

## Rapha Reins: Mission and Vision

### Rapha Reins Mission

To provide equine assisted psychotherapy and educational learning where humans, horses, and hearts are reigned together to bring emotional, mental, physical and social wellness for adults, children and families.

### Rapha Reins Vision

To provide a positive, healing environment for all who participate in our programs. Through mutual involvement in our program, we will empower and enhance the overall quality of life for all participants, volunteers and staff.

## Rapha Reins: Values

- 1) Rapha Reins Inc exists to carry out and inspire the love, care and responsible stewardship of horses and people by staff, volunteers, and participants.
- 2) Rapha Reins Inc.'s organization, systems and practices will afford participants an experience that can instill life-changing skills and values based upon personal responsibility, discipline and commitment within a strong culture of mutual respect.
- 3) Rapha Reins Inc does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital, or family status.

## Rapha Reins: Programs

**Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Learning** is a ground-breaking experiential (hands-on) approach to growth and learning using horses as a catalyst for change. Each session is facilitated by a dynamic team (the horses, an equine specialist, and a licensed therapist).

### *What we offer –*

1. Life Skills Programs for children and adolescents to manage and work through difficulties experienced on a daily basis
2. Programs for individuals, couples, families to help heal difficult situations and work together to bring peace and harmony for self and family
3. Conflict management to work on resolving issues using exercises that incorporate horses
4. Team building and communication leadership for businesses, schools and other organizations
5. Trauma Informed Care Program for Veterans who are struggling with PTSD; treatment for sex-trafficking rescue individuals
6. Teaching coping and self-actualization skills for individuals struggling with depression, anxiety, behavioral issues, eating disorders, parent-child issues, marital discord, etc...
7. Self-realization activities for those struggling with extreme substance use and abuse; groups for after care from treatment facilities

8. Collaboration with all providers to help the individual become successful in daily living
9. Riding lessons for adults and children; planned out trail rides with more advanced students
10. Birthday and celebration activities for family
11. Volunteer opportunities for horse grooming and care

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## **Rapha Reins: Costs**

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- Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP is conducted with a Horse Certified Specialist and a Licensed Mental Health Counselor) - (insurance model) - \$135 per session – some insurances may or may not cover it. It will be up to you to familiarize yourself with what your insurance will reimburse.
- Equine Assisted Learning (EAL is conducted with a Horse Certified Specialist) – (no insurance) \$50 per session
- Groups (3-6) using EAL activities – done with a Horse Certified Specialist - \$125/hr (additional participants will be charged \$25/person)
- Riding Lessons – Individual Private Lesson - \$45/hr; Group lesson (2 or more) - \$30/hr
- Social gatherings (birthday parties, school activities, etc...) - \$250/up three hrs

Our programs are conducted using EAGALA's (Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association) model, code of ethics and safety techniques. Our experiential program allows the clients to gain their own insight and conclusions from working directly with the horses. Activities are designed to allow client's the opportunity to overcome fears, anxiety, depression, addictions, process emotional traumas, behavioral concerns, self-esteem and learn invaluable life skills which will transcend all areas of life.

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## **Rapha Reins: Equine Assisted Learning and Psychotherapy**

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Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) and Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) use horses for emotional growth and learning. The collaboration between student (youth or adult), equine professional and horse helps participants learn about themselves and others by completing specific activities. The EAP is an educational services that uses horses as a tool for emotional growth and learning, creating a short-term collaborative approach among the participants both young and old. Learning is achieved during EAP when participants process feelings, behavior and patterns while learning about themselves and others.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) and Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) produces endless experiences and situations for discussion, analysis and learning. EAP/EAL are in a growing field that has proven to be very effective in building confidence, improving communication skills, and providing personal insights that give individuals fresh and effective problem-solving tools.

Non-verbal communication, assertiveness, creative problem solving, leadership, work, taking responsibility, teamwork, relationships, confidence, and attitude are some examples of the tools

utilized and developed by Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. By working with a large, powerful horse, individuals are able to develop confidence and overcome fears, allowing them to take their new skills into intimidating and challenging situations in their everyday life.

Working with horses allows for individuals to reveal their true selves in a non-threatening environment, allowing them to put away all pretenses and facades and to begin to establish trust and respect for the horse and themselves. This partnership creates a sense of achievement and pride within individuals who often feel isolated and insecure in other areas of their life. The bond that develops between horse and rider inspires a sense of teamwork, responsibility, communication, caring and joy. Sir Winston Churchill once observed that “The outside of a horse is good for the inside of a man.” Sir Winston’s famous remark was a huge understatement. The benefits of riding or working with horses on ground can extend from developmentally disabled adults to autism sufferers, at-risk youth and psychotherapy patients. Those who are willing to explore this alternative approach will truly reap the benefits.

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## Rapha Reins: EAL and EAP Activities

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EAL/EAP clients engage in activities with horses that stimulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that are then explored to assist the client in reaching resolutions and increasing self-awareness. These therapies are effective with children, adults, families and groups, as well as businesses and schools looking to improve their communication and management skills. EAL activities focus on teaching:

**Confidence:** The learning and mastery of a new skill horsemanship--enhances patients' confidence in their ability to tackle new projects, such as recovery, and leads to improved self-esteem.

**Self-Efficacy:** Learning to communicate and achieve harmony with a large animal promotes renewed feelings of efficacy. A motivated "I can do it!" replaces feelings of helplessness and motivation, empowering the person to take on challenges in other areas of recovery.

**Self-Concept:** Riding helps patients to develop a more realistic view of themselves through awareness of their size in relation to the horse. This is especially important in treating patients with eating disorders as well as those with interpersonal aggression problems.

**Communication:** Horses' sensitivity to non-verbal communication assists patients in developing greater awareness of their emotions, the non-verbal cues that they may be communicating, and the important role of non-verbal communication in relationships.

**Trust:** Learning to trust an animal such as a horse also aides in the development, or restoration, of trust for those whose ability to trust has been violated by difficult life experiences such as physical or sexual abuse, abandonment, neglect, or marital infidelity.

**Self-Acceptance:** Many individuals are initially concerned that they will do something embarrassing while learning about or riding the horses. Yet patients quickly learn that the other participants are engaged in their own equine experiences, and they observe the comfort of the

horses in their own skin. Fears of embarrassment in public are thereby often reduced and self-acceptance increased.

**Impulse Modulation:** Particularly for those whose mental illness involves the experience of lost control over impulses, the need to communicate with a horse calmly and non-reactively promotes the skills of emotional awareness, emotion regulation, self-control, and impulse modulation. Research clearly indicates that animal-assisted therapy reduces patient agitation and aggressiveness and increases cooperativeness and behavioral control.

**Perspective:** Through grooming activities and other types of care for a specific horse, individuals are able to put aside the absorbing focus of their mental illness, such as depressive and/or anxious ruminations, and instead to direct their attention and interests outwardly toward safe and caring interactions.

**Anxiety Reduction:** Many studies of human-animal interaction indicate that contact with animals significantly reduces physiological anxiety levels. Some patients are initially afraid of horses. But horses' genuineness and affection allay these fears, helping patients to embrace exposure therapy for their anxiety issues.

**Decreasing Isolation:** For many individuals with mental illness, there is a long-term or recent history of feeling rejected by, and different from, other people. Mental illnesses are intrinsically isolating experiences. The horse's unconditional acceptance invites young and old back into the fellowship of life.

**Social Skills:** Many individuals with mental illness are socially isolated or withdrawn. A positive relationship with a horse is often a first, safe step toward practicing the social skills needed to initiate closer relationships with people.

**Assertiveness:** Communicating effectively with a horse requires the rider to demonstrate assertiveness, direction, and initiative, important skills that enable the patient to express her needs and rights more effectively in other relationships.

**Boundaries:** Many individuals have experienced prior relationships as controlling or abusive. Healing takes place as patients discover that riding occurs within the context of a respectful relationship between a rider and a horse, and that, although physically powerful, each horse typically operates within the boundaries of this mutually respectful relationship.

**Creative Freedom:** Many persons with mental illness have been emotionally inhibited or over-controlled, and have lost some measure of spontaneity. The playful aspects of riding and team equine activities can help restore spontaneity and ability for healthy recreation and play.

In an educational setting, horses and the lifestyle that goes along with maintaining horses, provides opportunities to teach *critical life and communication skills*. Horses mostly use non-vocal communication and thus are wonderful teachers to help us better understand and learn how our *non-verbal communication* might be impacting or influencing others in our lives. Horses

also demand that we are aware of our surroundings at all times. In order to stay safe around horses we must be observant and *present in our bodies*. We have to *listen to* each other and to the horses. We have to stay *focused and attentive*. To care for horses takes dedication, time, and effort and our clients can learn a strong *work ethic* that may transition back into their daily lives. Furthermore, clients gain *self-esteem and self-confidence* while learning how to work with such a large and powerful creature. In all, horses provide us with a way to see our internal landscape and modes of operation exposed. They offer us humility, compassion, and challenge – all critical elements to supporting self-growth and self-awareness.

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## Rapha Reins: Use of Horses

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### WHY ARE HORSES USED?

- Working with large and powerful animals helps participants overcome fear. Accomplishing tasks involving horses, in spite of this fear, creates confidence and helps the participants deal with other intimidating situations in life.
- Like humans, horses have distinct personalities. They provide opportunities for metaphorical learning. Using metaphors is an effective technique when working with even the most challenging individuals or groups.
- Horses can mirror human body language. Participants learn if they change their behavior, the horses will respond differently.
- Horses are honest, which makes them especially powerful messengers.
- The horses at Rapha Reins are especially unique in that they have all had to overcome diversity to flourish into the incredible beings they are today, which is not unlike a lot of the people they will be working with.

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## Rapha Reins: Benefits of EAL and EAP

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- Breaks down defense barriers
- Time effective
- Challenges students in a non-threatening manner
- The horse is a non-judgmental, honest friend
- Promotes a motivating learning environment
- Builds the therapeutic relationship
- Enhances problem-solving skills
- Provides immediate cause-and-effect situations
- Decreases feelings of hopelessness
- Encourages responsibility
- Captivates and holds attention
- Helps teach empathy
- Develops social skills

- Stimulates creativity
- Teaches better communication skills
- Empowers and gives a sense of control over self

## **Rapha Reins: Collaboration with Community Partners**

### **Juvenile Court**

Work with Juvenile Court to collaborate volunteer opportunities for youth in the area. The youth can help be walkers, lead horses and help the physically challenged.

### **Marshalltown Law Enforcement Partnership**

Work to create a good relationship allowing a bond with youth and the police. The use of horses will enable this bond to be created and endure.

### **Horses for Heroes**

Collaborate with Iowa Veterans Home to establish a program that would benefit the veterans in doing some volunteer work at the ranch, provide a place to align with the horses to help alleviate fears and increase self-confidence.

### **Local Worship Centers**

Networking with the local churches will provide greater volunteer base and establish a greater understanding of helping each other

### **CIRSI**

Work with CIRSI staff to help build relationship with residents who are functioning with long term disabilities.

### **Big Brothers/Sisters—MENTORING**

Helping children find ways of being set free and providing a forum where friendship can be created and established with other children and horses

### **Marshalltown School District**

Work with the schools to identify and offer preventive and educational events for students and staff. This opportunity can also take the form of leadership training for youth and adult members

**Meskwaki Settlement School** – work with MAP (Meskwaki After School Program) to help youth learn self-awareness and build confidence. Provide TruCouncil and offer leadership programming using EAL; assist with school children through EAL activities at Homecoming week and Pride Week;

### **Horse (Day Camps and Week-long camps)**

Use of camps to help youth and adults experience the joy of learning to decrease fears of self-doubt and increase hope and faith in all things.