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TOP TEN REASONS WHY ESCT WORKS ON PROBLEM HORSES

1. ESCT works on the horse's brain and changes his behavior.
2. ESCT is easy to learn and use, hands being the only tool needed. The Harmony ESCT Pulser is available for working with horses under saddle.
3. ESCT removes the old memory and replaces it with a new one.
4. ESCT works in three 30-minute sessions or less.
5. ESCT integrates with all training methods and treatment modalities.
6. ESCT is based on proven Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) therapies used on humans for twenty years, now modified for the horse.
7. ESCT's effective cure rate is 95 percent.
8. ESCT centers the horse, creating responses instead of reactions.
9. ESCT engages the volitional brain where learning takes place.
10. ESCT can be used on the ground and with the rider up. The Harmony ESCT Pulser is ideal for hands-free riding and giving ESCT at the same time.

HARMONY HORSEWORKS is the home of **Wright-ESCT™ EQUINE STRESS CONTROL THERAPY** used to heal spooky, anxious and nervous horses. We are a Colorado non-profit corporation in good standing and a tax exempt 501[c][3] corporation (DLN 17053233026024) since February 23, 2004. FEIN 20-0763702.

TOP TEN REASONS WHY EQUINE STRESS CONTROL (ESCT) WORKS ON HORSES by Barbara Wright

1. ESCT works on the horse's BRAIN and changes his BEHAVIOR.

ESCT interrupts the fear cycle in the horse's brain -- simple as that! Other treatments and trainings start with the behavior and move back toward the brain, counter-intuitively, and require endless repetition and reinforcement (up to 500 times per incident with behavior modification and/or operant conditioning). This makes people give up on their horses because they run out of patience! This makes the horse give up on his people because he still holds the old spooky memory inside of him, ready to explode, even if he "modifies" his behavior during treatment. He is an accident waiting to happen.

In a state of fear, all mammals pretty much experience the same biochemical brain reactions and emotional body responses. Good body chemicals are replaced by bad ones that store the fear memory at the cellular level. It is the catabolic vs. anabolic neurochemical soup that the body's cells stew in.

We humans are largely frontal cortex animals -- we think in our forebrain with the right and left frontal lobes and spend most of our waking lives there. Horses are largely lower brain stem animals because that part of the brain regulates basic survival instincts -- the more cautious the horse, the more likely he will survive in the wild. Five thousand years of domestication has not erased this from the horse's brain. However, they are great pattern recognizers, some say the best in the animal kingdom, and have the ability to turn and face their stressors and evaluate the threat potential. They know how to engage their volitional brain, the learning brain. Horses also have considerable left/right brain connectivity, a feature that ESCT enhances. ESCT taps into this part of their brain by sending an interrupt response into the fear cycle and in that second, reevaluation takes place.

ABOVE: Handling a foal requires patience and consistency. Doing so minimizes fear reactivity later in life as it is exposed to many situations early on and is conditioned to accept change and new situations.

When fear takes over in humans, the lower brain stem functions kick in and begin sending powerful chemicals into the frontal cortex which, over time, literally erase logical and reasoned response by shutting down the left side of the brain, the reasoning side. This means the right side of the brain, the intuitive and reactionary side, takes over. THE SAME RESPONSE IS EXPERIENCED BY HORSES ONLY MORE INSTANTANEOUSLY. In a horse, this response is called the Automatic Startle

Response (ASR) and it has allowed the horse to survive in a world of predators for over 60 million years. You know that some humans are more "jumpy" than others because we also have a hard-wired startle response. Horses are made to be so for the sake of survival.

In both humans and horses, in all mammals, the body keeps the score about fear at the cellular level. Fear can create psychosomatic symptoms and physical illnesses because under stress, the immune system is compromised. Cortisols are released into the bloodstream in larger than desired quantities and the endogenous opiates which calm the organism -- endorphins, enkephalins and catecholamines, are suppressed. A raised head, wide eyes, fidgety behavior, inability to concentrate and a highly activated startle response are manifestations of fear in humans and in horses. Often, the cycle becomes locked as in human Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) victims. Horses suffer from the same PTSD cycle when they continually give the same undesireable response over and over again.

By sending interrupt signals through the optic nerve into the brain, bilateral eye movement and bilasteral body tapping reintegrate the lower brain stem functions with the higher brain functions, reconnects the left and right frontal lobes, and allows a new response to be formed, replacing the old reaction. At first, the new chemical pathways between the left and right lobes are tenuous but quickly become embedded with repetition. The horse, facing its stressor, is given ESCT and survives his fear and relaxes. This healing happens in 3 to 5 one hour sessions and spills over into all aspects of his spooky behavior.

If a horse is head shy, the body tapping is essential to start ESCT. Once the horse accepts the tapping on its body, one can move to his head and continue. Tapping is always done on the bony structures -- temporal fossae, facial ridges, scapula top and bottom, spinous processes, mandible, and on bony protrusions on the legs including the hocks. The piezoelectric current flows through the brain, left and then right sided, through the conductance in the bones.

You won't believe this is true until you try it on yourself. Think of the scariest scene in a movie, close your eyes and really make that scene come alive inside of you. Then have a friend tap your collar bones lightly, alternating left and right, and see what happens. Now imagine this happening instantly in a huge horse and the relief it must experience!

By creating a choreography of tension (introducing the stressor) and release (removing the stressor) interspersed with sets of ESCT, the horse faces his fear and is allowed to withdraw and rest, engage his mind and body, and integrate. He is kept calm and learning at all times and soon his brain's old memory is literally removed and replaced with a new one. He has a new baseline from which to work experientially and situationally and will behave accordingly.

2. ESCT is easy to learn and use, <u>HANDS</u> being the only tool needed.

The techniques used in ESCT are intuitive and straightforward. We can go into analysis paralysis and explain the biochemical and quantum physics theories underpinning bilateral brain integration and the fear cycle's chemistry, but the truth is – all you need is your hands to make ESCT work.

Hands are used in the eye movement, which is horizontal, vertical, peripheral and, if needed, at a distance. Human therapy professionals will argue that you can't give a horse eye movement therapy because he can't track the hand like ping pong ball, but years of practice and all the horses have shown me that all they need is the interrupt signal provided by the hand moving into and out of their field of vision. When frontally given, they lose the hand movement momentarily between their eyes and then pick it up again. Remember that horses have two "blind" spots – one between their ears and one at the tip of their nose, but they see peripherally everywhere else.

Hands, or more specifically, fingers, are used in the bilateral body tapping protocol of ESCT and this mimics what the eye does through the optic nerve, only this time the electric signal is sent through the bony structure of the skeleton to the horse's brain, first on the left side, then on the right. Tapping is soft, rhythmic and bilaterally symmetrical.

Supporting the use of your hands, of course, are other factors. But they don't need to be purchased in a store, either. You already have them – knowledge of the horse and its problems, your intention to heal, your understanding of the choreography involved in ESCT that is a sequence of tensions and releases, and the ability to read the horse from deep relaxation to hyper vigilance. This quality cannot be taught, only acquired with practice. This is where your intuition and instinct come into play and they are the true test of your knowledge of horses.

LEFT: The points of the hip are excellent tapping points to remind the horse it has a hind end, not just fear in its head. Notice the relaxed neck and eyes.

Your hands transmit signals to the horse that are greater and more involved than mere tapping. Your hands tell the horse who you are through your rhythm in front of or at the side of its head, the touch you give on its bones, and the relaxation or lack thereof in your wrist and arm. Your hands tell him how the rest of your body is from moment to moment, so while your hands are the tool, your body is the fulcrum from which the tool is suspended. It needs to be calm and relaxed, too.

Human therapists doing this therapy have developed a hand unit with two pulsing lozenges on the end that do the tapping. The hand unit controls the speed and depth of the tap. We have modified this unit for the horse and call it the Harmony ESCT Pulser and it allows hands-free tapping while riding and working with the horse in the saddle. The little pulsing pads attach to the halter or headstall at various points and do the tapping

automatically. The unit is battery powered and very light, fitting into the rider's pocket or saddle bag with the guidewires leading to the pulsing lozenges on the horse's head.

3. ESCT <u>REMOVES</u> the old memory and <u>REPLACES</u> it with a new one.

In human therapy, the patient is asked to envision a new outcome for his or her trauma during a series of visualizations and verbalizations guided by the therapist. We bypass the language overlay in horses altogether, which is a decided advantage in reaching the horse's fear. Humans can do many disservices with language during therapy, not the least of which is lying about the situation. Another is talking and retelling the story one more time, further embedding it in memory. What we are asking the horse to do is to take out his old slide memory and replace it with a new one. Why is this so?

LEFT: Eye movement can be done frontally, raising and lowering the hands simultaneously on either side of the horse's head, which has dropped in relaxation.

Humans think in videotape format and that's why we can replay, rewind, edit, create new endings and perform leaps of imagination. A horse is a pattern recognizer, perhaps the best in the animal kingdom, and he analyzes each situation in relation to an exact or similar memory in his mental filing cabinet. "Let's see, the last time I saw a big off road vehicle whiz by me I spooked and ran. That motorbike sure looks like an off roader to me. Outta here!" The point of comparison (slide memory) is what makes him spook. It's what's kept him alive for untold ages in a world filled with predators. Lucky for us, when we give him a new point of comparison with ESCT, the old slide is lost quickly. The old behavior then extinguishes because the new comparison is embedded through integration after ESCT sessions. "Let's see, the last time I saw an off roader I calmed myself because this two-legged was tapping me as it came by. Let's just stay right here and watch as that noisy thing passes me by."

In humans, with the use of language to define our world and our identities, we bring a big egoic legacy into therapy with us. Many people are in therapy at the behest of family, not of their own free will. Others don't want to lose their identity such as it is – warts and all. "Who will I be if I give up my neuroses? These people are hugely locked into their dram for identity. Again, lucky for us, horses don't ask these questions or have these ego attachments. They simply want to feel good and belong to the herd, so their first imperative is to find homeostasis – to seek the high ground where they feel good. ESCT does this for them quickly. They have nothing to lose, only their fear, which they are more than willing to give up. Once they trust, they release and heal.

4. ESCT works in three 30-minute sessions or less.

The question I am most often asked is: how long does it take for ESCT to work on a horse? Depends on the horse, of course.

RIGHT: Tapping the horse left/right down the spinous processes from the withers to the dock of the tail creates deep relaxation and reminds the horse it has a barrel and hind end, not just a brain filled with fear.

I worked with a remarkable Paso Fino that faced five stressors in an hour during a demonstration and then left the clinic in great shape to continue his integration and become, in the words of the owner, "a new horse." I also worked with a little Arabian filly, injured by a downed electric power line to the point that her hooves melted, who took two years to respond to her owner's patient practice of ESCT. But on the average, it takes three to five 30-minute sessions, spaced about 1 or 2 days apart, for the horse to overcome its fear in the short term.

Because integration between therapy sessions varies from horse to horse, and because integration continues over time, full resolution may not be seen until several weeks have passed with period reinforcement of ESCT. Most horses respond within the first 10 minutes in a very obvious ways and then continue to improve with each session.

This process closely follows what happens in humans during bilateral brain integration. Because there is no language overlay in horses and because we deal directly with a brain file cabinet full of memories which we can remove and replace, it happens much more quickly in horses than in humans. I am amused when people compare the horse's brain to the human brain, it being considerably smaller than ours, weighing approximately 2 lbs. instead of 12. I tell the critics several things: first, it is a brain perfectly suited for being a horse; second, they use every cell of it while we humans use only 1/3 or less of our brain capacity; and third, they live in the moment all the time, like highly practiced Buddhists, and do not practice engaging the unproductive "monkey brain" we humans cannot turn off.

5. ESCT integrates with all training methods and treatment modalities.

While ESCT is designed to work as a PTSD therapy in horses, it also combines with training and other healing therapies. In fact, you can use ESCT whenever your horse becomes"stuck," no matter what his temperament, discipline or background. The most dramatic improvement is noticed with horses who have suffered trauma, but even minor stresses and mixed-messages can be unraveled with ESCT. Here are a few situations that are improved with ESCT:

a. Use ESCT alone as a protocol in a series of healing therapy sessions.

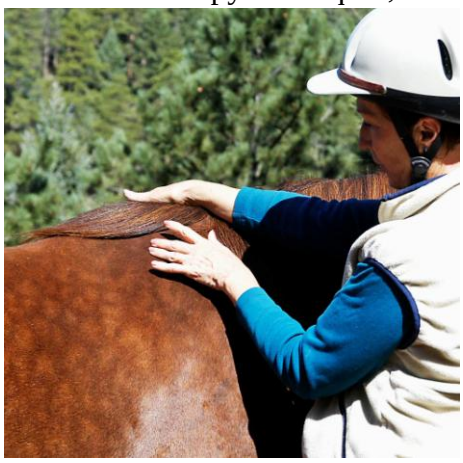
b. Use ESCT before or after another treatment modality, such as massage, acupressure or acupuncture, to relax and prepare your horse.
c. Use ESCT as a training tool to help overcome resistance to a higher level of learning or to the introduction of a new challenge.
d. Use ESCT as a reward for your horse for a job well done.
e. Use ESCT to center yourself and your horse when one or both of you are having a bad horse or bad people day.
f. Use ESCT on-the-spot when your horse encounters a spook or difficult situation.
g. Use ESCT in learning acceleration situations when a little relaxation will get him to the next level of achievement.
h. Use ESCT in a learning plateau situation when your horse has lingered too long at a level and is having difficulty improving.

Of course, keep your horse's ability, maturity, overall training and health in mind when you ask more of him. Horses usually have a good sense of where they need to be in any given routine, and you can read their level of comfort by watching for the body signals that show enthusiasm and engagement of the horse's volitional brain.

LEFT: Habituating foals to ESCT early on lessens the chance of fear being deposited into cellular memory (the body keeps the score).

6. ESCT is based on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) therapies used on humans, now modified for the horse.

When I received the human therapy and felt the incredibly efficient and fast transformation of my fears into simple events in my past, I was compelled to try eye movement therapy on one of my very spooky and unrideable horses on a dare! He responded so well that I read and studied everything I could about all the available eye movement therapy techniques, then transformed the human protocols for the eye and mind of the horse and added bilateral body tapping. Body tapping has also been added to human eye movement therapies to great effect.



LEFT: Tapping left/right on the withers creates a deep relaxation response in the neck.

This work began five years ago and included a field study of spooky horses. If you would like information contained in the field study, you can contact me and I will send you the private link to this section of the site, not available on-line for the general public.

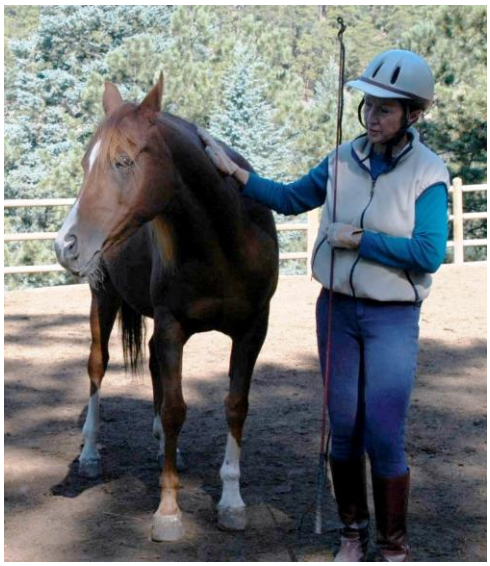
Eye movement therapy is the most widely used and probably also the most widely studied PTSD therapy because it works so quickly on humans. That efficiency also garners the most criticism since conventional therapy takes months and years and gives very mixed results. Because this therapy deals directly with the human brain through the optic nerve and skeletal structure, sending interrupt signals to the brain while the patient is asked to re-live and then re-think his traumatic experience, reprocessing of the harmful memory happens quickly.

In horses, this is even quicker since they don't have the language overlay and the ego attachment to neuroses that humans have. Neurosis is defined as the unwillingness or inability to make positive changes. Horses want to change and be whole, functioning members of the herd and in their partnership with humans.

Two of the therapies used directly in ESCT include:

Bilateral eye movement therapy
Bilateral body tapping therapy

7. ESCT's effective cure rate is 95%.



LEFT: Before sending a horse out for work at liberty, tapping it clears its mind and creates a mental attitude ready for work.

For humans, the test of a therapy is how well and how quickly it heals. Since ESCT is the world's first equine psychotherapy, we have no comparison data with other equine psychotherapeutic techniques. We can only look at it in light of other treatments and trainings that help horses relax and learn without therapeutic intervention. That is comparing apples and oranges.

I can only relate that healing takes place in horses that have not had permanent brain damage. Little is known about the horse's brain's healing ability, so we can only intuit that it probably does so similarly to humans. However, there is a point of return where some of the functions needed to integrate ESCT are no longer present in the horse and then it fails. In my three years of horse healing and working with over 130 horses, I have encountered very few cases in which a horse cannot heal due to some brain disease process or electrocution.

How is healing in horses defined? It depends on the trauma or spookiness of the horse. If we separate the genetic legacy of the horse, which often includes a highly activated automatic startle response, and deal only with ensuing learned behavior problems, we can eradicate or significantly improve the behavior with ESCT to the satisfaction of the horse/human partnership's requirements. His genetic legacy may be modified through

ESCT, for the better, but it will not be erased. We are not messing with their basic biology. Some riders can deal with a little spookiness because they can sit a rodeo bull; other riders become fearful at the twitch of an ear. The rider's response to a spook in the saddle or on the ground greatly affects how the horse handles the situation.

The truest test of healing is how the horse behaves overall once ESCT has integrated. The results show that he becomes overall more relaxed, quiet, and attentive. He has overcome his specific stressor(s) and a variety of others that can be placed in the same category (i.e., a flag spook is similar to a waving plastic bag). He faces new spooks by turning and facing them and investigating instead of running away. I call this the STAY AND PLAY RESPONSE instead of the RUNAWAY REACTION (or automatic startle response [ASR]). He learns to engage his volitional (read learning) brain and stay in the learning zone when given new challenges and situations.

As the human partner administers ESCT to the horse and sees the horse's improvement, the human becomes less likely to startle also. This positive feedback loop helps the horse/human relationship in a big way.

Results show that when applied correctly and allowing for integration, the healing rate with ESCT is 95%, assuming no brain damage in the horse.

8. ESCT centers the horse, creating responses instead of reactions.

We've talked a little about the Automatic Startle Response (ASR) before. All mammals have it. Most creatures do. Some people jump when suddenly touched and others stand perfectly still. We tend to categorize horse breeds into spooky and non-spooky categories (Arabians vs. quarter horses). The ASR serves to literally save the horse's life by removing him from potential danger as quickly as possible. THERE IS NO THINKING INVOLVED in this response, only a push towards movement after a lightning fast search through the slide cabinet for a similar situation. Often, not even that takes place. It is simply "outta here." Reactivity in prey animals is to be expected and most trainers agree that even under ideal circumstances, horses are an accident waiting to happen.

BELOW: Another bilateral eye movement is moving the hand horizontal directly in front of the horse's field of vision, left/right, about a 25 times. Notice how the horse has closed its eyes in relaxation at the end of this session.

To modify the ASR, or the RUN AWAY REACTION, into a more reasoned response is what ESCT does. Studies have shown how bilateral brain integration affects the human brain during the fear-interrupt cycle as therapy progresses. There are no studies extant about ESCT and horses. We have only the empirical evidence to go on, but we can assume the process is similar. By sending an electric interrupt signal

through the optic nerve with eye therapy or through the bony structure with bilateral tapping, the fearful memory and in-body experience is "jammed" by the electrical interference created by the tapping and eye movement. Try it on yourself by thinking of a spooky scene from a movie and then tapping yourself left right on the collar bone a few times. You can't hold the spooky message.

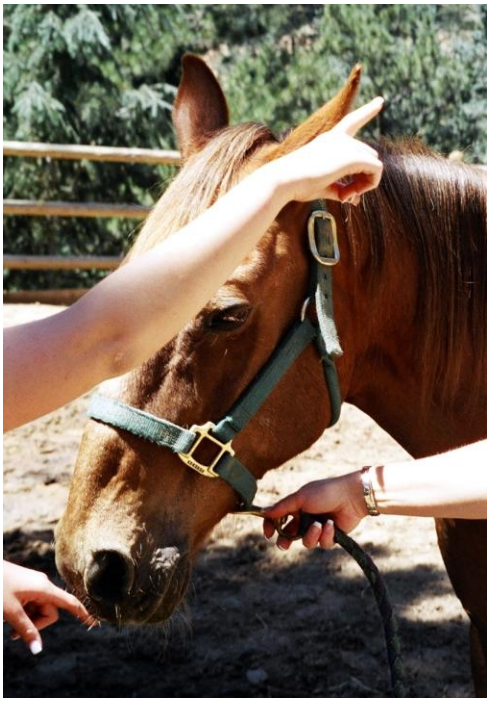
Through a process of approach and retreat of the stressor and the administering of ESCT, the horse relives its fear, relaxes in the face of its stressor, sees it move away, and regains control of himself. During ensuing introductions of the stressor or fearful situation, he becomes more and more adept and controlling his fearful reaction and creating a learned response because he SURVIVES the stressor and forms a new slide memory. This new memory becomes his new baseline, his new point of comparison. This is called centering. The little second of insight that the horse experiences is enough to disengage his ASR just enough to kick in his volitional brain. He thinks before he responds. With practice and in additional situations, he becomes more and more adept at responding instead of reacting.

The rule is to keep the volitional brain engaged during therapy and not to set the horse off, so we always begin with a full set of eye movements and tapping to settle the horse well into its body and mind. Then and only then do we introduce the stressor or stressful situation.

We go from run away to stay and play.

9. ESCT engages the horse's volitional brain, where learning takes place.

RIGHT: Another eye movement is from the tip of the nose to behind the ears, taking in the horse's peripheral vision. Strawberry seems to be napping as a result of the interrupt received through the optic nerve.



We've also talked a little about engaging the horse's volitional brain. Why is this so important? Because if the volitional brain is not engaged, learning does not take place. That is why with operant conditioning techniques, it often takes 500 passes to make the horse learn what it needs to know until the behavior is ingrained as an automatic reaction. It is still a reaction even after all that practicing, not a response. This is the beauty of ESCT. It teaches the horse how to respond instead of to react from instinct. The horse actually wants to engage its learning brain and experience life in this new setting. You can see it at work as the therapy progresses and it

is a delight to watch, much like a child opening a holiday present.

If the horse has checked out from boredom or trauma, he is not learning. During ESCT, we monitor the horse's progress according to his engagement in the process and his entrainment with the stressor or situation. Continued improvement and relaxation between presentation of the stressor signals he is engaged and entrained. If he shows the slightest regression, we respect his fear and bring him back to the 5th floor, where learning lives. If he is in the basement, he's checked out and if he's in the penthouse, he's sky high on adrenaline. The ESCT therapist also needs to stay on the 5th floor emotionally and bodily, not buying into the horse's fear.

This is not something that can be taught outright, but comes with practice and trust in one's intuition and horse sense. Throughout the therapy, the horse gives fear signals that include a wide eye with the whites showing, a high head, moving back a couple of steps, pulling on the lead rope, not looking at the stressor, pawing, outright bolting and head tossing and snorting. Relaxed horses exhibit a contra posta stance in the hind legs (where one leg is bent in a relaxed position), a relaxed neck, facing the stressor without tugs on the lead rope, moving toward the stressor, sniffing it with the muzzle, touching it, allowing it to touch him, soft eyes, relaxed jaw, and deep sighing. In this mode, the horse is learning and integrating at high speed. The way ESCT moves the horse from fear to acceptance is a delight to watch.

One of the techniques used in ESCT is called mirroring, where the therapist does what the horse does when the stressor is presented. If the horse moves his head away, the therapist moves the stressor away. If the horse steps back, the therapist steps back. This differs greatly from some training techniques in which the horse is forced to do what the human wants because not doing it would mean learning or reinforcing a bad habit. The logic of this has always escaped me because the horse is not a recalcitrant child but a prey animal attempting to protect his life.

If the horse should check out or bolt, bring him back gently and carefully and do some ESCT to engage and entrain him again. Then proceed in little steps. This rarely happens and when it does it is not a tragic mistake, only part of the healing process.

10. ESCT can be used on the ground or with the rider up.

Therapy begins with the horse on the ground on a halter and lead rope. The stressor or situation is worked through to satisfactory resolution where horse and human are comfortable with the responses shown. The horse is allowed to experience the stressor with ESCT on left and right sides or is introduced into the stressful situation from all sides.

The intermediate step is to saddle up and put the rider on board and have the horse tacked up with bit/bridle and halter/lead rope. The job of the rider is then to remain calm and adjust the horse when necessary, and the job of the handler is to give the therapy on the ground as needed. This is a double safety set up, reinforcing what the horse has already

learned but exposing him to the stressor with a rider on board. We all now that a horse and rider are a different configuration than a solitary horse.

LEFT: Whatever fear is treated on the ground with ESCT, needs to be also treated with the rider up. The horse sees these as two different situations and overcoming fear in one does not necessarily ensure safety while riding.

The final step is to teach the rider tapping techniques in the saddle so that as the horse bunches up in anticipation of a problem, the rider can desensitize the horse right away. This is usually done with one hand on the reins and one hand working the horse in the area of the withers and spinous processes. Often, it is useful to come to a full stop, have the horse face the stressor and tap along the spine while the horse faces its nemesis. With the Harmony ESCT Pulser, the automatic gentle tapping machine, the rider can keep both hands on the reins and remotely tap the horse's head with the pulsers attached to the headstall.

By the time the rider and horse have teamed up to work together, the horse has integrated so well that all that is needed is fine tuning, but it is good to know that one has a technique in hand; available at all times, to calm the horse in the arena or on the trail.

All this bonding has produced a horse that trusts its rider to keep it safe and a rider that has found confidence in his/her ability to calm the horse under almost any circumstance. This mutual positive feedback loop strengthens the effects of ESCT.

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