



Frank Bell Horse Whisperer

Dangerous Ex-Race Horse

Hi,

I can't wait for you to come back to California. I live near the L.A. area, so I might have to wait awhile. I found out about your clinics too late to go to the ones you had this year. Anyway, I am trying to start a program that is similar to Safe Futures in San Francisco. They work with both troubled horses and troubled kids, to give both a second chance. I am trying to get it going in the Los Angeles area...

So, my question is, I have always loved horses. I am still learning...I know a bit, but every horse is different! I am working with a retired racehorse right now. He is a 6 yr old gelding. I don't know if you have any advice for training old racers... He is spooky, we are working on it. Mostly my problem is this: He will walk nicely for most of the walk (just on lead line right now). When we get to a large open field, he is good on short line, but if I ask him to go away from me or if he is being lunged, he will strike out, rear up, kick out (at me/near me) and generally raise havoc. I know he is just trying to burn off some energy, but he has pulled the rope out of two people's hands and gone galloping into traffic! SO far, no injury but...What do you suggest? He did it to me on a lead line (6ft). There was no warning. He was walking away from me, he tried to come in, I pushed him out, and then WHAMMO, he does the strike/buck/kick thing...Then he goes back to being moderately calm and nice. He doesn't do this at any other time... Just feeling good or? How do I discourage and reprimand for this behavior?

Thanks for your time, I hope to have you come do a clinic when I get my facility up and moving...

Melanie Roffol

Melanie:

Your horse is exhibiting dangerous behavior that needs to be stopped immediately. I have a very straightforward program that I put all horses through, regardless of age or issue. This set of exercises puts the handler in charge and respected. Instead of lunging around and around, we teach the horse to do a turn on the forehand followed by a turn on the haunches. That burns off the energy while promoting respect. My 7-Step Safety System has been written about in horse magazines including Western Horseman. I have a video on this procedure called "Discover the Horse You Never Knew" that demonstrates the whole deal.



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I'd suggest you order that as part of the "[Getting Started Package](#)." I also have produced a video called "[Retraining the Racehorse](#)" which is a big seller and helps buyers of racehorses settle and re-program their horses. My '[Spooking/Shying](#)' video has helped thousands. Consider our problem solving series with the [Discover](#) video. As far as the rearing etc. Using one of my 12' leads, snap the lead under the horse's chin when he goes up or tries to kick or whatever while making an increasingly louder shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh noise then back the horse 10-15 steps aggressively using the lead just under the horse's chin. Then let it sink in for a bit - about 30 seconds - then start over and be prepared to do this again if necessary.

Your horse needs to understand there is a 'black zone' and a 'white zone'. The black zone is no fun, uncomfortable, maybe even painful. The white zone is the opposite - very pleasant and comfortable. You need to learn how to apply each and be very definite in your desires. If you are in the gray zone, he'll be there too.

Good Luck and Safe Riding,

Frank R. Bell