

The result is a five-session series with a designated purpose and specific body map for each session. Sessions 1-3 restore fuller mobility to each muscle. Sessions 3-5 integrate that mobility into the horse's movement.

Equine Fascial Rebalancing Series

First Session

Build trust. Get to know the horse's tension patterns.

Work out holding in surface musculature. Identify deeper holding patterns that are the roadmap for a continuing series.

Second Session

Give the horse a better sense of stability so he's more secure in moving on and off the ground. Bring out the power available in the horse's hind end.

Emphasize vertical line integrity in standing. Free tendons and musculature of all four legs. Free up superficial and midlevel fascial restrictions in shoulders, pelvis, lumbar and hip joints.

Third Session

Integrate muscle groups that share movement functions.

Begin to shift vertical line integration into horizontal plane. Work focuses on functional quadrants rather than individual muscles.

Fourth Session

Bring out fluidity of whole body motion.

Connect front and hind ends through the barrel. Emphasize horizontal line cohesion.

Fifth Session

Reinforce changes after horse has practiced his discipline.

Maintain flexibility of fascia while horse strengthens into an integrated movement pattern.

After a basic series, Joseph usually does two advanced EFR sessions over the next year.

Clients Talk

People love their horses and take their care very seriously. Like any other professional athletes, when they find something that works, word spreads quickly.

Joseph primarily works with performance horses, helping them achieve their full potential. He helps dressage horses improve their precision, competition jumpers get more height and power, and western horses increase speed and dexterity. With these horses even a small change can mean the difference between a third and a first place ribbon.

After EFR, a palomino owner put her horse in a performance show. Her horse, normally not a big winner, won an unprecedented 21 events, every event they entered. The EFR series was the only different thing they'd done, so she was quick with her praise about its effectiveness.

Gwen Blake, US Equestrian Olympic Team member, describes EFR's effect on her training horses. She says, "Joseph worked on several dressage horses in our barn. I have seen a distinct difference in how they carry themselves and how they have a more relaxed, willing work attitude."

Kathy and Rick Countryman are well-known hunter-jumper trainers at the Countryman Stables on Bainbridge Island, WA. They report the effects of EFR at their facility: "Joseph has worked with a dozen of our hunter-jumpers. Consistently horses that are 'too hot' calm down. They stop their habits of pulling and collect under themselves easier. The horses become supple and limber, move better, are more comfortable and jump with better form."

Joseph also works with horses who need help getting back into peak condition. Often they have a history of unresolved old injuries. AFA certified horseshoer, Lisa Dillon, speaking about her quarter

horse who had a chronic imbalance, says, "After an injury my gelding had movement problems that required therapeutic shoeing. I didn't think he'd ever be able to overcome this. After sessions with Joseph he's become more relaxed and supple, developed a better stride and an overall better sense of well-being and attitude. He no longer requires special shoes either. I highly recommend EFR."

Horse breeder, Kitty Mac, runs the Triple W Ranch in Ellensburg, WA. Kitty's 4-year-old quarter horse suffered debilitating injuries after tangling himself in barbed wire a few years earlier. "Dat Hickory" had great bloodlines but due to his compromised movement was unable to compete and bring in the awards necessary to make him a highly desirable breeding stallion.

Trainer Cara Landwehr worked with Hickory during his rehabilitation. She tells this story:

As a result of his injuries, Hickory developed tight movement patterns to protect his hindquarters and compensate for painful muscles and tendons.

Even after those injuries healed, Hickory initiated about 80% of his movement from his forehand rather than his hindquarters. He had tension and apprehension about being handled anywhere in a broad area around his lumbo-sacral junction and was unable to stand balanced on any three legs so handling his feet was difficult.

Both stifle joints were weak and wobbly and tended to lock. He wouldn't allow me to handle his tail for the first three weeks he was in my charge. He didn't know where his hind end or his feet were. He'd stomp and kick in the trailer which told me he didn't know how to stabilize himself and didn't know precisely where his feet were so he felt unsafe there.

Although kind-natured he was also reactive. While not a bad horse, he was prone to temper tantrums and dramatics and became easily unfocused. He had trouble learning new things and then remembering what he had learned. After the EFR sessions he made amazing progress in two major areas:

Bio-Mechanical

Once his muscles were no longer bound up, he was able to use them correctly. This cut a lot of time off his rehab program and enabled him to progress faster than I could have hoped.

After EFR, when he took a step, he used himself correctly so he got maximum benefit out of the gymnastic and strengthening exercises. He used to have trouble engaging and lacked energy. After the series he really discovered his engine!

He became able to do better lateral and engagement work. For a trainer this is a HUGE payoff. A horse making faster and easier progress with minimum wear and tear is a win for everyone!

Spirit

As Hickory's physical balance improved, so did his mental balance. I believe these two things go hand-in-hand. Releasing the locked tension in his body helped him relax and enjoy learning again instead of holding onto the old fears he had when he was in pain.

After EFR he began to have TONS of energy and started moving in very athletic ways. His workability, self-control and manners all improved tremendously.

Hickory's owner Kitty Mac says, "I'm convinced the EFR work made the difference. Joseph's work gave us a permanent positive effect we couldn't achieve any other way."

Horses Teach

"Horses are great bodywork teachers," Joseph says. "If you do a stroke without being in rapport, if it's too fast or deep or something's not quite right about it, they'll give you immediate feedback with their mouths or feet. They force you to become aware of everything you're doing. Whatever energy you bring to them, they reflect back to you. They won't put up with deep bodywork that's less than perfect so you really have to refine your quality of touch and presence. If you love them while you work they will give you the moon, but if your mind is elsewhere they'll knock you over."

Rolex, a Westphalian dressage horse, is highly participatory in his sessions. Joseph was working on the horse's shoulder when Rolex turned his head, pulled his lips up over his teeth and gently pressed them against Joseph's shoulder. Rolex was using Joseph's shoulder to show where he needed attention.

Curious, Joseph moved to the corresponding spot on Rolex and found it was indeed tighter than the surrounding area. Rolex knew and showed Joseph where he wanted more work. When Joseph moved to the other side, Rolex did the same thing but in a different part of Joseph's upper arm, again a place that Joseph moved to and found fascial restriction in.

New Attitudes

Attitudes about animals are changing and many people in the horse community are more open to alternative modalities. Interest sparks when their horses suddenly become more adept and alert. After seeing the effects of EFR on their horses, owners often ask about getting structural work on themselves. Because his practice is full of horses, Joseph refers humans to SI "people practitioners."

At the completion of a Structural Integration training, each practitioner is qualified to begin their SI practice. Most people take that knowledge and parlay it into a successful SI career but some people forage into the unknown by taking the work into specialized areas. Each time someone takes the work into a new arena, the field of knowledge expands for everyone.

Joseph's deep love of animals has found an avenue of expression richly rewarding for both man and beast. The work he's developed offers people new ways to create health for their horses as well as themselves.

Joseph also feels responsible to educate people about being compassionate with their animals. Through the hands-on work he's able to experience a closeness of communication with animals few people are aware is available.

Joseph's skilled hands, calm and patient manner and deep love for horses and other animals are important elements. But the most telling of all is that horses enjoy working with him.

Joseph and his wife went on vacation shortly after he started working with horses. They stopped by a local hunter-jumper show. No one was in the stable during show time but the horses were in their stalls. As the couple strolled through the barn, a horse at the far end of the corridor leaned out of her stall and started whinnying and vigorously nodding her head up and down.

His wife asked if he knew that horse. Joseph peered down the long corridor with the nickering horse at the end of it and said he doubted any horses he worked with would be at a show so far away.

The horse continued her excited display, calling to Joseph. Just then the mare's owner came around the corner and said, "Oh, hello Joseph. I see Sally remembers you!"

Joseph offers professional trainings in EFR. Interested students can request an info packet by calling (360) 687-8384. More information is available on his website, www.JosephFreeman.com.