

Ten Principles of learning theory in Equitation: a practitioners translation of the ISES approach.

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The goal of International Society for Equitation Science, is to create a sustainable antropeo-equine relationship by spreading the 10 ISES principles. However, most of today's riding teachers are still in need of innovative tools to explain these academic principles to novice riders, in order to enhance every day equitation and improve the welfare of both riding school horses and their riders. In this project we have modernised and updated the equitation educational curriculum. Sixteen online manuals, approximately 3500 pages, containing all the information needed by the Dutch qualification files for equitation instructors and relevant sectoral guidelines (ethology, welfare, quality, safety). There was an urgent need to develop a pliable, transparent set of attractive and reliable tools for practitioners / instructors to teach negative reinforcement specifically (NR). Throughout the new approach tools were developed to transform the 10 ISES principles towards 10 points for the Wellbeing Of Working horses (WOW). WOW guides practitioners and their pupils in an attractive way to understand the horses' perspective and to enhance the communication between horse and rider. WOW is a mentored practitioners project and will be part of a future research project. WOW explains the theory behind horse/horse, and horse/rider communication to novice level. It simplifies this communication by using expressive cartoons and 10 exclamations to describe horse and human behaviour: YES; NO; HEY; OOPS; UH?; TILT; CHILL; AHA; AUCH; WOW! The method also included 10 practical exercises for riders to train the correct application of negative reinforcement while also implementing the horses' needs and cognition as laid out by ISES. These 10 exercises were developed to be self-correcting and teach riders to ride 'on reward': rewarding the shaping process, while omitting repetitive aids. Ultimately, the novice and/or young riders are guided to perform the exercises one after the other, creating a customised 30-minute warming-up program for daily workouts. During the warming-up riders are repeating the basic aids and recognise responses on a daily basis, forming consistent habits for both (riding school) horse and rider. WOW riders are probably not able to explain how NR works in academic terms, but they can explain and apply it consistently during various situations. They learn to walk 'aids free, without dash or delay', 'halt without hands' or use '123Thanks'. The presentation will include several videos showing how the academic approach, after translation, gave riders pragmatic tools to incorporate the ISES principles in their own riding.

Layperson's message: 10 points for the Wellbeing Of Working horses (WOW) provides a practitioners translation of the academic way of sustainable training with expressive illustrations and 10 pragmatic exercises. We need to realise we are still at the very beginning of what might become a bigger movement, though we found answers yesterday we still have to bring the ISES message to millions of riders to ensure a future where horses are still part of our live. It is shown that WOW provides tools to explain the ISES academic approach of good training down to novice level.

Keywords: ISES principles; Riding school horses; practical tools; sustainable instruction; welfare during riding, novice riders.