

Dr. Rafanello has partnered with Equine Specialists at **Freedom Horse Farm**, a private 9-acre PATH Accredited Center, located on Schooley's Mountain, Long Valley, NJ. Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) incorporates horses experientially for mental and behavioral health therapy and personal development. It is a collaborative approach and is usually considered a short-term adjunct to regular therapy because of its intensity and effectiveness.

### WHAT IS EQUINE ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY?

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) is an experiential treatment opportunity for clients to participate in activities with horses.

Clients learn about themselves and others by participating in activities with the horses, and then processing (or discussing) feelings, behaviors, and patterns. The focus of EAP is not riding or horsemanship; sessions are conducted on the ground with 1-4 horses at liberty (freely roaming) in the ring. The focus of EAP involves setting up ground activities involving the horses, which will require the participant or group to apply certain skills such as non-verbal communication, assertiveness, and problem-solving. EAP addresses a variety of mental health and human development needs including depression, anxiety, PTSD, addiction, eating disorders, self-harm, behavioral issues, attention deficit disorder, and interpersonal struggles.



### WHY HORSES?



Like humans, horses are social animals, with defined roles within their herds. They have distinct personalities, attitudes and moods; an approach that works with one horse won't necessarily work with another. At times, they seem stubborn and defiant. They also like to have fun. In other words, horses provide vast opportunities for metaphorical learning. Horses have many characteristics that lend them to being effective agents of change including honesty, awareness, and perceptive non-verbal communication. Naturally intimidating to many, horses are large and powerful. Working alongside a horse, creates confidence and provides wonderful insight when dealing with other challenging situations in life.

(Adapted with permission from EAGALA.com)

Sessions last approximately 50 minutes, and are facilitated by **Tara Mahoney**, Licensed Associated Counselor and **Elizabeth Carlson**, Equine Specialist. Clients are required to wear comfortable, outdoor clothing, and no helmet is required.



Call Dr. Rafanello's office at 973-829-7099 for more information and how to book an appointment.