



Judges Conference 18 February 2024

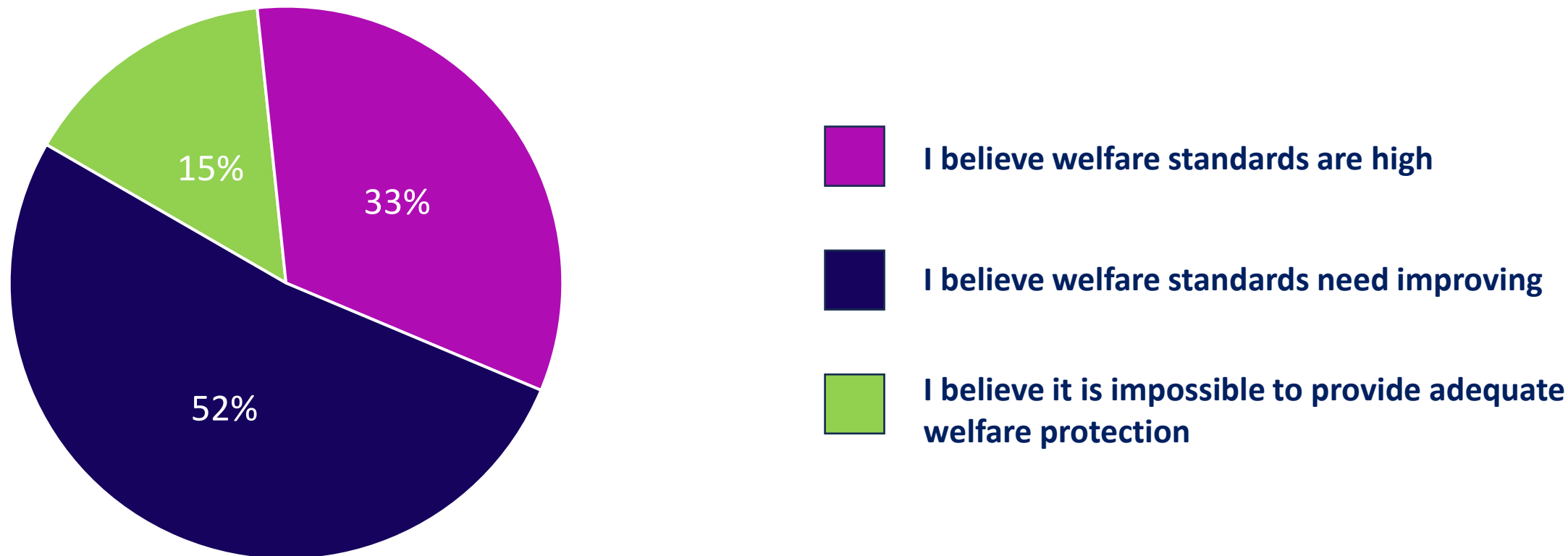
Latest horse management research re the Global Threat

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Global perceptions re welfare of horses in sport

¹Public



Savanta opinion surveys, 2022

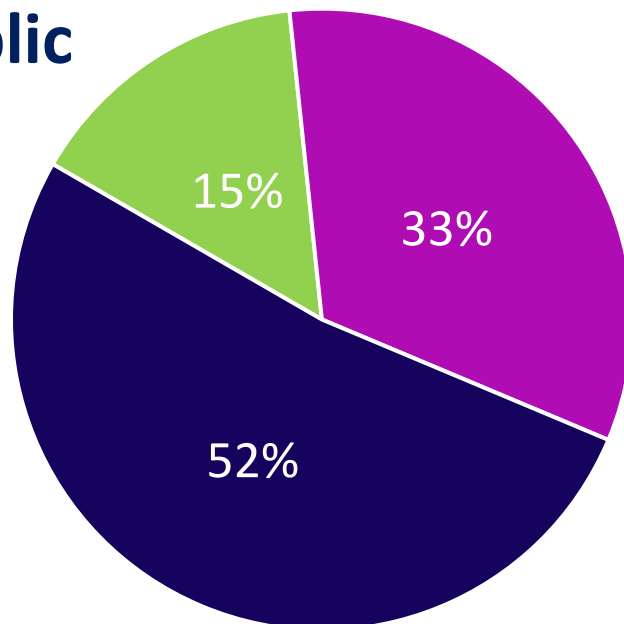
¹Public: 14,000 respondents from 14 countries

Data weighted to be representative of each country by age, region and gender

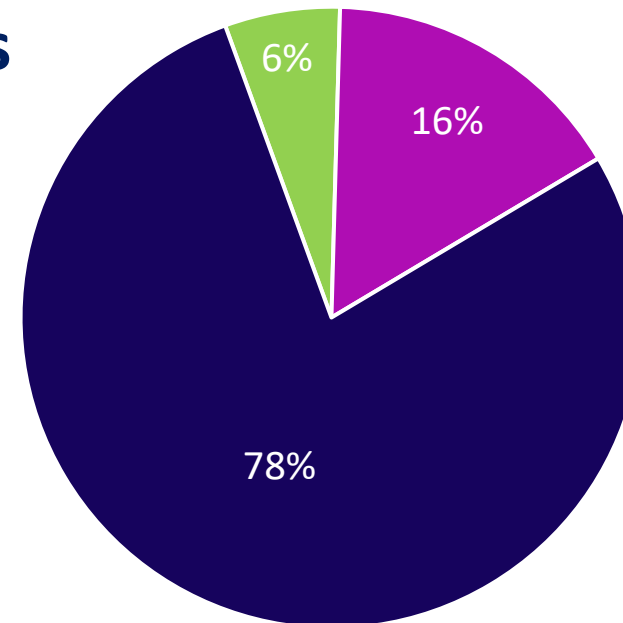





Global perceptions re welfare of horses in sport

¹Public



²Equestrians



-  I believe welfare standards are high
-  I believe welfare standards need improving
-  I believe it is impossible to provide adequate welfare protection

Savanta opinion surveys, 2022

¹ Public: 14,000 respondents from 14 countries

Data weighted to be representative of each country by age, region and gender

² Equestrian stakeholders: 27,710 respondents from 116 countries

Sources: ¹ Equine Ethics and Wellbeing Commission for the FEI Public Attitudes on the Use of Horses in Sport: Survey Report (November 2022)

² Equine Ethics and Wellbeing Commission for the FEI Opinions of Equestrian Stakeholders on the use of Horses in Sport: Survey Report (November 2022)

To **Fully Understand** the Horse and his **welfare requirements** you must understand his

EVOLUTION

Pertinent evolutionary facts

i.e., the first principles of all things equine

- Herd animal
- Galloping animal
- Chased 'prey' species.
- Fright Flight (not fight!)

George Stubbs 1724-1806 All Done from Nature



Pain physical and mental

- Protective mechanism
 - Modifies behaviour
- Including emotional components,
 - Such as Fear and Anxiety
 - both
 - Actual
 - Remembered

How To Avoid Pain In The First Place

KNOW WHAT IS NORMAL

Lack of knowledge is Root Cause of Horse Welfare Problems

[Horsemen, 2016]



New Research into Positive mental state
i.e. cup half full, not half empty

- **Five Freedoms and Five Domains**
- **Both frameworks used to assess and ensure the welfare of animals, including horses in equestrianism.**
- **The Five Freedoms -specific freedoms animals should have, which we discussed at this conference 13 years ago!**
- **However, the Five Domains -effects of management on animals' mental state and positive experiences in addition to avoiding negative ones.**



The Mental State

- **First four domains focus on factors**
 - **nutrition, physical environment,**
 - **health, behavioural interactions**
- **that give rise to specific negative or positive experiences,**
- **which contribute to the animal's mental state,**
- **As evaluated in the fifth domain, the Mental State**



MAINTAIN +ve MENTAL STATE



Too much emphasis on negativity

Ridden Horse Pain Ethogram

If we can produce a

- +ve mental state
- in the human -
- we can do it
- in the horse too



Follow the scientific research

- to compliment YOUR own extensive equestrian management
- knowledge / experience



STABLING

DIET

TURNOUT

SOCIALISATION



Stable design influences relaxation and comfortable behaviour in horses during short term stabling

Horses housed in individual stables for long periods - physical contact other horses not possible .. Detrimental

Very latest research indicates, even during short bouts of stabling,

- horses more relaxed when stable design allowed them to engage in social behaviours with other horses
- than when stable design left them physically isolated from other horses

Horse owners often perceive stable design unimportant if only used for short periods of time, with the majority of their time budget spent at pasture with other horses.

This is incorrect.

Research showed the greatest relaxation in horses stabled within half walls, c.f. window or full walls

STARCH / COGNITION

Effects of diet (low starch versus high starch) on dopamine release and ultimately its effects on equine cognition

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter often referred to as the 'feel good' hormone

Increasing the levels of starch in a working horse's diet may benefit its motivation and potentially increase its cognition via dopamine release.

Decrease in dopamine resulted in reduced motivation in the horses on the low starch diet

The level of starch change within the diet must be controlled or the potential for example stereotypic behaviours/ handling may occur (Kentucky Equine Research Staff, 2016).



Aberystwyth University April 2023

Associations between turn out practices and rates of musculoskeletal disease and injury in Thoroughbred foals and yearlings on stud farms in the United Kingdom



Early-life locomotor activity during turn out may alter susceptibility to musculoskeletal disease and injury via modulation of behaviours and tissue development during growth

Results suggest that disruptions or alterations to turn out time routines increase injury risk and should be avoided where possible

Turn out in larger paddocks, particularly before weaning, may confer protection against subsequent musculoskeletal disease and injury.

Mental Wellbeing

Quarantine :-

in proximity of sight and sound other horses

Weaning

Influence of weaning management on gastritis incidence in foals



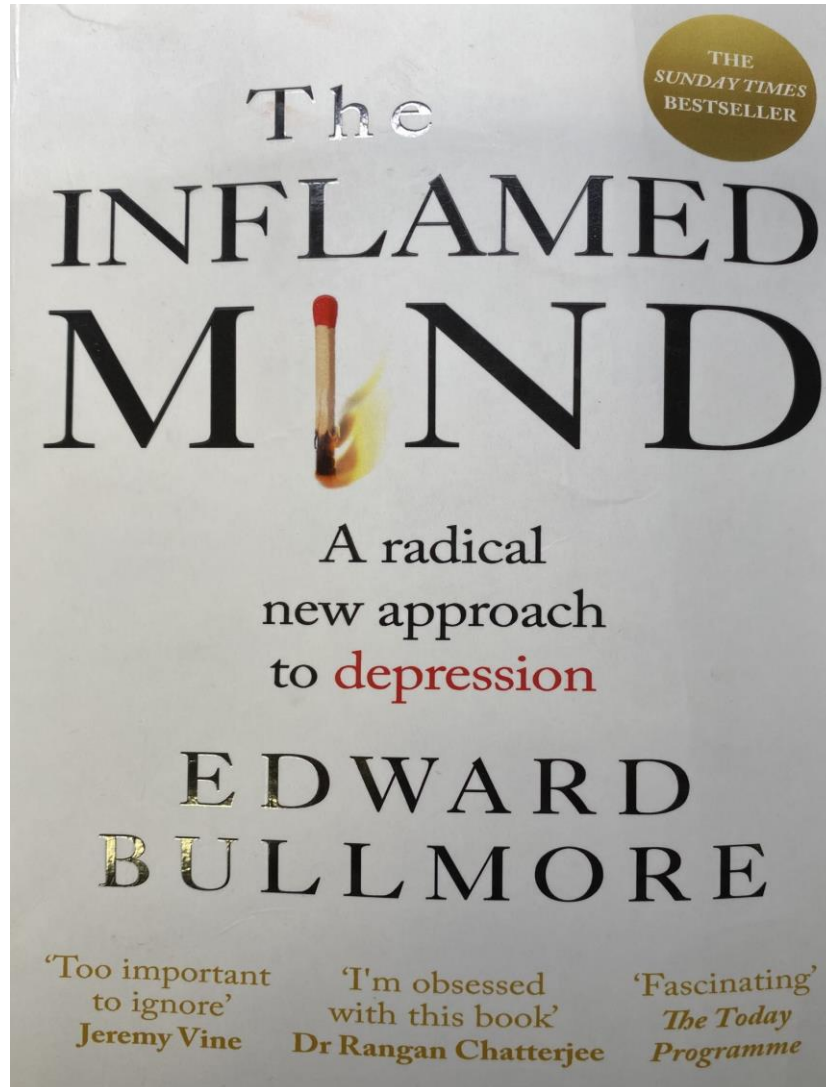
Humans > Conception to 2 years of age

Biochemical pathways

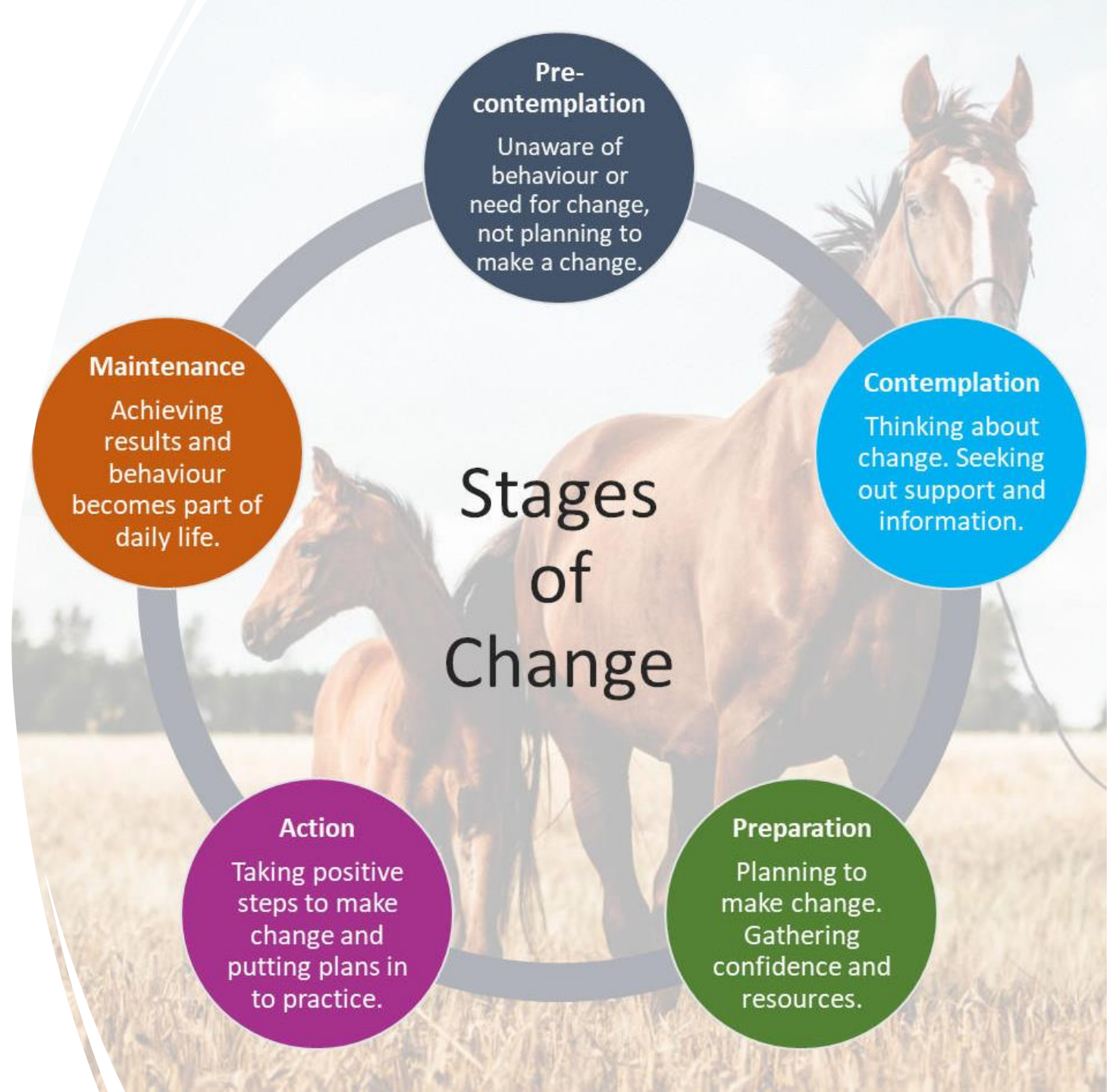
- > recognised mental states
- > vaccines to reduce mental disease neuro diversity

Could this research be applied to the horse

- > positive mental state



WHERE ARE YOU??





‘Breeding for a Sustainable Equine Future’



Thank you and discussion please.