

## The magic of horse-power – Back in the saddle again! by Denise Penney

It's been a good winter, but not so good for walking with horses.

Connecting with your horses all year long isn't always easy to sustain. Unless you can get to an indoor arena or do some ground work in a snowy round pen. We create such a connection with our riding partners during the nice months, then have to reconnect every spring.

Although our horses don't understand, they do enjoy being part of our active lives once again. Horses love being horses, but they also enjoy our companionship - mine love to trail ride. The trail is a good place to enjoy their company and let them relax.

During the winter all one can do is hang out in the barn and watch them eat. Brush them off and scratch those itchy spots. Spending time with them is important even when not training or riding. You don't want them thinking every time you catch them they have to work. Some like the work, but others just need to hang out with you.

Creating that connection is magical. It can take months or even years to create, but only minutes to lose. It is so fragile. The feeling you get when you have that bond and the horse follows you around the pasture without being asked is a high like no other.

People say you have "the bug" when you have horses, others tease it is an addiction. I call it PASSION!! But they are right because once you have that bond it's not something you can give up easily. Giving up horses causes a lot of heartbreak.

Getting back to riding after a long winter gives me an awesome feeling of joy and connection! It is like no other feeling and very hard to explain to a non-rider. But it's something everyone should experience - it relieves so much stress and anxiety.

As for the horses, they know they make you feel so good - they can feel it through your body.

*Until we meet again, safe and happy riding, Denise Penney*

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