

# E.A.P. – A NEW MODEL

(EQUINE ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY)

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LEARNING TO *MODEL* A NEW SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE



# TRADITIONAL & CURRENT WESTERN CULTURAL NORMS:

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- Exploitation, ***Division***, Racism
- Authoritarianism, ***Top-Down*** Hierarchies
- Abuse, Neglect, ***Indifference***
- Violence or the Threat of Violence...***Control***
- *Narcism; "The emphasis on individualistic society provides an underpinning for cultural values that permeate Western society and influence every aspect of life, including mental health and psychological well-being." (Bemak & Chung, 2012, pp. 56-57)*

WHAT DOES THIS RESEMBLE? (*OTHER THAN A HORSE STABLE*)...*A PRISON*



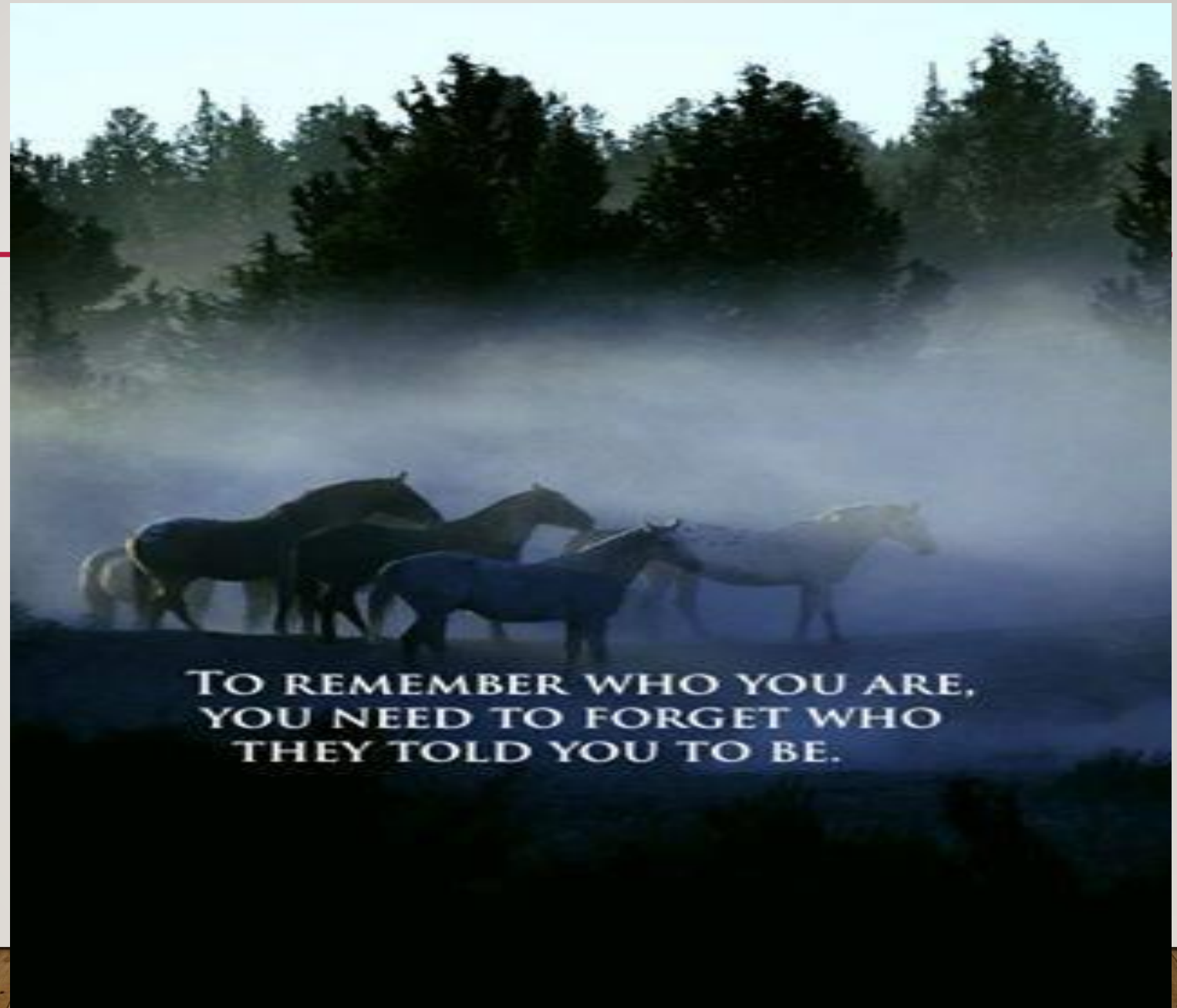
WHAT DOES THIS RESEMBLE? (*OTHER THAN A DOG RIDING  
A HORSE*)...*EXPLOITATION*

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IDENTITY:

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# **NEW WAY FARM, LLC** (NEU WEG BAUERNHOF IN GERMAN) *COLUMBIANA, OHIO*

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# PART I: THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL FRAME

*WHAT ARE THE SCHOLARLY PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGE YOU'RE ADDRESSING?*

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- a) How am I defining the challenge?
- b) What about its causes, consequences, and potential solutions do the scholars agree upon?
- c) What do they disagree about?
- d) Where do I stand in this debate, and why?

## A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE?

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- **Traumatization and PTSD symptoms lead to great suffering, the Midwest has been hit relatively very hard (unemployment/SUDs)**
- "The situation in this Ohio/Pennsylvania MSA is not atypical: roughly 25% of all MSAs have lost manufacturing jobs since 2010. Clearly individuals are either stuck with lower paying jobs or are trying to train themselves to work in industries that require higher skill levels." (Gallagher, 2019, p. 9)
- "Ohio ranks second among states in drug overdose deaths, with more than 39 deaths for every 100,000 people." (Russell, Spence, & Thames, 2018, p. 702).



# A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) - *COMORBIDITY*

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- "In the cohort of the Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, 18 to 20% of veterans met criteria for PTSD, and of those, about 20 to 30% reported increased drinking immediately after returning from Iraq...with rates of alcohol consumption increasing with the level of combat exposure..."; over time or the sheer inescapability from them leads many sufferers to eventually self-medicate: "The prevalence rates generally tend to increase over time with rates ranging from 37 to 39.1% for PTSD and 23.4 to 26.5% for hazardous drinking"; (Jackson et al., 2016, p. 1).
- "...higher levels of stress-induced anxiety, predict shorter time to relapse..."; "...laboratory studies in individuals with AD, which use scripts of personally experienced stressful or alcohol-related events, have shown that (i) stress reliably elicits craving..."; (Jackson et al., 2016, p.2).

## A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) - *COMORBIDITY*

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- "PTSD symptom severity was a strong predictor of craving elicited by trauma cues..." (Jackson et al., 2016, p.1); "When both disorders occur together, this **comorbidity is associated with more severe impairment, poorer treatment prognosis, more severe symptoms** of PTSD, **higher relapse rates, higher reports of family problems, and heavier drinking** when compared to individuals with either AD or PTSD alone..." (Jackson et al., 2016, p. 1).

## A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) – *EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE*

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- "A variety of investigators has demonstrated that youths' experiences as witnesses and/or victims of violence are associated with elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and similar syndromes, including posttraumatic stress disorder...violent and non-violent antisocial behavior...substance use and abuse...academic performance...antisocial belief systems...and emotional dysregulation" (Boxer, Middlemass, & Delorenzo, 2009, p. 794).
- "...research has shown that individuals reporting high levels of witnessing, as well as victimization by, violence also report higher levels of depression, aggression, posttraumatic stress, and interpersonal problems in comparison with individuals reporting low levels of violence exposure." (Boxer, Middlemass, & Delorenzo, 2009, p. 795)

## A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) – *PRISON - VICTIM BLAMING WORSENING SYMPTOMS*

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- "Lifetime violence experienced by incarcerated women has been characterized as severe, far exceeding experiences of women in the general population..." (Andrea, Cimino, Kunz, Mendoza, Shively, & Thieleman, 2015, p. 2)
- "Possible PTSD was one of the most prevalent mental health conditions, with 48.1% of male inmates and 57.8% of female inmates having indications of a possible diagnosis. Other prevalent conditions included inmates with at least one substance use disorder (85.5%), at least one severe substance use disorder (67.5%)" (Combs et al., 2019, p. 10)

# A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) –

## *PRISON - VICTIM BLAMING WORSENING SYMPTOMS*

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- "While the United States has only 5 percent of the world's population, it has nearly 25 percent of its prisoners - about 2.2 million people... One out of every 100 American adults is incarcerated, a per capita rate five to 10 times higher than that in Western Europe or other democracies..." (Collier, 2014)
- "While the United States has 707 incarcerated people per 100,000 citizens, for example, China has 124 to 172 per 100,000 people and Iran 284 per 100,000. North Korea is perhaps the closest, but reliable numbers are hard to find; some estimates suggest 600 to 800 per 100,000." (Collier, 2014)

# A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) –

## *PRISON - VICTIM BLAMING WORSENING SYMPTOMS*

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- "This growth is "historically unprecedented" in the United States and "internationally unique..." (Collier, 2014)
- "Even states like New Hampshire, with incarceration rates below the national average, continue to lock people up at more than double the rates of our closest international allies" (Wagner & Sawyer, 2018)

## A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) - *PRISON - VICTIM BLAMING WORSENING SYMPTOMS*

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- "...incarcerated women demonstrate significantly higher rates of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)...with up to 81% of incarcerated women having experienced five or more traumatic events in their lifetime...Among incarcerated women, incidences of co-occurring SUD and PTSD are substantial..." (Cimino, Kunz, Mendoza, Shively, & Thieleman, 2015, p. 2).
- "From a person-in-environment perspective, addressing risk factors in the community is critical because alcohol and drug use is predictive of recidivism for both men and women..."; (Cimino, Kunz, Mendoza, Shively, & Thieleman, 2015, p. 2)

## A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.) – *AMERICA...AND “THE WORLD”*

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- *America:* “An estimated 19.1% of U.S. adults had any anxiety disorder in the past year.” (National Institute of Mental Health, 2017)
- *America:* “An estimated 31.9% of adolescents had any anxiety disorder; The prevalence of major depressive episode was highest among adults reporting two or more races (11.3%).” (National Institute of Mental Health, 2017)
- *World Wide:* “More than 300 million people are now living with depression, an increase of more than 18% between 2005 and 2015.” (World Health Organization, 2017)



A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.)

I WANT TO TAKES CLIENTS **FROM THIS ROAD....**



A) HOW AM I DEFINING THE CHALLENGE? (CONT.)

**TO THIS ONE....**

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## B) WHAT ABOUT ITS CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS DO THE SCHOLARS AGREE UPON?

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- "...horses may **model a present focus** as imposing animals may encourage attention....are **highly responsive to humans**...horses **respond to human gestures**. Horse responses may **provide immediate feedback about a person's nonverbal behavior** (e.g., horses may crowd a person who is hunched and avoiding eye contact or back away from a person who is approaching quickly with prolonged eye contact), helping **increase awareness of one's behaviors and emotions**...." (Earles, Vernon, Yetz, 2015, p. 150)
- "Participants engaged in tasks with horses for 6 weekly 2-hour sessions. Immediately following the final session, participants reported **significantly reduced posttraumatic stress symptoms**,  $d=1.21$ , less severe emotional responses to trauma,  $d=0.60$ , **less generalized anxiety**,  $d=1.01$ , and **fewer symptoms of depression**,  $d=0.54$ . As well, participants significantly increased mindfulness strategies,  $d=1.28$ , and **decreased alcohol use**..." (Earles, Vernon, Yetz, 2015, p. 149).

## B) WHAT ABOUT ITS CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS DO THE SCHOLARS AGREE UPON? (CONT.)

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- "Prison-based animal programs have shown promise when it comes to **increased sociability, responsibility, and levels of patience for inmates** who participate in these programs." (Allison & Ramaswamy, 2016, p. 472)

## C) WHAT DO SCHOLARS DISAGREE ABOUT?

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- “...there is a **lack of empirically supported research** on active treatment components in EAMH...and **even less research on how group dynamics and developmental processes differ when horses are present.**” (Schroeder, Stroud, Sherwood, & Udell, 2018)
- “...in order **for group therapeutic factors to be activated in animal-assisted groups, group leaders need to be intentional** about how they integrate animals into the group experience.” (Schroeder, Stroud, Sherwood, & Udell, 2018)
- “...**horses did not have to be involved in a session for group members to build interpersonal bonds** amongst each other.” (Schroeder, Stroud, Sherwood, & Udell, 2018)

## C) WHAT DO SCHOLARS DISAGREE ABOUT? (CONT.)

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- “...findings from studies on ERT provide **inconsistent and less than compelling support for its efficacy in the treatment of any mental disorder**...several studies with control groups were **unable to demonstrate favorable results** for ERT. Given the lack of consistent follow-up data, the absence of treatment manualization or integrity checks, and several consistent threats to validity...the **results fall well short of the standards set forth for establishing empirical support for treatments**...” (Anestis, Anestis, Zawilinski, & Hopkins, 2014)

## C) WHAT DO SCHOLARS DISAGREE ABOUT? (CONT.)

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- “...the treatment group did not decrease significantly more than the control group. These findings suggest that EFP may be an effective additional treatment modality for post-traumatic stress symptoms, but there was no evidence from this initial study that EFP was significantly more effective than traditional office-based therapy.” (Mueller, McCullough, 2017)

D) WHERE DO I STAND IN THIS DEBATE, AND WHY?

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D) WHERE DO YOU STAND IN THIS DEBATE, AND WHY?

*PERSONAL EXPERIENCE 2018; CANFIELD (OHIO) FAIR*

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## D) WHERE DO YOU STAND IN THIS DEBATE, AND WHY? (CONT.) – *REPROGRAMMING THE SOUL...*

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- “Unlike other memories, **memories of traumatic events** may seem to have vague cognitive content. Rather, they often are **sensory fragments such as sights, sounds, smells, or kinesthetic sensations and emotional states**....” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2009, pp. 182-183) [*kinesthetic = physical sensory*]
- “...we must be able to combine our clinical role with psychoeducational work and interventions in larger systems that impact the client, so that we become **consultants, advocates, advisors, teachers, facilitators of indigenous healing**, and so on.” (Bemak & Chung, 2012, p. 16)

## PART II: PRACTICAL FRAME

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- **What are the local stakeholders' perspectives on the causes, consequences, and possible solutions to the social justice challenge**
- a) What do the stakeholders agree upon?
- b) What do the stakeholders disagree about?
- c) How do the stakeholder's perspectives compare/contrast with the scholars' perspectives?
- d) Where do you stand in this debate, and why?

# A) WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS AGREE UPON?

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- “In regards to recovery from adverse experiences, people have described the horse-human bond as a partnership of nonjudgmental acceptance and nurturance, which restored their sense of identity and life purpose...” (Yorke, Adams, & Coady, 2008).
- “Women have reported that therapeutic interactions with horses are emotionally grounding, instill feelings of courage and hope, and help them navigate interpersonal boundaries problems...” (Shambo, Young, & Madera, 2013)

## A) WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS AGREE UPON? (CON.T) – ANECDOTAL SUDS PATIENTS:

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- “...doing something useful”; “I feel that I do something. Something that’s important – to others, and of course, that’s a good feeling” (Kern-Godal, Halvorsen Brenna, Ajo Arnevik, Ravndal, 2016, p. 4)
- “Mostly, it has to do with the responsibility. To have someone that is dependent on you, because it becomes a commitment. That’s not something I’ve been that good at earlier. So I have absolutely found something in the horse therapy...” (Kern-Godal, Halvorsen Brenna, Ajo Arnevik, Ravndal, 2016, p. 5)
- “There’s no talk of drugs, or thoughts about drugs at all, it’s just to focus on the horses and how the day in there will be, in the stable. It’s very good motivation to think ahead in my life...” (without drugs)” (Kern-Godal, Halvorsen Brenna, Ajo Arnevik, Ravndal, 2016, p. 5)

## A) WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS AGREE UPON? (CON.T) – ANECDOTAL GENERAL PATIENTS:

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- "...body awareness: "I noticed that she is irritated because I'm stressed out, because there and then, I suddenly realised that I was stressed out. I remember only my breathing: I had a hectic way of breathing, from the top of my chest..." (Johansen, Arfwedson Wang, Binder, 2016, p. 6)
- "...(...) the reason is that I have been acting stressful, like really. Guaranteed it's had an influence on her and when I managed to breathe calmly and calm myself down, it calmed the horse down right away too. Getting that message made me realise things.(..) The moment you rush, the horse does the same." (Johansen, Arfwedson Wang, Binder, 2016, p. 6)

## A) WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS AGREE UPON? (CON.T) – ANECDOTAL VETERAN W/PTSD PATIENTS:

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- “It will make me **view my difficulties with PTSD in a completely new positive light.**”; “...**trust...was strengthened** by my experience here,” and that it “can be **transferred to everyday life.**” (Ferruolo, 2016, p. 5)
- “...working “with the horses was...probably the **most spiritual experience I had in a long time.**”; “...my biggest takeaway...was the **beauty, power, serenity, and majesty of God’s creation, the horse,**”; “...what I take away from this program is **peace, pride, and joy.**” (Ferruolo, 2016, p. 5)

## A) WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS AGREE UPON? (CON.T) – ANECDOTAL VETERAN W/PTSD PATIENTS:

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- "It taught me a lot about how I carry myself and interact with people...Working as a team is far more effective than working by myself."; "Learning about how I act with the animals relates to how I can act with humans in a better way."; "...the interaction will help me respect people and their different personalities." (Ferruolo, 2016, p. 5)



## B) WHAT DO THE STAKEHOLDERS DISAGREE ABOUT?

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- Some people are simply indifferent towards animals – does nothing for them
- Potential allergies and lack of availability.
- Riding – many EAP programs focus on riding.
- <https://www.eagala.org> – this organization seems to be the most popular of the EAP organizations out there. They offer training and accreditation so EAP facilitators can align themselves with them. However, they also model what I believe to be complete exploitation of the animals.

## C) HOW DO THE STAKEHOLDER'S PERSPECTIVES COMPARE/CONTRAST WITH THE SCHOLARS' PERSPECTIVES?

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- Stakeholders tend to be more universally pro.
- Scholars are not convinced due to a lack of empirical data.
- Scholars struggle with “**control**” in research of EAP:
- “The **little empirical evidence** that is available about the efficacy of equine-assisted interventions on psychological outcomes tends to be mixed and is often **difficult to interpret due to the lack of rigorous research designs**....The little empirical evidence that is available about the efficacy of equine-assisted interventions on psychological outcomes tends to be mixed and is often difficult to interpret due to the **lack of rigorous research designs**....Well-designed randomised controlled trials are greatly needed in this area...” (Byrne et al., 2013)

D) WHERE DO I STAND IN THIS DEBATE, AND WHY?

**AGAIN:** *PERSONAL EXPERIENCE 2018; CANFIELD (OHIO) FAIR*



## D) WHERE DO YOU STAND IN THIS DEBATE, AND WHY? (CONT.)

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- I favor non-riding (exploitative)
- Natural Horsemanship – natural environment, non-stabling (walk-in barn) - autonomy for the animal
- Viewing the horse as a stakeholder as well
- EAP *DOES* work according to my personal experiences – The limited times spent on farms growing up are perhaps the most memorable and positive experiences – a lot of “take away”.

# PART III: PROPOSAL FOR ACTION

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- **Specifically, what do you propose that our social justice community do to address the challenge you've identified?**
- a) Begin your proposal with a succinct overview of the action, and then break it down step by step, with a timeline.
- b) Discuss whose cooperation you'll need and how you'll win it.
- c) Discuss likely sources of resistance to your action and how you'll negotiate them. – city council, zoning board – form alliances with the local Mennonite community / business owners.

A) BEGIN YOUR PROPOSAL WITH A SUCCINCT OVERVIEW OF THE ACTION, AND THEN BREAK IT DOWN STEP BY STEP, WITH A TIMELINE.

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- State-of-the-art Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) facility to address the mental health needs in the area as they relate to adult trauma survivors - develop a model to be replicated by others.
- **PHASE I: *Land acquisition, \$450,000***; property w/self-sustaining hay supply with preexisting land leases - to be **completed within the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter**.
- **PHASE II: *Horse barn, \$140,000***; walk-in horse barn containing two very “rustic” rooms for individual therapy as well as group therapy, with gas heat, electricity, pump wells, compost toilets, and washer/dryer - to be **completed within the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter**.

A) BEGIN YOUR PROPOSAL WITH A SUCCINCT OVERVIEW OF THE ACTION, AND THEN BREAK IT DOWN STEP BY STEP, WITH A TIMELINE. (CONT.)

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- **PHASE III: *Operating start-up, \$100,000 (in order)***; fencing (\$20K), tractor w/implements (\$45K), misc. such as feeders, water heaters, furnishings, etc. (\$15,000), 8-10 horses / 3 donkeys / 10 goats / 2 pigs (\$20K).
- **TOTAL: \$690,000** dispersed within 3 the quarters with allotments in succession once the preceding phase has been completed.

## B) DISCUSS WHOSE COOPERATION YOU'LL NEED AND HOW YOU'LL WIN IT?

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- **Local Businesses:** I will appeal to “good will” element of business within the community and stress that backer’s names will remain associated with the project. *I will first seek backers then builders (contractors) prior to meeting with the local government.*
- **City council / Zoning board:** I will ingratiate the proposal promoting good will and community reputation / promotion. This community is concerned with preserving its agricultural image as well as some tourism.



## C) DISCUSS LIKELY SOURCES OF RESISTANCE TO YOUR ACTION AND HOW YOU'LL NEGOTIATE THEM.

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- **City council / zoning board:** I intent on seeking alliances with the local Mennonite community / business owners. *The existing lessor of the fields is a Mennonite family who operates a large grain business within the community.*
- **Ongoing support:** Will be sought in parallel with seeking the initial investment; *things such as feed, supplies, tax incentives, etc.*
- **Promotion:** *If needed,* will be done via the internet; the solicitation of local mental health clinics and mental health care providers; as well as various media outlets.

# PART IV: JUSTIFICATION

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- **Why should the community — our LLC, the campus community, and/or the wider community — join you in this action?**
- a) How does the action you propose address the challenge as you discussed it in Part I? That is, how does it speak to the scholars' arguments?
- b) How does it address the issues raised in Part II? That is, how does it fit with the stakeholders perspectives and meet their concerns?
- c) How does it advance values that our LLC, the campus community, and/or the wider community share?

## A) HOW DOES THE ACTION YOU PROPOSE ADDRESS THE CHALLENGE AS YOU DISCUSSED IT IN PART I? THAT IS, HOW DOES IT SPEAK TO THE SCHOLARS' ARGUMENTS?

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- **Measurability:** We will **obtain feedback** both directly and indirectly via the participant and his or her counselor, respectively.
- **(Beck's) BDI, (Burn's) BAI, as well as In-house Trauma-symptom Surveys:** We will provide these forms periodically and ask the client to fill them out and bring them back upon his or her next visit to be added to his or her file. We will also ask the participant's **counselor to forward us any documentation** as it relates to the client's progress as it relates to our EAP treatment.

A) HOW DOES THE ACTION YOU PROPOSE ADDRESS THE CHALLENGE AS YOU DISCUSSED IT IN PART I? THAT IS, HOW DOES IT SPEAK TO THE SCHOLARS' ARGUMENTS? (CONT.)

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- **Client/patient affordability:** We intend on accepting **Medicaid** as well as offering **sponsorships**. We will market these sponsorships (donations) for those who'd like to finance random client's EAP treatment at our facility. Sponsorship money will then be used to offer treatment to those who have no insurance coverage and cannot afford treatment on their own.

## B) HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE ISSUES RAISED IN PART II? THAT IS, HOW DOES IT FIT WITH THE STAKEHOLDER'S PERSPECTIVES AND MEET THEIR CONCERNS?

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- Stakeholders can **experience EAP without riding** and see if it's for them
- They will be introduced to Natural Horsemanship and potentially **learn a new language of respect, the observance and preservation of dignity and autonomy, and see if these things connect with them on a soul-level,** or in a healing way.
- "...we found evidence that the **Equine Partnering Naturally © approach to equine-assisted therapy maybe an effective treatment for anxiety and posttraumatic stress symptoms.** ...." (Earles, Vernon, Yetz, 2015, p. 149).

## C) HOW DOES IT ADVANCE VALUES THAT OUR LLC, THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY, AND/OR THE WIDER COMMUNITY SHARE?

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- **Humanistic:** Human / animal interaction stressing respectful, symbiotic relationships with other living organisms; a reminder and even perhaps a re-education of the potential and positive possibilities of the human experience.
- **Organic:** The experiencing of a potential deeply felt and realized 'human connection'.
- **Promotion of Mastery:** "...clients who are experiencing high levels of anxiety, depression, anger, frustration, or stress due to their inability to effectively understand and resolve problems and concerns in their social and community life *may be far better off working on mastering their environment* and developing appropriate responses..." (Bemak & Chung, 2012, p. 87).

## C) HOW DOES IT ADVANCE VALUES THAT OUR LLC, THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY, AND/OR THE WIDER COMMUNITY SHARE? (CONT.)

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- **Indigenous forms interaction:** Possible healing, and spirituality of a bygone era which may indeed build upon “modern”, Western forms of psychotherapy and mental health treatment in general.
- "...Western mental health has emphasized intrapsychic processes, neglecting the importance of social and cultural factors and the relevance of *spiritual and supernatural forces that contribute to psychological well-being*..." (Bemak & Chung, 2012, p. 89).

C) HOW DOES IT ADVANCE VALUES THAT OUR LLC, THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY, AND/OR THE WIDER COMMUNITY SHARE? (CONT.)

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- **Replication: Potentiality for creating a new model to be replicated on a mass scale**



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