



**Buy One, Take Two: Horse Assisted Education
and Altered States of Consciousness**

OR

An Emerging Future and the Horse as Teacher



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www.eqskill.hu

DIAGNÓZISTÓL A MEGOLDÁSIG

My Way to the Topic

- 📖 Student Scholarship (Hypnosis Research) 1997-2000
- 📖 Psychologist 1994-2000
- 📖 Psychodrama Group Leader 1994-2000
- 📖 Autogenic Trainer 1996-2000
- 📖 PhD Scholarship (Hypnosis Research) 2000-2003
- 📖 Hypnotherapist 2000-2002
- 📖 Active-Alert Hypnotherapist 2003
- 📖 Hypnoanalysis 2005
- 📖 Education on Psychotherapy 2006-2007



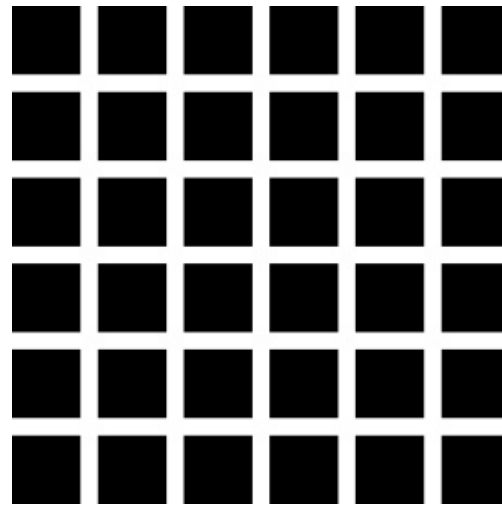
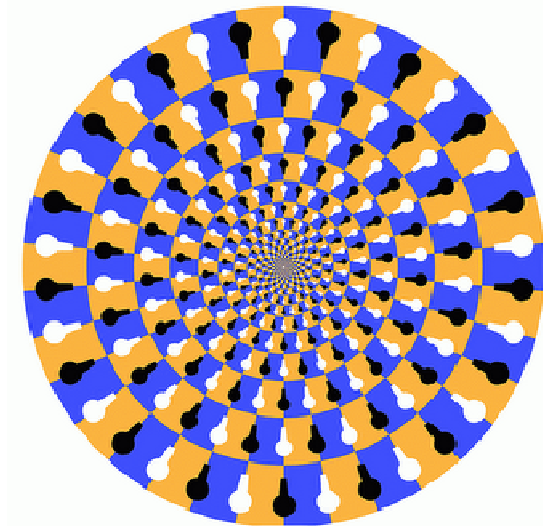
- 🐾 First time ride 1985
- 🐾 First own horse 2000
- 🐾 Horse Track Leader 2003-2004
- 🐾 Education on Equine Mediated Psychotherapy 2004-2007
- 🐾 First Equine Assisted Training 2005
- 🐾 First Equine Assisted Coaching 2007
- 🐾 Horsedream Licensed Partner Workshops 2008
- 🐾 Horse Dream Train the Trainer Seminar 2008



Basic Concepts

- Sensation – Perception
- Communication - Meaning
- Emotion – Feeling
- Suggestions
- Consciousness – Altered States of Consciousness

- The active process of selecting, organizing and interpreting the information brought to the brain by the senses

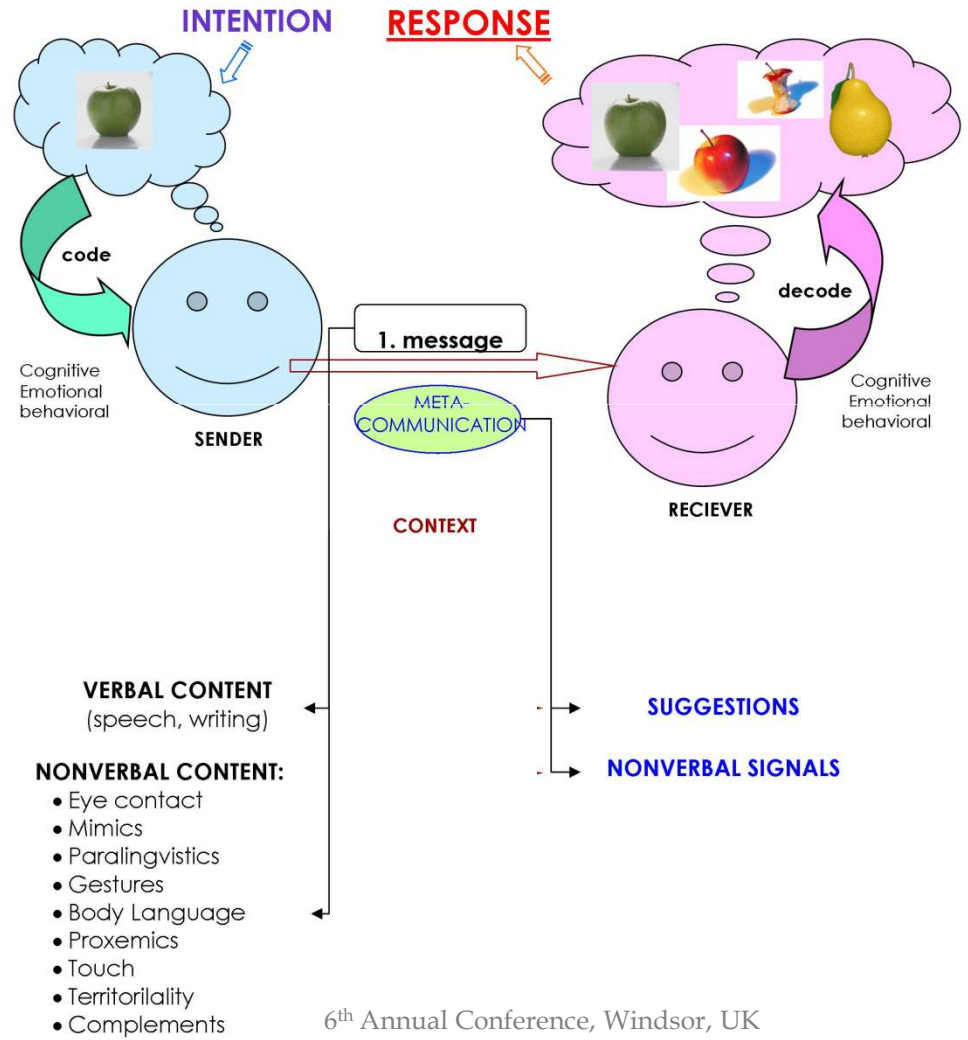




The Power of Context

A
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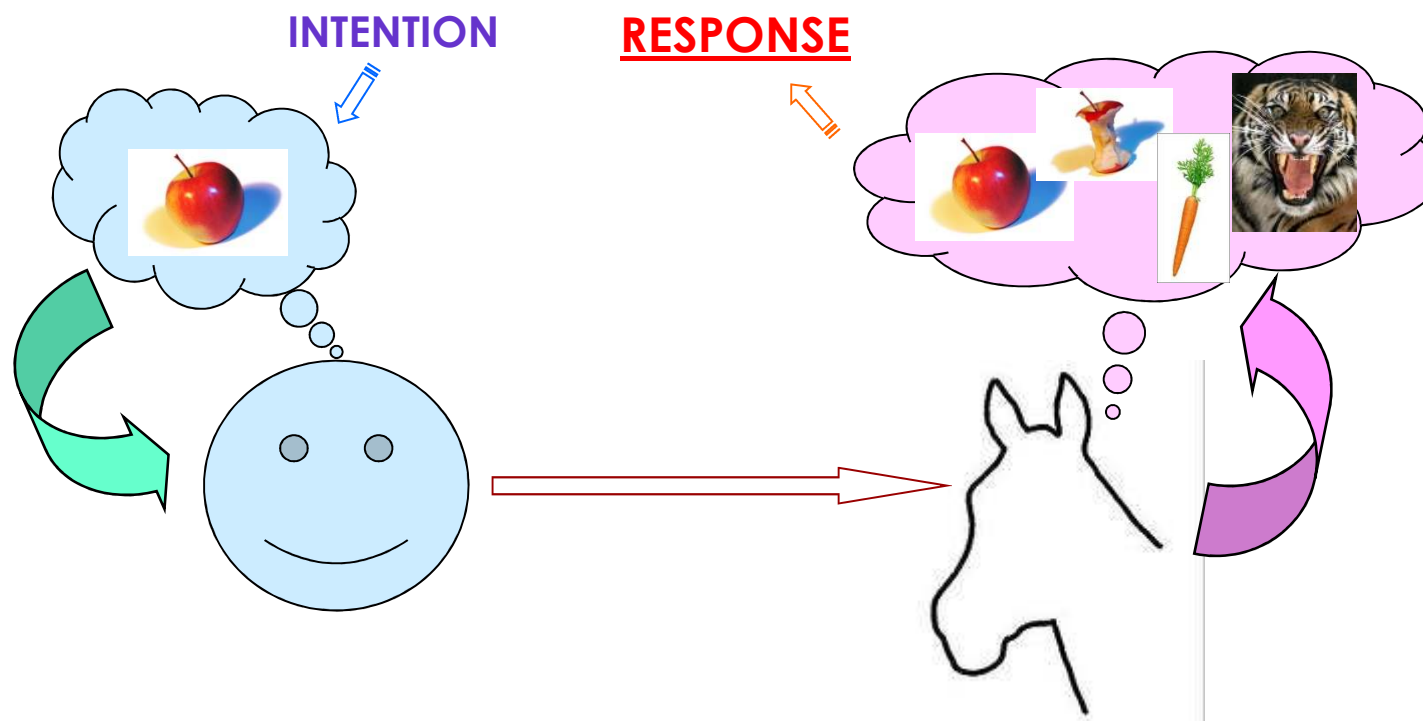
Something We All Know – But Always Forget...



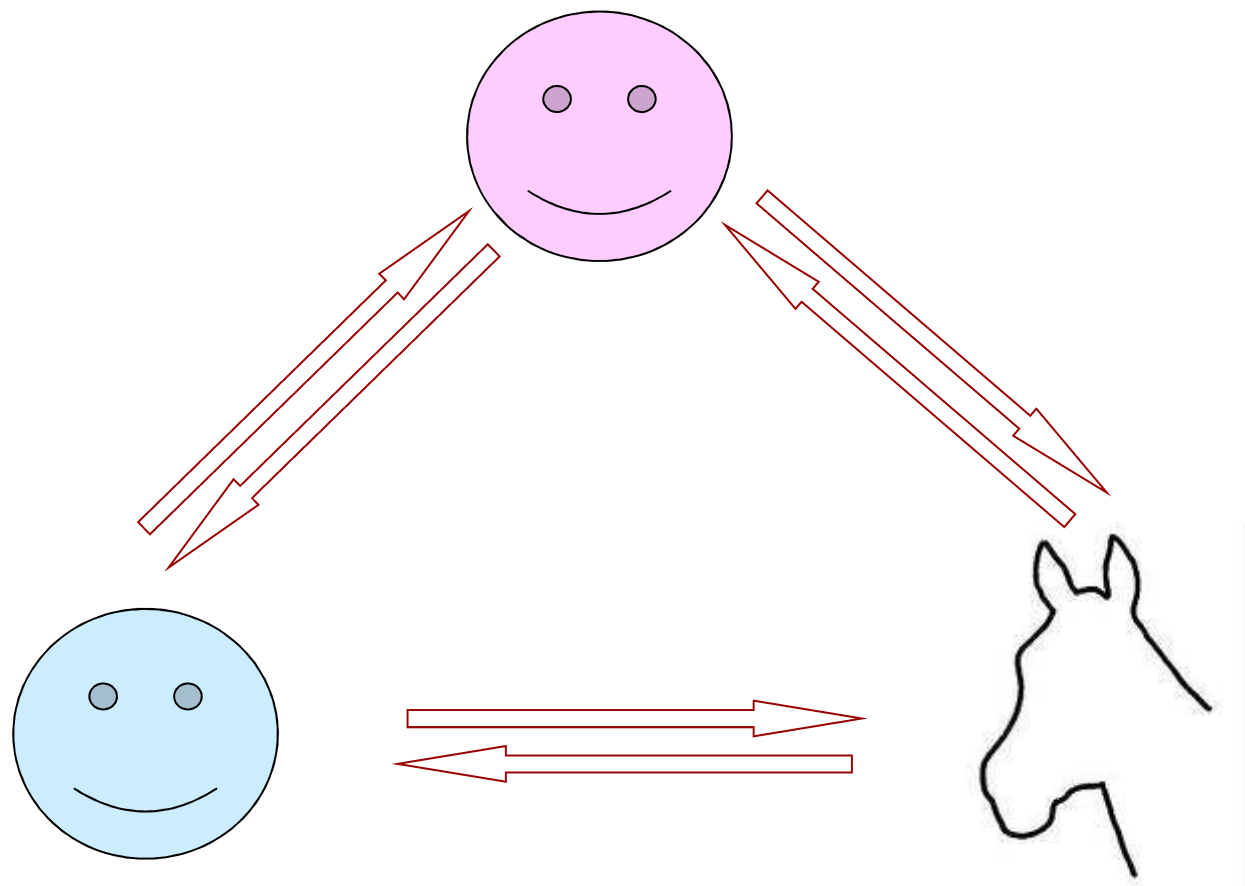
Conclusions

- The **MEANING** of the message is **what and how it was understood by the receiver** (and not what and how the sender meant it!)
- **Message is just a stimulus SENSED** by the receiver – the **MEANING is the result of receiver's PERCEPTION**, thus influenced by
 - past experiences
 - expectations, stereotypes, cognitive sets
 - context
 - actual feelings
 - actual state of receiver's awareness and consciousness

Concept of HAE



The Practice of HAE





What Do We Call a Suggestion?

„...what distinguishes suggestion from other kinds of psychic influence, such as a command or the giving of a piece of information or instruction, is that in the case of suggestion an idea is aroused in another person's brain which is not examined in regard to its origin but is **accepted just as though it had arisen spontaneously** in that brain.” (Freud, 1888)

What Do We Call a Suggestion?

- „Process (especially indirect) by which mental processes in (or the behavior of) an individual are altered by influence in the **absence of conscious volition** on the part of the individual thus influenced.”
- “... will be a communication or sequence of communications to the subject primarily intended to bring about some observable, overt action or actions. Suggestions are also used to bring about non-observable, covert responses.... The resulting effects will not be voluntary acts.” Weitzenhoffer, A. M. (1989)



What Do We Call a Suggestion?

- proposal
- impulse
- hint
- allusion
- recommendation
- self-fulfilling prophecy
- ...



Types of Suggestions

- Verbal – Nonverbal
- Direct – Indirect
- Auto – Hetero
- Personal - Environmental

Just an example...



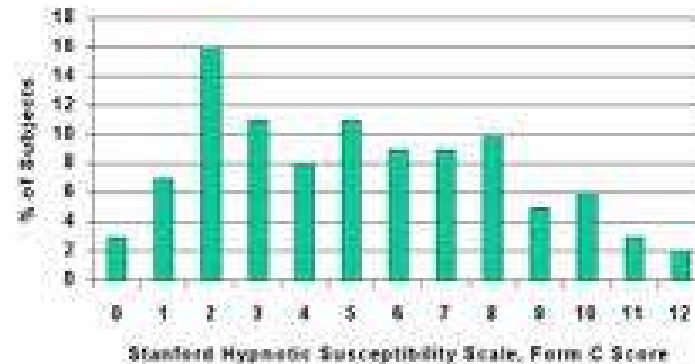
“I felt very uncomfortable when I heard his (*the priest hurrying to a dying woman*) hand-bell hurrying by my door... This hand-bell was a painful warning to actively go after this unknown cause with all my strength.”

From the diary of Ignác Semmelweis

Profile of Suggestibility

Best standardised measure:
Standard scales for hypnotic suggestibility
(SHSSA:A; SHSS:B; HCSS)

Distribution of Hypnotizability
Higdon (1965)



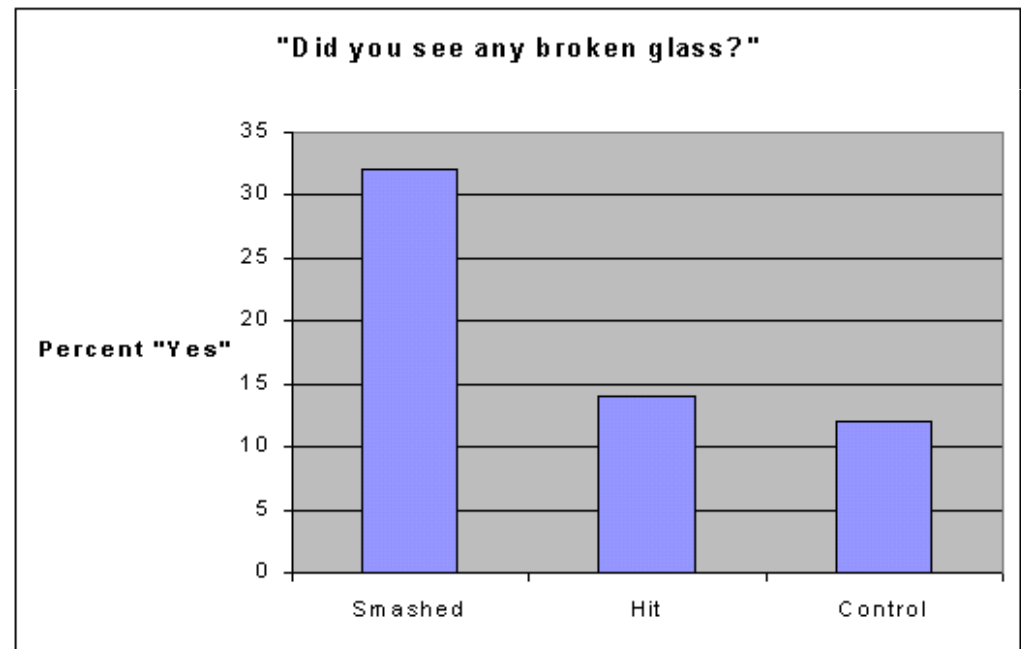
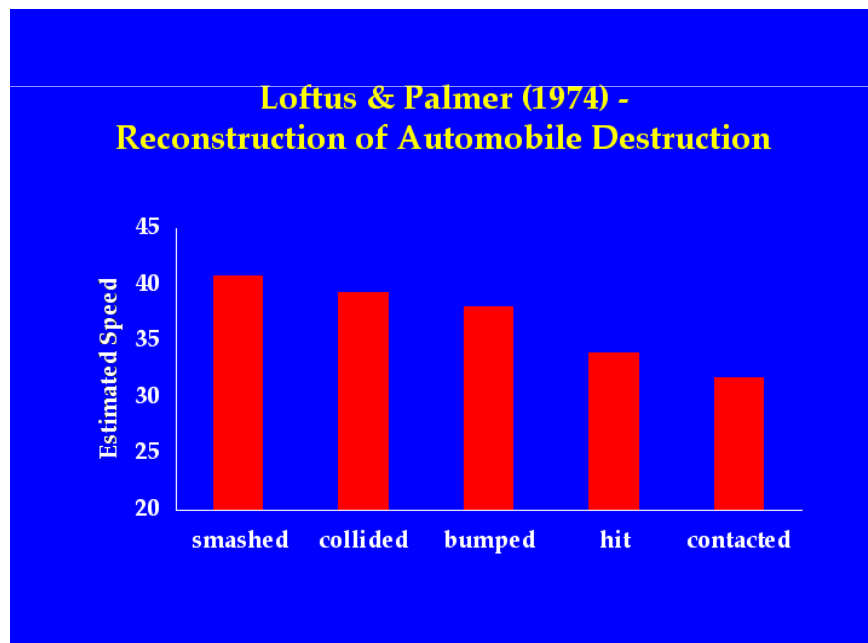
Suggestive power of Questions



(Loftus and Palmer, 1974)

Right after the film

One week later



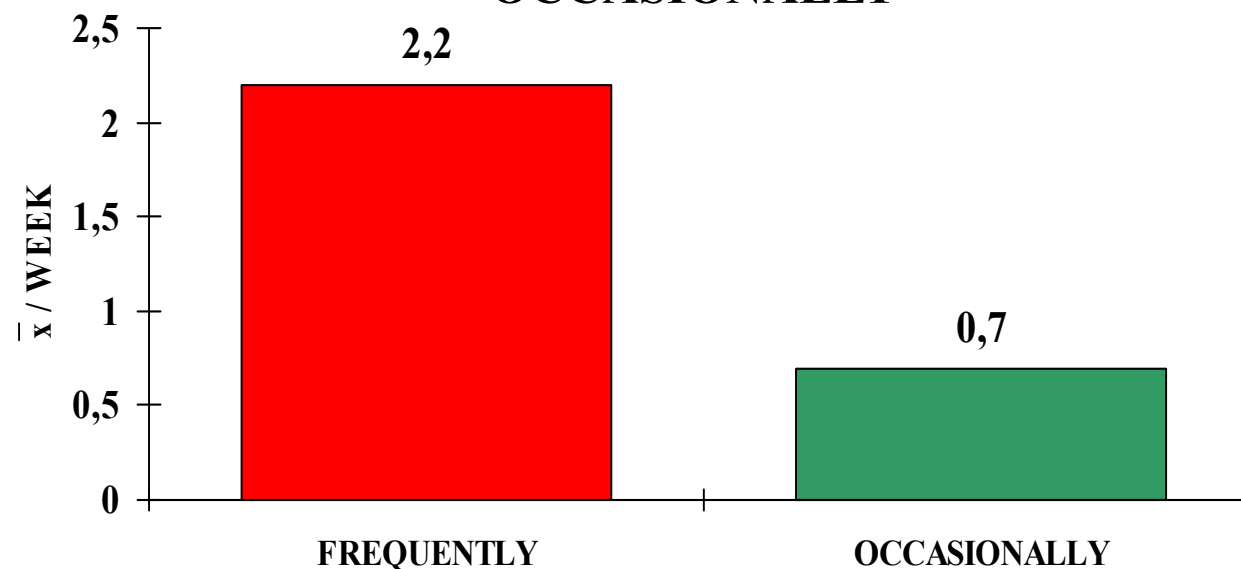
Suggestive Power of Questions

FREQUENTLY

"Do you have headaches

and if so, how often?"

OCCASIONALLY



LOFTUS, E. F. (1975) Leading questions and the eyewitness report. *Cognitive Psychology*, 7, 560-572.



What Does Influence Suggestibility?

- Acute pain
- Defencelessness
- Fear
- Instability of frame of reference
- Loosing control (or even the illusion of control)
- Increased physical / emotional utilization
- Altered states of consciousness (ASC)

What is ASC?

■ **Consciousness**

- still no agreed upon definition
- selective attention to ongoing perceptions, thoughts and feelings (Myers, 1986)
- functions: monitoring and controlling somatical and mental processes, organizing behaviour

■ **Conscious - subconscious - unconscious** (Freud, Janet, Hilgard)

- **ASC:** great number of (seemingly) different phenomena (from daydreaming through falling in love to near-death experiences or hypnosis), all showing the same characteristics



Dimensions of changed subjective experiences in ASCs

- Attention (extreme focus)
- Perception (time, environmental objects and persons, body image)
- Imagery and fantasy
- Inner speech
- Memory (from amnesia to hypermnesia)
- Higher level thinking (noncritical; trance-logic; reality testing; primary-process thinking)



Dimensions of changed subjective experiences in ASCs

- Meaning and significance of experiences
- Emotions and their expression
- Level of arousal
- Self control
- Sense of personal identity
- Sense of ineffable (experiences cannot be communicated verbally)
- **Suggestibility**

All together...

- ... the receiver in ASC is much more defenceless to suggestions...



- ... the sender has an opportunity to reach a much proper response



Induced ASCs

- Hypnosis
- Meditations, imagination
- Charismatic speakers
- Drogas
- Shamanic trans-states
- ...

Shamanic Trance – the Hungarian Method

- ☞ Drum as a „vehichle” to trance
- ☞ Horse as a methaphor for drum
- ☞ The Fairy Horse in tales






Spontaneous ASCs

- Love & sex
- Delivery
- Accident
- Coma
- Cycling, climbing, aerobic
- ...
- Horse riding

An Empirical Study

- N=17, experienced riders, first met these horses
- Measured:
 - Emotional Experience (Face Scale, McGarh et al, 1985) A series of nine circular icons representing a face scale from happy to sad. The icons show a progression from a wide smile to a frown.
 - Archaic Involvement (AIM, Nash and Spinler, 1989)
 - perceived power of the hypnotist/horse
 - positive emotional bond to the hypnotist/horse
 - fear of negative appraisal

An Empirical Study

- PCI (Phenomenology of Consciousness Inventory, Pekala, 1982) , an 53-item questionnaire
 - consisting of 12 major dimensions or phenomenological (i.e., subjective) elements (e.g., positive affect, altered experience, visual imagery, rationality),
 - and 14 minor dimensions (e.g., fear, joy, altered body image, absorption)
 - Quantifying the intensity of each phenomenological element
 - the strength of relationships between pairs of phenomenological elements

Setting:

- Standard Group Hypnosis
 - Hypnotic susceptibility(HCSS), FS, AIM, PCI
- 1 hour standard cross-country ride in groups of 3 or 4 subjects
 - FS, AIM_{Riding}, PCI
- Discussion, feedback

- **FS:** Higher (more positive) **emotional experience** when riding
- **AIM:**
 - higher score in **positive emotional bond** to the horse than to the hypnotist
 - lower score in fear of **negative appraisal** when riding than in hypnosis
 - no difference between hypnosis and control

■ Scores differed in PCI:

PCI Factors	N	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Altered experience	17	-2.262	16	0.038
Body image	17	-2.193	16	0.043
Meaning	17	- 2.796	16	0.013
Positive affect	17	-7.863	16	0.000
Joy	17	-7.103	16	0.000
Love	17	-4.314	16	0.001
Direction	17	4.637	16	0.000
Arousal	17	-2.337	16	0.033



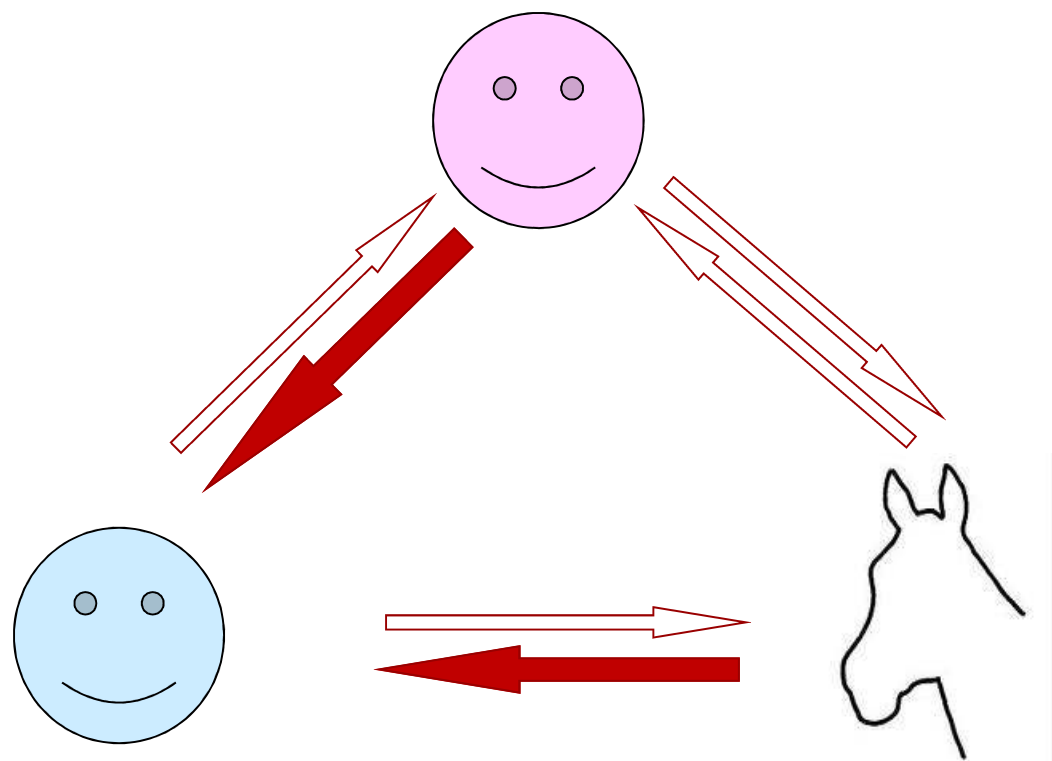
Proved

- ASC occurs during riding
- It has a deep impact on positive emotions
- Contains positive bonding towards the horse
- Behaviour and personal experiences less influenced by (human) social expectancies, roles and contrain to be sufficient

Conclusions

- Riding instructors and Horse Assisted Educators meet a **spontaneous trance of their clients**, that
 - requires more attention payed to suggestions given during their communication
 - makes possible to use a quasihypnotic language (eq. methaphors)
 - work in and influence the client's sub/unconscious patterns
 - gives an extra dynamics to the group

Conclusions





Invitation...

- **... to participate in a similar study (FS+ AIM+PCI) right after one leaves the round-pan / picadero**
 - World-wide HorseDream community study
 - Great number of subjects
 - Something scientific 😊
 - Something proving by numbers that we have a good reason to ask horses to cooperate us in education (training, coaching, etc)



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION



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