

Warwick Schiller



Age: 52
Lives: Hollister, California, USA
Occupation: I used to think I was a horse trainer, but now I'm pretty sure I'm a life coach.

How would you describe yourself? I'd describe myself as the luckiest man alive. I have an amazing family, I live in a beautiful place, and we have seven lovely horses, three wonderful dogs and five chooks that play rock, paper, scissors each morning to see who's going to lay that one egg for the day. I get to do what I love for a living and travel to some amazing places while doing it. So, luckiest man alive would be a pretty good description.

When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up? I wanted to be a bull rider like my father. I rode calves, steers, junior bulls and got on two full-sized bulls before I realised that pushing through fear was not one of the strengths I knew how to cultivate at the time.

In your 20s, what influenced you to leave your job at a bank and pursue horses overseas? As I grow, I think my perception of that reason seems to change. I always had a fascination with America and the Western lifestyle, but I've never been much

of a planner, just a dreamer, and have followed my nose with not a real thought as to where it might lead. That nose has led me to some pretty cool places.

Where did your journey in the US begin and how did you cope with those first few years? The first three years I was in the US I worked for NRCHA Hall of Famer **Don Murphy**. It was challenging for me, I really had no idea of the process of how to train a horse. I could ride, but the thought process was a long way off for me. I wasn't really ready to work there, I could have learned so much more if I was in a different headspace. I was just having a great lark in the US.

How did you turn your passion into your livelihood? I originally had a one year visa, and my plans were to just go over for a year, have a good time, learn some techniques and come home and train my own horse. At the end of that year, the day I was leaving, Don said to me when we said farewell on his verandah "If you want to come back, I'll give you a job. You could do this for a living." I have never had a lot of self-confidence, so that thought hadn't entered my mind as a possibility, but when someone dangled it there, I once again followed my nose. I went back to the bank in Australia for six months, then went back to the US. Two years later I

married Robyn, and then I went out training on my own. I wasn't really ready for that either, in technique or maturity, but it's been a part of the journey. I wouldn't be where I am now without all the mistakes I've made along the way.

How has your business expanded and evolved in the last few years? In 2015 my wife **Robyn** bought a new reining horse, we got him relatively cheap as. Even though he was a physical superstar, he had some mental quirks that prevented him from competing well. At the time I was pretty sure I could solve them relatively easily. I had been doing clinics all over the world and solving some supposedly unsolvable issues and thought this one would be no different.

Nothing could be further from the truth. This little fellow was very very shut down, he just kept everything inside, and if they won't show it to you, it's very difficult to help them with it. I couldn't figure out what to do to help him, so I stepped away and left him alone for a year while searching for ways to help him. Long story short, not only did it open my eyes to a way of working with horses that I hadn't considered before, it took me on a personal development journey that is continuing to this very day.

These days my first priority is building a true connection with horses, before trying to teach them anything. But in order to do that, you almost have to change who you are, how you view the world. So you could say that's evolved quite a bit over the past few years. I didn't do it because I thought it was a good business practice, that's just what I now believed in. Funnily enough, the business has expanded because of it, as everyone who does the "new stuff" just loves it.

What do you enjoy most about your career with horses?

These days, it's the like-minded people I meet at clinics who are really seeking that greater connection, not only with their horses but with themselves.

Robyn and Warwick in Morocco during a Tibourida Festival



You travel quite a bit with your family, what do you enjoy about it?

The amazing places we get to see and the amazing people we meet. In the past four months I've been to the UK, Holland, Morocco, New Zealand and Australia, and I have to say that the trip to Morocco was a highlight. It was such an amazing experience to work with the Barb stallions in Morocco. What amazing horses. I immediately added that trip to my reverse bucket list. What's a reverse bucket list,

you may ask. Well, a regular bucket list is a list of things you'd love to happen, but then you can be disappointed if they don't. A reverse bucket list is when you have a bucket-list-worthy experience, you then add it to your bucket list after it's happened. That way you experience no disappointment, and you have gratitude for the amazing thing that happened. It's all about the gratitude.

What's been the biggest highlight of your career? Of my showing career, the second biggest highlight would have to be having a personal best in the first round of the World Equestrian Games last year in Tryon, North Carolina, and making the semi-finals. My highlight would be being three points higher and setting another personal best in the semi-finals, in what could be my last ever reining run.

What do you miss most about Australia? I used to miss a lot about Australia, but seeing I travel there on average five times a year, I get my Aussie fix enough that I don't miss it. When I would get back to Australia once every three or four or five years, I'd get to the airport in Sydney and have that sick feeling in the pit of my stomach, but that doesn't happen anymore. It's no longer goodbye, it's see ya soon.

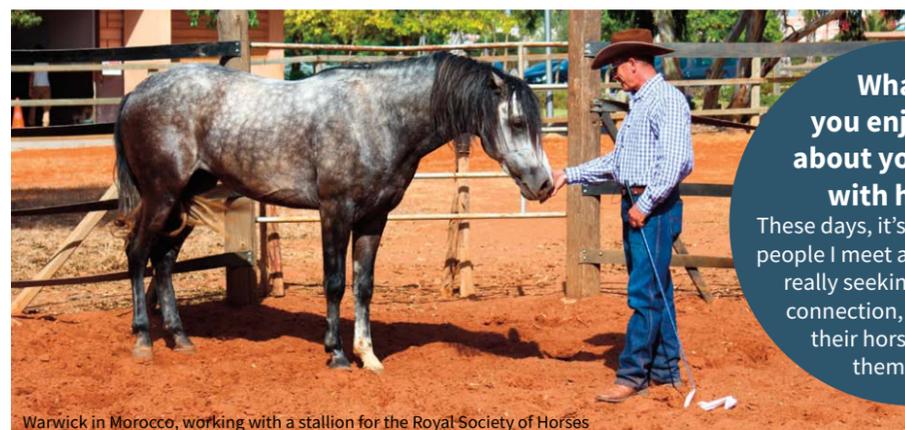
What are you still learning about horses? I'm learning more and more about how subtle their communication is, especially them communicating about when they are concerned, and if you can just slow down and be present enough to notice those communications, and let them know you notice, they will really let you in and be more willing than you ever thought a horse could be.

What is the first thing you have to pack to take away to a clinic? My extendable flag.

What are your long term goals? I think I've already started on this, and it's the human side of things. For years some people were easy to help, but some people just couldn't get it to work and I couldn't figure out why. I have come to realise that the physical things you do are only about a third of the equation. What's more important is what thoughts are you thinking, and what is your energy doing. Only in the past couple of years have I become aware of it myself, and it is something you need to work on all the time, not just when you are around your horses. So my long term goals are to be much better at explaining that, as the bit that I have done with people has had much bigger changes with horse and human than anything I've done before.

3 things we don't know about Warwick Schiller?

1. I have webbed toes
2. Most books I read are either about personal growth or spirituality
3. I have a wish to hold hands with an orangutan and go for a little walk



Warwick in Morocco, working with a stallion for the Royal Society of Horses



Warwick at Equidays, New Zealand 2019