

Therapeutic Value of Equine-Human Bonding in Recovery from Trauma. Yorke, Jan; Adams, Cindy; Coady, Nick. *Anthrozoös*, 2008 Mar; 21(1): 17-30. Correspondence to Yorke, Georgian College, 825 Memorial Drive, Box 2316, Orillia, ON Canada L3V 6S2; jyorke@georgianc.on.ca

Although most human-animal bond research has focused on relationships between humans and pets, animals have been used for therapeutic purposes in a variety of settings. Therapeutic riding programs have demonstrated a positive impact on quality of life for people with disabilities. Equine-facilitated psychotherapy is a promising approach to address self-esteem, depression and other emotional or psychological problems. Restoration of the trauma victim's capacity for recovery hinges on provision of safety and development of trust, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Thus, recovery from trauma represents an ideal context for exploring the therapeutic impact of equine-human relationships. The six participants in this study recognized that their pre-existing relationships with horses were therapeutic during recovering from trauma, defined as sufficient to have caused significant change in the participant's life. Semi-structured interviews and video-tapes of horse-rider interaction were used to describe the nature of the equine-human bonds described by participants have parallels both with important elements of therapeutic alliances between professionals and clients and with the positive impact of relationship factors on client outcome.