

The 6 C's of Horsemanship: Building Blocks for Success

By Dr. Mike Guerini

Many of us benefit from Natural Horsemanship and Foundation Training methods. We dive into books, watch videos, attend seminars and go to clinics to learn all we can to develop a strong emotional, mental and physical foundation in all of our horses. These methods use a “building block” approach to help us focus on assembling a good horse that is willing and able to perform. In this approach to training each lesson needs to be learned and firmly in place before we can teach the next lesson.

I believe very few people are born great horsemen and women, the majority of us work all our lives to become better horsemen and women. As I work to become a better horseman I have had to step back and take a look at my own "building blocks". The **6 C's of Horsemanship** are the Building Blocks for Success that I teach at my clinics and use in my own barn.

The **6 C's of Horsemanship** are “building blocks” for having Confidence, maintaining Control, maintaining Consistency, riding with Collection, having Compassion and keeping an attitude of Calmness. Together these ideas help us build a lasting relationship with our horse.

So how do we use the **6 C's of Horsemanship** to gain success in the saddle?

When we ride we want to be confident in our riding skills and our horse. To gain confidence--- we practice, learn from others, go to clinics and we take small steps. If I wanted to ride on a 5-day trail ride I would first build up my confidence and my horse's confidence by taking a 1-day ride. In order for us to gain confidence we need to learn to control our horse and the space around our horse. To build confidence and establish control we need to practice with ---- consistency. As a rider it is our obligation to be consistent in our training and riding methods. When we are consistent and have a plan and follow our plan we build confidence in our horse and our abilities. To maintain control we need to keep our bodies and our horse's body ---- collected. We cannot expect control when our arms are waving all around and our horses are racing through open fields. Maintaining collection of our body, our speed and the horse's flexibility helps us to be confident and in control. As we teach our horse we need to remember to have ---- compassion. When I go out on a trail ride I want to enjoy time with my horse and I want to enjoy the scenery and most of all I want this to be full of ---- calmness. As we embark on the day and each time we go to the barn remember---our horse should be just as calm at the end of our ride as he was when he was standing in his stall.

I am certain that the **6 C's of Horsemanship** will be a valuable tool for building knowledge and in turn realizing results as you work with your horses.

Dr. Mike Guerini is a clinician from Nebraska and you can learn more about Dr. Mike and his 6 C's of Horsemanship at www.dunmovinranch.com.