

Speaker 1 ([00:00:12](#)):

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.

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

Welcome back to the journey on podcast. I'm your host Warwick Schiller. And today I have a special guest in Karen Rohlf. So Karen Rohlf's business is called dressage naturally. And today I'm going to have a chat with Karen about her journey from being a, uh, you know, full on competitive dressage rider to having an epiphany and maybe viewing the world, including horses, just a little different way than she had previously. Uh, I think it's more about getting back to her childhood and getting back to the love of horses and that that journey kind of resonates with me a little bit. So I'm very excited to have Karen here can podcast Karen Rohlf, welcome to the genuine podcast.

Karen Rohlf ([00:01:30](#)):

Thank you so much. I'm really happy to be here.

Warwick Schiller ([00:01:32](#)):

I'm glad you're here. You are one of those people that I've probably had more requests for you than, than anybody that I haven't had on the podcast before, or probably at least as many requests for you as anybody. Really. So, and, uh, you know, I've kind of been following you from a distance for quite a long time and am pretty amazed at your journey to where you got to and from, from whence you came. So do you want to tell us a little bit about, uh, first, thank you so much for joining me. You want to tell us a little bit about that journey? Cause I, I just find that whole thing. Fascinating. Yeah.

Karen Rohlf ([00:02:12](#)):

Well, I guess, I guess there's a many, many places I could start, but I, you know, I was back in New York, uh, minding my own business, being a perfectly normal dressage trainer. So I guess I'll start there and I'll probably end up rewinding a little bit at one point. Um, but I, you know, I had a ton of business. I was competing. I had really nice horses under me. Everything was going along fine. I had my mentor was there at the facility. It was her facility. So I mean, everything was going really great. And then I had a grand Prix horse. Well, he was an FEI horse, pre St. George. And he was willed to me. And so here he was sort of landed in my lap and he was pretty down. He was kind of a, been there, done that kind of, you know, double bridle draw reins to whips spurs, any, you know, kind of, yeah.

Karen Rohlf ([00:03:11](#)):

So here he was and you know, and he had some soundness problems. He had terrible feet. And so I, you know, I did my best. I'm, you know, God I'm going better and better, but, um, as he started to have some soundness issues, I thought, well, I need to do something fun with him. I mean, it's a facility, there's no real turnout. And it was quite by accident that I stumbled across a Perelli clinic because I thought I need to do find some like silly, fun things to do. And I saw, you know, a flyer and there was a horse standing on a pedestal and it said probably clinic. And I didn't know anything about what probably was. And I was like, well, that looks like fun. My unsound horse can, you know, stand on a pedestal and come when he's called, you know? And so I stumbled across this and, you know, kind of to make a long story short is through what I started to learn by opening my eyes and looking outside the dressage

world, this horse who was, you know, kind of past his prime, you know, starting to open up a little bit, but still pretty shut down, really low energy, barely sound started to open up.

Karen Rohlf ([00:04:19](#)):

And I started to see this little spark and I started to feel what I used to feel with the horse that I had when I was a kid and the horse I had when the kid was it off the track thoroughbred who had a bone tendon didn't pass the pre-trip purchase for dressage. I didn't care cause I didn't want to do dressage. I was running and jumping. And that was that thoroughbred was the horse that I ended up going through all the levels and representing the United States on the young rider team and you know, all this. And, and so when that happened, well, I got, I got that third running. It was 15, I was 15, sorry. I was 15. He was seven. And, and I looked back and thought, gosh, you know, that shouldn't have worked. I took lessons once a week. I was alone in the bushes.

Karen Rohlf ([00:05:08](#)):

He shouldn't have done dressage. He was a hunter jumper. And I thought, gosh, that horse was so special. He gave me so much, but when this horse, my, the grand Prix horse, when I started to do this, you know, quote unquote natural horsemanship stuff, I started to feel him offering and connecting. And it reminded me of that really special horse, brave Tom. And I thought, wait a minute. Some of this, you know, relationship stuff that I did naturally as a kid actually works. And it was actually, you know, part of bringing out the best in the performance of the horse. So it really just got my attention when I started seeing results and, you know, kind of following the idea that a little information worse than none.

Warwick Schiller ([00:05:59](#)):

I thought I had enough had enough information to be dangerous. Exactly.

Karen Rohlf ([00:06:02](#)):

I'm like, well now I'm like running around bareback and Brian lists in the middle of this massage facility and my trainer was very kind. And, uh, and I, through some other circumstances, I ended up going to Florida for, um, the winter one year and a half quite by coincidence, ended up seven miles from where the [inaudible] were. And, um, my friend now who was the brilliant instructor, dragged me over there and said, you gotta meet pat and Linda. And I'm like, I don't have time for this, but I, then I did. And I ended up just immersing and I, I just, I took three horses with me and I just immersed with them for a couple of years. I said, I gotta figure this out because now I'm a professional and I don't know what I'm doing anymore because I have all this new information. I didn't know how it fit. So I had to figure out how it fit.

Warwick Schiller ([00:06:54](#)):

And, uh, did it fit, or did you have to have a bit of a paradigm shift too, to get it fit in what you were doing?

Karen Rohlf ([00:07:03](#)):

Yeah. It was a series of definitely a paradigm shift. Um, it, it a paradigm shift, but in a way, for me, it really felt right, because it felt like a really natural, it felt like remembering because I was so natural with my horse. My mom was just like, yeah, go play with your horse. I'm glad I survived. But I mean, we did crazy stuff and it was, and I go down there and just spend time with my horse and just be with him

because I, I loved him and I loved the relationship. So it felt like it gave me permission to do that more. And then I could rationalize it as a professional because it worked, it made better results. So on the one hand it was really an easy transition, but the hard part was, you know, there's so many priority shifts and, um, and thinking, okay, I have this worst in front of me.

Karen Rohlf ([00:07:59](#)):

This behavior is happening. I know how I've been doing it for the past 25 years, but now I see it in a new way. And so all these question marks came up of like, what should I do first? What's the, what's the priority here? And, um, so I had to kind of figure that out, but the part that really made sense to me is I thought, you know, and then in dressage, I really was learning about the physical part of the horse, the gymnastic development, and in the natural horsemanship, I was learning much more about the mental and emotional part. So I thought, well, I need mental, emotional, and physical. So it, it, to me, it was like I had to go to all those different Isles in the library, young people, there were such things as library. Um, you have to Google all those subjects. Yes. You have to, you know, if you know, mental, emotional, and physical, you're gonna have better results. And I just felt like I, I just went to these different sources of information and now I had a better whole picture.

Warwick Schiller ([00:09:03](#)):

Yeah. It's interesting. You, uh, you were doing a lot of dressage stuff before you did that. And, uh, I imagine that, that second one on the, on the training scale probably wasn't taken care of as much as it could have been

Karen Rohlf ([00:09:18](#)):

The, well, there's, there's a couple of different versions of the training scale, but like the rhythm and relaxation

Speaker 4 ([00:09:23](#)):

Yes. That's the whole mental and emotional and spiritual side

Karen Rohlf ([00:09:30](#)):

Of it. Yeah. And, um, I love to, I love to recite the object of dressage according to the FEI rule book, because a lot of times dressage professionals don't know this, so I like to quote it every chance I get. Can I, can I quote it? Okay. So according to the FEI rule book, article 4 0 1, the object of dressage is the development of the horse into a happy athlete through harmonious education, resulting in a horse that's calm, loose, supple and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus Richie achieving perfect understanding with his writer. So when I look back at that, it kind of is a no brainer that, that mental, emotional, physical cause most of the words in that description have to do with mental, emotional states. Yep. So when dressage people are like, oh, you know, that's not necessary. I'm like, well, how do you create keenness and attentiveness and calmness? Don't you want to know how to do that? Just as well as you know how to create suppleness and flexibility. So it, you know, I just go back to the rule book and go, here's what we're supposed to be doing. So why not improve our skills in all those areas?

Warwick Schiller ([00:10:50](#)):

So how long has that been a part of the robot? It just, and the reason I asked that is because that sounds like a description of classical dressage. Not necessarily modern day competitive research. Yeah.

Karen Rohlf ([00:11:03](#)):

It's been in there since I was a wee young professional. So yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:11:10](#)):

You know, I've, I've read some, you know, some Nuno Alvarez stuff and, uh, you know, I have an audio of Charles to [inaudible] talking about different things and everything they say, it's like, it doesn't even sound like they're talking about dressage to me. A lot of times they're talking about themselves, like D the inner journey, the, the taken care of you stuff before you worry about them stuff. And yeah. It's just,

Karen Rohlf ([00:11:35](#)):

Oh, well, yeah. My, when I say the word dressage, I know that so many people pictured different things. And it seems like the norm is to picture, compare everything to competitive dressage. But for me, like that object of dressage is dressage. And what they're doing in competition is something else that's going on in the world. Some of them meet that object and some of them don't, but I don't come, I don't naturally compare everything to competitive dressage because that's just one group of people doing it one way, but the way, no. Yeah. I stopped competing when I found myself, um, wrapping up the show and like forgetting to go get my score sheet. I'm like, cause I knew I knew what the I'm so interested in, what the horse has done and not necessarily how it compared to other other people, but I love competing. I love competing. Um, but yeah, I just found myself not really choosing to do it anymore. So I, I listened to myself.

Warwick Schiller ([00:12:38](#)):

So let's go back to your old being their schoolmaster present, George horse, grumpy horse, whatever it was. And you found out about a clinic, was it w did pet or Linda do that clinic or was it one of the, one of them? Oh,

Karen Rohlf ([00:12:54](#)):

This was so funny because, um, it was a Perelli clinic. It was advertised as a pearly clinic. And I didn't know what that was taught by a guy named David Litchman and I thought, what do you mean taught by David Litchman? It's supposed to be a pearly clinic. And I was such a pain in the butt because, uh, it was a level one clinic and level one advancing. And I'm like, come on, I'm a grand Prix trainer. I can do the level one advancing. And he's like, no, that's for people. I was like, come on. And he was, he, he was nice enough to let me in

Warwick Schiller ([00:13:28](#)):

That guy is, he was just at a horse expo. Is that last weekend? Um, oh yeah. I didn't even catch up with him the whole weekend. I was so busy, but that guy's a wizard. Oh,

Karen Rohlf ([00:13:37](#)):

I love him. We are, we became fast friends at that clinic and we've been friends ever since and yeah, he's, um, he's a character and he's, um, quite smart. And with the training and an artistics,

Warwick Schiller ([00:13:50](#)):

He's an absolute, yeah. He's, it's an artistic. He's not just, yeah, he's good. He's kind of the whole package that guy, I think, I think he's a bit of a wizard really. It's got that, you know, he's got the 12 mustache that gives you that little wizard. He looked, you know, you get an appointed hat and a cloak and a wand. He'd, he'd be right there. And so, yeah. So you go to this, this, uh, I didn't realize it was a David Litchman clinic. That's cool. So you get a David's clinic and what, what happened there? Because I imagine that's the start of everything. That's your, your, oh my God. What have I not been seeing all this time? That once you see it, you can't unsee it kind of moment. Actually,

Karen Rohlf ([00:14:31](#)):

That happened in the very first lesson. That here's the funny part. So we're all, it's a big group, right? So a group of people and he goes, okay, everybody tie your horse to the fence and come on over. And I'm like, I'm just kinda like standing at the end of the lead rope. And he's like, everybody come on over tie. Where's the fence. And I'm like, just, you know, scooching as close as I could. He looks at me, he goes Tyra, where's the fence. And I go, he's a, on a horse. He doesn't tie to fit.

Karen Rohlf ([00:14:59](#)):

I can't believe I said that. I was, ah, anyway. So he walked me over and showed me how to do it a safe way and a hilarious, but the first exercise with the horses was, you know, what, they would call a friendly game. So it's, you stay on there and you move your tools around and you make sure your horse is okay with it. Now this was a kind of, bomb-proof dead to the world. Low-energy, non-reactive kind of horse. So I'm standing there and I tell you, I have my stick in my hand and I'm just gently waving it. And he's, he wouldn't stand still. Now he would just take like a three inch step and then a three inch step. He was just doing this little creep, you know, which I would not have said was showing any signs of tension with the eyes that I had then, but the way David.

Karen Rohlf ([00:15:50](#)):

Exactly. So the way David and I, he was like, I was like, oh my gosh, my horse, can't relax when I move my stick. And as soon as I saw it, that way, it's just my, oh, I got emotional, my heart just melted. And I thought he's been holding all this tension and I didn't see it that way. I just saw it as lazy, low energy, whatever. So when we started to clear that it was the beginning of the relaxation, creating the opening, creating the trust, creating the willingness to then put in more effort than he ever did. So I wrote him for a few more years after that because his lightness created was easier on his body. Everything was easier with more ease, so there's less pounding. And so he was able to be written for longer and he offered more at that point in his life way past his prime than I had ever seen him offer before.

Warwick Schiller ([00:16:58](#)):

And when he was in his prime,

Karen Rohlf ([00:17:00](#)):

Yeah. Well, I only knew him from like age. Um, I first saw him at age nine and he was willed to me at age 11. And so this was now at like age 13 that this was happening. Um, but yeah, no, and I mean, he just, it changed everything. And so, and then he started giving the way my original horse had, because I had the relationship and I remember this one story work when I used to ride him at the end of the day. Cause after I trained everybody else's horses. And so at the end of the day, I go in this huge barn aisle, and

nobody else was there and I closed the barn aisles. And uh, I remember I was untacking them. And I put like one of his little splint boots on the blanket bar and I saw him nudge it and it, it fell off.

Karen Rohlf ([00:17:48](#)):

And then he, and I'm like, I'm not going to hit you for that. Like I was like, what do you know, why did you flinch? And then I, in that moment I just saw it and I took the other splint boot that was up there and I knocked it off and it was like, he looked at me and was like, really? And I went, yeah. So our ritual became I'd, untack him close the barn doors. And he would go up and down the aisle, ripping everything off the blanket bars. And then I go at the end and cleaned it all up and put it back nicer than I found it. And it was like the light. It that's when his personality really came out. That's when he was like, you get me? And I went, yes, I do. And you're allowed to be naughty because you can be you and I want you to show me everything. So yeah, that, that horse changed everything

Warwick Schiller ([00:18:40](#)):

Kind of a, a sixth sense moment. If you've ever watched that movie, the sixth sense with Bruce Willis, it was in that movie. You know, when you, when you figure out he's dead and then you go, well, hang on, hang on. He was dead before, or hell he was in the restaurant talking to his wife and he was, oh my God, I've known you kind of on some level realized that I kind of suspected he was dead somewhere along, but I didn't know it. And it's, it's kinda the same thing. Like you, you have this, I remember having this relationship with horses and then I lost it, but I totally didn't realize I lost it. But on some level I'm sure,

Karen Rohlf ([00:19:15](#)):

Absolutely. When I was, I was busy being professional,

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

You know, and,

Karen Rohlf ([00:19:20](#)):

And at that point I thought that meant being a little bit cold, you know, a little bit unattached and you know, and I, and then I think about how small that moment was with him that night in the barn and how I could have missed it. I really could have missed it. And I didn't. So, yeah, that was one of those just moments. Yeah. Wow.

Warwick Schiller ([00:19:50](#)):

And, um, how long did you have him for after that? Well,

Karen Rohlf ([00:19:54](#)):

It was another couple years and then his, um, he finally got his feet were, so his feet were not, I was going to say his feet were bad. His feet were not bad. He was shot so poorly for his whole life. Um, it got to a point where, um, I finally listened to this one, you know, alternative vet who was right the whole time. And he, he, his, he was so underrun his coffin bone, like the was pointing

Warwick Schiller ([00:20:23](#)):

Was negative. Yeah. Yeah.

Karen Rohlf ([00:20:26](#)):

So when I finally saw that and then I put him into rehab and, and he got that fixed up. Um, but he, I didn't really ride them so much after that. And so I actually sent him, he came down to Florida before I did, and I stayed with, uh, a friend of mine. And then later when I ended up coming down to Florida and then I later got my, um, my, I could bring Bubba home. And, uh, so he lived here on my property. He lived to, um, let's see, he was like 22. I believe when, um, put him down. He was, we called him the mayor of the property. He just strolled around and did whatever he wanted. Greeted everybody.

Warwick Schiller ([00:21:06](#)):

That's very, very cool. So he was the, he was the sixth sense moment. The, the, the eye opening moment. Where did you, where'd you go from there? I mean, because you're a professional and you look at life a certain way, and then you have this whoa, this watershed moment where you no longer. And then did you have that whole, what am I, what the hell am I doing? How am I going to do what I'm doing and do this? Or should I keep doing what I'm doing? Did you have that? Oh my

Karen Rohlf ([00:21:36](#)):

Gosh. Yeah. Yeah. Um, luckily I had, there were some of my students who were really curious about what I was learning. So they, you know, we kind of experimented together and others, I had to kind of keep it a little secret. Um, but after, after Bubba was retired, um, his real name was Vivaldi. I thought, okay, I got to try this again on another horse. So I found a, uh, quote unquote, crazy lip is on who was being given away for a dollar. And I thought, well, this'll be good. I'll get him. He's already messed up. So I'll try this stuff. And if it doesn't work, he's already messed up. I haven't, you know, no one, so that was my horse Monte and I got him and, oh, he was a challenge. Uh, but I was like, I'm going to just do what David Litchman tells me to do.

Karen Rohlf ([00:22:24](#)):

And, and it, it worked and, oh, man, I had such an amazing relationship with that horse. And so I was just blown away by that. And that was, he was one of the horses I took down to Florida with me, um, when I went and was just my experiment and he was amazing. Um, so, you know, that was, he was really the horse that helped me put it all together because I really experimented with, okay, I've got this natural foundation. I can do all the bridal lists. I can do Liberty and I want to do dressage. So what's my prioritization. I think that's the interesting part with trainers is what do you, how do you decide what to do today? How do you prioritize what you're going to do? And, um, so I just, I had him and then a couple other horses, students horses, and, um, my quest was to figure out that decision-making process. And that's what created my book. I wrote the book for myself, so I could figure out how to explain what it was I was doing.

Warwick Schiller ([00:23:25](#)):

And which book is this? It's, it's called

Karen Rohlf ([00:23:28](#)):

Dressage naturally results in harmony. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:23:31](#)):

Okay. And when did you write that?

Karen Rohlf ([00:23:35](#)):

Uh, it came out in 2008, so I started writing it, um, 2000 5, 5, 6, something like that. How many words is in it?

Warwick Schiller ([00:23:51](#)):

I don't know how many words, cause I mean, I'm in the middle of writing a book right now. It's not as much fun as that. That's what it would be. Oh gosh.

Karen Rohlf ([00:23:57](#)):

I have one piece of advice, right. The outline first

Warwick Schiller ([00:24:02](#)):

On the outline.

Karen Rohlf ([00:24:03](#)):

Oh gosh, I didn't do that. I just started writing. And then I was like, where have I gone?

Warwick Schiller ([00:24:10](#)):

And I was like, I got to write an outline first. And so you wrote the book basically to give yourself a bit of an outline, like quantify what you were, what are you doing?

Karen Rohlf ([00:24:23](#)):

Yeah. I love writing and I, I find, I think differently when I write and it, it helped, you know, it's like, if I have to write it down, I have to really know what I'm saying. So it really helped me to organize, organize my thoughts.

Warwick Schiller ([00:24:41](#)):

So when you wrote the book, were you still training horses?

Karen Rohlf ([00:24:45](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And doing clinics and yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([00:24:51](#)):

My own, yeah. Me too. Yeah, because what I've found is once you start prioritizing the relationship, um, I don't, I don't think you could, uh, personally, I couldn't train horses for the public because I wouldn't have enough time in the day to, to make it, you know, I might as well go on welfare. Um, and yeah, I wouldn't have enough time for the day, for day and, and people wouldn't pay me to do what I'm doing anyway, because after not doing anything.

Karen Rohlf ([00:25:28](#)):

Yeah. It, it feels very personal. The kind of relationship I have. And I, the last horse that I had here in training, um, you know, it was a dressage redo. You know, the owner came in a double bridle and she had to ice her hands after every ride. And he went home. Um, I did a fourth level test in a halter and she wrote him and then, you know, then she got him home and then she wanted to show like put the



double bridle back on. And then they started riding him the same way. And then he wouldn't tolerate that anymore because he knew a better way. And it just, I, I felt like I violated, I felt like I opened him. I taught him to open and trust and, and you know, so I will, I love working with people and their horses that they want to be in a partnership. And I'll, if I have to handle the horse as part of that training, yeah, I will. But the, I want the person to be part of it. Otherwise I want to put them together. Cause otherwise it's, it's, it's my horse. And I, I just don't have the, I, it, I don't have the Hartford anymore. It's too, it's too heart breaking to just with some horses that come in for training and then they go, like, it needs to be a partnership. I want to work with a person and their horse. And I love doing that.

Warwick Schiller ([00:26:58](#)):

Right. Yeah. Yeah. I found like people asked me like, I've got this horse that I, you know, maybe I've got a half lease or something or other, and someone else rides him in and I want to do this relationship stuff, you know, is it going to work? And I'm like, you know what? You might be better off leaving that horse inside his head because he's inside his head for a reason. He's blocking stuff out for a reason. And I don't think it's fair to start to wake him up and only have the other person go back. You know, that's absolutely that's I don't, I don't think that's, um, you know, that's, I don't think that's fair to the horse. And the other thing is people have to understand too, if you have a horse, that's shut down, you do not go from shutdown to good.

Warwick Schiller ([00:27:39](#)):

Isn't on the scale of things. If you're mentally good. And if you're not mentally good, you're probably anxious. But if you get so anxious that you cannot handle it anymore, then you shut down. So shut is actually more anxiety than anxious. And so when you come out of shutdown, now you're not as anxious as you were. You're actually anxious enough to where you can actually sit with it and be aware of it. And so, you know, shut down horses, don't go from shutdown to good. All of a sudden, this spooking and doing all sorts of stupid stuff. And people seem to think, oh, my horse is getting worse. And now actually you have to understand he's, he's getting better. And that's part of the process. And if you don't have the wherewithal to go through that, or he's in a situation to where he's going to go in and out or shut down, I don't think, I think they're better probably better off being, being inside their head a little bit. Really.

Karen Rohlf ([00:28:33](#)):

I agree. It's a PR it's a protective mechanism. Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([00:28:40](#)):

No, certainly. Um, yeah, but, but as a, as a person who in the last few years has realized he spent most of his life shut down. I can tell you're shut down. It's not a bad place. It's not a bad place to be when you're there. You don't know you're there when you're anxious, you know, you're anxious, you know, and I, I tell this story a lot, but my son and I went to Africa a few years ago. And before we went, I started looking at YouTube, different videos of animals and things that types we're going to see. And I saw a video of a Willdabeast cow being eaten alive by a lioness. And this will be, his care was like on her belly with a front legs tucked up underneath her. And she was, her head was pointing towards the camera. And as the lion was tearing chunks off, her, her head had a bit of a wobble.

Warwick Schiller ([00:29:24](#)):

But if you looked at her face, she was not in any pain or whatsoever. And I guarantee you, she wasn't going, oh, I wish I wasn't so shut down. So I could experience what it's like to be eaten alive by a lie. You know what I mean? So it's a, it's a, it's a, you know, mother night to take care of us. And if you're in a, you can't handle, she numbs it all out. And like that, that Willdabeast care was certainly not wishing she was experiencing what she was experiencing. And, and, you know, like I said, for me, I've realized I've been shut down for quite a long time. And I, I was having a great time. So it's, it's, you know, it's,

Karen Rohlf ([00:30:00](#)):

I know, I know sometimes I think horse training was so much easier when I just got them to do stuff and I wasn't listening to them nearly as much. Yeah. It feels a little more complicated now.

Warwick Schiller ([00:30:14](#)):

Yeah. And I think for me, what I used to do with horses, I was very good at teaching horses to pay no attention to the energy of the rider or the person on the ground. So I could, I could train a horse for an anxious person and they'd get along with him relatively good, because I didn't have any inner energy going into the whole thing was basically just a whole bunch of cues that I taught them to respond to. And I, and I think I taught them to respond to those things in a fair and ethical way. It wasn't like I beat him up or anything, but they, you know, they weren't reading the energy of the human. And, and also they were not really putting much out that they weren't bright, they weren't keen, but they were very obedient. And I was, you know, my background was in the raining and, you know, rain is, uh, you, you quoted that the dressage rule book before the, you know, what's called a general in the raining rule books is to rain. A horse is not only to guide him, but to control his every move, the best rain horse, surely we will, should be willingly guided with little or no apparent resistance and dictated to completely.

Warwick Schiller ([00:31:23](#)):

And so, you know, that's, that's what it's all about, but it's, it's, you know, it's a bit like dressage to where it's an object listening, uh, BDS. I mean, yeah. There's no reason to do it. It's not like you're working a cow and the reason we're going to go over there is because the carer went over there or, you know, doing like working equitation. There's a, there's a obstacle in front of me and I've got to go around it or, I mean, you know, it's yeah. So I think it's, it's, it's quite a listening obedience. And I think when you're training that, uh, for that you, you kind of fall into that, you know, you just get stuck into that sort of thing.

Karen Rohlf ([00:32:00](#)):

I mean, I think anything, you know, success to me is the horse understands what he's supposed to do. You know, he understands and he gets a chance to do it, you know, to be allowed to do it when he offers it. And I think there's ways to teach in, you know, controlling methods. If I say that in a very, um, lovely way, you know, with lightness and to have that obedience in a way that the horse is like, yeah, I get it. I get it. I know what I'm supposed to do. I understand. Um, so I think there's a, there's a way to do it, that it feels like a dance from, for me, it's just a personal, um, change in what I'm trying to, what I want to experience with the horse and what I'm trying to do. So, you know, I always feel like I was one of the nice dressage traitors, you know?

Karen Rohlf ([00:32:54](#)):

Um, but, um, I think I did miss some stuff with, you know, that I didn't know back then, but I, I feel like my goal with horses has changed what I want to feel at the end of the day. And, and I've set things up now in my life so that, you know, I don't, I don't feel like a professional. I feel like I have a property with my horses and I go ride my horses and I play with them and I enjoy them. And that's all, that's been my goal for a long time. And, um, so I'm really happy. I, I did it because I get to chance to play and experiment with no pressure on me except what I put on myself, which is, you know, interesting enough. Um, yeah, so I think there's, there's ways to do any kind of style of writing in a, in a very fair way where horses understand and get a chance to be able to offer it in lightness or not. You know, there's nothing wrong with raining or dressage. It's just how it is in how you do it.

Warwick Schiller ([00:33:58](#)):

Yeah. You know, I'm very much in a similar situation now, you know, we can only, we have our own property, we're have our own horses at home. I don't take anybody. Else's horses. They're all going to stay here forever. We're actually looking at a bigger property now because we just keep, like, my wife keeps finding horses. Um, yeah. So I feel pretty much the same way too. And I'm quite happy to go out and just, you know, this whole thing started for me about six years ago, my wife bought a running horse that he was a high level talent running horse, but wasn't competing at a high level because he used to spook at the judges stains and things like that. You know, like at the time I was like, I can fix that. And she bought this horse in, um, the spooking stuff that wasn't that hard to solve, but this horse had a level of being inside his head that I had never encountered before and nothing, not a single thing.

Warwick Schiller ([00:34:54](#)):

I knew how to do help. That actually made him worse. He was just, you know, the more you, it didn't matter what you asked it was, it was anybody at a two legged person asking them to do anything that he was. And he didn't say no, he was very, very obedient. And could do the raining really, really good. Didn't say no, but just did things with a level of tension in his body without it being outward tension, you know, it wasn't like he was anxious and jumping around. He was just very functional. And have you done any you around David? So you probably done some clicker training, have you? Yeah,

Karen Rohlf ([00:35:31](#)):

I use, I use some positive reinforcement in my training. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:35:37](#)):

For those listening, if you are not aware of how you start out with clicker training, for the most part, you'll start out with what they call protective contact. So the horse is behind a fence and you'll either what they call load to click, which means you have the clicker, you click treat, click trait, click treat until the host starts to realize that right after the click comes to treat, and then you'll take a target and it might be like a tennis ball on a stick or whatever. And this is where you are working on a horses, natural curiosity. If you put some weird object through the fence in front of them, knows they're going to reach out and sniff it. And when they sniff it, when they touch that target, you click can treat and then pretty soon you do it and do it and do it.

Warwick Schiller ([00:36:15](#)):

And pretty soon you can move the target and they will, their head will follow it and you click and treat and then you can move the target further and you can get their feet to follow it. And so that's how you get, that's basically the very basic static clicker running, but Sherlock, cause he's always his name when

we started doing that. Okay. He thought that that game was pretty good until we started moving the target a little bit further away. And I don't mean movie's feet. I mean, turn his head a little further. Um, and that was fine until we moved it a bit further. And then he looked at the target and he looked at us and all of a sudden it dawned on him that this is not random. The human actually expects me to do a certain thing. And when he realized that he turned and walked off, like it was all a fun game. I happened to bump that with my nose and there's a noise and I get a treat and I like the treats. This is cool. And it's all good when it was, when he thought that it was just a random thing, he was fine. And as soon as he realized someone was asking something of him, there was an expectation. He was like, you know what you can do with your treats. And he just walked off

Karen Rohlf ([00:37:23](#)):

Leading me, you're tricking me. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:37:26](#)):

And it was, it was, it was that, um, he was that, um, you know, turned off by the humans, asking him to do stuff because he'd been asked to do a lot. Um, and I've just, that was about six years ago. Uh, we haven't written him for about four years and I've only just started back riding him and he's easier up and it's all work. And it's taken me this long to start back riding in because I really wanted to, I'm going to get one chance to do this right with him. And it's taken me this long to like formulate a really good, uh, process in my head about how I'm going to go about riding him when I start riding him. And he used to, he used to go around kind of really overbroad. Like he was like, he was written in drawings. I'm not saying he was written in drawings, but he, it looked like that even loose, like in a round pen, he'd go around like that.

Warwick Schiller ([00:38:21](#)):

And I've been back riding Henry for a couple of weeks. Oh, well might be three weeks now, but I've only just started doing more than walk the first couple of weeks for sitting on him, just sitting on him. And actually I think what did the first couple of weeks was I would sit on him and if his ears were looking at something, I would just scratch his neck on the other side. And if he flicked an ear, I'd stop scratching. I wasn't asking for anything. He was just kind of getting his attention and letting them know. I saw that change in focus and that went on for a couple of weeks and it sit there for quite a long time. And then he'd finally, he'd take a big sign and have a leak in a chew, which he didn't, when we first got him, you had to pry his mouth open to get the bidding, a mouth open and get it out.

Warwick Schiller ([00:39:01](#)):

You know, he didn't lick and chew and you know, that sort of stuff, but what he's doing here the last few days, I've been actually going forward, like trotting and cantering and he's stretching over his top line and his nose is out in front of his pole. Nice. Really open in the throat latch. And you know, as you know, you can't train that. Like you can't, you can't push a rain, it's not a skill. Um, and yeah, and like just having all that going on and it's like, oh, so cool. And it's defensiveness coming down. Yeah. Yeah. And it's amazing what, um, you know, winning stuff used to make me excited, but when Sherlock started pointing him, sticking his nose out and while he was moving his feet and gone, it was like, I was so excited as like, it was like, cool. I think I have the way forward now.

Warwick Schiller ([00:39:53](#)):

But like I said, it's taken me this long to get back on the saddle with him because I wanted to make sure I had a perfect process. And I actually, I had a clinic in my house here about a month ago and there was a lady with, who's been to several of my clinics and she's got a Tennessee walking horse that was very, very shut down. He said, you know, they've done a lot of groundwork and he's been trained to be very obedient. And we got through some stuff on the ground with him and then she wanted to ride and he's kind of lazy. And so she said, I want it, you know, I want to get more energy out of him. I said, well, I don't think, you know, we're not going to apply more pressure to get more energy out of him because, and at the time I told the story about the Willdabeast, I said, the reason you got to kick her out or whatever is because he's basically body is shut down.

Warwick Schiller ([00:40:35](#)):

He's not receiving information from his body. So more whip or more spur or whatever, more, that's not going to make him any better. That's actually gonna make him worse. And I said, don't even I'm thinking, you know, what I might try with this horse is just sit here. And if his attention is on something, I might just wiggle a footnote steer or scratches, Nick on whatever on the opposite side. And if he flicks in ear in the slightest bit, I'm going to, and that made a huge change in this horse. I mean, his body, after a while his body started jumping, like he's, his body was coming back online and he started looking at you and I'm like, that's it that's, I'm going to start with Sherlock. And so it was, you know, it was only a month or so ago at a clinic here. Then I just experimenting and I went, that's it, that's where I'm going to start with, but I'm not going to ask anything of him. And yeah. And I'm excited about it.

Karen Rohlf ([00:41:27](#)):

Isn't that funny? Yeah. I have a, I have a dressage rehab, a horse that was given to me for major behavior problems and, um, you know, nice young seven year old schooling, third level, you know, about to be put down. And, uh, it's a really a lesson in expectations and patients, you know, cause today I'm like, yay. I was able to try all the way around the arena and stay on the rail. Yay. And you know, and sometimes my brain goes, come on, I care. And you're trying, you should be able to be further than this and yet, and, but you have to just, oh no, what's the goal. The goal is to have this horse not want to book me off to not be grinding, to not shut down to not, you know, be on the goal is that he trusts me and T and that he's confident, not that I get them on the rail, but that we're together. And it it's once you start seeing that and wanting that, I find, you know, it, it takes longer. But for me, it's just so interesting because you really get the heart of them in the end and, uh, it's, it's worth it. So yeah, it takes a little patience.

Warwick Schiller ([00:42:41](#)):

Yeah. It takes a lot of patients, but a lot of people say, oh, you're so patient. But I tell them, actually I'm not, I'm impatient. Like sitting on Sherlock for two weeks is me being impatient because I want to get him feeling better under saddle as quickly as I can. And the more I ask the less he's going to and it's, and I'm not. And like I said, I don't, I don't think with this particular horse, I've got a second, I'm going to have a second chance. I'm going to get one shot at redoing this. And if I mess the first one up the second time, it's going to take 10 times and the third. And, you know, as the saying goes, if you don't have, if you don't have time to do it right, the first time you're going to find the time, right. The second time.

Karen Rohlf ([00:43:22](#)):

And to have that picture about what the goal really is. So then you know, that these methods are, you know, that sort of method with him is going to be the fastest way. Instead of just trying to get, you know, skip a step,

Warwick Schiller ([00:43:34](#)):

He would, well, let him, you know, he has been written for four years and I'm sure if I said, let's go to a writing pattern. He could. I mean, it's not, he has no, you know, he has a huge heart and there is no, no to anything. He says, it's just a level of tension that carries. And I, you know, and by the time I get him sorted out, he'll be the best reining horse we have. And we won't do running with him. That's the paradox right there. So, you know, in, in this, in this journey of discovering this stuff with horses, have you found that it didn't just change the way you look at the way you do things with horses, but the way you do things with people, the way you approach life in general?

Karen Rohlf ([00:44:21](#)):

Oh, abs absolutely. And it's a little bit chicken or egg because at the moment that I went from New York to Florida, I was also, you know, getting, I got a divorce and I was changing a lot of things all at once. So there was a lot of personal development going on at that same, you know, an introspection going on at that time. Um, but, but something about this moving from dressage, which is very, um, micromanagy and the lessons are, you know, one-on-one, and I'm like laser focused and telling the student what to do to, uh, a kind of training where I ask and I wait to see what the horse does and then I, you know, respond accordingly. So there's this space. And so I naturally started teaching differently. And so now my thing is really about teaching students to be empowered to independently problem solve, and I want to connect them together.

Karen Rohlf ([00:45:27](#)):

And the horse and the rider being connected is more important than what I think it looks like. And so just giving that, that space of I'm having a picture, I'm going to send the energy and suggest it. I'm going to see what happens. I'm going to let you choose. And then we'll talk about what you choose and see if I can figure out a way to get you to choose the thing that I'm aiming for. So that's in that space there, I think is just some really cool stuff that happens. So I, from doing that with the horses and then in that, you know, in training that way, you have to be aware of, you know, what's my intention. Can I clearly have my intention and express it authentically naturally through my body. So it makes sense. Cause they're reading intention and body language and they don't understand when we're have like 20 million thoughts stacked on top of each other.

Karen Rohlf ([00:46:23](#)):

And we're judging ourselves at the same time. So, you know, at this moment where I'm doing all this personal development and knowing I've got to be really mindful and I've got to be really clear and I, you know, they want me to just be like, here's what I'm expressing. Um, so it was a combination of things that like everything had to shift, but all of those things helped each other. The personal development helped the training, the training helped the teaching. The teaching helped the training, the training helped the personal development and it was all, you know, can be wrapped up into, you know, sounds corny, but like being here now and sharing this moment and we, in order to share this moment, I need to see you. You need to see me and we need to give each other a little space to see what's going on instead of just getting it done.

Warwick Schiller ([00:47:14](#)):

It doesn't sound corny to me. That's, that's the rabbit hole. I'm down to sir, beautiful rabbit hole. Oh, you know what? The whole personal development thing, I, you know, at say X, uh, clinics or expos or whatever, you know, cause I, I don't, when I do a horse expo, I don't take a horse and do a demo. I have someone bringing a horse, they're having some difficulty with. And in the past, people would hand me a horse. You know, they're having some difficulty with it on the ground. And I would, I would hand me the horse and I would do some things and then the horse would be better. And for the last few years it's been weird because you know, someone's got an anxious horse on the ground and they hand them to me. And as soon as I take the lead rope, they kind of relax and stretch out towards me and want to greet me and say hello.

Warwick Schiller ([00:48:02](#)):

And, and you know, I, I make a point of saying at the time, that's not something I did right now. I didn't just cast some sort of a spell law, mentally picture a horse relaxing or whatever. That's just the way I'm showing up these days. And I tell people, that's probably the biggest thing you've got to do to help with your horsemanship is get your internal stuff. Right. Because you know, you know, like, you know, they use horses these days, a lot for, you know, equine assisted therapy and stuff. And one of the reasons they do is because they're very good at detecting in congruent behavior. You know, when you're out of landscape and you're in a landscape or talking to different things. And I, I think a lot of people with their horses are, you know, they're asking one thing physically and emotionally and mentally, they're doing the complete opposite and it, it doesn't, it doesn't work. And then they're doubting themselves at the same

Speaker 4 ([00:49:04](#)):

Time. And then they're feeling guilty. And then they're judging

Karen Rohlf ([00:49:08](#)):

And the horse they're like, what are you doing?

Warwick Schiller ([00:49:14](#)):

The biggest things that helped me with horses, you were talking about the personal growth, help them with this and that. And that's um, um, about three years ago now I did a year of a therapy called dialectical behavior therapy, both, both individual one-on-one and group therapy. I spent a whole year doing it and I didn't get anywhere with it. It didn't do anything for me. And there's nothing against dialectical behavior therapy, but I like to behavior therapy is for P it was originally designed for highly suicidal adults, but then they realized it's good for any, anyone with any emotional regulation issues. And so, but what I found out in that year was you actually have to have some emotions for it to work people with Hiroshi, emotional regulation issues, not lack of emotion issues. If there's nothing to work with, there's nothing to work with.

Warwick Schiller ([00:50:09](#)):

You know what I mean? It's like having a lead rope and a halter and no all in it, you know, what are you gonna do with that? Um, but one of the, we just have this, you know, mindfulness homework every week, but one of the weeks weeks we did, um, in the group therapy, they said, okay, so this week is all about judgmental thoughts. And they said, what? I want everybody here, one at a time go around. Like,

you start with your work. I want you to name three things in the room, identify three objects. And I said, well, that's a chair. And that's a funny looking lamp and that's it. And I said, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. And I'm like, what? And I said, that is not a funny looking lamp. It's a lamp. You think it's funny looking, but that's a judgment.

Warwick Schiller ([00:50:46](#)):

And so our homework for the week was to count judgmental thoughts. So you get a little clicker like the bus conductors or the bounces have, or whatever, you know, or put some pebbles in your pocket or whatever. When you have a jet, when you notice you have a judgemental thought, just like switch a pebble to the other side or click your clicker or whatever it is you do. And I thought, well, I'm going to hit them at three judgmental thoughts all day. So what I'm going to do is get three rocks and stick them in one pocket. And by the end of the day, I'll have three rocks in my other pocket. And the first morning I started working on it, I had 21 before breakfast. And the thing about those judgmental thoughts is when you become aware of having them, you become aware of how many you have. But I think the biggest part of this is being aware of how many you have about yourself.

Karen Rohlf ([00:51:34](#)):

Well, this is agreement number one in the Toltec philosophy it's agreement, number one in the Toltec philosophy philosophy.

Warwick Schiller ([00:51:44](#)):

What's that? Um,

Karen Rohlf ([00:51:46](#)):

T E C Toltec. They were artisans and scientists and Mexico it's like, it was, it was not a religion, but it's, they, it was all about how to be happy. Thank you. I have another rabbit hole to go down the rabbit holes. Okay. Here. One of my all time favorite books, this is a must for everybody is the four agreements agreements. Yeah. Yeah. So Miguel Ruiz, so agreement number one is be impeccable with your word and to be impeccable means kind of like without sin. So the idea is never speak against yourself or others and to recognize the power of words, because words with words, you can create anything. So

Warwick Schiller ([00:52:32](#)):

Yeah, yeah,

Karen Rohlf ([00:52:34](#)):

Exactly. So to be impeccable with your word. And so that's one of the practices is to notice, you know, exactly what you said, where are you putting judgments and where are you speaking? And especially to speak against yourself to make sure you're not speaking against yourself. And that's man, when you start looking at it to catch yourself is, uh, it's pretty eyeopening.

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

Yeah. The thing about it is, you know, you realize how many judgmental thoughts you have and then you realize how many you have a better self. But the thing about that is that's. When have you ever read any Bernay brown, brown? Yeah, well, I, I, um, the reason I was doing the dialectical behavior therapy, because I read a Bernay brown book where she said that if you, you, if you suppress the lower emotions,



you automatically suppress the higher emotions. And you know, a male growing up in my generation, you don't cry. You don't show fear, blah, blah, blah, blah. And I thought, Hmm, I wonder, could I have more happiness or more joy? I know that the level ones are suppressed, but I've never considered the other ones. And that's what led me to this therapy. But you know, when you, when you become aware of your judgmental thoughts, especially obvious self, then you get to, you know, pronate.

Warwick Schiller ([00:53:47](#)):

Brent talks about the difference between guilt and shame. Guilt is I did something stupid shame is I am stupid. You catch yourself telling yourself how stupid you are and you get a chance to go hang on. No, no, no, I am not stupid. What I just did was pretty stupid. Next time that happens, I can make the choice to do a different thing, but I personally am not stupid. And I think for me, that was one of the biggest game changes to my that, and also not being judgmental. So when someone hands me a horse, I'm not thinking how you bloody, you know, he's been over there and he's rearing up and he's biting on the strike and whatever he's doing, I don't, there's no judgment. So there's no negative energy there. And I would say that whole judgment thing for me personally, has been the biggest game changer with like, with me and with the horses and, and yeah, I think the judgment thing is amazing. Yeah. No it's

Karen Rohlf ([00:54:42](#)):

Huge and it's a lifelong practice in it. And you have to, it's tricky because sometimes, um, people will, um, try to appear humble by self-deprecating. And that's just as damaging know to really honor, you know, honor yourself. You got to love yourself and know yourself. I mean, that's, that's, I think the, the life's work is to, to know yourself and love yourself. Every, everything comes down to that.

Warwick Schiller ([00:55:10](#)):

Um, yeah. I come from Australia and, you know, sarcasms and art form there, you know, Australia, you know, your worst enemies, a bastard and your best, friend's a bloody bastard, you know what I mean? And so you don't say anything nice to anybody including yourself, you know what I mean? You don't know anybody else because that's the culture and, and, uh, yeah, definitely not to yourself. And it, and it, I don't know. I just was that way for most of my life and not realizing the effect it has on you until you start, you start looking into that and then you're yeah. Power words. Yeah.

Karen Rohlf ([00:55:45](#)):

And that's the way the fourth agreement is to do your best, but to understand that your best is going to change from day to day. So part of doing your best is, um, wrapped up in there is forgiveness of yourself.

Warwick Schiller ([00:55:59](#)):

So the doing your best, but that's going to change from day to day.

Karen Rohlf ([00:56:04](#)):

So it was a little bit of a paradox. You know, I'm not always going to do my best, but I honor and forgive myself that my best is going to be different if I'm tired or if I'm sick or, you know, so how do you live in that? You know, I'm doing my best. Do you know? Uh, no. Do no, but remind me, cause I'm, there's

Warwick Schiller ([00:56:27](#)):

A movie called taming wild. She took a Mustang and gave herself 12 months to train it with no tools, no ropes, no tops and flags and settled in the round pans and all that stuff. Um, Elsa, she was a podcast guest. She is amazing. And she basically, what she does is she calls it freedom based training, but a saying of hers that I really like is good leaders. Only ask yes questions. And I've talked to people about with your horse only asking yes questions and a yes. Question is something they know how to do. Or yes. Question is something that they don't know how to do, but they have enough tools to figure it out. Or a yes. Question is something they know how to do, and they can do it given the environment at the moment and their mental state at the moment. So just because they could do it yesterday at home, doesn't mean you expect them to do it, to show when there's the things completely different. And that sounds like that fourth agreement, like your best might be different on a different, on a different day.

Karen Rohlf ([00:57:36](#)):

So something that I use with horses that relates to that when I'm teaching is I'll say, is this fair, reasonable, impossible. So if a student's asking them to do something and fair, reasonable, impossible, you're going to be quoting Karen Rolf and it makes people just stop and look and go, oh yeah, you know, the footing slippery. It's not really reasonable or possible for the worst to do that. And I just, I love that one. It's a really great checkpoint. And if it is fair, reasonable, possible, then come on, let let's, let's figure out how to motivate the horse or be clear or it's a, yeah, it's a yes. Answer.

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:14](#)):

That's awesome. So one of the, you know, I ask all my guests, um, you know, I send them 20 questions. Anybody that listens to the podcast knows I sent him 20 questions and they get to choose four to seven of them. Um, and the first one that you chose was what book do you recommend? So is this the same book or is there a different book? Yeah, no, it was,

Karen Rohlf ([00:58:33](#)):

It was the four agreements. Um, this book, you can read it in a day and it's like this nice light reading until you try to actually live by it. And, but I read this book and then at the end, the back cover, it was like, you know, contact this website to do power journeys with Miguel, the author. And I went, okay. So, uh, like a month later I found myself, you know, in Teotihuacan Mexico on top of the pyramid of the sun with a Toltec Shaun and like experiencing some pretty crazy stuff. And, um, and then, and then worked with one of his apprentices and it's, I just really loved the philosophy and the agreements. And it's all about knowing yourself and your book of rules and then deciding who made that rule and do you choose it? So, which is, again, is simple, but not so easy.

Warwick Schiller ([00:59:31](#)):

Podcasts just took a turn because you don't know that like Karen Rolf knows nothing about me, but podcast listeners would know that I am extremely into anything Shamanic wise. I read books on shamanism. I had no idea that Karen Rolf was into anything like that. But thinking about, you know, where she's at in life, of course she is. I mean, you don't get there without that. Tell me, um, I'm like, I'm a shaman groupie. So this is

Karen Rohlf ([01:00:01](#)):

MIG Miguel Ruiz is just, he's I've, I've gotten to spend a bit of time, not a lot, but a bit of time with him. And he's just the real deal. I mean, you're with him and he's, you can walk in a room and you sit in there and all of a sudden everybody's giggling, okay, he's just sitting in the front of the room being another

time you walk in the room and it's like, whoa. And it's more power than you've ever felt in, in a room. And he just, he just BS. He just is. And, um, and he just, he does a lot of teachings. You can find him on Facebook, you can Google him. You can, you know, he has some beautiful, beautiful books, um, the four agreements and the mastery lover, my favorites. Um, and it's so simple. It's so sweet Lord. The mastery of love.

Karen Rohlf ([01:00:56](#)):

Yeah. Um, but yeah, so I mean just crazy stuff. Like we were on top of the pyramid of the sun, this whole big group, and we're just, we're meditating. And then I see him like, I'm like peaking, right? Cause I want to know what's going on. I see him on the other side of the pyramid of the sun and he's, he's like looking over and he just like would look at someone and then he'd like, and then I look over, across, and like, the person would just like lay down and their eyes were closed. He was like putting people in trances. Anyway, there was that. And then there was another meditation we were doing and it was an open eye meditation and we're in this space and he wouldn't tell us any of the mythology or history of the spaces we were in because he didn't want us thinking.

Karen Rohlf ([01:01:45](#)):

So we're just staring at the space. And then it was really tight space. And then he came along and sat in front of me and just, you know, we like locked eyes and did that for a little while. And then I had this visualization was really cool. And then he left and later we're talking with a group and I told the story and I said, yeah. And then Miguel came and sat in front of me and everybody around me, I mean, were smushed in, they were like, Miguel wasn't here. I was, yes, he was, he sat right in front of me. He stepped over your legs. He had his hand on my heart, you know, for about five minutes. And like, he wasn't there. And so I looked at our group leader and I said, Miguel was here. Right. And she said, yeah, he was there. And then I said, why didn't anybody else see him? And she said, because he didn't want them to. I was like, wow, that's mastery of your intent.

Warwick Schiller ([01:02:39](#)):

That's oh, thank you, Karen. You've made my day because you have, now you are now a true journey on podcast guests, because that's the sort of story I want out of everybody. So if you've got any more, spit them out.

Karen Rohlf ([01:02:53](#)):

Oh my goodness. Well, I'll tell you what the, what the visualization was. So it was this space and there was like a door. It was like, you were looking into a closet without a door. So it's like this little nook and there was sort of a frame is all stone, this other like doorway in front of it. And so I'm staring at it and I I'm staring. And I, I sort of got this picture of sort of gray dust smoke, swirling around in there. And I was like, okay, I'm just going to stare at that. I don't know what I'm supposed to be seeing. And it was swirling and swirling, swirling. And that's when Miguel came and stood in front of me. And I put my hand on his heart, he put his hand on my heart and just looked in my eyes and, um, you know, I'm laughing and crying and laughing and crying.

Karen Rohlf ([01:03:38](#)):

And then he kissed me on the forehead and got up with his little grin. And then I got this visualization of this like beam of light and sparks, just flying out of the top of the building. We are, the space we were in was like temple. And I was like, wow, that was cool. Okay. I'm going to go with that. You know? Uh, and

so I was kind of basking in that and I told that story. And then my group leader who's, his apprentice was just grinning. And I was like, what does it mean? And then she told me the mythology of the space and it's, you know, there's the sun and the rays and the energy, the sun comes to us. And then we recycle it back up and there's, um, a filter. So that there's a special beam of light that comes to each of us.

Karen Rohlf ([01:04:31](#)):

And that was this temple. That was what that space was. It was a space, there's a hole at the top and the light, you know, that was the meditation that was done in there. And she said, yeah, Miguel knew you were stuck and it was just swirling, but you weren't getting it and you weren't sending it back. So that was, I got rid of the smoky swirl and ended with the beam of light going back from me back out. So I was kind of like, woo. I mean, it was just the most blissful feeling after that in so many ways. And it just like that feeling of connected. And it was neat because I didn't know any of that. I was just told, do an open eye meditation in the space.

Warwick Schiller ([01:05:20](#)):

And after that you felt different. Did you continue to feel different? Like it was, it, was it like, uh, one of those moments and another sixth sense kind of moment.

Karen Rohlf ([01:05:30](#)):

Yeah, it was, there were some other kind of crazy things that happen there, but yeah, really kind of interesting. But I remember coming home from that, it was like a week and, you know, weird things, um, more WIC, like weave through through the airport. And then there was like a delay and missing connections, you know, delays, missing connections and the shuttle from the airport, like lots of delays, but I got home earlier than I should have. And the guy I was with at the time, we were like, no wait, but we were deleted. Wait, you know, anyway, so I remember the first day back going back and I'm driving down the driveway to the facility I was working at in New York. And I remember driving in and just stopping for a minute and kind of looking out and, and I was like, oh, I think I get that phrase, um, in this world, but not of this world, or is it the other way around, um, I'm of this world, but not in this world.

Karen Rohlf ([01:06:45](#)):

It was like this, oh, I'm like part of everything, but I don't need to connect. Like I knew when I stepped out of that car, I was going back into a reality that didn't feel the same anymore in this world, but not of this world. So I was going into this world than my being a trainer, but I was not of, I was something bigger that was in that world, but I was out of this world. So it was like, I was, and it was kind of like, hold on to this feeling or just like B, keep this feeling going, can't hold on to it. Um, and I just remember that, you know, it gradually fades it. So you're here, people who aren't can't see me, I'm holding up the line and then I can experience like that. Like you go way up and then it fades a little bit, but you're still higher than you were before I find it's hard to go all the way back and then everything I've done. So I've done stuff like that. And then the other thing I've done a lot of is Tony Robbins, which is like the opposite end of the spectrum. Then Miguel Ruiz. I mean, we get movies as this like beautiful soul and Tony Robbins is like rockstar, but I like doing things like that because he's so not me. He's like rock, you know, male testosterone on stair, you know? And, but I like, I like putting myself in that

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

How many times you've done the firewalk

Karen Rohlf ([01:08:12](#)):

I did the firewalk once, but I did as more program first because you know, that's me, I'm like jump right into date with destiny the six day intense one first. And then later I did the unleash, the power within where you do the firewalk, but yeah, it was, I couldn't wait. I lived. That was fun.

Warwick Schiller ([01:08:31](#)):

Yeah. I did a, um, I've talked about it on the podcast and actually had the guy on here, but I did a, uh, three and a half day. Men's emotional resilience retreat last year with a guy. And he's a former serviceman spend a couple of years on the road with Tony Robbins, onstage doing the on-stage stuff. And he's done a lot big, deep dive into like grief stuff and all sorts of things, but it was, it was kind of a life-changing um, she dies that's that's the, that's the Tony Robbins connection thing there. Yeah. Um, so the let's go back to these books. So those are the books. When you, uh, when you selected the question, what book would you recommend to people? Those are the ones.

Karen Rohlf ([01:09:13](#)):

Yeah. I mean, it's the four agreements. I think that one, I think that's, it's a great place to start it's I returned to it. I leave it around, they pick it up and I read it again and, um, it in a totally applies to horses. So be impeccable with your word, don't take things personally, don't make assumptions, do your best. So you can apply those directly to horses and your life and everything. So I, I love that

Warwick Schiller ([01:09:40](#)):

One. Wow. Okay. So the next question that you selected was if you could spread a message throughout the world, what would it be? Um,

Karen Rohlf ([01:09:51](#)):

Never underestimate the possibility for things to improve in ways you cannot yet imagine you sound like your practice that well, it's on the bottom of every page on my website, it's at the bottom of every of my emails. It's, it's, I'm like the, I can be annoyingly positive and not in the kind of way that I don't see the things that are happening, you know, like, oh no, everything's okay. Not that kind. I just, I will defend in court that things are going to be better. They, they will be better because we're learning, I'm learning, I'm growing. I'm going to learn from anything that happens. And it might not show up the way I think it's going to show up, but I have a unshakeable belief that things can improve in ways. I can't yet imagine. So.

Warwick Schiller ([01:10:46](#)):

Yeah. I just, I'd like to shorten that. I just think you have an unshakeable belief and that's amazing. That's, that's very cool. Okay. What's the most worthwhile thing you've put your time into?

Karen Rohlf ([01:10:59](#)):

Well, we've already talked about it. I think that the inner journey of personal development, I mean, it's, it's necessary for me anyway. It, I, I, you know, it, this is me in this life, like how to not be curious about it and to get out of, it's really about learning how to get out of my own way, as much as possible, because life, I think puts stuff on us that that gets in our way, and I want to get rid of that. So I can just, you know, beam be my fullest version of myself.

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:38](#)):

They, the best version of you. So what came first? Uh, the horse, the president, George horse, or the, or the, um, the personal growth stuff.

Karen Rohlf ([01:11:51](#)):

Oh, it was, you know, it was all around the same.

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:56](#)):

Yes. But what came first? Did the horse trigger this or that this trigger, the horse is, is what I want it, that's fine. I think, no,

Karen Rohlf ([01:12:03](#)):

The fruit, I I'm going to say the personal, personal development, because it was, it was during a time where I was married and I kind of think I didn't want to be. And that was the first time I was like, I have to figure this out. Am I, I'm not happy and am I not happy? And that's why I'm not having, uh, the marriage I want, or is it I'm not happy because of the marriage. So out of fairness to the marriage, I thought I got to figure that out. And, um, that was the first sign of like, I need to figure myself out and figure out where that's coming from, but it was really around the same time that this horse arrived and I didn't really ever connect those two.

Warwick Schiller ([01:12:50](#)):

Oh, I think that know, I always tell people to get the horse you need when you need them. And I think that always showed up at just the right time. There was, yeah, because I was kinda,

Karen Rohlf ([01:13:00](#)):

I was, I was kind of shut down. I was like, no, everything's fine. That's how I went through life. And everything's fine. Yep. And, uh, you know, to, to all of a sudden wake up and go everything, ain't fine. And I got to figure out why and I, and you know, to not blame anybody else. I, I just like, I'm not gonna blame anybody else for this. I gotta figure it out myself. I gotta figure out what's going on on the inside of me before I make any decisions about what I'm going to do with this.

Warwick Schiller ([01:13:29](#)):

Yeah. And I'm thinking he showed up for a reason. Yeah. Okay. So next question for you. And we probably already covered this, but I don't think we've covered this one. What do you think your true purpose is in the world?

Karen Rohlf ([01:13:44](#)):

Yeah, I think it is. I first I wrote, I thought to teach, but I, I think it's more just to share and I have a vision. Okay. I can tell you this. Cause I know you're weird like me now that I've talked to you. So here's my vision of the way things are weird. There's this like soup, there's this, see, there's this ocean of life and we're all part of this ocean. And we all have a little Periscopes that stick up and we can look around and we can see the world as it is from our perspective. And it's our role. I believe for me to look around, see what I see Periscope down and share that with the collective so that we all can learn from each other. And by sharing all our different perspectives, we get closer to the truth, whatever the truth is, knowing that everybody's individual truth is going to look different, but we, we just come back and we share. And

yeah. And so I think that's why it shows up as I'm a teacher and I'm really, I can't not teach, but I think really what it is I can't not share. And that's how I ended up with a profession of teaching.

Warwick Schiller ([01:15:12](#)):

When you were younger, did you, were you the one in the family who was taking all the family pictures on vacation? I did take a lot of pictures. Cause, cause I was, I was always, I was always the shirt, you know?

Karen Rohlf ([01:15:25](#)):

Yeah. I draw, I draw, I would I drawing pictures and writing the stories.

Warwick Schiller ([01:15:31](#)):

All right. Yeah. I th I think, you know, the question was, what do you think your true purpose is in the world? And you're trying to what yours is. But I do think that, you know, that's what this whole journey on podcast is quite a bit about too, is people who have got to a point to where other people kind of look up to them, um, you know, maybe a bit of an influencer or whatever, and then share not what they do. No, this is not about dressage naturally.net, which we can get into. But I mean, the, the, the, the journey that, that got you to this, this point, sharing that because we've had, do you know, Jim Masterson? I had Jim on the podcast and I think Jim thought we were going to talk about how the masters and method works. And it was like pulling teeth.

Warwick Schiller ([01:16:28](#)):

But I finally figured because with Jim, I wanted to know, you know, he was a hundred jumping room that figured this out by observing horses while well Bodyworkers worked on them. You know, that's the story I always heard, but I'm like, yes, but why didn't every other hunter jumper groom figure this out from observing. Bodyworkers no one had any more opportunity than you. Well, turns out he spent two years heavily in the transcendental meditation, lived in the condo as a child, had a pet. You know what I mean? That sort of stuff. That's the stuff that fascinates me because, um, I think, I don't know. I think a lot of people look up to successful people and might think they got lucky or they, or they worked hard or whatever. And of course your work hard, but I think it's being open to those less than mainstream ideas.

Karen Rohlf ([01:17:21](#)):

Well, and there's some courage, I mean, because that's where the judgment, the lack of judgment, because there were a million times I stopped writing my book. Who am I to write at your sash book? There's dressage books already written, oh my, I mean, that thought stopped me dead in my tracks at three o'clock in the morning, a million times. And so what I had to tell myself was, I'm not saying this is the best. I'm not saying I'm better than anybody else, but here's what I've learned. And if you'd like to understand what I've learned, I'm going to write it down. You know? So there's a lot of, there's some courage. And that's where I think the personal development comes in because you got to, you know, know how to deal with emotions and judgment and recognize those thoughts as not necessarily truth. Thank you brain for telling me that I shouldn't write this book because I'm nobody thank you for that information now go away. So, you know, that's what I call a brain gremlin. We gotta be able to recognize what's not your real self talking. That's, you know, the, the, you know, who who says, who said that it wasn't actually me. And to be, that's where the personal development creates the courage, which allows you to then be creative and put yourself out there. My,

Warwick Schiller ([01:18:45](#)):

Yeah, my friend Jane pike. She's a good question. Mindset coach. She calls that the EDBD committee.

Karen Rohlf ([01:18:51](#)):

Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:18:56](#)):

Okay. So the million dollar question that everybody on the podcast has selected this question, what is your relationship like with fear?

Karen Rohlf ([01:19:07](#)):

Oh yeah. Um, I noted that is number one. I'm I'm like, Ooh, I feel fear. So I think that's really important because if we don't recognize it as fear, then, um, other stuff piles on. So, but here's the thing. So I guess from Tony Robbins, I've, I've learned like, if you can't, you must, right. So if I feel fear, I go, huh, I'm feeling this thing. And then I kind of nudge myself to the edge. So I'm not a dare devil, but I do like to challenge myself, but I've also learned that, um, fear is a feeling and that feeling is almost identical to excitement. They're really close. And I think to frame it as fear as a decision, you're choosing to call that heart racing, clammy, pained, feeling fear, but it it's, it could be excitement. And, um, there's a, have you seen the Ted talk, Kelly McGonigal, um, making friends with your stress.

Karen Rohlf ([01:20:17](#)):

Let me write that one down. Yeah. Kelly McGonigal, making friends with your stress. And she said she used to spend her life trying to help people, um, decrease stress. And then she realized she was doing a service cause she likes, stresses, bad stresses unhealthy. And they did an experiment. They tracked people over years and they found that people with, um, equal amounts of stress and physiologically, they could, you know, measure these things. The people who framed it as fear had more heart attacks had more disease. The people who framed it as this is my body preparing me for something had, they could measure the arterial dilation. They could measure heart attacks and they were healthier because of the way they framed not feeling. So sometimes when I get that, I get a feeling and often the joke around here is my husband knows this. He's like, oh, you're going to do something because I kind of like to go to that edge and see what's over there and investigate. So I'm not a Daredevil, but I have jumped out of a perfectly good airplane and I used to rock climb and mountain bike. And, but I feel like I take very calculated risks. Um, but I, I, I think it's healthy. It's I think it served me in life to go up to the edge and go, let's look here for a second. What's actually going on.

Warwick Schiller ([01:21:51](#)):

Um, calculated risk. Yes. Rock climbing. Uh, how much rock climbing did you do? I did a lot.

Karen Rohlf ([01:21:57](#)):

My first husband was a rock climber. We used to live in Manhattan and go up to the Schwan gigs, like every weekend on a motorcycle. That was so cool. Um, but I was, I didn't lead climb. I was the follower. So, you know, as long as everything worked, according to plan, you just kind of sit in the harness for a little while. Um, but, um, but yeah. Is, it was it's fun. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:20](#)):



My son's a rock climber and he's taken us out climbing a bit and it's, it is. Yes. It's very, very cool because you just have to be present, you know, it's, you just have to be present and it's it's uh, do you know who Dean Potter is or was? I don't think so. Dean part, it was one of the world's best rock climbers and he died in, he died in a wing suiting accident in Yosemite. Um, he, you know, he kind of climbed with Tommy Coldwell a lot and climbed with Alex Honnold quite a bit, I think. Um, but I read a book and I think it was, have you ever read the rise of Superman by Steven Kotler? It's about achieving the flow state. No, but I'm writing it down. Oh, it's a great book. And in that book, they talked to Dean Potter and he is talking about the flow state and he said, you know, I didn't really like rocks.

Warwick Schiller ([01:23:17](#)):

I don't climb rocks. Cause I like rocks. I like, I climb rocks because of the state I have to be in to climb rocks. You know, he used to do a lot of free soloing and stuff like that, but you know, it's not necessarily about the rock climbing. And then Steven Kotler wrote a really good, not necessarily a follow-up book, but some sealant to that called stealing fire, best book I've ever read. And it's about altered states of consciousness. And it's about different ways of achieving altered states of consciousness, you know, whether it's meditation, uh, you know, psychedelics or doing things that you have to be in the zone, you know, like, you know, Travis Pastrana doing that double back, flip at the X games and you know, Felix Baumgartner when he, when he first got to parachute from outer space and old stories about that sort of stuff. And it's yeah, it's, it's just one of my favorite books. Well, I'm

Karen Rohlf ([01:24:09](#)):

Writing, I wrote those down. So, um, I'll, I'll get those. I don't have it in a long time. Um, not many cliffs in Florida,

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

The chore you'd have a hard time keeping the chalk in your fingers. You'd be sweating so much. Yeah.

Karen Rohlf ([01:24:29](#)):

Yeah. But, um, but yeah, some, a lot of really, really great memories, um, of climbing and the view is amazing, you know,

Warwick Schiller ([01:24:38](#)):

Awesome stuff. Okay. So another one of these questions that you, so he got myself into, oh, we'll be gentle. Uh, no, this one I'm interested to see what you think. And the question was, what do you think it means to be a leader and a follower?

Karen Rohlf ([01:24:54](#)):

Yeah. I selected that question as, as if I knew the answer, I don't really know the answer. I thought it would be an interesting topic. So it's a really interesting topic. So, um, I want to tell you about a simulation exercise that I do in clinics and w yeah, so there you pair up and you're standing, you know, facing each other and I tell people, okay, one of you is the leader and you can do whatever you want with your body and, you know, keep it, the goal is that your person can match. You. Don't try to trick them. And one person leads and the other follow. So we do that for a little while and then I go, okay, now I'll switch. The other person leaves the other one falls. And I say, okay, now, um, just begin. You can lead. If you get tired, you can give away the leadership and follow.

Karen Rohlf ([01:25:44](#)):

And if you're tired of following, you can, you can take it, you can give it all goes. And then he said, go. So people are moving around and there's, and then afterwards, and it's usually really fun. So there's a lot of laughing. Um, and afterwards I go, okay, give me techniques. What were some techniques, if you were leading and you wanted to be the follower, or if you were following and he wanted to take over leadership. And what's really fascinating is the answers are the same. Um, no matter what. So if you were, um, going from being a leader to a follower, you could wait, or you could kind of push the person ahead. You can kind of lead them ahead of you. And then, you know, or you could just wait and pause until they do something and then you follow them. Um, but going from following to leading, you could also wait and the person pulls back and now you're leading, or you could push.

Karen Rohlf ([01:26:54](#)):

So I thought isn't that interesting, same techniques. So that's kind of cool. So found that, you know, some people liked leading some people like following, but where the most fun was happening, where all the laughter was calming was when it, it transferred in really interesting ways because the magic was when you can't tell. And it's kind of like, there's this third idea. So it's like Napoleon hill, the mastermind principle, you know, new, no two minds can ever come together without thereby creating a third invisible intangible force, which may be like into a third mind. So there's this other thing that happens. And when this happens, everybody's laughing because it's like, oh my God, where are we going? And to me, that's the magic horses, right? So we're always leading a little bit and we're following little bit, we're leading them to do a trial and then we follow them in the trot and we might be following them in the trot while we lead them to turn.

Karen Rohlf ([01:27:56](#)):

Yeah. Right. So there's always this mishmash. So, you know, we get, I find myself as a dresser or a horse professional thinking, I need to be the leader. And I really am not sure that I need to be the leader. I think I need to be in this exchange. Right. I need to be a teacher. I need to be a teacher for my horse. I need to be with my hurt horse. But, um, I think there's something really cool in the, just being open to it's a little bit of both. There's li there's suggesting, and then there's listening and, you know, sometimes our horses have great ideas and, um, yeah. So I I'm playing with this idea of leaders. I think I'm ready to kind of let it go. I, I find myself saying the words of, I needed to be a leader. We need to be leaders for horses. And, and I feel myself not really quite believing it when I say it. So I I'm sort of letting go of some of that language. I don't know what I have to replace it with. So

Warwick Schiller ([01:29:00](#)):

I was kind of like that, um, right. Hunt's saying first to go with them, then they go with you and then you go together and that's kind of sounds like what that feels like. Someone's, you know, someone's, you're going with them. So you're the follower. And then they go on with you. Now you're the leader. But then at some point in time, you reached this, this place where you're both going together. I did exactly that exercise at a dinner ever heard of Wim Hof, the Iceman. So I went to, I take, I've been taking cold showers for about two years and I have a chest freezer in my garage that I take ice Bart's in. Oh,

Karen Rohlf ([01:29:34](#)):

I tried that. And I'm not good at

Warwick Schiller ([01:29:37](#)):

It. You tell me, oh yeah, my horse can't do that. Yeah. And did you break it down into smaller steps and the horse could do that? Yeah. You don't try the ice.

Karen Rohlf ([01:29:47](#)):

Bath. Okay. I turn the shower down right before I get out.

Warwick Schiller ([01:29:53](#)):

I'll just put down the list. They under threshold. Okay. Um, but I went to a whim Hoff seminar. The first time I had an ice bath and one of the exercises they had us do was take a toothpick wooden toothpick and stick it in with like someone hold their hand out, like with their hand, their Palm spread, and then put the toothpick against the end of your index finger. And then your partner who's facing you does the same thing. And so the toothpick is in between your two index fingers and one of you is deleted and they moved their hand around. And the other one, the father was going to make sure the toothpick doesn't drop. And so your hand goes forward and backwards. And so I decide, then what you do is the other one you say, okay, you take over. So the other person becomes a, you become a filler.

Warwick Schiller ([01:30:37](#)):

And then at some point in time, you decided, okay, now, instead of just moving our hands, we're going to move their feet. And someone's still a leader and someone else is the follower. And then you kind of get through it and moving around, but then you go now just feel each other. And there is no leader. There is no follower just go in. And it was the coolest feeling bit. Your hands are a toothpick with the part that was really interesting was the, you know, you've meditated and stuff. You think about like Reiki type energy or whatever you do that for a while. He says, take your other hand and stick it in the middle. And you put your hand up in between those two hands and it's hot. Like you can feel the energy in there cause all the concentrational intention is right there.

Warwick Schiller ([01:31:18](#)):

Um, and I mentioned a book a minute ago called stealing fire. And in that, so the subtitle for that book is how, uh, what is it, how Silicon valley, Navy seals and rogue entrepreneurs are changing. The way we live and work is the subtitle for the book. But in that book really early in the start, it talks about the, the seal team that took down. Uh, it wasn't a summit being Loddon, I don't think, but it was someone like that. And they had to go on this compound in the middle of the night, there's women, there's children. And they've got to take this guy alive and what they do, not only do they train the combat together, they meditate and they'd be covered these hive mind. And what happens is when a seal team goes into a building, the first guy looks left. The second guy looks right.

Warwick Schiller ([01:32:06](#)):

The third guy looks left, the fourth guy truck. They're like a zipper and they go into a building and there's no communications. Cause it's got to be completely dark and completely silent. And the guy in front he's leading, unless of course someone else sees something as they go by room and they just peel off and they become the leader and the whole team just falls in behind them. And there's no signals, there's no talking, there's no communication. They just feel each other. It's exactly what you were talking about right then. Wow. And the other thing I thought was really interesting is, you know, for years we have that whole dogma about, you know, in horses, there's a, there's a leader and there's then his followers and yada yada yada. And we, we, we get entrenched that dogma entrenched in our minds, but really in

a herd situation, it's so much more fluid in a real herd, not, not like a domestic herd where we've got limited resources, there's piles of hay and there's a water trough.

Warwick Schiller ([01:33:02](#)):

I'm talking in the wild. There is no, that is doesn't exist in the world. And it's such a fluid, fluid thing where the leadership is fluid and it moves from one to another. And I just, I love that exercise that you do because it's not only a good exercise to get in tune with other people, but it's a good ex I mean, it's, that's how it works with horses. You know, sometimes you can take over and sometimes they can take over, but you do enough of that. Give and take. And eventually you're both one unit and then, you know, it's that whole, then you go together.

Karen Rohlf ([01:33:35](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And what breaks the exercise is when there's somebody who had a there's, there's often someone who's like, I'm going to keep the leadership, you know, or I'm not gonna let them. And they're, they're thinking and they have some sort of agenda and they're trying to be fun. Like they're doing it in a playful way, but it, it, it breaks the energy because they're not feeling in the moment. They're trying to make something happen instead of just feeling what what's coming up. So, um, so true. You know, and that's why it's such a great exercise for them for doing something with horses.

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:11](#)):

It sounds like a great exercise. So you do this at clinics. Do you do a lot of clinics? Is that what you do? Most of them?

Karen Rohlf ([01:34:18](#)):

Um, not right now. I mean, I kind of go through phases. Um, there, there was a point in my life where I was so burned out from the business. I was thought I was going to quit horses. So I am very sensitive to going over threshold of things. So I kind of do like a lot of clinics for a few years and then not as many. And then some, and I give myself permission to change how I do things, um, whenever I want. And I'm very fortunate. I've got, you know, so many online resources and we've got, you know, the video classroom and my courses that are just rolling along. So it gives me I'm very, fortunately I have the luxury of being able to choose how much time spend, um, you know, teaching versus being at home 10, tending the store. Um, so it really varies, I guess, is my answer to that question.

Warwick Schiller ([01:35:08](#)):

Have you been in a bit of a forced hiatus the last year and a half? The whole COVID thing

Karen Rohlf ([01:35:14](#)):

I have, but you know, I could very easily never leave the farm I am, uh, my husband's like, you're really self entertaining. I'm like, yeah, I know. Like I don't need

Warwick Schiller ([01:35:28](#)):

Much. I used to think I was a bit of an extrovert, but this past year and a half, like we didn't go anywhere. We were ordering food from the grocery store sort of thing. And yeah, I think I'm an extroverted introvert to where I can go out and, you know, cause I do I'll do clinics, but then I get in the plane the next day. I don't talk to anybody. I'm just, I just need to read it. Yeah.

Karen Rolf ([01:35:49](#)):

Yeah. And that's the thing like I can be, you know, I love clinics. I'm really outgoing and I mean, I love speaking and um, but I recharge, I get energy by being alone. Um, so I'm, I, you know, this past year has kind of been like, oh good. I don't need an excuse to just stay home. So I, I, yeah, I'm very happy just being here in my beautiful place with my husband and my horses and my animals.

Warwick Schiller ([01:36:16](#)):

One of the, yeah, one of the questions you didn't select, but you almost said it right then was what do you do to recharge?

Karen Rolf ([01:36:23](#)):

Oh yeah. Well, um, I'm so lucky. I mean the, what I do every day is recharging the way I've set things up. But, um, my happy place is like lay on the grass with my dogs, what my husband and I like to do. Um, I mean we can just go walk in the woods and just walk in the woods and look at stuff and talk. We love, um, like music. So I love hearing live music. So that's, that's something we'll go, go do, um, get in the kayak, go float down. One of the Springs around here. Um, simple, simple stuff.

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:01](#)):

Sounds pretty idyllic. So if people want to know more about Karen Rolf, where did they find you? Yeah,

Karen Rolf ([01:37:09](#)):

I'm very Google-able but I'm just Sosh naturally.net is, is the central place for everything. And there's a, there's a ton of stuff there. You can get some free videos or read the blogs or listen to podcasts. And, um, there's a lot of stuff on the website. So just as naturally.net.

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:28](#)):

What about social media? Do you have much?

Karen Rolf ([01:37:31](#)):

Oh yeah, I got that. Yeah. I'm on Facebook. Um, dressage naturally I have a, I have a group called dressage naturally land that's open to everybody. Um, so you're, everybody's welcomed there. That's where it's in the groups. It's easier to like have conversations and, and talk and uh, I'm on Instagram dressage naturally. And um, I think on Instagram, it's Rolf Karen. Um, and yeah, so that's, that's where I am.

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:59](#)):

Awesome. Well, thank you so much for joining me on like Jenny on podcasts. This was, this was exactly what I hoped a bit. Well, I didn't even hope it would be, cause I had, I didn't know. I knew, you know, I've listened to some podcasts with you with other people and I kind of knew your story, like the sound of it and all that, but it didn't think we'd get to the Sharman stuff. So that was common

Karen Rolf ([01:38:19](#)):

On a pyramid. Yeah. Well, it's really fun. Um, more work to, to be able to have these conversations. Not many people ask me questions that, that lead to the showman story. So I really appreciate,

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Warwick Schiller ([01:38:31](#)):

Well, I hadn't known them. Sharmane stories. I'd asked the questions earlier, but thank you for sharing what you shared and you guys at home listening. Thank you guys so much for joining us on that junior podcast and we'll catch you up.

Speaker 1 ([01:38:45](#)):

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