

Dear

For two years now, we've had family stay over for a few days over christmas.

Being neurodivergent, this is very taxing. Before I was aware of my neurodivergence, I thought I was overreacting and I just pushed through events like these and the aftermath. I ignored the signs that I was reaching my limit. The result was predictable in hindsight: meltdowns, exhaustion, and of course guilt.

Now I know better. I know I need time to recover after situations like this. I can plan for it, and take the space I need. More or less. Because the guilt is still there. Even though I know I need it, I still don't fully show up for myself.

## The signals are there long before things fall apart

I was reminded of this while reading a recent newsletter by Carolina from Horse Conversations.

She wrote about how pain, stress, and dysregulation rarely appear out of nowhere. They start quietly, in ways that are easy to dismiss, especially in environments where pushing through is normal or even expected.

We usually only pay attention once things escalate. When the horse reacts. When the human burns out. When the situation "suddenly" becomes unmanageable.

But it was not sudden. The information was there all along.

## When this happens in front of my camera

The same goes for horses.

They signal discomfort, overwhelm, and fatigue in much the same way, through posture and tense behaviour. When those early, subtle signals are ignored, that behaviour escalates. Not because the horse is difficult, but because we did not understand the earlier communication, forcing them to communicate in a more obvious manner.

I have attended a few workshops with experienced photographers, where the horse was made to do the same thing over and over and over, just to get 'the perfect image'. To the point that the horse

became stressed and uncooperative.

During a session with me, this is definitely not an option. I not only pay attention to the lighting, surroundings, and you, but also, and maybe even more so, to signs that your horse is starting to feel discomfort.

I care about the wellbeing of your horse, so I am not looking for utter obedience. And when those early signs should show up for some reason, I adjust before things tip over.

## Why I do not push through

Ignoring limits does not create better images. It creates tension.

The photographs that matter most are not made by overriding signals, but by respecting them early enough that nothing has to break.

That requires time. It requires paying attention. And it requires accepting that taking a break, or slowing down is not failure.

Choosing a photographer is also choosing how much tension you are willing to ignore. If you choose less, you know where to find me.

Related blog posts:

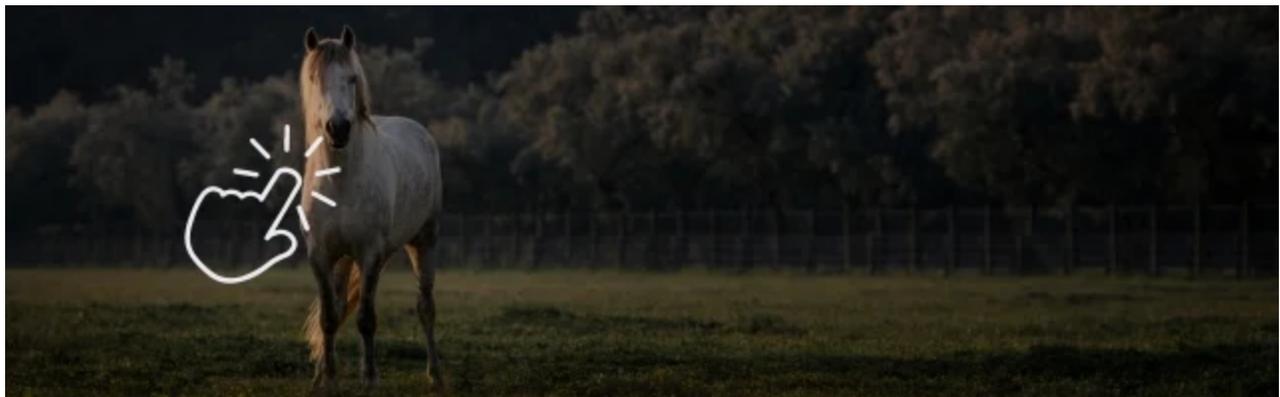
[What many people never realize about equine photography and neurodivergence](#)

[Why my horse photography isn't about perfection](#)

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What **caught my eye** on social media this month.

This caught my eye because it states something that is so obvious yet so many equestrians forget about it. They rely a leadership mindset that confuses obedience with safety.



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## My month in 3 images



As always, thank you for being a part of my journey.

Hold onto those small, everyday moments with your horse—they're the ones that matter most.

*Caroline*



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