

## Alcoholic Whispering 101: Bronco Taming Skills for Families!

**Alcoholic/Addicts are like horses. Families are like trainers.  
If you have a "Bucking Bronco" you have to look at the Training Method.**

With Love, By Betty Pennington, Alcoholic Whisperer



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## Enabling: "The Butterfly Story"

Author Unknown

A butterfly was trying to come out of a small hole that appeared in a cocoon.

**A man sat and watched** the butterfly struggling to come out.

**To help the butterfly to come out without the struggle,**

he took a small scissor and slit open the cocoon and the butterfly came out.

**The man was very happy that he helped the butterfly**  
and waited for the butterfly to take its first flight of freedom.

Instead he noticed that the butterfly had a withered body and weak wings.

**The butterfly was never able to fly and spent the rest of its life by crawling around.**



**The man did not understand** that the struggle the butterfly goes through  
is necessary for the **strength to fly**.

**No matter how compelling it seems to intervene in an addict's struggles –**

**Enabling Weakens**



**Encouraging Strengthens**

*Alcoholic/Addicts are like Horses!*

*"Anybody can make a horse do something. Can you get your horse to WANT to do something?" – Linda Parelli*

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## Part 1 Addiction System Overview: The Power Struggle For Control

**Did you know - Alcoholic/Addicts are like Horses and Families are like Trainers.**

**Alcoholics are like horses – the more they are chased around the pasture, the more they will run away!**

Whispering Tip: Learn how to have the horse/addict catch you.



### **Negative Emotions Cause Horses to Run Away or Fight**

- ❖ A horse/addict is extremely sensitive to emotions and can read energy from a mile away. **Any negative tones/pressure (no matter how subtle) will be detected and will create a negative reaction.**
- ❖ To eliminate drama with an addict, a whisperer learns to **do an "emotions check"** and always presents a positive frame of mind and attitude before each interaction.
  
- ❖ Many people become nervous or angry around alcoholic/addicts because they don't feel in control of the situation. They don't realize a horse/addict needs a calm, positive, respectful leader/partner or they will run/buck against perceived negativity and disrespect.
- ❖ When people are sad/afraid/angry with a horse/addict, it's usually because he's not doing what THEY want. He feels this negative energy - becomes defensive and will run off, rear, buck, strike, kick, freak out...do whatever it takes to get away from them. And then they unknowingly escalate matters by chasing...
- ❖ At first glance we believe **the horse/addict "makes" us angry** because of things HE does. Whispering teaches us to look at the things WE do and learn how we are (unknowingly) contributing to the addict's "bad" behaviors. Whispering magically transforms angry horses/addicts with psychology instead of force.

It's only when we run out of knowledge that our negative emotions become triggered and we react with fear, frustration, anger, or anxiety. **The good news is that the more we learn whispering skills, the less frustrated or angry WE become; we learn to understand addicts and set up interactions for success rather than remaining the cause or victim of accident or failure.** Horses and Addicts will teach us a lot about ourselves if we let them.

### ***Solution:* Learn Alcoholic/Addict Psychology – Whispering Can Transform a Relationship!**

- ✚ **The addiction family system survives/thrives on negative emotions.** It is gasoline on the fire. Positive energy is water on the fire. Whispering teaches how to love and respect our own life so we can offer this freedom to others. *There's no fight if everyone is right!*
- ✚ **Horses/Addicts LOVE interesting humans.** A whisperer understands the horse's psychology and finds ways to make the relationship interesting/exciting to the horse. He understands there is nothing wrong with the horse/addict or the family, only with the training methods.



### **The Relationship Litmus Test:**

- ❖ What does the horse/addict do when he is not attached to a bridle and rope (closely monitored)? Does he choose to hang out or run away?
- ❖ Does the horse/addict eagerly wait at the fence to greet us?

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## Part 1 Horse/Addict Training Tip: Dealing With A Problem Horse? - You Have To Change First

by Clinton Anderson, Horse Whisperer



1. The main thing to understand when dealing with a "problem" horse is that **if you want your horse's behavior to change, you have to be willing to change** the way you interact with him.
2. And, **you also have to be willing to put in the time necessary to work with him**. People ask me all the time if I've ever met a horse I couldn't train. The answer is no. **Every horse is trainable, but not every person is trainable because they don't want to learn new ideas.**
3. Relationship can be easy if you're willing to put in the effort. **But you have to be willing to work at it and must have a burning desire to be the best horseman you can be.**

**If you want your horse to change, YOU have to be willing to change first.**  
**That is the most important concept you can understand when it comes to training horses.**

When I was an apprentice for Ian Francis, he often said to me, **"To change your life, you must first change your attitude."** Ian believes, as do I, that if you're unhappy with the current state of your life, you need to change YOUR attitude and perceive your life the way you'd like for it to be and in turn follow through with the action to make it happen.

I've incorporated that saying into training horses - "If you want to change your horse, you must first change the way YOU interact with him." **When you interact with your horse in a way that HE understands, you'll get results.**

**But if you keep doing the same thing, you'll keep getting the same results.**

**Solution:** If you want a different reaction from your horse/addict and want to progress your relationship, **you'll have to change the way you work around him and start seeing things from HIS point of view.**

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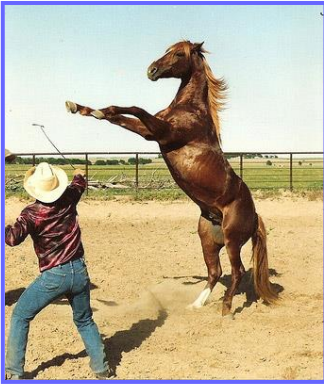
## **Part 2 Boundaries: For Safety and Mutual Respect**

**Did you know - Alcoholic/Addicts are like horses and Families are like trainers.**

**Alcoholics are like horses – they will challenge boundaries everyday!**

Whispering Tip: Safety and Respect are First Priority!

The foundation of a successful relationship with a horse or an addict is based on mutual respect for boundaries.



### **Boundaries and Respect Are a Two Way Street:**

- ✚ Mutual respect is built by defining and protecting our boundaries while also staying out of others space.
- ✚ Communication and understanding breakdowns happen when we don't know (or care?) what the other person's needs are; we make unintentional mistakes that are offensive, upsetting or frustrating in some way. (AA says "We step on the toes of our fellows...and they retaliate.")

*Do we want to be right...?*

### **Mutual Respect is Based on the Principle of "Live and Let Live".**

We get stuck in a pattern of always trying to get others to see it our way. We both want to be the "right" one.

- ❖ The Alcoholic/Addiction system is fueled by this cycle of resentment caused by lack of boundaries.
- ❖ We learn to put our focus on helping and taking care of ourselves. When we work to build and protect OUR life it allows others the freedom to enjoy the same dignity.
- ❖ Remaining calm, non argumentative and respectful to ourselves and others is water on the fire of addiction.

How are we allowing our boundaries to be crossed? \_\_\_\_\_  
How are we crossing others boundaries? \_\_\_\_\_

*Solution:* is to live our life in a way that makes us happy AND allow others the same freedom.

Our goal is to help heal damaged relationships by understanding and changing our part in the problem.

- ✚ The more we understand the behavioral and psychological science of Horses or Addicts, the more successful we can be with them.
  - Horses/addicts want people and things to be interesting. They hate to be told "No" and will buck if tightly controlled.
- ✚ Success in the relationship with a horse/addict is possible when we give Respect, Calm Communication & Trust in equal doses.
  - Success is all about knowledge, preparation and **practice**



*...Or do we want to be happy?*

*There's no fight if everyone is right!*

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## Part 2 Horse/Addict Training Tip: Respect Requires Daily Maintenance

By Clinton Anderson, Horse Whisperer



Unfortunately, respect is non-transferable. Just because I have earned a horse's respect does not mean I can hand him over to you and he will respect you the same way.

**Each person is responsible for gaining each horse's respect.**

That frustrates many people because they spend a lot of money on horse trainers and within 3 months, the horse acts like he doesn't know a thing.

Horses don't care how much money you spend on them, how much money you make or what part of town you live in. **Their only concern is that you understand THEM (horse-man-ship).**

**And the number one relationship principle is: Mutual Respect.  
Respect YOUR space and HIS.**

If you don't **consistently** move your horse's feet out of your space and you don't maintain a respectful boundary between the two of you, **his behavior will get worse.**

However, if you maintain that respect boundary and **continually improve** upon it, your horse's behavior will continue to get better.

**Horses don't ever stay the same.  
Every day they either get a little bit better or a little bit worse.**

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## Part 3 Co-Dependency: Means Co-Addiction

### Alcoholic/Addicts are like Horses: Families are like Trainers

- ✦ **What is Co-dependency? This is OUR addiction to trying to manage an addict's life. What's the Problem?**
  - Imposing our will on others, breeds disrespect and **negativity which is the fuel** for the addiction system
  - Horses/addicts are VERY sensitive to pressure. If he feels any disapproval or control – he WILL buck!
  - **"Help" is another word for control and "Advice" is another word for criticism.**
- ✦ **The Co-Addiction System is a deeply ingrained habit of giving and receiving negativity. Negativity is the fuel.**
  - **Addiction simply means we cannot stop doing what we are doing** even though we know it is harmful.
    - It literally feels like we will die if we cannot indulge our old thinking and behavior patterns.

**Co-Addiction: We are all Addicted to Negativity. These are our Emotional "Drinks"**

The 4 C's: I didn't Cause it, I can't Control it, and I can't Cure it...BUT...I Can Contribute to it

Anger Judgment Sad Disapproval Worry Disgust Distrust Fear Disappointment



Control Manipulation Advice Blame Victim Being Power Dominance Depression  
Right

**Solution:** A Horse/Addict Needs "Whispering" – Not "Training": *Positivity is Water on the Fire.*

- ✦ **Healthy Boundaries are necessary to cultivate a Respectful Relationship and/or Equal Partnership**
  - Self Respect: Boundaries to Protect Our Space (to not be dominated/controlled by others behaviors)
  - Respect for Others: Staying out of Their Space (to not dominate/control others behaviors)
- ✦ **Recognize/Correct OUR negative relationship patterns. Focus on loving ourselves by practicing Positivity.**
- ✦ **Pause when agitated.** We gain the ability to choose a **loving response** vs. an automatic **negative reaction.**

**Something to Ponder:** *Could we possibly be addicted to our negative interactions?*

- ✦ **Are We Co-Addicted?** After learning that our (well meaning) "helping" and "advising" was like pouring gas on their fire, would we stop that behavior immediately? Could we stay stopped for 24 hours? 30 days? Forever?
  - Would we be willing to completely learn a new (fun and positive) way of interacting with our horse/addict?
  - Are we willing to completely rebuild OUR life in order to rebuild the relationship with our horse/addict?

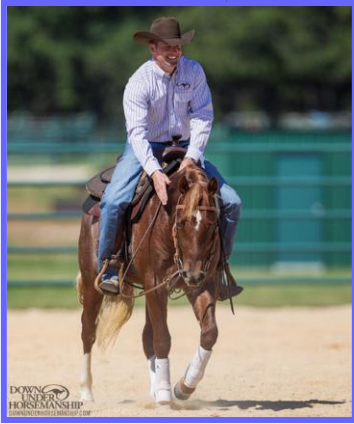
**As the horse/addict's trainers:** – If WE hold the power to change everything by learning to whisper - Why don't we?

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## Part 3 Horse/Addict Training Tip: Don't Let Your Emotions Get In The Way

By: Clinton Anderson, Horse Whisperer



- ✚ **Negative emotions have no place in training horses.** If you try to deal with a horse based on emotions, you won't get the response you want because he won't understand what you're asking him to do.
- ✚ **You have to be able to lovingly correct your horse and increase pressure without raising your emotion.** Losing your temper is not effective because even if the horse does what you want him to do, you won't recognize it because you'll be too focused on the punishment.

**And if you don't reward the horse for the small right behaviors, he won't understand what you're asking him to do.** If he can't figure out the answer you're looking for, he'll get confused and frustrated, which will only make the situation worse.

**At the same time, you can't just love and rub on your horse and expect him to be respectful of you.**

**You have to be willing to respect yourself to earn his respect.** I love my horses to death, but I also protect my space. The fact that I love them doesn't affect my boundaries. It's the same way my parents were with me – they both loved me, and they'd calmly correct me when I needed it.

Your goal is to build an equal partnership with a horse/addict based on mutual trust and respect. It takes time, and a consistent, calm approach to build a relationship that you both feel safe and happy about.

**You are the leader –  
Don't ruin progress by letting your negative emotions get in the way.**

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## **Part 4 The Enabling System: Who's Training Who?**

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**Horses/Addicts learn to play games to manipulate and frustrate**  
Why? - so others will give up and/or give in!

**They appear to be inept, incompetent or lazy**

Why? – because it works! Others will always work harder than them.

**When does the training (addiction system) start:**

Birth – Addicts are born defiant (and very cute and charming)

**What fuels the addiction system:**

Resentment and Negativity – Horses/Addicts hate to be controlled

- ✚ **Horses are not like humans. They are wired differently. (Addicts are not like Non-Addicts)**
  - They are prey animals, full of fear and trainers are perceived as a threat. It is not a natural match!
  - Horses/addicts are extremely intuitive and sensitive to pressure. They can read your emotions a mile away.
- ✚ **Traditional horse/addict training methods lead to much frustration, fear and anger for trainer & horse.**
  - This is caused by a lack of knowledge and understanding of the horse/addict's psychology.
- ✚ **"Whispering" principles are counter intuitive to traditional training.**
  - Instead of bossing and forcing a horse to gain control, a willing partnership is created based on respect.
- ✚ **We inspire and motivate the horse by becoming very interesting to be with.**
  - We learn how to get what we want by giving him what he wants/needs first. (Giving Respect to get Respect!)

### **Solution: How do we stop all the bucking? Switch from Enabling to Empowering.**

- ✚ **Never make the horse/addict wrong.**
  - Avoid the Deadly "D's": Disapproval, Disappointment, Dismay, Disgust, etc.
  - We only show the horse our approval. We present a positive, happy, fun side (Fake it til you make it)
- ✚ **Remove all pressure from the horse/addict to change:**
  - We stop doing what we have been doing and seek knowledge and skills to learn a new way of interaction.
  - **We remove ALL pressure to change the addict's behavior. We focus 100% on changing OUR behavior.**
- ✚ **Just say "Yes!"**
  - We learn how to smile and use reverse psychology in our interactions.
    - There's no fight if everyone is right.
    - We do not disapprove of their choices AND we do not interfere with their consequences
  - "Traditional"/society training teaches us to boss/force (control others) instead of to inspire and encourage (control ourselves).
  - "Whispering"/recovery teaches us how to build a true partnership based on mutual respect.



**Keys to Success: Smile!** And ask ourself: Who's Responsibility Is It?

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## Part 4 Horse/Addict Tip: Fix The Cause, Not The Symptoms

By Clinton Anderson, Horse Whisperer



- ✚ **The majority of horse/addict “problems” aren’t really problems at all; they are really just symptoms of a cause.** Ninety-five percent of all the problems you will ever have to deal with as a horse owner will fix themselves if **YOU** do the groundwork and earn your horse’s respect.
- ✚ Most people think that their horse’s problem (biting, bucking, rearing, pawing, etc.) is the real issue, but it’s not. **What most people think is a problem is nothing more than a symptom of a cause.**
- ✚ **But people get so focused on the horse’s “bad” behavior that they can’t see what is actually causing it.** It’s like a weed growing in the ground. You can chop it off with a weed whacker, but two weeks later it will grow right back because the root system is still intact. (Doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different result)
- ✚ If you really want to kill the weed, you must kill the root system. It’s the same thing when training horses/addicts. **Any problem that a horse/addict could possibly have, comes from either a lack of respect or fear, or in some cases, both.** You must change and kill the old training system (enabling) in order to “kill” the bad behaviors.

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