



## **Information about Equine Assisted Growth and Learning**

Wild Souls Ranch is a non-profit organization that offers Equine Assisted Growth and Learning for individuals and groups. We use an experiential methodology known as Equine Assisted Growth and Learning (using the Eagala model) which uses horses in an interactive process to empower clients.

### **What is Equine Assisted Growth and Learning (E.A.G.L.).**

EAGL is an innovative and creative modality for addressing a wide range of therapeutic and emotional needs. Through interactions with horses, clients metaphorically discover and explore patterns that may have become problematic in their daily lives. These explorations are facilitated by two Eagala trained facilitators who are both specialised in their professional fields and work with the client and the horses to create positive change.

EAGL is a client-centred process where horses “teach” the clients about themselves. It is a collaborative partnership between horses and humans, which assists clients in their personal journey of growth and development. The process is self-reflective and powerful, whereby the horses and activities create a metaphorical link to the client’s life. By partnering with horses, participants will engage in ground-based activities (no horse riding is involved). It is the stories which emerge from these metaphors that enable our programs to have a lasting impact and enable the client to take what they learn in the arena back to their lives. The holistic process engages clients on a physical, mental and emotional level all at the same time. As humans we remember 20% of what we hear, 50% of what we see, and 80% of what we do; thus, our actions are the reasons experiential learning is so effective. “Being in and with nature helps attune the participant to the fact that they are not separate beings but are related to, and influenced by, their surroundings. This can reduce feelings of alienation, unacceptability and bring them back to feeling connected to others, relieved, loved and accepted by others” (Mandrell, R. (2006) Introduction to Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. USA, p.5).

### **Why horses?**

Horses are herd and prey animals and as such are highly attuned to changes in non-verbal communication to maintain the safety of the herd. They are therefore able to accurately assess the state of being and communicate it non-verbally. They use emotions as information, and by releasing emotions that don't serve them, are able to live in the moment. Horses are large animals that are unique in character and personalities as us humans. They respond and react differently to clients' behaviors, emotions and attitudes. As the horse and client embark on their various interactions, the horses start to non-judgmentally mirror the client's state of being. The clients are encouraged to take notice of these horse behaviors. Once the reflective nature of this connection is made, the client can access a visual representation of his/her reality and is then able to explore his/her perception of their world. Clients are thus empowered to choose how to manage these perceptions. Through working with horses, clients can develop and promote self-esteem, empathy, leadership, appropriate boundaries, trust and assertiveness.

### **Some benefits include**

- Improved communication and social skills
- Development of healthy relationships
- Problem solving skills
- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Development of practical life skills
- Building trust
- Increasing personal insights
- Learning how to set boundaries

**For more information on what we offer, please contact us:**

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Website: <https://wildsoulsranch.org/>



## The Team

### Clare Edwards, MS

- Wild Souls Ranch Program Coordinator
- EAGALA Certified Other Specialized Professional
- Wild Souls Ranch team member since 2015
- 7+ years experience facilitating equine assisted growth and learning sessions



### Denys Vogt

- Wild Souls Ranch Lead Equine Specialist
- EAGALA Certified Equine Specialist
- Wild Souls Ranch team member since 2017
- 5+ years experience facilitating equine assisted growth and learning sessions



### Participant Quotes

"I've learned how to set boundaries, read body language, and confront challenges instead of ignore them."

"Working with the animals helps me with understanding my own problems, fears, and doubts. It's a physical activity with a spiritual meaning that applies to my life. Doing it with animals is easy because it's not pressured."

"This program pulled me out of a place I never wanted to be in in the first place."

"I have learned how to set boundaries with others and that I have the ability to influence the room."

"It is good to get out of my comfort zone so that progress can be made. It's happened once here, and it really helped me see my fears and begin to understand them."

"Our partnership with Wild Souls Ranch has been an invaluable experience for our officers, providing unique tools for wellness and resilience. Programs like these help us support our team in ways that go beyond the job, ensuring they have the resources to manage stress and stay strong for themselves and our community. We're grateful for this opportunity and proud to be part of this innovative approach to officer wellness."