

# horses healing hearts is now offering



Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP)

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

Our professionals are trained in the EAGALA model to provide the best experience possible. EAGALA is the leading international nonprofit association with over 600 programs, and 4,000 members in 49 countries world-wide. EAGALA uses equine therapy to address mental health and human development needs.

## The EAGALA Model

- The Team Approach – An Equine Specialist, a Mental Health professional and horses work together.
- Focus on the ground – No horseback riding is involved. Effective and deliberate techniques are used where the horses become metaphors in specific ground-based experiences.
- Solution-Oriented – all clients have the best solutions for themselves when given the opportunity to discover them. Rather than instructing or directing solutions, we allow our clients to experiment, problem-solve, take risks, employ creativity, and find their own solutions that work best for them.
- Code of Ethics - EAGALA has high standards of practice and ethics and an ethics committee and protocol for upholding these standards, ensuring best practices and the highest level of care.

## Why use horses?

Like humans, horses are social animals, with defined roles within their herds. They have distinct personalities, attitudes and moods; an approach that works with one horse won't necessarily work with another. At times, they seem stubborn and defiant. They like to have fun. In other words, horses provide vast opportunities for metaphorical learning, an effective technique when working with even the most challenging individuals or groups. Most importantly, horses mirror human body language. Horses are honest, which makes them especially powerful messengers.

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## What is EAP and EAL?

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) incorporates horses experientially for emotional growth and learning. It is a collaborative effort between a licensed therapist and a horse professional working with the clients and horses to address treatment goals. Because of its intensity and effectiveness, it is considered a short-term, or "brief" approach.

EAP is experiential in nature. This means that participants learn about themselves and others by participating in activities with the horses, and then processing (or discussing) feelings, behaviors, and patterns. This approach has been compared to the ropes courses used by therapists, treatment facilities, and human development courses around the world. But EAP has the added advantage of utilizing horses, dynamic and powerful living beings.

Not all programs or individuals who use horses practice Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. For one, licensed (in the U.S.) and properly qualified (outside the U.S.) mental health professionals need to be involved. The focus of EAP is not riding or horsemanship. The focus of EAP involves setting up ground activities involving the horses which will require the client or group to apply certain skills. Non-verbal communication, assertiveness, creative thinking and problem-solving, leadership, work, taking responsibility, teamwork and relationships, confidence, and attitude are several examples of the tools utilized and developed by EAP.

EAP is a powerful and effective therapeutic approach that has an incredible impact on individuals, youth, families, and groups. EAP addresses a variety of mental health and human development needs including behavioral issues, attention deficit disorder, PTSD, substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, anxiety, relationship problems and communication needs.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is similar to EAP but where the focus is on learning or educational goals. EAL still involves the team of mental health professional and horse professional working with the clients and horses. The focus however is on education and learning specific skills as defined by the individual or group, such as improved product sales for a company, leadership skills for a school group, or resiliency training for our military warriors.

***The potential applications for both EAP and EAL are limitless!***

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