

# Switch Off *Your Self-Doubt*



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# So You Can Ride with Calm Confidence

A free, downloadable mindset check-in for horse riders who want to feel calmer, clearer, and more in control, without spiralling into 'what ifs' or self-doubt



# Welcome

If you've been stuck in your head, second-guessing yourself, or feeling like the fun of riding has disappeared... this simple mindset check-in will help you get back on track.

We've called this guide "Switch Off the Self-Doubt" — because self-doubt often shows up in the form of the thoughts you're having before, during, or after a ride.

You might hear:

"I'm not ready."

"What if something goes wrong?"

"I should be better than this by now."

That inner voice — the one that questions your ability, your decisions, or your progress — is what fuels self-doubt. Left unchecked, it chips away at your confidence and makes riding feel harder than it needs to be.

This guide is designed to help you spot those thought patterns and start responding to them differently. It's not about pretending to feel confident. It's about having a practical way to reset your thinking before it spirals.

Take a breath. You're not on your own, and you're not stuck.

This is a simple first step to help you feel more calm, more in control, and more like yourself again in the saddle.

# Why Your Inner Voice Matters

You wouldn't speak to your horse the way your inner voice sometimes speaks to you, would you?

When you're dealing with nerves, fear or self-doubt, it's not just what's happening around you that matters, it's how you're talking to yourself about it.

Your inner voice plays a major role in how your body responds. If that voice is calm and reassuring, it helps you stay composed and focused. If it's critical or anxious, it can trigger tension, overthinking, or fear, even before you step into the saddle.

The good news?

You can influence it, and this mindset check-in will show you how.



# Step 1: Notice What You're Saying to Yourself

Here are five common thought patterns that can quietly knock your confidence.

You don't need to change anything right now, just notice which ones sound familiar.

## The Catastrophiser

"What if I fall? What if something goes wrong?"

This voice jumps straight to the worst-case scenario. It's trying to protect you, but it often creates fear about things that haven't happened (and probably won't). It keeps you on high alert, which makes it harder to relax or think clearly.

## The Critic

"You should be over this by now."

This voice is harsh, judgmental, and often holds you to unrealistic standards. It focuses on what you're not doing, rather than what you are doing, making it hard to feel good about progress, no matter how far you've come.

## The Comparison Trap

"Everyone else is more confident than me."

This voice tells you that you're behind or not good enough, based on what you think others are experiencing. But confidence isn't a competition. Comparing yourself to others usually undermines your own journey and disconnects you from your horse.

## The Doubter

"I don't think I can handle this."

This voice plants seeds of uncertainty, especially when you're pushing your comfort zone. It can sound reasonable, but it quietly erodes your belief in your own ability, even when you've handled similar situations before.

## The People-Pleaser

"What will they think if I mess up?"

This voice puts other people's opinions ahead of your own. It makes you anxious about being judged, criticised, or misunderstood, and can stop you from doing what's right for you and your horse.

### Quick check-in:

Which of these shows up most often for you?

When do they tend to appear most frequently?  
Before a ride? While riding? After a mistake?

What impact do they have on your body, your focus, or your enjoyment?

## Step 2: Reset with a More Supportive Voice

Now that you've spotted what your inner voice is saying, it's time to shift how you respond.

This isn't about ignoring what you're feeling or forcing fake positivity.

It's about choosing a way to talk to yourself that's calm, realistic and supportive — especially before or during a ride.

### Use This Reset Phrase Framework

"It's OK that I feel [emotion] — I [can / will / choose to] [action]."

This framework helps you acknowledge the feeling, without getting stuck in it. It gives your mind a clear way forward, grounded in choice and capability.

Here are a few rider-specific examples:

- "It's OK that I feel nervous – I can take this one step at a time."
- "It's OK that I feel wobbly – I will focus on the basics."
- "It's OK that I feel anxious – I can take a breath and bring my attention to what's in my control."
- "It's OK that I feel unsure – I will take my time."
- "It's OK that I feel tense – I can choose what I do next."
- "It's OK that I feel unsettled – I do what feels right for me and my horse today."

## Your Turn:

Write your own version below, using the framework:

It's OK that I feel \_\_\_\_\_

I [can / will / choose to] \_\_\_\_\_

Repeat your phrase before you ride.

Keep it in your head, or say it aloud while grooming or tacking up.

The more you use it, the easier it becomes to ride with calm, steady focus.



# Final Thought

Confidence isn't always something that magically appears; it's something you create and grow by following a tried, tested and proven process.

This mindset check-in is a simple way to start doing that – it helps you notice what's going on inside your head and positively choose a better way to think, feel and ride through it.

You've already taken the first step. And if you'd like more help as you go, there's support waiting for you.

## Want to Know More?

If you've found this guide has helped you feel a little differently about riding, then my full guide to managing your inner voice will take things to the next level!

**Managing Your Inner Voice for Horse Riders – A proven, psychology-based workbook to help you shift your mindset and ride with more ease, calm and confidence.**

Inside you'll find:

- Proven strategies to rewire unhelpful mental habits
- Practical tools to feel more calm, focused and in control of your mind and body
- Psychology-based insights tailored specifically to horse riders

👉 [Get the Rider's Guide to Managing Your Inner Voice right here](#)

## About the Author

Alison Buttery is a BHS Accredited Professional Coach and Certified Mindset Coach who helps horse riders overcome nerves, fear and self-doubt, so they can ride with more calm, confidence and connection.

Her work blends 35 years experience of riding, competing and coaching horses and riders, with proven, psychology-based tools and techniques that help riders to achieve overcome their mindset blocks and achieve their equestrian goals.



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