USING LONG-LINING IN THERAPEUTIC RIDING SESSIONS FOR HAPPIER, STRONGER HORSES

Presented by: Lindsay Mohr, Advanced CTRI
Dayna Baynes, CTRI
Stephanie Schmittler, CTRI
WHO WE ARE

- Lindsay Mohr: Administrative Manager of Exceptional Equestrians, Advanced CTRI through PATH. Lindsay has been with EE for nearly 15 years in a wide variety of positions. Lindsay’s background is primarily in dressage.

- Dayna Baynes: Program Manager at Exceptional Equestrians, CTRI through PATH. Dayna has been a PATH certified instructor for 7 years. Dayna began as a barrel racer and has been active in fox hunting.

- Stephanie Schmittler: Facility Manager at Exceptional Equestrian, CTRI through PATH. Stephanie has been a PATH certified instructor for 5 years. Stephanie’s experience is as a balanced seat rider with a dressage emphasis.
WHAT IS LONG-LINING

- Long-lining or Ground-driving is the practice of controlling a horse from behind through the use of two long lines attached to a bit or cavesson.
- Traditionally used as a schooling or training technique, it can also be used in therapeutic riding instead of leading.
WHY LONG-LINING

- Movement
  - When a horse is being led from the front, they never achieve the optimal quality of movement. When long-lined from the back, it is possible to get the horse to move forward freely without the interference of someone at their head.
  - A competent long-liner is able to ask the horse to lift their back and engage their hind end, creating a much stronger horse, especially when carrying an ineffective rider.
WHY LONG-LINING

- Behavior
  - Many behaviors in therapeutic riding horses begin with the leader. From nipping to head butting, when you place a person at the horses’ head, you give them an easy target. By removing the leader, that temptation is removed, which greatly improves the horse’s behavior and work ethic.

- Ease of the sidewalker
  - With short-backed horses, it can be difficult for the sidewalker and leader to move comfortably.
**WHICH HORSE?**

- **Training**
  - Horses who have driven are the easiest to start with long-lining
  - Horses who have a background in dressage and English riding are more familiar with the action of the snaffle bit
  - Horses who have never been direct-reined would NOT be ideal

- **Temperament**
  - Horses who are extremely sensitive to the bit often cannot handle the pressure of the lines as they move across their legs
  - Horses who kick should NOT be long-lined
  - Some horse’s personalities do not make them appropriate for long-lining
HOW TO BEGIN

Tack

When training a horse to long-line without a rider, begin with:

- Bridle with noseband and snaffle bit or cavesson
  - The action of a curb bit would not translate to long-lining
- Long-lines- (two lunge lines can be used start with)
- Overgirth or lunging surcingle (can also use a surcingle with handles) with rings to run lines through
- Carabineers
- Whip (dressage or driving)
HOW TO BEGIN

- Begin with a header
- Get the horse used to the feeling of the lines against their legs slowly
  - Start out directly behind the horse to minimize pressure
  - Begin with straight lines and transitions, add in steering
  - Stay at least 4-5 feet behind when starting
WHO SHOULD LONG-LINE?

- Experienced riders and horse handlers
- This is not a skill that every leader will be able to do. Long-lining requires careful and repeated training, specific to each horse.
- Individuals who have ridden in a direct reining discipline will be much more comfortable long-lining
**WHICH RIDERS**

- Clients who would benefit from consistent and specific movement
- Clients who are NOT independently steering their horses
- Clients with short and/or inactive leg
- Clients who struggle with balance and center
TACK FOR MOUNTED LONG-LINING

- Surcingle or Overgirth
- Western or English Saddle
- Accommodations:
  - Bailing twine to bridle or halter over bridle to hook up reins
  - Carabineers to surcingle or bailing twine to stirrups to hook lines through
    - Bailing twine closest to the riders head

- Pay careful attention to where the lines hang when the rider is mounted. A longer-legged rider on a short horse may bring the lines down too low to be effective.
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Mounting and Dismounting
  - ALWAYS have a header for mounting and dismounting.
  - When possible, have the lines unhooked for mounting and dismounting to prevent the rider’s legs from catching in the lines.
    - If you are mounting or dismounting while hooked up, make sure volunteers are aware to watch the lines.
  - NEVER mount a horse in a ramp while hooked up to lines.