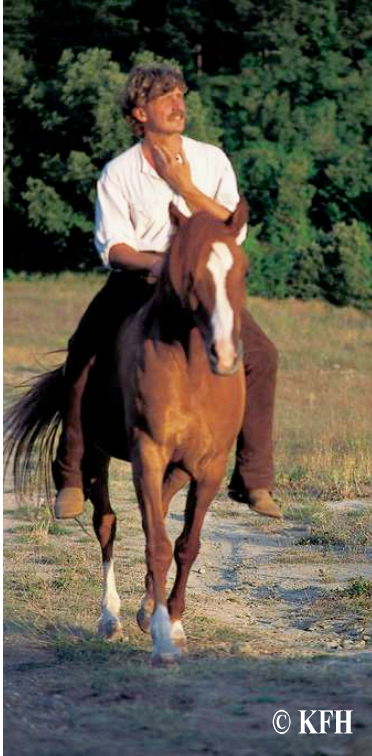


# Klaus Ferdinand Hempfling: "Many horseback riders of today are a bit afraid of horses"



Klaus Ferdinand Hempfling  
and his own horse Janosch

- by Anna Nordin ©  
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**Klaus Ferdinand Hempfling found his way in Spain, by the wild horses in the Pyrenees. Already two years after his first ride he wrote the book "Dancing with Horses". For him the communication with the horses was something natural, which was already inside of him. Now he travels around the world and teaches his way of being with and training horses. He also gives courses in his home country, in Denmark, where he now lives.**

The organizer of the course in Johannesberg was Dextrarius. They also earlier engaged Klaus, and are planning to get him to Sweden a couple of times each year. In the future also for continuing courses, where he will go deeper into the work in the picadero. After a long day with a lot of new impressions I had the chance to ask Klaus some questions.

**The horses you have met today, would you say they are representing a mixture of all horses?**

- No. The horses of this day were a mixture of strong, demanding horses, and sensitive, fragile. They were all demanding, but in different ways. Even though there was no obvious problem, they were depressed. They were mentally exhausted. Many horseback riders of today are a bit afraid of horses, and then you want a half dead horse. Even though we all know that it is much easier to work with a horse which is sensitive.

- It is much more difficult to give life back to a horse than to extinguish it. The young horse can be compared with a mountain of sand. When you frame them you take away their power, it is like taking away a spoon of sand every day. The decrease is not obvious from day to day, but with the years the mountain disappears. The horse's nature and temperament disappears. Therefore it is important to let the young horse go forward! Until they can convert the power forward into power upwards. Don't force them to hold back, let them have their youth and their power.

**What is the most usual problem that people have with their horses.**

- Almost 100 percent of all horse owners do too much with their horses. They give too many signals, they want too much of themselves, of their horse, of life, instead of waiting for things to come. Dare to be patient!

**Have you met any horse you could not help?**

- During the years there might have been two or three cases where I could not do anything.

**One of the horse owners today was afraid of her horse. Together with you she managed to overcome her fear and achieved a new confident contact with her horse. But is it not a high risk that everything goes back to the old when they are back home?**

- I can only give what I give, ideas and symbols. But afterward I must leave it up to the participants what they make out of it. To change people takes a long time but I have made them aware. Perhaps they will not be able to handle the situation at once, but the new awareness and the time means that they will step by step start to manage. Previously I found it difficult to let them go, but I had to learn to let them manage by themselves. I can only show the way.



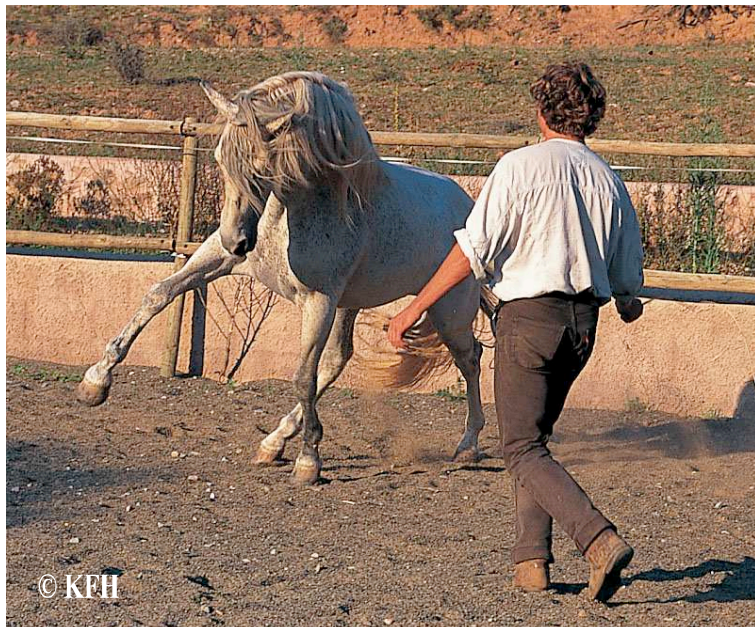
A mare at the clinic. According to Klaus she was overworked and had to learn that human beings do not only mean exhaustion but can also be nice.

**Do you ever give people the advice to sell a horse and find one which is suiting better?**

- I very seldom give the advice to sell the horse. The wishes might not fit with the horse. But wishes are just something outwards. The match is even good, because there was something in the horse's personality that made you choose it. Find out what that was, then you will see that it fulfils all the wishes you have.

**What type of reaction have you had on your books, the classification of the characters and your way of working with horses?**

- My first book "Dancing with Horses" was published almost 20 years ago and was first of all a success. Everyone talked about it and the comments were positive. "What Horses Reveal" with the different characters has had a slow start, but now it is on the bestseller list in Denmark (Klaus' home country, red. comment). People work with it more and more, but it needs more time.



**Are you not concerned that your classification of horses in character groups can be "abused"?**

- I have thought a lot about the risk of sharing the characters with others. People do easily get preconceived opinions about their horses and there is a risk that these characters are used in a wrong way. That you choose a character instead of seeing the horse. But in spite of this I have chosen to share it, in the hope that it can help some in any case. Perhaps they will begin to understand their horses better.

**The characters are not divided in breeds, but you can still see that some characters are more usual within some breeds. For example it seems like "The King" is a typical P.R.E. horse. Can a half-breed also belong to the character "The King"?**

- Absolutely! I am neither thinking in races nor in sex but look at the individual. A mare can also be a king. The horse has a feminine or a masculine attitude and that does not have to have anything to do with it's sex.

**Several times you were talking about that you can see on the horse's chewing and yawning that it is relaxed. How do you know that?**

- When you have tensions in the body you also tense the jaws. When the tensions are loosening up the horse begins to chew and yawn. The saliva also starts to flow which means that the horse must swallow. In studies on humans it has in fact turned out that attacks of mental depression can be predicted by tensions in the face. When you are relaxed and happy the face is subtle, that is the same by humans and animals.

**Your way of being with the horses is very attractive. But is it possible to combine your pedagogy with the traditional riding, if you for example compete in dressage or show jumping?**

- I do it in my way because it is what I believe in. But everyone can find his own mixture. You pick out what you like from different fields.



**Thank you for your time.**

- You are welcome.