

Warwick ([00:00:00](#)):

You're listening to the journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick is a horseman, trainer, international clinician, and author, whose mission is to help people achieve a deeper connection with their horses through his transformational training program.

New Speaker ([00:00:34](#)):

Welcome back to another episode of the journey on podcast. I'm your host Warwick Schiller. Today we've got a very, very special guest today. I'm going to be talking with Elsa Sinclair. And if you are unaware, who Elsa Sinclair is a couple of years ago, almost eight or nine years ago now. I think she made an independent movie called Taming Wild, and you can see it on I think it's an older major platforms. You can, you can rent it. It's an indie movie and she gave herself 12 months to train a wild Mustang, untouched Mustang with no tools. So no Holters, no leads, no whips, no ropes, no flags, no small enclosures.

Warwick ([00:01:20](#)):

Cause you know, you can get a horse in a small area and, you know, apply body language and pressure in such a way that coming to you is the better option that's available. But she did it without that. So the horse is basically free to do anything at once. And from that she has developed something that's called. She calls freedom-based training and it's exceptionally fascinating. I've had a good look at it. And I think what she does is absolutely amazing. So this is going to be a great episode. Let's get a Elsa Sinclair on the line.

New Speaker ([00:01:52](#)):

How are you?

Elsa ([00:01:52](#)):

I'm very well how are you Warwick?

New Speaker ([00:01:55](#)):

Excellent. I haven't seen you for awhile. How have you been handling the strange new world we live in since since all this craziness started?

Elsa ([00:02:06](#)):

Well, you know, I really, really miss the travel. I guess the last time I saw you as a New Zealand and it seems so strange to not be able to be traveling around like that. But on the flip side, I feel like my most important work is with my own horses in my own backyard. And so the inability to travel has really given me a good excuse to focus in and be a little bit more deep about the work that I do for myself.

Warwick ([00:02:38](#)):

Wow. Elsa Sinclair getting deeper about the already depths of the ocean deep work she's already done and I can't wait to see what comes out of that. So we have, we're going to start with, I, I mean you are such an enigma like where do you start? Figuring this is all about the journey. So maybe, maybe give us a bit about your journey. You live in Washington state.

Elsa ([00:03:06](#)):

I do. I live in Washington state. I actually live up on San Juan Island, which is as far Northwest as you can go before you hit Canada. So I'm on a little Island between Vancouver Island, which is Canada and the mainland of Washington state.

Warwick ([00:03:21](#)):

Wow. And where were you, where did you grow up?

Elsa ([00:03:23](#)):

I actually grew up in Connecticut and we moved West when I was 10 years old. So when I go to the East coast of the United States, it still feels like home with all the leaves turning and the stonewalls and the rolling Hills. But most of my life here I've lived on the West coast.

Warwick ([00:03:41](#)):

So you basically stayed at the same distance from the equator. You just moved from one side of the US to the other.

Elsa ([00:03:47](#)):

Yes. Although I'm glad we have a lot less snow here in Washington state than we had on the East coast.

Warwick ([00:03:54](#)):

You know, that's really, I I've always found that interesting about America is like, you know, it doesn't matter how far North you go. It depends on what side of the country on like they have those ice storms and stuff over on that side that you just don't have over on this side.

Elsa ([00:04:11](#)):

Thank goodness. I love a good rain shower. Seattle suits me really well.

Warwick ([00:04:15](#)):

Oh, well Seattle is sushi cause it doesn't stop raining there.

Elsa ([00:04:18](#)):

That's the Island where I live is actually on a banana belt sort of cloud I think they call it the rain shadow. And so we don't get nearly as many rainy days as Seattle does. But it's still pretty sort of damping cry all winter and I find it's cozy. It's very comfortable.

Warwick ([00:04:38](#)):

Oh, good. So how many horses do you have at home?

Elsa ([00:04:42](#)):

I have eight horses at home currently. It's a lot smaller number than we used to have. My mother taught riding lessons to all of my friends and all of the children in the community when I was a child. And actually when I was growing as well. And we had between 20 and 25 horses for most of my growing up they have all sort of aged out at this point and our herd has gotten smaller and smaller and we're left

with, you know, a horse or two of my mom's and horse are two of my daughters. And then all of the horses that I use in filming the movies.

Warwick ([00:05:23](#)):

Well, that's probably a good segue into the movies. Cause if, you know, I think most people would have heard of you because of the Taming Wild movie. Let's can we talk about that? Where, where did that come? If, if people don't know about it, like let's talk about what it is, how you ended up there, how it all went and what it's been like since what has that done for you?

Elsa ([00:05:48](#)):

You know, it's, it's such a huge subject and at the same time, so, so simple. I have been a horse trainer, my whole life, actually a third generation horse trainer. My grandfather did show jumpers. My mother taught children and now my form of training is really to use as little equipment as possible. But I was a professional horse trainer, so I was mostly working in the areas of what people would call natural horsemanship. And,

Warwick ([00:06:18](#)):

And that's the, that's a broad term, isn't it? I didn't natural horsemanship. What the hell does that mean? Yeah,

Elsa ([00:06:26](#)):

So, you know, my background was strongly in the Parelli world. You know, I went through all the Parelli levels. I passed all those levels and I loved it. But I was always sort of looking for the missing pieces. And I think all of us are all the time. Hopefully we never run out of missing pieces. Cause that's the puzzle. That's really fun. But I had a student who asked me some really key questions and I can remember the day this happened. She said, do you really think courses like courses like being written? And I said, yeah, I think they love it. And she said, but I mean, what if they knew they had a choice? Like what if they were a fully grown functioning adult in the wild, would those horses like being written? And I said, yeah, I think so people bring in wild Mustangs all the time and they teach them to be riding horses.

Elsa ([00:07:19](#)):

And I do think they really enjoy it. And she said, yeah, but do you think those horses knew they had a choice? And at that point I was stuck and that was the turning point for me because I started doing a ton of research about course training. And I tried to find someone who I felt had given horses choice, but everyone who talked about giving horses choice also used food rewards very heavily as in they controlled the food source and one course has behaved the way they wanted them. They were allowed to the food source and I felt like I'm not really sure that's choice. There's some gray area there for sure. But I started coming up with this idea that somebody should take an adult wild Mustang off the range and train this horse where it had all the food. It wanted all the friends that wanted all the space it wanted and just offer it companionship and friendship and see if writing was one of the things that you could do with that horse.

Elsa ([00:08:25](#)):

So I was really excited about this idea. I went and told all of my horse trainer friends about it and I was like, somebody should do this project. And essentially everyone laughed at me and said, yeah, okay. If

somebody is going to do the project is probably you. Cause none of us want to do it. And then I thought, okay, it would take a lot of time. It would take a lot of effort. Maybe I'll do it when I retire. Maybe this is something to look forward to when I'm older and I've done everything I need to in terms of raising my child and making a living and all of those things. But I couldn't stop talking about it. And I talked to everybody about this idea and ultimately I had a client who said, you know, you need to do this now. And I said, yeah, and I can't afford it.

Elsa ([00:09:09](#)):

I can't make time for it. My life is too busy. And he said, listen, I would really like a Mustang. What if I pay all the expenses for us to go down and get two Mustangs, we'll get one for me. And I will pay you to train it for me. And that will help cover your expenses. And then we'll get one for you to do this project. You can't stop talking about. And at that point it felt like I had no more excuses. I had to do this. And I sort of thought I would set a camera up in the corner of the field to document it, because that was one of the big things. And I had a really good friend who is a filmmaker. And she said, if you're going to do this, we should do it. Right. And I said, okay, Margaret, what does that look like?

Elsa ([00:09:52](#)):

And she said, well, I'll tell you what camera you need to buy. And I'll come up at least once a month and help you film. And I said, but what if it's a disaster? What if it doesn't work? What if nothing happens? What if I sit in the field with this horse for a year and nothing changes, she said, well, then that's what it is. But she said, I know you pretty well. And I've feeling that's not going to be how it turns out. And I said, all right, as long as you understand that nothing might happen here. And it might be a complete and utter failure just said, yeah, I've got it, but let's film it anyway. And so we did I actually wrote a blog and I started eight months before I went and got the horse. I started January of 2011 and I blogged every single week. I wrote a post about what my plan was, what I was thinking might happen, how it might develop. Of course, as I was learning forum before I got to this movie project and then I brought it up,

Warwick ([00:10:56](#)):

Where did you put this? What'd you put this blog,

Elsa ([00:10:58](#)):

It's on equine clarity.org. And

Warwick ([00:11:01](#)):

So there's one thing to do this, but there's another thing to say, I'm going to do, you know, it'd be like saying, I'm, you know, I'm gonna, I'm gonna work out three hours a day and whatever, telling yourself that, but then telling everybody else, you want to do that and be accountable for it. That's next level. Yeah.

Elsa ([00:11:20](#)):

And you know, as I was writing about it, there was always this thought that maybe it would get delayed years. Maybe it wouldn't happen right away, but it was so world changing for me to ask this question and to think about all the pieces that would have to fit together for this question to be answered. So I wrote every week and even once the horse came and the idea was I would have a year long project and

in one year, the question is what was possible. And so I wrote in this blog, equine clarity.org, every single week, what happens? And I made a lot of mistakes. You know, things I wouldn't do now, but that's part of the journey. That's what you have to do the mistakes before you realize their mistakes,

Warwick ([00:12:07](#)):

Especially when, when you're doing something no one's ever done before. Like if you're, if you're following someone who's successful and they have a process, you can avoid a lot of mistakes, but when you're breaking new ground, it could all be a mistake.

Elsa ([00:12:22](#)):

Yep. And mostly what I found is I used all of the awesome theories that horse trainers have used for hundreds of years. You know, I wasn't reinventing the wheel, but what I was doing is breaking it down into much smaller steps and understanding how to break a theory down into small enough steps that a horse would voluntarily say, yes, I'll do that with you. Even though there's no motivators, there's no healthcare, there's no rope. There's no fence to hold me to you. And there's no food reward to break something down into small enough steps that the horses, yes. I want to do that with you was really something I had to develop. You know, that's not common that people break things down that far.

Warwick ([00:13:07](#)):

Yeah. It's I like the, you know, the click of train is, tend to do what they call thin slicing. And they're pretty thin slices. And I, and I think really, you know, the process, like say my background on the reining, the process to do a net is breaking it down into small pieces. That's the key break down the small pieces. But when you breaking it down into such small pieces, you don't even know it's different from the last piece. That's, that's pretty cool.

Elsa ([00:13:33](#)):

And that's exactly the key is being able to delineate what is the difference between this piece and the next piece, even though it's so small that it's not going to cause the horse to feel overwhelmed, how do I recognize that we're making progress? And a lot of times, I didn't know, you know, there were a lot of nights. I sat in the hay feeder watching the horses eat, and I just cried my eyes out because I thought I have set myself up for failure here. There's no way this is ever going to work. I have a huge audience of people watching me. And I don't know what I'm doing

Warwick ([00:14:10](#)):

Was that I've just, I've just come back from a, a transformational three day men's emotional resilience, retreat. And you know, men don't show emotions, but everybody there had stuff coming out and anytime anything comes up, just go like, just sit with it. What does that feel like? And so you're sitting in this feat of crying. What are you crying from you? Frustrated? Are you ashamed? You disappointed what's, what's behind the chronic right there.

Elsa ([00:14:43](#)):

I think it was usually, you know, shame that I thought I was smart enough to figure this out and I had hit a wall and I didn't know how to figure out the current problem. And it was a feeling of, of being ashamed that I wasn't smarter, that I wasn't quicker to puzzle it together. And maybe I would never be smart enough. Maybe I would never figure out that puzzle. And so there was some, some grief and some

emotions that had to be processed there before my brain could actually puzzle through what had, had to puzzle through next.

Warwick ([00:15:23](#)):

Wow. I'm going to get to that stuff later. Yeah. So let's, let's, let's continue on. So how let's give people some context here. So you spent, you gave yourself 12 months to do this. How long did it take for your first, what you would have thought was a breakthrough?

Elsa ([00:15:41](#)):

So, you know, it was really interesting. I happened to pick a horse that was incredibly generous. And so, you know, I was touching her within the first day she was offering to be touched and that's not normal. Okay. I don't know how I got so lucky, but without any pressure, she was interested in curious, and there was some touch happening between us.

Warwick ([00:16:06](#)):

Sorry. How big an area is she at the time?

Elsa ([00:16:08](#)):

So by law you have to have six foot fences. When you bring home a, an adult wild Mustang. I begged borrowed bought all the fencing that I could afford and I made space as big as I could. We ended up with about a 60 foot round pen that went into a, another 60 feet of run that went through a barn and then another 30 foot round pen that connected back to the 60 foot round pen. So it was as big a space as I could manage it wasn't as big as I wanted. But

Warwick ([00:16:40](#)):

Yeah. So from watching the movie, cause I remember you saying that you'd, you know, you didn't want to have any small spaces to help you and I'm watching them maybe thinking, well, I thought he, you know, the con the context I got was you'd be out in 10 acres. Ah, so it's by law, you have to have six foot fences. That's why you've got that, but you've got to set up to way, if she wants to run away from you, she can't

Elsa ([00:17:00](#)):

Made an agreement with her that I would always be closer to the fence than she was. So she always had more space to get away from me if she chose to the door was always open for her to leave.

Warwick ([00:17:12](#)):

So you're always, okay. So you're always going to be in between her and the nearest fence. Yeah. So you you're communicating and see that's the thing, even just doing that. Cause you know what I like to quote Elsa Sinclair where the time where as good leaders only ask West yes. Questions, and it's not necessarily relate to that one, but good luck. You know, you're very, very aware that you are always making the easiest option available to her. So you can't be absentminded. And that's, I think some, a lot of people struggle with horses because they're just not aware all the time. And so I, and we're going to get into this later on, but I really think the key to relationship stuff with horses is your awareness, communicating your awareness, your awareness of their awareness and your awareness of their awareness of your awareness. And that's such a simple concept said right there. I never thought of that.

So always make it. So you're not just focusing on the horse and thinking about things and then realize you get in, you kind of get them, get a trap to where she's kind of got a scoot out of there. You always making sure every time that's, that's that's presence right there. That's very cool.

Elsa ([00:18:27](#)):

And then it's another thing leaders only ask yes. Questions that get yes answers. But it's one thing to get a yes. Answer. When a horse doesn't really have any options when they're stuck in a corner and there's nowhere they can go, they have to say yes to being close to you. But if you set it up where there's lots of open space and if they don't want to be close to you, they can actually say, no thanks. I'm going to go over here. That's a very different type of leadership where you're wanting to ask a question that gets a yes. Answer, but you're leaving the door open for the no answer. You have to be a lot more present then.

Warwick ([00:19:02](#)):

Yeah. And I really think you almost not asking me a question at that point in time, you know what I mean? So it's, yeah. It's not like there's a no to your question because there's not really a question. You know, if you, if you kind of got her between you and the fence, and you said, you know, if you have, if you put it in a place where she can't give you no answer, but imagine with a Mustang and if you get too close and get them cornered too much, they're not going to submit and say, yes, I'll give you an answer. Yes. And so you're going to find, this is going to be a wheel around and run off, jumped through, you know, squeezed a little gap you've made. And now you've got a really big, no answer. Now your horse is like, you're not very socially aware. Are you

Elsa ([00:19:42](#)):

The way I look at it is that no answers are anything that involved fight or flight when the horse has to present fight or flight, they're saying no. When they freeze freeze, is the horse saying, maybe, I don't know if I'm going to say yes or no yet. And hopefully at some point that freeze turns into a cognizant answer from them, but it's a, it's a tipping point. The thinking, the yielding, the playing, the stuff that you can be in harmony with easily, those are your yessing answers. And so I think everything we do with a horse is a question. And the way they answer is by the actions that they take afterwards. If it's a freeze, it's a maybe answer if it's a fight or flight it's no. And if it's something you can easily be in harmony with it's. Yes.

Warwick ([00:20:31](#)):

Okay. Very good. So you, so you were say you were touching on the first day. So what about okay, so think about, because I watched the movie think about getting on her, actually having her, allow you to get on her. So she's, and by this, in time, she's in a big area, isn't it?

Elsa ([00:20:49](#)):

Yeah. So by that point I felt confident enough. She was out in the woods and we were in a much bigger area. I made a big mistake. The first day I got on her, I had been jumping up and down and kind of bellying over her back a little bit. So she was used to my weight and all of that was going really well. We had piles of hay scattered throughout the woods because my idea was that I shouldn't deliver food. Food should be in the environment for her to find, and it has nothing to do with me.

Warwick ([00:21:18](#)):

So when you have a, if you have a pet snake, mice, you never bring the maths, the mouse to the snake, you take that, you take the mouse and you put it in a Brown paper bag and get the snake out of it. He's little thing. And then you put him into the bag and he goes to the mouse. So your hand is never the thing that brings the food. So the snake's never inclined to bite your hand. And so this is that. So that's how you avoided her connecting with you because of the food, because you're the bringer of food, right? So that's, if you guys listen to you, that is so subtle. That's so much forethought because Elsa here is trying to make sure that the relationship is based on the relationship. The relationship is not based on the fact that I bring the food. That's, that's subtle. That's cool.

Elsa ([00:22:09](#)):

It was a lot of work to set up, but it felt very important to me. If I wanted to answer this question, unfortunately, I decided to get all the way on her back the first time when she was busily eating one of those piles of hay. And because it's something she did every day and it was a normal thing for her, I didn't really think much about it, but the fact is, and we filmed this and it's in the movie. I sat on her. You know, I moved around a little bit. She seemed fine. But she was eating her hay. And then I decided that was enough for that day. And when I went to get on her the next day, she would have nothing to do with it. She, and she just made it clear by stepping far enough away that I couldn't get on.

Elsa ([00:22:56](#)):

And I wasn't going to throw myself on her back. So the way she said no was actually more of a counteroffer than an actual outright. No, which is a really nice thing. You know, I would say I was going to start to get on her back and she would just move and say, why don't you cut my nose instead? And you know, she would just make counter after offer. After counter offer. Every time I wanted to get on her back, she would just move enough to say, let's do something different. I'm not interested in having you get on my back.

Warwick ([00:23:28](#)):

That is such an amazing distinction right there. You know, something I find people that I help struggle with is their perception of what's going on, their judgment what's going on in their judgment, changes their internal energy in a judgment changes, none of their internal energy, but their outlook on the next thing that happens. And that right there, she wasn't saying no, it was a counteroffer. Yep.

Elsa ([00:23:59](#)):

But she made counter offers for the next three months. And for the next three months, I tried to get on her back and she repeatedly said, let's do something other than that. Elsa and I was so frustrated because our first sitting on moment had seemed so effortless and easy. And I couldn't imagine why she wouldn't want me to sit on her again. When the first one was so fine. And I think it was because she was distracted by the food, in eating the food. She was a little bit frozen. She wasn't actually saying yes to me. She was saying me,

Warwick ([00:24:38](#)):

So she didn't actually give you permission. Right. He's thought she gave you permission, but she was a little bit distracted by the food.

Elsa ([00:24:45](#)):

Yep. And by being distracted, the food, she was in a free state. And when she thought about it overnight, she thought actually, you know, I think my answers now not. Yes.

Warwick ([00:24:54](#)):

Well, and, and, and if you guys are listening to this stuff, so H w well, let's back up a bit. How long since you got her, was, did it take to the first time you got on? Cause this is, this is so important here.

Elsa ([00:25:07](#)):

It was three months, three months of spending time with her on the ground. And about three months in, I thought she was ready for me to sit on her.

Warwick ([00:25:16](#)):

Okay. So he goes, so Elsa has spent three months getting to the point where she can get on, got on once and then spend another three months getting the second time that you got on.

Elsa ([00:25:28](#)):

Yes. So the second time I got on with six months into the project, three months after the first time.

Warwick ([00:25:33](#)):

So this is cool because, because I always tell people that getting the, the first things right, is the hard part, all the, the big, hard stuff, the stuff that people think, Oh my goodness, that's gotta be so difficult to do. Usually that's really simple. If you get the first bit right now, I know that at some point in time, in this 12 months, you've got to where you could ride her around bareback and bride list. Any you wanted to go and you think I've got 12 months. It took me three months to get on it for the first time. You've got to be able to ignore that timeline. If you're going to spend another three months getting on it for the second time. Cause, but if you think I'm, we'll get to what happened in the end. But so you're on this plateau for three months, from month to month six,

Elsa ([00:26:21](#)):

Where most of the crying happened. Yes.

Warwick ([00:26:24](#)):

And that's the way most people would give up, change their plan, do something different. Think this is not gonna work. And you know, I I like to talk about a book called mastery by George Leonard. Have you ever written mastery by George? I love it. And he talks about being on the plateau when you you've got to fall in love the plateau. Cause you spent most of your time on the plateau. And he said, when you're on the plateau, you're doing karma yoga and karma. Yoga is the, is applying yourself to a task with no thought as to the outcome of that task. And so you could ignore that 12 month deadline the whole time during that three months, I can imagine. Yeah,

Elsa ([00:27:05](#)):

Actually, no, the 12 month deadline was the most helpful thing for me because it gave me an out, I had to stay on that plateau until I got to the 12 month deadline. And then I had permission to change the plan. And that gave me a huge amount of comfort. Wow. I am going to sit here on this plateau feeling like I am making no progress and it's not forever. It's only until I get to August, 2013. I think it was.

Warwick ([00:27:38](#)):

Wow. Okay. So you do get three months to get on the first time it took you three months from the first time to get on the second time, then what happened?

Elsa ([00:27:48](#)):

And from there it started, you know, it was a little bit like a snowball rolling downhill from that point on, it was once we got that part, right. It built pretty consecutively. Now she came in from the wild pregnant. So there was a period of time where I realized that carrying that baby, she had a very, very active, full, so I'd be riding around and the foal would be kicking and moving around in her and literally making her stagger two steps to the left or three steps to the right. And she, her whole body was so preoccupied with trying to keep her balanced, both with my weight on her back and the foal moving around so much that I did stop riding her for a small amount of time before that foal was born. So we had a little break in there.

Warwick ([00:28:37](#)):

You didn't know she was pregnant when you go to digit.

Elsa ([00:28:40](#)):

I know that with most Mustang marriage, there's like a 90% chance they're going to be pregnant. But it was a surprise. I didn't really know.

Warwick ([00:28:48](#)):

Yep. And have through that 12 months was the fall bone.

Elsa ([00:28:53](#)):

The foal was born in may. I got her in August. So September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, may. So nine months in that foal was born.

Warwick ([00:29:04](#)):

So then the last three months of it was with the follow decide.

Elsa ([00:29:07](#)):

Yes. Yep. And that was really interesting. Cause I didn't know if her maternal instincts were going to take over if she was still going to be interested in doing anything with me or if we were going to be right back to the beginning. Once the baby was on the ground she is actually probably one of the best mothers I have ever seen in my life. She mothered you to flee in a very gentle freeway with her full, but not over protective, not under attentive. But the interesting thing to me was she was incredibly defensive with the other horses. The other horses were not allowed anywhere, her full. And she was incredibly generous with people. I would bring a group of seven or eight children into the paddock and she would bring her full over and she would push him right into the middle of the seven or eight children and introduce him to everybody. And she would do it day after day after day. This is my fault. Why don't you interact with him?

Warwick ([00:29:59](#)):

Wow. But not the other horses,

Elsa ([00:30:02](#)):

The other horses.

Warwick ([00:30:04](#)):

That's crazy. How old was she when you go to out of the wall? She's four. Just four. Okay. Yeah. So she's possibly had falls before that.

Elsa ([00:30:13](#)):

Yeah, my guess is she had a full before that that was killed because she clearly, you know, she looked like America had fold before, but she had no full on her side when I got her.

Warwick ([00:30:23](#)):

Right. Wow. And when you, so you were saying you were riding around, she's pregnant and she's staggering here. And then let's give the people, give the listeners some sort of an ID. You're not riding her around the round pen. You're riding her in the woods, ya

Elsa ([00:30:38](#)):

In the woods, in the fields. We didn't do any writing in the round pen once we were allowed out of it or when we were in the round pen, the gate was always open to go out into the woods as well. She got a huge amount of choice about where we went, but she and I developed a system where I would decide sometimes and she would decide sometimes. And she was really actually her preference was to let me decide. She preferred to let me give her directions, which was lovely for me, but there had to be some back and forth where I would say, okay, it's your turn? Where would you like to go? Do you want to go closer to the other horses? Do you want to go farther away? That's the motivational piece that made it okay for her to have me as a writer, I think.

Warwick ([00:31:27](#)):

Wow. And so in, in the, in the, in the end of the whole thing, you, you get to the end of the 12 months and have, have you accomplished your goal?

Elsa ([00:31:40](#)):

Above and beyond, I really was blown away by how much she wanted to do with me. It was amazing. And then when the 12 months were over, I had this idea for a grand finale that I never thought I would get to. And that was to go to the beach with her and the full. And we have a place called long beach in Washington, which is just miles and miles and miles of empty beach. And I have a friend who has a cabin near the beach so that you can ride to the beach. So I rented the cabin and we took a whole bunch of horses down to long beach Washington. And we spent a week there and we filmed the end of the movie on the beach, which never in my wildest dreams. Did I actually think we would accomplish

Warwick ([00:32:22](#)):

Yeah. That, that scene with you riding her on the beach with the foal, that aside is pretty amazing.

Elsa ([00:32:29](#)):

It is, you know, it's one of those things where I set my goals really high and never in my wildest dreams, did I think I would actually get there. I just thought I would get interesting along the way. And that whole experience just sort of surpassed every expectation I had ever set. Every dream I set, it was a little bit better than what I thought it was going to be.

Warwick ([00:32:50](#)):

So I've kind of got the timeline of, of linear time as in days, months, one year. What about, let's break it down. What about each day? How long did you spend with her each day?

Elsa ([00:33:03](#)):

I generally would spend two to three hours with her every morning and two to three hours with her every evening. So roughly four to six hours a day. But I was working in the city on the weekends, so it was only five days a week, five days a week. I would be on the Island with her. And then two days a week I would leave my mother to take care of her and the rest of the herd. And I would drive to the city to teach for two days and then come back again.

Warwick ([00:33:30](#)):

And what were you teaching at the time?

Elsa ([00:33:32](#)):

I was still teaching natural horsemanship. So I was still teaching people how to put horses in trailers and you know, how to get them to go where they wanted them to go. And I really thought that I was going to end up making this beautiful story. That would be fun for people to watch and they would go, Oh, isn't that sweet? And then they would go on with their lives and they would still want to do all sorts of new entrepreneur, normal horsemanship. I had no idea how many people would want to learn what I actually did with this horse.

Warwick ([00:34:01](#)):

But what about you? Did you think you were going to do this thing and then just go back to your normal?

Elsa ([00:34:07](#)):

I did. I thought, I thought this would be a grand fun, unique experiment and that it would be over and it would be too slow and too time intensive and nobody would ever want to do it. It would just be, you know, someone had to walk on the moon because no one had ever walked on the moon before someone had to train a wild horse without any tools or motivators because nobody had done it before. Not because it would ever be done again. It turns out I was really wrong and everything that I did with me or not, I teach every day now and people, you like to use it usually in combination with the tool work that they do the other training methods. But what I find is the things that I had to do with me or not. If you take half an hour or an hour to do those things, your feel and your timing as a human being around horses gets so much better when you leave that door open for them to say yes or no. And you learn how to ask the questions that get yes answers, even though the door is open for the no answer, you learn how to read a horse so much better. And that's what I do every day. Now. That's what I teach.

Warwick ([00:35:24](#)):

Yeah. It's pretty fascinating. You know, I I'm, you know, I'm relatively out there in the social media world. And so, you know, I see a lot of different things and a lot times I'll see someone doing something that's a out of the ordinary or that I'm not aware of. And I'll take a bit of a look at it and I'll think, nah, I'm familiar, but I'm always, I'm always open to be surprised in a few guys listening. I had you know, I'd seen Elsa stuff in social media, I'd done a little bit of work and I was still on the fence about whether this lady is completely nuts or not. You know, like I don't, it might maybe it'll work if you've got eight hours a day and 12 months here, it's worked. I've seen the movie. Okay. Yeah, it works. But you know, that's not terribly practical at all.

Warwick ([00:36:22](#)):

So last year I'm presenting at a host expo in New Zealand called equitize, which are not, I think it was the fifth year of gone. And my favorite horse expo, mini horse expo in the world. It's a fun time and Ellis is going to be so I'm so excited, never met Elsa. So I'm, so I talked to her on zoom calls and stuff, but I hadn't met her. And I was so excited to meet her in person, but I was really so excited to, to watch her and not, not that I wanted to see her fail or succeed. I just want, I was interested to, to watch this stuff and see what, if there's anything I could maybe use, you know, can I steal this and not spend eight hours a day in the field? So I go over to what you know, at, at that host expo, I think they've got us doing like two or three demos a day.

Warwick ([00:37:12](#)):

So you're kind of busy. And I wasn't going to, a lot of times we clashed times clash. So I couldn't watch also things, but I got to go watch. I think two of them. And the first session I went over to watch, I'm sitting there and I'm watching. And there was a lady sitting in front of me in the stands. She was one seat down and one seat over. And I'd done a clinic the week before in a Topo in New Zealand. And she'd been a spectator there. And as I sat down, she turned and goes, Hey, and I'm like, hi, how are you? You know, I didn't meet her at the clinic. So I didn't know her name, but it's, it's a familiar face she's sitting there. And about 15 minutes into this whole thing, watch an Elsa with this horse. I've leached reached down and tapped this lady on the shoulder and she's turned around. And I said, I just realized, I don't know anything about horses.

Warwick ([00:38:04](#)):

I hadn't there. It was that, that was that eye opening. I was just like, I was just completely blown away. And that was the first horse that I watched with. And the second horse I watched her with was in my clinic the week before, and was a very, very odd horse. A lot of times I'll go, yes, what we should do with this horse is, but this horse was like, Oh, cool. You know, this horse was kind of anxious down, head weed, you know, like there wasn't one horse, it was about 15 horses in one. And a lot of times if a horse, you know, once you figure out what's going on, you can go, okay. I think we can work with this horse in this way. Cause I understand what's going on this horse. I, I really didn't understand where it count what it is.

Warwick ([00:38:54](#)):

Obviously, some really weird traumas going on this horse life. And it was probably going to be a rather sensitive sort of a horse in the first place. And so the second session I got to watch Elsa, she's working with this horse and I'm like, well, it has to be interesting. And it was, so it was crazy. This horse went through every emotional horse can have an Elsa doesn't and also doesn't ask anything of him. She just moved, positioned, dissolve, just BS Elfa and this horse at one point in time, lay down and rolled and

rolled and rolled and then it got up and then it would Ray and Ray and Ray, I just would stand on its hind legs. And this is how crazy out there Elser is. This horse is raring up. It's in a, it's in a square pan that has like six foot panels and it's probably 70 feet square, maybe, maybe 80 feet square, something like that.

Warwick ([00:39:49](#)):

And so there's not a lot of room, but this was way IRAP. And pretty soon Elsa starts climbing up on the fence and she says, he's telling us that he needs to rare up and see what's going on, but I'm just going to do it for him. And so instead of him raring up that was, would climb up on the fence before he ran up and he stopped around up. And, and, and later on, I said to Elsa said, so do you do that with all horses that rear up? And I was just like, I've never done that before. And right then I knew it was in the presence of pure genius. Like it was, yeah, it was so amazing what she knew what you did there and, and the learning, I think they're learning I got out of that was there was like a lot of things I got out of it, but the learning I got out of it was I trust whatever she says. Wow.

Elsa ([00:40:52](#)):

You know, I think that maybe that's because I trust what the horses say. And the it's really a moment to moment thing of saying, what is this horse presenting to me? And how do I find harmony with that? Or how do I compliment it? Or how do I adjust myself around that horse until there is the possibility of harmony? And if there isn't the possibility of harmony, I don't know what that horse is saying yet. And I'm going to have to keep working on it until I do figure out what the horse is saying. So hopefully that's what gives you confidence to understand, you know what I'm saying to all the people, because I'm trying to understand what the horse is saying to us.

Warwick ([00:41:32](#)):

Yeah. I'd say that too. But you know, like I'm always looking for things I can, I can add to, to what I do, but you gotta pick through like, Oh, that is some stuff I would never do. And I bet that Pete works, but no, I wouldn't do all that. It was like, okay, what if it also says that I could, I could eat anything else that does, I could fit in with what I do. And so you just mentioned harmony a minute ago and we're going to get into you use a lot of really amazing terms with, with, with really deep meanings behind them. But I'm going to get into some of the questions that I ask all my podcast, guests. And if anybody hasn't listened to my podcast, before I ask, I send the guests a list of about 20 questions and they get to choose which ones they would like me to ask. And so I'm going to ask Elsa some of her, the questions she said, she'd like ask. And the reason I'm going to do that is because I think some of your answers are gonna provide more segue and it's going to be a segue into some of the stuff we're just talking about. So I think the first question was, if you could spread a message across the world, one that people would listen to, what would that message say?

Elsa ([00:42:46](#)):

You know, I think this also bridged into the favorite quote ideas.

Warwick ([00:42:50](#)):

Oh, well, sorry, sorry. I left that bit off the end. Cause I didn't think that's what it was, but yeah. So the question is if we could spend a message across the world, one that people would listen to, what would that message say? Or your favorite quote?

Elsa ([00:43:02](#)):

And I feel like the two are really intertwined for me. So there's a quote that I have at the top of my blog that is by Mary Oliver and Mary Oliver says instructions for living a life, pay attention, be astonished, tell about it. And this has been really profound for me because there are a lot of times when I don't know what to do when I don't know where I'm going next, when I don't know how to answer a question. And I feel like I'm not alone in that. That's, that's a lot of us as humanity. And you know, this simple quote that Mary Oliver has is really profoundly helped me. And I think could profoundly help a lot of people. And that's that when we don't know what to do, pay attention, just really pay attention. Notice the things that are astonishing, because if you pay enough attention, there are astonishing things happening all the time. And then tell about it, talk about it. And sometimes I'm talking about it with the horse I'm working with. Sometimes I'm talking about it with the people I'm interacting with, but that is for me a really key stone piece, pay attention, find the astonishing pieces and talk about those.

Warwick ([00:44:23](#)):

Wow. That's profound. I think I'll ask, keep asking questions, but I got, I got a question I want to ask you, but it may get answered in the rest of this stuff. So the second question that Elsa has said, she'd like me to know, I ask her is what is the most worthwhile thing that you've put your time into? I've got a fair idea. What this one is actually something that you have done that changed the course of your life. Whoa. Okay. So is it anything other than Taming Wild?

Elsa ([00:44:52](#)):

No, it's the first Taming Wild movie. It really is. It was not something I ever thought I would do. And if I did, I thought it would be really old and you know, not have anything else to do with my time. The fact that I did it and I did it now. And the fact that it has been so successful both in the project, but then also in the sharing of the project, I have been able to share it successfully with so many people and have it be life changing for them as well. I am perpetually astonished by that.

Warwick ([00:45:27](#)):

You know what? I'm going to ask my question now in Keisha, as it's not a segue into it. So you just said you've had it, you know, help people and it's, it's been life changing for them. And, and what I've found with with what I do with the horses, a lot of times, all the time, most of the time, people have to change who they are for it to work. They have to change their perceptions about, you know, they have to change that, to change the perceptions about this self. They have to change. You know, if you, if they're, you know, they just have to, in order to do the work with the horse, you have to change a lot about yourself and that's on the level on that. Not the crazy level you're at. And so I imagine it would be lifetime because the thing that you did, I mean, the thing that people have a hard time doing in this society is being still just the ability to do nothing.

Warwick ([00:46:29](#)):

We're all busy, busy, busy, busy, busy, and that for the most part, sometimes we've got to make living, but sometimes we're busy because we just can't sit still and be with ourselves because stuff comes up that we're where we're hiding away from. And so, you know, Brunei Brown calls it, numbing behavior. You just, you, you you're doing stuff so that you don't have to be stealing and, and be with yourself. And like I've done, I've done a few trips to a float tank. You know, the float tank is sensory deprivation tank. And most people, a lot of people can't do it because it's just you. So if anybody listening doesn't know what a float tank is. It's a pod, an egg shaped pod that is filled with water. That's got, and it's not very much longer than your body or wider than your body and that much.

Warwick ([00:47:17](#)):

And it's that much water has about 1500 pounds of Epsom salts dissolved units. So it's very, very buoyant. The water is heated at the same temperature as the human body. The air in the room is heated at the same temperature as your human body. You get in, you close the lid. And so you cannot feel the water supporting you. You can't feel the water, you can't feel the air and there's no light and there's no sounds. There's just you and your mind. And that sends some people crazy. So in order for you to do what you did in that year, most people couldn't have done that. So you must have been at, at what, what, what comes before that, like you didn't learn to be that present on that still right there. And then, because it'd be like a 12 month sensory deprivation tank, you would lose your freaking mind. And so is there a, is there a story behind that? Like how did you personally forget come up with the idea of what you wanted to do? How did you actually mentally and physically do that? I mean, what, what's your background, you know, did you live in Tibet, in a monastery for six years or something around that?

Elsa ([00:48:25](#)):

No, not at all. And I actually don't consider myself that good at being work. I feel like I have found a side door into it and that is in paying attention. Most people can't just be because their stress goes up without something for their mind to chew on. And specifically when there is not a busy-ness the mind starts to chew on things that are stressful problems that are unsolvable. And what I trained myself to do was to pay attention so closely that I was looking for the solvable problems. I was looking for the questions that could be answered. And if I couldn't find the questions that could be answered, I have had to break it down again and pay more attention. What tiny details led me to the questions that I could answer, the problems I could solve. And so, in fact, I was very, very busy inside my mind. I was not just being, I'm terrible at just being, I'm not one of those people that could go in a sensory deprivation tank. I'm impressed. You can. And I think it's wonderful and I think it's amazing, but it's not my strong suit. So my side door into being is to pay such deep attention that my mind is busy in ways that lower stress instead of raising stress. And that's in finding the solvable problems,

Warwick ([00:50:02](#)):

It's kind of like the Buddhists would have you stare at a Lotus flower and you're just looking at the flower and you you're, you're observing the flower and you're looking at all the different, you know, the tiniest little parts of the player, like really get, you know, looking at that. And it's, you're just looking at a horse like that.

Elsa ([00:50:23](#)):

Yes, that's all it is. I'm looking at a horse like that. And so it's, it's the details and putting the details together in a puzzle. That makes sense. That causes me to do something that looks very much like being, but is actually very busy.

Warwick ([00:50:40](#)):

Wow. Okay. That's a question I really wanted to answer. So I'm going to ask you this next question. And these questions were borrowed from Tim Ferriss's book, game of mentors. And so he interviewed all sorts of people that do all sorts of interesting things. And this next question is what advice would you give people who are about to enter your occupation? And in parentheses, it says this one may be difficult. As many, as many of us have occupations that are far from normal cause teams not interviewing a teacher or a, you know, like people that just have a job. These are these people who are

outside the box, you about as outside the box. So what advice would you give people who are about to enter your occupation? And maybe even if you could describe what the hell your occupation is?

Elsa ([00:51:34](#)):

So my, my occupation is to train horses and people with the smallest, most subtle motivators possible working more with intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation. How many different things can we enjoy with horses that horses will voluntarily partake in? How do you get a job like mine? Honestly, you know, I was a horse trainer for a long time. I studied a lot of different methods and I remember meeting my first traveling clinician. It was actually when the Murdoch, when Murdoch went all over the world all the time. And I remember I was probably about 15 at the time. And I said, Wendy, I want your job. How do I get your job? And she laughed. And then we moved on from that. But the thing that I would say to anybody who wants to go into this profession of teaching people or teaching people in horses is immerse yourself.

Elsa ([00:52:34](#)):

There is no replacement for time, invest it, invest your time in every way, in every place in every variety you can learn from everyone, you can, but it's mostly about showing up, putting in the time, how many billions of hours do you need to watch a horse heard before, you know, what comes next? How many billions of hours do you need to watch a clinician teach before? You know what they're going to say next, how many millions of hours do you need to watch a student before? You know, which is the one key piece that's going to help them feel that harmony and connection with their horse. And there is no replacement for that time. I joke all the time that I will be really good at this one. I'm about 90 years old. And I apologize to all of you for right now while I'm still figuring it, but we are always still figuring it out. And then if you want to go into this, you just got to put in the time.

Warwick ([00:53:32](#)):

Do you think it would be easier for someone to learn what you do? Like B was a Sinclair. If they had no experience with horses at all, and they only learned your stuff, or if they came to it like you did, and they've, they know how to train a horse, you know, you know how to do positive reinforcement, you know, to do negative reinforcement, you know how to do a little, you know, how to do a lot, you know, all the different ranges of, of you know, like you talk about all the different types of leadership, you know, that from passive to assertive or whatever you call it, would it be easier? I don't know. What do you think?

Elsa ([00:54:16](#)):

I honestly think that there's a bunch of different pieces of what I do and the physical stuff that I do with a horse actually I think is easiest learned by singers and dancers. People who have professionals training in singing and dancing and know how to use their body physically. Actually a lot of professional athletes do as well. And horses respond to that, literally knowing how to move your body, when to move your body, when to be still and when to be active the, the art of knowing how to move your body away from a horse is very translatable to knowing how to use it with a worse when it comes to teaching other people, honestly the best way to learn that is to not be very good at it yourself, because I find that that saying, you know, those who can't do teach is actually very apt because those of us who have really struggled know how to break it down for someone else, if it's too easy for you, you don't know how to explain it to somebody else.

Warwick ([00:55:19](#)):

Yeah. So I think the best, the best people at what they do in like say horse trainers in the world don't teach it because they, they couldn't tell you what they do, that they don't know how they do it. They just do it. Yeah.

Elsa ([00:55:30](#)):

And now I will say that the one exception to that I think work is teachers who have encountered particularly difficult courses. So if you get someone who's very, very good at what they do. And then they meet a couple of forces that just below everything they know out of the water and they have to slow down and learn it the hard way. That's often how they become good teachers by finding a horse that is difficult to enough that they aren't good at it for a little while.

Warwick ([00:55:57](#)):

Do you find that? Cause this happens to me all the time. Do you find that teaching deepens your understanding of what you already know? Like, like quantifying what you are doing to people who are watching you like, Oh, I'll be doing a clinic and I'll, I will explain something in a way that I've never even thought I get a deeper meaning. Like, Oh shit, I kind of, it's kind of like the movie, the sixth sense with Bruce Willis where you realize he's dead, you think I've known that all along, but I didn't know. I knew that. Do you find that

Elsa ([00:56:28](#)):

All the time I will be teaching? There will be stuff that comes out of my mouth and I'll go, Oh, that's good. I should try that. When I get home, I bet that would really work with Cleo. And it's not that I haven't been doing it, that I've been doing it subconsciously. And when I go to teach it, it comes into my conscious and when it becomes into my conscious state, I can do it better than when it was subconscious.

Warwick ([00:56:51](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. I've definitely found that too. Okay. So let's get that. Let's try another question. What, Oh, what quality do you admire in a person?

Elsa ([00:57:04](#)):

You know, this is something I've thought about a lot and the quality that I most admire in people and actually courses too, is the ability to ask the second question. So the first question is the problem that's right in front of you. This is the thing I need to solve. How do I solve it? The second question is how do we all feel about that tomorrow? The way I solved this problem? How does that in fact affect or impact the relationship tomorrow? And I think everything we do has a second question. And when you don't ask the second question, you set yourself up for difficulty down the line. So the thing that I most admire in people is when they can say yes, I can see the solution to this problem, but what does that solution then give me tomorrow. What's my second question. How do I solve that problem? Do I even want to solve that problem or do I want to find a different solution today?

Warwick ([00:58:07](#)):

Very cool. Well, I'm just thinking about do you know who Kristen Tucker is? Okay. You and you, if you haven't listened to the podcast with him yet, you gotta listen to it, but you and him are brothers from

another mother, like completely think about things differently, but just are on a, just look at things on a level that most people I've ever met. Don't so I'm going to ask you one more question here, because this one's going to have this, this is going to have all the answers in it. Oh, this is all the Elsa stuff here. What do you think it means to be a leader and a follower? And what does leadership followership or just leadership, if you wanna do it that way, look like to you.

Elsa ([00:58:58](#)):

So this is most of what I teach every day as well. I have a lot of theories about leadership, but very, very simply I believe a leader is anyone that makes the decision that others agree to. So any decision you make, if there is somebody who yes, to that decision, you are then a leader. I also think leadership has a huge ability to switch back and forth and actually is healthiest when it does. Sometimes I'm the leader. Sometimes you're the leader. Sometimes the horse is the leader and the more fluidity leadership has usually the healthier relationship is. But there are different types of leadership and the most common type of leadership is the one everyone talks about, which is dominant leadership. And I believe dominant leadership is where you are willing to put pressure on someone that makes them uncomfortable until they agree with you.

Elsa ([01:00:00](#)):

And with horses, this includes a food reward training with you. Don't slice it thin enough if you don't make those steps small enough, there's a huge amount of discomfort. The horse feels from that food being withheld. And so any discomfort that comes before the yes, answer is your dominant leadership. I make a decision. You're going to say yes, but you're going to feel some discomfort on the way below that a step is insistent leadership, which is where I'm going to make a decision. And there's sort of a hesitancy, I've got to kind of talk you into it. You're not super keen on it, but you're not super uncomfortable about it either. That's what I call insistent leadership sliding down. The spectrum is assertive leadership. Assertive leadership is what I think everyone wants, which is where I make a decision and the horses. Yes, me too.

Elsa ([01:00:50](#)):

I want to do that. That's what everybody's aiming for. And it's great the other way round too, when the horse makes a decision and we go, yes, I want to do that. You know, my favorite example is when I'm swimming in a Lake or upon, cause my horses and my horses say, I want to take you for a swim and I go, great. I'm going to hang onto your main and isn't this going to be fun. Any sort of a decision where someone decides to do something and the other one says, yes, is your sort of leadership. That's the goal. That's what we all want, but you earn it, you earn it. It doesn't just get delivered to you. And you earn it by either making dominant decisions that are good ones. Like I'm gonna make you uncomfortable to say yes, but ultimately you're going to be really happy.

Elsa ([01:01:34](#)):

You said, yes, we do enough of those. We get to a place where you're going to say yes, right away. That's where most horse training lives in that upper end of the spectrum. The lower end of the spectrum is where I explore. And I think the very best horse trainers use it with, don't talk about it. And that is passive and supportive leadership. So passive leadership is the most subtle form. And that's basically where I'm only going to move my own body. I'm not only gonna make decisions for me, not for anyone else. And I'm going to decide whether I stand close to the horse or far away from the horse and the left side of the right side. And the horse is going to say yes, by being in harmony with my decision, okay.

Supportive leadership is where I move. And as I move, the horse is going to say yes, by being in harmony with my movement, either by matching me or by standing still and allowing me to move around them, they're going to say no, by going into fight or flight bumping into me or running away.

Elsa ([01:02:36](#)):

So the ability to have a horse say yes to your own personal choices is something we don't study very much, but I watch the very best horse trainers do it all the time. And so that is the side of the spectrum that I teach because we all want assertive where I say to the horse, I think we should both go chase cows and the horses. Yes, me too. But you have to earn it and you either earn it through the dominant side or you earn it through the passive and supportive side. Or if you're really brilliant horse trainer, you earn it from both sides at once.

Warwick ([01:03:13](#)):

Wow. I knew there was gonna be. I knew that I was gonna be a good thing, you know? I just, I learned so much just watching you in New Zealand last year. And one of the things I really loved was when the host does something you don't want, you just, what's the term you use. I just don't want to not indulge in that behavior. I don't want to engage in that behavior. Is that how you put that?

Elsa ([01:03:38](#)):

Yup. So when they do something I don't want, I make a counter offer. I don't engage in their behavior, but I just keep walking. I keep walking around the space. I keep looking for our next place of harmony. It's not interesting to me how they are misbehaving. I'm just not going to agree with it.

Warwick ([01:03:55](#)):

You just kind of, yeah. You just ignore all that stuff. You know? There was a whole, one of those horses I watched last year was did this thing. That was so interesting. There's so else's in this, you know, square pan with this horse. And she keeps saying, this horse wants me to control. It was a control the horse or help the horse. Which one of those terms did you use

Elsa ([01:04:17](#)):

A long time ago? I can't remember, but

Warwick ([01:04:19](#)):

Okay. Will tell the story and you'll be able to tell which one it was, but Ellis is telling everybody this horse is trying to get me to control it. And this horse does not look like it wants anything to do with Elsa. And so I'm thinking right about now I'm thinking this lady is crazy, cause this might have been the first course I watched you with. And so this pen that's it's you know, it's panels that are pinned together and it's, it's a, the panels are a little bit, you know, where they pinned together. There's a gap in the middle. And when the sound guy has strung up the wires for the speakers, instead of zip, tying them on the outside is zip tied them on the inside. And so there's zip tied to the inside rails, tight where no one can touch them.

Warwick ([01:05:00](#)):

But the little loop in between each panel, there's a little bit of the electrical code there. And this whole Elsa kept saying, he wants me to control him. He wants me to control and I'm thinking, I don't think he

wants to control him. And then these holes FA also would not indulge him in that. And then this horse went over and he started nibbling on that electrical, the speaker wire. And Health's actually had to come over and do something physical to the horse, which was just probably push his nose away with like three ounces of pressure. And also that's, that's big pressure. And as soon as you did that, this horse was like, I know how to get you to, to push me around. And, and, and right then I realized, Holy cow, she was right. All along. This horse is actually wanting her to take control. And she also is going, I'm not gonna take control. And he found the one thing to do to make you do it. Remember that story? I do. I remember it was it controlled the word or

Elsa ([01:06:00](#)):

I used to work dominance addicted. Of course, I find this in many, many, many horses that they are so accustomed to humans, making decisions for them, that when humans do not make decisions for them, they become very, very stressed. They need to be told what to do.

Warwick ([01:06:18](#)):

Yeah. That's what was going on. So Elsa was saying this horse needs to be controlled or told what to do is he's wanting me to tell him what to do. That's what I think that's why you put it. And I'm thinking, I don't see it. I don't see it. And I didn't see it. And all the behaviors he was throwing out. I, the way I looked at him was like, no, he's just whatever. I forget what I thought he was doing. But you were saying, he, the reason he's doing this particular thing is trying to get me to control him. And I'm not going to, I'm not going to tell him what to do. And I was not getting it until he did that. And as soon as you actually controlled him, he was like, ah, this is the thing I want to do. Cause I want you to control me. And that, for me, that was mind blowing right there. That was like a six, not a sixth sense moment. It's one of those things like once you see that you can't unsee that.

Elsa ([01:07:06](#)):

Yep. And it happens all the time in clinics, horses come and they say, what is the one thing that will get you to push me around? And once they find it, they'll do that one thing over and over again, whether it's chewing on the fence or playing with the electrical cord or what's the one thing that's off limits. And once I find the one thing that's off limits, then you will step in and tell me what to do with my body. You'll tell me to move left or you'll tell me to move, right. Or you tell me to back up and that's comforting and they will keep pushing that button to get the comfort that they are familiar with. And it's really interesting.

Warwick ([01:07:43](#)):

Yeah. That one was definitely an eye opener for me. So you talked before about harmony and you talk a lot about harmony and maybe you could explain a bit about that. So from the little bit that I grasp harmony, you go into harmony with them when you rewarding them for yeah, go ahead.

Elsa ([01:08:08](#)):

No, so I'm harmony. I also call it flow the horse. This is my primary system. Now it worked really well with Mirena. My first horse that I did the movie with, and I've since learned, there is a timing problem with harmony. And that is that when stress goes up for a horse, they don't want harmony. They want action that is going to solve the problem. And so if you try and offer them harmony while their stress is rising, they feel like you do not understand them. You do not know how to read them. You are not there for them. And so they want either you to make a decision for their body or make it like, make some

decision solve, this stress that I'm feeling. And so the really interesting thing about harmony is it's only a reward. If you offer it at the right time, if you offer harmony at the wrong time, the horse is going to have to make a counter offer and not be in harmony with you because they don't feel like their stress is low enough. That harmony feels good. Harmony only feels good when the stress is low enough that it's reasonable. And this is something that I've really had to explore a lot more, you know, as I filmed the second movie and as I'm working on the third movie, now this idea that there is a time and a place for harmony, and it's the most beautiful, valuable reward or reinforcement for a horse if you offer it at the right times.

Warwick ([01:09:44](#)):

Wow. So you just mentioned the second movie and you're talking about the third movie, which I had no idea about. Let's go back to the first one. So Taming Wild, where can people see that?

Elsa ([01:09:53](#)):

So the easiest way to track it down is through my website on Taming Wilds.com. The, all the movies are listed there. It's available on Vimeo, on demand, and it's also available on DVD. If you want me to send you a copy

Warwick ([01:10:08](#)):

And it's available on DVD. And tell me about the back cover of the DVD is a great, is a great story about the bank. So what picture is on the back cover of the DW Davidson?

Elsa ([01:10:18](#)):

So on the back cover of the DVD is a picture of me crouched down on the beach and Mirena at a full Gallop around me and circles around Jewish. And she's running circles around me. You can even tell she's quite energized. And there's an amazing story that goes with that. After I finished filming the movie, I actually was broke. I had no money and I was raising a child and I needed to go back to work full time. So all the footage from the movie actually went on the shelf for several years. It was a four year project from the beginning of filming to the end of editing because I had to put it away for awhile. So several years after we filmed the movie we had done a Kickstarter. We had raised money, we were ready to edit. Actually we had edited and we were taking pictures for all of the promotion of the movie.

Elsa ([01:11:08](#)):

And we've gone back to the same beach and Mariana and I were doing all of photographs in the ocean. I was there, no bridal, no saddle, no rope, no nothing. I was just standing next to me are now, and we're knee deep in the waves. And it's one of those things where the waves are coming in and it's beautiful and we're taking pictures and this rogue wave comes in and it's a big one and it crashes over the top of Mirena. And I, so we're both soaking wet. We're just, you know, seawater from head to toe. And the amazing thing to me is Mirena. Instead of panicking, she turned to me and she asked me if we could get out of the water and she, and I have a pretty good communication system, but she touched me and she said, we need to go. It's not safe in here.

Elsa ([01:11:52](#)):

And I really was quite cocky as a human being. And I said, no, no, no, we're fine. We're fine. Stay in the ocean with me. It was just one way. We're fine. And she reached out to me again. She said, no, no, no,

we got to go Elsa. And I said, no, no, no, no. We've got to stay. We're staying. We're going to keep taking pictures. It's great. We're all wet, but it's okay. And she reached out to me a third time and she said, no, we really have to go. And I was stupid enough to say no, no, stay in the water with me. And she said, I'm so sorry. If you can't come with me, I have to go by myself. And at that point she took off and there's my horse galloping down a completely empty beach with wilderness on one side and ocean on the other side. And she's disappearing as this little dot down the sand. And I'm thinking, have I lost my horse? Am I never going to see her again?

Warwick ([01:12:38](#)):

So tell us about this wilderness. She could actually go off the beach into the wilderness. And like, it's not like it's fenced or whatever. Like she could be gone forever. There's wild horses that live in there too. Isn't it?

Elsa ([01:12:50](#)):

Not too many. I know she would have a hard time in Washington Stein, but there are some, yeah. You know, it's possible. So yeah, she could disappear into the woods and I would never see her again. And you know, I stood there not knowing what to do. And she disappeared with this little dot down the beach. And then she turned around and she galloped back to me. And that picture on the back of the DVD was taken when I was crouched down. And she was winding her adrenaline down by galloping around me in circles. And my adrenaline was coming down to and I thought, wow, if you never let them run away, they never have a chance to run back.

Warwick ([01:13:28](#)):

So that picture was taken when she came back,

Elsa ([01:13:30](#)):

That that picture was taken when she came back

Warwick ([01:13:33](#)):

This special moment. So I've got a question for, you said when, when she reached out and, and with a nose and said, Hey, we need to get out of here. And the reason I'm asking this is because I've made it pretty, you know, kind of public that in the last few years I've been doing a lot of what you might call inner work, being a typical male. I learned to shut down my emotions earlier on in life. And I've spent the last three years doing all sorts of things, but there's this men's transformation of what was it called? Emotional resilience, a retreat. I went to kicked it all into geese. So now I have somatic stuff happening has never happened in my entire life. Okay. So while you've been talking to, I've been getting all these weird sensations, especially my solar plexus. I've never had solar plexus sensations, and I'm having getting all this funny feedback from you. But when, so when she reached out to GE to you to say, let's get out of the water, are you just reading her physically? Like, or is there a, is there an energetic you're getting like you know, like somatic sensations from her as well?

Elsa ([01:14:48](#)):

So I'm sure there are some addict sensations, but I actually like the physical application of using our human bodies to communicate. I like the clarity of it. And I believe that all of the somatic stuff is really great backup and reinforcements, but I like to reinforce and develop physical communications. It's very

clear. So I actually borrowed this from clicker trainers, the idea of the use of a target. When I hold out my hand and Mirena puts her nose against my knuckles. This is a target. And from our entire training, any time in the beginning, she did that by accident. I did something that was easier for her. It's just consistency. So now when she needs something to be easier, she reaches for my hand. It's very, very simple. I need something to be easier and it could be any variation of things, but something we're doing is too difficult. And it's very, very valuable for a horse to have an option to communicate that instead of having to go to fight or flight to communicate it.

Warwick ([01:15:54](#)):

Amazing. Good answer. And so then you filmed a second one, which was pure Evita.

Elsa ([01:16:03](#)):

Would it be that came from, you know, everybody asking me, so you did this with a horse that had a clean slate that was, you know, fresh out of the wild, had no bad experiences with humans. Could you do this sort of thing with a horse that had baggage that had abuse and, and, and a bad history. And I didn't really know the answer. I thought the answer was. Yes. And then the other thing people said is how would you do it faster? You know, if you wanted to use such a low motivation, how would you speed it up? Is there a way to speed it up? And so what I ended up doing is we rescued two horses out of the kill pen in Costa Rica. And we traveled a friend of mine, Andrea wadey and I, we traveled from the West coast to the East coast of Costa Rica ocean to ocean.

Elsa ([01:16:46](#)):

And we had a friend who had a really beautiful PAC mayor that led the way. So our two rescued geldings could follow the pretty matter across the country with very little pressure. And we put all of this body language practice into motion across the country. So we traveled for hours every day, but it was only a two week project. I mean, idea was to see what kind of transformational change can we have in the horses in just two weeks while crossing a country together. So the horse that Andrea got for me, I was in the U S still, and Andrew was buying the horses in Costa Rica. So they would have six weeks to get extra food and get fattened up. Before we did the journey, she bought a horse, she was bidding against the kill buyer and she, she won the bid and then the locals came over to her and they said, congratulations on your new horse.

Elsa ([01:17:39](#)):

And by the way, please never, ever, ever ride that horse. And so Andrea called me and she said, I'm so sorry, Elsa. I think I made a terrible mistake. I think I bought a horse. That's completely unrideable. And I said, no, no, that's fine. I don't need to ride it. I'm happy to walk across the country if I never ride. That's fine. The idea is the relationship with this horse, not whether I ride or not. And it was pretty phenomenal. The the relationship that developed between me and this horse across the country and what actually was possible in spite of his horrific, horrific past,

Warwick ([01:18:16](#)):

Did he have like a lot of scars and stuff that tell you a bit about his horrific past?

Elsa ([01:18:20](#)):

Yep. Yep. You know, I knew, I know he had been written cause he had scars from the saddle. He had scars across his, his word. The bridal had been, you know, all sorts of patches of white hair where, you know, stuff that obviously been rubbed back often grown back. And so the locals considered him quite dangerous, but he really was quite genuine with me. He didn't like people, he didn't want to be touched. He didn't want anybody near him, but he was willing to have a conversation. And over the course of that two weeks, that conversation grew until riding was just one of the things he was happy to do with me. You have to write him in two weeks. I did. I did.

Warwick ([01:18:58](#)):

That is so cool. You know, it's, it's funny, people say this horse is whatever, you know, this horse horses, bear, these horses, whatever. And for the most part, it's, that's just a reflection of the interactions they've had with people that have caused them to be that way. And this one sounds like he's a perfect example. Like they say, you never had this horse. He doesn't like people and he's just never been listened to. Yeah.

Elsa ([01:19:25](#)):

Yeah. And I got some things wrong. I mean, at one point I was trying to put on a Huff boot and he kicked me all the way across the road. And I ended up on the other side of the ditch and, you know, I picked myself up and dust myself off and said, sorry, bad timing. Let's try that again. So you know, it was, it was a really good adventure for me to realize that yes, you can speed it up. And movement is the way to do that. You know, being able to see lots of different things and experienced lots of different things is a way to speed it up. Obviously we had death put halters on those halter courses. We couldn't have the running off into the jungle. So they didn't wear halters across. But when we got to the East coast, we were able to take the halters off and ride them with nothing. And it was really an incredible sweet, condensed version of everything I've learned in the first movie.

Warwick ([01:20:13](#)):

And so that may be, is available on your website too? Yes, it is. Okay. So tell me about movie number three.

Elsa ([01:20:20](#)):

Okay. So new moving number three, we are in the middle of filming. I have bitten off way more than I can chew. It was supposed to be a one year project. I am thinking Murph five years, maybe, maybe three. We're two years in at this point. So moving number three was supposed to be a recreation of movie number one, but instead of a mayor this time we're doing with stallions and instead of one stallion, we've got two so that we have a compare and contrast. One of them is eight years old off the range was a herd leader. Very adults, very secure in himself. He knows himself really well, but clean slate didn't know people at all. The other one is a retard bucking horse. And I don't think he was a very good bucking horse because he was horrendously abused. The amount of, you know, remodeled broken bones and scars all over his body and adverse reactions. He has to people when I bought him, I bought him from the kill pen and I had to sign papers with the owner of the kill pen that he was selling him against better judgment. And this horse was dangerous. He had a history of attacking people. He's an eight year old stallion. He's about 16 hands, big, huge Palomino. And I was very cocky going into this. I thought, give me three months, three months, we'll turn it around. We'll get it going the right direction.

Elsa ([01:21:54](#)):

A year later, he touched me voluntarily for the first time we spent a year before that horse was willing to touch me. So if he has all the food, he wants all the space he wants. Does he need me? No. So we are going into your number two. Now I am now able to touch him over his entire body. I have to be very careful about putting him in with other horses cause he has a hair trigger and he's hurt more horses than I have ever seen any horse hurts. So he does a freeze response where he there's no one home and the other horses don't like it. So they poke at him and they poke at him one too many times and he explodes into a fit of rage. Like you've never seen with athleticism. You never knew he had, and he takes them all the way down to the ground.

Elsa ([01:22:50](#)):

So I have to be very careful who I put him with. I have to be very careful how I socialize him. I have to be very careful with how I am with him, but underneath all that he is the kindest, sweetest, gentlest horse you've ever met. So he's the really interesting part of the story. The other stallion is there as a contrast to him, but honestly the other stallion has gotten very little of my time because the one that was so difficult is taking most of my time and attention just to stay safe. And it's been really interesting

Warwick ([01:23:29](#)):

Then in together, lean together,

Elsa ([01:23:33](#)):

Say that again, work. I think I lost you

Warwick ([01:23:35](#)):

The two of them in together.

Elsa ([01:23:38](#)):

So the two stallions are in together when I'm there to supervise. Because when I am there, if I see the stress start to go up, I can ask them both to take a walk at this point. And if they walk a little bit and they move a little bit, they'll walk the stress off and they don't have to fight. If I am not there to encourage them to take a walk, the fight gets pretty brutal and I'm not willing to deal with the injuries that I have to doctor afterwards.

Warwick ([01:24:04](#)):

Right. Wow. And so you what, what do you, where do you want to go with that? Like, do you want to ride him bareback and brought us on the beach? Do you want to be able to get on him or do you just want to have him to where he's at least engaging with you?

Elsa ([01:24:23](#)):

So he is engaging with me quite well now. I feel like I, I, in this situation because they're both stallions, I need to get them to a point where I can put a halter on and lead them and trim their feet and do the basic things. Even if I trim their feet without the altar on, they need to have basic care things for me to feel like I have succeeded at all and wearing a halter and being led is one of those things because they are stallions. If they were to break through my fences and go visit my neighbors, breeding farm, someone needs to be able to put a halter on and take them home. So until then I don't feel like I succeeded at all. That's my first level of success is they need to be handleable so that they are safe. And

the wild ones certainly is res wonderful. He's very no nonsense. So he's, he's already there. The other one we're still working on. Would I like to be able to ride them? Yes, but only if it's something they will volunteer. If it's not something they want to volunteer, I'm willing to accept that. And I will find that out as we go.

Warwick ([01:25:33](#)):

Do you have a, do you have a working title for this movie?

Elsa ([01:25:37](#)):

Taming Wild evolution

Warwick ([01:25:41](#)):

Evolution really go well, you know, we've been talking to you for an hour and a half, so we probably should pull this up a bit, but I, but I, you know, that's a great name for that and that's a great way probably to finish up here evolution. I think you a part of and evolution in the horse human relationship, I don't know of anybody quite like you. And I mean that in the very best way possible, I'm quite, I don't know anybody quite like you, but I think, I think, I mean, I think you are going to help horses, like nobody always has, but I really think people that decide to follow your path with the horse, you know, you don't just come out of the womb being ready to do this. And I, I really think you're part of not just the evolution of horsemanship, but the evolution of the human consciousness. So I I, I congratulate you and what you're doing at my you on your journey. And I just want to thank you so much for joining us here on the podcast. I think this has been,

Elsa ([01:27:02](#)):

Thank you for inviting

Warwick ([01:27:04](#)):

Can, we can do this for like six hours.

Elsa ([01:27:06](#)):

We could, for anyone who is interested in the ongoing movie progress for this third movie, I have a Patrimon group Patrimon slash Taming Wild, and you know, for \$3 a month, you can see weekly updates every week. I post a little video of what's happening now with the stallions. So for people who, you know, can't wait for me to finish the movie. You can get updates as I go.

Warwick ([01:27:26](#)):

Awesome stuff. So if you want to find Elsa she's at [www dot taming, wild.com](http://www.tamingwild.com), that's correct. And Facebook page,

Elsa ([01:27:38](#)):

Facebook use Taming Wild movie and Elsa Sinclair. And I love any of you that are interested in this kind of thing. It's a little different from normal horse training. But what I found is that compliments course training of all different varieties.

Warwick ([01:27:54](#)):

This transcript was exported on Dec 13, 2020 - view latest version [here](#).

I know I would have to agree with that. That's what I found at New Zealand last. Jeez. So thank you so much for joining me here. And thanks everybody for listening and we'll catch you again, next time on another episode of the journey on podcast. Thanks for listening to the journey on podcast with work Schiller Warrick has over 650 full length training videos on his online video library, videos dot [inaudible] dot com. Be sure to follow Warrick on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, to see his latest training advice and insights.