

June 3, 2014

Dear Editor of *The Practitioner Scholar*,

It is my pleasure to submit a scholarly manuscript entitled, “Adding Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy to Conventional Treatments: A Pilot Study Exploring Ways to Increase Adult Female Self-Efficacy among Victims of Interpersonal Violence” for your consideration of publication. Joining me on this manuscript from New Mexico State University (NMSU) are my esteemed colleagues Dr. Pamela N. Schultz, Associate Dean and Director of the School of Nursing, Dr. Joseph Tomaka, Associate Dean of Research for the College of Health and Social Services, and Ms. Karen Longenecker, my former graduate research assistant in the School of Social Work.

Equine-assisted interventions are growing in popularity across the globe, and my goal is to see that under-represented and under-served populations have access to this innovative, experiential, brief solution-focused approach to behavioral health. As your journal has published on this topic in the past, it seemed logical to submit our manuscript to you for consideration.

This manuscript encompasses a pilot study of adult female victims of interpersonal violence seeking services for interpersonal violence in the heart of New Mexico. As a newly minted associate professor in social work academia, I have dedicated the focus of my research career to building the evidence for behavioral health treatments involving the use of horses, for horses and women have a most mysterious and vital connection that I hope to study in more depth as my career progresses.

Dr. Pamela Schultz, my faculty mentor in this area of scientific inquiry, is recognized internationally in the literature on efficacy of equine-assisted psychotherapy (EAP) as a treatment model (Schultz, Remick-Barlow, & Robbins, 2007). Studying EAP’s efficacy of has, so far, been the highlight of my emergent research career. I was recently invited to present this manuscript in Las Vegas at both the American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences and the Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conferences 2014. I am pleased to report that our work was met there with enthusiasm by attendees at both conferences. Just this past March, I presented the invited manuscript in Texas at the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association’s (EAGALA) 2014 national conference. I came away with rave reviews and leads for several new studies, so I am very pleased. Additionally, I am hopeful to become a member of EAGALA’s research committee as my university’s representative.

It is my desire that your journal consider publishing our manuscript. Initially developed sometime around 1999, the EAGALA EAP model is still a relatively new modality with a growing evidence-base. EAP uses a team of certified professionals (one a mental health clinician and one an equine expert) and horses on-the-ground in an experiential, solution-focused approach to behavioral health treatment. Clinicians from a number of schools of thought and practice perspectives have been, and continue to be, introduced to EAP as an alternative to traditional talk therapy across populations and across the human lifespan. The physical nature of equines in therapy modalities lends them to interdisciplinary scholarship, not only with behavioral health treatment (e.g., depression, anxiety, PTSD, etc.), but also to such scholarship on treatment with a number of physical health issues (e.g., obesity, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.).

This manuscript is truly a cross-college (College of Health and Social Services) undertaking. Thus, for all these reasons and more, I thank you for the opportunity to submit this manuscript to you today, in hope that it will be considered for publication with *The Practitioner Scholar*. If there is anything else you need, please do not hesitate to contact me, either at my office or by cell phone at 505-610-6808.

Kindest Regards,

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