



The Marijke de Jong Podcast

Episode #5 Why You Aren't Taking Action

See the show notes at: <https://www.straightnesstrainingacademy.com/podcast5>

Welcome to this podcast that will change the way you think, which will change how you feel, therefore, change what you can do, so you'll get the results you are looking for. And now your host, founder of the Straightness Training Academy, Marijke de Jong.

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MARIJKE DE JONG: "Well, hello there. We're back for another episode. "What happened to the podcast?" I received that question from so many listeners. And I have to tell you, it's been a while. But there's a good reason behind it. We've had some huge wins in 2022, and some tragedies, and I'm going to tell you all about it in this episode. Plus, I'm going to share a powerful tool with you to set yourself up for a balanced New Year.

Yes, it's been a long time since the last episode. And there's some reason behind it. And I want to explain some of that, because there's a big lesson in all of this. You know, in 2022, a lot has happened. A lot. Good, bad, and everything in between. And I had a lot of people who were asking, "Hey, are you like giving up on your podcast?" Are you going to do it again?" Like, "What's going on?" And the answer to that is, yes, I'm absolutely going to continue doing the podcast. I feel like I really want to do this podcast. And I love all the feedback that I get from you and everybody else who's listening.

But the reality of it was: I wanted to do it right. And I wanted to do the right things. And I wanted to do it right. But that holds us back, right? It's this perfectionist fiction where we believe the fantasy that things can be perfect. And in a minute, I'm going to tell you why we as human beings believe in these fantasies.

Now, another reason why I didn't continue with the podcast for a while was that I started a big project in 2022. And that has been big, big wins in the Straightness Training Academy, which was amazing. And I'm going to tell you all about those. And there was a lot of lessons learned through all of that. And it was really amazing. And I was, you know, to be honest, that was my top priority, that big project. That was my big rock.

And do you know the story of the rocks, it was this master who once stood before his class with a large empty jar, and he filled the jar with large rocks, and asked his students if the jar was full. And the student said, "yes, the jar is full". But then he added small pebbles to the jar. And he asked again, "is that jar full now", and the students agreed that the jar was indeed full. And the professor

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then poured sand into the jar and asked again, and the students then agreed that the jar was finally full. And the professor went on to explain that that jar represents our life, or 2022, or a year, right? I mean, the rocks, these are most important like health, horses, friends, big projects. And if the pebbles in the sand were lost, then the jar would still be full. And 2022 would still be a meaningful and valuable year. The pebbles they represent the other things that matter, like work and study. But the sand in the jar that represents the small stuff. And these things don't mean much to our life, or a year as a whole. And these this small stuff is like material possessions or activities like scrolling on social media.

So back to my big rock. I had this one big rock in 2022 and I needed space for that. And it has been *go go go* for several months, you know.

Now, I also had some other big rocks like family, dogs, horses. And in my personal life, mid 2021, we got some terrible news: my mother got cancer. And in January 2022, at the start of last year, she died. And yeah, that was still a little bit unexpected. And she was an amazing woman. And I learned so much from her. And in weekly ST episode, I think it was 25 (edit: 23) we did this life broadcast on Facebook. And in that show, you can hear all about it - I will list it in the show notes with a link so you can access that episode if you want to know more about it.

So we started 2022 with this tragedy, but also we ended December, we ended the year of 2022 with a tragedy, because our nephew was seriously injured and in hospital the whole month. And he's still is. So yeah, that is going on in our lives. And on top of that, also, our dog got sick in December; it was a little bit on and off, and good days, bad days. So yeah, we had our dog, Coddi, that's her name, we had her checked with the veterinarian. And we did a scan and echo and we saw a mass in her body. So I was like, "oh, no, I don't hope it's cancer or something like it" because she is a little bit on a certain age, right? So you can expect that. But the good news was that she had stolen some toys of our small dog. And she had swollen it so there were some toys in her stomach and, or also in her in her colon, right. So she needed surgery. So all right. December, we had her in surgery, and of course lots of aftercare.

So long story short, everybody was wishing us a happy Christmas. But it was more a human Christmas. And it's also not a Happy New Year, but a Human New Year. Because yeah, 2022 was full of discomfort. And I don't think 2023 will be different. Because, as always, just look back at your own life. It's half happy and half sad most of the time. And happy, this is only in fairy tales, right? In the Hollywood movies where *they lived happily ever after*. But in our lives, that's a complete lie. Every year, the question is not *if* we're going to face discomfort, but *when*. And it's also not like "hey, let's sign up for 10% discomfort or 30% discomfort". No. We'll end up according to the Yin Yang, like half of the time will be discomfort because without discomfort, there's no comfort. It's Yin and Yang, right.

And it's universal. So nobody escapes this universal law. Even if you have lots of money or are famous, it doesn't matter, right? Look at Johnny Depp in 2022, or Tina Turner. And it doesn't matter how nice you are or how hard you work. Nobody escapes pain and suffering. It's just universal.

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The only thing that is within our control is that we can make the suffering 100%. And that's bad news and good news. The good news is it's that *it's always us* to make our life miserable for 100%. And we do that with our thinking, right?

And the people who have written about this in a very good way are Viktor Frankl and Edith Eger. And both are amazing people, and they are Holocaust survivors, and they lost their family during World War II and they were in these concentration camps. But both of them kept searching for meaning and a reason for being.

And they didn't ask this question like, "Why me? Why do I have to go through all this pain and misery?" Because they realized that if they ask themselves, like, "Why me" that it creates victimhood, and it kept them stuck in the past, and it created a prison of the mind. So instead of asking, "Why me", they asked, "Well, why not me?" And instead of "Why me", they asked themselves, "What now?" "Now what?" "What can I do?" "What is within my control?" And with those questions, they reclaimed their power. And those questions led to choices, options and possibilities.

And the famous quote of Viktor Frankl is this one, he said, "Between stimulus and response, there is a space and in that space is our power to choose our response. And in our response lies our growth and our freedom." And that's it, right?

So, I don't wish you a Happy New Year, I wish you a Human New Year, and a Balanced New Year, where you will be uncomfortable half of the time. But the good news is, you have the power to choose your response when facing that discomfort. And the foundation of freedom is the power to choose. So I wish you a year of inner freedom, all right? That is what I wish for you, a Human New Year with inner freedom.

Alright, so here we are January 1, the New Year. And January 1 is typically the time that most of us reflect on what we have done in the past 12 months, and what we would like to do in the upcoming 12 months. And we start setting goals and objectives and things that we want to accomplish, right? So we start to focus on new big rocks.

So when I look back at 2022, let's first review 2022, and the big rock for me, in 2022, was the Basic ST Instructor Certification Program - we call that BCP. And I've really reinvented my instructor program. And the big win at the end of the year is that we now have 37 certified new instructors, which is really the next generation of instructors. And it's a huge win to the world and a huge contribution to the equestrian world. They're super valuable. They're difference makers, they're game changers. They are awareness creators. They really create awareness about the natural asymmetry of the horse. And they help people do an assessment about the eight dimensions of natural asymmetry.

And they're also skilled in looking at their physical natural symmetry in their own bodies, because we all know where left or right handed. But one of the most important things that we not always realize is that we have a positive-negative asymmetry in our brain. So we are literally, we have this negativity bias in our brain. And why do we have natural symmetry in our bodies and our brains? That is because we have a thousands-of-years-old primitive brain that is wired for survival. Same

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as with our horses, we have this strong need and wish to survive, a strong desire, and therefore the main focus is often on *what's wrong*.

Because back in the day, we needed to focus on what's wrong. I mean, if you heard a sound in a bush, you were not like, "well, let's be positive and assume it's a squirrel". No, it could be a saber-toothed tiger, right? So we expected the worst, we're really good in imagining worst case scenarios and focusing on the negative, just from a survival point of view.

Now, why is it important to know this when it comes to training horses and riding horses? Why is it important to be aware of this as an instructor? Because the main focus in teaching is often on what our students need to *do*. We're like do this, or do that, or the other thing with your reins, your seat your legs. And so we really focus on actions. And for a long time, I thought that the magic power for a student was that when I would say, like, *do this, that or the other thing* that they would say, like, "Okay, I'm on it, I'm going to do that". And when they just follow my advice, that they would be fine. Like, just do as I say, and you will be fixed, and you will feel better, right?

But that is so not true. Because here's the thing, the ultimate resource of a rider is their emotions. Because, can you imagine, if I say to someone, like do this, that or the other thing, and they feel curious, or if they feel furious - that is always the example that I use, because emotions fuel our actions - so if you are fueled by curiosity, you can imagine you will behave differently than if you are fueled by being furious, right?

Now, besides the ultimate resource, we also have the ultimate power, everybody has that. And that is our thoughts. And that is what Viktor Frankl said, right? Between stimulus and response, there is a space in that space, we have the power to choose what we make things mean. So we can choose to make the behavior of our horse mean that our horse is against us. But we can also make it mean that our horse is giving us valuable feedback. And that the horse gives feedback about what we think, feel and do, right? So we can ask ourselves, like, whenever our horse is doing something: Why do we make it mean something negative? Why do we make it mean that a horse is a naughty boy? And why do we make it mean that our horse is not listening to us? I mean, what if the opposite is true? What if he is listening to us, but he's just shouting? Like, "come on, listen to me! I don't know how to handle this too much pressure of you, or this too long pressure or unexpected pressure!"

I mean, we are very "good" with our hands, right? We can grab and hold and push and pull. And of course, our horse will react to that. And then we think we're the victim, but who started it, right? So that is super important to investigate what is behind our actions, and what we think, feel and do has an effect on our horse, and then a horse react to what we think, feel and do. And then we make it mean something, right? And if we don't like it, what our horses doing, then we make it mean something negative.

Now, what the good thing is, with the new generation of instructors, is that they now have better, more, and advanced tools to deal with the natural asymmetry in the brain: in our own brain, but also in the brain of of our students, right? And that is really important to create awareness for the negativity bias that we have. Which means by nature, we give way more attention to the negative

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things that happen in a training session. Or we really have a strong tendency to focus on what's wrong. And we quickly and easily go to focusing on the worst case scenario.

And I already investigated a lot, like, how can I create awareness for this phenomenon?

So a couple of years ago, or maybe a little bit longer, yeah, a little bit longer. I came up with the Mastery Iceberg. I didn't invent this Mastery Iceberg concept. But I brought it from another area into The Straightness Training Academy. What is this mastery iceberg all about? Well, if you look at an iceberg, then 10% is above the sea level. And 90% is below the sea level. So way more of the iceberg is not visible, right? And if you look at a rider, if you look at a master, then what you see is 10%. And the 10% is the skills and the actions and the behavior of that master. But what you don't see is 90%, which is attitude, and emotions. And that is the ultimate resource: the emotions, and the ultimate power: that is our attitude, right, our thoughts, are thinking. And so we already were aware about the Mastery Iceberg. And I always said, like, hey, we need to *freeze our ice* below the sea level to become better horse trainers.

But the next generation instructors who have been going through BCP last year, they know, even on a deeper level, that what we think, feel and do has an effect on our horse. And so being an instructor is not only about telling people what to do, like *do this, that, or the other thing* with your reins, your whip, your legs, your seat, because energy matters, and what we're thinking matters,. And what we think fuels our energy, right, and where focus goes, energy flows.

And one of the most important quotes of Wayne Dyer is "If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change". And if you combine that with Tony Robbins' quote, which is "What's wrong is always available, so is what's right". That's how we can rebalance our own brain. And the quote of Wayne Dyer and the quote of Tony Robbins give us more options to think about what happens.

And I'm so proud of the certified Basic ST Instructors, and also the fully certified Straightness Training instructors, because they will do an amazing job not only in teaching what to do, but also they help people what to think and how to feel in a different way. So it's not only about do shoulder-in, do haunches-in, saying, hold your reins like this, or use your leg like that. But these instructors are really equipped with an advanced toolkit to help people to become aware of their thoughts and emotions, and then helping them find empowering alternatives.

And I'm so glad I reinvented the Basic ST Instructor Certification Program in 2022. Because it's such a big win.

And that wasn't that there were no growing pains. One of the most significant growing pains that we had during the time of reinventing the program was that we changed our approach, which means we stepped out of the comfort zone with the program. Because discomfort is the currency of growth. And it's the price of mastery. And I invited all our already licensed instructors to step into this discomfort zone as well. But it's this thing with eggs, right? When an egg is broken from the inside, then life begins. But when it's broken from the outside, life ends. So in a way people need to decide to change and that has to come from the inside. You can't make people change. It's like,

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you can bring a horse to water but you can't make them drink. And you can bring a human to knowledge, but you can't make them think.

So if they don't want to change that's all okay, right? People have free will, and horses have free will. And we cannot make them do it. It's again, if they don't feel like it, and if they don't think about it, then that will not fuel their actions.

Now, I personally love Constant And Never-ending Improvement (CANI). But this always goes hand in hand with growing pains. So to give you an example, our educational programs have gone through some serious transformations.

For example, in 2011, we transitioned from in-person education to more online education. And also, we transitioned from a lot of direct contact with me to education through videos. So many of my students used to have a lot of access to me. And I transitioned from in-person events to taking teaching and coaching online. And a lot of the work we did more through video and less through direct contact with me. So of course, people were upset. And some of them were like, well, this is the end, or the world comes to an end, at least the whole education format that I created, they were like, "This is now the end". And there was a lot of resistance and avoidance. And people started talking about *The Good Old Days*.

And so that was 2011, right? And it almost stopped me from growing. Because when you want to meet the need of old customers who try to keep things the same, if I would have listened to that, if I wanted to please those old customers, then I would still be teaching only in the Netherlands in Dutch, right? But now, because I changed, I'm now reaching 1000s of riders and horses, who are benefiting a lot from Straightness Training - all over the world!

Now, another one of our biggest transformations was the addition of the liberty component in 2012. Liberty was actually the first tool I introduced for the human - not for the horse, but for the human - to learn how to do *more with less* in Straightness Training, I mean to do *more with less* use of the reins. Because, again, people are very "good" in using too much pressure, too long pressure, they use it too often, they use it in an unexpected way, they use it in a steady way. And horses don't like that, right? So I was like, let's introduce liberty, because that will help people to use their *inner picture* more and their *inner feeling*, right? I call it the inner picture and inner feeling back in the day, but it's the same as the ultimate power which is which is our inner picture, and our ultimate resource, which is the inner energy, the inner feeling.

So introducing liberty that was really very uncomfortable for a lot of instructors. So again, there was a lot of resistance and also avoidance. People didn't want to do it, they resisted it, it triggered their fight, the fight of their 'Reactive You'. Or they wanted to avoid it, so instead of *fight* we can also choose *flight*. And we try to escape it, right? So a lot of instructors said goodbye to Straightness Training, and they were like yeah, Straightness Training is no natural horsemanship. They were like, "Things are going off track. I'm outta here."

So they were upset there. Again, they were stepping into this worst case scenario, like, "the world comes to an end" by introducing liberty into the Straightness Training world, right? And they

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started talking about *The Good Old Days* where there was no liberty and things were easy and comfortable. And again, it's almost stopped me from growing because of all the resistance to the liberty pillar, right? I mean, yeah, people wanted to keep things the same. And every new idea is ridiculed. Right? And it's interesting that now 10 years later, it's normal, right? You cannot think liberty away from Straightness Training, everybody's like, it's a no brainer: Of course, we need liberty to refine our aids. Of course, we need liberty to be able to learn how to do *more with less*. Of course, we need to do Straightness Training at liberty to be able to tap in our horse's wisdom, and to get our horse in a higher mental state where our horse starts to take responsibility for the actual behavior. We don't have to make our horse do it, but our horse is choosing to do it, right? So everybody now is like: Yeah, of course, we need to do liberty, come on, bring it! But back in the day, it was really a huge growing pain.

Now, another growing pain was the moment that we started to introduce our Evaluation Program. Again, people were like, "the world is coming to an end", like, we do Straightness Training for the horse. And it's not a good idea to have these touchstones and tests. And we will end up like using the horse for Straightness Training. So there was again, a lot of resistance and objections and excuses why it could not work. And then also, the world came to an end, right? Everything would fall apart if we would continue with the Evaluation Program. But now everybody's like: Yeah, of course, we need to measure our progress. Of course, we need to check what's working, what's not working. Of course, it's a good idea to measure where we are compared to a standard. So growing pains, simply growing pains, you know.

Then we had another growing pain during COVID. Everybody had growing pains back then, in 2020. Because, yeah, the world changed literally, right? So what we did in Straightness Training that we shifted our focus also to not only mastery of Straightness Training, but also our self-mastery. So we focused on how to manage our mind in challenging times, and how to manage our emotions in challenging times when we were facing the pandemic, right? So we had a lot of focus on self-mastery, which is freezing the ice below the sea level.

And remembering Viktor Frankl, like: Okay, a lot is outside of our control. I mean, we were literally in the lockdown, right? But what was within our control is what we make it mean, and how we look at things, right? So we spend a lot of time developing our self-mastery skills. And we also transitioned from a year program into a membership. And we introduced Academy coaches and Mentor Instructors. So again, resistance, and avoidance, like the world comes to an end if we transition from a year program into a membership.

But it's really interesting to see the generations of instructors. For example, the ones who were very used to in-person education with me, they were really resisting and avoiding the online teaching. But the ones who started in 2011, they were really excited about online teaching because people from the United States could join, from Brazil, from South Africa, from all over the world, right? From all continents, Asia, Russia, and they were so happy with the online teaching.

So here it was: my program, the same program, one is resisting it and one is accepting it and allowing it and embracing it and excited about it. Same program, different experiences. Why is that? It's just the different thoughts, right?

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There you can see that the ultimate power is in our brain. What do we make it mean? Do we make it mean something horrible, terrible, the world comes to an end? Are we spinning a worst case scenario about it? Or are we asking ourselves questions like: What's the good in this? What can I learn here? How can I use this?

Also, it was interesting to see the generation of instructors who started in 2011, the ones who were really okay with online education, but they were really resisting liberty. So the people who started doing my program in 2014, they were really excited about the program that was including liberty. So again, it was not liberty, right? Liberty was not 'the bad guy'. No, it was what they thought about it. So some of the instructors of the older generation, they made it mean something bad, right? But the people who just arrived, they were like, "Oh, right, this is exciting, everything is exciting". I mean, groundwork was new, and work in hand, and longeing, and yeah, why not liberty. So they were really open and embracing liberty. So the same circumstance, the same situation, the same event like, "Hey, here's this liberty pillar", but a different experience. Again, why was that? Because people have different thoughts about liberty, right?

So we have had that always: In the same year, some people are super excited about a program of ours, and some people are not liking the program at all because of a change. And there's this saying, like "one person's nightmare, is another man's dream". "One person's nightmares another person's dream". And why is that? Because it's not the situation. It's not the circumstance. It's not the event. It's the thoughts about it.

A simple example is also a husband. I mean, the wife loves the husband, and the ex-wife hates the husband. It's the same husband, but different thoughts about the husband, and therefore different attitudes and different emotions. But it's not the husband; it's what we think about the husband, right?

It's also a saying, like, "It's not the problem, but it's what you think about the problem, that's the problem. The attitude about the problem, that is the real problem.

So last year, in 2022, when we were introducing the Basic ST Instructor Certification Program, BCP, the change was that people could become an instructor in the unmounted pillars, which is, in my opinion, a big win, because becoming a Basic ST Instructor is that you are an instructor in the basics. And the basics is what is needed most, because a lot of problems arise in riding. But they need to be solved in the unmounted training pillars like groundwork, longeing, work in hand, or Straightness Training at Liberty.

And the most important thing is teaching about natural symmetry and creating awareness. Because what happens a lot if people are not aware of natural symmetry, then we start fighting the symptoms with whips, and spurs and different bits, and changing the saddle and all kinds of treatments. So we need a lot of people who can create awareness about the unaddressed natural asymmetry because if it's unaddressed, then that can lead to all kinds of problems. Simple problems like the horse is taking the bit on one side to more severe physical issues like navicular disease or kissing spines.

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So another big win with these Basic ST Instructors is that they do not only teach what to do, right. It's not only about training the horse, but they also know how to train our brain, the natural symmetry in our brain, right? Because, again, we have this tendency to focus on what's wrong, what's negative, when it comes to our horse. And because we focus on that, that triggers our 'Reactive You', we get into a state of fight, flight, freeze easily, right?

But if we step into our 'Responsive You', that is what Viktor Frankl is talking about, like, between stimulus and response is a space. And in that space, we can choose what to think and how to feel. That is a game changer. Because when we are in our 'Reactive You', there's no space, it's just stimulus response, bam. We know all about that with our horses, right? When our horses are spooky, they are in stimulus response. And they are not thinking about like, "hey, is there really a physical threat?" No, they are just like, reacting. So that is such a great awareness that our Basic ST Instructors can bring not only awareness about the physical natural symmetry, but also the natural asymmetry in our brain.

All right, so because of these changes, these two changes - like, hey, we now educate instructors, who are teaching in the unmounted pillars only and who are certified in these four pillars, excluding the riding - that leads to resistance again, and people don't want to accept that, right? And it's again, it's again, like "the world comes to an end". And we should go back to *The Good Old Days*.

So it's ridiculed, right? And, yeah, people again, start focusing on the past on *The Good Old Days*. And they think that the program was better in the past than it's now. And they see themselves as better than this brand new generation of instructors. And they think we lowered the standards, because it's one pillar less. And yeah, people can qualify in the basics only. But what if the opposite is true? What if this is an improvement? What if this is a step forward, right, instead of a step backwards. And that is the choice we can make: What do we make it mean? What do we choose to believe about everything?

So it's okay, right? There will always be a small group of people that are resisting change. And that wants to avoid the transformation, and people who come up with objections and reasons why the world comes to an end and why this is wrong, right? And I understand where they're coming from. And I understand their frustration with not being able to have things stay the same. But I'm also dedicated to all of the people and horses who I have yet to help.

So that's why I really believe in the Basic ST Instructor Certification Program. And that's why it was my big rock in 2022. And it's really a great program to help people do what they love, to help them, do what they're good at, to help them do what the world needs, and to help them do what they can get paid for. It's a great program for people who wants to turn their hobby into a dream career. And all those four things together, like - do what you love, do what you're good at, do what the world needs, do what you get paid for - that causes us to be in our sweet spot. In Japan, they call it that you found your *Ikigai*.

And from that place, we can define new big rocks, right? So if you are a certified Basic ST Instructor, now you now that you are certified, you have 2023 ahead of you, right. So what are your big rocks? What are your pebbles? And what is the sand?

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It's such a great moment on the first day of the New Year to think about it, right? So to set yourself up for a balanced year, let's define your rocks. And not only if you are a Basic ST Instructor or a licensed ST Instructor, or maybe you are an instructor in the making, or maybe you are considering like, "Could this be something for me", for everybody, even if you don't want to become an instructor, even if you just want to be the best horse trainer you can be for your horse, then it's a good idea to think about, like, "What are my rocks?"

And to define your big rocks for 2023, you can use the Wheel of Mastery. And that Wheel of Mastery focuses on eight areas of mastery. And it helps you to define your rocks. And it helps you define what rocks need to have more attention to get a more balanced wheel.

And just go over to the show notes to download the workbook. In that workbook, which is about the Wheel of Mastery, you can do a balance assessment on your eight key areas. And there you can define like what needs more attention to have a more round wheel. Because we have eight areas, but sometimes we spend most of our focus on the area that comes naturally to us, right? Or that feels comfortable and familiar and easy. But sometimes we need to choose discomfort in another area to create more balance. So that is what this workbook is all about.

And a lot of people and a lot of you listeners are familiar with the Wheel of Mastery, especially if you have been reading my blog or are in one of my programs, then the Wheel of Mastery is very familiar to a lot of you. But then I would suggest: you do it again. Because there's great value in comparing an older Wheel of Mastery that you created back in the days, in a previous year, and to compare it to where you are right now. And then from that place, you can decide like, okay, how do I want to move forward from here?

So, here's some ideas, here are some big rocks that you could think about. So number one, if you are an instructor, you could think about your teaching practice, right? Your business. So, for example, when I'm planning out my year, I am always like, what are the things on the calendar that are my big rocks. So for me, like one of the big rocks is we educate and certify a new group of instructors this year. So that's our Basic ST Instructor Certification Program. So this year, for example, we first do a bootcamp in January, which is a three-day virtual live event where people can learn about the program and figure out if becoming an instructor could be something for them. And this bootcamp is on January 14th, 15th, and 16th. So mark your calendar and tell everyone you know. But that is a big rock, and I'm putting it on the calendar, right? The Instructor Confidence Bootcamp, and then, of course, the 16 classes in the Basic ST Instructor program.

And then I look at, like, what are other big projects that I want to work on throughout the year? And I carve out time in the year for those. And I asked myself, What are the big what are the big events? And I put that on the calendar. So that's number one, right? Put the big rocks of your teaching pack practice or your business on the calendar first. 0

And that's what I really want you to think about like what are the big promotions you want to do for your lesson program? Or what are the big projects, and what are the big events that you need to put on the calendar? And if you're not an instructor, you also have big rocks, right? And maybe they are more from a personal standpoint.

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So number two, I do the same thing with the big rocks from a personal standpoint. So for me, these are big rocks, like, my relationships, my relationship with Marc, with my friends, with my dogs, my horses, the relationship with myself. And I really recommend that that is a big rock, and that is your free time. I always say like, plan your free time first, where you take care of yourself on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, on a monthly basis, just carve out time for free time, daily, but also a vacation for a week or something, right? And planned trips where you can go and see friends and where nothing else is going on, right? You don't have to work. But you just have free time to recharge your batteries, right? And be really attentional intentional about that.

Now another big rock, under the personal Wheel of Mastery is, you know, your health and fitness. I really want to be intentional about that. And I'm scheduling that on the calendar. So what are the daily habits you want to commit to when it comes to health and fitness?

And another big rock for me is study: I love to read books and watch classes, and I love to read and study and learn and grow and investigate. So that is a big rock for me.

So it doesn't matter what you define as your big rocks. Again, awareness is key, and you get to decide what you want to focus on. But if you don't focus and determine your big rocks, then your jar will be easily filled with sand, right? And to have a meaningful 2023, we have to become aware of our rocks.

So this is the bonus tip I would like to give you: don't put sand in the jar. I mean, the metaphor here is that if you start with putting sand into the jar, you will not have room for rocks and pebbles. And if you spend all your time on the small and insignificant things in 2023, then you will run out of room for the things that are actually important. So in order to have a more effective year, prioritize important things in your life, and then worry about pebbles and sand at a later time.

But bottom line, don't spend too much time on the small stuff. Prioritize your big rocks, sand will always find some space. I mean, you can always scroll a timeline here and there and open an email here and there. Sand will always find some space, all right?

Now to summarize all this, I would like to say like,

- Hey, let's look back at your big rocks in 2022. And celebrate your big wins. And also your learning moments because there's no winning or losing but there's winning and learning. So look at your wins and look at what you learned.
- And then define your big rocks for 2023. And you can do so by using the Wheel of Mastery - just go to the show notes, there's a link. Or go to straightnesstrainingacademy.com/podcast4, just go to that link, and then you can leave your name and email and I will send you the workbook with the Wheel of Mastery. And then you can define your big rocks.
- And then stop wasting too much time on the small stuff and the sand in 2023.
- And know that 2023 will be another year of human experience. It will not be a Happy New Year, all day every day. No, just plan ahead for discomfort and use your ability to respond, right? That is your power and in that power to choose your response, in that lies your growth and freedom and it gives you the opportunity to learn and to grow, alright?

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Alright, so one more time don't forget to download the Wheel of Mastery workbook in the show notes [straightnesstrainingacademy.com/podcast4](https://www.straightnesstrainingacademy.com/podcast4).

And if one of your big rocks is “becoming an instructor” or if you want to find out if becoming an instructor could be something for you in 2023, then join my Instructor Confidence Bootcamp - registration opens January 3rd and the virtual event, it's a three-day virtual event will be on January 14th, 15th, and 16th. So mark your calendar and tell everyone you know.

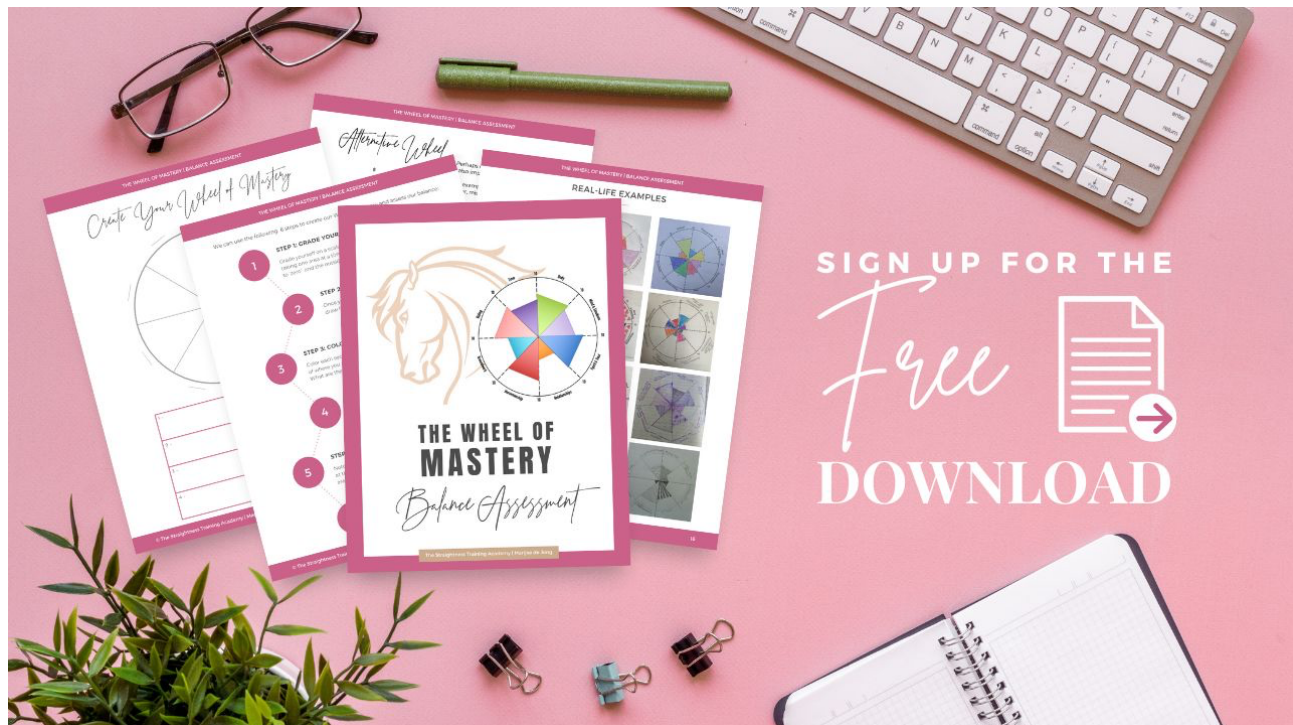
So listen, you're going to have a balanced year this year, because you're going to be intentional about it. Just go through your big rocks, put them on the calendar and download the podcast freebie where I go into a little bit more detail about the Wheel of Mastery.

Alright, that's it. I wish you a Human New Year again with a lot of inner freedom.

Talk to you soon. Bye.”

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Thank you for listening to the Marijke de Jong Podcast. It would be awesome if you would take a moment to write a quick review on Apple Podcasts. For any questions or more information, please visit us at [StraightnessTrainingAcademy.com](https://www.StraightnessTrainingAcademy.com).



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