

## Horsemanship?

Each and every person involved with horses is also involved on a journey - both with their horses and with themselves.

Not too many people are at the same place on the horse journey. Some are way up ahead on the trail and some are just beginning. The pace at which horse people progress is also as individual as the person, the horse, the combination of horse and person, and there are an infinite 'paths' on which to make the journey as well.

It can be very easy to become judgemental about these particular journeys; especially if we are observing someone else. But once we do make judgement, we are in effect often saying, "my way is better; my way is the best way and all you other cretins have no idea!"

So often we see, read or hear well-meaning people hold up one form of horsemanship as being 'the way'. In effect they are saying "that if you don't do it this way then you are just not getting it."

Some people also make strong statements about this or that well known horseman or horsewoman, and all they are basing those statements on is maybe a YouTube clip, a DVD or what someone else told them. One would have to question whether this is, or is not, an informed observation?

And some horse people deliberately expose themselves to being judged, i.e. in the dressage ring, in a cutting comp, an endurance event or in the show ring.

They rely on another person to determine how they are going with their horse.

The true judge of any horsemanship endeavour is, of course, the horse.

And unless we have privy to the horse's mind, we may be well advised to not make assumptions - because we all know what it means to make assumptions.

Allowing others to make their journey in the way they choose, and only helping IF and WHEN asked, is of course our challenge. Denigrating others is also just denigrating oneself.

Good horsemanship could then be defined; without judgement, without assuming and without ego.

The horse is the ultimate judge.

And if you want opinions about horses, ask a human. If you want the facts, then ask the horse.

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