



What Is Centered Riding®?



Centered Riding® is a new way of expressing the classical principles of riding, using body awareness, centering, and imagery, developed by Sally Swift. Centered Riding answers the question of “how” when your instructor tells you “what” to do when riding your horse. It can give you a new perspective on riding and other aspects of your life.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Centered Riding helps you become more aware of your body and its potential. Many people are caught in the trap of unconscious habit. The way you use your body feels normal and familiar, even if you have habitual patterns which cause you to be stiff, crooked, or out of balance. Your horse feels and reacts to the way you use your body, right or wrong, which can lead to confusion and discomfort. Centered Riding techniques help you discover an inner balance, serenity, and control that allows for greater freedom, suppleness, and coordination; your horse will respond with increased balance, poise, and forward motion. You and your horse become one, enjoying clear communication, harmony, and ease of movement.

WHAT ARE THE BASIC TECHNIQUES OF CENTERED RIDING?

SOFT EYES allow a greater field of vision, more awareness of your own and your horse’s body, less tension, and easier, freer forward movement.

PROPER BREATHING reduces tension and fatigue, lowers your center of gravity, engages your deep inner muscles, and helps your horse become quieter and more responsive.

CENTERING takes you to your center of control and energy, deep in the lower body, making your seat stable and secure. Centering techniques can help you achieve the quiet power and clear intent which characterize the oriental martial arts.

BALANCE OR BUILDING BLOCKS aligns your body and gives you true and consistent balance over your horse’s center of gravity, allowing you to stay secure while following his movements smoothly and comfortably.

GROUNDING results in better balance, security, and stability, through increased awareness of your connection to your horse and the ground through your seat bones and feet.

HOW DOES ONE LEARN CENTERED RIDING?

Centered Riding uses mounted lessons and unmounted exercises (“groundwork”) to teach you about anatomy and function, or how the human body works and interfaces with the horse’s movement and balance. Techniques from the Alexander Technique, Tai Chi, and other disciplines help educate the mind and body toward greater balance and integration, with special emphasis on posture and movement. All of the work has practical applications in your riding discipline, and in solving riding and training problems. While reading the book, *Centered Riding*, and/or viewing the Centered Riding videotapes is a good introduction, lessons or a clinic from a qualified Centered Riding instructor are the best way to experience Centered Riding and apply it to your own riding needs.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM CENTERED RIDING?

Centered Riding applies to all kinds of horsemanship and any type of horse or rider, helping riders reach their own and their horses’ best potential by removing fear, pressure, and unnecessary tension and helping riders learn how to use their bodies better. Centered Riding techniques are used by riders, trainers, and instructors of all levels, from pleasure riders to Olympic competitors. Centered Riding is used extensively in therapeutic riding, and has helped many riders cope with old injuries or chronic conditions. Most of all, it is fascinating and fun!

ABOUT CENTERED RIDING INSTRUCTORS AND CENTERED RIDING, INC:

Centered Riding was developed by Sally Swift, author of the best-selling book and videotapes. Today it is taught by Centered Riding instructors around the world. Instructors become qualified by completing a Centered Riding Instructor Course, and may advance through four levels; periodic updating is required. You can find Centered Riding Instructors, clinics and information at the Centered Riding website at www.centeredriding.org. (The name “Centered Riding®” is trademarked and only qualified Centered Riding Instructors may teach Centered Riding lessons and clinics.)

Centered Riding, Inc. is a non-profit educational organization established to teach and promote Centered Riding, train Centered Riding instructors, and carry on Sally Swift’s ideals and work. Centered Riding Inc. publishes Centered Riding News, Centered Riding eBulletin, a Clinic Schedule and a Centered Riding Instructor Directory and holds an Annual Educational Symposium. Membership is open to riders and friends of Centered Riding, business members and Centered Riding Instructors. **For more information, please visit the Centered Riding website at www.centeredriding.org or contact CENTERED RIDING, INC., PO Box 157, Perkiomenville, PA 18074.**