

## Clinic to Arena

### Optimizing the Equine Professional's Role in Equine Assisted Therapy and Equine Assisted Learning

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HOOF FALLS & FOOTFALLS

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## Presented from Equine Professional's Point of View

- Saebra's detailed background, qualifications, and certifications at *HoofFallsandFootfalls.com*
- Critical Incident Stress Management & Suicide Awareness/Prevention- First Responder Focused
  - I encourage you to find trainings like this in your area!
- Saebra has a passion for educating instructors in the EAS industry- provide safe, professional, and effective services that do right by their horses, participants, volunteers, other partnered professionals.



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## The Horse

- Instructor's training and skills relating to equines needs and traits
  - Equine psychology
  - Herd dynamics and interaction
  - Setting horse up for success = participant success
- Why the horse with PTSD
  - Prey animal- hypervigilance
  - In the moment
  - Honest communication
  - Non-verbals similar to humans
  - Relationship more "earned" than other animals



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## Teaching & Skill Progression

- Teaching Techniques- adapt to the needs of the participant
  - Teach to what you see- look for teachable moments
    - Each day may be different for the human (and horse!)
  - Not just "whats" but "hows" and "whys"
  - Multiple ways of breaking down & explaining skills (task analysis)
  - Teach to all learning styles- auditory, visual, kinesthetic
  - Lead by example
- Facilitating participant progression
  - Human first- teach them, not the dx.
  - Allow for independence- capable adults
  - Strive for "zone of proximal development"- setting human up for success
    - Modify: horse, activity, environment, physical or verbal support, etc.
  - Progression happens at different rates



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## Sample activities & progression

- Horsemanship skills based
  - Safety
  - Ethical partnering with horses
  - Maintains training and wellbeing of horses- diversifies ability to work in different types of programs
  - Helps Equine Professionals stay in their "lane" not crossing to therapy
  - Personality and learning type of participant (ex: military, first responder, etc.)- comfort of structure
- Follow a "traditional" horsemanship skills progression and pattern
  - Easy to duplicate and maintain consistency (daily, weekly, group to group)
  - Allows for daily predictability but also teachable moments
  - Clear structure gives more freedom to be in the moment
  - Sample:
    - Approach and haltering
    - Grooming
    - Leading
    - Round Pen or Longe Line
    - "Extras"- stretching, desensitization, join ups, lateral work in hand, long lining or ground driving
    - Barn chores
  - What about riding?



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Questions?  
Comments?  
Bonus  
Suggested  
Readings

### Contact Information:

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### Bonus Suggested Reading for Equine Professionals (Run internet search for article title)

- Domestic horses send signals to humans when they face with an unsolvable task. 2017
- Functionally relevant responses to human facial expressions of emotion in the domestic horse (Equus caballus). 2016
- EquiFACS: The Equine Facial Action Coding System. 2015
- Animals Remember Previous Facial Expressions that Specific Humans Have Exhibited. 2018
- Relationships and Communication in Socially Natural Horse Herds. 2014
- Habituation vs. Learned Helplessness in Horses. 2018

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