

## MOVEMENT

Each action entails four essential behaviours: movement, sensation, feeling and thought.

In order to move, to perceive, to be happy or angry or to think, it is necessary to consciously use all four of these components.

For example, in order to think, it is necessary to be awake, to know that one is not dreaming, to perceive one's physical position with respect to the field of gravity. Thinking also includes movement, sensations and feelings.

In order to move, one needs to use at least one of the senses involving feeling and thinking. Even to perceive or to be angry or happy, one needs to move, feel and think.

The relevant aspect to this work is movement, which consists of all the most important physiological activities such as, breathing, eating, speaking, both the ones that can be controlled and those that cannot be controlled such as the heart beat) This is the basis of awareness.

For instance, it is easier to know the quality of a particular movement rather than that of a feeling (joy, rage, envy etc..). Furthermore being aware of movement is the best tool to improve.

Someone said: “ It is necessary to be silent to hear birds sing”.

In order to understand movement, it is important to feel and not to initiate a useless action and then be affected by its inertia. It is necessary to be relaxed and not tense. Possibly in a situation of suppleness.

Being in the action means focusing on what happens without tension so as to have a clean mind and regular breathing.

If one learns by striving, it is unlikely to improve.

So feeling is a must. The whole issue is not related to a lack of sensitivity but rather to the ability to discriminate the fine details. It is necessary to pave the way and to set the stage for the best conditions to be able to “feel”.

Once the action is initiated, it is desirable to reduce fatigue to a minimum level and to eliminate any superfluous element from movement. The aim is to recognise its slightest changes and to have a more delicate and efficient control.

Moreover, during the action, it is important for the rider to get used to feeling while acting and acting while feeling without any lack of consistency.

Certainly this improves riders' skills in general, thus allowing them to develop better and more harmonious coordination.

This notion becomes even clearer if one imagines riding a bus, standing without holding onto any support.

Evidently, balance is the fundamental element to avoid falling. The body moves in harmony with the motion of the bus and can keep its balance.

Any movement will have an impact only on the body's movement and not on that of the bus.

When riding a horse, things become more complicated: the rider's balance has an impact on the horse's equilibrium and the former is used to control the latter. Provided balance is used because it is possible not to use it.

To go on with the example of the bus, a rider can complicate the situation. It is sufficient for him to sit comfortably enough, and try to manage the balance of his horse, after having anyway ensured his equilibrium on a chair: the saddle. Out of the three main aids that can be used – balance, hands and legs - he can only use the second and the third, having decided to give up the first one.

However, very soon, the rider discovers that his hands and legs can only work if they become like “iron”, that is extremely strong, if they work without balance.

Hence the use of pointed spurs and “heavy” hands.

But, as already pointed out, strength does not improve the quality of movement. It leads to apply an enormous amount of energy to the actions that can be more easily performed if force is better directed and adjusted.

The force that is not transformed into movement does not simply disappear. It results into damage to joints, to muscles and to the very parts of the body used to create the strain. The energy that is not transformed into movement turns into heat within the system thus generating changes that need to be corrected before starting again to act in a correct way.

Whatever is obtained without effort does not seem to be difficult. Indeed it is strain that makes any action hard to accomplish, as if an upper limit to the rider's skills has been reached. If a useless effort is made, it is hard to perceive it and there is no possibility to improve movement.

After all, riding does not entail the use of force. In fact men and women compete on an equal basis in the same categories.