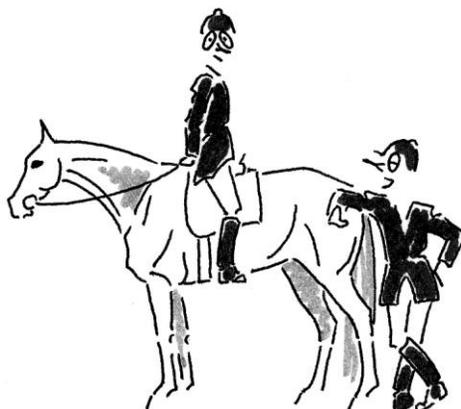


# MUTUAL RESPECT

Almost all people who are successful in business life, the music industry, the arts or in riding are people who have the guts to do things their own way. A copy is and will always be a copy, and in the very best case will come in number two, but will never be a winner.

All riders have some ability, but in order to use it and develop it they need to find their own way. To get good results the student must be allowed and encouraged to develop his own opinion and philosophy. Most students have a number of resources available to them for developing themselves and their horses – something that is absolutely essential for success. It is important that as trainers we encourage the students to take responsibility for their own and their horse's education. As trainers we should see ourselves as a person who points the student in the right direction, and teaches the student in a way so that he receives all the necessary information while we provide feedback, correcting and praising the student. We must take part in creating a positive and safe atmosphere, both for ourselves and the student. But it is equally important that we don't become too dominant - that instead we make sure the student takes part in the educational process.

One of my goals in teaching is to make the student as independent as possible. If we compare the student to a self-propelled train, then as the trainer I can lay the tracks. But if the train is not self-propelled and I have to both push the train, and at the same time go out in front and lay the tracks, we will never get anywhere.



## THINGS CAN DEVELOP IN THE WRONG DIRECTION

When we educate horses and students, cooperation is essential. This process of cooperation can often lead to a close psychological relationship between the instructor and the student. And with a sport like horseback riding, the student can feel subordinated by the instructor and as a result be very open about himself in an attempt to be understood. Because of the student's openness the instructor feels that the student respects and trusts him. Consequently, the instructor strives to live up to this respect and trust, but sometimes instead, loses contact with reality.

In an attempt to preserve his student's respect, and maintain this "mutual balance" between instructor and student, the instructor proceeds at a level that is too difficult for the student and his demands on the student become inappropriate. Then disaster strikes! The student fails. Even though the student listened to this capable instructor and did everything he was told, it got worse and worse.

Finally, the instructor realizes the problem, but now he faces an uncomfortable situation, because in reality it is the he who has failed. Slightly irritated with himself, he must now change his plans and try to reach new goals with a student who has lost confidence – and that is not an easy task.



## MAKING A FRESH START

When a student enters a new environment, it is totally normal for him to subordinate himself so that no demands are put on him and he gets the help he is looking for. This situation doesn't work in the long run and it is the responsibility of the instructor to make a change.

How then should the instructor relate to his student in order to achieve the best results? I will limit myself to a few observations. To begin with, it is better to think of the concept "reaching the goal" as "creating a self-confident and satisfied student". Over and above this, our job is to

understand the student's needs and wants, and to determine how we can help him to reach these goals.

It is very important that the goals we set are realistic, and that the student has a chance to reach them. The student should feel that he can meet the demands that have been placed on him, so that he can reach his goals and experience success.

*Mutual respect between instructor and student is a prerequisite for a long and rewarding relationship. By this I mean that the student, first and foremost, respects the trainer for what he knows and what he stands for, and that the trainer respects the student's wishes as well as his qualifications.*

It is invaluable when instructor and student can cooperate in a way that allows a mutual respect for each other as human beings to develop.

We must also be careful when we set goals for our students, not to be influenced too much by our own ambitions, specifically ambitions related to competing. Since the best publicity for us, as instructors, comes from the successes of our students when they compete, it is tempting to encourage them to compete at too high a level before they are ready. In my experience, much better results are produced when we emphasize good horsemanship very early on. The student should be urged to consider the development of his horse as well as himself, rather than spend his time chasing ribbons.

When the student begins to compete, he should be encouraged to think of it as a competition against himself, rather than against the others, so that his goal is to improve on his own previous performance. He should simply seek to receive better and better results. I would consider a student who thinks this way to have a sound attitude.

***We can ask ourselves who is happiest, the person who wins his first training level test or the person who places second in Grand Prix?***

If we want to have a client who is happy and satisfied, with self-confidence and the guts to go on, it must be one who is successful. In this context, the level is not of great importance.

When speaking of mutual respect, the following conditions are important:

- As trainers we take time to listen to the student.
- We should use correct language.
- We should be motivated.

- We should have respect for the students' ambitions and abilities.
- The student should participate in the decision-making process.
- The student should not try to take control of the lessons.
- The student should listen and try to understand the trainer.
- Both student and trainer should be well prepared.
- Both student and trainer should be honest.
- Both student and trainer should be positive.
- Mobile phones should be turned off.