

ARTICLE TWO

A Pilot Study on Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy for Trauma-Related Disorders¹

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ABSTRACT

Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP) has gained increasing attention over the last decade and evidence of efficacy is needed to substantiate this rapidly growing field of practice. The authors aimed to measure specific changes and durability of change for adult women with PTSD and Borderline Personality Disorder who were victims of traumatic interpersonal violence, when treated with EFP. Complex PTSD was used as an operation concept to allow for cross diagnosis similarities with possible relation to traumatic history. EFP was combined with psychoeducation in a group treatment. Six women participated in the brief (10 weekly sessions) therapy group. Selected participants were symptomatic and in distress, in spite of current treatment, and experienced symptoms severe enough to impair social and/or occupational functioning. Measures were chosen to capture major intractable symptoms including depression, anxiety and dissociation; an additional measure for treatment efficacy included functioning in major life domains. Measures were taken at four points: pre, mid, post, and 4 months post treatment. Measures showed significant positive changes in depression, dissociative symptoms, and treatment effectiveness overall. The change effect continued post treatment as participants' scores showed even more improvement in a four month follow up.