



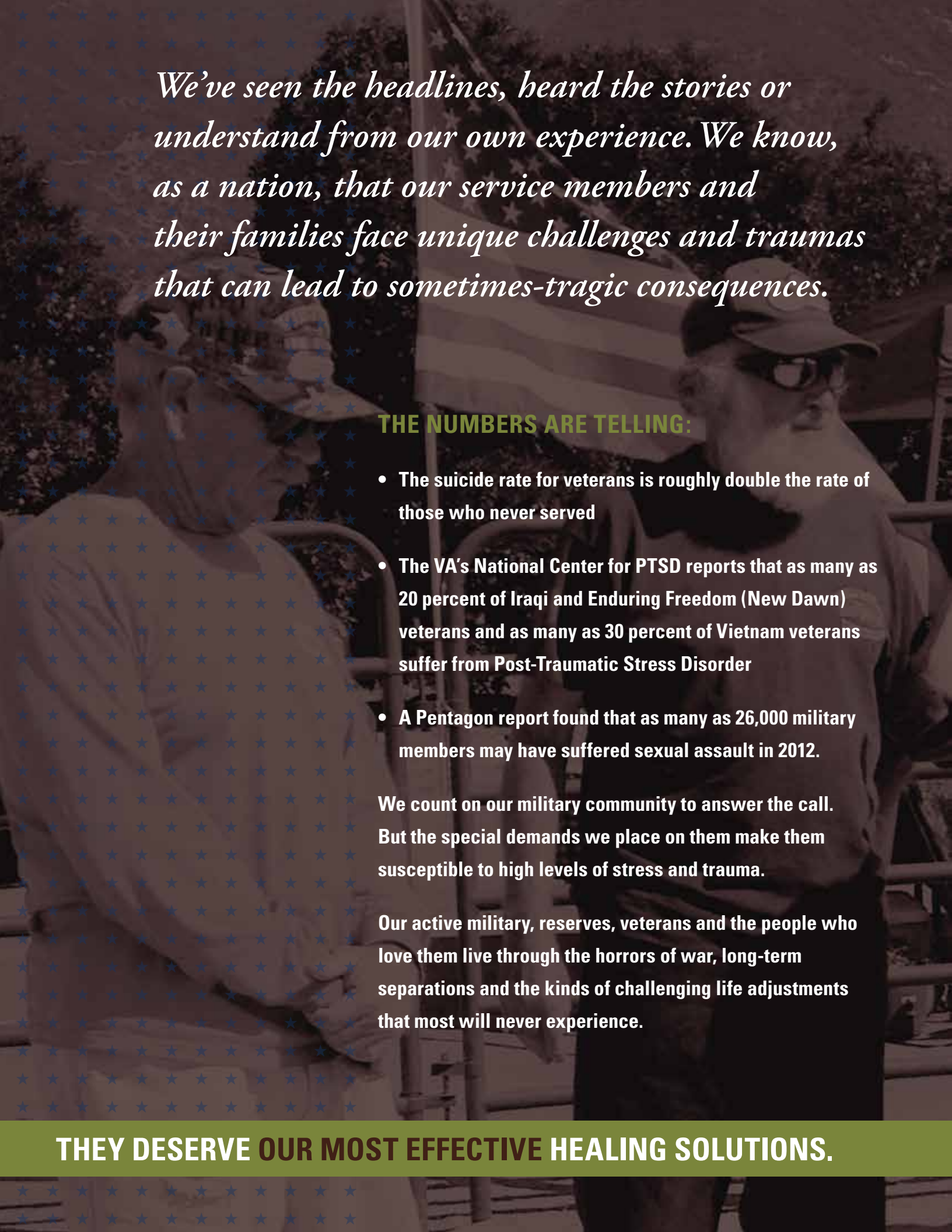
The global standard for serving those who serve

EAGALA's Military Services Designation raises the bar for equine assisted psychotherapy for active military, reserves, veterans and their families.



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The Global Standard for Equine Assisted
Psychotherapy & Personal Development



We've seen the headlines, heard the stories or understand from our own experience. We know, as a nation, that our service members and their families face unique challenges and traumas that can lead to sometimes-tragic consequences.

THE NUMBERS ARE TELLING:

- The suicide rate for veterans is roughly double the rate of those who never served
- The VA's National Center for PTSD reports that as many as 20 percent of Iraqi and Enduring Freedom (New Dawn) veterans and as many as 30 percent of Vietnam veterans suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- A Pentagon report found that as many as 26,000 military members may have suffered sexual assault in 2012.

We count on our military community to answer the call. But the special demands we place on them make them susceptible to high levels of stress and trauma.

Our active military, reserves, veterans and the people who love them live through the horrors of war, long-term separations and the kinds of challenging life adjustments that most will never experience.

THEY DESERVE OUR MOST EFFECTIVE HEALING SOLUTIONS.

The power of horses to heal

Equine assisted psychotherapy and The EAGALA Model



Treating the effects of trauma is never easy. And in military culture, the challenge is even greater. The reality is that traditional psychotherapy can be stigmatizing and feel like “just a lot of talk” among people who value doing and action.

Service members are hands-on. They trust their experience and the people they serve with. In order to engage them in their own healing process, the solutions offered need to understand who they are, respect their culture and meet them squarely on their own terms.

Clinical evidence and generations of human experience show that horses have a special ability to help people work through emotional barriers without shame or stigma. This is especially true and valuable for people who suffer the effects of trauma.

In equine assisted psychotherapy, horses serve as metaphors and powerful stand-ins for the people, issues and challenges in the client’s life – or the lives of the couple, family or military unit. A highly-trained mental health professional puts the horses’ unique sensitivities to work – their special capacity to read and respond to peoples’ non-verbal signals and cues – leading to powerful emotional breakthroughs and life-changing insights.

“We have conducted a number of EAGALA EAP sessions. The veterans who participate tell me that never have they found a group or individual session so useful and life changing, and that they have found hope. After these workshops, many reflect frequently on the experience and skills learned then take these lessons into their daily lives.”

SUSAN T. LISI, AFGE LOCAL 3306 CHIEF STEWARD,
VA MEDICAL CENTER, CANANDAIGUA, NEW YORK



Decidedly hands-on and action-oriented, equine assisted psychotherapy is an important tool to help clients understand and recognize unhealthy patterns, build on their personal strengths and change their lives.

In the growing world of equine assisted psychotherapy, EAGALA sets the global standard for care. That’s because EAGALA is the world’s largest and most professionally respected association for equine assisted psychotherapy. **EAGALA has more than 4,000 members in 49 countries and has certified the professional staff of more than 600 treatment programs worldwide.**

Only licensed, certified professionals who make up The EAGALA Network are authorized to offer the exclusive EAGALA Model of equine assisted psychotherapy to their clients.

EVIDENCE BASED EQUINE ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY AND THE EAGALA MODEL ARE WELL-RESEARCHED

Even though equine assisted psychotherapy is a relatively new discipline, EAGALA is committed to building a body of evidence based, peer reviewed research. With 15 years in the field, The EAGALA Model is tested and subject to ongoing study and development.

For a listing of research and studies on equine assisted psychotherapy and The EAGALA Model, please visit: www.eagala.org/research

EAGALA is interested in conducting further collaborative research models on the effectiveness of EAGALA Military Services treatment outcomes for military members, veterans and their families. Please contact EAGALA for further information.

Here's why The EAGALA Model is the global standard for equine assisted psychotherapy and personal development:

The EAGALA Model is highly professional.

EAGALA is the ONLY association offering a fully-developed, professionally-endorsed treatment model for mental health professionals practicing equine assisted psychotherapy. The EAGALA Model stands alone in the world of equine assisted psychotherapy because of its team approach. EAGALA standards require both a licensed, credentialed Mental Health Professional *and* a credentialed Equine Specialist work together collaboratively at all times to assure clients get the therapeutic attention and support they need as they make life changes.

The EAGALA Model happens on the ground.

There is no riding or horsemanship. Physical and emotional safety are paramount. This proven approach enables the client to work directly with the horses face-to-face on the same footing. Through their reactions and responses, highly-sensitive horses serve as honest stand-ins for the important people in the client's life. They offer honest feedback and usable information on the attitudes and behavior of the people working with them. The treatment team works with the client to process and understand what the horses teach them.

The EAGALA Model is solution-oriented.

It's built on the premise that it's the client himself who needs to determine the kinds of changes he needs to make in order to improve his life. The job of the treatment team is to put The EAGALA Model to work helping clients understand, access, validate and experience the changes they want to make in a safe, supportive setting.

The EAGALA Model in brief:

- **A team approach** – Under The EAGALA Model, all sessions are directed by a licensed, credentialed Mental Health Professional working with a credentialed Equine Specialist. This assures the highest standard of care.
- **A strong Code of Ethics** – EAGALA requires the highest standard of professional conduct from its credentialed practitioners.
- **Happens on the ground** – Clients remain on the ground in their work with the horses. Riding is not part of The EAGALA Model.
- **Solution-oriented** – The EAGALA Model utilizes horses as metaphors to help clients access their own solutions to life challenges.



THE
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NETWORK

- **Over 4,000 members and with 90 local and regional networking groups in 49 countries**
- **The only training and certifying organization to exclusively serve licensed mental health professionals offering equine assisted psychotherapy**
- **Only members of The EAGALA Network can offer the exclusive evidence-based EAGALA Model of treatment**
- **More than 600 credentialed programs worldwide**

EAGALA: The Global Standard for Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Personal Development





Putting The EAGALA Model to work to deliver life changing outcomes for service members, veterans and their families

EAGALA's high standards combined with our effective, replicable Military Services model sets us apart from all other "horse therapy" programs.

With The EAGALA Model as a tested therapeutic starting point, EAGALA worked with military experts inside and outside of its ranks to create **The EAGALA Military Services Designation.**

The EAGALA Military Services Designation is unique in the world. EAGALA Military Services Providers are specially credentialed with a deep understanding of military culture and life.

Whether treating members of a unit suffering the effects of PTSD, a veteran trying her best to find a place back in civilian life or a Gold Star Family working through their loss and grief, it's critical that treatment protocols make the strongest, most rapid impact.

EAGALA Military Services Providers are committed to helping service members and their families strengthen resilience and coping skills. They're uniquely qualified to treat:

- PTSD/TBI
- Transitions and reintegration
- Depression and anxiety
- Addictions
- Relationship problems

EAGALA Military Services Providers know that by effectively linking their clients' values and learning style to their treatment plan, service members, veterans and their families can more quickly and completely understand and integrate new perspectives and behaviors into their lives.



Here's why EAGALA Military Services programs are particularly valuable for service members, veterans and their families:

- **Horses are novel and engaging.** The non-traditional settings of EAGALA member programs help service members move beyond the perceived stigma that can be associated with talk-only therapy and office visits.
- **The unique qualities of the horse speed emotional breakthroughs.** This is especially true for those suffering from PTSD. That's because these highly-attuned animals offer safe reflection and compelling feedback for fears and anxieties military clients may be facing. In the hands of a skilled treatment team, the horses' unique sensitivity can help clients understand their own internal processes more readily than hours of talk.
- **Herd dynamics can help clients understand their own lives.** Observing the dynamics of a herd of horses can help clients better understand the dynamics of their own family, military unit and community and provide another positive model for collaboration, support and trust. The horses are living, breathing metaphors and stand-ins for the client's greatest life challenges and their most important systems of support.

This helps military clients:

- **Quickly translate emotional insights into life-changing action.** EAGALA Military Services standards and treatment protocols promote healthy life transitions through practical application of proven principles rooted in military culture.
- **Foster resilience in times of high stress.** The EAGALA Military Services approach is based on experience and doing. The treatment sessions re-create life experiences, including those involving frustrations, high stress and relationship problems. This provides opportunities for service members and their families to discover their resources and strengths and overcome perceived obstacles to change and growth in their unit, communities, and homes.
- **Break through barriers to care.** Clients challenge themselves in activities with horses that remove much of the perceived stigma associated with traditional talk therapy treatment methods. EAGALA Military Services Providers know that when treatment is about doing it's more engaging. And they know that engagement increases impact. Military clients repeatedly report how quickly and deeply they get to the root of their issues.
- **Find real world solutions to their toughest challenges.** Clients find their own solutions to the struggles in their lives. Under the direction of an EAGALA Military Services Treatment Team, clients build on their resilience and learn through self-discovery the changes they need to make in order to be more successful in both military and civilian life.



Results from a pilot program conducted by Refuge Services, an EAGALA Military Services Program in Texas, found that service members and their spouses reported major and measurable improvements in their marriages. There were dramatically fewer incidents of abuse and arguments. They reported more forgiveness, loving connection and time together. All after only six sessions.

As one officer in the study reported:

“For someone in the military like me, it’s hard to swallow my pride and ask for help. This was a safe environment to open up in. Sometimes the horses talked for me and helped show me the path to save my marriage.”





The EAGALA Military Services Designation

The global standard for serving active military, reserves, veterans and their families

EAGALA is the only equine assisted psychotherapy association to offer a special Military Services Designation that goes above and beyond its existing professional credential. This is an earned designation exclusively for those members of The EAGALA Network who have special training and experience in the military community and culture and who continuously upgrade their skills and treatment techniques to better serve service members and their families.

Here are the specific requirements EAGALA-certified Mental Health Professionals and Equine Specialists must meet in order to get and keep the EAGALA Military Services Designation:

- A minimum of 60 hours of training specific to military culture and issues within the last five years with 10 hours of those hours completed within the last two.
- Completion of at least six hours a year in continuing education on military issues and lifestyle;
- Documentation by the treatment team's Mental Health Professional of at least 150 hours of direct work with the military, 40 of which were in a clinical capacity;
- A letter of recommendation from military personnel directly involved in the supervision of the Mental Health Professional.

“Working with EAGALA was a profoundly moving experience for me. I gained insight and wisdom that I did not think was possible. Any service member who has an opportunity should try it.”

LUKE LEONARD, OIF VETERAN



Representatives of EAGALA have briefed on and demonstrated the benefits of The EAGALA Model and the EAGALA Military Services Designation throughout the chain of command, receiving strong support from officers in these organizations:

- Office of the U.S. Army Surgeon General
- Office of the Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- U.S. Army MEDCOM Warrior Transition Command
- Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
- Human Performance Resource Center

“The EAGALA Model uses the horse to gain insight into behaviors and perceptions. The horse’s reactions provide unbiased and real time feedback, breaking through the barriers that many military members experience in conversations with others who cannot begin to understand what we feel because we made it back. Equine assisted psychotherapy provides a strategy for dealing with trauma in a way that makes sense to military service members.”

JIMMY L. WALTERS, COL, USA (RET)



Photos courtesy of Reins of H.O.P.E.



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The Global Standard for Equine Assisted
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EAGALA is a nonprofit professional organization
with over 4,000 members in 49 countries.

EAGALA is committed to setting the standard
of professional excellence in how horses
and people work together to improve the quality
of life and mental health of individuals, families
and groups worldwide.

**To put EAGALA Military Services to work changing
lives in your community or on your base contact:**

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