



The Global Standard for Equine Assisted
Psychotherapy & Personal Development

A growing body of scientific evidence exists for Eagala Model equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP) and personal development (PD) services. The publications listed below are scholarly articles explaining the Eagala Model, describing empirical outcome studies, and/or addressing important concepts. These articles were published in peer-reviewed journals, having passed the scrutiny of experts in the scientific community.

Although some of the articles present data on benefits of the Eagala Model, the list contains a limited number of articles and each study has its own limitations. This does not mean the effects of the Eagala Model are limited; rather, it is a reflection of an emerging field in its early stages and illustrates the need for continued research.

EMPIRICAL SCHOLARSHIP

❖ Research on Eagala Model Outcomes

- Morgan, B. M. (2017). Stress management for college students: An experiential multi-modal approach. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 12* (3), 276-288.
 - Quasi-experimental study comparing students who received stress management activities (experimental group) with students in a control group. Activities were carried out either with Eagala Model or another experiential modality (e.g., yoga, mindfulness, hiking). Student stress decreased from pretest to posttest in the experimental group. Those receiving the Eagala Model performed as well as other modalities.
- Nurenberg, J.R. et al. (2014). Animal-assisted therapy with chronic psychiatric inpatients: Equine-assisted psychotherapy and aggressive behavior. *Psychiatric Services in Advance, Oct.* 1-7.
 - Hospitalized psychiatric patients with violent or regressed behaviors were randomly assigned to Eagala Model equine-assisted psychotherapy, canine group, social skills group or routine hospital activities (control group). Those in the Eagala group showed the largest decrease in violent behavior.
- Kemp, K., Signal, T., Botros, H., Taylor, N., Prentice, K. (2013). Equine facilitated therapy with children and adolescents who have been sexually abused: A program evaluation study. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 23*, 558-566.
 - Eagala Model intervention for adolescents who experienced sexual abuse and trauma. Researchers found significant improvements in psychological distress and functioning after the intervention.

- Black, M. (2016). Combating compassion fatigue in community care professionals using the Eagala Model. *Counseling Australia, Winter*, 8-13.
 - Pilot study¹ investigating the Eagala Model to treat compassion fatigue in community care professionals. Results showed significant decreases in compassion fatigue and burnout and increases in compassion satisfaction at posttest. Emotion awareness and management also increased significantly.
- Whittlesey-Jerome W. K., Schultz, P. N., & Tomaka, J. (2016). Adding equine assisted psychotherapy to conventional treatment: A case study of adolescent resilience among charter high school students. *Pediatrics & Therapeutics* 6, (1), 1-10.
 - Case study comparing effects of Eagala Model group sessions and psychoeducational group sessions on resiliency in charter school students. The Eagala group showed trending improvements in mastery and relatedness over and above those found in the nonequivalent control group.
- Whittlesey-Jerome, W.K. (2014). Adding equine-assisted psychotherapy to conventional treatments: A pilot study exploring ways to increase adult self-efficacy among victims of interpersonal violence. *The Practitioner Scholar: Journal of Counseling and Professional Psychology*, 3, 82-101.
 - Pilot study looking at adding Eagala Model EAP to existing conventional treatments for victims of interpersonal violence. The Eagala group showed greater improvement in self-efficacy, depression, and general functioning.
- Schultz, P. N., Remick-Barlow, G., & Robbins, L. (2007). Equine-assisted psychotherapy: A mental health promotion/intervention modality for children who have experienced intra-family violence. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 15 (3), 265-271.
 - Pilot study investigating Eagala for children with mental health and behavioral issues in a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experiment. GAF scores improved from pretest to posttest; improvements were positively correlated with number of Eagala sessions.

❖ Research Describing or Conceptualizing Eagala Model EAP

- Fournier, A. K., Letson, E., Berry, T. D., & Pasiuk, E. (2018). Human-animal interaction and metaphor in equine-assisted psychotherapy: Empirical support for the Eagala Model. *Human-Animal Interaction Bulletin*, 6 (1), 47-63.
 - Correlational study investigating the relationship between distress, human-horse interaction, and psychological learning. Data suggests the effect of interacting with horses on psychological learning is moderated by metaphor, providing evidence for the role of metaphor in the Eagala Model.

¹ A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary study conducted to evaluate the feasibility of further studying an intervention. Pilot studies seek to improve upon study design prior to performance of a full-scale controlled study. A pilot study can provide useful information impacting movement forward with a larger scale study. Pilot studies assist in determining the sample size needed to detect a significant intervention effect. Listed are several pilot studies with promising results that would be helpful to see replicated on a larger scale.

- McNamara, J. (2017). Equine Facilitated Therapy for Children and Adolescents: A Qualitative Pilot Study. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 12*(4), 412-427.
 - Qualitative study of Eagala practitioners. Identified needed scholarship – theoretical framework, standardized clinical practice, parent involvement in child/adolescent work, and research on mechanisms of change.
 - Wilson, K., Buultjens, M., & Monfries, M. (2017). Equine-assisted psychotherapy for adolescents experiencing depression and/or anxiety: A therapist’s perspective. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 22* (1), 16-33.
 - Qualitative study investigating facilitators’ perceptions of Eagala Model EAP for adolescents with depression or anxiety. Researchers identified themes related to the horse’s role, common outcomes, practitioner motivation, and needed evidence base.
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NONEMPIRICAL SCHOLARSHIP

- Roffey, M., Garland, S., Bromfield, F. C., Abdulla, N., Hawtrey, R., Moodley, T., & Nune, N. (2018). Equine assisted psychotherapy in a South African forensic setting: A descriptive report. *South African Psychiatry (17)*, 7-15.
 - Describes an Eagala Model EAP program at a forensic hospital unit.
- Usadi, E. J., & Levine, S. A. (2017). Why we don’t ride: Equine assisted psychotherapy, military veterans and moral injury. *Journal of Trauma & Treatment, 6*: 3. doi: 10.4172/2167-1222.1000374
 - Discusses why ground-based EAP is recommended for war veterans and others who have experienced moral injury.
- Walker Buck, P., Bean, N., & de Marco, K. (2017). Equine-assisted psychotherapy: An emerging trauma-informed intervention. *Advances in Social Work, 18* (1), 387-402.
 - Describes the Eagala Model, particularly as it relates to social work and treating those affected by trauma.
- Notgrass, C. G., & Pettinelli, J. D. (2015). Equine assisted psychotherapy: The equine assisted growth and learning association’s model overview of equine-based modalities. *Journal of Experiential Education, 38* (2), 162-174.
 - Introduces and describes the Eagala Model.