

What is Equine Assisted Psychotherapy?

Open Arms Behavioral Health is proud to offer Equine Assisted Psychotherapy to a variety of clientele for a variety of life's problems. Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) incorporates horses experientially for mental and behavioral health therapy and personal development. 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. Next, participants process (or discuss) feelings, behaviors, and patterns with the mental health and horse professionals. This approach has been compared to the ropes courses used by therapists, treatment facilities and human development courses around the world. However, 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.

Open Arms Behavioral Health is proud to offer Equine Assisted Psychotherapy to a variety of clientele for a variety of life's problems. EAP has shown to be effective with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. We are honored, therefore, to have the designation of EAGALA Military Services provider. If you feel that Equine Assisted Psychotherapy can be of help to you or your family, please ask your provider team for more information.