

Full Potential

(3 min. read)

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I've always had the intention to be a 'forever home' to any horses that I own. It is a noble pursuit but highly unattainable. I have had to sell a couple of horses in the last few years and it was so hard.

No one cares for a horse like you do, right? Even if the horse isn't the best fit and takes up the majority of your time, it's really hard to help them to their next herd. There is a fine line between putting in the work to get better together, and being overburdened with making it work. Well, I have learned that just because you *can* make it work, doesn't mean you should.

I just had to assess whether one of my horses was worth the work to keep him or let someone else put him to work. My husband purchased a horse at an auction about five years ago... total impulse buy. He is a beautiful, buckskin gelding. He worked really well for us for about two years but then started to get anxious. This was the time when my son was rodeoing in high school, and we were gone a lot. I know it's probably my fault for not giving him the consistency he needed. Long story short, he became a terrible fit as a 'husband horse' and required a lot of maintenance to keep his mental soundness. I was spending most of my free time caring for a horse that I did not enjoy riding. I started to dread working him, just because we did not 'mesh.' I paid a few trainers to work with him, so I could ride my other horses. This was fine, and he did really well with them but would come home and slowly get back to his not-so-fun self. Something had to give.

I sent him to be assessed by a trainer friend of mine to see if he had the potential to fit into the type of riding I was doing more of (roping). He was honest and said he was a sweet horse, but wouldn't fit into that discipline. So, what should I do? I loved the horse but didn't want to waste my precious time trying to make it work or his potential to be a great mount for someone else. Maybe I was holding him back? After a lot of praying and contemplating, I had my friend ride him for a few months, and get him in the best mental and physical shape, and we put him in a sale.

While he was gone, my herd at home was so much easier to take care of. I only had 2 horses to work, and I got along with them really well. I had no problem keeping them in shape. Life was good on the farm. The gelding didn't bring a ton of money in the sale, but I know he went to an awesome home. I get texts from his new owner, and he is flourishing being ridden daily.

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