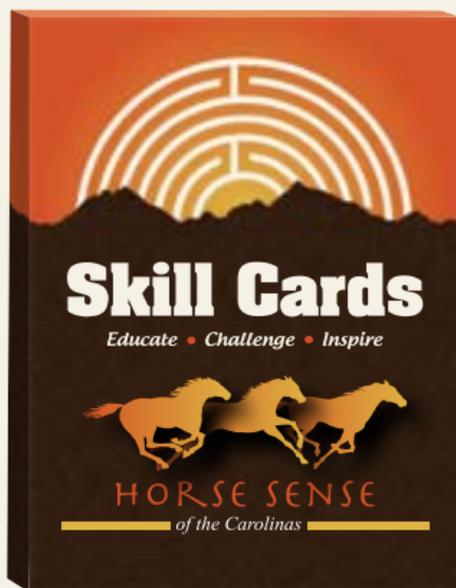


USER'S MANUAL



**INFORMATION
AND INSTRUCTION
FOR THE EAP-L PROFESSIONAL**

PROFESSIONAL DISCLAIMER

These skill cards are intended for use by therapists and equine specialists who are offering skills-based programming in EAP-L. EAP-L integrates the basic principles and ethics of the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA) with techniques and research-based practices of a modern clinical practice that functions in today's mental health system.



Horse Sense Skill Cards

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CONGRATULATIONS...

You are now able to meet your clients' needs in a whole new way!

PURPOSE AND HISTORY

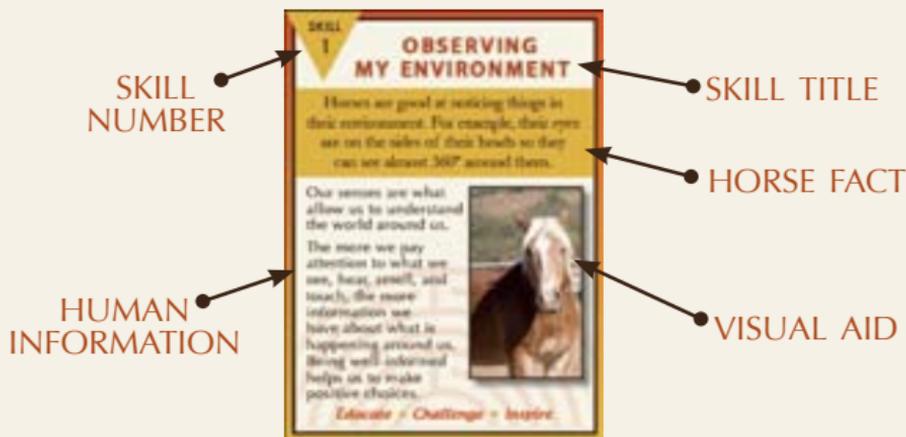
These skill cards have been designed to assist in the process of learning and development that occurs through equine-assisted psychotherapy practices, or equine-assisted learning sessions. It is important that the facilitator always considers the specific needs and goals of a client before incorporating skill cards into a session or a curriculum.

Horse Sense was inspired to create this full deck of cards after experiencing great success when utilizing some of them with adjudicated youth. Some of the immediate rewards of using these cards are: they provide the treatment team with a clearer understanding of the client's reading and comprehension abilities; they are helpful for visual learners and can be referenced in the moment in a session; and they create an immediate bridge from the arena to the rest of the client's life.

We realized soon after introducing these cards in our sessions that many more people were benefiting from the cards than just our youth populations. Families began practicing the skills together in

session and at home, couples appreciated having something tangible to work on, and the skills provided information and learning for people who were participating in non-therapy sessions.

THE ANATOMY OF THE SKILL CARD:



INTRODUCING SKILL CARDS TO CLIENTS & SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

The way that we introduce the cards will depend on the client we are working with, but there are a few things we often do with the cards. For instance, we regularly have “fence time” before we go into the day’s activity. During “fence time,” we explore the card as we check-in by the fence before going into the arena or the pasture with the horses. We ask each client to read the card in the order the information is presented: Title of skill, Horse fact

and then Human information. We ask the client if s/he can relate to the card and if s/he will share an experience from his/her life that demonstrates what the card is describing.

We typically ask the client to describe the elements of the card in their own words, and ask if the client has any questions about the card. Then we can gauge how thoroughly the client understands the meaning of the card and provide further explanation or information as necessary. We typically focus on one card per session, and oftentimes we will offer the client a selection of skills that they can choose from for the day's session.

You will find that the text on each card is very brief; this is purposeful, so that you can help your client to access the language that best fits for them. Some cards are very self-explanatory such as, ***Diversity***, whereas others may require more experimenting and facilitation. ***Touch & Go*** is a good example, as it is a practical description of how to tap into the most difficult and painful emotions without living in them. The ***Touch & Go*** card is clearly designed for a therapy session and needs to be treated as such.

Most of the cards can be utilized by anyone that is a trained facilitator, however the ***Muscle Relaxation*** card requires at least some additional training or exposure to relaxation techniques.

What makes this set of skill cards invaluable is that they are universally appropriate and important. When facilitating with these cards we recommend that you remain humble and aware enough to recognize that these skills are not just for your participants. Hopefully these cards will remind you of your own areas for growth and development, and help you continue to improve as an EAP-L facilitator.

Here is a short list of which populations might benefit most from specific cards:

FOR DEPRESSION: *Challenging Distorted Thoughts, What is Depression, Signs of Depression, Self-Care.*

FOR ANXIETY: *Approach & Retreat, Moving thru Anxiety, Responding to Fear, Good for You!*

FOR FAMILY: *Balance, Phases, Respect for the Environment, Relationships, Boundaries, Good Listening.*

FOR YOUTH AT RISK: *Barn vs. School vs. Home, Self-Respect, Respect for Others, Diversity, Standing Up for Yourself.*

We believe these cards will be a wonderful addition to your work & life. We wish you every success on your path.

Thank you,
The Horse Sense Herd

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank and acknowledge all those who contributed to the creation and content of the Horse Sense Skill Cards. We offer out a special thanks to all the amazing youths who have inspired us over the years.

Thank you to *Valerie Krall, Liza Sapir, Kendall Smith, Shannon Knapp, Lori Araki, Josie Mosser, and Brenda Dammann* for making these cards a reality!

Thanks and acknowledgement as well to all the photographers. Thanks to Coco Baptist for the photos on Skills #14, #32, #33, #39, and #43. Coco Baptist can be reached at: **coco_photo@hotmail.com**.

Thanks to Nina Fuller for the photos on Skills #1, #5, #15, #22, #39, and #48. Nina Fuller can be reached at: **<http://www.ninafullerphotography.com>**.



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