

What's with that?

I am often asked, why don't you post more information about trimming on your site? The answer is very simple, I find it irresponsible.

I visit other hoof care sites often, reading the information posted and can't help but feel that there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of people out there experimenting on their horses. More often than not, it is out of desperation. I read that this person suggests backing up the toe to this point and another suggests bring the heels to this height. Even if you stay on one site and try to apply the described method, the likely hood of misinterpretation is very high, as everyone learns differently. What this does is create a host of would be designer trimmers that are experimenting in a hit or miss fashion, in the hope that the horse will respond in kind.

Can you see the problem here? Experimentation means that we do not know what the outcome is going to be, we only know what we desire the outcome to be. With experimentation comes a cost and all too often the cost is paid by the horse in the form of pain and discomfort. There is no need for experimentation; we do know what the results will be when we apply logic and science.

Proper hoof care requires a commitment and that commitment is to develop the knowledge and understanding needed to treat the horse's foot responsibly. Mudding up the waters with bits and pieces of information, tethered together in frustration is not responsible.

I have been a horseman for almost thirty years and I have lost count of the number of horses that have suffered under the care of a person with good intentions, often under a miss understanding of what is natural. It is not natural for a horse to wear shoes; therefore it is only natural that a horse goes without shoes. It is natural for a horse to be out 24/7, or to have its hooves soaked daily, the list goes on and on. When then did it become natural to trim indiscriminately at the hoof of a horse in experimentation? How harsh is that statement? Before you decide that I am being judgmental, surf the sites dedicated to barefoot hoof care for any amount of time and see for yourself, if the way in which they address trimming does not change with the tides. That with each new paper released on hoof research they change the way the hoof is addressed and make recommendations on how this should be applied to the horse. I for one think that the horse owner should not be used as an instrument of experimentation. That any information being presented be scrutinized and supported by logic and science. The studies being conducted in the universities and by leading researchers are just that, studies. The findings of these studies should be evaluated and their merit based on sample size and method, not simply on stated results. Often a study that is stated to be significant is truly only significant to the sample group and not to the horse at large. Don't get me wrong, I would love to see meaningful studies, with significant sample sizes and verifiable findings, filter their way to the field, but in a responsible manner.

It is irresponsible to post the findings of current studies in a way that would suggest that the horse owner implement changes in hoof care or trimming technique. It is asking the horse owner to conduct experiments with their horses. Without a strong understanding of foot structure, the functions of these structures and the stimulus to produce positive results, what outcome could the horse owner expect? The results speak

for themselves; hundreds of emails each month from horse owners around the world speak of frustration and confusion.

There is however, a viable and proven science that dispels fear and frustrations; it is called Applied Equine Podiatry. It is a science that requires a commitment to learning and can not be rushed. It is a commitment that too many horse owners are unwilling to accept; why this is I do not fully understand.

The answer as to why I do not post information on trimming? "It is not just a trim." I have said this perhaps 10,000 times over the last eight years, and it has not changed. Applied Equine Podiatry is a science and the HPT Method a tool. Both have proven to be beneficial to thousands of horses around the world, but only for those horse owners and professionals that have been willing to commit to gaining the knowledge and expertise needed to apply it correctly.

Sincerely,  
KC La Pierre, RJF, MEP