



# Classical Horse Training

*Combining art with science to achieve balance and harmony*

## ONLINE SUPPORT PROGRAM

*“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”  
— Mahatma Gandhi*



## INTRODUCTION

The horse is a fascinating being. We can build a lifelong partnership in true harmony with a creature that is so majestic and powerful. At the same time, the journey can be complex as a horse can't speak our human language and we often misread or don't understand the signs what horses are trying to tell us. We might hit many bumps in the road such as injuries, trauma, fear, stress, and/or disconnection.

During this course, I will challenge you to learn more about your horse 'inside-out'. In my approach, I will present functional training and movement therapy through the practical application of modern day scientific discoveries.

This program will not provide a certain method or magical formula. Instead, this course aims to truly consider the horse as the greatest teacher. As such, it is not about reinventing the wheel, but to get it – back - rolling in the right direction.

The application of this course is two-fold:

- **To restore functionality of body and mind**
- **To optimize efficiency with minimal effort**

**The first aim** is toward setting up, managing and executing an effective rehabilitation program in the case of anatomical and/or biomechanical challenges and implications that your horse might be facing including:

- Birth trauma
- Poor Posture
- [Degenerative] diseases
- [Secondary] Trauma
- Genetics & Confirmation
- Worms & Ulcers
- Poor management, tack & training

In this program, you will learn more about anatomy & biomechanics inside-out. Since the horse never asked to be ridden, we can only ask so if we have a sound understanding of what is going on under the skin.

You will learn to analyse the subtle difference between variation and abnormalities so you can match your feel with actual reality as there are many courses that promote feel, but few that actually provide a reference frame for it. However, this is essential as you need to know what to feel for. Without a reference frame, feelings in relation to performance might be misleading. We often get so used to the patterns of our own horses, that this becomes the normal, even when in reality it might be abnormal. Developing a good independent feel for proper functionality is therefore essential to ensure your horse's wellbeing and optimize performance.

Finally, **you will learn to not train harder – but to train smarter** through rewiring your horse's muscle memory. From this angle, training and movement are to be considered as an effective tool to restore functionality for your horse to promote soundness and general well-being.

**The second aim** is toward optimizing functionality by strengthening exercises that allow your horse to find balance in self-carriage.

You will learn to [re]discover the treasures of classical dressage. Furthermore, you will learn many deeper essences to the exercises – even if you'd already known them – so they can truly serve as a means to an end rather than to perform an exercise for the sake of the exercise.

The exercises are designed to enhance strength, suppleness and straightness so that a horse can move freely with optimal coordination and efficiency and minimal effort. From there, lightness occurs.

In summary, **it has to be said that the journey will not always be easy, but utmost rewarding** - often in unexpected ways. Biomechanics is complex as we're talking biology in which nothing is truly black and white with an infinite number of grey. So I can't guarantee you that it will always be simple, but I'll aim to make it as simple as the complexity allows from the horse's perspective.



This program is not about picture perfect – but instead about giving you a fair and raw insight into the real world with all its ups – but also downs. You will see me and my horses thrive, but also struggle as part of the journey.

It is my goal that you will start to see your horse in a different way – a new path that can't be undone. Something that is not necessarily easy, but will give you magical moments in true dialogue along the way. Let's try to evolve and do right by our horses. Let them teach us their beauty and unravel the secrets of their body and mind. Let them teach us how to appreciate and understand them. Because we owe it to them.

I would be most humbled and grateful to assist you and your horse in this wonderful journey with all I can offer. In this brochure you'll find all information you need to set you up for success. I am looking forward in 'meeting' you soon!

Warmly,  
Thirza



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## LEARNING GOALS

- A better and deeper understanding of your horse through the 'inside-out' principle
- Improving yourself as a trainer in the aspects of bodywork, work in hand, lungeing, long-reining and riding
- Incorporating multiple approaches to one holistic program for your horse.
- Developing your senses – eye, hear, feel and smell – to properly assess horses

- Developing knowledge and skills on the essence and execution of functional exercises and practical application of equine physiology.
- Performance in balance through self-carriage by rewiring muscle memory and achieving lightness
- To achieve or deepen a harmonious relationship with your equine partner by establishing and refining an interactive dialogue through which both find a higher mental state of calmness and self-awareness.

## BENEFITS

- A course where the well-being of your horse truly comes first
- A tailor-made individual approach
- Support and warmth of a close group of likeminded people
- You will achieve more progression due to in-depth character
- You will be inspired by witnessing progression of other participants
- Discounts on dissections and masterclasses in The Netherlands

## MEMBERSHIP FORMAT

After years of exploring multiple membership formats I have now been able to create one single membership that gives you full access of all features of this program:

## EXPLORER PLUS MEMBER

The explorer membership will combine self-study with personal guidance of myself. Within this membership you will access to a library with over 50+ videos, 20+ manuals, 15+ webinars as well as momentum classes AND three personal online lessons with...ME☺

The membership includes:

FULL ACCESS TO LIBRARY		
ACCESS TO FORUM & PAGE		FB
MONTHLY WEBINARS		
ONLINE ASSESSMENT included		1
ONLINE LESSONS: included		2
MOMENTUM CLASSES included		6

Upon signing up you will receive a confirmation email on when and how to get started. You will get immediate access to the full library. When the class starts, you will get an email with instructions on how we get started with our one-on-one personal online lessons in which you receive personal live feedback on how to get started or progress with your horse.

The first assignment consists of an assessment. You will get instructions on how to film your assessment, upload it to YouTube, sent it to me and then I will provide feedback on it and give you some homework.

From there, you have 2 additional online lessons to check your progress with me. The online lessons are designed to enhance your progress and receive one-on-one guidance as you would in a regular 'live' lesson.

For each lesson you can send in a **maximum of 20 minutes video**. There is no vast script to follow. You can either upload a video of a regular training session aimed at receiving general tips to improve or ask for advice about a specific issue/problem. In case of the latter, please make sure that the issue is clearly demonstrated in the video.

Training sessions can be in hand, lungeing, long reigning, ridden of a combination of multiple [for example: you start in hand and then mount and

show some exercises ridden].

Finally, you can also use your video lessons for anatomical & biomechanical assessment of multiple horses as well as potential purchase prospects to get feedback on suitability for your specific goal, selecting form to function.

When an online lesson is received in time I will have a quick look myself and then we go over it together in a selected Momentum class in which we go over the video together and I provided full feedback as if it were a regular live lesson as well as give you homework on what to work on to progress further.

So in summary, one assessment + 2 additional video lessons are included in the membership. If you want more video lessons, you can easily book extra ones in the online portal at a separate price of € 60 per online lesson.

More information on how the online lessons and momentum classes work can be found on the respective sections on page

## MODULES

This course consists of 6 module and 3 additional elements:

### **Module 1. Anatomy**

In this module I will take you through the anatomy of the horse. I will cover all major bodily systems and how you will be inspired by their beauty!

### **Module 2. Biomechanics**

In this module we'll dive deeper into movement. I will learn you how to perform a basic assessment. You will learn about the kinematics of each gaits as well as how to spot gait and postural abnormalities and lameness's.

### **Module 3. Management**

In this module I will share some key management adaptations that can help improve your horse's mental health, posture and movement in a passive way!

### **Module 4. Bodywork**

In this module we will have a look at simple bodywork techniques that can be used to enhance the progress of soundness and general well-being of the horse.

### **Module 5. Training**

This is the largest module in which I will share key exercises to improve your horse's mental and physical well-being. Exercises are presented in groundwork, work in hand, lungeing, long-reining and riding as well as fun sessions.

The module is divided into several separate categories:

- *Main concepts & theory*
- *Tools & Aids*
- *Absolute basics*
- *Lateral exercises*
- *Proprioception work*
- *Classroom sessions*

In the classroom sessions I show regular training sessions of my horses so you can follow each on their own path and needs and see their ups and downs throughout this wonderful journey. The goals of training are various: from weight loss to solving rotations. As such, it is a wonderful opportunity to see me dealing in a fair way with various 'problems' and how I work with them. It is by far picture perfect, but an honest depiction of the raw process towards balance.

### **Additional element 1: Dissection Case Studies**

You will receive exclusive materials of horse stories on the dissection table. This way you can truly learn from the horse 'inside out'.

### **Additional element 2: Livestream Webinars**

I will host 1-2 live webinars a month. Upon starting this course there are already more than 15 archived webinars to watch.

### **Additional element 3: Momentum Classes**

Every 8 weeks there will be a momentum class for each time zone in which we go over some online lessons and learn from each other as a group. This way we can keep personal momentum and stay inspired!

## **CONTENT ELEMENTS**

The online course consists of several elements that will cover both theory and practice:

- 1. Momentum Classes**
- 2. Online lessons**
- 3. Practical videos**
- 4. Complementary Manuals**
- 5. Facebook group**
- 6. Forum & FAQ**
- 7. Dissection case studies**
- 8. Livestream webinars**



## MOMENTUM CLASSES

Momentum classes are in essence online clinics. In each momentum class there can be a maximum of 5 practical participants and 10 theory participants.

There will be 6 momentum classes included in the course duration of which **you can participate in two of them as a practical participant** and the remaining four as a theory participant.

As a practical participant you must sent in an online lesson at least 24hrs prior to the momentum class date and time. Then, during the momentum class, I will provide live feedback on each lesson and you can ask questions of course. As a theory participant, you will be able to learn from watching all the lessons and as a bonus you can also ask questions after each lesson. Once all lessons are finished there is room for discussion to finish. Sometimes a common topic comes up in multiple lessons and then I decide to share a presentation on that topic. Sometimes we can close with a discussion on certain questions and so on.

Since this is an international program, momentum classes will be divided upon different time zones.

All momentum classes will be recorded as well so if you can't watch live – you can still catch up on the replay. As such, you can also watch ALL momentum classes of other time zones to learn as much as possible.

Momentum classes dates are set at:

### **New Zealand (local Auckland time)**

Last Monday & Tuesday evening each other month at 19.00 PM local time (07.00 CET).

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**Australia (local Sydney time)**

Last Wednesday & Thursday evening each other month at 19.00 PM local time (09.00 CET).

**United States (local California time zone)**

Last Friday morning each other month at 09.00 California time or 13.00 New York Time (18.00 CET).

**Europe & Asia**

Last Saturday of each other month at 09.00 AM CET (use time converter for Asian countries).

You can book your spots for each class on the website and thus choose when to apply for your participant spot. Participant spots are given on first come first serve basis. So you can choose freely whenever you want to use your online lessons included in this course and apply for a participant spot whenever one is available 😊

You are also more than free to book a spot on a momentum class on a different time zone than in your own country if those days suits you better 😊

If you wish more personal guidance than the two sessions included you can book an additional participant spot at €60 per online lesson on the website.

## ONLINE LESSONS

The online lessons take place WITHIN the momentum classes and are designed to enhance your progress and receive one-on-one guidance as you would in a regular 'live' lesson.



For each lesson you can send in a **maximum of 20 minutes video**. There is no vast script to follow, however, for all new horses listed into the program the first video will always have to include a short assessment so that I can analyse muscle tone, posture and gaits to have a clear picture about your horse's anatomy & biomechanics.

Furthermore, it is a good first assignment for YOU to start observing and feeling. The assessment is an additional bonus and free of charge within the support membership.

After the initial assessment, you can either upload a video of a regular training session aimed at receiving general tips to improve or ask for advice about a specific issue/problem. In case of the latter, please make sure that the issue is clearly demonstrated in the video.

Training sessions can be in hand, lungeing, long reigning, ridden of a combination of multiple [for example: you start in hand and then mount and show some exercises ridden].

Finally, you can also use your video lessons for anatomical & biomechanical assessment of multiple horses as well as potential purchase prospects to get feedback on suitability for your specific goal, selecting form to function.

You can take the videos with a simple (phone) camera and upload them to either Youtube or Vimeo. Clear instructions will be provided within the course.

After I've watched the video(s) you will receive extensive feedback from me during the momentum classes in which we go over the video together.

**Feedback on each video will include the following elements:**

- Overall impression → does it look harmonious, balanced and light; is there a good relationship and dialogue with the horses visible; is there place for fun and relaxation?; mental and physical state of your horse: is your horse comfortable, focussed and healthy or are there any signs of discomfort, pain, miscommunication or resistance?
- Training build up / sequence → is it logical and well-structured ; does your horse move better after the end of the training session; is duration of the exercises well-balanced; Is it diverse enough?
- Execution of exercises → are they correct in essence and technical execution; do they improve biomechanics of your horse
- Your skills as a trainer → Mental and physical state of yourself; Do you have a good inner picture and intention; are you calm and clear enough to your horse; is there a true dialogue; do you apply aids correctly; how does your own posture and mental state relate to that of your horse; are you listening to your horse?
- Recommendations → if it is necessary, I will recommend to go over specific materials within the library that might assist you in your process at that given time as well as assign you with specific homework to do😊

**So in summary, there will be 7 steps to make this work:**

- Await assessment (first assignment) instructions
- Film your assessment and sent it to me per email for feedback
- Incorporate the feedback and get started with the training of your horse and perform self-study of the program

- Film training sessions with your horse(s)
- Submit videos to Youtube (2 included in this course)
- Book a participant spot for a Momentum Class
- Keep going and enjoy the process

The lessons are not interchangeable and cannot be refunded so it is up to you to spend them within the time frame of the course.

## DEMONSTRATION VIDEOS

To enhance your learning, I have created a full video library for self-study purposes.

Shot by a professional video team the course provides high quality videos that elaborates on anatomy, discusses biomechanical concepts and demonstrates practical exercises – both passive and active. Besides explaining why and how, I will also elaborate on possible challenges that you might encounter and how to solve them.

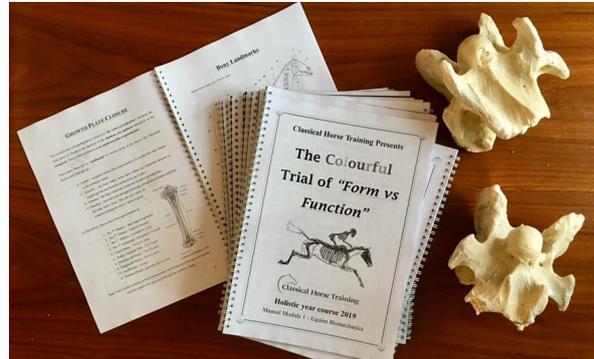
Apart from separate exercises, there will be videos of my own training sessions with a variety of horses as well as me teaching lessons to different students.

The full library consists of more than 50+ videos with a duration between 15-60 minutes and gets expanded on a monthly basis.



## MANUALS

The extensive manuals are complementary to the videos. They go hand-in-hand and provide additional information so it is key to not just watch the video but also to read the manuals.



The full library consists of more than 22 manuals making up for **more than 700 pages of content.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Frequently Asked Questions sections will contain some extra information answering a lot of questions that might come up. Reading through them is recommended as they contain a whole lot of extra information.

## FORUM

You'll get access to an exclusive forum where you can share experiences with fellow participants and ask additional questions. It is meant as a platform to connect likeminded people and to have extra support on your journey. This way, when you're having a bad day, there are people that will have experienced the same feeling and can tell you it's okay and support. On the opposite, when you're having a great breakthrough we'll be there to enjoy it with you and you can inspire others.

Furthermore, additional short videos and informational blogs will be posted on a weekly basis.

The forum will be hosted through a closed Facebook Group as well as the online platform provided through the website after signing up.

## DISSECTION CASE STUDIES

You will receive exclusive materials of every dissection I do. At the start, 4 past case studies will be available and they will be updated every 3 months.



The case studies will consist of images and video material when the horse was still alive, complemented by the assessment of the horse and the reason for dissection. It will continue with pictures and videos of the actual dissection with a written report of all the findings. All muscles will be named on the pictures so it will provide a very valuable and unique extra learning tool to learn more about the horse 'inside-out'.

## WEBINARS

Every month I will host 1-2 live webinars in which we can come together as a group asking questions and discussing all aspects of either the course or anything horse related. Topics come up via member request.

In the webinar I will give a presentation on a specific topic and you are free to ask any additional questions and engage in a vivid discussion!

The webinars will be recorded and archived in the video portal as well for

those unable to 'attend' live. Furthermore, additional speakers will be invited every now and then to enrichen the library. Guest speakers so far include Zefanja Vermeulen, Dr. Raquel Butler and Tamara Dorresteijn.

An oversight of webinar dates and times – CET – will be provided at the beginning of each new month (dates and times are not set due to varying availability of guest speakers).

## FOR WHO?

The course is open to anyone willing to learn and think outside the box. Whether you are a professional wanting to broaden your knowledge or expertise or a passionate horse lover wanting to help your horse(s) the best you can.

Horses of all disciplines, levels, breeds, sexes and ages are welcome. However, I am not a specific expert in certain gaited horses so please contact me beforehand if you want to partake with a specific breed.

Furthermore, since this course has a high personal character, **only a limited amount of places are available**. The reason behind this is simple: the risk of online programs is that they become rigid in the sense that they do not take into account the individuality of each horse and human. Their structure might be appealing as it provides a logical step-by-step approach of training horses, but at the same time these approaches will not work for every horse and you'll risk 'over' practising on exercises that are not suited for you and your horse (at that given moment). In this way, the horse is being used to suit the method, rather than using the individuality of each combination as a starting point.

Therefore, I want to truly offer an individual tailor-made approach in which I get to personally know all humans and horses involved, as if I would be there with you physically like in a normal clinic or lesson.



## STUDYHOURS

This course is based upon self-study so that you can follow it at your own pace. To watch and read all materials will require at least 6-8 weeks of full-time study.

Assignments and training session will require at least 20-30 min each, but can be done at your own convenience.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED?

### **1. (Video) camera**

A good phone camera is also allowed. Specific instructions on how to film will be available. However, it is very easy, you don't have to be a professional filmer. Don't have anyone to film? Set you camera on a standard close by!

### **2. Internet connection for Momentum Classes**

Our online meeting will be either through Zoom or WebinarGeek.

### 3. Youtube account

To upload your videos and send me the link so I can watch. Specific instructions on how to upload will be available.

### 4. Enthusiasm, Patience & Willingness to learn

Horse riding is often referred to as an art that takes year to matter. The journey will not always be easy, but definitely worth. With the right mind set, anything is possible.



## INVESTMENT

**One off payment : € 695,00 \***

**Equal (4) instalments: € 180,00 \***

The membership is valid for 12 months in total. When the membership expires you can extend again at a discounted rate.

If you select instalment payments the first instalment is due upon registration. The next instalments will be set at 4 weeks apart each.

- *If you already purchased the introduction course on Applied Anatomy & Functional Biomechanics you get the fee for this course automatically refunded within 10 working days*

You can register here: <https://www.thirzahendriks.com/plans-pricing>

## LIST OF KEYWORDS

### MENTAL BALANCE

Mental states of horse and human  
Learning behaviour  
Psychology models  
Relaxation & Breathing  
Proprioception & Muscle Memory  
Equine neurology

### TRAINING PILLARS

Groundwork  
Work in hand  
Lungeing  
Long-Reining  
Riding  
FUN

### TRAINING SKILLS

Posture & Seat  
Rein aids  
Breathing  
Voice

### PHYSICAL BALANCE

Equine Anatomy & Biomechanics  
Human Anatomy & Biomechanics  
Bodywork & Passive physio  
Self-carriage & Lightness  
Rewiring muscle memory  
Exercises physiology

### EXERCISES

Horizontal/ Vertical Balance  
Lateral bending  
Lateral exercises  
Collection / Extension  
Integrative pole work  
Sequences  
Transitions

### GENERAL

Classical dressage  
History/Evolution  
Balance  
Lightness

