

Centering

How do I ride this?

- 1** Take your feet out of the stirrups and allow your legs to hang down long against your horse's sides.
- 2** Walking on a long rein, focus on your lower back/lumbar sacrum area.
- 3** For five full minutes, breathe very deeply, directing your inhalations and exhalations to that area of your back.
- 4** As you inhale, imagine inflating your lower back/lumbar sacrum as if to push against a hand resting there.
- 5** As you exhale, maintain the same fullness in your back.

Keep in mind

It is crucial for all riders to practice centering. It helps when executing any movement on horseback, especially when you are not consciously thinking about your position.

Execute this exercise only at the walk and practice it frequently, for the full five minutes. Stay focused. Keep concentrating on your breathing. This is harder than it sounds!

A variation of this exercise is to have a ground person longe you. Place one hand on your tummy and the other on the small of your back. Practice filling up both hands with your breath as you expand through the waist.