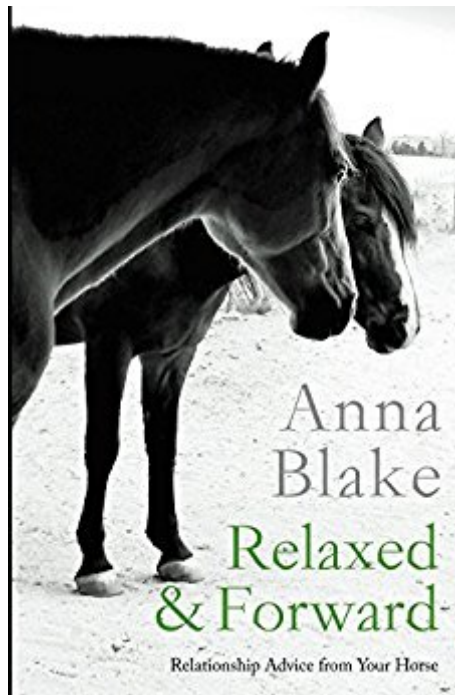




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Relaxed & Forward: Relationship Advice From Your Horse



Synopsis

"Do you still watch those old horse movies that you've seen a dozen times, just for the scenes of the horse galloping in slow motion? Do you hold your breath just a bit? Do you get something in your eye? We've been besotted with horses since they had three toes. From the popular *Relaxed and Forward* blog comes training advice combining the everyday fundamentals of dressage with mutual listening skills. Blake writes with a profound respect for horses and an articulate voice for humans, blending equal parts inspiration and un-common sense. It's serious training communicated with humor and lightness, because horses like us when we laugh. Most riders want to build a better relationship with their horse. These short essays are geared as much toward attitude as technique, and include topics ranging from reading calming signals from your horse to using breath as your best communication tool. Blake's writing uses clear descriptions, storytelling, and humor to inspire meaningful, positive communication. Less correction and more direction. Horses are honest; they answer us in kind. If we want a better response, a more fluid conversation and relationship with a horse, we have to be the ones to change first. The other word for that is leadership. By the award-winning author of *Stable Relation, A Memoir of One Woman's Spirited Journey Home, by Way of the Barn*. "Excitement and delight surge through me every time I see Anna Blake's name as an author. Her writing is filled with deep understanding and heart connection, seasoned with a lively dash of humor. Reading her work is like giving myself a gift...one I can open again and again." --Kim Walnes, winning USET Three Day Eventer, Riding Instructor/Trainer, and Life Coach.

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Customer Reviews

Disclaimer: I'm already a big fan of Anna Blake's blog. I thought this might be a bit of duplication, but it really isn't. She's funny and profound, a master at painting a scene or a character or a feeling with words, and has a quirky and entertaining perspective on horses, and horse training. She is a horse-centered, kind, and knowledgeable horse trainer. You will NOT be told about dominance, respect, "hooking up", etc., but you WILL learn a better understanding of how to build a relationship with your horse, how to be fair to your horse - and to yourself! I would put her in some humanistic (horse-istic?) category with the likes of Mark Rashid. I don't agree with everything she says (I have been using clicker training with an extremely troubled horse with quite good results, and she has a chapter on why one should not use food rewards with which I take exception) but hey, that's ok. I know what she's talking about. The book is entertaining and illuminating, a couple of times I had to stop reading and take deep breaths and think deep thoughts for five or ten minutes before going on. Highly recommend for people who love horses.

Whether you're an experienced rider or you're just starting out, you must read this book! Anna Blake knows everything about horses, even their tiniest movements and what those signal to the rider. She has a very kind, empathetic method of training both horse and rider. I've learned more from this book than from my several years riding a horse and watching the expert trainers' videos. We want our horse to listen to us, but do we really know how to listen to him? It's a two-way conversation, which Anna can explain with expertise and humor. Horses are not just big conveyances, existing only to obey us without question and carry us where we want to go. They are sentient beings, just as we are. When riders learn to communicate effectively with their horse, both parties will have a better, safer experience.

This was one of the best books I have ever read on the sport of Dressage (or any riding discipline)

and how to make the most of the relationship and partnership between humans and horses, and how to get the best results from your horse and yourself whether it be in the show ring, taking lessons or just having a backyard horse that you just "dub" around with. If you think you Have read it all and have experienced all of the equestrian/horse world, just read this book and you will learn all the things you most likely have forgotten or never knew. I felt as if the author was speaking directly to me -- having challenges with my horse in specific transitions? How am I asking for the transactions? Guess what? It's me!!!

It's so rare to find a book so delightful and insightful. I learned, loved and laughed throughout. I can hear the voice of wisdom Anna Blake shares as I ride and I know my horses appreciate it. Even though I am a trail rider and she is a dressage trainer, the concepts are valuable to any riding style. Read it. You won't be sorry and your horses will thank you.

I absolutely loved this book! Gave some really simple steps that I was able to implement immediately (taking deep breaths while working around my horse) that have made a huge difference very quickly. My horse is very stoic and previously did not enjoy being brushed, petted, etc and would move away almost as soon as I approached him. Just by recognizing his calming signals (discussed in this book) and taking a few deep calming breaths I am now able to enjoy a closer relationship on the ground with my horse. I'm anxious to apply what I learned to my riding. Highly recommend this book. Anna is a great author with amazing insight into one of Jehovah God's most amazing animal creations.

I was given Anna Blake's first book as a Christmas gift from a barn friend, I've been hooked on her since. She has so much compassion for the horse AND the rider, it makes me want to hook up my trailer and head to Colorado with my horse so we can both bask in her wisdom and humor. I have no lofty goals as a rider, just to be the best partner I can be for Lady - to help her be brave, confident and trusting. But that doesn't mean I want to be just a passenger either. I struggle with dressage (really struggle!) Even though this isn't a "how to" book but there is a lot of good instruction included. If you love horses you'll enjoy and appreciate this book, I promise!

I have enjoyed Anna Blake's blog for years, so when her first book (Stable Relation) came out, I leaped on it. Now her second, "Relaxed and Forward" has proven to be an equal delight. Anna knows both horses and humans right down to their bones! With quirky humor and affection, she

guides us through all of the pitfalls that plague our predator (us) and prey (horse) relationship. A harmonious, respectful partnership is what all horsemen want, and Anna gives us many of the tools to achieve that. She reminds us what drew us horse crazy people to these amazing animals in the first place and how to hold on to that wonder.

I loved the title, and bought this book mostly on a whim. It honestly changed how I relate to my horses, and my riding was better after I read it. I think it raised my awareness of horse/human communications, and helped me tune in and listen a little better.

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