

get Gritty



Living with Genuine Grit
Part 12: Creating Confidence
& The Grit Zone

Gritty Riders Create Confidence

Confidence (noun): A feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities.

Confidence is trust in yourself.

Here's the thing-you can't magically conjure up confidence and then go out and do something. Confidence is earned, little by little, step by step.

Confidence is a choice to go out there and keep trying, to make mistakes and learn and grow, to be the best that you can be.

Confidence is the willingness to try, and trusting that you will figure out how to achieve whatever it is that you want to achieve.

"Actions of Confidence come first. Feelings of Confidence come later." The Golden Rule of Confidence as stated in The Confidence Gap by Dr. Russ Harris

"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit at home and think of it. Go out and get busy." -Dale Carnegie

If you want to be a confident, gritty rider, you need to be willing to try and create your own confidence, little by little. In this workbook you will learn more about how to create confidence with your horse. Let's get started!

~Chevy

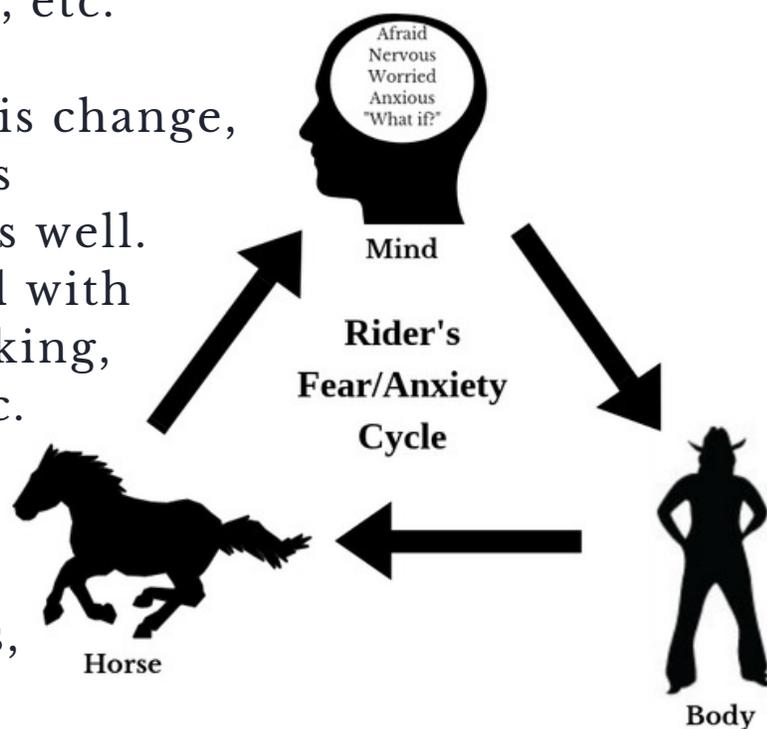
When working with horses, confidence is important!

Horses are very sensitive flight animals. As herd animals, if one of the herd is fearful, the others pick up on it and become fearful too. And they react by running away and asking questions later!

So when you as a rider start experiencing thoughts of fear, anxiety, nervousness and worry, these thoughts quickly affect your body. These thoughts trigger your fight-flight-freeze response, causing your heart beat to quicken, your breathing to become fast and shallow, your muscles to get tense, your posture to change, etc.

Your horse quickly notices this change, and it can trigger your horse's fight-flight-freeze response as well. Your horse may even respond with dangerous behaviors like bucking, bolting, spooking, kicking, etc.

To be a confident, gritty rider requires a variety of knowledge, skills and abilities, including the mental skills to manage your own emotions in the saddle, the horse sense to read your horses and assess the situation that we are in, and the riding skills to safely lead our equine partners.



With horses you cannot "fake" confidence. You need to develop authentic confidence.

The Confidence Conundrum

And here lies the confidence conundrum.

If you need to take actions of confidence before you feel confident to become confident, yet your horses can sense if you are not authentically confident, how can you build your confidence?

You need to be like Goldilocks and assess if the situation is Too Hot, Too Cold, or Just Right.

Too Hot-This is the danger zone. This is where you don't feel safe, where the demands of the situation are beyond your skills/abilities, or beyond your horse's skills/abilities. Going into the danger zone will greatly decrease your confidence level at best, at worst, you and your horse could get hurt.

Too Cold-This is the comfort zone, or the "stuck zone". This is where you are comfortable, but you are not building your confidence, you are not making any progress towards your horsemanship goals/dreams. You are stuck.

Just Right-This is the GRIT ZONE.

The GRIT Zone

What is the GRIT Zone?

The GRIT zone is the in between zone, outside of your comfort/stuck zone, but not into the danger zone. In the GRIT Zone you are learning, growing, taking action, and trying new things. When you are in the GRIT Zone you are making progress towards your goals. You are building your confidence. In the GRIT Zone you are improving as a horsewoman, and your horse is improving in their skills and abilities too.

Only you can determine what Zone you are in. As you are working with your horse, occasionally pause and ask yourself, "What zone am I in right now?"