**Bridle Paths**

**PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS,**

**SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES**

**Equine** **Assisted** **Psychodynamic** **Therapy**

Experiential sessions, where clients work with a team consisting of a licensed mental health professional, a certified equine specialist, and a horse or horses

* Individual, group, and family psychotherapy sessions are available
* Appropriate and effective for many issues, including PTSD, anxiety, addiction/recovery, childhood trauma, major life changes, grief, fear, and lack of motivation/direction

***What is Equine Assisted Psychodynamic Therapy (EAP)?***

* An insight-oriented therapy used with an experiential approach that can aid veterans in gaining a better understanding of behavioral and emotional changes that might occur when adjusting to civilian life
* EAP is client-driven with a focus on providing the client with resources and skills he or she can transfer to everyday life. When participating in EAP the client has the choice of verbally expressing themselves or to just focus on the experiential process. The client interacts with the horses on the ground using non-verbal communication, with a solution-focused approach
* Each EAP session includes hands on activities with the horses as well as processing of emotions and patterns of behavior that allow the client to gain insight into themselves and their relationships. The EAP process is considered a short term or “brief” approach designed to activate the client’s own healing resources

**Therapeutic Horsemanship and Equine-Assisted Learning**

Bridle Paths offers a unique combination of traditional mounted therapeutic riding lessons as well as unmounted work done on the ground with the horses. The mounted and unmounted activities are equally important in establishing a close bond between our clients and the horses.

* Individual weekly instruction in horsemanship and riding
* Group sessions that include ground-based (unmounted) and mounted work
* Family sessions including unmounted and mounted work and other outdoor activities
* Focus on relationship, connection, communication, and trust
* Appropriate for participants with physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological needs (including traumatic brain injuries) and for families working toward post-deployment reintegration

Bridle Paths

**Programs for Veterans, Service Members and Families**

**Benefits of Participation in**

**Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies**

* Cognitive development, including improvements in learning, recall, sequencing, and application of information
* Physical development in the areas of balance, coordination, stamina and proprioception
* Executive functioning skills, including planning and organization, memory, initiation, flexibility in new situations, decision-making, and motivation
* Impulse control and self-awareness
* Emotional and social development, including consideration of boundaries, relationships, resiliency and optimism, leadership, and communication, with attention to connection, trust, interaction in group settings, and responsible risks
* Improved self-esteem and confidence

**About Bridle Paths**

Bridle Paths is a nonprofit organization that offers strength, support, and healing to individuals and families through safe, effective, and high-quality equine-assisted activities and therapies. We provide therapeutic horseback riding instruction, equine-assisted learning, and equine-assisted psychotherapy services to individuals and families faced with physical, cognitive, psychological, and emotional needs.

Our facility is located on a 56-acre property and includes a 14-stall barn, indoor and outdoor arenas, a round pen, and a climate-controlled viewing area. Bridle Paths is a member of the Professional Association of Horsemanship (PATH) and the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA). The site has ample parking, a wheelchair-accessible barn, a mounting ramp, experienced and certified staff, and a group of committed and well-trained volunteers.

Bridle Paths serves clients referred by many organizations, including the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Reboot Combat Recovery Program, the Wounded Warrior Project, Boulder Crest Retreat, and the Warrior Retreat at Bull Run.

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