

## **ONE TRACK MIND - 04/23/2014**

Perhaps the best way to sum up a horse's mind is to refer to it as a one track mind. A horse uses each side of its brain independently to take in stimulus from the environment. Therefore, each side of a horse left or right, near or offside wants to focus on one thing at a time. A horse will tend to balance each side by rotating to the other side in order to relate to the same sensory information. This is why a horse with proper training is conditioned on each respective side until they are 'right on' or balanced to carry themselves properly with the rider. A horse will often respond on each respective side very differently. As a rider you need to allow the horse the little time it takes to relate to things on both sides. Then the horse has cleared its questions and can then focus on your natural aids to guide it along. The result will be that your intentions become crystal clear to the horse.

You really get a two-track mind in a horse when it is scared or confused. It is reacting and questioning at the same time. Whereas, if a horse is content, focused and hooked on either side to pressure or a situation then it can follow through in a concentrated manner. For instance, if you kick a horse to go with both legs at the same time, this confuses the horse (especially a colt) and the horse will eventually quit reacting to their mixed messages. Response is an independent focus to a single aid, reaction is a scattered focus to many things that usually produce nothing.