



## Introduction

**Thirza Hendriks and Emma Loftus** will be combining their knowledge and experience to deliver a 2-day workshop about Functional Equine Health.

As horse lovers, we put their well-being as our highest priority, but despite our best efforts we might get to deal with performance issues, behavioral abnormalities, relationship struggles, injuries, diseases, and general health concerns. We want to know what goes on beneath the skin and what to do to “fix” or improve things. But what if you can take a step back and learn to observe and read your horse’s body and mind? To create understanding and prevent a situation from escalating into a complex injury or dysfunction?

During this course you will learn to take a step back and assess horses on a deeper level regarding health and function. You will learn how to take a step back and observe and feel.

Movement should come easy to the horse and this course we will teach you how to recognize flow of movement as well as simple facilitation techniques for your horse – and yourself!

This course will provide a full holistic approach combining anatomy, physiology, and biomechanics. We will show a lot of dissection research and case studies to train your assessment skills. It will challenge you to look outside of the box, to discover your own influence on the horse and teach you practical skills for holistic biomechanical assessment of the horse and how to positively influence the horse's health and flow of movement.

Key words for this course:

Equine health; biomechanics; function; neuroscience; locomotory efficiency systems; physiological systems; tensegrity; assessment skills.

## For whom?

Anyone that is interested to develop your eye, feel and connection to the horse – whether you are a professional or a horse owner.

There are no pre-requisites to enter this course.

## Program

This course provides a balanced mix between theory and practicums

### Day 1.

Theory lecture:

1. What is health?
2. What is (movement) function?

Practicum

1. Finding health in your own body
2. Assessing horses on systemic holistic level

LUNCH BREAK

Theory lecture:

3. Flow and ease of movement
4. The influence of water (&its importance for health & fascia)

Practicum

3. Finding flow in your own movement
4. Assessing and finding ease / flow of movement in the horse

## **Day 2**

Theory lecture:

1. Neuroscience: self-regulation and the ability to deal with stress
2. The influence of breath

Practicum:

1. Finding breath in yourself
2. Breathwork for horses

LUNCHBREAK

Practicum:

3. Learning touch & intention
4. Simple techniques to improve functional health & flow of movement in yourself and your horse to optimize health, function & performance

## **Dates & Venue:**

April 15-16 2024

08.30-16.30 each day

Mount George, 93 Muller Rd, Mount George SA 5155, Australia

Please contact the venue direct for paddock / stabling options for those bringing a horse.

## About your teachers

### Emma Loftus

Emma Loftus is a qualified Biodynamic Craniosacral practitioner. She has been studying Craniosacral with horses since 2010 and gained a qualification in the Biodynamic model of this modality in 2019 with the Craniosacral Therapy Educational Trust in London.

Emma is registered with the Pacific association of Craniosacral therapists as well as the Equine Therapies association of Australia and currently has a busy practice around Victoria seeing horses and humans.

Continued professional development is a requirement to keep her registration up through advanced craniosacral trainings that range from; Neurodivergence, pre- and peri-natal trauma, the vascular system, the neuroendocrine immune system and more.

Emma is also certified Equinology Equine body worker (EEBW) and between 2016 and 2020 has attended various trainings through the Equinology school to gain more understanding of anatomy and biomechanics.

Alongside her clinical practice, Emma continues to further her equine anatomical knowledge by attending in person (and online) dissections.

Emma is a student at the Ellen Collinson School of Iridology and has found this modality to have great benefits within the world of craniosacral.

Through dissections, the map has been found to be quite accurate, and with this knowledge we can look deeper into the body to assist more complex cases that require a triage approach to their health and wellbeing.

Emma has a keen interest in bringing awareness to horse owners, practitioners, the veterinary and science world around Craniosacral therapy and its benefits to horses and their humans through local and international in-person workshops as well as online offerings.

Finally, Emma is a student of the Equusoma training program (Horse-Human trauma recovery). Biodynamic Craniosacral is trauma informed – and her Equusoma training is to develop this further in relation to bringing more awareness to the often-overlooked dyad (relational field) of the horse and their owner in home, away and therapeutic settings.

Emma is very interested in clinicians who think outside of the box; Thirza Hendriks, along with her colleagues within the Equine Studies school in Europe is such a person.



You can visit [Emma's website](#) or check out her Facebook page: [Emma Loftus Biodynamic Craniosacral for Horses and Humans](#).

### **Thirza Hendriks**

Thirza Hendriks is an equine scientist and coach, specialized in Biomechanics, Functional Training and Postural Movement Therapy.

In the field of equine Anatomy & Biomechanics, Thirza is part of the Equinestudies Dissection team and performs about 10 whole horse dissections (both primitive and domesticated horses) a year world-wide since 2018. This gives Thirza a unique insight on the horse 'inside-out' and she'll be able to present the latest research findings in Equine Science.



Besides her education in the field of Anatomy & Biomechanics, Thirza also studied Equine Exercise Physiology (Pg Dip) to understand the physical adaptations necessary in response to training stimuli and how to use this knowledge to build an efficient training plan.

In the area of training, Thirza has studied with various classical training professionals, as well

as rehabilitation specialist and/or institutions (such as Portuguese riding school, The Art of Horsemanship, Straightness Training, The School of Lightness and Dutch Institute of Classical Equitation. She has also successfully competed in the past (carriage driving, jumping & dressage).

All this knowledge combined has led Thirza to develop her own unique way of functional training and postural movement therapy for the horse. This way of training allows the horse to function within self-carriage and lightness so that a horse can move with optimal efficiency and minimal effort.

Throughout her career, Thirza got the reputation as an expert in rehabilitation training due to her successes with compromised horses world-wide. However, although rehabilitation is necessary, it is Thirza's ultimate passion to prevent problems rather than to manage them. Through education to both professionals and horse owners she allows them to make informed decisions regarding breeding, selecting form to function and functional training to set a new improved standard within the industry so that not rehabilitation, but instead functional health becomes the norm for (performance) horses.



Today, Thirza is a much sought-after international clinician and lecturer in the field of Biomechanics & Movement Analyses as well as Exercise Physiology and Functional Training for horses. By now, she travels to the UK, Sweden, USA, Taiwan, South Africa, Australia, and New-Zealand on a yearly basis, working together with other highly valued and renowned veterinarians, body workers, saddle fitters, and trimmers.

More information about Thirza can be found on: [www.thirzahendriks.com](http://www.thirzahendriks.com)

## Investment:

550 AUD with horse

350 AUD without horse

**Maximum 6 horse spots and 9 spots without horse**

**Students bringing a horse will receive:**

A detailed biomechanical assessment of their horse

A detailed health investigation of their horse

Practical exercises to improve health, breathing and flow of movement within their horse

Students without a horse can participate and learn from all biomechanical assessments and practical exercises.

**Registration via:**

<https://www.thirzahendriks.com/events-1/functional-health-course-2-day-course>

## Cancellation policy

A 30% refund will be given upon cancellation of the participant up till 12 weeks prior the event. Any cancellation on behalf of the participant within 12 weeks prior to the event will not be refunded. However, if the participant can find a suitable replacement for taking over the spot the fee can be refunded.

Upon the unlikely cancellation of the event by the organizer, a full refund of the participation fee will be given within 14 days. Additional costs like flight tickets / overnight stay will not be refunded.

You are strongly advised to close on a cancellation insurance.

