

## SAFETY, HORSE BEHAVIOR & GROUNDWORK

### Safety of:

- #1 – Public
- #2 – Human
- #3 – Horse
- #4 – Institution

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### Stages of Learning

Awkward → Mechanical → Natural

### Horses feel safest when well lead

#### Humans

- Predator behavior
- Communication
  - Speech
  - High, Wide, Big
  - Low, Small, Narrow

- 1) Approach & Retreat
  - Retreating is not a threat
- 2) Pressure Motivates
  - Release Teaches
- 3) Teach everything on the ground first

#### Horses

- Herd behavior/Follower/Prey (Flee vs Fight)
- Communication
  - Body language, biting, kicking, blow, sigh, nostrils, lick lips, blink, ears, tail
  - Control movement of other horses
- Horses are afraid of predatory behavior not predators
- Stroke vs. pat

**“Horses crave leadership and authority...horses can recognize leadership traits in both horses and humans, and they cannot be fooled...either act like a leader at all times, or you are not one.”**

**- J. Goodnight**

References:

Natural Horsemanship Explained- Robert M. Miller, DVM

Handling Equine Patients- Robert M. Miller, DVM

## Stages of Pressure

- Air, Hair, Skin, Muscle, Bone

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Head

Catch with 2 eyes  
Release correctly

Body

Minimum pressure to  
control movement

Soft hands  
**Yields**  
Fingers not fist

Forequarter

Only increase pressure  
if no response

Hindquarter

Neck  
Lateral flexion

Barrel  
Tail

Hobbles  
Prevent injury  
Eliminate behaviors