

# **GALLOPING TO SUCCESS**



**How You Can Create a Thriving  
Equine-Assisted Learning Program  
In Your Area of Choice**

**VERA ANN REMES**

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

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# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## WHY

Given the current trends and demands of setting up a profitable Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) program, we have created an online course for equine professionals, mental health professionals wishing to add EAL to their current therapy regimen, and horse owners, who are looking to partner with their personal equine in a new rewarding field, who would like guidance into setting up a profitable Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) program. Whether on a grand scale at an equestrian facility, in your backyard, or small barn, we'll address the current trends and challenges with a step-by-step course. Let's look at the current trends that make setting up an EAL Program a great way to make a profit while doing what you love.

### 1. Mental Health and Wellness Focus

- Trend: There's a growing awareness of mental health and the benefits of EAL for therapy and counseling.
- Course Solution: We have created modules on integrating EAL into therapeutic practices, collaborating with mental health professionals, and understanding the psychological benefits of working with horses.

### 2. Personal Development and Leadership Training

- Trend: Organizations are increasingly using EAL for team-building and leadership development.
- Course Solution: We provide step-by-step guides on designing corporate programs, creating effective team-building activities, and marketing to businesses.

### 3. Educational Programs for Youth

- Trend: Schools and youth organizations are recognizing the benefits of EAL for character education and social skills development.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Course Solution: We have developed content on creating programs for schools or homeschoolers, aligning activities with educational standards, and measuring program outcomes.

## 4. Diverse Clientele and Inclusivity

- Trend: There's a push towards inclusivity, making EAL accessible to diverse populations, including individuals with disabilities.
- Course Solution: We offer training on adapting EAL programs for different needs, understanding legal requirements, and ensuring accessibility.

## 5. Evidence-Based Practices

- Trend: Increasing demand for programs backed by research and measurable outcomes.
- Course Solution: We teach how to incorporate evidence-based practices, collect and analyze data, and demonstrate the effectiveness of EAL programs.

## 6. Digital Marketing and Online Presence

- Trend: A strong online presence is crucial for attracting clients.
- Course Solution: We include in our modules digital marketing strategies, creating engaging content, using social media, and optimizing websites for search engines.

We will address these trends with practical, step-by-step solutions, to help equine professionals, mental health professionals or other interested persons to establish and grow successful, profitable EAL programs. We offer in-person consults and other personalized services. You may call for more information but we suggest you first read this EBook to see if this is a future you wish to pursue.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

We have prepared this guide to setting up Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) programs. It describes the history of EAL and the background so you may appreciate the journey of EAL facilitators thus far. EAL describes experiential learning activities with horses and humans that build life skills<sup>[1]</sup>, academics, riding skills.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Pre-Assignment

Take a moment to ponder these questions and note answers on a paper. Come to a consensus on each item:

- What current EAL program(s) do you offer to clients?
- What EAL program(s) do you want to offer to clients?
- What are the obstacles stopping you from doing what you want to do?
- What are the reasons you feel ready to begin an EAL program?
- What are the time frames within which you must have your program ready?

Armed with this information, read this EBook. We have developed step-by-step programs to help you. We have over 50 years of experience in this area. And can tailor a plan for your situation. Call or email for a consultation. 973-714-8269. Email us at [Veritaseal#gmmail.com](mailto:Veritaseal#gmmail.com)

## OUTLINE

Here's the outline for VERITAS Equine Assisted Learning Institute EBook focusing on the basic principles for working with organizations, personal growth, education, and mounted activities:

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Module I

Lesson 1. Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

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# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Summary Of Key Takeaways

## Module I: Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

### Lesson 1: What is EAL?

Welcome to the first lesson of our Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) training program! Whether you're a seasoned horse owner, an certified professional, or an equine enthusiast looking to start an EAL program, this module will provide you with a comprehensive introduction to the fascinating world of EAL. Let's dive in!

### Historical Context and Development Origins

Equine-Assisted Learning has roots that stretch back centuries. Historically, horses have been partners to humans in various capacities - from agriculture and transportation to war and recreation. However, the therapeutic and educational partnering<sup>1</sup> with horses began to gain formal recognition in the mid-20th century.

One notable origin is the partnership with horses in rehabilitation programs for veterans returning from World War II. These early programs laid the groundwork for what we now recognize as EAL, demonstrating the profound psychological and emotional benefits that interactions with horses can provide.

### Evolution

Since those early days, EAL has evolved significantly. In the 1960s and 1970s, pioneers like Liz Hartel, an Olympic equestrian who used horseback riding to overcome polio, and Dr. Boris Levinson, who introduced animal-assisted therapy, played crucial roles in shaping the field.



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The 1990s saw a surge in interest and research, leading to the establishment of formal organizations such as the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA). These organizations helped standardize practices, promote research, and provide certification programs, further legitimizing and expanding the field.

1 Start to eradicate the word “use” from your vocabulary when speaking about the involvement of equines in your program - the sooner, the better. We recommend putting out something akin to a curse jar, except you place a statement of something you plan to do with the horses as an enrichment activity each time you say we “use” the horse. No monetary expenditure but enough to have you remember for next time.

## Key Influencers

Several key influencers have significantly impacted the development of EAL:

- Linda Kohanov: Author of "The Tao of Equus," Kohanov has explored the spiritual and emotional connections between humans and horses.
- Tim Jobe and Bettina Jobe: Founders of the Natural Lifemanship approach, focusing on trauma-informed EAL.
- Patricia Pendry: Researcher whose work on the effects of EAL on stress reduction and emotional regulation has provided valuable scientific insights.

## Benefits of EAL

### Emotional Benefits

Horses are incredibly intuitive animals, often mirroring the emotions of the people around them. This unique ability makes them excellent partners in emotional healing and development.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Stress Reduction:** Interacting with horses can lower stress levels. Imagine coming home from a busy day and spending time with your horse, feeling the tension melt away.
- **Emotional Regulation:** Horses help individuals recognize and manage their emotions. For example, a horse might become restless if you approach it feeling anxious, prompting you to calm yourself to maintain a harmonious interaction.

## Cognitive Benefits

EAL can also enhance cognitive skills, offering a dynamic way to engage the mind.

- **Problem-Solving:** Navigating a horse through an obstacle course can enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Focus and Attention:** Working with horses requires concentration and mindfulness, helping to improve attention spans.

## Social Benefits

Horses naturally live in herds and have complex social structures, making them perfect for teaching social skills.

- **Communication:** EAL activities often involve team tasks, improving verbal and non-verbal communication.
- **Trust and Collaboration:** Building a relationship with a horse requires trust, which can translate into better teamwork and collaboration skills in humans.

## Physical Benefits

While EAL is not primarily about physical activity, it does offer notable physical benefits.

- **Balance and Coordination:** Activities like grooming or leading a horse can improve fine and gross motor skills.
- **Physical Fitness:** Even light riding or handling can provide a good workout, enhancing overall fitness.

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## Real-World Examples

To illustrate these benefits, let's consider a couple of real-world examples. Here are 2 possible scenarios submitted for consideration and evaluation:

1. **Corporate Team-Building:** A company might bring its leadership team to an EAL workshop to enhance communication and teamwork. Through activities like guiding a horse through a maze, team members learn to trust each other and improve their collaborative skills.
2. **Therapeutic Programs:** Individuals dealing with trauma or stress can find solace in the calm presence of horses. A client working through anxiety might find that learning to regulate their emotions to calm a horse helps them manage their anxiety in other areas of life.

## Key Takeaways



- - EAL has a rich historical context, evolving from early therapeutic uses to a well-recognized field today.
  - Working with horses offers a wide range of benefits, including emotional, cognitive, social, and physical improvements.
  - Real-world applications of EAL include corporate team-building and therapeutic programs, demonstrating its versatility and effectiveness.



## Learning Activity

**Reflective Journaling:** Spend 10-15 minutes journaling about your initial thoughts on EAL. Consider the following questions:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- - What aspects of EAL resonate with you the most?
  - How do you envision incorporating EAL into your practice or business?
  - Are there any specific goals you hope to achieve through EAL?

Share your reflections in the course discussion forum on our VERITAS FaceBook Page [(20+) Facebook] and read through some of your peers' entries. This will help you gain diverse perspectives and ideas.



## Looking Ahead

In the next lesson, Module 1, Lesson 2: Understanding the Horse-Human Connection, we will explore the unique qualities of horses and how their natural behaviors and non-verbal communication skills play a crucial role in building trust and rapport.



[Next Lesson: Understanding the Horse-Human Connection]

Feel free to start the next lesson when you're ready, and remember, the journey of learning and growth with EAL is just beginning!

## Module I Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) Lesson 2: Understanding the Horse-Human Connection

Welcome back! In this lesson, we will explore the vital connection between horses and humans, which forms the foundation of Equine Assisted Learning (EAL).

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Understanding this connection is crucial for anyone looking to start a successful EAL program. Let's delve into the unique qualities of horses and how they contribute to the EAL experience.

## The Role of Horses in EAL

Horses play a central role in EAL due to their unique qualities and behaviors. Their natural instincts and social dynamics make them ideal partners for facilitating learning and personal growth. Here's why:

Unique Qualities of Horses That Make Them Suitable for EAL Sensitivity to:

### 1. Non-Verbal Cues

Horses are incredibly perceptive and can sense subtle changes in body language, emotions, and energy levels. This sensitivity allows them to act as mirrors to human behavior and emotions, providing immediate and honest feedback.<sup>[2]</sup>

Example: Imagine a session where a participant is feeling anxious. The horse might become restless or avoidant, reflecting the participant's inner state. This reaction can help the individual recognize and address their anxiety.

### 2. Social Nature

As herd animals, horses have complex social structures. Their interactions within the herd and with humans provide valuable insights into social dynamics and relationships.

Example: Observing a herd of horses, you can see clear social hierarchies and roles, much like human social groups. This can be a powerful metaphor for participants to understand their own social interactions.

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### 3. Non-Judgmental Presence

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Horses do not judge; they live in the moment and respond to the authenticity of the person interacting with them. This creates a safe space for participants to explore their emotions and behaviors without fear of judgment.

Example: A participant who feels judged or misunderstood in human interactions might find solace in the horse's non-judgmental presence, allowing them to open up and explore their feelings more freely.

## 4. Immediate Feedback

Horses respond in real-time to human actions and emotions. This immediate and honest feedback helps participants understand the impact of their behaviors and emotions.

Example: If a participant is assertive and clear in their commands, the horse is likely to respond promptly. If the participant is unsure or inconsistent, the horse's reaction will reflect that uncertainty, providing a direct lesson in communication effectiveness.

## 5. Instinctual Behaviors

As prey animals, horses rely on their instincts for survival. Their reactions to their environment and to people can reveal underlying issues and areas for personal growth.

Example: A horse's flight response can highlight a participant's unrecognized fear or anxiety, prompting a deeper exploration and understanding of these emotions.

## 6. Natural Behaviors and Communication Styles of Horses

Understanding the natural behaviors and communication styles of horses is essential for effective interaction. Here's a breakdown of some key aspects:

### 1. Body Language

Horses primarily communicate through body language. Learning to read these signals is crucial for building a strong connection.

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- Ears: Forward ears indicate curiosity or interest, while pinned-back ears can signal irritation or discomfort.
- Tail: A relaxed tail shows contentment, while a swishing tail can indicate annoyance or stress.
- Facial Expressions: Relaxed lips and soft eyes show calmness, whereas tight lips and wide eyes can indicate fear or tension.

Example: When approaching a horse with forward ears and a relaxed tail, you can feel more confident that the horse is comfortable and receptive. Conversely, pinned-back ears and a swishing tail signal caution.

## 2. Vocalizations

Horses use sounds like nickers, whinnies, and snorts to communicate. Each sound has a specific meaning and context.

Example: A nicker might indicate a friendly greeting, while a snort could signal alertness or caution.

## 3. Social Hierarchy

Understanding the herd hierarchy and how horses establish dominance and submission helps in interpreting their interactions and applying these lessons to human social dynamics.

Example: Watching a dominant horse lead the herd can offer insights into leadership styles and the importance of clear, confident communication.

Building a strong connection with horses is a cornerstone of EAL. Here are some techniques to establish trust and rapport:

### 1. Approach and Introduction

- Slow and Calm Movements: Approaching a horse slowly and calmly helps in building trust. Sudden movements can startle them.
- Allowing the Horse to Initiate Contact: Letting the horse approach you first can foster a sense of safety and mutual respect.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Example: When meeting a new horse, take your time to let the horse sniff and explore you. This patient approach helps establish a foundation of trust.

## 2. Consistent and Predictable Behavior

- Routine and Structure: Horses thrive on consistency. Establishing a routine helps them feel secure.
- Clear Boundaries: Setting and maintaining clear boundaries helps in building a trusting relationship.

Example: Feeding and grooming at the same times each day creates a predictable environment that helps the horse feel safe and secure.

## 3. Positive Reinforcement

- Rewards and Praise: Using treats, gentle strokes, and verbal praise to reinforce positive behaviors encourages trust.
- Patience and Persistence: Building a relationship with a horse takes time. Consistent and patient interactions build lasting trust.

Example: Rewarding a horse with a treat after successfully completing a task reinforces the positive behavior and strengthens the bond.<sup>3</sup>

## 4. Importance of Non-Verbal Communication Mirroring and reflecting

- Mirroring Emotions: Horses often reflect the emotions of the person interacting with them. If a person is calm, the horse is more likely to be calm; if a person is anxious, the horse may also show signs of anxiety.
- Adjusting Behavior: By observing and adjusting their own behavior, participants can see changes in the horse's response, learning how their actions and emotions impact others.

Example: A participant who feels nervous might see their horse become agitated. By calming themselves, they can see the horse relax, illustrating the power of emotional regulation.

## 5. Energy and Presence



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- **Staying Present:** Horses live in the moment and respond to the present state of their environment and the people around them. Staying present and mindful is crucial for effective communication.
- **Managing Energy Levels:** Horses respond to the energy levels of humans. High energy can excite or stress a horse, while calm energy can soothe and relax them.

Example: A participant who enters the arena with high energy might find their horse becoming restless. By taking a few deep breaths and calming their energy, they can help the horse settle.

## 6. Non-Verbal Cues

- **Body Posture:** Standing tall and confident can project calmness and authority, while a slouched or tense posture can convey anxiety or insecurity.
- **Eye Contact:** Soft, relaxed eye contact can establish connection and trust while staring can be perceived as a threat.

Example: Maintaining a relaxed but confident posture while interacting with a horse helps to establish trust and mutual respect.

Example: A participant who feels nervous might see their horse become agitated. By calming themselves, they can see the horse relax, illustrating the power of emotional regulation.

## Summary

Understanding the horse-human connection is fundamental to EAL. By recognizing the unique qualities of horses and their natural behaviors, participants can build trust and rapport with these animals. The importance of non-verbal communication is emphasized, as horses respond primarily to body language and energy levels. Techniques for establishing a connection with horses, such as approaching them calmly, maintaining consistent behavior, and using positive reinforcement, are key to successful interactions and learning experiences in EAL.

<sup>3</sup> We do not endorse hand feeding. We recommend placing the treat in a bucket first or using clicker training to recognize the correct response

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Key Takeaways



- Horses' sensitivity to non-verbal cues and their social nature make them excellent partners in EAL.
- Building trust with horses requires calm, consistent, and patient interactions.
- Effective non-verbal communication is crucial for successful horse-human interactions in EAL.

## Learning Activity



Practice Non-Verbal Communication: Spend time with a horse focusing solely on non-verbal communication. Approach the horse calmly, observe its body language, and adjust your behavior to see how the horse responds. Reflect on the experience:

- How did the horse respond to your energy and body language?
- What did you learn about your own non-verbal communication?
- How can you apply these insights to your interactions with people?

Share your observations and reflections in the course discussion forum on our FaceBook Page for Veritas Equine Assisted Learning. Engage with your peers to gain a broader understanding of the horse-human connection.

## Looking Ahead



In the next lesson, Module 1, Lesson 3: EAL Principles for Personal Growth, we will explore how EAL can enhance self-awareness, manage emotions, and build confidence through structured interactions with horses. This lesson will delve into reflective practices and techniques for emotional regulation, offering a path to significant personal development.

[Next Lesson: EAL Principles for Personal Growth]



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# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Feel free to start the next lesson when you're ready, and continue your journey of learning and growth with EAL!

## Module I Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

### Lesson 3: EAL Principles for Personal Growth

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Welcome! In this lesson, we will explore how Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) can foster personal growth by enhancing self-awareness, managing emotions, and building confidence. Through structured interactions with horses, participants can experience profound personal development. Let's dive into the principles and practices that make this possible.

#### Self-Awareness and Reflection

Understanding oneself is the first step to personal growth. Horses, with their keen sensitivity to human emotions and behavior, provide a unique mirror for self-awareness.

#### Exercises to Enhance Self-Awareness Through Interactions with Horses

##### Observational Exercises

**Body Language Awareness:** Participants observe the horse's reactions to their body language. Noticing how a horse responds to their posture, movement, and energy can increase awareness of how they present themselves.

**Example:** Stand in front of a horse and observe its reactions as you change your stance from relaxed to tense. Notice how subtle shifts in your posture can elicit different responses from the horse.

**Emotional Mirroring:** Horses often reflect the emotions of the people around them. Participants can observe and discuss how their emotions affect the horse's behavior, gaining insights into their emotional states.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Example: Spend time with a horse while feeling different emotions—calm, anxious, happy—and observe how the horse's behavior changes in response to your emotional state.

## Groundwork Activities

Leading Exercises: Leading a horse through obstacles or open space helps participants notice their own leadership style and how they communicate non-verbally.

Example: Lead a horse through a simple obstacle course, paying attention to your own body language and the horse's response. Reflect on how your non-verbal cues influence the horse's movements.

Liberty Work: Interacting with a horse without ropes or halters requires clear intention and presence, helping participants become more aware of their influence and presence.

Example: Work with a horse at liberty, using only your body language to guide its movements. This exercise highlights the importance of clear, intentional communication.

## Role-Playing Scenarios

Personal Challenge Simulation: Participants engage in scenarios that mimic real-life challenges, partnering with the horse to reflect and respond. This helps in understanding their reactions and coping strategies.

Example: Simulate a stressful situation, such as presenting a project, while interacting with a horse. Notice how your stress levels affect the horse and practice techniques to remain calm and focused.

## Reflective Practices and Journaling

Reflective practices and journaling are powerful tools for deepening self-awareness and tracking personal growth.

### Guided Journaling

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

**Prompt-Based Reflection:** Providing prompts related to their experiences with the horses helps participants articulate their thoughts and feelings.

**Example:** Reflect on a prompt like "What did you notice about the horse's reaction to your presence?" or "How did you feel leading the horse through the obstacle course?"

**Emotional Check-In:** Regular journaling about their emotional states before, during, and after interactions with horses can help track progress and deepen self-awareness.

**Example:** Keep a journal noting your emotional state at different points during your interaction with the horse. Over time, observe patterns and progress in your emotional responses.

## Group Reflection Sessions

**Sharing Experiences:** Participants share their observations and reflections in a group setting, fostering a sense of community and collective learning.

**Example:** Participate in a group discussion where everyone shares their experiences and insights from the day's activities. This collective reflection enhances learning and support.

**Facilitated Discussions:** Guided discussions led by the facilitator help participants delve deeper into their reflections and draw connections between their experiences and personal growth.

**Example:** Join a facilitator-led discussion that explores common themes and lessons from the group's experiences, providing deeper insights and understanding.

## Emotional Regulation

Horses help participants learn to manage their emotions effectively through various techniques –

Techniques for Managing Emotions With the Help of Horses Breathing Exercises

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

**Syncing with the Horse's Breath:** Participants practice deep breathing exercises while observing or touching the horse, syncing their breath with the horse's. This promotes relaxation and emotional regulation.

**Example:** Stand close to a horse, place your hand on its side, and practice deep, slow breathing, trying to match your breaths with the horse's natural rhythm.

**Mindful Breathing:** Practicing mindfulness breathing techniques in the presence of horses can help participants remain calm and centered.

**Example:** Practice deep breathing exercises while grooming a horse, focusing on the sensation of your breath and the horse's presence.

## Grounding Techniques

**Physical Contact:** Touching or grooming the horse can serve as a grounding exercise, helping participants stay present and manage overwhelming emotions.

**Example:** Spend time brushing a horse, paying attention to the texture of its coat and the rhythm of your strokes. This can help you stay grounded and present.

**Sensory Awareness:** Focusing on the sensory experience of being around the horse (e.g., the feel of their coat, the sound of their breath) can help anchor participants in the present moment.

**Example:** Close your eyes and focus on the sounds, smells, and sensations around the horse, using these sensory inputs to stay connected to the present.

## Emotional Expression

**Verbalizing Feelings:** Encouraging participants to speak their emotions aloud while interacting with horses helps in acknowledging and processing emotions.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Example: While spending time with a horse, talk out loud about your current feelings and thoughts. This practice can help in processing and understanding your emotions.

Artistic Expression: Using creative methods like drawing or painting to express feelings inspired by interactions with horses.

Example: After a session with a horse, draw or paint something that represents your feelings or the experience. This artistic expression can provide deeper insights into your emotions.

## Developing Mindfulness and Presence

Mindfulness and being present are essential skills for personal growth and effective interaction with horses.

### Mindfulness Exercises

Walking Meditations: Walking with the horse mindfully, paying attention to the movement, rhythm, and surroundings.

Example: Take a mindful walk with your horse, focusing on the rhythm of your steps, the sound of the horse's hooves, and the environment around you.

Stillness Practice: Spending quiet time in the presence of the horse, focusing on breath and body sensations, and observing the horse's behavior.

Example: Sit quietly near your horse, focusing on your breath and the sensations in your body. Observe the horse's behavior without trying to interact.

### Presence Techniques

Attention to Detail: Noticing and mentally cataloging small details about the horse and the environment helps enhance presence and mindfulness.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Example: Spend a few minutes observing your horse closely, noting details like the texture of its coat, the movement of its ears, and the sounds it makes.

Intentional Interactions: Engaging with the horse with clear intention and focus, being fully present in the interaction.

Example: Approach your horse with a specific intention, such as grooming or leading. Focus solely on this task, ensuring your actions are purposeful and deliberate.

## Confidence and Empowerment

Building self-confidence through equine activities can empower participants in all areas of life.

### Building Self-Confidence Through Equine Activities Skill Development

Learning Basic Horsemanship: Mastering the skills needed to handle, groom, and care for horses can build self-confidence through competence.

Example: Learn and practice basic horsemanship skills, such as grooming, tacking, and leading. As you become more proficient, your confidence will grow.

Riding Lessons: Progressing through riding skills provides a sense of achievement and boosts self-esteem.

Example: Start with basic riding lessons and gradually advance to more complex skills. Each milestone achieved builds confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

## Challenge-Based Activities

Obstacle Courses: Navigating horses through obstacle courses or completing tasks builds problem-solving skills and confidence.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Example: Work with your horse to navigate an obstacle course, focusing on communication and problem-solving. Successfully completing the course can boost your confidence.

Trust Exercises: Activities that require participants to trust the horse and themselves, such as leading the horse with eyes closed or working with the horse at liberty.

Example: Participate in trust exercises, such as leading your horse with closed eyes, relying on your other senses and the bond you've built with the horse.

## Overcoming Personal Challenges Partnering with Horses Metaphorical Learning

Personal Challenges Paralleled in Equine Activities: Identifying personal challenges and using equine activities to work through them.

Example: If you struggle with assertiveness, practice setting boundaries with the horse. This can help you translate these skills to your personal and professional life.

Overcoming Fear: Facing fears in a controlled, supportive environment with the horse can translate to greater confidence in other areas of life.

Example: Confront your fear of riding by gradually working up to it with your horse. Overcoming this fear can empower you to tackle other challenges.

## Supportive Environment

Encouragement from Facilitators: Facilitators provide positive reinforcement and support throughout the activities, helping participants build confidence.

Example: Receive guidance and encouragement from your facilitator as you work with your horse, reinforcing your achievements and boosting your confidence.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Group Support: Peer support and shared experiences enhance the feeling of community and mutual empowerment.

Example: Participate in group activities and discussions, sharing experiences and supporting each other. This sense of community strengthens confidence and personal growth.

## Summary

The principles of EAL for personal growth focus on enhancing self-awareness, managing emotions, and building confidence through structured interactions with horses. By engaging in reflective practices, learning techniques for emotional regulation, and participating in empowering activities, participants can experience significant personal development. The supportive environment created by the facilitators and the unique qualities of horses make EAL a powerful tool for personal growth.

## Key Takeaways



- Self-Awareness: Interacting with horses helps increase self-awareness and reflection.
- Emotional Regulation: Techniques learned with horses aid in managing emotions effectively.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

**Confidence Building: Equine activities build self-confidence and empower participants.**

Learning Activity



Personal Reflection Exercise: Spend 10 minutes journaling about your most recent interaction with a horse. Reflect on your emotions, the horse's reactions, and any insights gained. Share your reflections in the next group session.

**---Looking Ahead**



Next Lesson: EAL Principles for Organizational Development



In the next lesson, we will explore how EAL can enhance teamwork, leadership, and communication within a group. Through structured interactions with horses, participants will experience firsthand the importance of trust, collaboration, and clear communication. Get ready to delve into the principles of organizational development with EAL!

**Module I: Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)**

**Lesson 4: EAL Principles for Organizational Development**

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Welcome to Lesson 4 of our Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) program. In this lesson, we will focus on the principles of EAL as they apply to organizational development. You'll learn how structured interactions with horses can enhance teamwork, leadership, and communication within a group. Let's get started!

Team Building and Collaboration

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Horses, as highly intuitive and responsive creatures, offer unique opportunities for improving teamwork and collaboration. These activities are designed to enhance your group's ability to work together effectively.

## Activities Designed to Improve Teamwork and Cooperation Obstacle Courses

- **Team Navigation:** In this exercise, teams work together to navigate a horse through an obstacle course. This requires clear communication, collaboration, and strategic planning.

**Example: Imagine you and your colleagues need to guide a horse through a series of cones. Each person has a role—one leads the horse, another gives directions, and others provide support. Successfully completing the course requires everyone to listen to each other and work together effectively.**

- **Role Assignment:** Assign specific roles to each team member, such as leader, navigator, or supporter, to ensure everyone participates and contributes. This helps in understanding team dynamics and individual strengths.

**Example: Assigning roles like “leader,” who handles the horse, “navigator,” who maps out the course, and “supporter,” who ensures safety, helps each member to play to their strengths and recognize how they can best contribute to the team’s success.**

## Problem-Solving Challenges

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Group Challenges:** Teams are given a challenge that requires collective problem-solving, such as building a makeshift bridge for the horse to cross. This fosters creativity, resourcefulness, and cooperative effort.

**Example: Your team must create a bridge using available materials for the horse to cross safely. This exercise encourages brainstorming solutions, delegating tasks, and working efficiently under pressure.**

- **Reflective Debrief:** After the challenge, teams discuss what strategies worked, what didn't, and how they can apply these lessons to their work environment.

**Example: Post-activity, you and your team sit down to discuss the experience. What communication strategies were effective? Where did you encounter obstacles? This reflection helps you transfer these insights to real-world scenarios.**

## Trust-Building Exercises with Horses Blindfolded Leading

- **Trust and Communication:** One team member is blindfolded and guided by a partner while leading a horse. This exercise emphasizes trust, clear communication, and reliance on teammates.

**Example: Blindfolded, you rely entirely on your partner's verbal instructions to lead the horse. This exercise highlights the importance of trust and precise communication.**

- **Feedback Session:** Participants discuss their experiences and feelings during the exercise, enhancing mutual trust and understanding.

**Example: After the exercise, discuss how it felt to rely on your partner and how effectively you communicated. This conversation builds mutual respect and understanding.**

## Join-Up Techniques

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Building Trust: Participants use join-up techniques (methods of bonding with a horse based on body language and mutual respect) to build trust with the horse. This parallels trust-building within a team.

**Example: Using body language, you invite the horse to join you, building a bond based on respect and trust. This technique mirrors how trust can be built within a team through consistent, respectful interactions.**

- Application Discussion: Facilitators guide a discussion on how these techniques can be applied to building trust within their teams.

**Example: Discuss how the principles of join-up can be translated into workplace scenarios, such as building trust through consistent, respectful communication and actions.**

## Leadership Development

Equine activities offer profound insights into leadership styles and behaviors. Horses respond to clear, confident leadership, providing immediate feedback on the effectiveness of various approaches.

### Enhancing Leadership Skills Through Equine Activities Leading by Example

- Leadership Exercises: Participants take turns leading a horse while others observe. This exercise helps in understanding the impact of different leadership styles and behaviors.

**Example: You lead a horse while your peers observe. They provide feedback on your leadership style, helping you understand its impact and areas for improvement.**

- Observational Feedback: After the exercise, observers provide feedback on the leader's style, strengths, and areas for improvement.

**Example: Observers might note that a calm, assertive approach was effective, or that clearer communication would enhance the horse's responsiveness.**

## Leadership Challenges

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Complex Tasks:** Leaders are tasked with guiding the horse through complex tasks or situations, requiring decision-making, adaptability, and confidence.

**Example: Guide a horse through a challenging course, making quick decisions and adapting to the horse's responses. This exercise tests your leadership under pressure.**

- **Reflective Leadership:** Leaders reflect on their approach, decision-making process, and how they handled challenges, fostering self-awareness and growth.

**Example: Reflect on your decision-making process during the exercise. How did you handle unexpected obstacles? This reflection fosters self-awareness and growth.**

## Understanding Different Leadership Styles and Their Impacts

### Exploration

- **Leadership Style Assessment:** Participants assess their leadership styles using tools or frameworks (e.g., transformational, transactional, situational leadership).

**Example: Use a leadership style assessment tool to identify your predominant style. Understanding your style helps you recognize its strengths and potential areas for improvement.**

- **Equine Feedback:** Participants experiment with different leadership styles while interacting with the horse and observe the horse's responses, gaining insights into the effectiveness and impact of each style.

**Example: Try different leadership approaches with the horse, such as a more directive versus a more collaborative style, and observe the horse's responses.**

### Impact Analysis

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Group Discussion: Teams discuss the impacts of different leadership styles observed during the exercises, focusing on outcomes, team morale, and productivity.

**Example: Discuss how different leadership styles affected the horse's behavior and team dynamics. What worked best and why?**

- Real-World Application: Facilitators help participants draw parallels between their equine experiences and their work environment, identifying opportunities for applying these insights.

**Example: Relate the insights gained from the horse exercises to real-world leadership challenges. How can you apply these lessons to improve team performance?**

## Communication Skills

Effective communication is crucial for organizational success. Horses, being highly sensitive to non-verbal cues, provide excellent feedback on both verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

### Improving Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Body Language Awareness

- Non-Verbal Cues: Participants observe how their body language affects the horse's behavior. This helps them become more aware of their own non-verbal communication.

**Example: Notice how the horse reacts to your posture and movements. A slight change in your body language can significantly impact the horse's behavior.**

- Mirroring Exercises: Participants practice mirroring the horse's movements and behaviors, enhancing their understanding of non-verbal cues and how to use them effectively.

**Example: Spend time mirroring the horse's actions, such as walking in sync. This exercise enhances your sensitivity to non-verbal communication.**

## Clear Verbal Communication



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Instructions and Feedback:** Participants practice giving clear, concise instructions to each other while working with the horse. This emphasizes the importance of clarity and directness in verbal communication.
- **Example:** Practice giving your partner clear instructions on how to lead the horse through a specific task. Clear communication is key to successful teamwork.

**Reflective Feedback:** After exercises, participants provide feedback on each other's communication styles, focusing on clarity, tone, and effectiveness.

- **Example: Discuss what aspects of communication were effective and what could be improved. Constructive feedback helps refine your communication skills.**

Exercises to Enhance Active Listening and Clarity Active

Listening Drills

- **Listening Exercises:** Participants engage in active listening exercises where they must accurately follow instructions given by a partner to complete a task with the horse.

**Example: Follow your partner's instructions to guide the horse through a task. This exercise emphasizes the importance of active listening.**

- **Feedback Loop:** After the task, participants discuss what they heard, any miscommunications, and how they can improve their listening skills.

**Example: Reflect on any miscommunications that occurred during the exercise. How can you improve your listening skills to prevent similar issues in the future?**

Clarity in Communication

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Instructional Clarity:** Participants practice giving instructions to each other and the horse in a clear and concise manner. This can include tasks like guiding the horse through a specific route or teaching the horse a new command.

**Example: Practice giving clear, concise instructions for guiding the horse through a new command. Clarity in communication is essential for effective teamwork.**

- **Communication Refinement:** Participants refine their communication techniques based on feedback from facilitators and peers, focusing on improving clarity, brevity, and effectiveness.

**Example: Use the feedback from your peers and facilitator to refine your communication style. Focus on being clear, brief, and effective in your instructions.**

## Summary

EAL principles for organizational development focus on enhancing teamwork, leadership, and communication within a group. Through structured interactions with horses, participants can experience firsthand the importance of trust, collaboration, and clear communication. Team-building activities foster cooperation, while leadership exercises provide insights into effective leadership styles and behaviors. Communication skills are honed through exercises that emphasize both verbal and non-verbal communication, as well as active listening and clarity. The unique qualities of horses and the experiential nature of EAL make these principles tangible and impactful for organizational development.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Key Takeaways



1. Teamwork: Effective teamwork requires clear communication, collaboration.

Next Lesson: EAL Principles for Education.



In the next lesson, we will explore how EAL offers a powerful approach to education by integrating hands-on, experiential learning with traditional curricula, promoting personal growth and development in youth, and providing specialized benefits for individuals with special needs. Through structured interactions with horses, students of all ages and abilities can enhance their social skills, responsibility, empathy, and overall well-being. The unique qualities of horses and the experiential nature of EAL make it an impactful and versatile tool for educational purposes.



Get ready to delve into the principles of Education with EAL!

**Module i: Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)**

**Lesson 5: EAL Principles of Education**

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Welcome to Lesson 5 of Module 1! Today, we're diving into how Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) can revolutionize education. We'll explore how hands-on learning with horses integrates seamlessly with traditional curricula, promotes personal development, and caters to special educational needs.

## Experiential Learning

### Hands-On Activities That Promote Learning Through Experience

Let's start with Interactive Lessons. Imagine a classroom where students don't just read about animal anatomy but actually interact with horses. In these settings:

- **Horse Care and Management:** Students learn about horse anatomy, grooming, feeding, and general care. This practical engagement makes learning vivid and applicable.
- **Behavioral Observations:** By observing horses' behaviors and their social interactions within a herd, students gain insights into animal behavior that parallel human dynamics. For example, just like humans, horses have social hierarchies and communicate non-verbally.

Next, we move to Problem-Solving Exercises:

- **Obstacle Courses:** Students work with horses to navigate obstacle courses. This experience sharpens problem-solving skills and critical thinking. Picture a group of students guiding their horses through a maze – they must strategize and adapt on the fly.
- **Project-Based Learning:** Projects such as designing a horse-friendly environment or creating a training plan merge disciplines like science, math, and engineering.

For instance, designing a safe and effective stable involves knowledge of engineering principles and understanding equine needs.

Incorporate Fieldwork and Research:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Scientific Studies:** Students can conduct research on horse behavior, physiology, or the impact of EAL. This hands-on approach makes scientific methods come alive.
- **Environmental Learning:** Lessons on ecosystems and conservation are tied to horse management, providing a comprehensive view of environmental stewardship.

## Integrating EAL into Traditional Educational Curricula

### Cross-Disciplinary Integration

- **STEM Subjects:** Imagine integrating lessons about biomechanics, veterinary science, and environmental science through horse-related activities. For instance, understanding how biomechanics apply to a horse's movement can enhance students' grasp of physics.
- **Humanities and Social Sciences:** Use horses to explore their historical roles, literature featuring equines, and psychological principles observed in horse behavior. Picture students reading about horses in history and then visiting a stable to see their historical significance firsthand.
- There are programs developed by education professionals that set up EAL activities for Reading and Math. One such program is Horse Powered Reading ® and Math. They train facilitators to teach reading and math basics through interactions with horses.

### Experiential Learning Modules

- **Outdoor Classrooms:** Create environments where students interact with horses while learning various subjects. An outdoor classroom with horses can transform a math lesson on geometry into a practical exercise in measuring and building horse enclosures.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Develop interdisciplinary projects where students collaborate on tasks related to horses, promoting teamwork and holistic learning. Imagine a project where students design a marketing plan for a local equestrian event, integrating skills from business, communications, and design.

### Youth Development

### Programs Designed for Children and Adolescents

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Character Building Activities:** Tasks like feeding, grooming, and caring for horses teach responsibility and the importance of consistent care. For example, a student responsible for a horse's daily grooming learns the value of routine and dedication.
- **Leadership and Teamwork:** Group projects with horses enhance teamwork and leadership skills. Assigning roles like team leader or project manager in horse-related activities helps students develop leadership qualities.
- **Social Skills Enhancement:** Working with horses improves communication skills and empathy. For instance, learning to read a horse's body language helps students understand non-verbal cues in their interactions.

## Special Education

### Adapting EAL for Individuals with Special Needs

- **Customized Programs:** Develop EAL programs tailored to each participant's specific needs, ensuring accessibility and inclusiveness. Sensory integration activities, like tactile experiences with grooming or the calming effect of riding, cater to various sensory needs.
- **Therapeutic Activities:** Incorporate therapeutic riding to address physical, emotional, and cognitive challenges. Structured activities can reinforce positive behaviors and support behavioral interventions.

## Benefits and Outcomes

- **Physical Benefits:** Activities like riding improve motor skills, balance, and coordination. The therapeutic movement of the horse also aids in muscle tone and flexibility.
- **Emotional and Psychological Benefits:** Achieving goals with horses boosts self-esteem and confidence while aiding in emotional regulation and reducing anxiety.
- **Social and Cognitive Benefits:** Engaging with horses enhances social skills and communication, while problem-solving and following instructions contribute to cognitive growth.

## Summary

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

EAL offers a powerful approach to education by integrating hands-on, experiential learning with traditional curricula. It fosters personal growth, responsibility, empathy, and overall well-being through structured interactions with horses. The unique qualities of horses make EAL an impactful and versatile educational tool.

## Key Takeaways:



- EAL enhances traditional education through hands-on learning and interdisciplinary integration.
- Youth development programs build character, leadership, and social skills.
- Special education programs benefit individuals with customized, therapeutic activities.

## Learning Activity:



Reflect on how you could integrate EAL principles into a current educational setting or curriculum you are involved with. Write a brief plan outlining potential hands-on activities, cross-disciplinary lessons, or character-building projects.

In the next lesson, we'll explore Mounted Activities in EAL. We'll discuss everything from basic horsemanship to advanced riding programs and their impact on physical, emotional, and social development. Stay tuned for insights on how mounted activities can enhance your EAL Program!



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Module 1: Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

### Lesson 6: Mounted Activities in EAL

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Welcome!

Hello and welcome to Lesson 6 of our Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) programs. In this lesson, we will explore the exciting world of mounted activities in EAL. Whether you are a seasoned equestrian or a newcomer, these activities offer a range of benefits that can enhance your physical, emotional, and social well-being.

#### Basic Horsemanship

Mounted activities start with basic horsemanship skills, which lay the foundation for safe and effective riding. Let's dive into some of the fundamental skills you'll learn:

Introduction to Riding and Handling Horses Foundational Skills:



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 1. Mounting and Dismounting:

**Example: Imagine you are a busy professional who just got into riding. Learning to mount and dismount correctly ensures you start and end your riding sessions safely. This involves placing your foot in the stirrup, swinging your leg over the horse, and settling into the saddle gently.**

## 2. Basic Riding Commands:

**Example: Think of these commands as your first language with the horse. You'll learn how to instruct the horse to walk, trot, stop, and turn using reins, leg pressure, and verbal cues. This is similar to how you might use commands to train a hyperactive new dog, ensuring clear communication.**

## 3. Posture and Balance:

**Example: Maintaining proper posture and balance while riding is like having good ergonomics at your desk. It prevents strain and enhances comfort for both you and the horse.**

## Groundwork Skills:

### 1. Leading and Haltering:

**Example: Leading a horse is akin to guiding a colleague through a project. You'll learn how to correctly and safely lead a horse, ensuring mutual understanding and respect.**

### 2. Grooming and Tacking:

**Example: Grooming and tacking up your horse is like preparing a meal; it's all about the right steps and attention to detail. This includes brushing the horse and putting on the saddle and bridle properly.**

## Horse Behavior and Communication:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 1. Understanding Equine Body Language:

**Example: Just as you might read a coworker's body language in a meeting, understanding a horse's body language helps you anticipate and respond to their needs.**

## 2. Building Rapport:

**Example: Building a relationship with your horse is similar to building rapport with a new client. Trust and mutual respect are key, achieved through consistent and positive interactions.**

## Safety Procedures and Protocols

Safety is paramount in all equine activities. Here's how we ensure a safe environment for both riders and horses:

### Rider Safety:

#### 1. Helmet Use:

**Example: Wearing a helmet while riding is like using a seatbelt in your car. It's a simple yet crucial safety measure.**

#### 2. Appropriate Attire:

**Example: Dressing appropriately for riding is like choosing the right attire for a business meeting. It ensures comfort and safety.**

### Horse Safety:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 1. Safe Handling:

**Example: Knowing how to approach and handle horses safely is similar to handling sensitive office equipment. Proper techniques prevent accidents and ensure smooth interactions.**

## 2. Emergency Procedures:

**Example: Learning what to do in case of an emergency, such as a fall, is like knowing the fire drill procedures at your workplace.**

## Environmental Safety:

### 1. Arena Rules:

**Example: Following arena rules is like adhering to workplace protocols. It maintains order and safety for everyone involved.**

### 2. Weather Considerations:

**Example: Being aware of how weather conditions affect riding is similar to adjusting your commute based on the weather forecast.**

## Therapeutic/Adaptive Riding

Mounted activities in EAL also include therapeutic or adaptive riding, which offers significant benefits for individuals with physical and emotional challenges.

## Benefits of Mounted Activities for Physical and Emotional Health Physical Benefits:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 1. Improved Balance and Coordination:

**Example: Riding a horse engages your core muscles, much like yoga or pilates, improving balance and coordination.**

## 2. Muscle Strengthening:

**Example: Handling and riding horses is a full-body workout, akin to a gym session, strengthening various muscle groups.**

## 3. Flexibility and Range of Motion:

**Example: Mounted activities enhance flexibility, similar to the benefits of a regular stretching routine.**

## Emotional and Psychological Benefits:

### 1. Stress Reduction:

**Example: Spending time with horses has a calming effect, much like meditation or a nature walk, helping reduce stress and anxiety.**

### 2. Emotional Regulation:

**Example: The rhythmic motion of riding can help you manage your emotions, similar to the benefits of rhythmic breathing exercises.**

### 3. Confidence Building:

**Example: Successfully handling and riding a horse boosts self-esteem, much like achieving a major work milestone.**

## Social Benefits:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 1. Improved Social Skills:

**Example: Group riding sessions encourage social interaction, similar to team-building exercises at work.**

## 2. Sense of Community:

**Example: Being part of a riding group fosters a sense of belonging, much like being part of a supportive work team.**

## Case Studies and Success Stories Individual Success Stories:

### 1. Physical Rehabilitation:

**Example: A story of someone recovering physical capabilities through therapeutic riding, much like how physical therapy helps in recovery from an injury.**

### 2. Emotional Healing:

**Example: Examples of individuals overcoming emotional challenges with the help of horses, similar to how therapy or counseling can aid in emotional healing.**

## Program Impact:

### 1. Community Programs:

**Example: Highlighting successful community programs that integrate therapeutic riding, similar to community outreach programs that bring about positive change.**

### 2. Research Findings:

**-Example: Summarizing research supporting the benefits of therapeutic riding, much like presenting findings in a business report to demonstrate effectiveness.**

## Advanced Mounted Programs

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

For those looking to further develop their riding skills, advanced mounted programs offer opportunities to learn and grow in specialized disciplines.

Developing Advanced Riding Skills Skill Progression:

1. Advanced Riding Techniques:

**Example: Learning advanced skills such as cantering and jumping is like advancing in your career with new professional skills.**

2. Horse Training:

**Example: Participating in horse training is similar to mentoring a junior colleague, helping them develop and succeed.**

Specialized Disciplines:

1. Dressage:

**Example: Dressage focuses on precision and discipline, akin to mastering a complex project at work.**

2. Jumping:

**Example: Learning show jumping techniques is like overcoming obstacles in your career, requiring skill and confidence.**

Competitions and Shows:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 1. Preparation for Events:

**Example: Training for riding competitions is similar to preparing for a major presentation or competition at work.**

## 2. Showmanship Skills:

**Example: Enhancing showmanship skills for horse shows is like honing your public speaking abilities for a big event.**

## Incorporating Mounted Activities into Broader EAL Programs

Mounted EAL does not teach riding skills. EAL partners with the horses for their ability to develop life skills, academic learning or emotional support.

## Holistic Integration:

### 1. Combined Curriculum:

**Example: Integrating mounted activities with groundwork and team-building exercises is like creating a well-rounded professional development program.**

### 2. Personal Development:

**Example: Using advanced riding programs to develop confidence and resilience is similar to pursuing continuous education for personal growth.**

## Program Customization:

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program



## Community Engagement:

### 1. Outreach Programs:

**Example: Extending advanced mounted programs to the community is like running community service initiatives that benefit society.**

### 2. Volunteer Opportunities:

**Example: Encouraging participants to volunteer in equine care is like fostering a culture of volunteerism within a company.**

## Summary

Mounted activities in EAL cover a wide range of skill levels, from basic horsemanship to advanced riding programs. Each level contributes significantly to physical, emotional, and social development. Basic horsemanship lays the foundation for safe riding, while therapeutic/adaptive riding offers profound benefits for those with physical and emotional challenges. Advanced programs further develop riding skills and integrate these activities into broader EAL programs, promoting personal growth and community engagement. The structured interaction with horses enhances overall well-being and fosters a deep connection between participants and horses.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Key Takeaways



- Physical and Emotional Benefits: Riding improves physical strength, balance, and emotional well-being.
- Skill Development: Basic and advanced horsemanship skills are essential for safe and effective riding.
- Community Engagement: Mounted activities can be integrated into community programs for broader impact.

## Learning Activity



Reflection Exercise: Spend some time reflecting on how the skills and benefits discussed can apply to your personal and professional life. Write down three ways you can incorporate the principles of mounted activities into your daily routine.

## Next Lesson



Join us in the next lesson, Module 1, Lesson 7: "Ethical Considerations and Best Practices." We'll discuss how implementing ethical considerations and best practices ensures that EAL programs are conducted in a responsible, humane, and professional manner, benefiting both the participants and the horses involved.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Stay excited and see you in the next lesson!

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## Module i: Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

### Lesson 7: EAL Principles of Ethical Considerations and Best Practices

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Welcome to Lesson 7 of our Introduction to Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) course. Today, we'll dive into the essential ethical considerations and best practices that ensure our EAL programs are conducted in a responsible, humane, and professional manner. Whether you're a busy professional or someone new to EAL, this lesson will provide you with valuable insights to maintain high standards in your practice.

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#### Animal Welfare

Ensuring the well-being of horses in EAL programs is paramount. Let's explore some key aspects:

- Proper Care and Management
- Veterinary Check-Ups: Horses should receive regular veterinary check-ups to monitor their health. Think of it like how you schedule regular health check-ups for yourself to catch any issues early.
- Nutrition and Grooming: Just as you ensure your diet meets your nutritional needs, horses need appropriate nutrition, exercise, and grooming. This keeps them healthy and happy.
- Physical Health Monitoring: Keep an eye on any signs of illness or injury. Immediate action is crucial, much like how you'd treat a sudden illness in a family member.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Behavioral Understanding
- Recognizing Stress: Understand horse behavior to spot signs of stress. Imagine how you feel when overworked – horses can feel the same way.
- Breaks and Rest: Ensure horses are given breaks and not overworked, similar to how you need breaks during a busy workday to stay productive and healthy.
- Safe Environment
- Safety Measures: The environment should be safe, with proper fencing, shelter, and clean water. It's akin to ensuring your home is free of hazards to keep your family safe.
- Hazard-Free Zone: Regularly check for and eliminate potential hazards to prevent accidents, just as you would childproof your home.
- Ethical Treatment
- Respect and Dignity: Treat horses with respect and dignity, avoiding any form of physical or psychological abuse. Think of it as treating your pet with love and care.

## Ethical Guidelines and Standards

Following ethical guidelines ensures the integrity and trustworthiness of your EAL program:

- Adherence to Professional Standards
- Established Guidelines: Follow ethical standards set by organizations like PATH International or EAGALA. These standards are like the rules you follow in your profession to ensure quality and safety.
- Informed Consent

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Client Awareness: Ensure clients are fully informed about EAL activities. It's similar to how you'd want to understand any medical procedure before consenting.
- Transparency
- Operational Clarity: Maintain transparency in your program's operations, much like how businesses maintain transparency to build trust with customers.
- Regular Audits and Assessments
- Continuous Improvement: Conduct regular assessments to ensure compliance with ethical standards, akin to how businesses perform audits to maintain quality control.

## Professional Conduct

Maintaining professionalism in EAL practice is crucial for credibility and effectiveness:

- Boundaries
- Clear Boundaries: Establish clear boundaries between facilitators and participants. It's like maintaining professional boundaries with colleagues at work.
- Confidentiality
- Protecting Privacy: Safeguard participants' personal information, just as you would protect your own personal data.
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Respecting Diversity: Be aware of and respect cultural differences. Tailor your approach to accommodate diverse backgrounds, much like how you'd adapt communication styles in a multicultural workplace.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Conflict of Interest

- Avoiding Conflicts: Avoid conflicts of interest to maintain professional integrity, similar to how you avoid conflicts in your professional life to ensure fairness.

## Certification and Continuing Education

Continuous learning and certification are vital for maintaining high standards:

- Obtaining Certification

- Proper Training: Ensure facilitators are certified by recognized EAL organizations. Think of it as obtaining a professional certification to enhance your career.

- Ongoing Education

- Continuous Learning: Engage in workshops and courses to stay updated, similar to how professionals attend seminars and training to stay current in their fields.

- Supervision and Mentorship

- Seeking Guidance: Regular supervision and mentorship help address challenges and improve skills, akin to having a mentor in your professional life.

- Networking and Collaboration

- Building Connections: Networking with other EAL professionals can lead to improved practices, much like how professional networking can open doors to new opportunities and insights.

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# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Key Takeaways:



- Ethical treatment of horses and clients is fundamental to EAL.
- Professionalism and adherence to ethical standards enhance the credibility of your program.
- Continuous education and certification ensure high standards and best practices.

## Learning Activity:



Create a checklist of ethical guidelines and best practices tailored to your EAL program. Use this checklist to evaluate your current practices and identify areas for improvement.

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We start a new Module II! Next Lesson: Integrating Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) into Therapeutic Practices, Collaborating With Mental Health Professionals, And Understanding The Psychological Benefits Of Working With Horses.

Stay tuned as we explore how to integrate EAL into therapeutic practices in the next module. This will provide you with practical strategies to enhance the therapeutic benefits of your EAL programs.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

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By ensuring that our EAL programs adhere to ethical considerations and best practices, we not only protect the well-being of our horses but also build a foundation of trust and professionalism with our clients. Let's keep learning and growing together in this exciting field!

## Module II

### Lesson 1: Integrating EAL Into Therapeutic Practices, Collaborating With Mental Health Professionals, And Understanding The Psychological Benefits Of Working With Horses.

#### Integrating Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) into Therapeutic Practices

##### 1. Understanding the Therapeutic Potential of EAL

- Psychological Benefits: EAL can help clients develop emotional regulation, self-awareness, and confidence. It is effective for individuals dealing with anxiety, depression, PTSD, and other mental health issues.
- Physical Benefits: The physical interaction with horses can improve motor skills, balance, and coordination, beneficial for clients with physical disabilities or rehabilitation needs.
- Social Benefits: EAL promotes communication, teamwork, and social skills, which can be particularly valuable for individuals with social anxiety, autism, or other social challenges.

##### 2. Establishing a Multidisciplinary Team

- Licensed Therapists: Include licensed mental health professionals (psychologists, counselors, social workers) who can integrate EAL into their therapeutic approaches.
- Equine Specialists: Employ equine specialists trained in EAL who understand horse behavior and can ensure the safety and well-being of the horses.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Support Staff: Include support staff such as veterinary professionals, program coordinators, and administrative personnel to manage logistics and operations.

## 3. Designing Therapeutic EAL Programs

- Assessment and Goal Setting: Conduct thorough assessments of clients to understand their needs and establish clear, achievable goals for their EAL sessions.
- Individual and Group Sessions: Offer both individual and group EAL sessions to cater to different therapeutic needs. Individual sessions can focus on personal growth, while group sessions can enhance social skills and teamwork.
- Customized Activities: Design EAL activities tailored to the therapeutic goals of each client. Activities may include grooming, leading, riding, and interacting with horses to foster specific emotional or behavioral outcomes.

## 4. Integrating EAL with Traditional Therapy

- Complementary Approach: Use EAL as a complementary approach to traditional therapeutic methods such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), and talk therapy.
- Session Structure: Structure sessions to incorporate EAL activities followed by reflective discussions with the therapist. This helps clients process their experiences and apply insights gained from EAL to their everyday lives.
- Homework Assignments: Assign clients tasks to practice skills learned during EAL sessions in their daily routines, reinforcing therapeutic progress.

## 5. Training and Professional Development



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- **Training for Therapists:** Provide specialized training for therapists to understand EAL principles, horse behavior, and safety protocols. This enables them to effectively integrate EAL into their practice.
- **Continuing Education:** Encourage ongoing education and professional development for the entire team to stay updated on the latest research and best practices in EAL and therapeutic interventions.
- **Supervision and Support:** Establish a system of regular supervision and peer support to address challenges, share experiences, and ensure the quality of therapeutic EAL programs.

## 6. Ethical Considerations and Best Practices

- **Client Safety:** Ensure the safety of clients during EAL sessions through proper supervision, use of appropriate safety gear, and adherence to safety protocols.
- **Informed Consent:** Obtain informed consent from clients or their guardians, explaining the nature of EAL, potential benefits, and risks involved.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintain confidentiality of clients' personal information and therapeutic progress. Ensure that records are securely stored and only shared with authorized personnel.
- **Animal Welfare:** Prioritize the well-being of horses by providing proper care, regular health checks, and a safe environment. Ensure that horses are not overworked and are treated with respect.

## 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Tracking Progress:** Implement systems to monitor and evaluate clients' progress throughout their participation in EAL programs. Use assessment tools, feedback forms, and regular reviews to track therapeutic outcomes.
- **Program Evaluation:** Conduct periodic evaluations of the EAL program to assess its effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure alignment with therapeutic goals.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Feedback Mechanism: Establish a mechanism for clients and staff to provide feedback on the EAL program. Use this feedback to make necessary adjustments and enhance the overall quality of the program.

By integrating EAL into therapeutic practices thoughtfully and systematically, practitioners can offer a unique and effective approach to addressing a wide range of emotional, psychological, and social challenges, enriching the therapeutic experience for their clients.

## **INTEGRATING EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING (EAL) INTO COLLABORATING WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS (MHP)**

### **1. Building a Collaborative Team**

- Inhouse vs. External: Paying independent contractors or salaried MHP's may not be within your financial reach but establishing a conduit from your program to their clients and vice versa may appeal to MHP's. This would entail hammering home the novelty, beneficial results, of EAL. Preparing a written agreement. Demonstrating the program for professionals. Offering in-service courses to them makes the relationship more attractive. Make sure the financial split of fees is satisfactory. See Establish Partnerships.
- Establish Partnerships: Form partnerships with licensed mental health professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, social workers) who are interested in incorporating EAL into their practice.
- Multidisciplinary Team: Create a multidisciplinary team that includes mental health professionals, equine specialists, and support staff to ensure comprehensive care for clients. The same issues about financial set up must be addressed and agreed upon.
- Define Roles and Responsibilities: Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each team member to ensure smooth collaboration and effective integration of EAL into therapeutic practices.

### **2. Education and Training**

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Educate Mental Health Professionals: Provide training sessions and workshops for mental health professionals to familiarize them with the principles, benefits, and practices of EAL.
- Specialized Training for EAL Facilitators: Ensure that EAL facilitators are trained in mental health basics, including understanding different psychological disorders and therapeutic approaches, to enhance collaboration. Review the certifications they hold in this area. Offer in-service courses in these areas.
- Continuing Education: Encourage ongoing education and professional development for both mental health professionals and EAL facilitators to stay updated on the latest research and best practices.

## 3. Designing Collaborative Programs

- Joint Assessment and Planning: Conduct joint assessments with mental health professionals to understand clients' needs and develop tailored EAL programs that align with their therapeutic goals.
- Integrated Session Planning: Plan sessions that combine traditional therapy methods with EAL activities. For example, a session could start with talk therapy, followed by EAL activities, and conclude with a reflective discussion.
- Customized Activities: Design EAL activities that complement the therapeutic objectives set by the mental health professional, such as activities focused on building trust, improving communication, or reducing anxiety.

## 4. Communication and Coordination

- Regular Meetings: Schedule regular meetings between EAL facilitators and mental health professionals to discuss clients' progress, share insights, and adjust the program as needed. If not in person zoom may be a suitable alternative.
- Communication Channels: Establish clear communication channels, such as secure emails or a shared online platform, to facilitate the exchange of information and coordination of sessions.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Collaborative Documentation: Maintain collaborative documentation where both EAL facilitators and mental health professionals can record observations, progress notes, and feedback. Formulate pertinent documents reflecting mutual agreement.

## 5. Session Structure

- Co-facilitated Sessions: Conduct sessions co-facilitated by both an EAL specialist and a mental health professional to provide comprehensive support to clients.
- Reflective Discussions: Include reflective discussions after EAL activities where the mental health professional can help clients process their experiences and relate them to their therapeutic goals. “Reflection” is a vital part of the COASTER model for lessons. Familiarize yourself with the Coaster Model.
- Follow-up and Integration: Plan follow-up sessions to integrate insights gained from EAL into the broader therapeutic framework, ensuring continuity and reinforcement of therapeutic progress.

## 6. Ethical and Professional Standards

- Client Safety and Well-being: Prioritize the safety and well-being of clients through proper supervision, safety protocols, and use of appropriate safety gear during EAL activities.
- Informed Consent: Ensure that clients or their guardians provide informed consent, understanding the nature of EAL, its benefits, and potential risks. Documentation of this should be included in the client's file.
- Confidentiality: Maintain strict confidentiality of clients' personal information and therapeutic progress. Ensure secure storage and sharing of records only with authorized personnel.
- Animal Welfare: Ensure the well-being of horses involved in EAL by providing proper care, regular health checks, and a safe environment. There are apps available to remind you of health landmarks throughout the year – shots, wormer, exercise, etc.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Progress Tracking: Implement systems to monitor and evaluate clients' progress throughout their participation in EAL programs. Use assessment tools, feedback forms, and regular reviews to track therapeutic outcomes.
- Program Evaluation: Conduct periodic evaluations of the EAL program to assess its effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure alignment with therapeutic goals.
- Feedback Mechanism: Establish a mechanism for clients and team members to provide feedback on the EAL program. Use this feedback to make necessary adjustments and enhance the overall quality of the program.

## 8. Promoting Collaboration

- Networking Events: Organize networking events, workshops, and seminars to promote collaboration and knowledge exchange between EAL facilitators and mental health professionals.
- Joint Research and Publications: Encourage joint research projects and publications to contribute to the evidence base for EAL and its integration with mental health practices.
- Community Outreach: Engage in community outreach activities to raise awareness about the benefits of EAL and foster partnerships with local mental health organizations.

By fostering strong collaboration between EAL facilitators and mental health professionals, you can create a holistic therapeutic approach that leverages the unique benefits of EAL to enhance clients' mental health and well-being.

## **INTEGRATING EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING (EAL) INTO UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH HORSES**

### 1. Research and Evidence-Based Practice

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Review Existing Research: Study existing literature and research on the psychological benefits of working with horses. Familiarize yourself with key studies, theories, and findings in the field.
- Conduct Your Own Research: Design and implement research projects within your EAL program to gather data on the psychological outcomes experienced by participants. Use qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyze data.
- Collaborate with Academic Institutions: Partner with universities or research institutions to conduct rigorous studies and validate the psychological benefits of EAL.

## 2. Training and Professional Development

- Educate EAL Facilitators: Provide training for EAL facilitators on the psychological aspects of working with horses, including understanding human-animal interactions and the therapeutic mechanisms involved.
- Workshops and Seminars: Organize workshops and seminars led by experts in psychology and equine therapy to enhance the knowledge and skills of your team.
- Continuing Education: Encourage continuous learning and professional development to stay updated on the latest research and best practices in EAL and psychology.

## 3. Program Design and Implementation

- Therapeutic Goals: Define clear therapeutic goals for your EAL program that focus on psychological benefits such as emotional regulation, self-esteem, stress reduction, and social skills development.
- Structured Activities: Design structured EAL activities that target specific psychological outcomes. Examples include:
  - Building Trust: Activities that foster trust between the participant and the horse, such as grooming and leading exercises.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Emotional Expression: Activities that encourage participants to express and process their emotions, such as reflective journaling after interactions with horses.
- Problem-Solving and Coping Skills: Activities that promote problem-solving and coping strategies, such as navigating obstacle courses with horses.
- Therapeutic Integration: Integrate traditional therapeutic techniques with EAL activities. For instance, use cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) principles during reflective discussions post-EAL sessions.

## 4. Collaboration with Mental Health Professionals

- Joint Sessions: Conduct joint sessions with mental health professionals to provide a comprehensive approach to therapy. The mental health professional can help interpret the psychological benefits observed during EAL activities.
- Interdisciplinary Team: Form an interdisciplinary team that includes psychologists, counselors, and equine specialists to design and deliver the EAL program.
- Regular Consultations: Schedule regular consultations with mental health professionals to review participant progress and adjust the program as needed.

## 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Assessment Tools: Use standardized psychological assessment tools to measure the impact of EAL on participants. Tools can include pre- and post-intervention surveys, self-report questionnaires, and behavioral observations.
- Feedback Mechanism: Establish a feedback mechanism for participants to share their experiences and perceived benefits of working with horses.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Data Analysis: Regularly analyze the data collected to identify trends, measure outcomes, and make data-driven decisions to improve the program.

## 6. Participant Education and Empowerment

- Education Sessions: Conduct education sessions for participants to help them understand the psychological benefits of working with horses. This can include information on how human-animal interactions can influence emotions, behavior, and mental health.
- Self-Reflection: Encourage participants to engage in self-reflection activities, such as journaling or group discussions, to deepen their understanding of their experiences with horses.
- Empowerment Strategies: Implement strategies that empower participants to take an active role in their therapeutic journey, such as setting personal goals and tracking their progress.

## 7. Ethical and Safety Considerations

- Informed Consent: Ensure participants provide informed consent and understand the psychological aspects of EAL. Clearly explain the potential benefits and risks.
- Safety Protocols: Maintain strict safety protocols to protect both participants and horses. Ensure that all activities are supervised by trained professionals.
- Confidentiality: Protect the confidentiality of participants' psychological information and ensure secure handling of personal data.

## 8. Promoting Awareness and Advocacy

- Public Awareness Campaigns: Launch campaigns to raise awareness about the psychological benefits of EAL. Use various platforms, including social media, community events, and publications.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Advocacy for EAL: Advocate for the inclusion of EAL in therapeutic practices by presenting at conferences, publishing research findings, and networking with professionals in the field.
- Client Testimonials: Share testimonials and success stories from participants to illustrate the positive impact of EAL on psychological well-being.

By integrating these strategies, you can effectively demonstrate and understand the psychological benefits of working with horses through EAL, enhancing both the practice and its recognition within the mental health community.

## **Module II:**

### **Step-by-Step Guide to Designing Corporate Programs, Creating Effective Team-Building Activities, and Marketing to Businesses**

#### **Lesson 2:**

##### **1. Designing Corporate EAL Programs**

###### **Step 1: Identify Corporate Needs and Goals**

- Conduct Research: Understand common corporate challenges and goals, such as improving communication, enhancing leadership skills, or reducing stress.
- Engage with Businesses: Consult with potential corporate clients to identify their specific needs and objectives for the EAL program.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

— Several organizations will assess the character strengths of persons who are part of a participating group and advise as to who may interact more easily with other members of the group. One we know of is extremely expensive. However, VIA Institute of Character Strengths. <sup>[3]</sup>

## Step 2: Define Program Objectives

- Set Clear Goals: Define what the program aims to achieve, such as team cohesion, leadership development, or conflict resolution.
- Align with Corporate Goals: Ensure that the objectives of the EAL program align with the business goals of the corporate clients.

## Step 3: Develop Program Structure

- Program Duration: Decide on the duration of the program (e.g., one-day workshop, weekend retreat, ongoing sessions).
- Session Format: Plan the format of the sessions (e.g., group activities, individual coaching, reflective discussions).
- Customization: Tailor the program to meet the specific needs and goals of each corporate client.

## Step 4: Design EAL Activities

- Team-Building Exercises: Create activities that promote teamwork, such as collaborative tasks or group challenges involving horses.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Leadership Development: Develop activities that focus on leadership skills, such as guiding and leading horses through obstacles.
- Communication Skills: Plan exercises that enhance communication, such as non-verbal communication tasks with horses.

## Step 5: Incorporate Reflective Practices

- Debrief Sessions: Include time for debriefing and reflecting on the activities, facilitated by a trained professional.
- Journaling: Encourage participants to keep journals to reflect on their experiences and insights gained during the program.

## Step 6: Ensure Safety and Welfare

- Safety Protocols: Implement strict safety protocols for all activities to ensure the safety of participants and horses.
- Animal Welfare: Prioritize the well-being of horses by providing proper care and breaks during sessions.

## 2. Creating Effective Team-Building Activities

### Step 1: Understand Team Dynamics

- Assess Team Needs: Conduct an assessment of the team's strengths, weaknesses, and dynamics.
- Identify Goals: Define the specific team-building goals, such as improving trust, enhancing communication, or resolving conflicts.

### Step 2: Plan Engaging Activities

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Ice-Breaker Activities: Start with ice-breaker activities to help team members get comfortable and build rapport.
- Group Challenges: Design group challenges that require teamwork and collaboration, such as guiding a horse through a course together.
- Role Reversal Exercises: Create activities where team members switch roles to gain new perspectives and enhance empathy.

## Step 3: Incorporate Horse Interactions

- Non-Verbal Communication: Plan activities that emphasize non-verbal communication with horses, such as guiding them without using reins.
- Trust-Building: Develop trust-building exercises where team members work together to earn the trust of a horse.
- Problem-Solving: Include problem-solving tasks that require creative thinking and collaboration, such as building an obstacle course for the horse.

## Step 4: Facilitate Reflective Discussions

- Group Debrief: After each activity, facilitate a group debrief to discuss what was learned and how it applies to the workplace.
- Personal Reflection: Encourage individual reflection to help participants internalize their experiences and insights.

## Step 5: Adapt to Team Needs

- Flexible Approach: Be prepared to adapt activities based on the team's responses and dynamics.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Feedback Mechanism: Collect feedback from participants to improve and tailor future team-building activities.

## 3. Marketing to Businesses

### Step 1: Identify Target Market

- Research Businesses: Identify businesses that could benefit from EAL programs, such as those facing team cohesion challenges or leadership development needs.
- Segment Market: Segment the market based on industry, company size, and specific needs.

### Step 2: Develop Marketing Materials

- Professional Website: Create a professional website that highlights the benefits of EAL, program offerings, and success stories.
- Brochures and Flyers: Design informative brochures and flyers that can be distributed at networking events and business meetings.
- Case Studies and Testimonials: Include case studies and testimonials from past corporate clients to demonstrate the effectiveness of your programs.

### Step 3: Utilize Digital Marketing

- Social Media: Use social media platforms to share content about EAL, including videos, articles, and client testimonials.
- Email Campaigns: Develop targeted email campaigns to reach potential corporate clients with information about your programs and upcoming events.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Optimize your website for search engines to attract businesses searching for team-building or leadership development solutions.

## Step 4: Network and Build Relationships

- Attend Business Events: Participate in business networking events, trade shows, and conferences to meet potential clients and showcase your services.
- Partner with HR Professionals: Build relationships with HR professionals and corporate trainers who can refer your services to their companies.
- Host Demonstration Events: Organize demonstration events or open houses where businesses can experience a sample of your EAL program.

## Step 5: Offer Customized Solutions

- Tailored Proposals: Provide customized proposals to businesses based on their specific needs and goals.
- Free Consultations: Offer free consultations to discuss how your EAL program can address their unique challenges and objectives.
- Corporate Packages: Develop corporate packages that offer a range of options and pricing to accommodate different budgets and needs.

## Step 6: Measure and Showcase Success

- Track Results: Measure the outcomes of your EAL programs and collect data on their impact on team dynamics, leadership skills, and overall corporate performance.
- Share Success Stories: Regularly share success stories and positive outcomes with potential clients through your marketing channels.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

By following these step-by-step guides, you can effectively design corporate EAL programs, create impactful team-building activities, and successfully market your services to businesses.

## Module II

### Lesson 3: Step-by-Step Guide to Designing Equine-Assisted Learning Programs for Personal Growth

#### Step 1: Understanding Personal Growth through EAL

- Define Personal Growth: Explain how EAL can enhance self-awareness, emotional regulation, confidence, and resilience.
- Research: Study successful EAL programs focused on personal growth and their outcomes.
- Identify Goals: Determine the specific personal growth objectives you aim to achieve (e.g., improving self-esteem, reducing anxiety, enhancing communication skills).

#### Step 2: Curriculum Development

- Framework: Develop a structured framework that outlines the program's goals, methods, and expected outcomes.
  - Activity Planning: Create activities that foster personal growth, each designed to target specific areas like
- Step-by-Step Guide to Designing Equine-Assisted Learning Programs for Personal Growth

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- Identify Goals: Determine the specific personal growth objectives you aim to achieve (e.g., improving self-esteem, reducing anxiety, enhancing communication skills).

## Step 2: Curriculum Development

- Framework: Develop a structured framework that outlines the program's goals, methods, and expected outcomes.
- Activity Planning: Create activities that foster personal growth, each designed to target specific areas like trust, empathy, and emotional awareness.
- Incorporate Theories: Integrate psychological and developmental theories to support the program's structure and activities.

## Step 3: Creating Effective Personal Growth Activities

- Activity Design: Develop activities that are safe, engaging, and conducive to personal growth.
- Example Activities:
  - Mindfulness with Horses: Encourage clients to practice mindfulness by observing and interacting with horses calmly and attentively.
  - Trust-Building Exercises: Activities that involve building trust with the horse to mirror and work on trust issues in human relationships.
  - Leadership Tasks: Guiding a horse through various challenges to develop leadership and decision-making skills.
  - Safety Protocols: Establish and enforce comprehensive safety guidelines.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Evaluation Tools: Create methods for evaluating the effectiveness of each activity (e.g., self-assessment surveys, facilitator observations).

## Step 4: Training and Certification

- Staff Training: Train facilitators on EAL principles, personal growth techniques, and safe horse handling.
- Certification: Ensure that all staff members hold relevant certifications and comply with legal and safety standards.

## Step 5: Marketing Your Program

- Identify Target Audience: Prospective clients seeking personal development and mental health professionals looking for complementary therapeutic modalities.
- Develop Marketing Materials: Create brochures, flyers, a professional website, and social media content highlighting the benefits of EAL for personal growth.
- Networking: Build relationships with mental health professionals, life coaches, and personal development groups.

## Step 6: Implementing the Program

- Pilot Program: Start with a pilot to gather feedback and make necessary adjustments.
- Full Implementation: Launch the full program after refining it based on pilot feedback.

## Step 7: Evaluation and Improvement

- Collect Feedback: Regularly collect feedback from participants and mental health professionals.
- Assess Outcomes: Use assessment tools to measure the program's impact on personal growth.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Continuous Improvement: Continuously refine and enhance the program based on feedback and assessment results.

## Detailed Guide to Creating Effective Personal Growth Activities

### Step 1: Define Learning Objectives

- Specific: Clearly define what participants should achieve (e.g., increased self-awareness, improved emotional regulation).
- Measurable: Ensure that the objectives can be assessed.
- Achievable: Set realistic and attainable goals.
- Relevant: Align objectives with overall personal growth goals.
- Time-bound: Set a timeframe for achieving the objectives.

### Step 2: Develop Activity Outline

- Introduction: Briefly introduce the activity and its objectives.
- Materials Needed: List all materials and equipment required.
- Step-by-Step Instructions: Provide detailed instructions on how to conduct the activity.
- Safety Guidelines: Include safety precautions and emergency procedures.

### Step 3: Facilitate the Activity

- Engage Participants: Use engaging methods to capture participants' interest.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Monitor Progress: Observe participants and provide guidance as needed.
- Encourage Reflection: Allow time for participants to reflect on their experiences and what they learned.

## Step 4: Assess and Reflect

- Assessment Tools: Use self-assessments, facilitator observations, and feedback forms to evaluate learning outcomes.
- Feedback: Provide constructive feedback to participants.
- Reflection: Encourage participants to discuss what they learned and how it applies to their personal growth.

## Marketing to Prospective Clients and Mental Health Professionals

### Step 1: Research and Understand Your Market

- Target Audience: Identify individuals seeking personal growth and mental health professionals who could refer clients.
- Needs Analysis: Understand the needs and challenges of your target audience.

### Step 2: Develop a Marketing Strategy

- Unique Selling Proposition (USP): Clearly define what makes your EAL program unique and beneficial for personal growth.
- Marketing Channels: Determine the best channels to reach your audience (e.g., social media, email marketing, partnerships with therapists).

### Step 3: Create Marketing Materials

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Professional Website: Develop a website with detailed information about your program, success stories, and testimonials.
- Brochures and Flyers: Design informative brochures and flyers to distribute to potential clients and mental health professionals.
- Social Media Presence: Use social media platforms to share success stories, educational content, and program updates.

## Step 4: Build Relationships

- Networking: Attend mental health conferences, personal development workshops, and local community events.
- Partnerships: Partner with therapists, counselors, and life coaches to create referral networks.
- Presentations: Offer to present your program at mental health clinics, personal growth seminars, and community groups.

## Step 5: Offer Free Workshops or Demonstrations

- Demonstration Days: Host free demonstration days to showcase your program.
- Trial Sessions: Offer trial sessions to prospective clients and mental health professionals to experience the benefits of EAL firsthand.

## Step 6: Follow Up and Build Trust

- Follow-Up: Regularly follow up with interested parties and provide additional information as needed.
- Testimonials: Collect and share testimonials from satisfied participants.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Consistent Communication: Maintain regular communication with clients and referral sources through newsletters, emails, and social media updates.

## Step 7: Evaluate and Adjust Marketing Strategies

- Monitor Results: Track the success of your marketing efforts.
- Adjust Strategies: Refine your marketing strategies based on feedback and results.
- Stay Informed: Keep up with trends in personal growth and mental health to ensure your strategies remain effective.

By following this step-by-step guide, you can design a comprehensive Equine Assisted Learning program tailored for personal growth, create effective growth-promoting activities, and successfully market your program to prospective clients and mental health professionals.

trust, empathy, and emotional awareness.

- Incorporate Theories: Integrate psychological and developmental theories to support the program's structure and activities.

## Step 3: Creating Effective Personal Growth Activities

- Activity Design: Develop activities that are safe, engaging, and conducive to personal growth.
- Example Activities:
  - Mindfulness with Horses: Encourage clients to practice mindfulness by observing and interacting with horses calmly and attentively.
  - Trust-Building Exercises: Activities that involve building trust with the horse to mirror and work on trust issues in human relationships.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Leadership Tasks: Guiding a horse through various challenges to develop leadership and decision-making skills.
- Safety Protocols: Establish and enforce comprehensive safety guidelines.
- Evaluation Tools: Create methods for evaluating the effectiveness of each activity (e.g., self-assessment surveys, facilitator observations).

## Step 4: Training and Certification

- Staff Training: Train facilitators on EAL principles, personal growth techniques, and safe horse handling.
- Certification: Ensure that all staff members hold relevant certifications and comply with legal and safety standards.

## Step 5: Marketing Your Program

- Identify Target Audience: Prospective clients seeking personal development and mental health professionals looking for complementary therapeutic modalities.
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## Step 6: Implementing the Program

- Pilot Program: Start with a pilot to gather feedback and make necessary adjustments.
- Full Implementation: Launch the full program after refining it based on pilot feedback.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Step 7: Evaluation and Improvement

- **Collect Feedback:** Regularly collect feedback from participants and mental health professionals.
- **Assess Outcomes:** Use assessment tools to measure the program's impact on personal growth.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Continuously refine and enhance the program based on feedback and assessment results.

## Detailed Guide to Creating Effective Personal Growth Activities:

### Step 1: Define Learning Objectives SMART

- **Specific:** Clearly define what participants should achieve (e.g., increased self-awareness, improved emotional regulation).
- **Measurable:** Ensure that the objectives can be assessed.
- **Achievable:** Set realistic and attainable goals.
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### Step 2: Develop Activity Outline

- **Introduction:** Briefly introduce the activity and its objectives.
- **Materials Needed:** List all materials and equipment required.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:** Provide detailed instructions on how to conduct the activity.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Safety Guidelines: Include safety precautions and emergency procedures.

## Step 3: Facilitate the Activity

- Engage Participants: Use engaging methods to capture participants' interest.
- Monitor Progress: Observe participants and provide guidance as needed.
- Encourage Reflection: Allow time for participants to reflect on their experiences and what they learned.

## Step 4: Assess and Reflect

- Assessment Tools: Use self-assessments, facilitator observations, and feedback forms to evaluate learning outcomes.
- Feedback: Provide constructive feedback to participants.
- Reflection: Encourage participants to discuss what they learned and how it applies to their personal growth.

## Marketing to Prospective Clients and Mental Health Professionals:

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### Step 2: Develop a Marketing Strategy



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Unique Selling Proposition (USP): Clearly define what makes your EAL program unique and beneficial for personal growth.

- Marketing Channels: Determine the best channels to reach your audience (e.g., social media, email marketing, partnerships with therapists).

## Step 3: Create Marketing Materials

- Professional Website: Develop a website with detailed information about your program, success stories, and testimonials.

- Brochures and Flyers: Design informative brochures and flyers to distribute to potential clients and mental health professionals.

- Social Media Presence: Use social media platforms to share success stories, educational content, and program updates.

## Step 4: Build Relationships

- Networking: Attend mental health conferences, personal development workshops, and local community events.

- Partnerships: Partner with therapists, counselors, and life coaches to create referral networks.

- Presentations: Offer to present your program at mental health clinics, personal growth seminars, and community groups.

## Step 5: Offer Free Workshops or Demonstrations

- Demonstration Days: Host free demonstration days to showcase your program.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Trial Sessions: Offer trial sessions to prospective clients and mental health professionals to experience the benefits of EAL firsthand.

## Step 6: Follow Up and Build Trust

- Follow-Up: Regularly follow up with interested parties and provide additional information as needed.
- Testimonials: Collect and share testimonials from satisfied participants.
- Consistent Communication: Maintain regular communication with clients and referral sources through newsletters, emails, and social media updates.

## Step 7: Evaluate and Adjust Marketing Strategies

- Monitor Results: Track the success of your marketing efforts.
- Adjust Strategies: Refine your marketing strategies based on feedback and results.
- Stay Informed: Keep up with trends in personal growth and mental health to ensure your strategies remain effective.

By following this step-by-step guide, you can design a comprehensive Equine Assisted Learning program tailored for personal growth, create effective growth-promoting activities, and successfully market your program to prospective clients and mental health professionals.

## Module II

### Lesson 4. Step-by-Step Guide to Designing Equine Assisted Learning Programs in Education

#### Step 1: Understanding EAL in Education

- Define EAL: Explain the principles and benefits of Equine Assisted Learning.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Research: Study existing EAL programs and their impact on students.
- Identify Goals: Determine the specific educational goals you want to achieve such as life skills (e.g., improving social skills, enhancing emotional intelligence, fostering teamwork) or academics like reading math or STEM.

## Step 2: Curriculum Development

- Align with Standards: Ensure your EAL program aligns with educational standards and curricular requirements.
- Lesson Planning: Create detailed lesson plans that integrate horse-related activities with academic subjects.
- Incorporate Experiential Learning: Design activities that allow students to learn through direct interaction with horses.

## Step 3: Creating Effective Education Activities

- Activity Design: Develop activities that are age-appropriate and meet the learning objectives. There are low-cost/free websites that offer worksheets and lesson plans that are keyed to state educational goals for each level, including special needs.
- Example Activities:
  - Trust Exercises: Building trust with the horse to teach empathy and patience.
  - Problem-Solving Tasks: Navigating obstacle courses to enhance critical thinking and teamwork.
  - Safety First: Implement strict safety protocols for both students and horses.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Assessment Tools: Create tools to evaluate the effectiveness of each activity (e.g., observation checklists, student reflections).

## Step 4: Training and Certification

- Staff Training: Train educators and facilitators on EAL principles and activity facilitation.
- Certification: Obtain necessary certifications and ensure compliance with legal and safety regulations.

## Step 5: Marketing Your Program

- Identify Target Audience: Public and private schools, homeschool groups, educational co-ops.
- Develop Marketing Materials: Create brochures, flyers, and a website that highlight the benefits of your EAL program.
- Build Relationships: Network with educators, school administrators, and homeschooling communities.
- Offer Demonstrations: Host open houses or demonstration days to showcase your program to potential clients.

## Step 6: Implementing the Program

- Pilot Program: Start with a pilot program to gather feedback and make necessary adjustments.
- Full Implementation: Roll out the program fully once the pilot is successful and any issues have been addressed.

## Step 7: Evaluation and Improvement

- Collect Feedback: Regularly collect feedback from participants, educators, and parents.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Assess Outcomes: Use assessment tools to measure the impact of your program on students.
- Continuous Improvement: Continuously refine and improve your program based on feedback and assessment results.

Detailed Guide to Creating Effective Education Activities:

## Step 1: Define Learning Objectives SMART

- Specific: Clearly define what students should know or be able to do after the activity.
- Measurable: Ensure that the objectives can be assessed.
- Achievable: Set realistic goals that students can achieve.
- Relevant: Align objectives with overall educational goals.
- Time-bound: Set a timeframe for achieving the objectives.

## Step 2: Develop Activity Outline

- Introduction: Briefly introduce the activity and its objectives.
- Materials Needed: List all materials and equipment required.
- Step-by-Step Instructions: Provide detailed instructions on how to conduct the activity.
- Safety Guidelines: Include safety precautions and emergency procedures.

## Step 3: Facilitate the Activity

- Engage Students: Use engaging methods to capture students' interest.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Monitor Progress: Observe students and provide guidance as needed.
- Encourage Reflection: Allow time for students to reflect on their experience and what they learned.

## Step 4: Assess and Reflect

- Assessment Tools: Use quizzes, observations, or student self-assessments to evaluate learning outcomes.
- Feedback: Provide constructive feedback to students.
- Reflection: Encourage students to discuss what they learned and how it applies to their lives.

## Marketing to Public and Private Schools, Homeschoolers:

### Step 1: Research and Understand Your Market

- Target Audience: Identify key decision-makers in schools and homeschooling communities.
- Needs Analysis: Understand the needs and challenges of your target audience.

### Step 2: Develop a Marketing Strategy

- Unique Selling Proposition (USP): Clearly define what makes your EAL program unique and beneficial.
- Marketing Channels: Determine the best channels to reach your audience (e.g., social media, email marketing, educational fairs).

### Step 3: Create Marketing Materials

- Professional Website: Develop a website with detailed information about your program, testimonials, and success stories.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Brochures and Flyers: Design informative brochures and flyers to distribute to schools and homeschooling groups.

- Social Media Presence: Use social media platforms to share success stories, educational content, and program updates.

## Step 4: Build Relationships

- Networking: Attend educational conferences, school board meetings, and homeschooling events.

- Partnerships: Partner with educational organizations and local businesses.

- Presentations: Offer to present your program at school meetings or homeschooling groups.

## Step 5: Offer Free Workshops or Demonstrations

- Demonstration Days: Host free demonstration days to showcase your program.

- Trial Sessions: Offer trial sessions to schools and homeschooling groups to experience the benefits of EAL firsthand.

## Step 6: Follow Up and Build Trust

- Follow-Up: Regularly follow up with interested parties and provide additional information as needed.

- Testimonials: Collect and share testimonials from satisfied participants.

- Consistent Communication: Maintain regular communication with clients through newsletters, emails, and social media updates.

## Step 7: Evaluate and Adjust Marketing Strategies

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Monitor Results: Track the success of your marketing efforts.
- Adjust Strategies: Refine your marketing strategies based on feedback and results.
- Stay Informed: Keep up with trends in education and marketing to ensure your strategies remain effective.

By following this step-by-step guide, you can design a comprehensive Equine Assisted Learning program tailored to educational settings, create effective learning activities, and successfully market your program to schools and homeschoolers.

## MODULE II

### Lesson 5: Step-by-Step Guide to Designing Equine Assisted Learning Programs for Mounted Activities

#### Step 1: Understanding Mounted Activities in EAL

- Define Mounted Activities: Explain the role of mounted activities in EAL and how they can promote life skills or personal or educational goals.
- Research: Study successful mounted EAL programs and their outcomes.
- Identify Goals: Determine specific life skills or personal or educational goals you aim to develop (e.g., confidence, responsibility, teamwork).

#### Step 2: Curriculum Development

- Framework: Develop a structured framework outlining the program's goals, methods, and expected outcomes.



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Lesson Planning: Create detailed lesson plans that integrate mounted activities with life skills or personal or educational goals development.
- Incorporate Theories: Integrate psychological and educational theories to support the program's structure and activities.

## Step 3: Creating Effective Life skills or personal or educational goals Activities

- Activity Design: Develop activities that are safe, engaging, and conducive to life skills or personal or educational goals development.
- Example Activities:
  - Confidence Building: Activities such as trotting or cantering with guidance to build self-confidence and courage.
  - Responsibility Tasks: Grooming and tacking up the horse to instill a sense of responsibility and care.
  - Teamwork Exercises: Group riding tasks where participants must work together to achieve a goal, enhancing teamwork and communication skills.
  - Safety Protocols: Establish and enforce comprehensive safety guidelines.
  - Evaluation Tools: Create methods for evaluating the effectiveness of each activity (e.g., self-assessment surveys, facilitator observations).

## Step 4: Training and Certification

- Staff Training: Train facilitators on EAL principles, mounted activity techniques, and safe horse handling.
- Certification: Ensure that all staff members hold relevant certifications and comply with legal and safety standards.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Step 5: Marketing Your Program

- Identify Target Audience: Prospective clients or families looking for programs that develop life skills or personal or educational goals in children and teenagers.
- Develop Marketing Materials: Create brochures, flyers, a professional website, and social media content highlighting the benefits of mounted EAL for life skills or personal or educational goals.
- Networking: Build relationships with local schools, community centers, and youth organizations.

## Step 6: Implementing the Program

- Pilot Program: Start with a pilot to gather feedback and make necessary adjustments.
- Full Implementation: Launch the full program after refining it based on pilot feedback.

## Step 7: Evaluation and Improvement

- Collect Feedback: Regularly collect feedback from participants and their families.
- Assess Outcomes: Use assessment tools to measure the program's impact on life skills or personal or educational goals development.
- Continuous Improvement: Continuously refine and enhance the program based on feedback and assessment results.

## Detailed Guide to Creating Effective Life Skills or Personal or Educational Goal Activities:

### Step 1: Define Learning Objectives

- Specific: Clearly define what participants should achieve (e.g., increased confidence, improved teamwork).

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Measurable: Ensure that the objectives can be assessed.
- Achievable: Set realistic and attainable goals.
- Relevant: Align objectives with overall life skills or personal or educational goals development goals.
- Time-bound: Set a timeframe for achieving the objectives.

## Step 2: Develop Activity Outline

- Introduction: Briefly introduce the activity and its objectives.
- Materials Needed: List all materials and equipment required.
- Step-by-Step Instructions: Provide detailed instructions on how to conduct the activity.
- Safety Guidelines: Include safety precautions and emergency procedures.

## Step 3: Facilitate the Activity

- Engage Participants: Use engaging methods to capture participants' interest.
- Monitor Progress: Observe participants and provide guidance as needed.
- Encourage Reflection: Allow time for participants to reflect on their experiences and what they learned.

## Step 4: Assess and Reflect

- Assessment Tools: Use self-assessments, facilitator observations, and feedback forms to evaluate learning outcomes.
- Feedback: Provide constructive feedback to participants.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Reflection: Encourage participants to discuss what they learned and how it applies to their personal growth.

Marketing to Prospective Clients or Families:

## Step 1: Research and Understand Your Market

- Target Audience: Identify families seeking programs that develop life skills or personal or educational goals in their children.
- Needs Analysis: Understand the needs and challenges of your target audience.

## Step 2: Develop Marketing Strategy

- Unique Selling Proposition (USP): Clearly define what makes your EAL program unique and beneficial for life skills or personal or educational goals development.
- Marketing Channels: Determine the best channels to reach your audience (e.g., social media, email marketing, partnerships with schools and community centers).

## Step 3: Create Marketing Materials

- Professional Website: Develop a website with detailed information about your program, success stories, and testimonials.
- Brochures and Flyers: Design informative brochures and flyers to distribute to potential clients and local organizations.
- Social Media Presence: Use social media platforms to share success stories, educational content, and program updates.

## Step 4: Build Relationships

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Networking: Attend local community events, school fairs, and youth organization meetings.
- Partnerships: Partner with schools, community centers, and youth organizations to create referral networks.
- Presentations: Offer to present your program at PTA meetings, school events, and community gatherings.

## Step 5: Offer Free Workshops or Demonstrations

- Demonstration Days: Host free demonstration days to showcase your program.
- Trial Sessions: Offer trial sessions to prospective clients to experience the benefits of mounted EAL firsthand.

## Step 6: Follow Up and Build Trust

- Follow-Up: Regularly follow up with interested parties and provide additional information as needed.
- Testimonials: Collect and share testimonials from satisfied participants and their families.
- Consistent Communication: Maintain regular communication with clients and referral sources through newsletters, emails, and social media updates.

## Step 7: Evaluate and Adjust Marketing Strategies

- Monitor Results: Track the success of your marketing efforts.
- Adjust Strategies: Refine your marketing strategies based on feedback and results.
- Stay Informed: Keep up with trends in youth development and marketing to ensure your strategies remain effective.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

By following this step-by-step guide, you can design a comprehensive Equine Assisted Learning program focused on mounted activities that promote life skills or personal or educational goals, create effective activities for personal growth, and successfully market your program to prospective clients and families.

You have reached the end of Module 2. You have probably noticed that there are many common elements to setting up an EAL Program no matter what area you want to follow. Research and marketing are skills you will wish to develop so you can fully follow through with starting your program. Let's move on to our final module, Module 3, outlining specific activities, record-keeping tips, evaluation, steps to start any program, and resources.



## **MODULE III: Specific Activities, Records-Keeping Tips, Evaluation, Steps to Start Any Program, Resources"**

### **Lesson 1: SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

There are certain activities that can lend themselves to almost any equine-related session, if you are able to accommodate these activities at your facility. Here is a list and short description of each. No need for fancy props.

One great website is "Lessons in TR" and there a lot more to it than Therapeutic Riding. This excerpt from [Equine Assisted Activities for Peace and Reflection - Lessons In TR](#) gives you a list of activities to do with horses some mounted, some not.

#### **Welcome Activities**

##### **Chair Yoga**

Start each session with a 15 minute chair circle yoga outside the barn. Anyone can do chair yoga.

##### **Herd Image Check In**

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Find an image of a horse herd running that includes lots of different types of horses and behaviors. You can pull it up on a laptop, project it onto a screen, or use a large printed poster image on the wall or if available observe the real thing.

## **Horse Intro Activities**

### **Horse Introductions**

Explain how to greet a horse.

### **Herd Observation**

Release several horses in the arena or take participants out to the pasture.

### **Horse Observation**

This activity takes place when the horses are all in their stalls. Jenna's barn did it during feed time, and took all the nameplates off the horses' stalls so no associations would be made.

### **Choose a Horse**

This works best with 1 rider or a small group. Introduce the rider to all the horses, telling them a little about each and their history.

### **Safety Talk**

Discuss horse safety and correct handling. The grief group reviewed this every week, it's that important!

### **Horse Handling Activities**

#### **Haltering (Invite Horse Participation)**

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Explain the correct and unaggressive way to halter a horse.

## **Grooming**

Explain the grooming tools and how to use them, then let the participants groom their horses.

## **Leading & Quiet Time In The Arena**

Teach the participants how to lead, then give them quiet time in the arena with the option to lead, groom, breathe with the horse, or just be with the horse.

## **Hand Grazing Outside**

Lead the horse outside and let them graze in the grass or an outdoor obstacle course.

## **Boundaries & Moving the Horse**

Explain the boundaries of the horse, safe zones, and your space vs. his space.

## **Obstacle Course**

Set up an obstacle course and let the participants lead their horses over the obstacles.

## **Obstacle Course with Labels**

Set up an obstacle course and let the participants name the obstacles. Write the names on a white board or pieces of paper attached to the obstacles. Have them lead the horse through the obstacles, read the labels as they go to each one, and discuss afterward. For example, one obstacle was named “My New Goal” and they later discussed why she couldn’t (get her horse past) her new goal.

## **Set Up an Obstacle Course**



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Have the participants set up their own obstacle course to lead their horses through.

## **Obstacles from afar**

Set up a “chute” down one side of the arena – two ropes for the horse to walk between, or two pole lines – and within it set up a bunch of obstacles.....From the EAL standpoint it’s about what the participant is learning and processing more than how to do it right,...

## **Move With The Horse**

Have leaders hold the participants’ horses for them at the halt, while the participants stand facing the horse’s side with one hand on the shoulder and one on the barrel.

## **Feed**

Let participants help feed the horses. One program fed the horses half their meal at the start of the program, for the observation portion, then at the end participants helped feed the rest of the meal.

## **Ride**

Our program incorporated riding. I always tried to tie in what they learned doing the ground activity (breathing, teamwork, body awareness, etc.) to their riding, and was surprised at how nicely this worked and how the riders really connected the two and it impacted their riding.....

## **Conclusion Activities**

Most programs have some type of discussion time at the end. Here are some ideas.

### **Where**

- Circle up in the aisle, sitting in chairs, surrounded by the horses
- Sit inside the classroom or community area, we always had treats to end

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Discussion Questions

- What did you learn about your horse? What did you learn about yourself?
- How did what you learned on the ground help you while riding?

## Remember

- This is an informal group support setting – you're all in this together
- Wait and listen for each person to speak
- They will discuss and come up with realizations themselves, it's not for you to point out – you just listen!
- Allow about 10 minutes for this

## Sample Lesson Plans

You can't do all these activities in the same day. Most programs last only 1-2 hours. 1.5 hours would have been perfect. Here are some examples of how to fit everything together.

### Example 1

- Introduction to Horses in Aisle
- Safety Talk
- Grooming
- Leading
- Simple Obstacle Course
- Discussion

### Example 2

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Yoga Chair Exercise
- Introduction to Horses in Aisle
- Safety Talk
- Give the choice to groom, graze, lead, or have stall time – or progress through all
- Emphasis on quiet, peaceful time and horse's input

## **Example 3 – One time half day group**

- Arrive, light lunch, mingle with volunteers, check you have all paperwork
- Discuss how you're doing today with the horse herd pic or image sheets
- Kids help create an obstacle course with the volunteers
- Tour the barn
- Horse Observation to teach behavior
- Horse safety
- Introduce Horses in the aisle ("Horse Meet & Greet")
- Group 1 – assign horses, leading, riding
- Group 2 – vaulting barrel, craft/horseshoes, write letter to troops
- Switch groups
- Conclusion, discuss other program opportunities if they wish to come back

## **Example 4**

- Horse Herd Check In
- Horse Observation
- Move With The Horse

### **Specific Activities, Records-Keeping Tips, Evaluation, Steps to Start Any Program, Resources**

- Grooming
- Riding – tie in what they experience in Move With The Horse

Hope that helps some of you with your programs!

This website is a wonderful resource.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

If you are into props here is a list that can be utilized in a myriad of equine activities

- Large cones
- Small cones
- Pool noodles
- Streamers, ribbons
- Colored liquid chalk non-toxic
- Wooden letters and numbers
- Large pad for taking down dictation from participants
- Small and large Hula hoops (Remove the staples that hold it together and if necessary apply a drop of glue so it comes apart easily if stepped on)
- Bean bags
- Rubber mats. You can make a trail with small ones (12 inches by 12 inches) and line a large square area with large (3 feet by 4 feet) ones as a “stable or stall” for your equine partner.
- You are only limited by your imagination.

Here are additional resources:

- [9 DIY Enrichment Activities for Horses to Prevent Boredom \[LIST\] | Mad Barn](#)
- [Equine Therapy Games – Equihandee](#)
- [4 Ground/EAL Activities - Lessons In TR](#)
- [Activities For The Unridden Horse – The Backyard Horse Blog](#)
- [A Guide to Equine Assisted Activities & Therapy \(EAA/T\) and Its Effectiveness as a Treatment for PTSD \(unitedontherok.com\)](#)
- [Equine Assisted Learning for Adults and Teens \(riverviewrandr.com\)](#)
- [31 Things To Do With Your Horse \(other than riding\) \(horsetricks101.com\)](#)
- [Horse interactive activities for beginners? : r/Horses \(reddit.com\)](#)
- [Thinking Outside the Box: Ideas for Equine-Assisted Services with Veterans - Thinking Outside the Box: Ideas for Equine-Assisted Services with Veterans \(pathintl.org\)](#)

**RECORDS-KEEPING TIPS**

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

There are several internet apps and programs that you can input the areas you are tracking and keep the input up to date that will provide progress tracking in various equine-related programs, including Equine Assisted Learning (EAL), Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP), and physiological progress. We have not personally used any of these but have researched the area. The list is not exhaustive and if there are financial constraints, extensive note-taking is always an option. Here are a few options:

## 1. HorseNotes

### - Features:

- Tracks horse care, health records, and training progress.
- Allows for logging sessions and activities.
- Provides reminders for veterinary appointments, farrier visits, and medication schedules.
- Use Case: Ideal for tracking the overall health and training progress of horses used in EAL and EAP programs.

## 2. Stable Secretary

### - Features:

- Comprehensive record-keeping for horse health, training, and care.
- Allows for customization to track specific client sessions and progress.
- Mobile app available for on-the-go updates.
- Use Case: Suitable for managing detailed records of horse care and client interactions.

## 3. TheraNest

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## - Features:

- Designed for mental health professionals, offering tools for session notes, treatment plans, and progress tracking.
- Includes features for billing, scheduling, and secure client communication.
- HIPAA compliant for secure handling of sensitive information.
- Use Case: Perfect for tracking progress in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy, ensuring client confidentiality and professional documentation.

## 4. ClientTrack

### - Features:

- Customizable to track various types of client progress, including physical, psychological, and educational goals.
- Offers reporting and analytics tools to evaluate program effectiveness.
- Cloud-based for easy access and collaboration.
- Use Case: Great for comprehensive progress tracking across multiple aspects of EAL and EAP programs.

## 5. SimplePractice

### - Features:

- Designed for healthcare and wellness practitioners, providing tools for client records, session notes, and progress tracking.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Offers telehealth capabilities and secure client communication.
- Integrates with billing and insurance features.
- Use Case: Useful for professionals offering Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and other therapeutic services, allowing for detailed tracking and secure management.

## 6. Evernote

- Features:
  - A versatile note-taking app that can be customized to track client progress, session notes, and goal setting.
  - Allows for integration with other tools and apps.
  - Offers organization through notebooks and tags.
- Use Case: Useful for creating personalized progress tracking systems for both EAL and EAP programs.

## 7. Quenza

- Features:
  - Designed for coaches and therapists to create customized activities and track client progress.
  - Provides tools for goal setting, session notes, and client feedback.
  - HIPAA compliant for secure data management.
- Use Case: Ideal for creating tailored progress tracking and engagement plans for clients in EAL and EAP programs.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## Importance of Using Progress Tracking Apps

1. Enhanced Client Care: Tracking progress helps ensure that each client receives tailored care and attention based on their individual needs and progress.
2. Data-Driven Decisions: By analyzing progress data, professionals can make informed decisions about program adjustments, improving overall effectiveness.
3. Professional Accountability: Detailed records demonstrate professionalism and accountability, essential for maintaining trust with clients and stakeholders.
4. Improved Communication: Many apps offer secure communication features, enabling better interaction and feedback between practitioners and clients.
5. Efficiency and Organization: Automated reminders, scheduling, and documentation features streamline administrative tasks, allowing professionals to focus more on direct client interaction.

Using these apps and programs can significantly enhance the management and effectiveness of equine-related programs, ensuring that both horses and clients receive the best possible care and support.

## EVALUATION

Pre and post-testing of participants for programs is of utmost importance. We favor self-administered tests because of ease and expense. These are available for academic learning, psychological, and physiological areas. Here are a few, there are many more.

- The Personality Inventory for DSM-5—Brief Form (PID-5-BF)
- PTSD Checklist for *DSM-5* (PCL-5)
- [Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire \(PAR-Q, PAR-Q+\) | APTA](#)
- [Push-Up Test for Upper Body Strength and Endurance \(verywellfit.com\)](#)

## STARTING A PROGRAM DEPENDING ON YOUR RESOURCES



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

Here's an outline of the steps involved in starting an Equine Assisted Learning (EAL), Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP), or Equine Assisted Services (EAS) program, tailored to the resources you might have:

## Step 1: Define Your Program Focus and Goals

- Assess Community Needs: Identify the needs of your community and decide whether your program will focus on EAL, EAP, or EAS.
- Set Clear Goals: Establish the objectives of your program, such as improving mental health, fostering personal growth, or providing educational services.

## Step 2: Acquire the Necessary Knowledge and Certification

- Research and Training: Gain knowledge in EAL, EAP, or EAS through reputable courses and training programs.
- Certification: Obtain relevant certifications from recognized organizations like PATH International or EAGALA.

## Step 3: Develop a Business Plan

- Mission Statement: Clearly define the mission and vision of your program.
- Market Research: Conduct market research to understand your target audience and competitors.
- Budget and Funding: Create a detailed budget and explore funding options such as grants, donations, or loans.
- Business Structure: Decide on the legal structure of your business (e.g., nonprofit, LLC).

## Step 4: Select and Prepare the Location

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Facility Requirements: Choose a location that meets the needs of your program, including adequate space for horses and clients, safe fencing, and appropriate shelter.
- Zoning and Permits: Ensure that your location complies with local zoning laws and obtain necessary permits.

## Step 5: Acquire and Care for Horses

- Selection: Choose horses that are well-suited for EAL, EAP, or EAS activities, prioritizing calm and well-trained animals.
- Veterinary Care: Establish a relationship with a local veterinarian for regular health check-ups and emergency care.
- Training and Management: Ensure horses are properly trained and managed to maintain their well-being.

## Step 6: Hire and Train Staff

- Qualified Staff: Hire qualified professionals such as licensed therapists for EAP, certified equine specialists, and administrative staff.
- Ongoing Training: Provide ongoing training to staff to keep them updated on best practices and new techniques.

## Step 7: Develop Program Curriculum and Structure

- Curriculum Design: Create a structured curriculum that aligns with your program goals, including specific activities and lesson plans.
- Client Assessment: Develop assessment tools to evaluate clients' needs and progress.

## Step 8: Establish Safety and Ethical Standards

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Safety Protocols: Implement comprehensive safety protocols for both clients and horses.
- Ethical Guidelines: Follow ethical guidelines to ensure the well-being of horses and clients, including informed consent and confidentiality.

## Step 9: Marketing and Outreach

- Marketing Plan: Develop a marketing plan to promote your program through social media, local events, partnerships, and online presence.
- Networking: Build relationships with local organizations, schools, mental health professionals, and community groups.

## Step 10: Launch and Evaluate Your Program

- Pilot Program: Consider starting with a pilot program to test and refine your offerings.
- Feedback and Evaluation: Collect feedback from participants and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of your program.
- Adjust and Improve: Make necessary adjustments based on feedback and evaluation to enhance your program.

## Resource Considerations

- Limited Resources: Start small with a few horses, minimal staff, and a basic curriculum. Focus on building strong relationships and word-of-mouth marketing.
- Moderate Resources: Expand your offerings, hire additional staff, and invest in marketing and community outreach.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

- Abundant Resources: Develop a comprehensive program with advanced facilities, a large team, extensive marketing efforts, and partnerships with multiple organizations.

By following these steps and tailoring them to your available resources, you can successfully start and grow an Equine Assisted Learning, Equine Assisted Psychotherapy, or Equine Assisted Services program.

## SUMMARY OF KEY TAKEAWAYS



# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

## SUMMARY OF KEY TAKEAWAYS

- EAL has a rich historical context, evolving from early therapeutic uses to a well-recognized field today.
- Working with horses offers a wide range of benefits, including emotional, cognitive, social, and physical improvements.
- Real-world applications of EAL include corporate team-building and therapeutic programs, demonstrating its versatility and effectiveness
- Horses' sensitivity to non-verbal cues and their social nature make them excellent partners in EAL.
- Building trust with horses requires calm, consistent, and patient interactions.
- Effective non-verbal communication is crucial for successful horse-human interactions in EAL.
- Self-Awareness: Interacting with horses helps increase self-awareness and reflection.
- Emotional Regulation: Techniques learned with horses aid in managing emotions effectively.
- Confidence Building: Equine activities build self-confidence and empower participants.
- Teamwork: Effective teamwork requires clear communication, collaboration.
- EAL enhances traditional education through hands-on learning and interdisciplinary integration.
- Youth development programs build character, leadership, and social skills.
- Special education programs benefit individuals with customized, therapeutic activities.
- Physical and Emotional Benefits: Riding improves physical strength, balance, and emotional well-being.
- Skill Development: Basic and advanced horsemanship skills are essential for safe and effective riding.
- Community Engagement: Mounted activities can be integrated into community programs for broader impact.
- Ethical treatment of horses and clients is fundamental to EAL.
- Professionalism and adherence to ethical standards enhance the credibility of your program.
- Continuous education and certification ensure high standards and best practices.

# How You Can Create a Thriving Equine-Assisted Learning Program

1. World Health Organization. Division of Mental Health. (1994). Life skills education for children and adolescents in schools. Pt. 1, Introduction to life skills for psychosocial competence. Pt. 2, Guidelines to facilitate the development and implementation of life skills programmes, 2nd rev. World Health Organization. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/63552> ↑
2. **The now-famous "7% rule" was developed by a body language researcher who broke down the components of a face-to-face conversation:**
  - 55% VISUAL (what we look like),
  - 38% VOCAL (what we sound like) and
  - 7% VERBAL (the words we say).
3. [VIA Character Strengths Survey & Character Reports | VIA Institute](#) ↑

# Equine Assisted Learning: The Program of the Future

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is a transformative program designed to meet the diverse needs of individuals and groups in every area of life. Whether fostering personal growth, enhancing educational experiences, or building organizational success, EAL stands as a dynamic and versatile approach to meaningful change. As dedicated facilitators lead the way, this innovative modality continues to break barriers, offering unmatched opportunities for connection, learning, and healing. At VERITAS Equine Assisted Learning Institute, we are passionate about empowering facilitators to harness the potential of EAL. Our mission is to equip new and experienced professionals with the knowledge, tools, and inspiration needed to bring this program of the future to life.

We, Vera Ann Remes and Nancy Van Wyke, are honored to share our expertise and experience through this eBook. Together, we envision a world where EAL becomes a cornerstone of support for individuals and communities everywhere. For more information about VERITAS or to connect with us, please visit us on FaceBook .