



# **OVERWEIGHT HORSES AND INTRINZEN**

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# INTRODUCTION

- translator of literature, master-worrier
- wise pony-queen who loves eating and is very independent, free-spirited and badass





# **DISCLAIMER:**

THIS IS A HIGHLY INDIVIDUAL TOPIC, I DON'T CLAIM TO HAVE A SOLUTION, I'M SIMPLY SHARING MY EXPERIENCES AND WHAT HAS WORKED FOR US



# CONTENT OF THE TALK

- the horse's needs
- the human's mindset
- ideas for session design





# POSSIBLE PROBLEMS ON THE HORSE'S SIDE

- hunger
- fatigue
- constant negative stress
- brain fog



# THE HUMAN'S MINDSET

- pressure from the inside or the outside
- too low or too high expectations
- perfectionism
- our own physical and mental well-being



# PRESSURE – CAUSES

- worries → pressure from the inside
- criticism → pressure from the outside
- vicious circle of stress and worries about the horse's physical and mental health



# PRESSURE – POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- First of all: Don't panic. Trust yourself that you are always acting in your horse's best interest.
- Determine where the pressure is coming from
- Determine how bad it really is and act accordingly
- If you can: change the environment / the situation to better cater to your horse's needs (diet / stable situation)
- If it's not an emergency, develop a strategy for dealing with the weight-issue and stick to it
- Try not to feel bad about pushing your horse a little in the beginning, there's a spectrum of „nos“



**NOW, WE HAVE CHECKED IN WITH OURSELVES  
AND OUR HORSES, WE'RE BOTH FEELING GOOD,  
ALL PRESSURE IS RELEASED... NOW WHAT?!**

Time to get  
playing!!!







**LITTLE PIT-STOP: THE IMPORTANCE OF PURPOSE**  
THE MAGICAL SOLUTION TO MOTIVATING  
ENERGY-SAVERS



# INSPIRATIONS FOR SESSION DESIGN

- find things your horse enjoys and do more of that
- use a target, objects and obstacles as an external focus to engage with
- take your horse outside, use racing & grazing, explore new paths with them
- mix up foreseeable and surprising elements
- compromise to spark their self-determination



# FAT-BURNING FOR HORSES

- try HIIT instead of lunging – more natural for a horse and it can be combined with running \*towards\* something
- build muscles instead of endurance
- try a chaos- or bounce-chute
- try to spark intense bursts of energy



# GETTING OUT OF YOUR HEAD AND INTO ACTION

- reframe certain modes of training; e.g. lunge on walks, jog with your horse in the arena, try different leading positions
- disrupt (negative) patterns and unrealistic expectations by trying new things, e.g. medical training, trick-training, long-reining, using new toys
- alternate between fat-burning days and autonomous days to give both of you a clear frame



# FINALLY, SOME REMINDERS...

- You're doing the best you can, acknowledge that
- If you must play, you can't play
- Not every „no“ is a „hell no!“
- It's okay to tell your horse that it should move, just not how
- Your horse doesn't work against you – you have to figure things out together





**AND... DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN!**  
YOU'VE GOT THIS!