

LIFE IN **BALANCE**

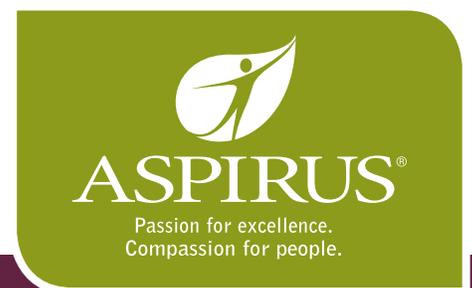
Your guide to healthy living.

Equine (Horse) Therapy for Mental & Physical Health

Since the 1960s, Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) has been a treatment that involves activities with horses to improve physical health. In the 1990s the use of horses for mental health began. The therapy involves interactions with horses for individuals with and without special needs, including those with physical, cognitive and emotional issues. Because scientists can understand how the rhythmic movement of horses can help with challenges of motor skills, Equine Therapy has even been used for neurological disorders such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, head injury, stroke, or spinal cord injury.

An interesting addition to this treatment is Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) in the 1900s. It is the use of equines to treat human psychological problems. Though studies understand the link between companion animals (such as dogs, cats, and horses), how horses specifically help with mental or behavioral issues hasn't been completely uncovered. But, we do know through ongoing studies, horses are more highly attuned and sensitive to people's emotional states than other animals typically used in assisted therapies. Additionally, "horses are large and powerful and have the potential of allowing people to overcome fear and develop confidence that can be translated into real-life situations. They can also help put people at ease because they're responding only to people's intent and behavior. What's more, they're social animals with their own personalities, and are most willing to interact when people are engaged and work to build a relationship with them", per Dr. Hallie Sheade, who runs Equine Connection Counseling in Texas.

In the Central Wisconsin area Stable Hands would be a great place to start if you would like more information. However, you can also look online under "Equine Therapy" for assistance in your area.





IN HONOR OF APRIL FOOL'S DAY,
**Here are Some Reasons Why Humor
is Important in the Workplace:**

- **People will enjoy working with you.** Humorous people are more fun to be around.
- **Humor is a potent stress buster.** Humor is a way to relieve stress and increase relaxation.
- **It puts others at ease.** Humor is a way to break through the tension.
- **Humor increases creative thinking.** Being able to see things from a new perspective increases creativity.
- **It helps build trust.** In numerous studies, people who have a healthy sense of humor are seen as more likeable and trustworthy.
- **It boosts morale.** Humor boosts morale and retention while reducing turnover because employees look forward to coming to work.

-Adapted from forbes.com



Relationships with Problem Drinkers

If you love someone who has a drinking problem, you may slowly acquire problematic ways of managing communications, social interactions, behaviors, and uncertainties you experience. These are normal responses to addiction-affected relationships. As the disease advances and you find yourself having to manage these things more often and experiencing emotional stress, your health may be adversely affected. Physical symptoms like stomach problems, depression, and sleep problems are only a few that you might experience.

In talking to a counselor or your employee assistance program, you can learn the steps to wellness and intervention. You may feel your situation is unique. It is, but the dynamics of how to intervene with addiction in relationships are nearly universal. Call it “settled science” thanks to many who have sought help before you.

SHOULD YOU GET Professional Counseling?

Perhaps you've thought about getting professional counseling, but until now have dismissed the idea. Yet you're not making the changes you want in your life. The tipping point for many people is being fed up with feeling stuck. If you're near that point, one primary obstacle to seeking professional counseling is probably fear. That fear can be greater than the excitement for the changes you desire. Professional counseling is about going to the next level, whatever that is for you. To this end, even high-functioning people seek counseling, not just those with more difficult circumstances, crises, or severe mental health issues.

If you're avoiding professional counseling because you hesitate to change, don't let trying to do it your way and repeatedly getting the same result become a permanent wall between you and your big dream.



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Confidential Helpline

800.236.4457

Counselors available 24/7



April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Alcohol Awareness Month, a program organized by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. It was started in April 1987 with the intention of targeting college-aged students who might be drinking too much, as part of their newfound freedom. It has since become a national movement to draw more attention to the causes and effects of alcoholism as well as how to help families and communities deal with drinking problems.

April, which is the month during which Alcohol Awareness Month runs, is a chance for public health bodies, community centers, and treatment facilities to increase their efforts to reach people who may not fully appreciate the dangers of unhealthy alcohol consumption. Alcohol abuse contributes to higher rates of violence, sexual assault, and suicide. Millions of people in the United States struggle with alcohol dependence, abuse, and alcohol addiction, or alcohol use disorder (AUD). Only 10 percent of people with a diagnosed AUD get the help they need, which means millions of people every year struggle

with acute and chronic health problems from drinking too much. Binge drinking, or consuming more than five alcoholic beverages in two hours, which brings one's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08, is a dangerous practice that can cause acute physical and mental harm.

Drinking too much in one sitting can cause acute harm to the body, but drinking too much over time can cause chronic physical and mental health issues. Liver damage, cardiovascular disease, and cancer are the most dangerous long-term side effects from heavy drinking; however, struggling with alcohol abuse or addiction can also trigger mental illness.

Source: www.alcohol.org

If you would like more information on alcohol use, abuse, dependency and the effects each has, you may also visit the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) at www.niaaa.nih.gov.



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Oakview Professional Building
3000 Westhill Dr – Suite #100, Wausau, WI 54401

Aspirus Stevens Point Outpatient Therapies
2957 Church St, Stevens Point, WI 54481

Aspirus West Medical Office Building
410 Dewey Street (2nd Floor), Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

Curran Professional Park Building
315 S Oneida Ave, Rhineland, WI 54501

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