



INTRODUCTION TO THE EQUID- NEXUS FACILITATION MODEL

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Equid-Nexus
An Equine Engaged Parts Work Psychotherapy Model

IT IS SAID THAT THE
EYES ARE THE
WINDOW TO THE SOUL



ALIVENESS
CONNECTEDNESS
SELF-ENERGY



MISSION STATEMENT



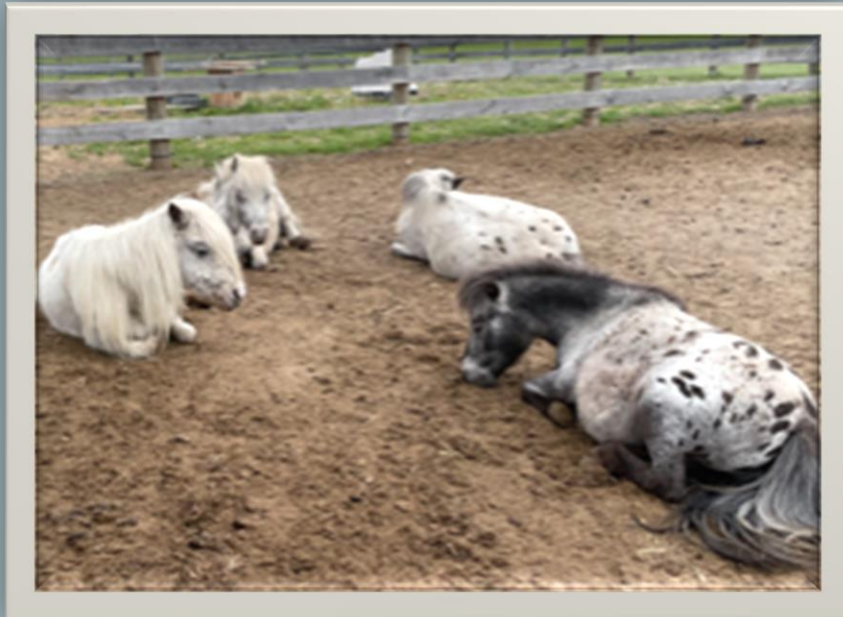
Equid-Nexus is a facilitation model and training organization aimed to educate therapy teams on integrating IFS-Informed EMDR into Equine Engaged Psychotherapy to treat and heal relational trauma.

We believe that “the personal is the professional” and therefore focus on professional development by experiential learning.

We lead with Self-Energy to scaffold others’ access to Self and to build relational awareness through intersubjectivity within the human and horse relationship.

Our intention is to add value in growing a Self-Led community for those in the equine-assisted services field.

IFS-INFORMED EMDR
EQUINE ENGAGED
PSYCHOTHERAPY



- “Equid” implies any mammal related to the horse family
- “Nexus” means “a connection or series of connections linking two or more things” and “the central and most important point or place”
- It is a relational trauma processing model that engages the person’s inner world of parts within an external relationship with an equine
- Foundational underpinnings of Internal Family Systems (IFS) *Informed Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR)*

THE EQUID-NEXUS FACILITATION MODEL: KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TO EAP

- Opens up space for more in-depth processing of relational challenges and attachment struggles, and procures precision in working with **protector parts** and exiles that carry the burdens of pain and trauma
- Process of **building relational consciousness** both internally and externally from Self-to-Part and from Self-to-Horse
- Healing occurs by strengthening the connection with Self and building an engaged connected relationship with an equine
- Combines **evidenced based** forms of trauma therapy in cohesive interventions

THE HORSE AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIP



- Is a **real** relationship
- Nervous system-to-nervous system connection
- Rewires the brain
- Allows for imperfection in relationships and opportunities for “do-overs” and repairing relationship ruptures
- Challenges outdated belief systems
- Creates the conditions to try out new behaviors
- Heals deep relational wounding through a felt-sense somatic process

INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS (IFS)



- Rejects the notion of the mono-mind and maintains that people’s personalities are inherently multiplicitous
- “Parts” can be protectors (managers and firefighters) or exiles (many times younger parts that hold burdened energy)
- Everyone has a Core “Self” that is not a part, and has characteristics of:
 - Curiosity, Compassion, Connectedness, Calmness, Clarity, Confidence, Courage, Creativity
 - Presence, Perspective, Patience, Persistence, Playfulness



ADDITIONAL APPLICATION OF IFS INFORMED EMDR WITH EQUINE ENGAGEMENT

The Self has great capacity as a resource and healing agent. The presence of the horse further enhances this resourcing by lending its Self-presence in connection.

- Fidelity to the 8 Phase model with IFS upgrades and interweaves
- Allows for more precise interventions by working with **protectors** that may stall, block, or loop in traditional EMDR process
- Targeting parts, not memories, beliefs or cognitions (these are held by parts)
- Working with parts that emerge within the relational context with the horse
- Bilateral stimulation (BLS) is used to help facilitate the un-blending process and gain a new perspective, positive belief, and/or disconfirming knowledge
- Self-Energy is main **resource**, utilized to deepen and expand healing process
- Butterfly hug is used to increase access to Self-Energy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND GRATITUDE TO THE SYZYGY INSTITUTE



Equid-Nexus has built upon Bruce Hersey's IFS informed EMDR model

- The Syzygy Institute was founded by Bruce Hersey and Michelle Richardson
- Bruce's model of integrating IFS informed EMDR with Coherence therapy lead to the Institute's name
- There are three steps in their experiential trainings:
 - IFS for EMDR Therapists
 - IFS informed EMDR
 - Discovery and Beyond
- 2 Levels of certification offered
 - Basic
 - Master

SYZYGY

To Learn More: <https://www.syzygyinstitute.com/>

NATURAL LIFEMANSHIP'S **PRINCIPLES** AND RELATIONSHIP LOGIC

The NL trauma-focused model of EAP is a natural connection with the premise of Equid-Nexus's focus on internal connection to Self and external connection with another (horse)

- Animals are sentient beings
- The relationship with the horse is a real relationship (not a tool, a metaphor, instrument, or mirror)
- Healing cannot happen at the expense of another
- Safety comes from a connected relationship; not from arbitrary safety rules
- If it's not good for both, eventually it's not good for either
- Connection with self is necessary in order to request connection from others
- Who we are in session is more important than what we do
- The horse doesn't know who the client is

**RELATIONAL TRAUMA AND
ATTACHMENT WOUNDS RESULT IN
FEAR AND MISTRUST**

CONNECTION IS SEVERED BY FEAR



IDENTIFYING AND
HEALING FEAR IS
THE PORTAL TO

COURAGEOUS
CONNECTION

FEAR CREATES BARRIERS TO SELF-PRESENCE AND ISOLATION FROM OTHERS

6F's of IFS

Find
Focus
Flesh out
Feel Toward
Befriend
Find the Fear

- Past relational ruptures and trauma are “**evidence**” to our parts that believe people or relationships are dangerous and therefore the system must be protected at all costs
- Managers and firefighters operate from the goal of quelling this fear by specific strategies they employ (their “**solution**” [behavior] to the “**problem**” [exile] *Syzygy Institute*)
- Getting to know the client’s **protectors** and using the 6F’s help us to understand what they are afraid of creates space for healing and “**do-overs**”
- These parts need to be **updated** that the client is no longer “x” age, but that they have grown up and have more resources than they did when they were young; often the period of time when the ruptures occurred
- Only then will protectors soften back and give permission to work with exiles

Befriending
Protectors with curiosity and presence helps facilitate healing the exiles they are protecting

ENGAGING IN A CONNECTED RELATIONSHIP
WITH A HORSE CAN HEAL THE DEEPEST
ATTACHMENT WOUNDS

CLIENTS CAN BE PRESENT IN THEIR
RELATIONSHIPS INSTEAD OF FROZEN FROM
PAST TRAUMA BURDENS

COURAGEOUS CONNECTION TO HEAL ATTACHMENT WOUNDS



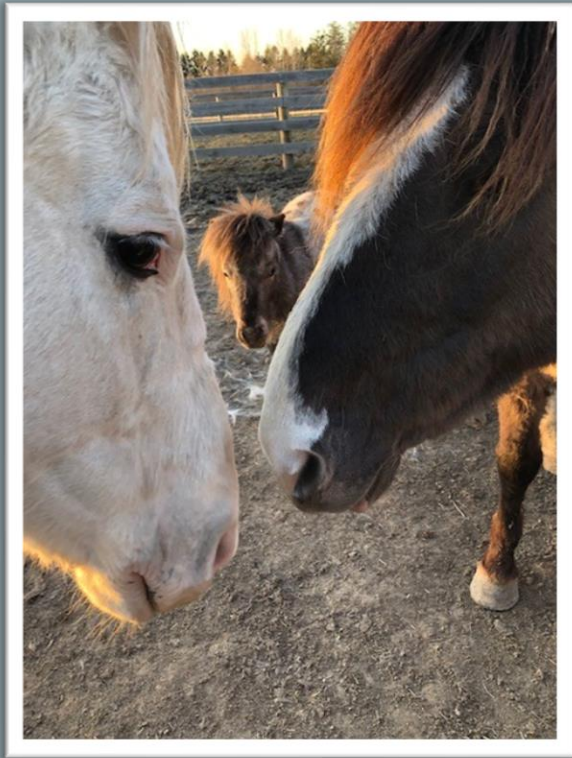
Moment captured during a training. Photo used with permission.

- Attachment wounds can impact every facet of a person's life and the way they view the world
- Attachment ruptures without repair with others fractures trust and safety within the person's internal system
- Depending upon the severity of the pain (burden), experiences may become “frozen” and parts become extreme and reactive
- Creating the conditions for **Intersubjectivity** (“the interchange of thoughts and feelings, both conscious and unconscious, between two persons or “subjects”, as facilitated by empathy”) facilitates the healing process within the person's internal system and with others

THE EQUID-NEXUS MODEL OF SELF-LED FACILITATION TARGETS THE FEAR OF THE PROTECTORS AND UNBURDENS THE EXILE WITH THE HORSE AS A WITNESS AND HOPE MERCHANT.

PRACTICING TO BE PRESENT, ATTUNED AND TO EXPERIENCE RESONANCE WITH THE HORSE LEADS TO TRUST AND A CORRECTIVE RELATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

LEARNING COMMONS MODULES



- Internal Family Systems Model – Foundational Skills and Interventions
- The Self – Beyond the 8C's
- IFS informed EMDR Equine Engaged Psychotherapy
- Building Relational Consciousness through Intersubjectivity
- Self-Led Horsemanship™
- Groups – *coming soon!*