

SPECIAL POINTS OF IN- TEREST:

- Teaching and Riding Dressage: **ALWAYS** go back to the basics: How concentration on only performing movements will jeopardize your overall performance.
- The Importance of having GOALS
- The Feeling of Collection
- Mental Thought of the Month: Turn on the Haunches
- Classically starting your young prospect
- Fitness Move of the Month: Hip stretch
- How to Think Like a Champion: Letting go of what cannot be Controlled
- Words to live by and words never to use.
- Exercise Notebook: Using Half Steps to enhance lower level collection
- Changing Your Expectations: My personal story on how I approached a train block with a young stallion.
- Recommended reading
- Classifieds



Alejandro ACT
2000 Bay PRE Stallion

Words to Live By...and words never to use

Deirdre R. Malburg

Those of you who have had lessons with me probably have heard me say a million times to think like a professional rider. How does a professional rider think?

Riding is more of a mental game than a physical one. It takes loads of self confidence to ride a horse. Since our partners are 3 times our size and sometimes know that, we must always remain cool, calm, and collected, just as the lead mare in the herd is. This means that we must always remain confident is everything we do with our horses.

This confidence stems from the way we think as riders. We can influence and change the way we think by using correct words and meaningful questions.

First, the words to live by are always to the point and definitive. Instead of saying or thinking, "Why can't I do shoulder-ins today?" a professional thinking rider would say, "Our shoul-

der-ins are stuck today. What can I change in order to make them easier for my horse?"

Words and Questions to live by:

- What?
- Change
- Can

Words a professional will never use:

- Why?
- Can't
- Try

When a rider poses the first question, the brain is not able to find an answer. When the rider poses the second question, the brain is able to logically work through the problem and find a solution.

It is not that professionals never question themselves, it is that they ask themselves the right questions.

It does not matter whether the rider ever wishes to be a professional or not. All riders should aspire towards independence. By this I mean that the rider should always seek knowledge and understanding by introspective questions. This will give the rider the ability to think through problems and solve them without the instructors knowledge 24/7.

As an instructor I strive to give my students this independence in the saddle. This will allow the rider to be a thinking rider. One who is capable of feeling a problem and working out how to fix it. Just by changing your questions to yourself, you are on the road to working through riding problems on your own. Be the loving boss in the saddle who protects your animal and guides it through life, happy and sound.

Mental Thought of the Month

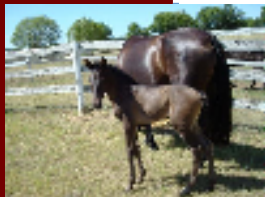
Turn on the haunches:

To keep the horse's back legs walking during the turn on the haunches, imagine that your inside seat bone is attached to the inside hind leg by a string. Pull your inside

seat bone forward to pull the inside hind leg forward. Remember that the inside hind leg must always step forward in this movement...never sideways or out.



Teaching and Riding Dressage: ALWAYS go back to the basics: How concentration on only performing movements will jeopardize your overall performance



Sabio's Filly
Dam: Nova

“Training blocks happen, but it is up to the rider to look within and find what needs to be changed in herself (and not the horse) to overcome such blocks.”

-Deirdre R. Malburg

Basics are what they sound like, the beginning. The basics of dressage should always be practiced and reinforced because they are the foundation of training.

The basics can be found on the Training Scale

As riders and trainers, we must always remember that

and without the constant help of an instructor. The scale should be studied in depth and understood completely. If a rider has an instructor and regular lesson, the scale should be researched and studied by the student in order to get the most out of lessons. This

muscles are constantly working to balance, but not to “make” a horse do a movement. If the rider feels as if he is forcing a horse into a movement, it is time to go back to basics. Working other exercises can help improve other movements. Horses are



the horse must develop into the upper level movements. For example, if I am having trouble getting my horse to collect properly I must ask myself if I have enough impulsion. If a rider cannot find contact, they must realize that the horse is not relaxed enough.

The training scale is a great tool for those riders who must work on their own

research will lead to educated questions that will lead to a better understanding.

Dressage should not be “painful” for the horse or the rider. It is work, however. If the rider is feeling “pain” or discomfort while performing a movement, I can guarantee that the horse is feeling that same pain and discomfort. Your

very willing to perform every movement that we ask them, but unless there is a progression of training the horse cannot perform. We must always be sure that we are accessing our horses classically and not training tricks. Tricks backfire later, progression does not.

Questions and Answers: Dressage Camp?

Some of you mentioned your interest in a dressage camp:

Tell me your ideas for a dressage camp in the spring:

- Examples:
 Daily rides
 Daily Lectures (made by each participant)
 Daily discussions
 Reading, Research, writing

I will also need to know who would be needing a horse, so that I can round some up.

I want this to be an affordable, and, and educational experience for any dressage enthusiast.

Let me know if you would be interested and if you have any ideas. Also how long would you want it to last? Week? Long weekend? Weekend?

DeirdreDressage@hotmail.com

If we are going to do this, then I would like to get some advertising done soon.

Fitness Moves: Stretching the Hip for better looseness

Please consult your doctor before starting any fitness program

The trick to looking as if you are not moving in the saddle is to move. By this I mean that the hips must act as your shock absorbers. If we have tight hips, then we cannot expect our horses to be loose and relaxed (not to mention that other parts of our bodies must compensate for this tightness making undesirable parts move). The

first step to looseness in the hips is flexibility. This stretch will send you on your way to happier, healthier riding.

1. Lay on the floor with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
2. Take your right leg and cross it over your left leg.
3. Pull your left knee (with your right leg crossed over) to your

chest using both hands. Pull until you feel the stretch and hold.

4. Repeat with the left leg crossed over the right leg.

I like to perform this stretch before every ride (especially at shows when tension is most likely to spring up).

“You don’t have to be Mr. Universe to ride dressage.”

“Not muscle strength, but muscle control.”

What to look forward to next month!

- Why go to horse shows?
- Mental thought of the month: Sitting deep, but light for collection: Sitting a moving object.
- Fitness Move of the Month: Using resistance bands.
- Teaching and Riding Dressage: Correct circles.
- Giving our horses the chance to behave correctly.
- How to Think Like a Champion: Reading your dressage test and making the most of the judges comments.
- Recommended reading.
- Events at Andalusians of Central Texas.
- Exercise Notebook: The 10 meter trot and canter serpentine.
- Classifieds.
- Using fear to learn and grow: My personal journey with fear.
- Mental thought of the month: Riding “turn on the haunches” in every aspect of riding.
- To poop on the move or to not poop on the move? That is the question.



🌟 How to Think like a CHAMPION: Letting go of what cannot be controlled

The key to a great performance is FOCUS. We can never expect our horses to be attentive to us if we cannot be attentive to them. Focus includes:

- Total immersion in your activity
- Loss of Fear
- Narrowed focus of attention

When a rider goes to warm-up and performs a test, it is important that he or she focuses on the horse alone. What is around does not matter because the rider cannot control the surrounding circum-

stances. Some examples might be:

- Another horse bolts in the warm-up
- A bag flies across the arena
- A banner is flapping on the wall
- Birds re happily playing in the show arena
- Etc.

All of these circumstances cannot be controlled by us as riders. In order for our horses to focus on the task, we must focus on the task. If the rider is scared of bag or banner (scared of the horse spooking), that

rider is telling the horse that the bag is to fear. If that same rider was focused enough on the horse, she or he never even notices the bag. If the bag is not noticed by the rider, it is more than likely not to be noticed or feared by the horse. Remember that we are our horses' herd leaders. Herd leaders are responsible for the safety of the herd. If that herd leader were to say run, the herd runs. If that herd leader was to state that there is nothing to fear, then the herd remains calm.

Let go and enjoy your horse...it is all you can control. Remember...don't turn bags into mountain lions.

"In order for us to demand full attention from our horses, we must give them our full attention."

- Deirdre R. Malburg

Events at Andalusians of Central Texas

January:

31st: Deirdre Teaching a Clinic at MCC Highlander Ranch, Waco, TX

Please note that my Name has changed to:

Deirdre Malburg

February:

Hans Biss coming to Texas with a possible visit to Andalusians of Central Texas.

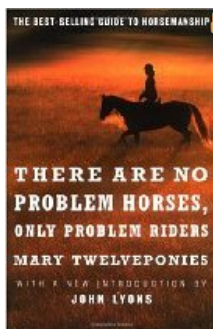
28th: Deirdre teaching clinic at MCC

March:

7th-8th: Frostbite Dressage, Katy, Texas

28th: Deirdre Teaching Clinic at MCC

Recommended Reading



There are No Problem Horses, Only Problem Riders
by Mary Twelveponies

I bought this book because I needed a reference that took certain situations and told me how to deal with them.

This is an excellent resource to have because it outlines common problems so well. Have this book at your reach at all times!!!!

The Importance of having GOALS

I am sure this has been said about one million times to me in my lifetime, but its importance cannot be stressed enough.

Goals guide us on a path. It lets us pick a path that we wish to take, but helps us stay on a path.

Goals are ever changing and morphing as we grow and learn. For example, at one time in my life I had the goal of competing on the Young Rider North American Championships (Junior Olympics). I finally came to the point that I had a horse at that level to compete in it, but circumstances changed for me and I decided not to stress my horse

too much in an international competition (he was an Arab, built completely wrong for the sport). I instead, changed my goal. My new goal was to see if I could push my horse, Regulus, past Prix St. Georges.



Deirdre and Regulus

Regulus, past Prix St. Georges.

By following that goal I gained the knowledge of training a horse through the FEI level. This example shows that it is ok to change your goals.

Why are goals so important?

Dressage is a very structured system of riding. One must know exactly where the horse is in training in order to move forward. Making goals can help the rider move the horse through this system with direction and a plan. As Steffen Peters likes to say, "ten minutes of purposeful riding is better than one hour of aimless riding." Goals give your riding purpose.

Forming your goals:

- Write a list of your goals or goal for the year.
- Then, write a list of your goals or goal for the month.
- You can then move onto writing a list of goals for the week...and then, even your goals for the day.

This process should be repeated often because circumstances change regularly.

Example:

Yearly goal: Move up to Second Level by next year.

Monthly Goal: Receive a 60% at First Level Test 4

Weekly goal: Gain fluidity and impulsion in the leg yield.

Day Goal: Develop better yield from my leg and make the leg yield end at "B" instead of "M."

The yearly goal may end up changing to,

- Receive a 60% at First Level Test 4

Because this rider may not have accomplish that goal.

The main point is that the rider now has a clear plan and motivation for the year/day. And this plan will give him or her a purposeful ride everyday.

The Feeling of Collection

The feeling of collection is the ultimate sensation you can have with your horse in Dressage. Collection is the basis of EVERY MOVEMENT. Once a horse has developed collection, that horse has developed the strength necessary to move through all the movements with power, grace, and fluidity.

How does the rider know when collection is achieved? It becomes easy to ride! The rider will have the power all in the hips and the core. With just a slight tightening of the core and a closing of the hip, the horse will step up into a smaller more active trot from even the biggest extension. Collection is not the lack of impulsion. Think of collection at the potential energy in a horse. You are storing the energy up in the center of your horse in order to use it in every movement.

When the horse has stored energy for a movement, that movement can become more brilliant and explosive.

We would want to throw our energy out of the front and we would not want to throw it out the back.

When the energy is stored in the middle, we develop a horse the has extra spring, or suspension. The way to achieve this collection is by send the horse forward with our hips (hips to hands), and then stopping the energy from flying out the front with our core muscles. We must always be careful to preserve the energy. If the rider were to pull on the reins, then the energy would go out the back, but if the rider were to give the reins too much, then the energy would be flat and out the front. Collection is about finding a balance with your deep seat.

To find the collection needed in the upper levels the rider must always give and take to cultivate a ball of energy in the center of the horse (picture your horse straddling a big bouncing ball).

Collection takes time for both the horse and rider. Give you and your horse the time needed to find the strength, balance, and coordination needed before this demanding step in training.

Remember that the basics are always their for you to go back to. We must always insure the basics are always met and reinforced while we move up the levels.

-Deirdre R. Malburg

Classically starting your young prospect

Starting your own young prospect can be one of the most rewarding challenges one can do with a horse, but care should be taking to insure the that horse is started correctly so that is can enjoy a sound and happy life.

Why Classically? Classical training refers to the training system that has been worked and developed since the ancient Greek time period. This method is still used today to ensure that we have horses that can live out a long life of beautiful performance.

Starting a young horse is a huge responsibly. When a horse is young, it is very formable. We want to be able to “form” that horse into a healthy frame from the beginning. Without a system, a young prospect can be on the road towards problems in the future.

A young horse is to always begin on the lounge line. At least three months prior to mounting, the horse should begin to learn balance and frame on the lounge. The first few times the horse is beginning to lounge, it may be lounged with the halter and no tack. This should quickly progress to tack and lounge equipment. A Surcingle should be used **OVER A SADDLE** with loosely fitting side reins. This allows the horse to begin accepting the contact on the mouth. As training progress on the lounge the side reins can be shortened until the young horse is showing balance on the lounge with a long, relaxed frame. The young horse should seek the contact with the bit and not curl away from it. The purpose of the lounging exercises is to help the horse find balance with the bit before the rider's

weight is introduced. For more information on lounging, please refer to the, “USDF Lounging Manual,” or “Lounging” by the German Equestrian Federation.

Once my horse is showing the proper balance on the lounge line, I can begin to introduce the rider's weight. When I am looking for balance, I want to see that the horse is able to relax, keep the frame long and low, and steady and steady, slow pace is all three gaits. The transitions between the gaits should be effortless. Once all of this criteria is present, the horse is able to begin work towards these aspects with a rider. If at all possible, the horse should be introduced to the rider's weight on the lounge line as well. The horse is then able to use the familiar work of the lounge line to find balance with a rider. If you are not able to find help, then a round pin will have to do. When the rider is first introduced, it is better if the side reins are left on while the rider just remain weight with no contact with the mouth. Once the rider is to take contact, the side reins are to come off and the rider's hands become the new side reins. The rider's hands should stay light, steady, and supportive (just like side reins). If working in a round pin, the rider should strive to be a still as possible while the horse figures out how to balance with the rider's weight.

Introduction of the forward, and turning aids should be first introduced with the seat, and weight aids. The goal while starting a young horse is to use as little of an aid as possible, but receive a large reaction. Verbal aids can be used with the slight seat aids in order for the horse to understand what is being asked. Once the horse

understands the aid, the verbal aids can be taken away slowly.

Once the horse understands the forward and turning aids, then arena and trail work can commence. Because the forward aids have been taught and understood, it is time that the rider insist that the horse move to the bit from the legs. The rider should keep his or her hands steady, and soft so that the horse knows where to send the energy. Every young horse I have started has embraced this aid. The rider should put some pressure on the horse with the legs and expect the head and neck to drop. This is the beginning of thoroughness. I do not expect my young horses to be on the bit, but that they seek the bit.

Remember, if you have a young prospect that has already been started by someone else in something other than classical training, it is not to late to start over. You might find that it takes longer for this horse to catch on, but it is worth it in the long run. By following the classical system, you are ensuring that your horse has had the proper basics that will prevent problems at the upper levels in the future. Remember to always seek professional help and keep yourself knowledgeable on dressage theory. One can never read enough. Reading is our gateway to understanding, and understanding is our gateway to purposeful practice.

Changing Your Expectations: My personal story on how I approached a training block with a young stallion.

Fear is our enemy and our friend. It can destroy us or make us stronger.

Working with a young, exuberant stallion will always be a source of fear, but this healthy fear caused me to be more alert and attentive to my horse, thus, helping me focus on my ride. This year I had a particularly scary accident with one of my main stallions, and it was my fault.

This particular stallion loves the ladies very much. He had been quite a handful the entire year, but was finally getting to a point where he could focus and perform. I let my guard down and he took his opportunity. I was casually talking with the other riders in warm-up while I was letting him stretch in the walk. Before I knew it, he was up on his hind feet and focusing on a beautiful mare in front of us. I was able to get him under control the first time, but it was too late...he had already set his dominance over me. The second rear came and he lost his balance and fell over (I thank every riding teacher I have ever had on teaching me how to fall correctly). I had some bruising and a possible a broken tail bone, but ultimately we were both fine physically (emotionally is another story). After weeks of

introspection I finally came to the conclusion that I needed to change my expectations. I had always treated him like a stallion. I expected him to act up and I sheltered him from any circumstances that might have caused him to act up. I immediately changed my training plan.

I decided to give him more room and the chance to behave well. This meant that he also had more responsibility for his actions. I expected him to behave like a gentleman. We were rewarded profusely for handling situations well. I took him for walks by the mares and expected him to behave as if they didn't exist. I gave him the chance to behave. In the past I would walk by mares with him yanking and talking to him as if he was going to act up, but what this accomplished was focusing his attention to the questionable situation, thus, giving him the opportunity to act up. My new strategy was to walk by situations like they did not even exist. This kept him focused on me instead. When he acts up now, I punish him, turn him around and make him face the situation again with the expectation that he will be calm and cool. Once he was able to pass without a commotion, I rewarded by scratching his favorite spot on his withers. Within a couple of days, I saw

major improvements.

I changed my expectations about the way he should act. I keep my full attention on him, but I walk him through the stable now expecting him not to act up (instead of the other way around). By giving him room to behave I am creating more opportunities to reward him instead of punish him. I do not let good behavior go unrewarded. Everything in his nature is telling him to behave like a head stallion, but together we are slowly learning that I am the head horse, the herd leader and he is to be focused on me alone.

This is only the first step in my transformation, but it has been a big one. I am sharing this with you because I hope it can help all of you cope with situations that you might be having. Training blocks happen to everyone, but it is up to me, alone to look within myself for change. Hopefully this has inspired you to look within yourself to help solve a training block of your own.

"Courage is not the lack of fear, but performing in the presence of fear."

Exercise Notebook: Using Half Steps to enhance lower level collection

Half steps can be a great tool to enhance lower level collection, but care should be taken to insure that the energy is kept during the exercise.

Half steps are:

- Active
- Soft in front end and in the hands

Half steps are not:

- Slow, less energetic
- Done with your hands
- Done by pulling back on the bit.

With this in mind, let's talk about the aids.

1. First we want our horse actively moving off of the leg. He must charge forward at the slightest touch. This must be taught first before half step work can begin.
2. Once we have a sensitive horse, we can begin to ask him to sit some more. To get this we must sit deeper. Your hips are your horse's hips and if you want his back legs to step underneath, then your hip must remain open and pushing forward towards the hands.
3. Once you have released your hips you can then begin to ask your horse to lift his body instead of pushing the energy out the front. This is achieved by a very slight closing of the hand

while the core muscles restrict the energy and bring it up. In order to tell the horse to bring the energy up, we must lift our bodies as well.

4. Be sure that the activity in the hind legs is marching and not dragging.
5. Be happy with just a few steps of elevated trot. Once you get a few steps, reward your horse and move into a collected or working trot. Each day, or even week, see if you can get a few more steps. You may even try to get the same amount of steps, but with more elevation.



**Deirdre Dressage
&
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Deirdre R. Sabo USDF Bronze and Silver Medalist

- I believe in always using the natural way of training horse and rider. It is very important that new horse owners and riders understand the basic principles of riding so that they and their horse may experience a healthy working relationship.
- I strive to improve the horse and rider so that they can enjoy their time together with strength and balance. I believe that dressage is the basic knowledge that all riders of all disciplines should learn to enhance their performance.
- A method should always be used when training the horse and rider and throughout my years of experience I have formulated a method that has been proven.

Andalusians of Central Texas Carol and Ronnie Marroquin

- We offer Andalusians in Gray, Bay, and Black at . . .

Andalusians of Central Texas which lies deep in the heart of Texas. And deep in our hearts is a love for the splendid Andalusian.

As with everyone who has seen the Spanish Horse, we too are enamored by their beauty, grace and temperament. And as so many others know, you can't own just one. We began with one mare and are steadily adding to our breeding program. We are definitely enjoying our endeavors as each year brings new adventures in raising Andalusians.

- Through these adventures we have met many who also love Andalusians. We value their friendships and sincerely appreciate the time and talents they have shared. Their experience is an integral part of our successes. Our goal is to produce Andalusians that will carry on the stately heritage of the Pura Raza Espanola - horses that display the regal elegance, and established characteristics of the true Spanish traditions. Horses that will in turn capture your heart.

Classifieds

Horses for Sale:

**Mariscala
2005 Gray Andalusian Mare**



Financing available: Please see www.prebreeder.com

Please contact Deirdre R. Sabo if you re interested in the Mare of a lifetime!

Deirdre-
Dressage@hotmail.com

**Voltaje
2004 PRE Stallion**



Andalusians of Central Texas has a new and improved website!!! Check it out at

www.AndalusiansofTexas.com

This fabulous horse has what every rider is looking for! He has a great mind, he is easy to ride, and he is very versatile. Voltaje will do it all for you! He is the perfect horse for an amateur or young rider. This stallion does NOT require a professional rider!! Please contact Deirdre for more information or to schedule the test ride that will change your life!

DeirdreDresage@hotmail.com