



Clanking Chains: The Home is the “Round Pen” for Child Rearing; Developing Trust, Authority Orientation, & Follow-Up; Illustration: James 3:3

Roberts, Monty. “Communication.” Chap. 2 in *Horse Sense for People*. (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 55, 57-59:

When a young, unstarted horse enters the round pen he is stepping into the unknown and his adrenaline is up. The success of my method is based on my ability to communicate with the horse, and the round pen provides me with a controlled environment in which intense conversation can take place. (p. 55)

The round pen is an ingenious configuration. It allows the animal to move without stopping the flow of energy, as an enclosure with corners would do.

The round pen is the place where two entities come together; at first they are disconnected, but then with proper discourse they become harmonious and synchronized. (p. 57)

When an untrained horse enters the round pen he is in a strange place, with a human present, no other horses and no obvious escape route. His only goal is survival.

If at this point the human communicates that he is not predatory, the horse is able to assess calmly what is available to him. His keen senses are in their most heightened state, and ... he instinctively sets out to negotiate with his human counterpart in an effort to come out alive. If the human knows the language of Equus he is able to create an environment for learning. He can offer leadership and ask the horse if he would like to join his herd. (p. 58)

In a round pen the flight route keeps the horse at a steady pace around the perimeter of the pen. The horse can flee from me, but his flight will bring him back to the place he started from. (pp. 58-59)

The round pen helps me to achieve the first stage of our conversation. It creates the context in which our conversation takes place, and the context of any meeting can affect the speed of the outcome. Within the controlled environment of the round pen, I can initiate responses from the horse. As I ask and respond to the horse's signals, I never lose sight of my objective, which is to ask the horse to willingly allow itself to be saddled, bridled and ridden. The trainer must always remain objective and should not personalize the horse's responses. Abuse is more apt to occur when a trainer perceives that he is personally under attack.

No flight animal can contrive to act against you. Each of its actions is a response to something the trainer has done. The trainer has perceived the actions of the horse to be directed against him personally. Knowing no other alternative, he acts out violently. The trainer has been taught by generations of predecessors that it is necessary to physically break the will of the horse.

People can contrive to be difficult, but close observation will show that most prefer to get along with one another. Obstreperous behavior is most often a response to actions that negatively impacted them.

My round pen is a place where I introduce to the horse the idea that he and I are on the same team. The horse has a natural understanding of the concept of the herd and teamwork. (p. 59)

- 1) For a child the “round pen” is home. The “two entities” are parents and children who are instinctively as well as biologically connected. Instinctively, the child wishes to survive and the parents wish to assist him.



- 2) The home is the arena or corral in which the child and parents can establish communication and develop discourse. All parents have divinely delegated authority. Christian parents are obligated to possess establishment and biblical viewpoint. Their mandated objective is to communicate this knowledge to their children.
- 3) The primary obligation of parents is coalescence with their child's soul with secondary emphasis on his body. Oftentimes morals involve the body and its actions but the source of morality is principles engrained into the soul's stream of consciousness.
- 4) Often parents emphasize genetics. They are very proud of their family trees and the bloodlines that lead back to prominent people who participated in significant events or who achieved great things in their day.
- 5) There is certainly nothing wrong with conveying this information to a child. The purpose would be to inspire him to emulate his betters in the family lines. But his ancestors are his betters because they took advantage of their genetic abilities to do good instead of evil.
- 6) Taking advantage of abilities is a mental attitude that suppresses fear with courage built on integrity.
- 7) Thus, the greatness of individuals begins in the soul and the quality of one's achievements is determined by their manifestations of truth and virtue.
- 8) Therefore, parents should emphasize the soul not the body. Consequently the development of integrity, virtue, and honor should take precedence over the development of talents, abilities, and skills.
- 9) However, both may be used in concert to achieve the objectives of both. A child's participation in sports, music, theater, or the visual arts should complement the ongoing development of his integrity, virtue, and honor.
- 10) Without these attributes the child may do well in sports but will not be a good sport; he may play music excellently but the music he plays may be far less than excellent; he may be an influential performer but his influence may be for evil rather than good; and he may transfer his society's milieu and Zeitgeist to canvas but only their flaws, not their virtues.
- 11) Remember, God created the soul and it is eternal. Human procreation created the human body and it is fallen and temporal. It is the soul that is saved and to which is imputed the resurrection body. The body is corrupt and is destined for death and decay.
- 12) Thus the body with its talents and abilities is to be developed and utilized for good. But these things cannot be accomplished unless the soul directs the process based on establishment integrity or preferably a combination of establishment and biblical integrity.
- 13) The contrast between the origin of the soul and body is why there is no marriage in heaven. God creates the soul to have both a temporal and eternal relationship with Him. The body is created by human procreation and is corrupted by genetic sin with which God can never have fellowship.



- 14) Once the Eternal State begins, procreation ceases. All believers' earthly relationships are restored except for the physical. All are free of the influence of the sinful nature. All are in status quo perfection in resurrection bodies. All are willing followers of God and Christ and possess a fervent desire to worship and serve Them.
- 15) Getting children to Join-Up and Follow-Up is the objective of parents. Their goal is to instill into their children the essentials of establishment and doctrinal integrity upon which they can build as adults. Their methods of accomplishing these objectives and goals are benevolence and severity.
- 16) Fear is not only a sin but a strong emotion based on the instinct to survive. As with all emotion it is a reactor factor to perceived threat or danger. Fear without a problem-solving device is irrational. It is willing to compromise, capitulate, and concede in order to insure safety. It is the source of cowardice, hypocrisy, and duplicity and most legislation.
- 17) A child should never fear his parents. A child should respect his parents. If there is fear it should be directed toward wrongdoing and its consequences. Parents should be respected as God's instrument of administering discipline for wrongdoing.
- 18) This respect is a reciprocal love motivated by the parents' unconditional love for the child. This develops into an aggressive love manifest by the child's enduring loyalty and devotion.
- 19) The home is the "round pen" in which Join-Up occurs between children and parents. It creates the "context in which conversion takes place."
- 20) "Context" refers to "environment or setting." Is the home environment nonthreatening and is it viewed by the child as a place of security? Or is the home environment threatening and perceived by the child as a place of insecurity?
- 21) It is obvious that the former is the context in which the desired objectives may be more quickly achieved. The trainer's objective "is to ask the horse to willingly allow itself to be saddled, bridled, and ridden."
- 22) The parents' objective is to ask the child to trust them (saddle), submit to their direction (bridle), and to voluntarily place himself under their control (rider).
- 23) The key to accomplishing these objectives is trust. Building trust with a horse is critical to his conversion and Join-Up. We can note some excellent applications from:

Roberts, Monty. "Building Trust." Chap. 3 in *From My Hands to Yours: Lessons from a Lifetime of Training Championship Horses*. (Solvang: Monty and Pat Roberts, Inc., 2002), 26-27:

Trust is the basis of everything I accomplish with the horse, and Join-Up is proof of the existence of trust within that relationship. By establishing trust, I am creating a zone around me where the horse feels comfortable enough to willingly Join-Up with me. At the moment of Join-Up, the horse comes to me and says, "I'll stay with you; I trust you. I am a herd animal and I can only survive if I have friends."

1. Through trust horses Join-Up with humans. Through trust, sinners Join-Up with Christ for salvation of their souls. The first authority figures for a child are his parents. Through trust the child Joins-Up with them in a process called bonding.



2. The concept of trust needs to be defined from the language of Scripture. We note the Greek of the New Testament from:

Friedrich, Gerhard (ed.). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), 6:1-7:

πίθω, peithō: The basic sense is 1. "to have confidence," "to give credence," "to be convinced," then 2. "to have confidence in a command," hence "to obey," also "to be persuaded."

In the New Testament ... means first "to trust," "to rely on." Also "to be convinced, persuaded," "to follow," "to obey." The meaning can be "to obey" in for example:

James 3:3 - Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey [**πίθω, peithō**] us, we direct their entire body as well.

Confidence in God is taken in the radical sense in which it includes absolute surrender of one's own assurance. It is thus united with obedience, which is free from all autonomy.

3. The plan of God is designed to introduce authority, order, and discipline to children by means of parents. Before a child comes to know, trust, and obey God he is introduced to these concepts in the context of the home.
4. The child instinctively and willingly Joins-Up with his parents at birth and bonds to the mother. He is willing to follow-up with father and mother as they give direction.