

Notice for Mental Health Agencies and Counsellors ?

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy Course

We would be grateful if you would kindly circulate this notice to your counseling staff and consider the benefits of having one or more of your staff trained and accredited in the new and exciting field of *Equine Assisted Psychotherapy*.

During the week 20-28 July, a team from the USA based, *Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association* will conduct an accreditation course in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy at the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Accreditation requires completion of two, three-day sessions, each priced at US\$550 (includes training, course materials, morning teas and lunches but not accommodation).

Tertiary qualified mental health professionals with membership of a recognized professional body are invited to attend.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy is well established in the USA and Canada and has been operating on a smaller scale in Australia for several years with excellent results. The Gracefull Strides facility at the Sunshine Coast, for example, has been operating since 2004 with a variety of clients referred by private practitioners, schools and government departments.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy is particularly useful for clients who do not respond well to in-house talking therapy. For the client, EAP provides an exciting, enjoyable and effective means of addressing a wide range of behavioural and cognitive dysfunctions.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy does not involve riding and the mental health professional requires no prior experience with horses.

The program involves a client (or a family group) interacting in ground-based activities with a horse. This is undertaken under the supervision of an EAP trained health professional and an EAP trained equine professional. It is a short-term, solution-focused modality based on experiential learning, cognitive behavior and systemic approaches.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy provides an exciting new opportunity for counselors to engage with their clients and to break through barriers in communication. The therapy's key strength is that horses have the ability to mirror exactly what human body language is telling them. Many clients will complain, "The horse is stubborn. The horse doesn't like me," etc. But they soon learn that if they change their approach, the horses respond differently. Because of their size, horses can be intimidating, but accomplishing a task involving a horse, in spite of those fears, creates confidence and provides for wonderful metaphors when dealing with other intimidating and challenging situations in life. In fact, horses provide vast opportunities for metaphorical learning. Using metaphors, in discussion or activity, is an effective technique when working with even the most challenging individuals or groups.

We would be delighted to welcome members of your staff to the EAGALA training session at the end of July. For more information or to register, please consult the links below, or contact me at:

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Links:

Training Information

EAGALA Training Programme Brochure: <http://eagala.org/contents/Certification%20Brochure.pdf>

EAGALA Information: <http://www.eagala.org/informationContent.htm>

Some Australian EAP Facilities:

Victoria - <http://www.eapaustralia.com.au/>

NSW - <http://www.fernmark.com.au/equineassisted.htm>

Some Scholarly Articles on EAP:

"Equine Assisted Psychotherapy from an Imaginal Perspective", International Association for Jungian Studies: http://www.jungianstudies.org/publications/baughl_sb1.pdf

"From Kids and Horses: Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy for Children", International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology (2005): <http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/redalyc/pdf/337/33750210.pdf>
(Scroll down for English version)

"New Age or Old Sage? A Review of Equine Assisted Psychotherapy", Australian Journal of Counselling Psychology (2005): http://pciranch.com/files/Research-new_age_old_sage.pdf