Equine Assisted Modalities: Glossary of Terms

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP): Addresses the client or group's treatment goals, focuses on setting up ground activities involving the horses which will require the client or group to apply certain skills, as defined by their treatment plan or goals. Examples of skills applied in an EAP session: Improved behaviors and social skills, depression and anxiety reduction, relationship development.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL): Addresses the individual or group's learning or educational goals, focuses on setting up ground activities involving horses to help learn specific skills or achieve educational goals, as defined by that individual or group. Examples of skills applied in an EAL session: Improved product sales for a company, leadership skills for a school group, resiliency training for the military.

Equine-Facilitated Learning (EFL): EFL covers a wide array of social and emotional learning activities organized around horse experiences. EFL facilitators may be experienced educators, business consultants, personal coaches or certified in alternative health fields. Practitioners of EFL are not regulated or licensed; consumers should ask about the EFL practitioner’s background and qualifications. EFL may contribute to positive outcomes for a client although the activity itself is not therapy.

Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP): EFP is a type of experiential psychotherapy built around interactions with horses. Therapy must be applied by a provider who is trained and licensed (by their state) to practice psychotherapy or counseling. The therapist should have additional training and experience in facilitating EFP; often sessions are facilitated jointly by a trained therapist and an equine specialist especially when working with more than one client at a time. Also known as: Equine Assisted Psychotherapy, Equine-Facilitated Mental Health, Equine Assisted Counseling.

Equus Coaching™/ Equine Assisted/Life or Leadership Coaching: Experiential coaching blending life and leadership coaching with interactions with horses. Equus Coaching is typically provided by a professional who has completed a recognized and/or accredited Life, Leadership, or Executive Coaching certification program plus additional training in basic equine husbandry and safe handling, equine psychology, and experience in setting up a partnership with an equine facility. Activities are conducted on the ground (no riding) and addresses the individual or team communication and goals.

Gestalt Equine Therapy: Practitioners of these models have been trained in the essentials of Gestalt therapy and the essentials of equine assisted psychotherapy. There are several certification programs, each with different acronyms such as Equine Gestalt Coaching Method® (EGCMMethod) and Gestalt Equine Psychotherapy (GEP).

Hippotherapy: Physical, occupational and speech therapy treatment strategy that utilizes equine movement. Hippotherapy must be prescribed and provided by a trained and licensed physical, occupational or speech and language therapist. The foundation of sensorimotor integration established in hippotherapy can improve neurological function and sensory processing, which can be generalized to a wide range of daily activities.
**Therapeutic Horsemanship:** A program where students learn horsemanship skills, such as riding or caring for horses. Horsemanship skills are the primary objective, however life lessons and other therapeutic benefits may be gained through learning the skills of being with horses.

**Therapeutic Riding (TR):** Mounted therapy in which people with disabilities ride horses to relax, and to develop muscle tone, coordination, confidence, and well-being. Therapeutic riding is most often provided by a riding instructor with special training, who in many cases will be under the direction of a hippotherapist (see above). TR uses horseback riding to positively impact cognitive, physical, emotional and social well-being for participants. Long recognized as a therapy of tremendous benefit to children with disabilities such as cerebral palsy or Down’s syndrome, TR has now broadened and shows tremendous promise in treatment of autism, sensory integration disorders, language development and trauma recovery in children.

**Professional Organizations and Training:**

**Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH):** The organization formerly known as NARHA officially became the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) in 2011. PATH offers three levels of certification for therapeutic riding instructors: Registered, Advanced and Master. PATH’s Standards for Certification and Accreditation manual details voluntary standards for the equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) industry, precautions and contraindications to therapeutic riding, a glossary of industry terms and sample forms. www.PathIntl.org

**Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA):** EAGALA teaches Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) and Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) focusing on experiential, ground-based activities. The EAGALA treatment team (a Mental Health Professional and Equine Specialist) works with the client in creative horse-centered activities designed to address specific treatment goals. www.eagala.org

**Equine Guided Educational Association (EGEA):** Provides educational programs and training in Equine Guided Education (EGE) and Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL) for professionals entering the field and resources for the public. www.equineguidededucation.org

**Equine Experiential Education Association (E3A):** An international professional membership organization offering training, certification, business development and resources for the implementation of Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) programs by educators, coaches, professional development trainers and other facilitators. www.e3assoc.org

**Koelle Institute for Equus Coaching®:** Provides a full year training and apprenticeships for certified coaches who wish to gain skills as an Equus Coach. Training includes basic equine husbandry and safe handling, equine psychology, coaching alongside an equine partner, and experience in setting up a partnership with an equine facility. Coaches who complete a year-long course are skilled at providing equine assisted coaching for individuals, couples and families. Coaches who complete a second year apprenticeship course are certified to provide Equus Workshops. www.KoelleInc.com