

**Presenter's name:** Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel

**Curriculum vitae:**

Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel is a journalist, author and riding instructor qualified by the German Equestrian Federation (FN). With over 20 published books – some of which have been translated into Hungarian – numerous lectures, seminars, courses and further training for trainers, she is a qualified specialist for the rider's seat and aids both at home and abroad. Her uncle Gottfried von Dietze founded the German *Kuratorium für Therapeutisches Reiten*. Through her family connection, her professional expertise and the intensive collaboration with her well-known cousin *Susanne von Dietze* – a worldwide well-known physiotherapist – she has gained practical experience in various areas of therapeutic riding – from training para-equestrian athletes to working as a judge. For more than 20 years she has been involved in the training program for future therapists in Hungary as an examiner for the relevant equestrian and hippological skills. This year she started a train-the-trainers program in Hungary.

As a journalist, she is not only known for her writing on equestrian topics, but she is also an expert on contemporary ballet and stage dance.

**Category:** Oral presentation

**Topic:** Special Program / projects

**Authors:**

Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel

**Title:** WARMING UP THE BRAIN: A NEW START TO A THERAPEUTIC RIDING LESSON

**Keyword 1:** Brain Warm-up

**Keyword 2:** Autonomous Coordination

**Keyword 3:** Body Ownership

**Abstract:**

Anyone who sits on a horse, whether they are a competitive rider or not, faces the same basic challenge: to adapt their body, consciously and unconsciously, to the movements of the horse's back. It's one of the wonders of nature that these movements fit perfectly into the human body's system of movement.

If we look at the basic gaits of a horse - walk, trot, canter - the different demands on the compensatory movements of the rider's body have one thing in common: they belong to Autonomous Coordination, such as walking, standing, kneeling, running, swinging or jumping from one leg to the other... ect. This type of coordination doesn't need to be trained; it just needs to be developed. All babies and toddlers have similar, if not identical, stages of learning to move without the help of responsible adults. This self-fulfilling program has established human survival skills: safe stability in an upright position and the ability to move the body as effectively as possible.

The specific learning steps in Autonomous Coordination can be used for a highly effective warm-up of the brain. This program directly activates the cerebellum, which is responsible for coordination, rhythm and movement correction. The brain's strong danger filter will generally consider these familiar movements as safe. This warm-up program, consisting of 2 preparatory and 6 execution

steps, can be easily adapted to different levels of movement ability. The exercises can be performed on the ground and/or on horseback.

The immediate benefit of the program will be a better connection between the brain and the body. It can help to reduce hyperarousal, anxiety and fear, and build a better sense of self in a number of ways, including body ownership. All of these effects can be very helpful in a Therapeutic Riding approach.