



Horsenality™

by Linda Parelli

Do's and Don'ts

Knowing what makes your horse tick, what's important to him, what motivates, de-motivates, upsets or excites him, is a fantastic key to success with your horse. When you get it right all, or at least most of the time, both of you will be happier and achieve more harmony every time you are together.

I think about how much my understanding of Horsenalties has impacted my relationship with my horses Remmer and Allure. It's almost magical sometimes and feels so easy. All I have to do is think about their point of view and then present my requests with that in mind. HUGE! And isn't that what Pat has always said...? "Cause your idea to become your horse's idea, but understand your horse's idea first". Looking at things from the horse's point of view has become a lot more defined by the Horsenality Profile because you get to do way more than approach him as a prey animal. Now there's a full bodied character to get to know.

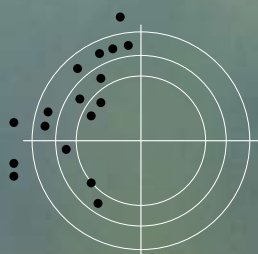
In the following pages, I've tried to give you a guide of Do's and Don'ts for the different Horsenalties. As you get to know them more intimately and notice the slightest changes, this will help you to do the right things more of the time and to adapt your approach and strategies when your horse moves between confident and unconfident, motivated and unmotivated. It is especially valuable if you have a horse that is more complex than average, and is, as we like to say, "all over the chart!"

DO'S

This is a list of things that are good for each specific Horsenality. This will help keep you focused on what to do in your sessions and how to keep them flowing positively.

DON'TS

This list should be like a list of warnings. That's because doing them will cause your horse to have problems with you!



Linda's Trakehner Warmblood, Allure, is the poster boy when it comes to displaying the characteristics of a Left Brain Extrovert Horsenality.

Readers write about Horsenality:

Horsenality is so complex. My mare is not just one simple Horsenality, but it seems as if she can be left brain and right brain, introvert and extrovert, at the same time. When I bought her in April 2007, she was very left brain introvert. She did not like to go forward and would buck to prove it. After about two months, she started becoming a left brain extrovert, and she started to like going forward and definitely loving to run. That went on for about three months, and then she started showing signs of right brain extrovert. She would run and run and run, and it was obvious that she was scared. I really had to learn to interrupt her patterns. She has been right brain extrovert now for almost three months. Now, in the last few weeks, she's getting more left brain extrovert again! I enjoy playing with her so much, and I really have to get savvy with the horse that shows up. I think she wakes up in a different part of the corral every morning. She has given me a lot of emotional fitness. If I wasn't doing Parelli, I don't know how I would be able to deal with a new horse every day. I may not even own her, because at first she was such a challenge that I wondered if we were the right match. But now, we have such a strong bond and I love her and her horsenality so much. —Lacey Pelly/age 14, Level 2 student

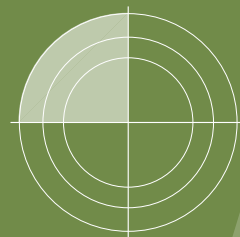
Recently I was spending some undemanding time with my two horses together and was watching them interact. I was trying to guess what mood they were in and if they were acting according to the Horsenality I had allocated to them.

As they played with and annoyed each other, it occurred to me they are very similar to my own two children. The older horse is like my nine-year-old son. Neither expresses themselves very well and both shut down if I ask too much of them or if they find something difficult. My six-year-old daughter is an extrovert who is very comfortable within herself and her abilities, and demands lots of attention but gives plenty in return. This is very similar to my young horse. HOW INTERESTING!!

Therefore the horses tend to interact with each other and with me in similar ways as my kids. Then I went on to the thought process of how differently do I treat the horses and the kids. Being extroverted myself I find it easy to cope with the outgoing, confident family members and struggle to have a binding relationship with the not so confident members.

This became very obvious when my older horse decided that he didn't want to be caught anymore. I had lost any trust he had in me and was worried I might make the same mistakes with my son. I am taking the time it takes to build my relationship with my horse again so that he will become the partner I have always wanted. Hopefully this will teach me the skills for a better relationship with my son, so that we will have a new level of connection and understanding.

Thank-you for giving me the tools for understanding myself, my horses and my family. As well as the techniques to deal with whatever personality/Horsenality shows up anytime so that I can be a great partner for my horses and a great mum and role model for my kids. —Kim Barker, Australia



LEFT BRAIN EXTROVERT

This horse is a playful character that needs interesting things to do. He is obsessed with learning and needs variety and new things to keep it fun.

DO:

- ✓ Teach him something new at least once a week.
- ✓ Keep sessions active, interesting and playful. Use obstacles, become more imaginative and when he's really playful, increase the pace and get him to do more.
- ✓ Mischief is his middle name; so give him things to do with that busy mind and mouth. This horse loves to play tricks on you, so why not teach him some tricks on purpose?
- ✓ Use long lines – 22' and 45'. Give him room to move!
- ✓ Praise him a lot: rubs and scratches, smiles, laughter... you having fun as well, is very rewarding for this kind of Horsenality.

DON'T:

- ✗ Bore him with endless, mindless repetition. This guy is smart! When you know he's got it, move on. You can always come back to it and add polish little by little.
- ✗ Slow, calm riding is not really this horse's dream. He wants to be active, go somewhere.
- ✗ Short lines (12') are too confining when playing on the ground.
- ✗ Punish him, ever. He doesn't know he's being naughty; he's just having fun! If he's high-spirited, and you punish him he'll become aggressive. If you end up scaring or suppressing him he'll shut down and crawl inside his shell to save his dignity.

Readers write about Horsenalities:

Learning to read and properly respond to my horses' horsenalities has been the biggest breakthrough for us yet!

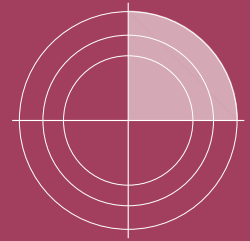
I found myself challenged by my second horse, an extreme right brain extrovert with some left brain extrovert tendencies. Emmy is eleven years old and still green under saddle. We have been playing our way through the Levels on-line and at liberty. We were making progress, but at times I felt overwhelmed by her extremes.

I filled out the horsenality charts for my Levels Partner Mariah. I had to really think back to how she was before Parelli. Her "before Parelli" showed her to be an extreme right brained extrovert with right brained introvert tendencies!! I'd forgotten what we were both like in the beginning. We have come a long, long way. Currently we are officially studying Level 3. She is still primarily right brain extrovert but moderate to mild. Mariah and I are now true partners in all that we do.

I gained a whole new perspective when considering my relationship with Emmy. Not so long ago I was thinking I was not the human for her. I'd decided to sell her. Now, empowered by this new knowledge and understanding, I feel confident we too can make this journey together.

I lean towards being a right brain extrovert with some right brain introvert tendencies. "My horse is my mirror"...hmmmm how interesting. —Becky Andrew, PA

The concept of Horsenalities has completely changed how I play with my horse. I have a nine-year-old TWH mare who alternates between a LB introvert and RB extrovert. Before I started Parelli, I would get frustrated quickly when she was LB because she was very unmotivated and stubborn. When she was RB, I was scared because she was seeking 'the middle of the herd', which meant she was on top of me, literally. Getting the LHB pack and reading about Horsenalities has totally changed my relationship with my horse. I now understand where her behaviors come from and no longer get frustrated or scared. It has enabled me to work as a partner and has taught me the tools I need to get her back to center. The results have been amazing! The more I learn, the more she moves toward a LB introvert. I just can't get over the changes I've seen, and the things that I see now that I didn't see before. As with much of the Parelli program, the information gained from Horsenalities has transferred to my work. I work with men with Autism. Our clients are non-verbal and there's lots of overlap between my horse and work. Learning to be a better observer has taught me to see things in the guys I didn't see before. When behaviors arise, I don't just see the behavior, I see where it comes from, and learn what I can do to set them up for success. —Karen Farnsworth, CA



RIGHT BRAIN EXTROVERT

This horse constantly needs reassurance. He gets confused easily and then gets afraid, so he needs you to make things simple, which will help him relax; especially since that is not something that comes easily for him around humans.

DO:

- ✓ Use a lot of consistency, it's calming. For example, circles are great and the more worried your horse is, the smaller you need to make the circles. You could also weave around barrels or buckets placed six-feet apart. Frequent transitions also uses the principle of consistency... keep doing one-rein transitions every few strides, from walk to trot, until your horse refocuses and calms down.
- ✓ Speed up, match the energy and add "four ounces." You need to be asking your horse to go more quickly than he really wants to; this interrupts the fear pattern. If you don't feel safe and confident doing this when riding, get off and do it from the ground. For example, if your horse gets frantic and wants to head to the arena gate, paces at the gate, etc., take him there and get him to pace back and forth faster than he wants to do it! Do it until he relaxes and be ready to start again.
- ✓ Use longer lines when playing on the ground, it will give your horse more drift. (22' is ideal unless you are good with a 45' Line).
- ✓ Respect thresholds; use approach and retreat to overcome them.
- ✓ Keep learning sessions short and simple.
- ✓ Relax when he relaxes. Until then keep your energy up and get your horse busy.

Calming strategies: A Million Transitions; Small circles; Tiny figure eights; Falling Leaf (1/2 circle changes of direction while you walk forwards); Do what he wants, only faster and smaller—"and then some!"

DON'T:

- ✗ Straight lines help a horse gather speed. You don't want this! Use straight lines only when your horse is more self-controlled.
- ✗ Don't hold him back; this increases fear. Give the energy a focus!
- ✗ On Line is better than Liberty if your horse is upset. That way you can "hold his hand". He'll tend to get lost and disconnected at Liberty.
- ✗ Don't teach your horse more than one thing at a time.
- ✗ Don't try to teach him when he's upset or unconfident. That's the time to use calming strategies.
- ✗ Forcing him over thresholds usually results in an accident.

Make it worse by: holding him back; punishing him; using stronger bits, tie downs, martingales, etc.; being too soft and not matching his energy; not knowing what to do – strong and focused leadership is essential; blasting through thresholds; getting mad or frustrated or scared.

Readers write about Horsenalties:

The evening my husband and I watched the Horsenality DVD, we recognized the world awakening significance of this concept. By spelling out what natural horsemen know intuitively about how to read and interact with any individual horse, Pat and Linda have enabled our relationships with our horses to soar to a higher level. It sure has had a profound impact on my relationships with my horses.

The most dramatic change was with my eleven-year-old appendix quarter horse mare, who has right brain introvert tendencies. When I got her three years ago, I was told she was a bossy, alpha mare, and she earned the name Saphira (after a dragon). We started playing Parelli style from the beginning, but she was a "difficult" horse, very bracy, high-headed, panicky, and would often lock-up. If a twig would snap a hundred yards away, she would virtually leave the planet! And I was going to ride this beast.

I was just starting the Parelli program (apparently missing the part about picking the perfect partner), and wondered if she was just "too much horse" for me. I had the utmost confidence in the program (especially watching the incredible progress my husband was making with his previously stubborn and defiant, left brain introvert gelding), so we forged on thru the Levels program. We immersed ourselves in all of the Parelli's information and inspiration we could get our eyes on, and played hours and hours each week.

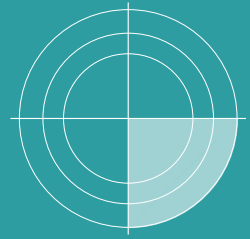
Despite all of this, we got stuck nearing the end of Level Two. I knew there was a trust issue, for both Saphira and me. We had come so far in our relationship, it was already a miracle. I never thought we'd be riding solo around our farm, or bareback, or she'd offer to step sideways to the fence for me to get on even when I wasn't planning it, but we had. She was becoming so soft and calm, I usually just call her Sophie (she's not dragon-like anymore).

Somehow, I wanted more. We still were not confident enough to do what I really wanted, which was trail ride off the farm.

Then, just in the nick of time, came the Horsenality concept with its' complimentary Leadership strategies. We put them to good use immediately, shifting in strategies as she shifts between right brain extrovert and introvert. Within four weeks, I was itching to ride off the farm with her.

I could have guessed it, she (actually, we) came off the trailer in a right brain extrovert mode. We played and then rode with a strong focus, with me matching her energy, and giving her tasks to do. After each back up, side pass, or tree we circled, her head (and my adrenaline) came down. Before I knew it, she was back to her usual mild right brain introvert mode, where I have to be mindful to slow down, and retreat/reapproach. At one point, we even played in the lake, where I just had to occasionally remind her that I was still there. Was this really my horse, who is normally reluctant to step in a puddle? (I'm sure she was thinking, is this really my human?)

Thank you Pat and Linda, for helping me reveal my horse, discover my potential, and live my dream. (P.S. I just passed my Level 2 yesterday!) — Christa Roser, PA



RIGHT BRAIN INTROVERT

This shy, timid, shrinking violet avoids pressure by retreating into himself. Success involves going very slowly at first and waiting for him to come out of his shell, to trust more. Pretty soon he'll be offering you more.

DO:

- ✓ Wait – wait – wait – WAIT! Ask your horse for something and then wait until he does it or looks at you to ask for clarification or more direction. If you just go through your phases to get him to act when you want, he'll be tense, lose confidence and trust. He may even blow up.
- ✓ Use the tiniest and softest suggestions and wait. This horse sees every little thing you do, sometimes he doesn't respond because his brain is locked up in fear.
- ✓ Be consistent. The Right Brain horse has trouble with change so do simple things with lots of repetition until he's calm.
- ✓ Confidence is everything. If you focus on this, your horse will give you everything else.

DON'T:

- ✗ Make your horse do things when he's not looking at you. This tells you he's afraid of the pressure you are putting on him. You might not think it's pressure, but you can frustrate this Horsenality with phase 1, simply because you are asking and asking and not waiting long enough for the response.
- ✗ Ask too much. Ask less in the beginning and you'll get more in the end. Don't ask more unless your horse is calm and trusting.
- ✗ Use big phases. You don't need them. He can see you, he just can't think when he's afraid or rushed/pushed.
- ✗ Punish your horse for not doing what you want. Remember, this is fear, and punishment does not make a horse braver.

Readers write about Horsenalties:

My horse, Jack, is a LBI with medium to low spirit and is every bit of the Horsenality chart on LBI and completely food motivated. After spending most of my life riding RB horses I found this horsenality very frustrating. I am a detail person, perfectionist, and very direct line. I absolutely love the home study courses and soak up all the new information as fast as I can get my hands on it. Jack, on the other hand, is unimpressed. Currently playing in Level 3, our journey has had its hills and valleys as we navigated through our differences in what our partnership was going to look like... feedback has included biting, bucking, leaving when saddling, as well as, the "you can't make me" look. I have seriously considered moving onto another partnership but in the advent of the newest material and recently attending a Level 3 clinic I have to reevaluate my reasons for doing so. I equated our journey to our family, on a road trip.

Ever been on one of those....? First there is the preparation, mapping out the trip, packing the car, arguing who gets to sit by the window etc., but for the most part, everyone is excited and ready to go on an adventure. Loaded up, we head out positive we are going to have a great vacation yet as the trip wears on all the highways and rest stops begin to blend together, the mutiny begins. The family is divided into two camps... some who just want to hurry up and get there and the others, who enjoy the journey. You know the type... they take the side trips to the Biggest Ball of Twine, the World's Double Barreled Cannon and the Cockroach Hall of Fame. The rest of the family can come along and be miserable or can join in on the fun. We still end up spending time together and eventually get to our scheduled destination, albeit a little later than originally planned, but the trip was not a failure. After arriving home, we do not get rid of the family, we actually tell stories recounting our time together with a sense of humor and laughter.

By now it is obvious which camps Jack and I fall into. The newest phrase added to my Parelli journey has become "practicing compromise." Isn't that what all relationships are about? Jack is teaching me it is okay to take the side trips and still have our final destination in mind. I am reminded all the negative attributes of LBI also have a positive. He loves new environments. We have been to a beach clinic and were the first ones to canter on the beach. We have galloped with exuberance on wooded trails. Less confident horses have had to stay in the ring as we were free to explore open fields. Our riding arena is 100 acres and some days that seems too small. I would never in my wildest imagination have been able to accomplish these adventures without my dominant, confident, LBI. He has taught me that being creative and imaginative is a necessary part of our relationship. Taking a detour, no sweat, we may not arrive on schedule but we had fun getting there!

— Sharon Wootten, Level 3 student, NC



LEFT BRAIN INTROVERT

Welcome to the land of "Why should I? What's in it for me?" This horse reads people like a book. He knows what you want and he's not going to give it to you, unless you treat him right. Even though he appears stubborn or lazy, he's not at all lazy in the mind! Reverse psychology is where it's at, oh... and treats!

DO:

- ✓ Use incentive – treats, grazing, rest, scratches, etc. Incentive is not bribing because you'll ask your horse to do something before rewarding him. A bribe is when you use the treat to lure him into doing it. There's a big difference.
- ✓ Ask him to do less than he's offering. It will blow his mind! He'll then start offering more.
- ✓ Give him time to think. He's not a slow thinker; he's just got to stop thinking resistant thoughts before he can be more in tune with you.
- ✓ Variety is important, it makes life interesting.
- ✓ Use more drive than draw.
- ✓ Teach him some tricks. This is fun for both of you and is a good way to make him feel clever.

Likes – variety, rewards and food! Also responds well to going slow, relaxing, eating and doing things that are new and interesting.

Variety: straight lines, point to point, trail rides, obstacles, daily variety, tricks and learning something new.

DON'T:

- ✗ Make him work. He uses energy only for the things he thinks are fun.
- ✗ Punish him. You'll have a big fight on your hands. This horse is a master intimidator of people when he dislikes them!
- ✗ Push him. He'll have you working harder than him! He's also great at objecting when asked to go faster and usually responds by kicking up, swishing his tail or laying back his ears. Just don't go there. Do the opposite of what he expects.
- ✗ Use much repetition. He cannot see the point in doing the same thing over and over and will lose motivation and respect for you. He's smart. Treat him like he is.
- ✗ Let your horse come to you with his ears back. Send/chase him away until he asks for permission to come to you.
- ✗ Get fooled into thinking that he's lazy. He's just unmotivated by you, so figure out how to make things more interesting?

Big Dislikes – repetition, treated like he's brainless, being rushed, lack of apparent purpose, no time to relax, a boring owner, too much work and not enough play. 🐾