

Dressage4Kids TEAM Clinic at Georgia International Horse Park  
October 26/27, 2018



Working through a tough situation and creating a positive outcome is the most helpful in growing as a rider. For years I have had a bad habit of riding with my reins too long, my hands too low and too wide; meaning that a lot of the time I lacked a consistent connection with the bridle. Although challenging, my first lesson with Lendon was invaluable

because during that lesson Lendon helped me break that habit.

Throughout the lesson the changes in my riding were immediate and remarkable. For example, when I made a correction of my habit, I had much better control of my horse's shoulders and her overall frame was much better. If my reins lengthened and I slipped back into my old habit, my circle would lose its shape because my horse's shoulders escaped through my outside rein. The whole lesson was comprised of retraining years of riding with my reins too long and my hands in the wrong place. By the end I wasn't sure if we had really retrained my muscle memory or if my hands were only temporarily in the right place.

I was thrilled the next day to find that the change was not temporary at all! The next day was focused more on test movements, but Lendon still helped me to focus and improve on my basics. She helped me to really drill down on my halt transitions and my free walk to medium walk transitions.

Lendon very simply emphasized that when the rider says "halt" the horse needs to halt. She explained that if the horse won't halt



from a quiet aid the rider must then use a harsher aid to communicate clearly. When the horse is responsive, the rider could then use quieter aids.

For addressing the free walk to medium walk transition she suggested maintaining or developing a connection with the bit during the free walk before picking up the reins. That helps to make a more seamless transition into medium walk. She also said that repetition of those kinds of transitions were key. If the horse braces or jigs them quickly make a correction, return to free walk, and try again. The horse should be just as easy to let into a free walk as they are to put them together.

Since having those lessons I think about Lendon's feedback constantly. I cannot stress how helpful those lessons were in giving me valuable stepping stones into developing more solid basics and moving up to having more successful work at harder levels. I'm so grateful to Lendon for those wonderful lessons and to Dressage4Kids for giving me the opportunity to attend this incredible clinic.