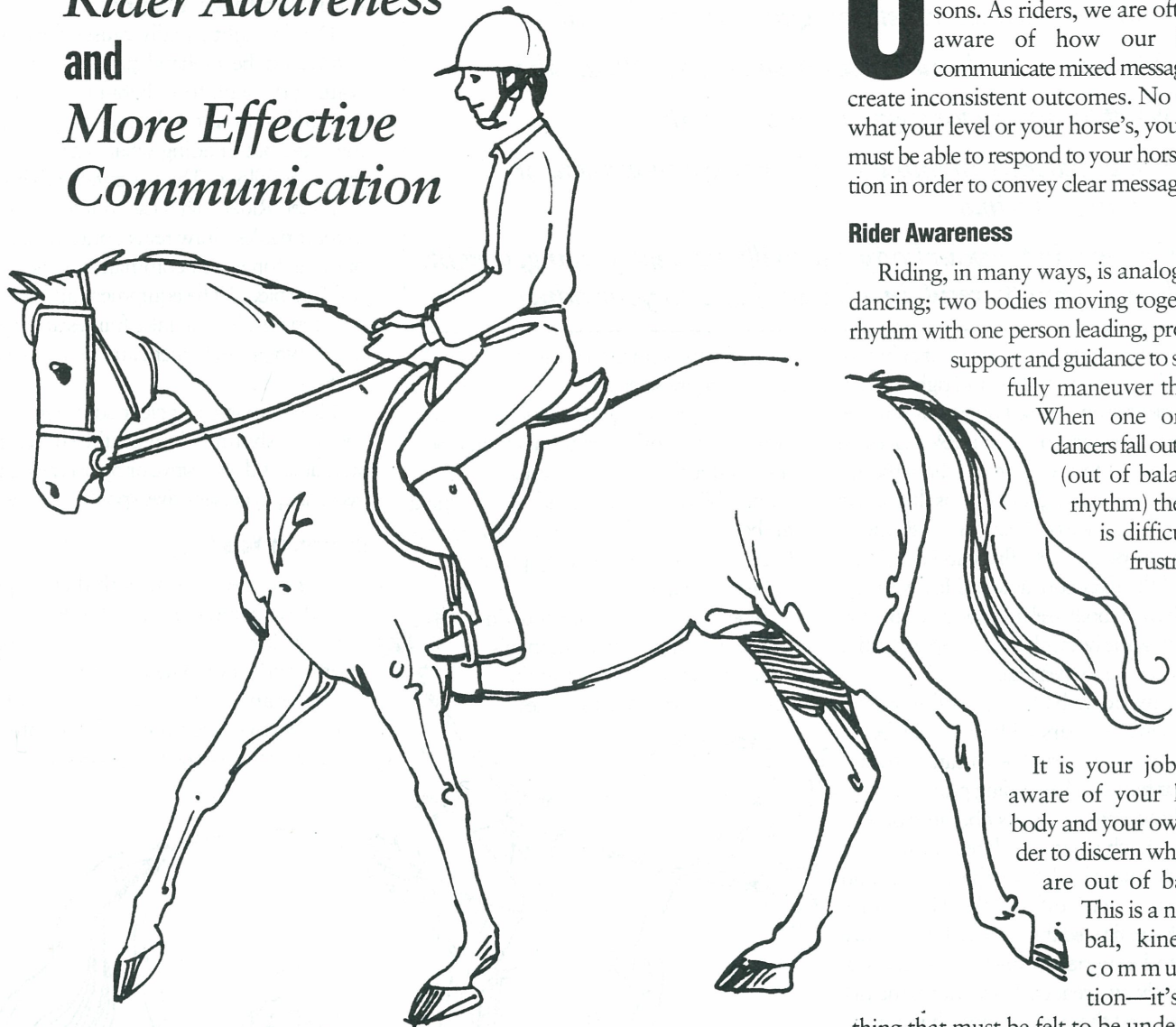


More *Performance,*

... Through
Rider Awareness
and
More Effective
Communication



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Illustrations by Jim Haynes/Graphics Plus

Are you allowing your horse to reach its full potential in movement and performance? Learning how to utilize your own body to support and enhance the movement of your horse is what "allowing" is all about.

Unwittingly, many of us get in the way of our horses' ability to perform and move for a variety of reasons. As riders, we are often unaware of how our bodies communicate mixed messages that create inconsistent outcomes. No matter what your level or your horse's, your body must be able to respond to your horse's motion in order to convey clear messages.

Rider Awareness

Riding, in many ways, is analogous to dancing; two bodies moving together in rhythm with one person leading, providing support and guidance to successfully maneuver the pair.

When one or both dancers fall out of sync (out of balance or rhythm) the dance is difficult and frustrating.

It is your job to be aware of your horse's body and your own in order to discern when they are out of balance.

This is a non-verbal, kinesthetic communication—it's something that must be felt to be understood. Being able to feel when you are out of balance is as important as knowing when you *are*. Because riding involves continual movement of the horse and rider, rebalancing becomes a constant necessity.

With this in mind, it becomes clear why a static position creates conflict between the movement of the horse and rider. This conflict is frequently at the root of evasions and riding errors.