walk and trot. And is pretty good riding at the walk and trot. We have been practicing alot of the Parelli stuff and have gotten some results. There just seems to be a few things we cannot seem to overcome with him. Breyanna is crazy about this horse and would love to be able to enjoy him to the fullest. We also live in Conyers and are not to far from you. I was wondering what you would charge to show her what to do with him to fully gain his respect. Or if you work with kids. If she really has a mind to keep this horse, I just want her to enjoy herself and stay safe.

My reply was, "Do I work with kids? You betcha Red Ryder, bring him on," and we set a time for them to bring both horses over.

Naturally, the question of my fee came up.

I have a high traffic horses Internet discussion email list where we hash out all things horse and otherwise, [Marv Walker Horses](#). The list essentially has two rules, keep it civil, keep it tasteful. Almost from the beginning nearly 20 years ago list members began harassing me for videos. I thought, "Why not?" and began looking into doing videos. I didn't look very long because the costs of filming, let alone editing and having to buy enough copies to fill a good-sized garage to get a good price was way into the thousands of dollars even back then. Marketing them would have been a full time job. If you do a professional video, you better make sure it will sell.

So I told the list members that videos were far more than I wanted to monkey with.

Commercial seating repair has been the family business since the very early 70s. My late father before he passed away, my brother Dale, my brother Rodney and I all have commercial seating repair businesses where we maintain restaurant, conference hall, auditorium seating. I also sell a commercial seating "How To" manual ["How You Can Easily Make \\$300 To \\$800 A Day And More Doing Simple Restaurant Seating Repairs..."](#) Manual buyers wanted, you guessed it, videos. The business is not brain surgery. With the manual and the ability to walk and chew gum at the same time, you're pretty much there.

Anyway, they wanted videos and I told them, "Any videos you get from me will be backyard homemade videos." They told me they didn't care as long as they got the info.

The next time a horse list member mentioned videos I told them the same thing, ""Any videos you get from me will be backyard homemade videos." They told me they didn't care as long as they got the info.

So I began to rethink the video idea.

Very shortly after that Breyanna's mother emailed me.

I told her my fee would be for them to allow me to video the session and model releases. She quickly agreed and we set the time for what was to become the most memorable horse experience of my life...

[Contents.](#)

They Burst On The Scene...

It was a cold clear morning when the obviously well cared for truck pulling the equally well cared for GN dressing room 3 horse slant snaked into the yard. The truck spilled two adults and one little

bundled up 9 year old girl. Introductions were quickly made and mom dropped the ramp and opened the trailer. She disappeared into the trailer as I stood next to the ramp at the door and waited for them to come out so I could see what I was working with. I heard some scrambling inside the trailer and mom reappeared moments later leading a red-brown and white paint gelding. The moment she saw me she tossed the leadline to me and ran to safety leaving me with the horse.

He's wound tighter than a clock and his weight is equally distributed over each leg just waiting for an alarm to go off. He's fully cranked, agitated, every muscle tensed, looking around wide-eyed to see what might be out to get him while looking to see if his buddy was going to get out of the trailer and hollering all the time. He dances around circling and turning and I'm not real sure which way he's going to bounce next. I'm just trying to stay out from under him. I didn't have to worry about Breyanna and her parents getting in the way, they were giving me plenty of room. Good thing. I needed it.

I start working him the hundred yards toward the round pen while he starts working to head anywhere but where he's at at the moment. Breyanna, obviously nervous and concerned, and her parents, followed a safe distance behind. It was more than hundred yards when you add in all the circling and jumping around we did. I was continually soothing the horse, "Easy...easy...easy...easy..." while keeping one hand on the lead rope and the other pressed stiffly against him to push me away in case he hopped in my direction.

It takes me awhile but I finally manage to get him into the RP in one piece, me, not him, much to my relief.

Now to get a thousand pounds of cranked up uncertain horse and a sixty-five pound frightened little girl on the same page...

[Contents.](#)

Starting With Breyanna First

I get the horse inside the RP and coax Breyanna to fasten the PVC pipes to close it as the horse circles uncertainly on the lead line. When the gate pipes are fastened I work the halter off the horse and set him free in the RP. He goes off around the round pen checking things out and looking for his buddy. He is focused on everything under the sun except people. Breyanna is light years away from his attention span and she obviously wears her disappointment.

And her nervousness.

I invite her into the RP and she comes in warily, her eyes glued on the wandering horse as he explores the round pen looking for a way out and the reassurance of his buddy. We go to the middle of the pen and she says something about he might go berserk at any moment. "We don't care what he does as long as he doesn't do it by us," I reassure her. "And we're going to make sure he doesn't do it by us." She seems a little better so I take her to the center of the pen ignoring the horse, or so it appears to Breyanna but I'm aware of him every moment, and began to explain to her what we were going to do. While it appeared to her we were ignoring her horse I was well aware of where he was and what he was doing.

I spent a few minutes just relaxing her a little then I began to explain to her that he wasn't paying any attention to her, which she and her parents very obviously knew. I wanted her to know I knew as well. I wanted her to know that I knew he wasn't paying any attention to her and that we were going to fix that.

I told her we were going to give her horse a series of directions we knew we could get him to listen to and obey until he realized we were someone to pay close attention to. Every minute or so I moved to another part of the RP. The first two times or so I had to motion her to come closer to me. After that, when I moved she automatically moved with me as soon as I leaned in the direction I wanted to go. We then discussed what she was doing following me around and I told her that was what we were going to do with her horse.

[Contents.](#)

The Leader Concept

All horse herds have leaders. All herd leaders become leaders in the same way. They simply give the other herd members a series of directions they know beyond a shadow of a doubt they can get the others to obey until the others say by their actions, "Hmmm... This being is acting like a leader and I'm acting like a follower therefore this being must be a leader and I must be a follower.

Horse herds do not exist for the benefit of the herd. They exist for the benefit of the individual. Human social order exists for the benefit of the group. The leader gets all the perks. It gets the best food, the best sunning spots, it drinks before the others, it gets respect from all the other herd members (you don't bite or kick the herd leader) and so on. The leader is the horse MOST able to take all rights. All the others line up behind the leader according to their ability to take rights. Any rights they cannot take, they must honor in others.

This lining up, or ranking, is what we call the "pecking order."

The lead horse, often referred to as the "alpha," takes all the rights over all the others. The second ranked horse takes all rights over all the horses EXCEPT the alpha. Because it is unable to stop the lead horse from taking rights it has to honor the lead horse's rights. The third ranked horse takes all rights over all the other horses EXCEPT the alpha and the alpha junior. And so it goes all the way down until you have one horse who can't take any rights from ANYONE in the herd. This horse is seldom named but it is called the "omega."

Being the omega in a herd is preferable to being the alpha in a herd of one.

Why is that?

All peace, all safety, all comfort for the individual is found in the herd situation. If you are an omega in a herd you have more eyes to watch for predators, more ears to listen for predators and because of that you are able to eat more, drink more, sleep more. If you are all alone, the more time you spend eating, drinking and sleeping, the more vulnerable you are.

There is a old joke that fits another benefit of being the omega. Two guys were out hiking in the woods and a large bear comes toward them. One of the hikers sits down on a log and begins to put on running shoes. "You can't outrun a bear," his buddy snorts. "I don't have to outrun the bear, I only have to outrun you." In a herd situation you don't have to outrun a predator, you only have to be the second slowest member of the herd. The larger the herd the greater the chances someone else will be slower than you.

By giving the horse a series of directions we know beyond a shadow of a doubt we can get the horse to obey we become the herd leader. The herd leader says, "My hay, stay away!," "My place, get out!," "Coming through, move away!" All of these translate to "Mine! Mine! Mine!"

The basic series of commands I use and I know I can get the horse to obey are basically the same as a

lead horse would use: 1.) Go that way, 2.) Stop, 3.) Go that way, 4.) Stop, 5.) Go that way, 6.) Stop, 7.) Go that way, 8.) Stop, 9.) Go that way, 10.) Stop

Now you are saying, "Wait a minute! That's no series, it's only two commands!"

It's only two commands to you. That's because you can link things in sequence. You have the ability to look into the past, analyze the present and anticipate the future. The horse being an "in the now" being only focuses on one thing at a time. My two commands chain into a continual stream because the horse is not saying, "I just did that! You're repeating yourself."

My commands in essence all say, "MINE!" "This is my space, get away from it and don't come into it." I then tell horse whenever I decide the spot it is about to enter is mine, "Don't go into that spot! (Mine!)" or "Get away from that spot!" (Mine!) "I want that space!" (Mine!) "That's my spot too!" (Mine!)

This is how Breyanna is going to get Jewel focused on her and her alone...

[Contents.](#)

The "Dumbo Effect" - The Magic Feather

Everything about Breyanna says fear. Her body is drawn tight to itself, her voice is a little shaky and her eyes dart to her horse to see where he's at and what he's doing. I'd already reassured her I was going to do what it took to make sure she was going to be safe but it was important she be given the means to protect herself. The real cure to fear is the ability to protect oneself.

She's wearing a helmet. If she hadn't been wearing one I would have insisted she have one. There is no way she's getting inside that pen without one.

I give her a longe whip with a 5 foot handle and a 5 foot lash and permission to use it if the horse comes closer to her than she can accept. I also tell her not to worry about hitting me with the whip if she feels she has to use it and I'm in the way. I tell her if I'm in her way to push me out of the way. If she has to run over me that was fine too. I also tell her if things get out of control (very unlikely but possible) and she feels the need to leave the RP to do so - no need to ask my permission, just go.

The longe whip in addition to being an extension of her being is also a confidence booster to her. Just like the magic feather that helps Dumbo fly in the Disney animation, the longe whip enables her to isolate herself from any danger Jewel might be to her. In essence, it's my job to make sure nothing happens to her. The ONLY reason I'm in the round pen with her is to take the bullet should he endanger her. I can coach from the outside of the RP as well as I can from inside. Well, almost as well anyway.

The longe whip makes Breyanna 25 feet wide. The real purpose of the longe whip is to greatly increase the area of your being. Without a longe whip you can only influence what space you take up by extending your arms out. If your area is 5 foot without the whip, with the whip it's 15 feet. The ability to extend it from side to side allows you to control and direct 25 feet.

For a good while I used to teach people to use just their being to move and control horses in the round pen. I figured it would hone their skills to be able to move horses around by their presence. An experienced horsewoman and I were working a mustang at a clinic in Wisconsin. She was moving the horse out when it suddenly stopped and mule kicked at her. At first I thought she had caught both feet in the face. It was so close I think you would have had a hard time putting a playing card between the hooves and her face.

I immediately went to insisting on the use of a longe whip for all sessions and even use one myself even though I don't need it. I use it to set an example, to encourage safety and to demonstrate its use.

A good many horse owners recoil at using a whip with their precious babies. Many tell me right off their horse goes nuts when it sees a whip. My usual reply is a "Really??" Then I take the whip into the pen with the horse and the horse pays no attention to it. Why? Because I don't view the whip as a whip. I view it as an extension of my being. It allows me to reach and control a greater area. Unless the horse makes an aggressive move toward me. In that case, it's a whip and I will use it as such. Which ever way I view the whip is how the horses view it

At this point, for Breyanna, it's a whip...

[Contents.](#)

Breyanna's Confidence Rises

A change comes over Breyanna after the safety talk and she has possession of the longe whip. She seems a little more at ease and considerably more relaxed. I give her a little refreshing on what we are going to do - give her horse a series of directions we know we can get the horse to obey until it says by its actions, "This being is presenting me with leadership actions and I am obeying them. Therefore, this being must be a leader and if this being is a leader, I must be a follower."

After the refresher I tell her to go at it. Does she have any real idea how to do it? No. But she'll never learn any younger and she has to start somewhere. I move just enough out of the way so I can grab her if something goes wrong and she begins.

The way you focus an unfocused horse is to focus it. You focus it by directing its attention. Since we want the horse focused on us we demand it pay attention to us every time its attention is somewhere we don't want it to be.

At first she's a little hesitant. She doesn't want to kick the sleeping giant. When giving directions to horses, regardless of what those directions are, you need to be confident and direct. I step in for a moment and give her a few tips on how to give directions and then I back out and let her continue.

A lot of gurus are hung up on form and procedure - "stand this way, stand here, wiggle your fingers so, crouch at this moment to do this, etc." Folks tend to get lost focusing on the nuances that will come later. As long as folks are giving the horse directions and the horse is for the most part obeying them I tell them, "No matter what you do you will learn something if you're open to it." If you do something and something opposite of what you expect happens there are two things to be learned. One is, "If I want something to happen and the opposite happens, I need to do something else to get what I expect." If I ever want to have what went wrong happen I do what I did that went wrong.

I'm sure you have heard the old saying, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over while expecting a different result." The other thing to be learned is, "Well, at least I now know how to get the horse to do what I don't want. If I ever want the horse to do that, I know how to get it to do it."

Breyanna goes back at it with a little more confidence and determination. And the horse flips his butt and shows his heels to her. But he does what she says with a annoyed flip of his head.

I have had horses mule kick at me, pass by and cow kick, rear up and come toward me, pin their ears, shake their heads in annoyance, you name it. I usually ignore it as long as I am in no danger. It is like someone yelling a threat from a great distance. If you say, "Oh yeah?" and move closer they'll maintain the safety distance and move the same distance away. The horse is essentially saying, "You better be

careful who you are bossing around here!" I have two responses to that. One is I ignore it completely. That removes all power from the threat and says the threat isn't even worth thinking about. The other depends on the seriousness of the threat. If the horse moves in on me in a manner that makes me uncomfortable in any way I immediately respond with a bunch of noise and retaliate until the horse says by its actions, "Just joking! What's the matter? Can't you take a joke?" This completely defeats the challenge.

Once a threat or challenge is defeated the horse USUALLY drops that from its list of things to try. But it may have a bunch of other challenges up its sleeve and they have to be defeated when they are offered as well.

I stand back and Breyanna expresses concern for me and the possibility of her hitting me with the whip. I tell her again not to worry about me and then she gains even more confidence.

Jewel, I now know his name after asking, even though it was all over his halter, starts going around the RP as she watches. He changes directions on his own and I step in and ask her if she told him to do that. Jewel pretty much does as he wishes while Breyanna and I talk some finer points.

Here is the beauty of herd dynamics, the herd leader can decide when and where s/he wants to use it. If in working a horse the leader decides at any time s/he is going to take a break for any reason, in this case to go over some of the finer points, for any period of time, s/he can do that. S/he's the leader and as leader s/he makes ALL the decisions.

After our little coaching session Breyanna goes back to what she was doing...

[Contents.](#)

Breyanna's Confidence Tested

Breyanna's confidence is building rapidly and Jewel is letting her know he doesn't care for her attitude. He tosses his butt and shows his heels, snakes his head and strikes as he searches for a way to get away from this little leader being. He does all of this stuff a safe distance away from Breyanna. He doesn't want to take a chance she may be able to reach him. Breyanna's mother gets a little nervous at this point and expresses her concern. I tell her we don't care what he does as long as he stays away from us and that I'm in there to make sure nothing happens to Breyanna.

After a few minutes Mom notices Jewel hasn't been calling for, or even looking for, her mare. The way you focus a horse is to give it something more important to focus on and Jewel had all he could handle at the moment with nagging, demanding, little Breyanna. She was more important than his mare buddy and so he was devoting his attention to Breyanna.

I notice he is very close to devoting his full attention to Breyanna. He is obeying Breyanna without a lot of complaining. She tells him to do something and he does it. He is even starting to watch her to anticipate her next command and he obeys as if there really isn't any other option. He obeys as if there is no other option because there isn't.

I start telling her things to watch for that tell us a horse is relaxing.

Tense horses have close in ears focused ears. They are tight together and aimed in the direction of concern. Relaxed horses have floppy ears, they are wide apart and tend to droop off toward the sides. Tense horses have wide open eyes to let as much information come into them as possible. Relaxed horses have heavier lidded eyes, they are comfortable, they don't need any more information than what they are getting. Tense horses have tense bodies, their muscles are primed for flight. Relaxed horses

have loose muscles, the stomachs swing back and forth, the major muscles jiggle instead of jerk and the horses move smoothly instead of stiffly. Tense horses have tight mouths. Relaxed horses have loose mouths, floppy lips and may even show their tongues. Tense horses have wide open extended nostrils to let in more air for scenting and getting ready for an oxygen burn. Relaxed horses have relaxed nostrils because they are comfortable with their surroundings.

Jewel was showing all those signs but Breyanna is 9, high on adrenaline from going from absolute terror of her horse to absolute control of her horse and a good chunk of what I say is lost on her. I'm mainly telling her he's done, it's time to stick the fork in him.

We spend a few minutes working on what's left of Breyanna's fear. Since Jewel is calm I tell her to go up to him and stand there then come back to me. After a couple more times I tell her to bring him back with her simply by telling him to follow her. In no time the three of us are standing in the middle of the RP. We move a few times and Jewel follows right along until at one point he is a little further away from us than usual. I tell Brey to bring him closer. No luck.

Then I tell her what to do when the horse won't listen. Tell it again. If you want. You are the leader. You can tell the horse to do something as often as you want. You are the leader. I myself don't like to tell the horse what to do too many times. If I have told the horse to do something in a clear manner AND I know the horse is able to do it I tell the horse by my actions, "I thought we had an agreement? Obviously, you don't seem to think so. I think I'm going to give you a little reminder." That reminder is a couple of laps around the round pen.

Breyanna sends him back out and he obediently goes out and begins going quietly around. After a few go rounds, he follows more attentively.

Things are going along ho-hum with no major developments so I point out her mother and her mare are close by and Breyanna's head snaps around in surprise. Not too long after that I tell her mother to get her mare and start coming around in Jewel's sight and to do whatever she wants to do with the mare. The goal is to re-create the circumstances that lead to the problem. I then tell Breyanna what is going to happen is that we are going to make sure Jewel pays more attention to us than he does her mother's mare and how we are going to do it.

I tell her we are going to begin telling him what we want him to do if he starts doing what we don't want him to do. If he starts focusing on her mother's mare we will move his focus back onto us.

Horses are very intuitive and sensitive animals. They can pick up on a person's mental state and immediately mimic it. Breyanna is a little taken aback and concerned because we're about to get into the very situation that terrifies her. My presence there is somewhat comforting and protective but she still is a little uncertain. Jewel feels it and begins to move just a little more agitated.

It's time to put Brey to work on what is happening and get her mind off what MIGHT happen...

[Contents.](#)

Breyanna Hulks Up

Breyanna's mother brings her mare around and Jewel's agitation notches up. Not much, but more than Breyanna can handle and react to so I take over with a little demonstration of how to get his mind off his buddy and back on us. Pretty soon he's back to what Brey can handle and she takes over again.

Brey becomes a monster at this point. She has the power to control Jewel and her actions show it. She ramps up her determination and begins to call the shots and tell him what to do time after time. He

becomes a little agitated at the rain of commands but he obeys Brey who is displaying more confidence.

Breyanna is zoned out. She's sending him around at will and he's complying but she is absorbed with getting him to do what she wants. She doesn't have enough experience or know how to tell when the horse has grasped the concept. We haven't covered that because I didn't want to overwhelm her when she was essentially greatly distracted by her fear.

I tell Brey he's close to asking, "Tell me what you want me to do! What I want to do doesn't seem to be good enough!" Shortly thereafter he does. All that expected of him is to pay attention to Breyanna and ignore all the stuff that may be going on around them.

Breyanna brings him into the center of the RP and we then begin working on the "head down" cue.

When a horse is excited, spooked, scared, agitated or whatever you want to call any state other than relaxed, its head is high and wary. Go outside and look around and notice how far you can see. Now, get down on the ground and notice how far you can see. Big difference. Get the horse's head down and the horse is automatically relaxed - there are less noticeable things to make the horse concerned when the head is lowered.

Only a trusting horse will lower its head on command and by association a lowered head promotes trust.

You cannot force a horse to lower its head without using mechanical force and that won't work out well at all. Breyanna and I go over lowering the horse's head at will without force and she makes great headway, nothing a few moments of practice won't cure. I demonstrate how its done mostly to show her and her parents that it can be done even though Jewel has had no head lowering training.

The head down cue can be used when you feel the horse needs to be relaxed. By teaching the horse to lower its head with a signal or a command you can relax the horse by giving the signal or command. For instance, if you train the horse to lower its head with a tap on the top of the neck just above the withers and you are out riding and feel it tensing up, you tap. You give it the "relax" signal.

I tell her to go get the halter and halter her horse. She goes to the gate to get the halter and Jewel follows right along behind her. She has some difficulty getting the halter on because she gets side tracked into putting the halter on instead of having Jewel do what she wants - keep his head where she can put the halter on.

We discuss haltering and some review and the halter is on. Then she begins leading him quietly around the RP with a droopy leadline, half the time paying little attention to where the horse is other than it's quietly following her. An hour or so before she was cringing in fear to be anywhere around him. Now she has no fear of him.

Brey's mother brings her horse by for one last time and Jewel pays no attention. Neither does Breyanna.

While I deal with the parent's questions and concerns Breyanna practices her communication skills. Every once in awhile I step in to help her when I think she really needs help. The focusing procedure, while in essence a herd dynamic procedure, is a human education procedure. The horse already knows what to do when presented with certain actions. It is just a matter of the human figuring out how to present the actions in a way the horse clearly understands. Presenting the actions clearly is quickly learned. If they work, they are presented "correctly." If they don't, they're not. Once you find out something isn't working correctly try to do them differently.

I tell Breyanna to load her horse and she does, all by herself. She leads him back around to the barn the

hundred yards to the trailer, up the ramp into the trailer, ties him up and comes out with nary a bobble. We say our goodbyes and off they go.

[Contents.](#)

Breyanna's Response

I'm mostly in the horse business for the warm fuzzies. This session with Breyanna and Jewel is hard for me to top.

Here's what Breyanna sent me a few days afterwards...

DEAR: MR. WALKER

I REALLY WANT TO THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME AND MY HORSE BOND, I HAVE NEVER BEEN THIS HAPPY WITH HIM. NOW I KNOW IF I EVER NEED A TRAINER, I WILL COME TO YOU. SINCE I CAME TO YOU I DO NOT FEAR GOING TO GET MY HORSE OUT OF THE PASTURE ANY MORE. BECAUSE NOW I KNOW HOW TO GET HIM TO LOWER HIS HEAD AND FOCUS ON ME INSTEAD OF EVERY THING ELSE IF I NEED TO . TODAY I AM GOING TO RIDE HIM AND LUNGE HIM TO SEE IF HE IS BETTER AND SEE IF HE REMEMBERS HIS LESSON.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! MR. WALKER

I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO THANK YOU ENOUGH

FROM: BREYANNA

[Contents.](#)

The Nagging (Pun Intended) Fear

Breyanna and her family were planning on going to the first show of the season some 50 miles away in the spring.

Breyanna expressed concern that even though Jewel was doing really, really well, problem free, at home he would revert back to his old ways when he ended up in the middle of a show with all the activity and excitement.

Sometimes our fears cause the very thing we're afraid of. When you are up to your waist in alligators it's hard to remember your initial objective is to drain the swamp.

I promised her I'd come to the show just in case she needed some help.

[Contents.](#)

I'm Dismissed

I arrive at the show about 15 minutes before the first class and wander around looking for Breyanna and her family. I find her parents relaxing in lawn chairs by their trailer. Her mother's mare was standing tied to the trailer.

There was no sign of Breyanna or Jewel and I thought the worse - she wasn't there.

I asked where she was and her mother said she had gone off somewhere to "test" Jewel.

About that time I saw the first class, a halter class, was in the arena and there in the line of exhibitors was Breyanna and Jewel. Jewel was standing like a rock.

There were nine in the class. Eight of which were all halter fitted and polished to the max. Brey was neatly dressed and Jewel was shined up but they were not quite as well turned out as the others.

I saw Brey being handed a third place ribbon and the class was dismissed and they started heading toward the gate. I made my way over to the gate and arrived at the same time Breyanna and Jewel did.

Breyanna saw me standing there and as soon as she got to the gate she said to me, "You can go home now."

And I did.

[Contents.](#)

Breyanna's Mother's Thoughts

Her mother reports Brey and Jewel are best buds.

I'll let her tell you the story...

I was the desperate mother who wrote Mr. Walker concerning Breyanna my 10 year old daughter and her paint horse Jewel 7. I was really at the end of my lead line of watching her be so good to this horse and him treat her so bad. Not only at every horseshow would he make sure he embarrassed and humiliated her, he was becoming dangerous with his habits. She also endured lots of the same frustrations at home. He had decided that he was the leader. Breyanna was at the point of going from a horse crazy little girl, to being frightened by them. But like all of us who become attached to something, she kept trying so she did not have to sale him.

So, one night while surfing the internet trying to find others who experienced her problems, I came across Mr. Walkers web site. I was a little skeptical, but he had so many interesting things on it, that it held my interest. After reading alot of the information he had, I discovered he even lived in my area. I figured, what do I have to lose and e-mailed him. Within no time he had answered me right back. He even asked that I call him, so we could discuss it further. After talking with him we sat up a date to go to his farm.

The day came, it was so cold and very windy. Jewel came off the trailer like dynamite waiting to go off. I couldn't wait for Mr. Walker to take him from me. After finally getting him to the round pen Mr. Walker let him go. Then he turned all his attention to Breyanna. He very patiently explained what they..together.. were going to go in that round pen and do. He also told her that if at anytime that she or I did not feel comfortable about her being in there, that she could leave. As he took her in the round pen, Jewel was busy running, bucking and ignoring you as usual. Mr. Walker gave her the whip (which he calls an extension of your arm, not really a whip) to Breyanna and started explaining what he wanted her to do and why.

Jewel played the challenging game many times, but with Mr. Walkers instructions, he was put in his place. By the end of the session, Jewel was following Breyanna (instead of dragging her), he was focused on her (not on the other horses or especially as to where mine was), at that point he actually understood where he belonged in the Jewel/Breyanna hierarchy. But better yet Breyanna was smiling after a session with him, instead of crying. He followed her back to the trailer like a puppy dog, not

once paying attention to the horses running in the pasture on the way.

After he was loaded, Mr. Walker went back over what they had done and told her what she should work on at home. He also, made a point to tell her and myself that if any problems occurred to please call or write him. He even told Breyanna that to let him know when, but that he would come to her first show.

Over the course of the next couple of months while waiting on that first show, Mr. Walker called and wrote several times checking up to see how it was going. Well the big day finally came. When we got to the show, Breyanna continued to do exactly what she had been doing with him since that day. About 15 minutes before her first class (halter), sure enough here comes Mr. Walker as promised. He had to drive close to an hour just to be there. She went in her class with confidence and he behaved like a gentleman. They placed 3rd, in a really tough group of halter horses. But it wasn't about the ribbon to her nor I, it was about being able for her to just enjoy having fun and doing what she liked with the horse she really wanted have.

Thanks to Mr. Walker Jewel learned his place in the herd and Breyanna has regained her enthusiasm, confidence and determination. A horse or a person can get up on the wrong side of the corral and have a bad day sometimes, but there actions shouldn't become disrespectful or dangerous to others. As Mr. Walker puts it, It Was Mind Meeting Mind!

[Contents.](#)

Some Time After...

Long about the end of the first show season I hear from Breyanna again...

Dear: Mr. Walker

I got two forth place ribbons & Jewel did really good, he did not whenny for daytime once, at the end of the show I went a talked to the judge & he told me the reason he didn't place me any higher, it was because Jewel was, at one point trotting in the front end & walking in the rear (i'm not shure about that one), but anyway, the best part about my show was getting to ride around with my friend & not having to worry about him going beserk, I had more fun doing that than anything. oh & heres how it's going here at home.

I can ride "WITHOUT" a bridle now (but with a halter & reins), can go ride around the paster by my self. I can even ride bareback without a bridle (but with a halter & reins).

It's changed my horse life, working with you.

Thanks

from: Breyanna

Working with her changed mine too.

[Contents.](#)

Epilogue...

A few years after the session with Breyanna one of the people at church handed me a newspaper and said, "Maybe you know this person since you work with horses and all."

I opened the paper and there was a page and a half story about Breyanna and Jewel complete with a bunch of photos including one of her jumping him bareback with no bridle or halter.

The story said Breyanna had become a skilled young horse trainer.

[Contents.](#)

It's All On Video!

This story is a written account of a video taped session entitled [Focusing The Unfocused Horse aka Dealing With The Buddy Sour Horse.](#) available from [MarvWalker.com.](#) The DVD covers the entire session beginning to end as a terrified little girl steps up and saves her circling the drain relationship with her beloved horse in very short order.

As I have said a number of times before in this e-book, this is the main horse warm fuzzy in a long list of warm fuzzies working with horses and humans helping them quickly past attention, trust, fear and respect issues.

If I can be of service to you, please don't hesitate to call on me.

My email address is: Marv@MarvWalker.com

My phone number is 706 468-6990. You can call anytime but it's best to call between 9pm and midnight EST to insure I'll be here to answer the phone.

[Contents.](#)