

Horse Riding and Dimensions of Wellness

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Outline:

- Riding classes led nurse to be a therapeutic horse riding instructor (THR)
- Systematic review about equine assisted activities and therapies (EAAT)
- The dimensions of wellness
- How horse riding interacts with dimensions of wellness
- Recommendations and conclusion from research

Riding Classes Led a Nurse to be a THR Instructor

- 2014, English as Second Language
- 2015, Started Master's program in nursing
- 2015, started horseback riding classes
- 2016, started the learning process to be THR instructor
- 2017, tried to apply PATH standards in Saudi Arabia

Educational video about THR

- When know about it, got excited to share it
- Educational video was made
- Bandar, was the client, has night blindness and myopia
- Katrina was the instructor
- The video on YouTube and social media



Why systematic review?

- Evidence does not mean one or few research paper(s)
- Lack of supporting evidence of EAAT was reported
- Lack of evidence made providers abstain from referring
- Insurance companies do not pay for EAAT without evidence

History of EAAT

- Hippocrates described horseback riding as a “universal exercise”
- Winston Churchill : “There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man”
- The official use of horse riding as modern therapy started in 1950s
- EAAT is growing rapidly

EAAT has 8 types according to PATH

- Equine-Assisted Activities (EAA)
- Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT)
- Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL)
- Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP)
- Hippotherapy, Interactive Vaulting
- Therapeutic Driving, Therapeutic Riding

PATH and others

- PATH is not the only organization that provides EAAT
- Other organizations may use different terminology
- Other organizations may provide different services
- Other terms include: Equine-assisted interventions (EAI)
- Deciding the best fit for the client is challenging

Systematic Review method

- Databases : CINAHL, MEDLINE, PsycINFO, Social Sciences
- Terms : EAAT, Hippotherapy, therapeutic horseback riding
- Time period: from 2015- mid 2018
- Initial considered articles number: 128 articles
- Non-research, opinion, not peer reviewed articles excluded
- Reviewed article after exclusion: 52 articles

Level of evidence

- 21 articles are clustered in the lowest accepted level
- 25 studies used sample size 20 participants or less
- A sample of four was published Three times
- Weak studies do not make cause-effect relationship
- Stories and expert opinions are considered scientifically weak

Findings

- PATH was mentioned in six different studies
- One author was a PATH instructor
- EAAT is a wide term that contains all types
- EAGALA is another international non profit
- EAGALA was mentioned by some authors

Findings

- EAAT supplemental & complementary treatment
- EAAT does not replace any primary intervention
- Five studies described the EAAT as entertaining & therapeutic
- EAAT improves cardiovascular, and brain functions

Organizations provide EAAT

- Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH)
- Equine-Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA)
- American Hippotherapy Association
- Equine-Assisted Mental Health (EAMH)
- Gestalt Equine Institute of the Rockies (GEIR)

Organizations specialties

- American Hippotherapy Association: physical, occupational, and speech therapy
- PATH: Therapeutic Horse Riding (THR)
- EAGALA: non riding program, ground based work
- A country may have its own national program
 - Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy Institute in South Africa (EAPISA)

Name of the Journal	Number of articles
The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine	2
Journal of Creativity in Mental Health	2
Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders	3
Research in Developmental Disabilities	2
Journal of Psychology in Africa	2

Horse riding & emotional wellness in research

- Statistically significant (SS) findings worth reporting
- 5 studies reported SS decrease in depression and anxiety
- 2 studies reported SS improvement in PTSD
- 1 scientifically strong study reported no SS difference when compared to standard intervention

Horse riding & emotional wellness in research

- Benefits veterans & military professionals, combats trauma
- EAAT improves confidence, assertiveness and self-esteem
- Decreased undesirable behavior
- Equine service programs, provided better mental health

Horse riding & social wellness in research

- EAAT helps improve social wellness
- Farm environment requires working in groups
- Making friends including best friends
- EAAT SS improved socialization, social communication
- SS increase in number of used words and new words

Recommendation

- Only one center followed the EAGALA standards strictly among three
- Standardization is the key to empower EAAT
- Standardization decreases the variations
- Benefits of EAAT in a wider perspective
- Dimensions of wellness may be helpful

Wellness from holistic perspective

- After teaching wellness class in MMU
- Wellness from different perspectives
- A holistic view
- More than physical and mental wellness
- One dimension can affect other dimensions



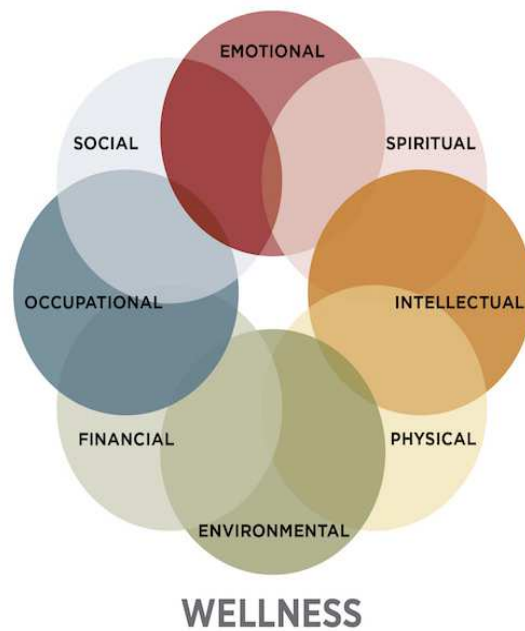
What is wellness

- Wellness is not absence of illness
- Wellness model does not focus on illness
- Wellness has 8 dimensions
- Improving one dimension of wellness improves others
- Physical wellness improves mental wellness



8 Dimensions of wellness

- Emotional, spiritual, intellectual
- Physical, environmental
- Financial, occupational, social



Examples

- Patients with severe mental illness die from heart disease
- Poverty can cause social isolation (financial & social wellness)
- No job = no health insurance (occupational & physical)
- Psychiatric medications may lead to obesity & heart diseases
- Depression and obesity associate and trigger each other

Personal example:

- Bicycling to the university (physical)
- Reading at the university (intellectual, occupational)
- Meeting others at the university (social)
- Meditation and praying room at BU (Spiritual)
- Biking does not burn gas (financial, environmental)
- Biking decreases stress (emotional)

Physical wellness

- Horse riding is a physical exercise
- Horse riding improve physical balance
- Riding improves muscle strength
- Riders try to stay physically fit



Intellectual wellness

- Learning new skills and playing games
- Horseback riding is a skill that requires learning
- Some games can be applied during riding
- Reading in an area of interest
- Consider reading about horseback riding

Financial wellness

- Balance between saving and spending
- Health insurance does not usually cover EAAT
- Find sponsors for barns
- Finding a way for the rider to ride for free
- Part time job or volunteering opportunities

Environmental wellness

- Spend time outdoors
- If possible outdoor arena
- Maintain arranged, and clean area
- Treat your horses and trees nicely
- Use compost and recycle bins



Spiritual wellness

- Knowing your own beliefs and values
- Respecting other beliefs and values
- Time for praying each day
- Appreciate beauty of the nature
- Appreciate the beauty and spirit of a horse

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 A square icon with a black border. On the left, a green silhouette of a person is kneeling in a prayer position. On the right, a green silhouette of a person is sitting in a meditative lotus position.

Social wellness

- Keep in touch with family and friends
- A visit or a phone call are helpful
- Quality time when meeting face to face
- Meet new people and appreciate new relation
- Horse riding introduces the rider to new relationships (horse & people)

Occupational wellness

- Balance between work and enjoyable activities
- Balance between horseback riding and work
- Volunteering and paid job should provide satisfaction
- Ask for help when a task is overwhelming
- Working in horseback riding program can be fun

Emotional wellness

- Balance between accepting challenges and stress
- Acknowledging and being able to express feelings
- Finding trusted one who listens without judgment
- Horse has big ears and does not judge
- A horse can not talk to someone else



Interactions

- Horse riding with others (physical, social wellness)
- Horse riding is enjoyable and decreases stress (emotional wellness)
- Having sponsor for therapeutic horse riding (financial wellness)
- Balance between these dimensions is the key
- Improving one dimension leads to improvement in other dimensions

Conclusion

- Benefits not limited to one dimension of wellness
- Help your rider to get maximum benefits
- High quality research is needed
- Help students like me to do research
- Ask about the research and the findings

Any questions?

- Your questions make the presentation more valuable



References

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