

Ground work

Its not just all about the riding!

So what is ground work and why is it important?

In basic terms Ground work is the art of working the horse from the ground. There are various ways this can be done and an emphasis on certain goals can be achieved.

Types of ground work include.

Lungeing (single and double lunge)

Inhand

Long reining

Liberty

Rehabilitation

The benefits of ground work

For the Horse

- Builds confidence
- Improves behaviour
- Allows a connection between human and horse to develop through body language
- Allows training without the weight of the rider
- Improves clarity of the exercise
- Enhances the correct movement
- Develops the partnership between human and horse
- Enables a non ridden horse to be educated and developed
- Empowers the horse to express its self

For the human

- Allows in the moment visual feedback of what's going on and potential issues
- Creates an opportunity to tackle behaviour without being on board
- Develops a deeper connection
- Gives us an opportunity to understand their body language and communication
- Can enable us to learn more about our own bodies and how they influence the horse
- Enhances communication skills
- Builds confidence
- Improves knowledge

Using ground work to develop the connection between horse and human improves the relationship and communication this enables both horse and human to be more predictable and therefore safer in their training together

Ground work is also used during rehabilitation to build strength and movement without the riders weight initially. It's important to remember there's a big difference between rehabilitation and exercise here. A 10 or 20 minute walk in hand shouldn't just be like taking the dog for a walk or it taking you in some cases! The art of rehabilitation is about improving movement patterns and posture to prevent re injury and to develop the use of the correct muscles for strength, mobility or stability, flexibility, suppleness and balance.

In fact all our training should be aimed at improveing movement and posture this is the route to long term health in both human and horse. Having an understanding of correct function and movement patterns and using targeted exercises can help to tackle soundness issues, behavioural problems and generally help the horse use it's body for the best long term function.

The ultimate in ground work is seen at Liberty. Here horse and human share only an energetic connection and body language to communicate. This level of connection is very rewarding for human and horse and can only be developed with true understanding and education.

Linking ground work to ridden.

These two things are not separate in my opinion and for clarity of training I use body language and positioning to achieve the desired response. In this way both human and horse have an understanding of what's required within their bodies whether working from the ground or ridden.

Who is ground work for?

Any horse and human can learn correct ground work

If you'd like to learn more about ground work please get in touch via pm or text/call 07971187955