

# Fit Together – Introduction



For some time I had wanted to be able to do more to support my clients between visits for Equine Bowen. We all understand that pilates, yoga, or other forms of 'keep fit' exercises are beneficial for our posture and overall musculoskeletal health. The same is true for our horses, and many that I visit could benefit in this way. I decided to embark on some CPD focussed on learning more about these types of exercises, so that I could pass on what I had learnt to my clients. That was the beginning, which turned into the Fit Together project, and is developing even further with my studying for an Advanced Diploma in Equine Exercise Rehabilitation.

Most horse owners will be familiar with at least some of the exercises that I have included in Fit Together, and may already be using some of them. However, without a clear understanding of the specific benefits of each exercise, or of how to combine them to good effect, they will be unable to achieve the best effect. This is the gap that Fit Together can fill. My aim is to teach sufficient understanding of how movement is produced in the body for some simple exercise strategies to become evident, and to provide people with the opportunity to practice these strategies within the structure of Fit Together. I hope that they will then become confident to continue working in this way, not only with exercises that are included in Fit Together, but embracing other exercises that are described elsewhere.



Below, you can read all the information that I have produced to describe what you can expect from Fit Together.

I am really enjoying this new venture, and loving the work for the Diploma. It would be a pleasure to talk with anyone who feels they might like to explore this further, and to answer any questions you may have to help you decide if this is right for you. Do please pick up the phone, or email, or text.

Best wishes,

*Susan*



# Fit Together – Description

This workshop and the accompanying App will help you to take control of choosing and using exercises to improve your horse's wellbeing. These are simple and commonly used exercises which, when practiced consistently, can help to increase core strength, protect the spine, improve quality of movement and gait, and help to reduce patterns of compensation from previous injury.

The first part of the workshop discusses essential background knowledge to understanding posture and movement, and the impact of exercise on the body. This will include discussion of very basic biotensegrity, biomechanics and physiology with an emphasis on deepening current understanding and on application to everyday situations. It will help you become more confident in your ability to use exercise in a focussed way.

The second part of the workshop introduces a framework that will help you in assessing potential benefits of any exercise that you come across, and in combining exercises to provide a balanced regime. Use of this framework will be practiced in the context of a library of simple and commonly used exercises. You will select exercises that you judge to be appropriate for your situation in terms of ability and interest; then you will combine them into a plan of exercise to last for 12 weeks.

Once you have your plan on paper, I will set it up on your individual copy of the App. This runs on your mobile phone, and will provide you with a quick and easy memory aid of which exercises you had scheduled for each day, a short description of the exercise in case you are learning something new, and an easy way to record whether you successfully completed the exercises each day. The App will help you turn your plan into a regular routine, and will help the regular routine become a habit, and it will provide you of a diary and photojournal of your horse. You will have access to this App only for the 12 weeks of your exercise plan. I am planning to make the App available beyond the 12 weeks, but have yet to determine costings etc, so will inform you of options for that at a later date. To use the App you will need to download the 'Culverdoc' app onto your mobile phone.

Throughout the whole of this programme you will have access to a private group (Facebook or WhatsApp – joint decision with the group) for members of your group only.

More details of the content are described in the Synopsis.

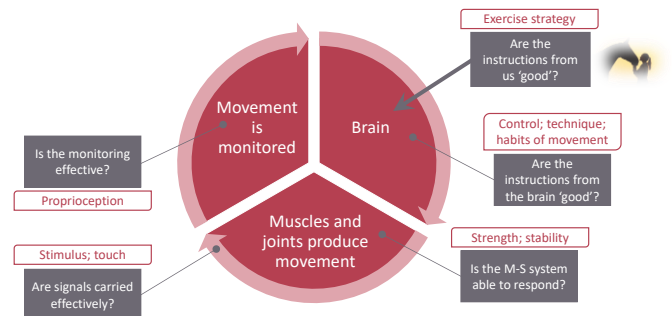
Total cost is £127. I prefer a single payment on enrolment, but can also offer monthly rates (£37 initial payment, followed by 3 payments of £30 at monthly intervals).

# Fit Together – Summary

## Weeks 1 – 3; 1 hour on Zoom each week; live sessions, maximum 6 people

### Content:

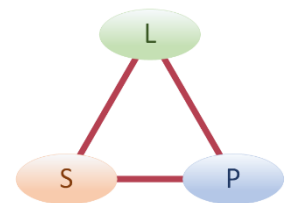
- Defining good musculoskeletal health
- Quality vs quantity of movement
- Characteristics of movement
- An insight to 'blocking' and 'bracing' through tensegrity
- The 'movement cycle'
- Opportunities for intervention
- Physiology of the warm-up and cool-down
- Control of muscle action
- Habits and neural pathways
- Elementary biomechanics
- The importance of proprioception



## Weeks 4 – 5; 1 hour on Zoom each week; live sessions, maximum 6 people

### Content:

- Strategy for producing a balanced programme of exercise
- Introducing a 'library' of simple conditioning exercises (in hand work, correct use of 'carrot stretches', ground pole set-ups, ...)
- Benefits of the individual exercises for core strengthening, proprioception, and loosening
- Opportunities for progression within each exercise
- Correct use, and ways to combine for maximum benefit



## Week 6; 1 hour on Zoom; live session, maximum 6 people

You will produce the first 4 weeks of your individual plan to use with your horse/pony

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
1	Walk in hand UM - 3 positions	Two grids Small circles and S	UM - 3 positions		
2					
3					

## Weeks 7 – 18; independent work following your plan with your horse, supported by the mobile phone app

## Weeks 9 & 13; 1 hour on Zoom each of these weeks; live sessions, maximum 6 people

Check-in, planning for the next 4 weeks, trouble shooting

## Week 17; 1 hour on Zoom; live session, maximum 6 people

Recap and consolidating



**Do you ....**

want to get your horse fitter but don't know where to start?

**Does your horse ....**

match up to your dream of beautiful posture and flowing movement?

**Do you and your horse ....**

struggle with some of the basics such as impulsion, transitions, and different ability between left and right reins?

Improvements can be simple if you take them one step at a time; and the important first step that many people forget is core strength and correct posture. Without this, when your horse is carrying your weight, even simple movements can become difficult; strain and injury become more likely.

**Turn over to see how you could make a start.**

Good movement

=

Strength + Balance + Coordination



# Fit Together

*Building your horse's musculoskeletal health*

Fit Together is an 18 week programme which includes:

9 hours live sessions online

50 page printed booklet

app for your mobile phone

## Who is it for?

Fit Together is for owners at all levels who would like to improve their horse's health and performance by using simple, easy to learn exercises that work on posture, coordination and balance. It is aimed mostly at those with no prior experience of building a plan of focussed exercise, but might interest anyone looking for a more structured approach.

## Why build an exercise plan?

All ridden horses can benefit from strengthening core muscles and improving balance, posture and coordination, whether they are ridden for gentle hacking, or for competitions. This can help when you ride if you are struggling with difficulties such as lack of impulsion, difficult transitions, falling in on the bend, and many more. More importantly, it can help your horse if they are struggling with the work you ask of them whilst carrying your weight. Even if you are unaware of any difficulties, using an exercise plan can prevent unnecessary wear on your horse's body, decrease stiffness and pain, reduce the risk of injury, and increase their quality of life and longevity. This is where Fit Together will help.

## How does Fit Together help?

Starting at an introductory level, the Zoom sessions teach some simple physiology and anatomy; discuss the ingredients that should be included in any exercise regime; investigate benefits of specific exercises; and guide you through the process of building a balanced plan of exercise for your horse. It supports you with an app to use for the final 12 weeks, and also with further check-in Zoom sessions, as you follow your exercise plan with your horse.

## Does Fit Together include cardiovascular training?

No. Fit Together is low intensity training, which emphasises quality of movement; the benefits are similar to those you would expect for yourself if you attended yoga or pilates classes. Cardiovascular training is high intensity training which should only be carried out once good quality of movement has become established.

## Can I find out more?

Yes, of course! To find more about the next presentation, which starts in early August:

- phone Susan on 07775 808 314
- email [susan@susanryrie.co.uk](mailto:susan@susanryrie.co.uk)





**A stronger back**

**Reduced risk of injury**

**Improved posture**

**Better quality of movement**

**Less wear on the joints**

These are things you can achieve for your  
horse or pony

**Turn over to see how I can help you**

Good movement

=

Strength + Balance + Coordination

