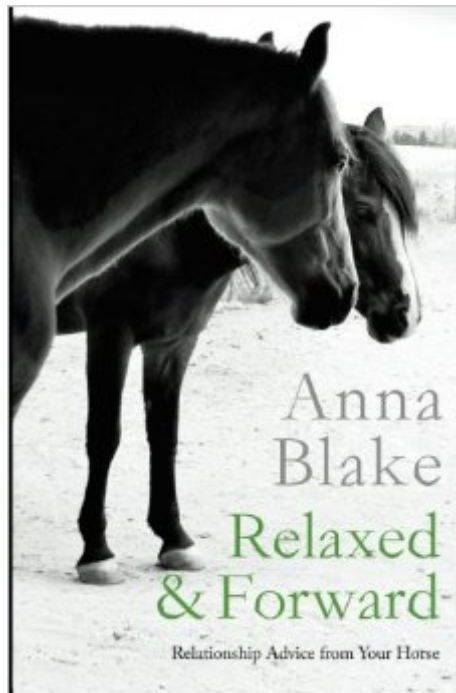


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# Relaxed & Forward: Relationship Advice From Your Horse



## Synopsis

Do you still watch those old horse movies that you've seen a dozen times, just for the scenes of the horse galloping in slow motion? Do you hold your breath just a bit? It's because horses embody so much more than muscle and bone. They evoke a full range of emotions like hope and courage and valor. They can gallop straight to you with neck arched and tail flagged, and then instantly melt to a stop--just to share your breath. We've been besotted with horses since they had three toes. From the popular *Relaxed and Forward* blog comes training advice combining the everyday fundamentals of dressage with mutual listening skills. Blake writes with a profound respect for horses and an articulate voice for humans, blending equal parts inspiration and un-common sense. It's serious training communicated with humor and lightness, because horses like cheerful riders. Most riders want to build a better relationship with their horse. These short essays are geared as much toward encouraging a positive training attitude as useful technique.

Blake's writing uses clear descriptions, storytelling, and humor to inspire meaningful, positive communication. Less correction and more direction. Horses are honest; they answer us in kind. If we want a better response, a more fluid conversation and relationship with a horse, riders have to be the ones to change first. The other word for that is leadership. By the author of *Stable Relation, A Memoir of One Woman's Spirited Journey Home*, by Way of the Barn.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Disclaimer: I'm already a big fan of Anna Blake's blog. I thought this might be a bit of duplication, but

it really isn't. She's funny and profound, a master at painting a scene or a character or a feeling with words, and has a quirky and entertaining perspective on horses, and horse training. She is a horse-centered, kind, and knowledgeable horse trainer. You will NOT be told about dominance, respect, "hooking up", etc., but you WILL learn a better understanding of how to build a relationship with your horse, how to be fair to your horse - and to yourself! I would put her in some humanistic (horse-istic?) category with the likes of Mark Rashid. I don't agree with everything she says (I have been using clicker training with an extremely troubled horse with quite good results, and she has a chapter on why one should not use food rewards with which I take exception) but hey, that's ok. I know what she's talking about. The book is entertaining and illuminating, a couple of times I had to stop reading and take deep breaths and think deep thoughts for five or ten minutes before going on. Highly recommend for people who love horses.

It's so rare to find a book so delightful and insightful. I learned, loved and laughed throughout. I can hear the voice of wisdom Anna Blake shares as I ride and I know my horses appreciate it. Even though I am a trail rider and she is a dressage trainer, the concepts are valuable to any riding style. Read it. You won't be sorry and your horses will thank you.

Whether you're an experienced rider or you're just starting out, you must read this book! Anna Blake knows everything about horses, even their tiniest movements and what those signal to the rider. She has a very kind, empathetic method of training both horse and rider. I've learned more from this book than from my several years riding a horse and watching the expert trainers' videos. We want our horse to listen to us, but do we really know how to listen to him? It's a two-way conversation, which Anna can explain with expertise and humor. Horses are not just big conveyances, existing only to obey us without question and carry us where we want to go. They are sentient beings, just as we are. When riders learn to communicate effectively with their horse, both parties will have a better, safer experience.

I have enjoyed Anna Blake's blog for years, so when her first book (Stable Relation) came out, I leaped on it. Now her second, "Relaxed and Forward" has proven to be an equal delight. Anna knows both horses and humans right down to their bones! With quirky humor and affection, she guides us through all of the pitfalls that plague our predator (us) and prey (horse) relationship. A harmonious, respectful partnership is what all horsemen want, and Anna gives us many of the tools to achieve that. She reminds us what drew us horse crazy people to these amazing animals in the

first place and how to hold on to that wonder.

This is a super book! It helped me more than any technical book that was written, although those have helped me too. But this book is all about having a relationship with your horse, which is essential to good riding. I highly recommend it to any rider of any discipline. It's funny, but insightful and made me think about how I ride. I have to say, it has changed the way I ride, hopefully for the better. My horse seems to like it!

This book is awesome. If you are trying to become a better rider and horse owner, the information in this book will certainly help you make that journey more successful. There is so much information included in each chapter, that I have been reading it a section at a time and then evaluating the topic with relation to my own experiences. There are so many quotable passages (both Anna's and other clinicians) that it gives you a lot of information to mull over. My experience with my horses has improved dramatically when I have been able to incorporate these techniques into my horse adventure. This is a MUST READ for the true horse enthusiast.

I loved the title, and bought this book mostly on a whim. It honestly changed how I relate to my horses, and my riding was better after I read it. I think it raised my awareness of horse/human communications, and helped me tune in and listen a little better.

Absolutely wonderful read! If you love your horse, you'll love this book. It's filled with short stories that speak to the heart, and overflowing with advice on how to listen to and learn from your equine partner. I highly recommend adding "Relaxed & Forward" to your bookshelf!

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