

Trail's End  
Autumn 2006  
*Jill Owens, Editor*

*Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves. Do not seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.*

Ranier Maria Rilke  
***Letters to a Young Poet***

I have been living a lot of questions lately.

Gypsy injured her stifle around the new year and is coming back slowly—and not without certain difficulties—after months of rest. While my veterinarian and my dressage trainer are hopeful and encouraging, the vastly experienced and world-class German dressage master with whom I clinic thinks that Gypsy is breaking down. He says if I want to pursue dressage, I will need to get another horse. Is this overly pessimistic, or the voice of reason and reality born of many years' experience?

If Gypsy truly isn't up to the athletic demands of dressage, perhaps she won't be able to do competitive trail either, and in any case, she's barefoot now and ridden on trail in Boa Boots which are prohibited in competition.

So I am faced with a dilemma: should I go as far as I can with *this*

*horse*, altering my goals to fit what she and I can both do, or pursue *my goals*, and search for the horse that can carry me there?

Gypsy is my soul-mate. Could I ever really hope to find such a strong connection with another equine? Do I even want to try?

Do I really need to compete to feel fulfilled? Could I be content to enjoy riding my “best girl” around the ranch and on regular adventures away from home? Is there another path—one I’ve never even thought of—that will present itself for our discovery?

These are some of the questions I’m living these days. Perhaps I can learn to love them, and in time, the answers may come.