

## After A Session

Your horse will likely be feeling active and frisky.

Immediately after the session lunge him at the walk, trot and canter ten times in each direction to integrate the structural changes into his body. This allows the work to penetrate deeper into his body. If he wants to kick up his heels, let him. If he wants to roll, encourage him to do that, too. He's exploring how his body moves in different ways and this is good.

If possible it's a good idea to turn him out and let him run, turn, twist and roll. Your horse will have a good time exploring his new flexibility. This play is an important part of the session because it helps your horse know what he is now capable of doing.

Horses are not sore from the bodywork after a session but once in awhile a horse might overdo the exploration of his new flexibility. If he's still racing, running and rolling after half an hour, you might want to bring him in for the night. Most horses have common sense about what they can do, but every once in awhile a horse feels so good he wants to jump over the moon. If soreness is a concern to you, monitor his field play that day.

Don't ride for the rest of the day after a session so your horse can move without your weight and directions. Do half the normal workout the following day so he can move around and integrate the neuromuscular changes. This helps him learn on his own what is different in his body and how to use himself better.

## What Causes Reduced Flexibility?

Injuries, chronic stress or strain, aging, even normal wear and tear can cause fascia to thicken into adhesions as the tissue repairs itself, often becoming fibrous and glue-like in the process. This reduces flexibility of the joints and prevents muscles from lengthening to their full extent.

All horses, even healthy ones, develop inefficient movement habits and accumulate a history of kicks, falls, and bruises. Over time these travel through the horse's body compromising his comfort and movement.

Example -- a pulled muscle on left foreleg can cause him to favor his left leg. Over days or weeks this will cause him to put greater strain on his right leg/shoulder. This produces strain in the right neck and upper back. The horse then feels unbalanced, is more limited in movement choices and won't function at his best. Over time his body will rigidify the fascia into a more fixed position to support the imbalance as other parts of the horse's body compensate further.

## What Happens in a Session?

Using his hands, Joseph works the superficial layers of muscle and tissue. As outer layers become more flexible and less restricted, he is able to work deeper into the horse's structure to organize intrinsic muscles and joint relationships more efficiently. This full body restructuring takes place in five sequential sessions.