

# TELLINGTON TTOUCH TRAINING

## TTEAM CONNECTIONS

Volume 13 Issue 4

October - December 2011

### FROM LINDA'S DESK



Roland and I landed in Venice on August 30<sup>th</sup> and have had one enriching experience after another. I think I overdid my schedule a little this time however. After the Italian horse training I was down for the count for eight days in bed with pneumonia. I've recovered fully now, but there simply are

not enough hours in each day to write about all the exciting events and people and horses and animals we have met on this trip, but I want to mention a few.

I was billed as the Godmother of the Milan Horse Expo for the second time and it was four days filled with panel discussions, TV interviews, two demos a day, lots of guests visiting our booth and books signed. I worked privately on several of the grand prix jumpers owned by two of Italy's top riders – friends of Massimo Da Re. Massimo and Silvia are doing a wonderful job of spreading TTouch to the professional horse world and taught 16 weekend Tellington trainings this year!

A highlight of the show was working with Weltall, the dressage horse ridden by Dieter Laugs, handled by Dodo Laugs and owned by Marina and Toni Meggle. I wrote in the last newsletter that Weltall



Photo: Linda doing TTouch on Dunny, an unpredictable Connamara mare.

was doing really well since I spent a week working with him and teaching Dodo and their grooms TTouch. In his first competition he placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in two grand prix classes and in the following two shows he won four grand prix classes with really excellent scores. That

qualified him for the Milan international dressage competition which is a qualifying event for the Olympics in London.

Weltall was brilliant in Milan. He has changed so much you would not believe it. Because he was so defensive in the grooming area in the past, he is now groomed and saddled in the stall and he can be TTouch'd everywhere on the body. He loves TTouch and stands still for every inch of his body to be worked. To see him in Milan with his head hanging over the stall, playing with the hair of one of the grooms sitting on the ground outside would not have been believed if you knew his distrust of humans before.

After Weltall's brilliant performance in the Grand Prix Free Style Milan on Saturday one of the Olympic judges- who knows the horse from when he was competing so successfully in the Olympics - said he has

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## Mission Statement

Animal Ambassadors International is an educational organization dedicated to sharing the TTEAM philosophy and techniques in order to develop a deeper understanding of animals and ourselves, and to heal our relationships with each other, nature and the environment.

## TTEAM Philosophy

- To honour the role of animals as our teachers.
- To bring awareness to the importance of animals in our lives.
- To encourage harmony, cooperation and trust between humans and animals amongst humans.
- To recognize the individual learning process of every human and animal.
- To respect each animal as an individual.
- To teach interspecies communication through the TTouch
- To work with animals using understanding instead of dominance.

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Photo: Dieter Laugks riding Weltall in a Grand Prix competition.

never seen Weltall move so well through the back. Weltall has been TTouch'd every single day since May and it has really paid off! He gave the impression of being totally engaged and really enjoying his performance.

The week before Milan I spent a weekend with Beate Meyer who staged an impressive opening of her new covered arena in southern Germany near Munich. Close to 200 people came to celebrate the opening of the first Tellington Training Center in southern Germany and we were so blessed that the rain stopped just in time each day to give us reasonable weather while it was pouring, hailing and snowing in the surrounding area. Five TTouch Practitioners came to assist with the 20 participants and 50 auditors who spent Sunday with us. There were some fascinating horses we worked under saddle and I have to write about them to share some of the insights. I'm hoping to get it onto my blog once I find the time to write again. Beate is a very impressive organizer and teacher and her specialty is starting young horses. So it's great that she has a covered arena to work horses over the winter.

On September 25th I had the pleasure of presenting the second Tellington TTouch Training in Speyer, with the brilliant organization of Gabriele Boiselle and her dedicated team who provided a delicious lunch and sweet goodies for all. We had perfect weather; a sun filled riding hall, and 62 enthusiastic seminarians. . .

"I worked with 3 horses "Faramir" - Berber-Mangalara Marchador Mix - gelding (4years), "Dunny"- Connemara Mare (14years) and "Nelly "- Haflinger Mare to demonstrate trust that can be developed with the combination of TTouch body work, the remarkable mental, physical and emotional balance and cooperative attitude that results with the special ground exercises of "The Lern Parcours" (Playground of Higher Learning). And we also did demonstrate the changes that can occur with the Tellington equipment under saddle: the Lindel, Balance Rein, Liberty Ring, and the Tellington Training Bit.





Photo above: Linda riding Dunny with a saddle using the Lindel and balance rein, one of the combinations that she used.



Photo above: Anke Recktenwald walking beside Linda and Dunny. Linda is riding bareback with neck ring & rollerbit.

A highlight of the day was the change in the lovely Connemara mare "Dunny" who sometimes is perfect under saddle and other times very hard to rate with too much impulsion and tempo. When I rode her without the saddle and with the Tellington Training bit she relaxed, and came into balance, and then was lovely to ride and to see with the saddle. When we finished the work, Gabriele wanted to see what the mare would do when she was set free in the arena. Would she run off to the



Photo: Linda turning Dunny using the neckring as the aid.

far end of the arena or stay with us? The first thing she did was roll and then walked along the front row of the participants and quietly greeted one after the other. It was a perfect end of a seminar that demonstrated trust and respect between horses and humans.

I had excellent assistance from Tellington teachers Ingrid Wild, Anke Recktenwald, and Bernadette Jochem and I look forward to September 23, 2012 when Gabriele and her Edition Boiselle Team will host the 3rd annual Tellington Seminar with me..."

I have sad news to report about Tanja Lasser, who graduated in our first TTouch-for-You certification training and organized and co-taught a three-year Austrian training for people. She crossed the Rainbow Bridge in the middle of September and will be dearly missed.

Tanja's vision for TTouch was boundless. When she called me in 2006 with the proposal that I should meet with Dr. Fritz-Albert Popp at the International Institute for Biophysics, in Neuss, Germany I could not imagine that he would agree to meet with me. Dr. Popp's study of light in the cells was world-renowned. Tanja was convinced it was important to make this connection with him, so I could better understand my intuitive sense that TTouch could affect the light in the cells as I had been sensing for so many years. How right she was.

Tanja made the long journey from Vienna to Neuss on an overnight train to meet with Roland and me. The three of us spent two hours with Dr. Popp. I did some Clouded Leopard TTTouches on his shoulder and explained that I had been sensing light in the cells for many years and that in the case of pain or fear or disease there seemed to be less light. He responded with a statement that gave us a piece of the TTouch puzzle I had been searching for since my 28th birthday. He said, "The light represents the communication between the cells".

In that statement was a key I had been searching for since 1965. That was the year I received an astrological reading predicting that in my lifetime I would develop a form of communication that would spread around the world. It became clear to me in that moment with Dr. Popp, that the "communication" was "cellular communication and the key to that communication was TTouch. The phrase, "TTouch is an interspecies language without words," took on a deeper meaning.

After our first meeting with Dr. Popp I realized Tanja had an ability to organize and manifest her vision with a skill and conviction that was magical. Two years later Tanja surprised me once again when she proposed and coordinated a pilot study of TTouch at the International Institute of Biophysics, conducted by Dr. Popp's son Alexander, again in Neuss, Germany.

For the pilot study we needed four people with physical issues. They would each receive 30 minutes of TTouch. The study would have to show a significant increase of at least 15% in cell function in order to merit a more extensive study in Vienna that Tanja was already envisioning.

She contacted Karin Frieling and arranged for two clients of Karin's to meet us at the Institute. I TTouched two people – one woman suffering from severe arthritis that caused swelling in the joints of her hands and Dr. Jurgen Schuett who was in the fourth stage of metastasized cancer. The 30 minutes I spent TTouching him in the pitch dark with his hand held under the apparatus that measures the light in the cells was one of the high points of my life. Half way through the TTTouch session he said that the pain in his right side that was constantly at a 10 level had reduced to a level 4. I said, "My cells are smiling at your cells" and he replied, "My cells can feel the smiles". It was the statement that brought a new awareness of the importance of holding a positive image no matter what the circumstances. This experience was one of the many gifts from Tanja and the recollection brought tears of gratitude.

Tanja's genius was apparent once again when she conceived of the "placebo" treatment we had to have for one of the four people in that pilot study. She had the brilliant idea of doing circles over the skin instead of moving the skin in a circle. The man she TTouched had observed the work on his German Shepherd dog and you can't tell from the movement if the skin is moving or if the hands are rubbing over the skin. Tanja did 30 minutes of these "over the skin" touches and the man loved the feeling so much he wanted to fly to Vienna to have more work from her. However, what made the study significant was the results showed that the "over the skin" touch had no significant improvement of cell function, but the three other people showed marked improvement of cell function.

It was this pilot study that laid the foundation for the Bad Vis-lau study that Tanja organized with Susanne Liederer and Alexander Popp. Tanja, Elizabeth Kreiner and I TTouched 58 people over 3 days. Once again Tanja's genius for organization was important to the study. It was her idea that all three of us use only 5 TTTouches we agreed upon, with a 1 -5 pressure and only the top half of the body so we had comparisons. As it turned out this latter study showed significant results which we will build upon in the future.

Tanja's dedication and her vision for spreading TTTouch was a driving force in her life. So it was an indescribable shock when she chose to leave this earth.

For months, Tanja had been experiencing indescribable migrating pain throughout her whole body, panic attacks and an inability to sleep that was making her desperate. She was terrified of drugs because of an extreme reaction in the past and this may have been the reason she did not seek medical help.

My daughter-in-law, Jeanette Kleger, is a Naturopathic Doctor and when I discussed Tanja's symptoms with her, they were exactly the symptoms of chronic Borriolosa that Jeanette's sister had experienced. I had hoped Tanja would agree to be checked after hearing that two friends of mine have recovered from this disease, having had the same symptoms as Tanya and are now functioning normally. But Tanja rejected the possibility that she could have Borriolosa and she could find no cause nor help for her condition. This must have left her with such a feel-

ing of desperation she could no longer stand the pain.

Tanja's physical presence, her love and the sound of her musical voice will be sorely missed. But her spirit will live on with us. I choose to believe spiritual author Sylvia Brown who writes, "When a person leaves their physical body behind they don't just go to Heaven and sit on a cloud playing a harp, they exist in another dimension and continue the activities they had begun on the earthly plane."

I believe Tanja will continue to inspire us as we search for a deeper understanding of the miraculous effects of TTTouch. We will continue to work together to expand and support Tanja's vision for TTTouch into the future.

It's past midnight and I have a class tomorrow so I only have time to share a few announcements:

We will have a Tellington Training iPhone App for horses ready soon!

### **November 15 to 18 2012 !!!**

Mark your calendar because we have booked the La Fonda Hotel for our **3<sup>rd</sup> TTTouch CELLebration Conference**. I hope to send a special announcement with the details for booking.

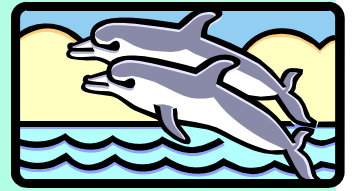
Blessings and Heart Hugs from Zug, Switzerland  
Linda and Roland

"A person cannot directly choose his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances."

James Allen

1864-1912, Author of "As a Man Thinketh"

# Hawaii - 3 choices of workshops



- ⇒ TTouch For You
- ⇒ TTouch for You & Your Dog
- ⇒ TTouch for You and Your Horse

## Challenge your mind while you refresh your body and spirit!

You are invited to join Linda Tellington-Jones in a **"TTouch for You"** training at her home in Kona, Hawaii, **January 29—Feb 3, 2012**. Luxuriate in this heavenly climate and rejuvenate under Linda's inspiring tutelage. This six-day workshop is for you if you want to experience a new level of well-being for yourself and your family, or you are a health care practitioner searching for alternatives to integrate into your practice. TTouch is used successfully for relieving symptoms of neck and back pain, migraine, headaches, stress, depression, and releasing habitual patterns of fear. TTouch enhances healing of injuries and has even helped stroke and arthritis patients. Perhaps best of all is the feeling of true health, in body, mind and spirit.

You will experience and take home so much more than Tellington TTouch. Included are aspects of Kona life: balmy, 80-degree days and pleasant nights with palms swaying in the ocean breeze. The coral studded lagoon teeming with tropical fish is pristine and warm. We make time for snorkeling, shopping in picturesque Kailua Village and other adventures you might create with our help or on your own. The volcano on the other side of our island is certainly worth taking an extra day to visit. We include a half-day cruise to swim with the dolphins if they will join us (they usually do), and we also usually see whales at this time of year.

### **Feb 6 - 11, 2012 TTouch for You and Your Dog -**

Of course you don't have to bring your dog but you will learn the TTouch techniques to take home with you.

### **Feb 26 - March 3, 2012 TTouch for you and your Horse**

Combine learning the TTouch for your horse and yourself as well

### **"TTouch For You" (and your Dog) or (and your Horse) - Six Day Training**

Our daily schedule is generally from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM with a 2-hour lunch break daily. Included activities are a half-day whale/dolphin cruise with Captain Vito's "Into Spirit" and a special dinner at Linda's. If you have never snorkeled or are unsure in the water, Roland, an experienced and encouraging instructor, is willing to teach you in our pool.

Cost for each training: Early bird is \$960.00 if payment is received in full by November 27, 2011; Dec 5th or Jan 1, 2012 respectively, after that the cost is \$1060.00. Tuition includes the whale/dolphin cruise and dinner at Linda's. Please call the TTouch office at 1-800-854-8326 to reserve your place. Office hours: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Mountain Time, Monday through Friday.

We look forward to being your hosts in paradise.

Linda Tellington-Jones, Founder TTEAM and Tellington TTouch Training



# HEAD WRAPS RULE IN HELSINKI!

By Mary Rodriguez - P1 Spain

The workshop participants had arrived and were settling their dogs, some of which were quite overwhelmed at being in a new setting, surrounded by unfamiliar people and dogs. In one corner a little border terrier was beside himself, barking incessantly. "Let's try a head wrap!". Within 40 seconds (someone timed it - this is Finland after all) the barking had stopped.

We could not have had a better introduction to the "Introduction to TTouch Body Wraps" workshop. Let's face it! The idea of binding your dog in lengths of elastic bandage is rather weird, and many people find it hard to take on board. After that another participant with an American Hairless Terrier puppy which was also barking non-stop asked if perhaps she could try the head wrap too. Same result. Then a young biology student with her Dutch Shepherd which is fearful of other dogs and sometimes reacts to them tried the wrap and was delighted to find that her dog was much better able to cope with the stressful situation. She used the head wraps throughout the day, including the groundwork workshop which followed when she found that her dog was able to focus much better when he was wearing it.

With this initial success which everyone could see, interest and enthusiasm for the wraps workshop certainly rose a notch or two and all the participants were eager to try out the various configurations. I think there were quite a few enthusiasts of TTouch wraps by the end of the day.

In all we held three workshops in Helsinki which were very well attended. The participants were all professionals in various branches of animal care. A large percentage were dog trainers and behaviourists while others were canine massage therapists, canine physiotherapists and the "guru" of canine osteopathy in Finland. Interest and motivation were high and at the end everyone said that they had found some aspect of the work which they felt they could use in their particular field of expertise. The therapists were particularly keen on the wraps because they had the opportunity to feel and see for themselves how they affected movement first in other participants and later in the participating dogs. One of the participants was in a wheelchair and she had come along with her assistance dog, a beautiful Black Lab. The groundwork apparatus had to be modified a little to suit her requirements but she was able to manoeuvre around the course and was quite satisfied with how things went



Photo: An American Hairless Terrier was calmed dramatically by wearing a head wrap

for both her and her dog.

The day before the workshops I had a unique opportunity to give a short talk and demonstration at the "Chicken Training Camp" run by Tommy Wirén and his wife Jaana Rajamäki at their "Trainer's Choice" facility in Kangasala some 160 kms. north-west of Helsinki ([www.trainerschoice.fi](http://www.trainerschoice.fi)). Tommy is one of the top dog trainers in Finland, specialising in training police and special services dogs, sniffer dogs etc. He also hosts his own very popular weekly dog training programme which is broadcast on both Finnish and Swedish television.

The Chicken Training Camp is a novel idea pioneered by Bob Bailey from Sweden. In a nutshell chickens are used instead of dogs to help trainers hone and refine their own skills. Chickens are so fast in their movements that

shaping behaviour using the clicker requires trainers to enhance their reflex responses so that they can avoid fixing undesired behaviours and promote the behaviours they are trying to teach. Students on the courses are given tasks, but they have to decide how they are going to achieve the set goals - hence "Trainer's Choice". The Singapore and Malaysian police sniffer dog units have sent groups to Finland to improve their training skills.

When the students had completed their tasks for the day I was invited to give an introductory talk about TTouch and later was able to demonstrate some of the TTouches on Jaana's beautiful elderly rescue Golden Retriever that took to the work like a duck to water. Her deep relaxation during the session was a wonderful advert for TTouch.

Afterwards I had the opportunity to try my hand at chicken training which was great fun, and I did manage to get the chickens I worked with to discriminate between a warm, medium and cool colour which was quite gratifying.

Finland seems to be doggy paradise with over 350 out of the 400 plus recognised breeds present in the country. Many owners take a great deal of trouble to train their dogs and get involved in activities with them. The animal facilities are excellent, including a wonderful veterinary faculty with an ultra-modern hospital equipped with all the latest gadgetry. I visited a huge dog swimming pool where many people take their dogs in winter when the snow gets too deep to exercise them outdoors. There is a



Photo: A clinic participant practices mouthwork on her Border Terrier.

"tunnel" playground for terriers to give them the chance to practise the skills they were bred for where they can run through tunnels and warrens negotiating obstacles to their heart's content. Animal physiotherapy, osteopathy, massage and other treatments are highly popular and people are prepared to go that extra mile to ensure that their animals are in good shape. The swimming pool even has a salt therapy room for animals suffering from respiratory complaints. I was told that some people take their dogs along there to have the treatment for themselves because it is less expensive than going to a human treatment centre!

I will not even attempt to describe the range of doggy "street wear" available: collars, leads, harnesses, coats and jackets in every imaginable colour and design the decoration ranging from "kitsch" to "gothic". Most dogs have at least five sets

which are always colour coordinated and chosen to fit the season or occasion. Quite amazing!

In all I feel that the participants at the workshops were receptive to the philosophy and practices of TTTouch and that one way or another they will begin to incorporate some part of the work into their own professional practice. The success of the workshops was due in no small measure to Liisa Tikka who organised the whole event which was held at her own very well run, spacious and bright, dog training school ([www.massetter.fi](http://www.massetter.fi)). So far Liisa has taken a foundation training in TTTouch. Great appreciation is also due to Pia Arhio-Lehto who is about to attain PiT status. Pia's TTTouch skills and support throughout the sessions was invaluable.

Mary Rodriguez - P1 Spain

## From Robyn's Desk

I am writing this on my way back from the Mane Event, a Canadian horse expo that is held twice a year, once in Alberta and once in British Columbia. It is a well run expo organized by a family of horse enthusiasts. They do a great job of bringing clinicians to entertain as well as educate about various disciplines including dressage, jumping, extreme trail and reining to name a few.

My least favourite part of the expo is the Trainer's Challenge – three trainers – three unhandled two year-olds – five hour long sessions and then the final 'test'. Since when did horse training become a timed event and what is in it for the horse? These types of competition have become very popular over the last few years and from what I have seen, even the most well intended trainer can become ego-driven by the situation. I can't say I blame them, there is a lot of pressure to perform, but I wish that the organizers would do follow-ups on these horses to see how they fare six months or a year later. From the little of these demos I have watched it seems to me that all the trainers have pretty much the same techniques with slight variations. Lots of negative reinforcement, a break from pressure, some rubbing on the head and body, and then more pressure.

It is interesting to see the various ways the horses cope, but it is rarely if ever recognized as such, nor is the concept that individual horses could have different ways of learning or coping. Mostly you hear phrases like, "mustn't let the horse get away with it" or "don't let him be 'dominant' by moving into your space" and my favourite, "the saddle doesn't really fit but he has to get over it". That one just leaves me shaking my head. Who speaks for horses? We must all remember that only the horse owner can truly be the advocate for the horse.

There were, however, some highlights for me this weekend. Bernie Traurig was the jumping clinician and I had the pleasure of watching at least parts of several sessions. He was positive and upbeat with both horse and rider; demonstrated the exercises he was going to teach and each of the horse / rider pairs made marked improvement. Axel Steiner was the dressage

clinician and although I didn't have the chance to watch him I heard very positive feedback about the sessions.



I gave a presentation that showcased the use of Bodywraps on horses and their riders and gave a Power Point presentation about Analysing and Influencing Personality. We also spoke with many people at our booth and one of our local practitioners, Sabine Gelb, brought a massage chair to do short TTTouch sessions and that was quite the hit.

Over the years the concepts of Bodywraps has been touched on in various forms and somewhat in the Ultimate Horse Training and Behavior book, but nowhere were the steps or variations detailed. Thanks in huge part to my daughter, Mandy, who writes really clearly and our intern, Indra McMorran, who takes fantastic photos and is a Photoshop wizard we have completed 2 of the 3 planned Bodywraps Booklets. All Wrapped Up for Horses and All Wrapped Up for Pets are now printed and available to purchase from [www.ttouch.ca](http://www.ttouch.ca), or by phone 1 800 255 2336. The booklet of wraps for humans, All Wrapped Up for You, has all the photos complete and is in the editing stage. It will be ready by December.

Subscribers may feel there has been a short time between this issue and the last. I am leaving for Singapore in a couple of days and then will travel on to Australia afterwards for Equitana and to teach some workshops. I won't be home until mid December hence the rush to get this edition of the newsletter finished.

I look forward to my trip DownUnder and seeing familiar friends and meeting new ones.

Stay in touch,  
Robyn

# TTouch - Ahead of Its Time

By Rikke Schultz, DVM Denmark

In 1989 I saw three women doing “strange” things to an Icelandic horse at the World Championship for Icelandic Horses in Denmark. I had heard TTOUCH mentioned and realised that it was Linda, Robyn and Susan doing TTouch on their horses before the competition. That was my introduction to this fabulous technique. I have since spent time at Robyn’s farm in Canada and had Robyn and Mandy give a clinic in Denmark.

As an equine vet working only with acupuncture, osteopathy and cranio-sacral therapy for many years I am still astonished by how well TTEAM fits into explanatory models about the body and mind appearing in humans and animals. It is fantastic what Linda seems to have understood over 30 years ago, what is only being realised on a larger scale within the past ten years.

The Rolfer and massage therapist Thomas Myers’ explanations of the muscular chains that he has named “Anatomy Trains” and his realisation of the importance of connective tissue and fascias really explains why the circular TTouchees and skin rolling have such a huge effect on large areas of the body. The TTouchees work directly on the fascias in different layers, depending on the finger positions. It explains why the lifts, that also release the subcutaneous tissue so well and give space for the blood vessel function, can have an impact on the pulse and respiration in endurance horses. I also believe that the fascias surrounding the carpal joint and the hock restrict the joints and releasing those will bring better joint mobility and maybe decrease some cases of lameness.

It should be mentioned that in 2012 the third bi-annual human congress about the importance and newest research of fascia will be held in Canada. That is how short a time the important of fascias has been widely accepted in the human research world.

## Cranio-sacral system (C-S system)

When we look at ear and tail work together with cranio-sacral therapy the huge effect of these exercises can be understood. The inner most centre of the entire body is the central nervous system, CNS – the brain and the spinal cord. It is surrounded by different layers. One very close called pia mater and another one also surrounding the spinal fluid called dura mater. The last one is very hard, not at all elastic and it is attached to the inside of the cranium, the first cervical vertebra (atlas) and the sacrum. All the peripheral nerves leaving the spinal cord go through the dura. A static dysfunction of the skull, atlas or sacrum but also the other vertebrae can result in a pull on the dura influencing nerve roots, spinal fluid flow, the mentioned bones and cranio-sacral rhythm.

Doing circles with the tail can release the sacrum and pulling gently on the tail will stretch the whole spine but also affect the dura. I think this is why the horses often shake their heads when

it is done. They can feel it in the atlas and the cranium. This also emphasises why a gentle pull and SLOW release is so important.

Doing ear-work not only effects the acupuncture points in the area but also the tentorium which is the membrane that separates the cerebrum from the cerebellum, that is also a part of the dura. This “tent” like membrane is attached to the medial side of the inner ear bone that is part of the temporal bone. The wrong tension in it can affect the whole C-S system. Below and medial to the inner ear bone is a big hole in the cranium where three of the so called brain nerves (vagus, accessory and hypoglossus nerves), the biggest arteries for the brain and the jugular vein passes through. A dysfunction of the temporal bone can decrease the volume of this hole and thereby create malfunction of one or more of these structures. The vagal nerve has connections to most of the inner organs and a dysfunction can therefore affect the heart, digestion, respiration and more. The accessory nerve innervates among other structures some of the muscles around the shoulder blade and a dysfunction can have huge impact on the front leg movement. It is easy to imagine how impaired blood flow to and from the brain will have a huge impact on the horse. This understanding makes one realise the power of ear work but also why it has to be gentle, why one should NEVER pull hard on the ears and why some horses, who are really ear shy, can have a good reason for it.

## The poll (The atlanto-occipital joint)

The joint between the skull and atlas is very important, of course in a biomechanical sense for flexing, extending and turning the head but also because there are a lot of nerve sensors (proprioception) in the joint capsule and muscles around it, which are responsible for the brain’s sense of the body-ground relationship - how the body is orientated in space. The same goes for the TMJs.

This is also the area where the brainstem transforms into the spinal cord. Other VERY important structures in the area are the vertebral arteries that are running through holes in the cervical vertebrae and supply the brainstem with blood. When the atlas is rotated (or the other cervical vertebrae) a pull on these arteries can occur. In short the atlanto-occipital area is VERY important.

When there is a dysfunction in this joint, more often contractions in the extensor muscles uni- or bilateral extending the joint and making it hard for the horse to flex the neck correctly are the reason. This is VERY common. Flexed lesions where the horse can flex but have a hard time extending the poll are less common or less realised, because that is what we want the horse to do.



Doing forelock circles helps to release the soft tissue on top of the joint.

Neck releases where the head is stretched brings the joint in a “position of ease” used in the osteopathic very gentle and effective “functional indirect technique” F.I.T. The soft tissues around a joint are brought to relaxation and the brain is given time to figure out what the normal tension in the tissue should be. This brings the normal function back to the joint. This technique moves the lesion as opposed to direct techniques in manual medicine (chiropractic, osteopathy and more) that goes into the lesion with the risk of increase the pain at the moment it is done.

### **Fight and flight reflexes**

Linda has always spoken about the importance of bringing the head down in order to overcome the fight, flight or freeze reflexes and increase the learning ability. This happens because the parasympathetic (relaxation) nervous system is activated or one can also say that the sympathetic (stress) nervous system is deactivated. Authors like Steven Porges and Peter Levine write about this subject in humans now in relation to stress syndromes and depression. When a person is balanced between the two systems in the autonomic nervous system, it is referred to as being in a state of “social engagement”. I think TTOUCH can bring the horses very much into a parasympathetic state and the ground work into social engagement. The more I work with complementary medicine I realise how much “deeper” the treatments work when it is possible to bring the horse in a parasympathetic state. TTOUCH, acupuncture and cranio-sacral therapy are some of the methods that can do that.

It also happens with the mouth and nostril work by releasing the facial fascias which according to Thomas Myers are connected to the toes in humans!!

When the horse is playing with the jaw during the mouth work it brings about a release of the TMJ, osteopathy has a similar treatment for those joints.

### **Rib release**

The rib releases can normalise rib- and diaphragm tension and dysfunction. These are commonly overlooked problems in a lot of horses, especially the later, both in western medicine and chiropractic. It also stretches the lumbar area together with back lifts. These exercises bring the back into flexion which is good because most lesions in the spine are extended lesions where the horse tries to avoid using the back in flexion which is, what we want it to.

My “learning journey” over the years has given me a better understanding of the anatomical and physiological effects of TTEAM and how much Linda has been ahead of her time with her method.

All together TTOUCH/TTEAM has lots of options to treat the inner core – the C-S system and the outer “case” – the fascias together with a big effect on the autonomic nervous system and thereby having the ability to release a lot of problems in horses in a gentle way both physically and mentally.

With respect for great work  
Rikke Schultz, DVM  
Denmark

Literature list  
Levine, P. “Waking the Tiger – Healing Trauma”  
Myers, T. “Anatomy Trains”  
Porges, S. “Polyvagal theory”  
Evrard, P. “Introduction à l’Osteopathie crânio-sacrée appliquée au cheval”

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## **Tools and Tips for Reducing Touch Sensitivity and Handling Issues.**

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By Kathy Cascade, TTouch Instructor

Working with dogs that are not comfortable being touched can be quite a challenge for both owners and professionals. It is not uncommon for dogs that have spent time in rescue or shelter environments to exhibit defensiveness to touch and handling as a result of stress or prior experiences.

Touch sensitivity can also manifest as a result of inadequate socialization, and some dogs simply perceive touch as aversive without any history of improper handling. For both social and practical reasons, a dog should be comfortable being handled in a reasonable manner. Grooming, toenail trimming, and Veterinary examinations are just a few situations that come to mind,

and of course dogs that are difficult to handle often are turned in to shelters.

### **Containment vs. Restraint**

The word restraint refers to forcefully holding a dog or restricting movement with the leash. Fearful animals typically respond to restraint with attempts at escape and increased anxiety. Think of yourself being tied down in the dentist chair and it likely changes the experience! Containment is a more gentle technique of keeping an animal close to you by providing encouragement, reward, and more subtle boundaries. The first

step in helping a dog overcome resistance to being touched is to avoid any type of restraint. Encourage the dog to approach for a treat, allowing the dog to move away as needed. Once a dog realizes they are not trapped and have the choice to move away, they are often much more willing to approach.

## **Introducing the Thundershirt Pressure Wrap or TTouch Bodywrap**

If a dog is particularly fearful or worried about being touched by a human, we can start by first introducing a Bodywrap or Thundershirt, allowing the animal to experience light pressure against the body. The first step when introducing something new to a dog is to break it down into smaller, manageable steps. Changing the context of the new item can also be helpful. Start by placing some yummy treats on the folded Thundershirt or Bodywrap and allow the dog to eat from it. A dinner plate is familiar and usually not scary! Next, unfold the Thundershirt or wrap halfway and simply lay it across the dog's back for just a few moments, offering a treat while the dog experiences this new sensation. The next step is to place the Thundershirt fully open on the dog's back, closing the front connection, but leaving the side panels open. If using a Bodywrap, follow the same sequence until the wrap is brought around the dog's chest, cross over the top of the shoulders, then back down and tied at the side of the dog. The last step is to close the panels so the Thundershirt is snugly on the dog. At this point, it is very important to allow the dog to move around. This allows the dog to know he is not trapped, and also allows him to integrate the sensations of the Thundershirt or Bodywrap against his body as he moves. Remove the Thundershirt or wrap after a few minutes. The next session may not require the step by step introduction, but keep the sessions of wearing the Thundershirt or Bodywrap fairly short (5 to 10 minutes) for the first few experiences.

## **Introducing Tellington TTouch**

Once the dog is comfortable wearing the Thundershirt or Bodywrap, it is time to introduce short sessions of touch. Employing gentle containment, start by touching the dog over the Thundershirt. Begin with the Tellington TTouch form of stroking using the back of your hand, rather than any vigorous petting. Initially using the back of your hand is much less threatening to the dog. Start at the shoulders and simply stroke down the dog's back or side a few times using a light pressure. Work for just a few moments at a time, giving the dog several short breaks, allowing the dog to move around if needed.

Once the dog is comfortable being touched around the shoulder region over the Thundershirt, move toward the hindquarters and begin touching in areas where the Thundershirt is not covering the body. The Zebra TTouch may be very helpful at this point. Start with your fingers and thumb close together at the dog's shoulder and with a raking type action, gently opening your hand and moving your fingers through the dog's coat and then drawing your fingers back together again as you move from the shoulders towards the hindquarters. Again, remember to pause

frequently and observe the dog's responses. At this point you may also introduce the Abalone TTouch using a greater amount of contact with your full hand. If possible, stroke down the legs with the back of your hand over the feet as a preparation for handling the feet and eventual toenail cutting. Sometimes the use of a tool such as a sheepskin mitt, TTouch Wand, or paint brush can also be used to help the dog become accustomed to different textures and sensations.

As the dog becomes more comfortable with being touched in subsequent sessions, introduce other TTTouches on different areas of the body. Begin working around the muzzle with the Chimp TTouch, which again uses the back of the fingers, then move to the Raccoon TTouch. If the dog is hesitant or resists being touched around the face or mouth, apply a Facewrap (a quarter or half inch width of sewing elastic or one inch width elastic bandage draped over the muzzle and crossed at the throat, then tied around the neck) for a few brief moments. Short sessions of mouth work and ear strokes can be added as possible.

## **Keys to Success in Overcoming Touch Sensitivity**

The TTouch Bodywrap and Thundershirt Pressure wrap are very helpful tools in reducing anxiety and calming the dog through the use of gentle pressure. Once the dog is comfortable wearing these type of wraps, it is often much easier to begin direct contact with the hands. Avoiding restraint while giving the dog a choice to approach and retreat also reduces fear and helps to build trust. And finally, using Tellington TTouch bodywork in a mindful and respectful manner reduces arousal and allows the dog to feel safe. The most important consideration is to be patient, keeping the sessions short and build on each successful experience.

Kathy Cascade, PT, Tellington TTouch Instructor  
Cascade Animal Connection [www.sanedortraining.com](http://www.sanedortraining.com)

## **TTEAM Connections - Subscription Renewals**

If you want to check the expiration date of your subscription look on the envelope label when you receive the newsletter. I send out renewal notices with the newsletters as we do the publishing and fulfillment from our home office.

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Thanks, Robyn

## TTouch For Life, Surviving an IRS Audit

By Shelly Moore P2 Creswell, OR

Recently I got the great pleasure of going through a full IRS audit of our business. To say the least getting the IRS notice in the mail was quite shocking as well as daunting as the IRS has such a checkered reputation. I was full of fear and dread that I had possibly done something wrong while reporting our taxes.

I found it very interesting that I sustained a whiplash type of neck injury preventing a horse from falling earlier during the day. So literally receiving this audit notification in the mail that afternoon was a “pain in the neck”. It was so ironic how all of this appeared to happen on the same day. Maybe the universe had a really good sense of humor?

The first thing that I did was contact our CPA and arrange for him to represent us with the IRS. Though I was certain I had done nothing intentionally wrong on our taxes, I did not want to jeopardize myself, my family or our business by not being familiar with current tax laws. The second thing I did was arrange to get some bodywork on my neck.

Our CPA agreed to represent us and made all of the necessary appointments directly with the IRS agent assigned to our case. Something that I found very unusual is that the agent had scheduled a whole day to be at our farm. For me this was just another element of anxiety and tension to deal with. During the few weeks of time we had to prepare for the audit I poured over all of our business records and while going over our taxes found a clerical error that I believe triggered the audit. Finding that error was both good and bad, what if I had made other errors and did not know it?

As my sleep patterns deteriorated and my neck pain increased, seemingly more and more each day, I began to think about all of the ways in which I could give the IRS agent an idea of what we do in our business and how just knowing it exists could possibly benefit him in the future. This may seem odd, but it gave my over active brain something to think about on those long sleepless nights.

As the ‘dooms day’ appointment approached and my anxiety level skyrocketed I began to use the Emwave heart rate monitor daily and incorporate the TTouch Heart Hug into my morning routine. While doing the Heart Hug I also started counting the blessings in our life out loud. The funny thing about this is that I count my/our blessings daily but, silently when I do my morning stall cleaning meditation. Saying them out loud seemed to give them much more weight, power and value. I also found that doing the Raccoon TTouch on my neck and shoulders helped me release quite a lot of tension. I found that if I did the TTouch using a heat pack it seemed more effective. Mini Python lifts on the back of my neck also seemed to help release some of the muscle tension.

Finally the day the audit officially started had arrived. This was the day that the IRS agent would spend at the farm, observing me – I felt like a bug under a microscope. Thankfully our CPA was here during this so I was not totally alone. As I went through my morning rituals, I began to formulate a plan to give this IRS person calming signals during the day.

As the IRS agent parked his car and prepared to meet us, I made sure that I approached him on a slight arc. Through out the day, I pictured what I hoped to be the ultimate best outcome for our audit and I sent him kind and loving thoughts. Before answering his questions I would pause slightly and slowly blink and give myself a little more time to answer. At times I would yawn and slightly look away and then answer the questions or show him the equipment he wanted to see. I found myself doing a bit of mouth work during times that he was “busy” with his notes and assessments. I noted the amount of facial tension I was experiencing and thought about all of the animals I had know with that “stiff upper lip”. It really gave me a new perspective on how we manage stress in our lives.

Finally, the day ended and the IRS agent went away with a pretty good idea of what we have to offer the animals and people we work with. That evening my husband and I had a glass of wine and talked about how the day went. I told him that I thought we were pretty much done and that it went well. What seemed like only a few minutes later our CPA called and said the audit was continuing, but, it would be conducted at his office, so as things go this was just the first day.

Over the next four days, I did have to provide much more documentation and answer several more questions about our business. Before going into the CPA office I would pause long enough to do a TTouch Heart Hug while in the parking lot. I also wore a vest so that I could carry the EmWave with me as a back up plan. At one point I excused myself to the restroom so I could have a quick break from the tension.

Eventually, we did have an adequate end result and fortunately we did have enough resources to pay the fines and penalties. But I learned a few great lessons. Because I save “everything” I could quickly locate all the information that was requested. Always have an independent third party look at your books at least annually. Stay current on your country’s tax laws and hire a competent CPA.

And yes, my neck injury healed completely about a week after this was completed.



# The Mysterious Case of Tristan Finch

By Shannon Finch

As I load my car for a weekend seminar, I glance over at my Morgan gelding, Tristan, in the pasture. There's something odd about the way he's trying to get to some hay on the ground. He slowly ratchets his head down, bit by bit, shifting one front leg forward, the other back, spreading them in a wide vee. He looks like a tripod. Then he's fine, munching away. There wasn't a mark on him, he didn't seem distressed, he galloped in from the pasture last night like normal, so I leave on my trip. By the time I return Sunday night, he can't lower his head below his withers. I feed him on an elevated piece of plywood.



Photo: This is the only way Tristan could get his head down, by spreading his front legs into a wide vee. This is actually an improvement.

The vet comes first thing Monday morning. By this time, Tristan is swaying and staggering like he's drunk. At times he doesn't seem to know me and tries to run away from me. He won't come into his stall from the paddock; he acts like he's afraid. This is not the horse I know. On top of that, he's not eating or drinking much. The vet recommends I get him to the local veterinary hospital as soon as possible.

At the hospital, the vet rules out several possibilities, including Wobbler's Syndrome. She's convinced that he has arthritis in his neck. I question her repeatedly about this. What kind of arthritis strikes seemingly overnight? Wouldn't there have been signs along the way, like stiffness or soreness? And what kind of arthritis makes a horse stagger and not eat? The vet is noncommittal, shrugs her shoulders. She says, "Well, he is 15 years old after all." And all I could say was, "He's a Morgan, 15 is nothing." While we are talking, Tristan starts to paw. Great, now he's colicking. I leave him at the hospital overnight.

The vet calls me the next morning with what she considers good news. His colic was mild, and better yet, the x-rays show "some arthritis" in his neck as she suspected. I bring Tristan home, and she sends the x-rays to Washington State University for a radiologist to read. I feel somewhat vindicated when WSU's vet says it's highly unlikely the arthritis is causing Tristan's symptoms. I load him up for the seven hour drive to WSU for further tests. It's late in the day when we get there, so I won't be able to meet with the University's vet until the next day. WSU is a teaching hospital, so a couple of very caring students help me get Tristan settled. They coo over him, tell

him how beautiful and handsome he is. Normally he'd be all over this kind of attention, but it barely seems to register. He will eat only if I'm there, so I stand with him for an hour as he picks at hay.

The next day, I am shocked by Tristan's decline. He tries to urinate, stretching his hind end way out, like he's parking out, and crossing his front feet like a ballet dancer. He can barely get any urine out. He has trouble pooping, and swishes his tail like he's irritated by something. He doesn't seem to know where the food and water are, so he has to be led to them, otherwise he just stands in the corner. Dr. Hines tests him for West Nile Virus, EPM and equine herpes virus. She also does a bone scan, which shows a "smoking hot" spot (her description) on his lower spine. This explains why he can't put his head down. The scan can't tell us if it's a fracture, bone tumor, or a bone infection. I can't for the life of me figure how he could have fractured his back. Even if he fell down

in the pasture, or a tree branch fell on him, I'd know he'd been injured. In any case, she says none of these things are very treatable. Also of concern is that Tristan's left kidney didn't show up on the scan properly either--it didn't process the radioactive dye, and since it's in close proximity to the hot spot, it may be related.

I go home the next afternoon, without Tristan. He can't make the trailer ride in his condition, he's still radioactive from the bone scan, and we are still waiting for the results of the West Nile, EPM and EHV tests. She tells me about something called aberrant parasitic migration, where a worm ends up in the bloodstream and can lodge in the spine or brain. Tristan is on a regular worming schedule, but Dr. Hines says it has nothing to do with lack of worming, it's just a worm taking a wrong turn. It's a freaky thing that happens sometimes, and it could explain his neurologic symptoms. They want to treat him with Panacur Power Pack, a high dose of wormer. She calls that night to say that Tristan was on anti-inflammatory medication and had started the Panacur, and he was actually able to eat a little hay from the ground. A shred of hope.

There's no test for aberrant parasitic migration. Either the horse gets better with the high doses of wormer or he doesn't. All of the other tests come up negative. Dr. Hines has no firm diagnosis and can't do anything further for him. They can't do an MRI or a CT scan, he's too large, they can't get to the right spot. If it's a tumor, there's nothing to be done, he will just deteriorate. If it's a fracture, same scenario, just pain medication, anti-inflammatories and stall rest. I drive back over to

WSU to pick him up. It's quiet and dark in the hospital, and Dr. Hines leads me to Tristan's stall. I think she's mistaken me for someone else, because this isn't my horse. I don't recognize him. He's lost so much weight in a week, his muscles have atrophied, his eye is dull. It takes him a minute to recognize me, and when he does, he staggers over to me. He hugs the wall as I lead him, staggering a little, out to the trailer.

It takes four of us to get him in the trailer, and I'm seriously doubting my decision to take him home. If I have him euthanized there, they can do a necropsy to figure out what went wrong. If he goes down in the trailer halfway home, I have a big problem. And of course, I don't want him to suffer anymore either. I get thirty miles down the road from WSU and pull over. He's still standing, but looks awful. I could turn around right now, but instead, I call my friend who is an animal communicator. Val says she thinks he wants to come home, smell the ponds, be with the other horses. If he's going to die, he wants to do it at home. As I'm talking with her, Tristan begins to nibble out of the hay net. I take that as a sign. The rest of the trip home is agonizing; there's road construction for miles and miles, making it slow going, and the roads are incredibly rough. I grip the steering wheel hard, as if I can use it to lift the truck over the bumps. For hours I curse the Washington State Department of Transportation. I stop several times to check on him and offer him water. I can see he's tired; by the last stop, he doesn't even come to the window. He's about done in, and so am I.

We have a rough week after we get home. He is clingy, so unlike him; it's awful to see this confident, often brash horse with the wind taken out of his sails. He's afraid to go in and out of the stall door opening. I make him an elevated feeding station in his paddock so he won't have to go into the stall, and so he doesn't have to bend down to eat. He paws, swishes his tail, grunts like he's in pain when he poops. He tells the communicator that if he isn't better in a few days, he wants out. I trot out every bit of TTouch I know. Obstacle work is out of the question, but I bodywrap him to help him with his spatial issues, I work his ears for his immune system, and I do Coiled Pythons all over because I am sure he hurts all over. Forelock slides and Clouded Leopards on his head seem to relax him. His back is hot, so I do Lying Leopards through a cold cloth on his back. I know exactly where to work, due to the conveniently placed shaved spot from the x-rays.

After a week, I start turning him out with the other horses because he is so depressed. He has always been the ruler of the pastures, but I watch to be sure they don't take advantage of his weakened condition. One look from Tristan, and Phoebe and Ari pointedly go the other direction--I have to laugh, he's still got it. I am somewhat heartened by this small thing. But watching him try to graze is heart-wrenching. He spreads his



Tristan had no idea where he was putting his legs and feet. This was "normal" for him during his illness. Notice the wide stance behind, narrow up front.

front legs out--one far forward, one far back--just like when this first started, but even more so. But he just can't get his head down; he gives up and just stands there. I put hay on an elevated board for him so he can still "graze" and be with the others, but I can tell it's not what he was hoping for.

There is a group of horses in the pasture next to ours that come for the summer. His usual routine is to trot over and visit with them, with squealing and stomping on both sides. Today, he sees them, whinnies loudly, starts to walk over, and then once again, just gives up. In desperation I call Debby Potts, my mentor, for any other advice she can offer. She says I'm doing all she would do. But then the Octopus TTouch comes up. I don't remember if she mentioned it, or something about our conversation reminded me of it. I knew it had been very useful in EPM cases and so I had tried it in the beginning, but it

seemed to be too much sensory input for him, as he got very agitated. But this time, it's a miracle: He definitely walks better. I start some tail work too, which had seemed to make him more wobbly before, but now seems to also help. I have to remind myself in my excitement not to do too much, to let him process the bodywork.

My friend Alice told me about a holistic vet who had been coming to her place, and that maybe Dr. Hannah could help Tristan. I get an appointment with her after Tristan has been home for two weeks. She does a chiropractic adjustment and an acupuncture session. Tristan is wary at first, but then gets into it, laying his head against Dr. Hannah's chest. She also suggests we do the Panacur again, as his blood work shows high eosinophils. (Eosinophils are a type of white blood cell that become active in certain disease processes, such as allergic disease or infection from a parasite.) She tells me to continue with my TTouch in between his chiropractic and acupuncture appointments. And he actually starts to get better.

Two weeks later Tristan has a big relapse. I can tell it's happening because he gets extremely clingy with me. He pushes his head against my chest and just stands there. He's more ataxic (unsteady and uncoordinated), drags his hind toes, and is depressed. Dr. Hannah is convinced that this is a generalized neurological condition and she recommends another EPM test, just in case the first was a false negative. All of his symptoms fit EPM. (The irony of this is not lost on me. My horse Ari had EPM several years ago; Dr. Hines took care of him at WSU also.) Dr. Hannah also recommends something called Zeolites, to help his immune system deal with any kind of infection.

His EPM results are negative, and I admit I'm a little disappointed. I desperately want some kind of diagnosis, and the reality is there isn't going to be one. I continue to do Octopus on Tristan's legs, tail work, leg circles. Dr. Hannah is pregnant,

and won't be able to continue his treatments, so I have to carry on myself. And this is where I'm beyond grateful for TTouch. I'd be lost without something to do, and it clearly makes a difference.

*Postscript:* Tristan got ill in August of 2009. He had the one major relapse, and several smaller incidents. Each time he had an "episode," it was preceded by extreme emotional distress and a clinginess that was very unlike him. Overall, though, he improved. I had Dr. Hannah's associate do a couple more adjustments on Tristan, especially when he started to have trouble with his hoof trims. Now before his farrier visits I do a TTouch session including leg circles, tail work, and Octopus, along with some Jellyfish Jiggles on his back and neck. And then I do it again after his trim. For about a year after the illness, occasionally I'd see a little bobble, or he'd thread his hind legs, or there'd be a sway to his walk, and I'd immediately up my TTouch routine.

Two years later, I still find myself watching Tristan like a hawk for anything odd about his posture or gait. The slightest bobble makes my stomach drop and my chest tighten, and I think, "Here we go again." Yes, I'm slightly paranoid. There was the day I came home and he was lying down in the pasture, and it looked like he was having a seizure. I'm running, calling to him to get up. He looked up at me surprised, clearly wondering why I was flailing about. He was just in

the middle of a roll. The other day, he slipped on the wet grass as he was making a turn, and he fell. I held my breath, and he got up and walked it off. He looked sheepish, and if he could speak I think he would have said, "No worries, I'm good, I meant to do that."

Tristan gallops in from the pasture every evening, always the first one, just like he used to. He looks completely normal. But I haven't ridden him since the illness. I just don't feel that it would be safe for either one of us, and really, I'm content to just let him be a pasture ornament. I've started some clicker training games and tricks with him, and he loves it—he's always been the showman. As I watch him gallop, I can't help but think of how close I came that day to turning around and going back to WSU to have him euthanized. So, so close. And I think of how hopeless and heartsick I felt after I brought him home, seeing him try and then give up all those times. Well, without TTouch, it *would* have been hopeless. There were a lot of factors to his recovery, but the bottom line is, without TTouch, I would have given up, and today, I'd be missing this. I'd only have memories of Tristan flying across that pasture.

Shannon Finch is a P2 for companion animals and horses. She is also a graduate of and certified Training Partner with the Karen Pryor Academy for Animal Training and Behavior. Shannon recently completed a Master's degree in Humane Education. She is a frequent contributor to TTEAM Connections.

## Shadow Chasing

By Toni Shelbourne - UK - P2

One of the most distressing behaviours owners have to deal with is shadow chasing. Dogs become so obsessed they can dig through carpets, chew walls and cause injuries. Is this a bad habit or a medical condition, and what can be done to alter the behaviour? Dogs can have obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) tendencies; however shadow chasing can start from the simple act of teasing a dog with a reflection. Others develop the habit through boredom. Like people though, some cases will be a true OCD condition. Whatever the motivation, the dog becomes distressed. I recently worked with Blake, this is his story.

Blake showed signs of chasing shadows as early as ten weeks of age. This developed further to an obsession with water. He would hit the surface with his paw to stimulate the ripples, biting and chasing them. He also pulled on the leash and was terrified of heavy goods vehicles. Although he got adequate physical exercise and company he was super-bright, he needed to use his brain.

When assessing Blake it was clear he was holding tension in the neck, head and face. Tension patterns in these areas often manifest into nervous or obsessive behaviours and promote a sense of constant alertness. He was also reluctant about his tail being touched which was tight and cold. Often dogs with fear issues will have these qualities to the tail as well as tension in the hind

quarter. The gums were dry and Blake was very mouthy. He had a dip in his mid back which was created by the fore and hind legs placed in a position in front and behind the vertical plumb line from his shoulders and hips. This offensive posture was helping to create the feeling of anxiety, high state of alertness and fear reactions around traffic. I worked with Blake to help release these holding patterns through the body with the TTouches, (specialised ways of moving the skin in lifts, circles and strokes). When he became boisterous I calmed him with a TTouch called the Springbok, (think about antelopes jumping really high when trying to escape predators) if this movement is performed randomly all over the body it helps the nervous system settle. The dog can then pay attention to you, enabling hyperactive dogs to listen.

A body wrap was fitted, an elasticized bandage which hugs the body. This valuable tool helped Blake stop, think, remain calm and perceive what his body was doing and how he was carrying himself. It can help to achieve physical balance which in turn brings the mental and emotional state into alignment too. For me the body wrap had multiple jobs to achieve. I wanted Blake to start thinking about his behaviour of shadow chasing, not unconsciously throw himself into the action, to feel more confident around situations he felt were scary, like the traffic, and



then to reorganise his body so he could walk to heel whilst on leash. The wrap really seemed to calm him and combined with the TTouces I could distract and redirect if he started to shadow chase.

Lead walking was tackled next. Knowing connections around the neck can heighten pulling behaviours, we fitted a harness. With two points of contact using a double ended lead, the most important connection being at the front of the harness, I was able to shift his point of gravity. With evenly distributed weight on all four legs, Blake would not only be able to walk in balance but he would feel bolder as with self carriage comes self control and self confidence, at the moment Blake had none of these. Blake became light in my hand and responsive to the softest of signals. The other advantage of the harness system was when he 'planted' himself we were able to give a sympathetic forward signal which didn't pull on his neck. Once his owner was happy with the leading techniques we briefly walked up to a busier road to see his reactions to traffic. By watching his body language and calming signals, (signals dogs display when they are unsure), we were able to help Blake cope by either increasing the space between him and the traffic or supporting with TTouces.

By the end of the session he was already showing signs of improvement. I asked his owner to obtain a calming cap to reduce Blake's vision. These caps have a thin mesh like material over the eyes which can help reduce visual stimulus and are great for shadow chasers.

Two weeks later I visited Blake again for another session. He was calmer, easier to redirect if he started to chase however this was decreasing. If he did have a bad day, the calming cap was helping to reduce the intensity. His lead walking had improved and he was coping better on walks, coming out of the water quicker when called. He looked and felt softer throughout the body but was still holding some tension. After fitting his body wrap, harness and a face wrap, (elastic around his head to promote focus and emotional balance), we walked to the park and let him off leash but left the body and face wrap on. Normally he could at any moment bolt off to find water, but the few times he started to run off I was able to call him back and keep him engaged. Finally as we approached the pond he rushed ahead and got in the water. His behaviour was different though and after ten minutes we were able to calmly call him out and put him back on a long leash, previously he could be in the pond for hours.

At another pond, whilst still on leash, I asked Blake to approach the water a few steps at a time, calming him each stage with TTouces and not allowing him to go forward unless he was focused on me and responsive. When we reached the water he was relaxed, I let him paddle for a few seconds then calmly called him away, which he did instantly. We repeated the exercise a few times, making sure he received huge amounts of praise when he responded. You could see he was really enjoying the new level of interaction he was receiving and did everything we asked of him. The session was a great success and we returned home.

Six weeks later I received this email from Blake's owner.

*'Hi Toni*

*Blake is doing well and even his dog-sitter says that he has calmed down. I use the face wrap when we go to the fields and if I say 'no' to water, or 'out' if he does go in it, he obeys me! I taught him in 10 mins with treats to close the back door after he has opened it to come in. It is his party piece now. He learns things very quickly'.*

This proved that with the right mental stimulation and support Blake could learn to direct his energy into more appropriate tasks and not have to chase shadows or obsess about water. Blake is a very smart dog and not all cases can be helped so easily in such a short time but with the right handling and equipment most dogs can improve. However bad it gets there is always something an owner can do with the right advice and support. Be proactive if your dog has this condition and if they do not, never, ever tease him with reflections as it might come back to haunt you.

*Toni Shelbourne has been working professionally with animals for over 22 years. She has been involved with Tellington TTouch for the past 14 years.*

*Toni has written a book The Truth About Wolves & dogs: Dispelling the myths of dog training It will be available soon.*

## From A Reader

Hi Robyn,

I want to thank you for showing me the Turtle Touch at the workshop. I tried it on my Mother-in-law who suffers from arthritis. Her fingers bunch up and it's quite painful for her. I visited with her when we returned from Vernon and did some Turtle TTouch on her hands. I saw her again yesterday to do some more and she said her hands felt good for 2-3 days after I did it the first time. Yeh!

Another "aha" moment for me happened when I taught a clinic in Red Deer on Saturday. One of my students has a Saddlebred who carries his head very high, is spooky and coiled up like a spring. I had my TTEAM tools with me so I put a head wrap on him. Within a few minutes, he dropped his head and remained calm for the whole 2-hour lesson after wearing the wrap for approx. 20 minutes. The other riders, who know this horse very well, were all gob-smacked. Another yeah!!!

Thanks for the knowledge!  
Barbra-Ann King

Relationship Riding.com

# Alpaca Enrichment

By Marty McGee Bennett , Bend, OR

## Noun

**1.enrichment** - act of making something fuller or more meaningful or rewarding.

**2.enrichment** -something that enriches

Few would argue that owning alpacas enriches our lives. Much has been written about their calming effect on humans and certainly “alpaca watching” is one of the many joys of ownership. But do we enrich their lives? Given the many gifts alpacas offer humans, shouldn't we consider it our duty to do everything we can to provide fulfilling lives for our alpacas?

For South American alpacas, the procurement of adequate forage is Job 1 and requires most of an alpaca's attention. The search ends up providing exercise and interesting and varied food stuff, leaving the animals happy to rest when they can. In this country we provide, if anything, too much of a good thing when it comes to food. Our animals are often overweight, requiring that we restrict their access to pasture by keeping them penned where they cannot roam. Some breeders lack space and their alpacas live in confined areas, sometimes even in crowded conditions. Some alpacas do not have access to pasture at all, and some only for part of each year. In these settings, alpacas receive their allotment of food in one or two concentrated servings per day, leaving the rest of the day empty.

According to Dr. Susan Brown, exotic animal veterinarian and behaviorist, “In the world of behavior and animal keeping ‘enrichment’ is defined as the process by which the environment of captive animals is modified to benefit the inhabitants.” As defined by Shepherdson (1989) and Chamove & Moodie (1990), the goals of environmental enrichment are to:

1. Increase behavioral diversity.
  2. Reduce the frequencies of abnormal behavior.
  3. Increase the range or number of normal (i.e., wild) behavior patterns.
  4. Increase positive utilization of the environment.
- Increase the ability to cope with challenges in a more normal way.

While alpacas do spend a lot of time eating, they also have rich behavioral palettes besides that. The more enrichment opportunities you offer, the more varied behaviors you will see.

The following is a list of enrichments to get you thinking about the possibilities:

- creating browse by offering limbs and branches
- rotational grazing to provide access to new areas periodically
- offering hay in multiple locations outside in winter (weather permitting), requiring foraging behaviors
- offering a variety of hay instead of the same type
- offering oat straw
- offering smaller amounts of hay more often
- varying the location and method of offering hay, grain or treats
- providing scratching posts or street sweeper-type brushes mounted on the wall
- providing mirrors
- providing summer water features, such as hosing or wading pools
- creating varied terrain, such a “king of the hill” mound in the pasture.
- arranging pastures so that the animals have things to watch such as traffic, bicyclists, or walkers.

There are some who might question the value and practicality of providing enrichment. After all, we all lead busy lives. Dr. Brown explained, “There is a large amount of scientific evidence based on experimental design that shows conclusively that environmental enrichments are beneficial to the emotional, psychological and physical health of captive animals. Using environmental enrichments is a PROACTIVE approach, meaning we are working to prevent behavioral problems, not waiting until there IS a problem and then reacting to it (the REACTIVE APPROACH) and trying to fix it..which often doesn't work. Many problem behaviors occur because the animal is highly motivated to do a behavior and then finds a way to express it-- often in a way that is a problem for you!”

There aren't too many alpacas luckier than Gypsy and Canela. These gelded males live in Alaska with Nina Faust, one of the most dedicated alpaca enthusiasts you are likely to find. Given



Photos by: Nina Faust

Photos: A mirror to look into or a brush to scratch on provide stimulation.

the long winter and necessarily limited access to grazing Nina has made it her job to provide enrichment all year long, but particularly in the winter months. She told me, “I started with toys, things to entertain them, especially in the winter. Gypsy liked turning on the lights, figured out how to move the light switch cover, and loved doing things with his lips. A treat panel with holes covered by small, movable doors secured with one screw provided an interesting place to hide carrots. Little bowls with holes drilled



Photo: Gypsy's favorite - a Wobbly Dish Toy where small treats can be 'hidden'.

in the middle and mounted on a dowel secured to a ledge created the “Wobbly Dish Toy,” Gypsy’s all time favorite. Plastic jars with holes made “carrot roll-around.”

Nina also takes her show on the road, explaining: “When the winter footing is good we head out for a fun walk. To spice it up, I walk the route ahead of taking them out so I can hide some carrots and a bit of hay in depressions I make in the snow. This “treasure hunt” really appeals to their seeking instincts and love of finding food. They know we are going out on a hunt and clearly enjoy finding the hidden tidbits. Sometimes if we cannot go out of the pen I will hide food inside the pen. They will scour the pen looking for every morsel!”

Given my particular bent, I believe that training when done in a way that involves the animal can serve both as enrichment and works toward your interests as well. Clicker training is both remarkably efficient and fun, and, given that clicker training is based on positive reinforcement, has the added benefit of ensuring that the animal is a willing participant.

Nina Faust is also a fan of clicker training and has used it with great success. “The first thing I trained them to do was come to a target and to follow it. Then I worked on getting them to cush. Cushing took a while as I was clicker training the behavior as it was performed (also called capturing behavior). Seeing the flash of insight on their faces when they finally understood that I was asking them to sit down was a feeling of total connection with them. This was the moment they understood what the click means and we finally had a common language, the click!”

Off-lead work is a great way to increase the level of trust between human and alpaca. Nina told me, “Once the boys understood the clicker I started creating mazes, jumps, and other tasks for them to master, like weaving between poles, walking through a hoop, standing and sitting on a rug, walking under a tunnel, and ringing a bell. What thoroughly amazed me was that as they caught on to the clicker training ‘game,’ they truly looked forward to these daily training sessions. Even better, I noticed that their level of trust with me increased dramatically, and they were really cueing in to every little thing I did.”

Martha, my friend, helper, and chief of pasture maintenance, came in from the pasture the other day hands on hips and said, “You will never guess what Woody did!” Woody is deaf, incredibly clever and always into something. Martha had been out in the pasture poop scooping with the Gaitor, a John Deer run-about with a dump bed. The animals are always very interested in the Gator, and follow it around the pasture. They have been known to help themselves to Martha’s water bottles, snacks, gloves, or anything else on the seats or in the open glove box.

On this particular day the animals created a new wrinkle. Martha said, “I couldn’t find the key and I *always* leave it in the ignition! I was just about to panic when Woody walked over and spit the key out right onto the hood!” Who knows what Woody was thinking but it was a darn good thing he decided to deposit our one and only key where Martha could find it...had he chosen another time and place, the Gator still might be parked in that field. I suppose the moral of this story is provide enrichment or the alpacas will provide their own!

In writing this article I relied heavily on information and support from Susan Brown, DVM. Dr. Brown is an exotic animal veterinarian with extensive experience with animal behavior. Many thanks to Nina Faust for her help with this article, the wonderful photos and on-going inspiration!

### Getting Your Alpacas to Try New Foods

Getting alpacas to try new things often involves food. Grain works, but carrots, grapes, and other garden vegetable treats are preferable to too much grain or sugary treats. Just because your alpaca will eat something, doesn’t mean that you want to use it for enrichment -- make sure that you are offering healthy foods. If your alpacas don’t know about carrots, for example, it can be a challenge to get them to try this new food. Here are a few ideas:

- Cut the carrots up into very small pieces that are easily chewed.
- Introduce the carrots with a grain treat that your animals already love.
- Mixing shredded carrots with alfalfa leaves can encourage the animals to get a bit of a taste, as it is difficult to separate the small bits of carrots from the leaves.

Editor’s note: Marty is a Camelid Instructor who has written many books on Camelids and is a regular contributor to the newsletter. Remember that you can enrich the environment of most animals, you just have to be creative.  
[www.camelidynamics.com](http://www.camelidynamics.com)



# A Clicker Primer

By Shannon Finch

I love clicker training. Some of you may remember reading about my dog Kipper, a.k.a. Bullet Boy, in *The Kipper Chronicles*. Without my clicker, this dog would have driven me mad. I've used it with both dogs and horses who were intent on hurting me, and feral cats who didn't want anything to do with me. I've used it for horses who didn't want to load in the trailer, or pick up a foot for the farrier. Recently, I trained a pair of young Large Black Hogs (that's their real name) to go to their trough on cue and wait for their meals. Like most pigs, they had a tendency to get very pushy at feeding time. When full grown, these pigs can weigh 600 pounds, and a large man wouldn't be able to wrestle with them, let alone my tiny female client.

For general training, clicker training just can't be beat. It works with any species, it's easy to do, and it's fun. It makes for enthusiastic and creative learners, who offer all kinds of behaviors to see what will get them clicked. They look forward to training. They become problem-solvers. Just as in TTouch, clicker training affects the trainer in a positive way too; we also become more clear, more creative, and better problem-solvers.

The clicker also adds another dimension to my TTouch work. It gives me a way to begin interacting with animals who can't be touched or don't want to be touched, even with a wand. I can click and treat for the animal just standing there, a glance at me, a deep breath, a shift in posture, or proximity to the wand, things that make it easier to begin TTouch work. The clicker also expedites my progress with behavior issues like hyperactivity, reactivity, shyness, and fear.

Could I get there with just TTouch? Absolutely. TTouch is my foundation, the filter that I run everything through. It allows me to address emotional issues far better than I can do with the clicker alone. Also, while the clicker can make learning less stressful, it doesn't generally reduce stress in and of itself. TTouch does. Clicker training is one of my tools, like a body-wrap, a wand, or a head halter. (Just to be clear, there are other skilled TTouch practitioners out there who use clicker training. Sarah Fisher and Marie Miller published a great book, *100 Ways to Train the Perfect Dog*, which includes clicker training and TTouch. I highly recommend this book for you dog folks.)

What follows is a primer on clicker training: What it is, some of the science behind it, how to get started, and other tidbits which I hope will entice you to add it to your toolkit. Bear in mind that I am also using TTouch techniques in the scenarios that I describe even if I don't mention it. In future installments I will go into specifics of how I use the clicker and TTouch together for dogs, cats and horses.

## What Is Clicker Training?

Clicker training is also known as "marker" training. There's no mystery to it: Your animal does a behavior you like, you "mark" the behavior, and then you reinforce with something the animal likes. If you've ever seen a dolphin performing at the aquarium, you've probably seen marker training in action. (Please note that I'm not implying that training dolphins to perform for humans is okay; I just want you to know how they are trained.) The marker in this case is the whistle, and the reinforcement is a fish. A clicker is a type of marker, but markers can be any number of things. For a deaf dog, a trainer might blink a penlight. For a deaf and blind dog, the marker could be a quick tap on the dog's body or a vibrating collar. Whatever the marker, the meaning is the same: "Yes, that's it!" The click, whistle, or vibration gives your animal valuable information: It tells her precisely which behaviors will earn reinforcement. This has tremendous implications for your training: It can be faster and more clear, which makes learning less stressful and more fun. What's not to like?

Marker training has at its roots a simple concept in behavior science: An organism is more likely to learn and repeat actions that result in consequences he/she wants and likes. In other words, if hopping on one foot earns you a hundred dollars, and money is something you want, you are likely to learn to hop on one foot, and repeat it in the hopes of more hundred dollar bills coming your way. Marking that behavior with a click makes it more clear to you what's going to earn you that hundred dollar bill, and you will enthusiastically repeat that behavior.

## Why Can't I Use My Voice?

Remember that cartoon by Gary Larson, the one that shows a dog and a person, and the bubble above the person says, "Blah, blah, Ginger, blah, blah, blah, Ginger?" Most of us talk--a lot--to our animals. That's why I don't want you to use your voice as a marker. There's a good chance that your animal will tune you out, simply because there's been a lot of previous babble, and there's nothing to make them sit up and take notice.

The second reason is timing. I don't know of many people who can be spot-on with a "Good dog, Rover." It can be next to impossible to get it out of your mouth in time, especially when working with reactive animals. The click is very quick, and allows you to be extremely accurate. There are some horse clicker trainers who can use a tongue click, and more power to them. I can't get it out in time, or I'm suddenly plagued with dry mouth, or I get tongue-tied and nothing comes out but a garbled sound.

Our voices can also reflect our mood. Whether we got caught in a traffic jam on the way home, or we had a fight with our

spouse, our voices can show irritation and frustration without us even realizing it. The clicker, on the other hand, doesn't have bad days. It doesn't have bad moods. It doesn't raise its voice in exasperation. It's completely neutral and consistent, which makes it an effective marker.

## When It's Okay to Use Your Voice

Now that I've told you not to use your voice, there are a couple of instances when you might need to. One, if the animal is so noise sensitive that he can't even handle a ballpoint pen click, it would be cruel and counterproductive to continue to click. Some animals can become so hyperactive and overstimulated by the sound of the click, that again, it's counterproductive. In these situations, I will use a soft, slightly drawn out "Yessss" as my marker. Most of us don't walk around saying Yessss, so it's distinct enough to use as a marker.

I advise clients to train a Yesss marker in addition to the clicker anyway. It's not as accurate, but it gives you the ability to mark behaviors when you might not have a clicker. What I don't recommend as a marker is the word "good," because likely it's been overused. And believe it or not, the "good" word may have negative connotations for some animals if previous training sessions have been stressful. This marker also works for people who have trouble manipulating a clicker because of arthritis or other issues.

## Positive Reinforcement

Many of the tools used in traditional training, such as prong collars or electronic collars for dogs, or harsh bits for horses, are simply ways for the trainer to say no. Most dogs classes are one giant NO-fest, with dogs being yanked, scolded and pushed into position. Horses are swatted, spurred and backed up at full speed in the name of "schooling." The animals are corrected for what they are doing wrong, in the hopes that they will figure out what the right answer is. The word correction is a euphemism for punishment. Research has shown that punishment as a training technique often has unintended consequences, increases stress and impedes learning. The animals have to work hard to figure out what's wanted, and they do it to avoid being punished.

Clicker training is the polar opposite of this. Just as in TTouch, we focus on telling the animal what we want, and we reinforce those desirable behaviors with something the animal really wants. This is positive reinforcement. Dog sits, dog gets a treat. Horse comes when called, horse gets a carrot. Positive reinforcement is the foundation of clicker training. You don't click and hit, or click and scold. As the person holding the clicker, there are two things required of you. One, you promise to reinforce after you click. And two, that you have a clear picture of the behavior you want, so you know what to click. It's not fair to the animal if you're all over the map, not knowing what you want.

## Clicker Tips

\*The click means "yes, that's the right behavior." Click as the behavior you want is happening, and then treat.

\*You've made a bargain with your animal that click means treat, so don't forget to give your reinforcement. If you click something by mistake, I would treat it (unless the animal is aggressive or doing something dangerous). Clicker training is very forgiving, but don't keep clicking things you don't want.

\*Caution: Don't mix correction and clicker training. Animals will stop offering behaviors and lose interest if you use punishment and then click for the right behavior. Behaviors that are rewarded will tend to stay, behaviors that aren't, extinguish. If you are dealing with dangerous behaviors, then please get qualified, professional help.

\*Reinforce as soon as you can after the click.

\*One click = one treat.

\*Aim for a high rate of reinforcement, which means click/treat as much as possible. This helps set behaviors quickly. Don't be stingy!

\*If you don't have a clicker on you and your animal does something wonderful, mark the behavior with the word YES! and reinforce with a treat if you have one, a scratch or a ball throw, whatever is motivating for the animal, even if it's not a top-shelf reinforcer.

\*The clicker is for training new information. I promise, you won't have to carry it with you forever! The clicker is for training new behaviors, or to communicate something more clearly, for instance, an animal that needs to stand still for a procedure--you can use the clicker to communicate that. Once the behavior has been trained, you fade away your clicker and treats until you need to train the next thing.

\*Don't use the clicker as a way to get your animal's attention. If you click as your dog or horse is running away from you, they might stop the first couple of times, but then they'll keep going away from you, because that's what you've clicked.

\*Short sessions. I repeat, short sessions. Count out 15 treats, or set a timer for one or two minutes. That's your session. You can certainly take a little break in between sessions, because I know, if you've driven an hour to get to the barn, a one minute session isn't going to cut it. The point is, don't drill your animal for an hour.

\*Keep records. I hate keeping records myself, but it has helped me figure out where there are holes in my training. I can see if I moved forward too fast, or if I'm not forward quickly enough for my animal.

## Reinforcers

A reinforcer is anything that increases the likelihood that a specific behavior will occur in the future. The carrot and the yummy dog treat are reinforcers. You want to use reinforcers that really get your animal, (or person), fired up. A hundred dollar bill is motivating for many people, but not so much for a dog, a horse, or a cat. For many animals, food is a preferred reinforcer, though not always. Just ask anyone with a ball-obsessed Border Collie: Steak could be raining from the skies, pelting her on the head, and she sees only the tennis ball. This is the important thing about reinforcers: The animal is the authority on what is reinforcing. You may think it's the steak you just grilled up for your dog, but she may be dreaming of a special moment with her tennis ball.

My clients often say, "He really works for praise." Now, that may be true of some animal, somewhere. I've yet to meet that animal. Think about it this way: There aren't many of us who go to work simply because we love our bosses and enjoy hearing, "Hey, you're great, thanks for coming in." It's not that we don't like our boss or our job, but the greater motivation is more likely that paycheck that comes on Friday. I gently point out that my training bag of stinky dog treats or tuna or horse crunchies is trumping their praise and petting by a long mile.

Please don't take this personally, it doesn't mean our dog, or cat, or horse, doesn't love us. In fact, they must love us because they sure put up with a lot of aversive behaviors from us. I can't tell you how many times I see people hug their dog, or give their horse a big thumping slap to say "well done!" all the while the animal's body language is saying, "If you weren't my person, I'd let you know how much I don't like that." Cats often will let you know, usually in a painful way, when the reinforcer you've chosen is aversive or even punishing, which is why they have the unfair reputation as untrainable. The point is, figure out your animal's top-shelf reinforcers, and use those in your training.

If you're worried about using food, I understand. I'm asking that you get over it. For most organisms, food is a primary reinforcer (meaning, they want and need it, and will do almost anything for it). That's just a fact, and if we can use it to help these animals, why wouldn't we? In my experience, the clicker does not create a food-dependent animal. In clicker training, you are marking behaviors, whereas with just chucking food, you could be reinforcing anything. Maybe it was the sit, but it could also have been the eye blink, a breath or the jumping up that happened when you said "good dog." And often, if you don't have any food on you, the animal becomes disinterested. This doesn't happen with the clicker. The animal is as eager to work as she was the day before.

In training, the timing of your reinforcement is key. For optimal learning, you should reinforce as the behavior is happening, and the reality is, it's nearly impossible to do so. Here's where the clicker comes in. It is a "bridge" signal: It bridges the time between the desired behavior and the delivery of the reinforce-

ment. The click is a secondary reinforcer (also known as a conditioned reinforcer); it has no meaning until you've paired it with a primary reinforcer, which I'll tell you how to do in a bit. But once it is paired with a primary reinforcer such as food or a ball toss, you've got a powerful tool that does double duty. It not only tells your animal precisely which behaviors earn reinforcement, but it also buys you time to deliver that reinforcement.

While you want to deliver reinforcement quickly, you will inevitably fumble, or drop your treat bag, or get distracted for a moment. No worries: You've clicked the correct behavior, and your animal knows the reinforcement is coming. Just don't get into the habit of being slow.

## The Clicker

Clickers are basically glorified toy "crickets," which those of a certain age may remember. Nowadays, there are all kinds of clickers on the market. The most common, and least expensive, is the box clicker. This is simply a plastic box with a metal tab that you depress to make the click sound. Other clickers have a button. For folks with limited mobility in their hands, these button-type clickers are easier to manage. I have a battery-operated clicker that gives me four sound options: a high click, a low click, a ding, and a cricket chirrup. Some animals find the box clickers too loud, and if I have any doubt at all, I use a ballpoint pen as a clicker. The button type clickers don't tend to be as loud as the box click, so that would be my next choice. It's important to be able to get to your clicker quickly. You can hang it around your neck, or use a wrist coil. I prefer the wrist coil. The neck ones bounce around and are hard for me to get to, but others swear by them. In a pinch, I've used a rubber band or ponytail band to attach my clicker to my wrist. What you don't want to do is just have it in your pocket. You'll miss so many opportunities to reinforce your animal. And if it's a box clicker, you will grab it and inevitably try to push the wrong end, which won't work.

## Treat Bags

If you are using food, you will need something to put it in that's easy to get to. There are treat bags that you can hook to your pants, and others that go around your waist, like a fanny pack, that open and close easily. For many years I simply stuck treats in my jacket pockets, but that does get messy, and animals will be constantly nosing you. A TTouch friend gave me one that goes around my waist and closes easily. Love it. When I used the one that hooks to the pants, every time I bent over, treats would spill over all. Bonus for the animal, bummer for training momentum. Try some out and see what works best for you.

## Mechanics

Decide which hand will be your clicker hand, and which hand will be your treat delivery hand. I am right-handed, so I click with my left, treat with my right. If you're using a bag that hooks to your pants, put it on the same side as your treat delivery hand. You can slide a waist bag to the right spot. It's good



to practice clicking and treating without an animal first. Click and put the treat into a cup until the motions feel automatic. Most of the time, you will keep your treat hand at your side or at your waist, wherever it's comfortable. After you click, reach in for the treat. If your hand is in the bag, that's what the animal will focus on instead of offering behaviors. There are some situations where I may have food in my hand, usually if I need to be very quick with my reinforcement, say, with a reactive dog or horse.

## Charge up Your Clicker

There is absolutely nothing magical about the clicker. It's simply a noisemaker, and will have no meaning to your animal when you first click it. We have to create meaning for it by teaching your animal that the click means something fantastic is coming. We call this charging up your clicker, and it's what makes the clicker become a secondary reinforcer. I always start with the clicker in my pocket to muffle the click, just to see if the animal finds the sound aversive.

Click and immediately treat for 10-15 clicks. Move around so that your click isn't location specific. If you're working in the house with a dog or cat, go to different rooms. If you're working with a horse, you may need to work through a stall door so you're not getting mugged, but you can still move around a little.

You never need to do this step again. Once your clicker is charged, it's charged. You'll know they're getting the picture if they snap to attention and watch you intently. If the animal is a little nervous or shut down, you may need to charge your clicker over the period of a couple of days, or you may need to use a ballpoint pen as a clicker, or your soft Yessss.

## So, How Do I Get A Behavior?

You can click any behaviors you want, whether you intend to put them on cue, or you want them to be default behaviors. For example, you may click a reactive dog turning her head away in the presence of another dog, or a dog staying four-on-the-floor instead of jumping up. These don't have to have verbal cues or hand signals attached to them, they are just good habits, otherwise known as default behaviors. You click them when you see them, or you use a lead line, wand, head halter, or other piece of equipment that can help the animal be in the right place so you can click/treat.

There are several other ways to get a behavior. You can lure the animal with food. This is also called Lure/Reward. It is positive reinforcement training, but what's lacking of course is the marker, so it isn't as accurate. Animals can also become dependent on the lure, so in clicker training, we only want to lure a couple of times to jumpstart a behavior, and then we fade the lure away.

## Reinforcer Tips

\*Use something soft for dogs and cats, so it can be eaten quickly and not leave a bunch of crumbs for them to nose around for. The treats should be small, like pea-sized.

\*Sometimes people say their dogs don't like treats, and when I ask what they're using, they pull out their tiny bag of kibble their dog eats every day. Yuck! Don't use the animal's regular meals for training. For dogs, I like the Natural Balance logs that I cut up into tiny pieces and stick them in baggies in the freezer. I can pull them out whenever I need them, they can be fed frozen. Some cats like them too. Some people use cooked chicken, steak, hot dogs, cheese, or cheese whiz in the tube, Cherrios, liver treats, Solid Gold jerky treats, Charley Bears; the list is endless.

\*For cats, try a little highly aromatic cat food or tuna on a spoon or tongue depressor, small bits of cheese, or soft cat treats. My cats go insane for Greenies pill pockets, which you can tear off into little pieces.

\*For horses, you can use cut up apples, carrots, a mouthful of grain. I put these last in a pan, click, offer the pan, horse takes a bite, you take the pan away. You can hand feed, but often the horse will scrape your hand with her teeth in an effort to get every last bit, which makes you yank your hand away, which makes the horse more anxious about the food.

\*If your dog is an alligator when it comes to treats, toss the treat or scoop your hand underneath the dog's mouth and sort of shove the treat in. Dogs are alligators because they've likely clunked someone's hand before and the person yanked the hand away, taking the treats with it. This makes dogs crazy.

\*You may need to reduce the animal's regular meal rations because the animal is getting more food.

\*When something is difficult, use very high value reinforcement. A dollar may not be enough to make you bungee jump off that bridge, but five hundred might do it. It's good to have several reinforcers in your repertoire, some a little lower value, some a little higher.

\*If the animal is too stressed to eat, that's okay, click and offer anyway. What usually happens is that they will eventually figure it out and take it, and that's an opening to good things happening. The ability to eat says a lot about the stress level of the animal. As we note in TTouch, if the animal is eating, he/she is breathing. Breathing is good.

\*A high rate of reinforcement will improve learning, aim for at least 12-15 clicks per minute. Nearly everyone that starts clicker training is much too stingy.

\*Reinforcing too early is a little bit like bribery. Click the behavior you want, then treat.

A common and effective way to get behavior in clicker training is through shaping. Shaping is simply clicking approximations of the behavior you want, getting a little more each time. Here's a very simplistic example. Say you want your horse to step on the trailer ramp. He may put one foot on the ramp. Click/treat that. Then he puts a second foot on ramp. Click/treat that. Then he moves forward a step. Click/treat. And another step, and so on until he's actually in the trailer. This may or may not happen all in one session. It might take three or four short sessions to get all the way into the trailer, but that's fine. To me, that's preferable to beating them in.

We can also capture a behavior. This requires being prepared as well as being in the right place at the right time. I did this with Kipper's goofy tail-chasing behavior. I was sitting at my desk one day, and out of the corner of my eye, I saw him start to chase his tail, which is very fun for him. I grabbed the clicker on my desk (I have clickers everywhere!) and clicked the next spin. And then I ran and got him a treat. He immediately offered me the spin again, and I clicked and treated it. I was able to put it on cue very quickly, within a couple two minute sessions. "I could have shaped Kipper's spin, using a little bit of luring, or a target stick (see targeting below), but by capturing it, I got it fully formed with all the nuances of how he uses his body to perform this trick. I might not have been able to do that as well with shaping; the spin might have looked robotic rather than natural. Some behaviors just beg to be captured."

## Start Clicking! Target Training

Target training is a form of clicker training where we teach an animal to touch an object with some part of his body, say, a paw or hoof, or nose touch. If you've seen a service dog turn on a light by hitting the switch with her paw, or hit the Walk button at the crosswalk, that's targeting. Targeting has many practical applications. Target-trained dogs can go to a mat and lay down, follow a target over obstacles (great for introducing new dogs to agility), work with frightening objects, overcome fear of people and other dogs, and get into vehicles. Horses can learn to load into the trailer, touch scary objects with their nose, and "station" to a specific area for medical procedures. (Zoo's use stationing all the time. For example, the hyena can station at the fence for a blood draw rather than a staff person going into the enclosure with the her.) Shelter cats who have learned a high-five, are more friendly and "show" better to potential adopters. Animals can open and shut doors. And they can even learn to identify objects by name, as in, "get your teddy bear," or "go to the water bucket." I taught the Large Black Hogs to go to their feeding zone with the cue "trough." The trough was the target, and they stationed there, waiting politely for the food to appear.

Target training is a great way to get started with the clicker. It gives you great timing, you'll see success quickly, and it takes you through the process of getting a behavior and putting it on cue. It's also very fun for both handler and animal. (I will say,

though, just because you can train something doesn't mean you should. Be respectful of your animal, and understand the species you're working with. Some animals don't "do" tricks. Honor that. You can still teach many practical skills without being demeaning.)

## Target Training For Dogs

One of the easiest ways to get started with target training is to teach a nose touch to your hand. Start by rubbing a little bit of a smelly soft dog treat on your hand, and then present your hand to your dog. She will likely sniff your hand. The instant you feel the touch, click and then treat your dog. Do this for a few repetitions, and then start to move your hand around to different heights. Then you can move your hand a bit farther away, so your dog has to follow it. This is a great way to move her, say, over agility obstacles, or to start heel work. It's also really useful for the recall. Remember to click and treat as soon as your dog touches your hand.

If you present your hand, and your dog is looking around uninterested, remove your "target," and then try again. You want to teach your dog to respond quickly, and if you hold your target there waiting, and then click the slow response, you'll get more slow responses. It helps if your dog is a bit hungry. Keep your sessions short. Count out 10, 12 or 15 treats, and that's a good session. It's better to do several short sessions a day rather than one hour-long one.

Add the cue "Touch" as soon as your dog is deliberately and reliably touching your hand. Just as your dog is leaning in to touch, and you know he's committed, say the word "touch," and then click and treat when he touches. Do this for a few repetitions, or a few sessions, depending on the dog. Then you can try presenting your hand and saying the cue to see if your dog has it. If not, just go back a step, saying the word touch just as he's doing the behavior. When your dog is touching on cue, you can fade the clicker out. Remember, as with any training, you have to take it on the road and test it out in different situations and with distractions.

You can transfer this to things your dog is afraid of. For instance, I will teach dogs to touch the shoe of someone they are nervous about, with some preliminary TTouch work of course.

## Target Training for Cats

For cats, you can use a chopstick, a wooden spoon, or your finger as a target. There are target sticks on the market that have a little ball at the end; I have a retractable target stick that has a button clicker in the handle, which is very swanky. You could make a similar target stick by putting a ping pong ball on the end of a dowel or chopstick.

You can teach a hand touch (see procedure above), or even better, you can teach a high-five. You can use a target stick, or you can start with your hand, but the target stick is more likely

to elicit the pawing behavior. Start by holding your target slightly above your cat's head. Most likely she will raise her paw to it. Click and treat that. If she paws at it, or if she actually makes contact, click and treat. Gradually move your hand down the target stick until it covers the end and she touches your hand with her paw. You can then fade the target stick out and turn your hand fingers pointing up. Add the cue "high-five" when she's reliably touching your hand with her paw. (If in the beginning she just stares blankly at you, start with your target stick lower and wiggle it like it's a toy. You'll then gradually take your target higher to work up to that high-five behavior.)

## Target Training for Horses

I don't recommend teaching a horse to high-five for obvious reasons. I also don't generally teach horses to hand touch, because there's the possibility of biting. But I do use target sticks all the time. To make a sturdy horse target stick, I use a dowel with a plastic supplement lid on the end. Cut two slits in the middle of the lid so you can thread your dowel through, and you've got a great target stick. A nose touch is taught the same as a hand touch. Present your target, click and treat for touching with the nose. Add the cue "touch" when the horse is reliably touching the target. You can also teach a horse to do a hoof touch to a target on the ground (again, the supplement lids can come in handy). In that case my cue would be something like "foot" or "lid" to differentiate it between a nose touch.

## Doesn't This Take A Long Time?

Some say that that clicker training takes longer than compulsion training. Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't. The fact is, all good training takes time. What people don't realize is how much time they spend punishing or constantly telling the animal NO. This is a cultural thing, so it feels "right" to us. But here's an interesting thought: Why not just train the thing we want in the first place? Your animal has many, many behaviors to choose from in response to your request. Why go through all the rigmarole and stress of saying "Not that" over and over? Adding the clicker into your training takes the guesswork out of the process and lets you say "yes" over and over. I've had animals get something in as little as two or three clicks, which is simply amazing, and not uncommon. Moreover, they enjoy it, which releases feel-good chemicals in the brain. And I don't know about you, but when my animal gets something, I enjoy it too, and training becomes fun for everyone. Karen Pryor's website, [www.clickertraining.com](http://www.clickertraining.com) has tons of ideas for clicker training with different species and lists many resources. Check it out if you want to go further--this is just the tip of the iceberg!

Shannon Finch is a P2 for companion animals and horses. She is also a graduate of and certified Training Partner with the Karen Pryor Academy for Animal Training and Behavior. Shannon recently completed a Master's degree in Humane Education. She owns and operates AnimalKind Training, teaching and training throughout western Washington.

## Thoughts about our Business

By Laura Faber-Morris

At Wholistic Equine Center, we believe in safe, practical, gentle and fun interactions with horses. Here we combine the TTEAM and Connected Riding where people can learn how to move in connection with their horse and their own bodies, thereby building on their success. Ground work and balanced riding instruction provide tools that enhance connection, communication, trust and strong bonds with horses.

We work for our school horses. They know and understand their jobs. It is our job to teach our children to have fun, and be safe. Learning is always achieved when the environment is tailored to different learning styles.

Our gentle school horses' personalities are all unique and different, just like the children who come to the Ranch. Our programs are based on cooperative learning, not force. We believe



that when horses and children feel understood then they learn and thrive. Misunderstandings with horses are too frequent and most always avoidable. Children learning how to have clear boundaries with horses can take that and apply it to other aspects of life.

The collaborative approach of TTEAM and Connected Riding as applied in the teaching and re-education of horse and rider has proven successful. When you combine these two methods and apply

them to a horse and rider who are disconnected in their bodies, their potential for proper posture and lasting change is ever present.

Teaching TTEAM/Connect has equipped me with the skills to identify tension and restrictions in both the human and equine body and to know how to creatively and practically teach it to



others.

This dualistic approach allows people to see their horses as they truly are: beings that experience discomforts in the body and/or frustration when learning new things.

I do not teach in any particular order. I meet horse and rider where they are at. This also means that some people come to you with something particular in mind. Like, "I am having trouble collecting my horse and picking up the right lead."

For me this translates to "my horse is completely jammed at the base of the neck, off balance, not shifting weight on all fours in each stride because I am so static in my own posture that my back kills me after each ride and I am not having fun. Did I mention my horse also pulls back and dances in the cross ties?" We as TTEAM/Connect practitioners are obligated to find our way into this kind of situation without overwhelming our new clients with every little thing that you think their horse needs.

Remember, when we start with what people perceive as practical and they feel capable of, then we will directly influence the horse's life for the better. We all know that this horse needs ground work. We also know that many people are not open to the time it takes or at least they think they don't have time. Yet, most people are willing to address their riding if it is for the greater good of their horse and if it means better performance (fun).

Here I will share a real experience with one of those kinds of people who now is a TTEAM/Connect junkie. Put a Connected Halter on the horse and balanced the person in the saddle. This is exactly what I have had to do on more than one occasion. While teaching the rider some of the keys to connection in the saddle I had her horse on the one line. While getting rider feedback I continued to incorporate cheek press, delineations of the throat latch, caterpillar, shoulder presses and shoulder delineations. She felt the difference from the saddle when the horse connected on the one line. She was hooked. To her there was nothing more empowering than riding a horse that was telescoping through the neck and moving in connection. Let the backfilling begin because now she felt her horse's potential!

We had a woman come to a clinic who couldn't walk her horse from point A to point B without yanking, pulling and chronically circling. TTEAM rescued both of them from nauseating twirling and high headedness. Leading exercises such as Elegant Elephant and Homing Pigeon with a sliding line on the off sides through a labyrinth and just walking an S produced results just short of miraculous! Both of them could actually think about what was going on in a proactive manner because bodies were now in a more balanced leading position instead of constant action/reaction. Horses that are difficult to control in my opinion usually have some physical imbalance or restriction in



the body. This horse responded well to firm leg stroking, TTouch over the entire bladder meridian, promise wrap as well as leg work, mouth work and tail work.

The women and horse mentioned above were now ready for more helpful groundwork tools such as the basics of combing a line attached to the halter. Once she got the subtle rhythm of combing the lead line hand over hand while rotating her hips toward and away from the horse while standing next to the horse's head either with a zephyr line or a Connected Riding

line, we know that this helps a horse release through the neck. We all know that a lower head equals a calmer horse, right? Well what if you combed hand over hand as you guided the horse over poles. Try it and your horse will learn to stretch into the support, letting go at the poll from the oscillation of the combing. Then when you see lifting through the base of the neck, giving a telescoping appearance and hear the deep breaths and blows, licks and chews, you can be assured that your horse is noticing the difference.

It is easy once people get in their bodies. In TTEAM you make a quarter turn to halt. The horse gets it. It works even better when you are aware of your own body's balance. When I quarter turn to halt, I "think" up with my little helium balloons on my wrists. Chances are that when I "think" up the horse's head goes down. Remember the rule of opposites. People get this concept quickly. Years ago when Robyn demonstrated opposition reflex to me I thought, "Duh, that makes perfect sense!"

Living in Montana, I don't have the luxury to put my foot down about how these techniques should be learned and in which order.

There are fundamental basics that all clients must learn and the major one is the quarter turn to halt. Part of my program teaches children and nervous novices on my own horses. Here I systematically teach TTEAM/Connect and horse and rider build on their success each time. The other half of my business is working with children and their horses or adults who love their horses but the relationship isn't working (i.e. they are afraid or intimidated by them). All of these horses typically come confused about signals and boundaries or roles, in pain or have restrictions in their body. This is where an extensive background and practice in TTEAM/Connect helps with the multitude of "tools in the toolbox" I have access to. Everything I need to address, from physical postures of horse and rider, apart or together, allows a new partnership to develop using TTouch, Connected Riding presses, slides, and finally balance with the key being at one with the horse under saddle. TTEAM/Connect is based on taking ownership of our ability to change behavior and my role as a teacher is to "chunk down" the learning for my clients. It is about the practical guidance demonstrating what connection feels like that people can understand and provide

feedback thereby learning it all a lot faster. When a client's horse spooks and canters off and the client automatically release their hips and soften their joints while with each breath, exhaling forward while lifting through the sternum they have found that instead of panicking, the default is better, easier and more effective. Once the language is learned, i.e. "Cheetah", "Dingo", "Caterpillar", etc. it is just a matter of comparing and contrasting, and being open minded to feed back. Remember these are the clients that I need to help immediately and they need to walk away feeling successful.

As we all know there are different kinds of learning styles and those of us with different learning styles don't always fit into the education prescription for learning and teaching. Irregardless of how people or animals learn, we all can agree that we tend to retain information quicker, better and faster when we feel safe physically and emotionally. This sense of safety (security) allows us to explore and challenge ourselves without extra stress thus weaving information into our minds and bodies.

If you have been around horses long enough to know that if you are at the barn and you ask twenty people the same question you get as many if not more different answers. Imaging how your horse feels after their eager owner decides to try yet another method of training. Don't get me wrong, tools in the toolbox are important, however, knowing what they are each for and when and how to use them are another story.

I came across Peggy Cummings at the TTEAM Advanced Training and Celebration. I was intrigued by her work with horses and people. I could tell that Peggy was very different from many teachers that I had worked with at other clinics and that her prescription for teaching was much different. As a TTEAM Practitioner II and a Connected Riding Practitioner, I draw not only from my individual experience as a receiver of information filtered by learning differences. In all the years I have taught riding no other method has been as easy to teach (together with TTEAM). I teach how I learn and Connected Riding has given me the tools to empower others to feel the ease of it. We have all had the fast paced, unclear lessons where we are told to put body parts here or there, "sit deep" and my personal favorite, "sit up and relax"! Or we have had so much imagery and philosophy thrown at us that we feel like we can't ride at all. Most people that I work with including children, teens, women of all ages, and the token man from time to time, come to me because it makes sense and their lessons are progressive. Once they learn the language and the connection between TTEAM and CR language and the sensations in their body it is just a matter of "remembering to remember" or as Robyn likes to say, "Find it, feel it, let it go". In other words all my students learn to attach sensation in their body to a key phrase. For example, "crease release" would clue a student that perhaps they could let go of the death grip of their inner thigh. Once they let go of the hold it now leaves room to notice what might change in themselves or their horses. Perhaps they feel deeper and more secure in the saddle and the horse's walk is more rhythmic.

As a teacher there is nothing worse than listening to yourself repeat the same thing over and over, week after week, and still see your students wondering what it is they are supposed to feel. They already know what they are supposed to look like. Repeating instructions in a negative way only reinforces the unwanted response. In TTEAM and Connected Riding all teaching language is put in positive terms with a compare and contrast which translates into clear concise understanding of what a person is supposed to feel. Tools provided by TTEAM/Connected Riding language translates my favorite useless riding instruction language such as "relax" to exhale up light and float forward.

The rider interprets in a split second that "crease release" means for them "relax" in that moment. As a TTEAM and Connected Riding Practitioner, it becomes very easy to see minute details that are the rider's keys to Connection or break in old patterns of braced or disconnected postures. If I just say "relax", in my opinion, this does not give the rider enough information as hard as it is to believe. Remember most people over think riding instruction so much that it holds them back from fully integrating the work's powerful connection and clear cues.

It is basic physics for every action there is an equal and opposing reaction. Anyone who has ever ridden a horse once can relate to the sensation of the horses' first step forward. The upper body's physical reaction to this step is to fall behind the vertical or plumb line sitting in the saddle. Thus the first step set us up for immediate tension in our body so as not to fall off. Bottom line is anyone who has ridden needs to do something to stay on the horse and most people will come back for more when they feel safe.



Photo: Using The Playground of Higher Learning under saddle improves balance for both and gives new focus to exercises.

Laura Faber-Morris lives in Whitefish, Montana with her husband and their son. She and her business partner, Shannon Haycox operate the Wholistic Equine Center. Laura is a TTEAM P2 and a Connected Riding Practitioner.

# The Problem with Collars

By Peter Dobias, DVM

Before you start reading the following lines, I invite you to do a little test. Open your hands with your thumbs touching each other. Place the thumbs at the base of the throat and with the fingers pointing back and surrounding the neck. Now, take a deep breath, squeeze and pull back with all your force keeping your thumbs connected.

This is how many dogs feel when they are on the leash and they are pulling.

If you are still keen to continue with this experiment, put a choke chain around your neck and attach it to a leash. Ask a friend to grab the end of the leash and pull and jerk on it periodically. Welcome to the dog world! No, I will not make you go on with this experiment and ask you to test a prong collar or electric shock collar. I just want you to become more aware of what is happening to dogs and that collars have caused more injuries than you can imagine.

One day, my dog Skai and I were on one of our favorite walks in Capilano Canyon near our home in North Vancouver. The wild river has carved the rock into breathtaking scenery with moss-covered cliffs, white water rapids and old growth rainforest.

Just a few minutes after starting our walk, I noticed a man with a young German shepherd on a leash. The poor little pup was struggling to say hi however his owner had a different idea. He was determined to prevent his dog from coming closer to us by yanking and jerking harshly on the leash that was attached to a choke chain. **With every yank, I caught myself closing my eyes, cringing and feeling sorry for the poor dog.** He was coughing and gagging with every jerk and had no idea what was going on.

Suddenly the voice in my head whispered: "Peter, you must say something, this poor dog is helpless and will get hurt," the voice went on, "maybe the man is not even aware of what he is doing.

"Excuse me," I started with hesitation, "You may not be aware of this but the choke chain you are using can cause a life long injury and damage and I thought you may want to know why". "Thank you, that would be great, I would love that," the man replied. "I had no idea."

Here is what our chat was about:

## Wondering where the collar originated from?

No one really knows when the use of collars started. Perhaps it was the way the cave people restrained their wild dogs from running away. However, the first reference to dog collars comes from Ancient Egypt.

The reason why I am so weary of collars is that when dogs pull they can cause a lot of damage. **The neck and cervical spine are one of the most important "energy channels" in the body.** It contains the spinal cord for supply to the whole body, is where the front leg nerves originate from and it is the energy channel where the nerves controlling the internal organ function pass through. The thyroid gland that regulates the whole body metabolism is also located in the neck.

For years, I have observed the relationships between the neck injuries and health of dogs. I have learned that if **the flow of energy in the neck is interrupted or restricted, a whole array of problems may arise including lameness, skin issues, allergies, lung and heart problems, digestive issues, ear and eye conditions, thyroid gland dysfunctions to name a few.** I also suspect that the patients that have severe energy flow congestion in the neck area have a higher cancer rates.

While the purpose of this article is not to give you long description of each condition, I would like to give you a few examples to help you understand how important the health and alignment of the neck is to the general health of your dog.

## Hypothyroidism (low thyroid gland hormone) may be related to collar related injuries.

For the longest time I have been puzzled about the high rates of thyroid issues in breeds that frequently pull on the leash, such as Labrador Retrievers and German Shepherds. It seems obvious that the collar actually pushes on the throat exactly in the area of the thyroid gland. This gland gets severely traumatized whenever a dog pulls on the leash, it becomes inflamed and consequently "destroyed" by the body's own immune system when it tries to remove the inflamed thyroid cells.

The destruction of the thyroid cells leads to the deficit of thyroid hormone – hypothyroidism and because the thyroid gland governs the metabolism of every cell. The symptoms may be low energy, weight gain, skin problems, hair loss and a tendency to ear infections and organ failure.

## Ear and eye issues are frequently related to pulling on the leash.

When dogs pull on the leash, the collar restricts the blood and lymphatic flow to and from the head. My clients are often perplexed when all the ear and eye problems disappear after switching their dog from a collar to the right harness.

## Excessive paw licking and foreleg lameness can also be related to your dog's collar

Leash pulling impinges the nerves supplying the front legs. This can lead to an abnormal sensation in the feet and dogs may start licking their feet. These dogs are often misdiagnosed as allergic and all that needs to be done is to remove the collar and treat the neck injury.



## Neck injuries can cause a variety of problems.

Some dogs suffer severe whiplash like injuries from being jerked around. Extension leashes do not help because they encourage dogs to pull. They are faced with the imminent jerk when they get to the end of the line.

Most people do not know that leashes and collars can be at the core of many problems and that just one incident of pulling or running fast to the end of the leash can be serious. So how can we reduce such risk?

## A harness – the collar alternative.

Over the years, I have searched for the best way of making dogs safe and to prevent neck injuries. Harnesses that have the leash attached at the front of the chest are the best solution because they distribute the pressure of tugs and jerks throughout the whole body and keep the neck and throat free.

Many harnesses on the market have the leash attached on the back and pulling still restricts the front portion of the neck thereby pressing on veins, arteries, nerves and energy channels. When you choose the right harness, make sure that your dog's harness is the right fit and follow the maker's instructions carefully. Use the harness only when leash walking and take it off when your dog is off leash. Ensure that the harness is not pressing or rubbing anywhere and that it is washed regularly.

If your dog is adequately trained, give him as much off leash time as possible. If you have a "puller" have his neck examined by a vet, physio or chiro experienced in neck assessment. You may want to get his thyroid level measured and the neck and back checked for any signs of injuries. Keep in mind that many veterinarians are not trained in checking spinal alignment and working with the right practitioner is essential.

If you are looking for gentle and effective treatment methods, homeopathy, physiotherapy, intramuscular needle stimulation, chiropractics, acupuncture and massage are the best choices. I hope that you will join our "gentle leash" efforts and will pass this information onto others. If you would love to see such medieval torturing devices like choke chains, martingale, prong and shock collars become museum pieces, here is an opportunity.

Whenever you see a dog pulling and choking on the collar, gather the courage and talk to the owner. **If you would like to be part of our "gentle leash" movement, you can contact us at [www.peterdobias.com](http://www.peterdobias.com)**

With Gratitude,  
Dr. Peter Dobias  
Healing Foundation - on FB

## Forehead Wraps

Excerpt from "All Wrapped Up" For Pets now available [www.ttouch.ca](http://www.ttouch.ca) or 1 800 255-2336 PDT. \$14.95

**What you need:** One 1 or 2" bandages

**Description:** This configuration puts light contact on the forehead and occipital joint.

**When to use:** This is helpful to calm dogs who are excitable, nervous, reactive or stressed. It is also a great preparation for the "Face Wrap".

**How to Apply:** Place the middle of the wrap across the forehead. Cross the wrap under the chin. Take the ends up and around the neck until they meet and fasten together with Velcro or a safety pin.



**Observations:** The "Forehead Wrap" is easily accepted by most dogs. It has a settling effect and is a great tool to use with hyper, unfocused, or nervous animals.

**Troubleshooting:** Be sure and use the width of bandage appropriate to the size of the dog so it does not keep slipping over the eyes.

**Modifications:** This configuration can be easily modified into a "Face Wrap" by sliding the bandage down over the nose. Conversely this configuration can be achieved by starting with a "Neck Wrap".



# LINK WRAP

Excerpt from "All Wrapped Up" - For Horses now available [www.ttouch.ca](http://www.ttouch.ca) or 1 800-255-2336 \$14.95

**What you will need:** Two or three 4" bandages.

**Description:** This modification of the "Figure Eight Wrap" is an excellent configuration to use with horses that are uncertain about having a bandage around their hindquarters. It consists of two separate "loops" that make up a whole body wrap, ensuring safe, easy, removal.

**When to use it:** The "Link Wrap" is best used with horses who have never worn a full Body Wrap before and may need to have it taken off quickly and easily.

**How to apply it:** Start with a basic "Base Wrap" around the base of the neck (see page 10). Once your horse is comfortable with this configuration take a second bandage, or two tied together for larger horses, and string one end underneath the "Base Wrap" at the withers. Tie the other end back to itself creating two "linked" loops of bandage. While paying attention to your horse's response, quietly slide the back loop over the hindquarters adjusting it to sit above the gaskin. Once your horse has walked for a couple of steps, halt and remove the tail.

**Observations:** If your horse is very concerned about things touching their hindquarters be sure and go through other steps from "Ultimate Horse Training and Behavior Book" prior to applying any Wrap configuration. For many horses, this configuration helps to increase body awareness, reduce hyper-sensitivity to touch or things moving around them. It is also a useful Wrap for connecting a horse from their hindquarters to their front end.

This configuration allows for a lot of movement so watch that the back portion of the Wrap does not slide too high up.



**Troubleshooting:** The real beauty of this configuration is that it can be applied while being held, thus creating an "emergency release" option. Where the knot would be tied to create second loop, simply have a second person holding the back loop in place while standing just behind the horse's shoulder. Should the horse need to have the wrap removed, the handler can simply lead the horse forward while the secondary person stops, allowing the horse to walk out of the second loop.

**Modifications:** The "Link Wrap" may have additional bandages added to it to create a "Belly Wrap" or "Telescope Wrap".

**Removal:** To safely remove this configuration untie the back loop and slide the far end over the hip and around the hind quarters so that the "wrap-less" side is away from you first.



# How TTouch Training Differs from Others?

By Carrie Eastman

I recently had a student ask me about the differences between TTEAM and natural horsemanship. As I mulled over her questions later that night, I got to thinking about why I had chosen TTEAM, and why I returned to TTEAM after exploring some popular natural horsemanship methods. Here are some points to consider when making up your own mind about which training philosophy resonates for you and your horses.

Natural horsemanship techniques typically rely on a combination of desensitizing, habituation, dominance and repetition.

Let's take a closer look at each of these components. . Desensitizing equals removing sensitivity. Horses see, hear, smell, feel and sense much more than most people. Desensitizing is considered desirable in natural horsemanship because the process produces a calmer, less reactive horse. Personally, I value my horse's superior senses and depend on my horse to notice things I wouldn't. I also recognize that there will always be new and potentially scary situations in life, no matter how many objects and situations I would desensitize my horse to. So the question is whether teaching a horse not to react is better than teaching a horse to think through new situations. Another question is whether or not you prefer to depend on your horse's senses to supplement your own.

Habituation. Habituation is the same as desensitizing.

Dominance is another common theme in natural horsemanship. Become the herd leader. Move your horse's feet. Drive your horse. Send your horse on a circle in the round pen until he surrenders and joins up. If your horse refuses a request, turn up the pressure. Here I would ask, if you are building a relationship with someone, do you choose to have one person dominate the relationship, to lead without question? How would you feel in a relationship where your partner made all your decisions? How would it feel to not be allowed to say "no"? Can there be true partnership if one partner is not allowed to say "no"? How willing and eager can a horse be, without freedom to choose?

Repetition. I frequently see horses being drilled. Folks drill for 3 reasons that I can see – to reinforce a point, to perfect an exercise or to punish. Once an activity is learned, is there truly a benefit to repeating the lesson?

Another observation I have made about several natural horsemanship techniques is the gap between what is said and what is done. Using gentle words does not translate to gentle actions. I suggest paying attention to what is actually being done, and how the horse is reacting. For example: a carrot stick, a

wand, a whip, a crop are all names for similar tools. If the tool is used to tap annoyingly until the horse moves away, or used to cause discomfort or pain, does a warm fuzzy name change the outcome? Pay attention to the obvious – your horse will tell you his/her feelings about the techniques and tools.

I am not suggesting that we anthropomorphize horses. Horses are horses – people are people. I am however suggesting that horses are capable of thought and feeling, and that partnership is only possible when the thoughts, feelings and boundaries of both parties are honored.

Allowing for our differences also means learning each other's language. Would you deal with someone who spoke a different language than yours by shouting? By forcing? By repeating over and over? By creating discomfort and waiting for the person to fumble around until by accident they got the answer and relieved the discomfort? Or would you take the time to explain your request in a variety of ways until understood?

Brainwaves can be a good indicator of how a horse is responding to a given technique or interaction. Informal studies over the years using Electroencephalograms (EEGs) have shown beta, alpha, theta and delta brainwaves occurring together in both hemispheres during TTouch. TTEAM Ground obstacles produced beta brainwaves, indicative of analytical thinking. EEGs during petting, stroking, brushing and rest did not produce the mix of all 4 types of brainwaves in both hemispheres. These results suggest that the non-habitual movements and touches of TTEAM produce thinking horses and true learning.

With my horses, natural horsemanship techniques produced obedience, and horses that were subtly unhappy with the work and not as interested in spending time with me when given a choice. TTEAM produced calm, curious, trusting interested partners. So when someone asks me how TTEAM is different from other popular techniques, my answer is that for me TTEAM is about respectful willing partnership, conscious thought, and the right to question when they don't understand.

Carrie Eastman lives in Pennsylvania and is currently training to become a Practitioner. Carrie teaches riding and trains horses. She has been involved in TTEAM off and on for many years. [www.carrieeastman.com](http://www.carrieeastman.com)



## TTEAM Equine Workshops - 2011 & 2012

Location	Date	Clinician	Type of workshop	Contact
Petaluma, CA	Nov 8-12	<b>LTJ</b>	TTEAM for horses	US Office 854-8326 <a href="mailto:trainings@tellingtontraining.com">trainings@tellingtontraining.com</a>
<b>Sydney, Australia</b>	Nov 10-13	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	Equitana Asia - booth & demos	
Melbourne, <b>Australia</b>	Dec 3-7	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	5 Day TTEAM Workshop	Sue McKibbin 03 5626 8226 <a href="mailto:sue@mckibbin.net">sue@mckibbin.net</a>
Austin, TX	Nov 21	<b>LTJ</b>	Demo & book signing	Donna Roland <a href="mailto:roland4horses@yahoo.com">roland4horses@yahoo.com</a>
Sydney, <b>Australia</b>	Dec 9-14	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	5 Day TTEAM Workshop	Rebecca Booth <a href="mailto:rebecca@elementals.com.au">rebecca@elementals.com.au</a> <a href="http://www.ttouchaustralia.com.au">www.ttouchaustralia.com.au</a>
Kauai, <b>Hawaii</b>	Jan 29-Feb 3	<b>LTJ</b>	TT for You & Your Horse	US Office 1 800 854-8326 <a href="mailto:trainings@tellingtontraining.com">trainings@tellingtontraining.com</a>
Dawson Creek, <b>AB</b>	Mar 2-4	Mandy Pretty	2 Day TTEAM workshop	Rose <a href="mailto:cousins@pris.bc.ca">cousins@pris.bc.ca</a>
<b>England</b>	March 9-14	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	6 Day TTEAM training	Tilley Farm 01761 471 182 <a href="mailto:admin@ttouchtteam.co.uk">admin@ttouchtteam.co.uk</a>
<b>Costa Rica</b>	Mar 18-24	Mandy Pretty	6 Day - TTouch morning - Riding tour afternoon	<a href="http://www.paradiseriding.com">www.paradiseriding.com</a>
Lakeland, <b>GA</b>	Apr 13-18	Edie Jane Eaton	3 Day TTouch with horses or 6 Day TTouch with horses	Cindy Pullen <a href="mailto:cindy.pullen@gmail.com">cindy.pullen@gmail.com</a> 678-773-6826
Whitehorse, <b>YK</b>	April 20-22	Mandy Pretty	3 Day TTEAM workshop	Violet van Hees 867 633-3154 <a href="mailto:krv@northwestel.net">krv@northwestel.net</a>
Red Deer, <b>AB</b>	Apr 27-29	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	Mane Event Expo - demos	<a href="http://www.maneeventexpo.com">www.maneeventexpo.com</a>
Vernon, <b>BC</b>	May 12-13	Mandy Pretty	2 Day TTEAM workshop	Canadian office - <a href="http://www.ttouch.ca">www.ttouch.ca</a> 1 800 255-2336
Edmonton, <b>AB</b>	May 26-27	Mandy Pretty	2 Day TTEAM workshop	Karen Carruthers 780 973-5843 <a href="mailto:Karen.carruthers@gov.ab.ca">Karen.carruthers@gov.ab.ca</a>
Vernon, <b>BC</b>	June	Mandy Pretty	3-4 Day Riding workshop	Canadian office - <a href="http://www.ttouch.ca">www.ttouch.ca</a> 1 800 255-2336
Dubois, <b>WY</b>	Jun 17-23	<b>LTJ &amp; Robyn Hood</b>	Starting Young Horse workshops	US Office 1 800 854-8326 <a href="mailto:trainings@tellingtontraining.com">trainings@tellingtontraining.com</a>
Vernon, <b>BC</b>	July or Aug	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	TTouch workshop w/ Connected Riding	Canadian office - <a href="http://www.ttouch.ca">www.ttouch.ca</a> 1 800 255-2336
Vernon, <b>B.C.</b>	July or Aug	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	Starting Young horse workshop	Canadian office - <a href="http://www.ttouch.ca">www.ttouch.ca</a> 1 800 255-2336
Vernon, <b>BC</b>	July or Aug	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	Advanced TTEAM training	Canadian office - <a href="http://www.ttouch.ca">www.ttouch.ca</a> 1 800 255-2336

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# TTouch For Companion Animals - Workshops 2011 & 2012

Location	Date	Clinician	Type of workshop	Contact
Orangeville, <b>ON</b>	Oct 29-Nov 3	Kathy Cascade	Foundation & ongoing Practitioner Training	Cdn Office 1 800 255-2336 www.ttouch.ca
Chapel Hill, <b>NC</b>	Nov 5-10	Kathy Cascade	Foundation & ongoing Practitioner Training	US Office 1 800 854-8326 trainings@tellingtontraining.com
Portland, <b>OR</b>	Nov 6-11	Edie Jane Eaton	Foundation & ongoing Practitioner Training	US Office 1 800 854-8326 trainings@tellingtontraining.com
Bloomington, <b>MN</b>	Nov 9-14	Lucie Leclerc	Foundation & ongoing Practitioner Training	US Office 1 800 854-8326 trainings@tellingtontraining.com
Austin, <b>TX</b>	Nov 15-20	<b>LTJ</b>	Foundation & ongoing Practitioner Training	US Office 1 800 854-8326 trainings@tellingtontraining.com
Dripping Springs, <b>TX</b>	Nov 18	<b>LTJ</b>	Silent Auction & dog demo as a fund raiser for Texas Hearing & Service Dogs & Greyhound Rescue	Marnie Reeder 512 288-4480 jasper@sysmatrix.net
Brisbane, <b>Australia</b>	Nov 16-20	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	4 Day TTouch Workshop	Ros Taber rtaber@rspcaqlld.org.au
Sydney, <b>Australia</b>	Nov 19-23	<b>Robyn Hood &amp; Andy Robertson</b>	5 day TTouch Workshop	Andy Robertson ttouch@hbi.com.au
Melbourne, <b>Australia</b>	Nov 26-30	<b>Robyn Hood</b>	5 Day TTouch "Workshop"	Tim Munro tim@naturallywild.net.au
Lihue, <b>HI</b>	Feb 4-5	Sage Lewis	Demo for Kauai Humane Society	Www.DancingPorcupine.com
Kailua, <b>HI</b>	Feb 6-11	<b>LTJ</b>	TTouch for You & Your Dog	US Office 1 800 854-8326 trainings@tellingtontraining.com
Calgary, <b>AB</b>	Feb 18-23	Robyn Hood &	Ongoing & Foundation Practitioner	Cdn Office 1 800 255-2336 www.ttouch.ca
<b>England</b>	March 1-6	Robyn Hood	Ongoing & Foundation Practitioner	Tilley Farm 01761 471 182 admin@ttouchteam.co.uk
<b>England</b>	March 17-22	Robyn Hood	Ongoing & Foundation Practitioner	Tilley Farm 01761 471 182 admin@ttouchteam.co.uk
Omaha, <b>NE</b>	Apr 21-27	Sage Lewis	Fundraiser for Nebraska Humane Society	Www.dancingprocupine.com
Rupert, <b>QC or Orangeville</b>	April	TBA	Ongoing & Foundation Practitioner	Cdn Office 1 800 255-2336 www.ttouch.ca
Vernon, <b>B/C</b>	July	Robyn Hood &	Foundation & Ongoing Practitioner workshop	Cdn Office 1 800 255-2336 www.ttouch.ca
Vernon, <b>B.C.</b>	July	Robyn Hood &	Advanced TTouch Training	Cdn Office 1 800 255-2336 www.ttouch.ca

## TTouch For You - 2012

Location	Dates	Clinician	Type of workshop	Contact
Kailai, <b>HI</b>	Jan 29-Feb 3	LTJ	TT for You	US Office 1 800 854-8326 trainings@tellingtontraining.com

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Canadian Website [www.ttouch.ca](http://www.ttouch.ca)

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