

“Due to realization that they cannot control the horse and by letting go of the control of the animal, people paradoxically acquire more internal control. This can lead to them being more relaxed and help them pay more attention to their surroundings and their inner selves. Horses create a distraction that helps break down defenses and helps the therapist get a more realistic picture of what might be going on. EAP provides immediate feedback regarding cause and effect. People can have immediate success which may help them to see that other changes they are trying to achieve aren’t so difficult. It helps people learn to trust and build trust which can transfer to other relationships.” Miles (1993)

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CHASTITY INGRAM,
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EQUINE ASSISTED
PSYCHOTHERAPY
& EQUINE
ASSISTED
LEARNING

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What is EAP?

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 people and horses to address treatment goals. Because of its intensity and effectiveness, it is considered a short-term, or "brief" approach. Individuals learn about themselves and others by participating in activities with horses and then discussing feelings, behaviors and patterns.

The focus of EAP and Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is not riding or horsemanship. No experience with horses is needed.

“Experiential learning is learning by doing. Today, biologists and neuropsychologists argue that humans are ‘hardwired’ to learn this way. It has been estimated that while we remember only 20% of what we hear and 50% of what we see, that we retain 80% of what we do.”

Benefits of EAP:

- Challenges people in a non-threatening way
- Rapidly breaks down barriers
- Provides immediate feedback
- Captures and holds attention
- Improves communication, responsibility, problem solving, anger management, self-esteem, relationship skills and more...
- Used in conjunction with evidenced based practices.

So why use horses?

Horses don't lie. They mirror our conscious and subconscious behavior and provide instant, nonjudgmental feedback which in turn provides an opportunity to work on the previously mentioned skills. It is a powerful interactive learning simulation. Horses have minds of their own and read your intentions and react to what you do. They can offer unconditional friendship, experience a wide range of feelings, and provide immediate, honest, observable feedback in response to our interactions with them. Horses are sensitive to nonverbal stimulus, which makes them astute therapeutic guides. They are social beings that bring us insight into group/family dynamics and the individual roles we play in our daily lives.



CHASTITY INGRAM IS A
CERTIFIED EAP PROVIDER
AND A MEMBER OF THE
EQUINE ASSISTED GROWTH
& LEARNING ASSOCIATION.

So why try EAP?

EAP uses interactive activities in place of traditional sessions where you “talk” and a therapist “listens.” Not only does EAP work, it is much more enjoyable than typical talk therapy. It can be a useful adjunct to traditional talk therapy. EAP sessions are designed to meet your unique needs. The activities in each session require you and the horse to accomplish a specific goal. Your reaction to the horse, and the horse's reaction to you, not only helps “show” where sticky spots are, but how to better communicate and interact with others to accomplish your personal goals. With EAP you will discover new, more effective solutions for the challenges in your life. 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. This brief approach can successfully address a variety of mental health needs including: behavioral issues, substance abuse, abuse issues, depression, anxiety, relationship problems, communication and more.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is similar to EAP but is different in that the focus is on learning or educational goals. EAL still involves the team of mental health professional and horse professional working with people and horses. The focus however is on education and learning specific skills as defined by the individual or group.