

## **Case Study – Tellington Method for a Horse who suffered a Stroke**

**- Rebecca Booth**

The vet diagnosed a stroke when the horse originally lying down and reluctant to get up then started "walking" in continuous circles, Azzar is a 33 year old Arabian mare. When I saw her, her front feet were camped out in front and back legs camped out behind and she was leaning to the left at a dramatic angle with her hind end. Her left hind foot was slightly more than midway to the right and the right hind also to the right causing the lean. She was dull in the eyes and unsteady on her feet. I could see she was in good physical condition and Mara told me days before she was cheeky and very active, normal for her. My first thoughts were that I needed to help her be more aware of her body, particularly her legs and hindquarters. I tested if she was an awareness of her feet by asking her to "lift" them. I didn't actually want her to lift the legs as I thought she would fall over but I was feeling for the change of balance in her body that indicated she was preparing for the move. She gave me no indication she felt the request at all. Mara told me she is normally very quick to pick up her feet. A head wrap and figure 8 body wrap were the first to be used.

On her legs I used python lifts, octopus, raccoon around coronet and tapping on her foot with my fingers (like we do with a wand). On her body I used random touches all over, as many different ones as I could to stimulate her nervous system. I gave her lots of time to integrate everything I did and I could see the light coming back into her eyes. She was starting to stand a lot straighter. When she looked steadier on her feet I thought I would give the Sure Foot Pads a go. My intention was to use them one at a time to minimise the possibility of her losing her balance. I was hoping they would bring her additional information through the soles of her feet and proprioception. I decided to try these diagonally so front left, right hind, front right, left hind but one at a time. Amazingly after the Tellington work, she was able to pick up her feet and place them on the pads. She really enjoyed them and her body became steadier. I finished off with some tail and forelock work. Afterwards she walked over and thanked me by licking me and placing her head resting in my hands. By now Mara was crying as she is not normally an affectionate horse and this to her was a very clear and deliberate thank you. Mara had done one clinic with Robyn Hood about 5 years ago so I reminded her of the basics and asked her to continue the work. She does not have the pads but I asked her to place anything flat under her feet that might provide different sensations e.g. cardboard, towel, etc. That will continue to stimulate her. She had some wraps from years ago so I suggested a few different configurations as well but mostly told her to use her intuition. I will check in with her next week and see how she is going. When I left she was standing squarely and quite well balanced with only a small sway every now and then.

