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FOREWORD

Having been involved with Tellington TTouch Training (www.ttouch.com) for 30 years, the use of various kinds of groundwork and obstacles when working with horses is not a new concept for me. I, my sister Linda Tellington-Jones, and the thousands of practitioners who use the Tellington Method frequently work with horses around and through obstacles, often without a halter, and so the concept of “Horse Agility” makes perfect sense to me.

When I heard about Vanessa Bee and what she was doing with Horse Agility, I made a point of contacting her when I was in England. As it turned out, she was doing an agility demonstration at a local horse event, so I had the opportunity to see her concepts in action. Later, as I approached her information booth, she was talking to someone about Horse Agility—and horse handling in general. I was impressed with her attitude towards horses and the relationship that she was encouraging people to build with their horse as they were doing agility.

Her attitude and belief in nurturing a relationship with your horse comes through in the pages of *The Horse Agility Handbook*. She explains a step-by-step process: first, developing your relationship with your horse

so it can be a win-win for both of you, and then continuing in your work together to build confidence and cooperation.

Horse Agility as an activity and a sport provides a venue for those people and horses who may not wish to, or be able to, work under saddle, but who still want to compete—or maybe just find a social circle with like-minded people.

In addition, the competitive nature of Horse Agility is framed with the horse in mind. Obstacles are scored not only on how the horse does them but also how the handler responds to the horse in situations that might be challenging or unfamiliar. This is a rather unique concept in most areas of equestrian competition.

I think Vanessa Bee’s book will give people many ideas about exploring new ways to work with horses, in and out of the competitive arena, while further developing their relationship.

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