

Organic Learning

Some thoughts from Barbara Janelle

I found the following statement in Dan Millman's Sacred Journey of the Peaceful Warrior, a book I am enjoying very much:

"I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand"

This fits my approach to learning and teaching. I take notes as a way of fixing information that I hear and see. However, it is only when I truly do something or use an idea that I understand it.

There are many examples of this in TTEAM and two come easily to mind:

1. To hear about helping a horse develop balance by giving it space when leading it is interesting. A demonstration of this seems so simple and obvious. To do it, both through the experience of playing a horse being led, and then by leading a horse, creates a shift in awareness. A new and deeper understanding results from "feeling" with mind, body, emotions and spirit the relationship between leading and balance.

2. It is one thing to accept intellectually that there is a difference between the domination-submission approach to animal training and the TTEAM techniques of understanding, supporting and helping the animal to learn. Experiencing this difference through role playing (the 22-33-44 Game) reaches the emotional, physical and spiritual levels as well as the mental. The resulting depth of understanding can lead to an entirely new relationship with an animal and to a major change in self-awareness.

With 25 years of teaching experience (15 years at university level, 10 teaching TTEAM, Therapeutic Touch, Meditation Techniques and recently Centered Riding), I know that learning is not a mental process but rather a whole being process. Doing is not just a physical-spiritual process. This is true whether the "doing" is leading a horse or using an idea to change our relationship with our world.

What happens when we truly understand something? For me there is a silent wave that touches every part of my being - a giant "AH HA!" that lights up all of me. I "feel" it everywhere. Something tangible shifts in me. The process of understanding is one of the most thrilling this existence has to offer.