

**Presenter's name:** Norunn Kogstad

**Degree, affiliation:** MD, PhD- student Norwegian University of Science and Technology

**Curriculum vitae:**

**EDUCATION**

1999-2000: 1-year Dog Trainer Education at Hagan Dog School

Sept. 2000-April 2002: Equine Physiotherapy and Naturopathy Education in Gothenburg

Sept 2002-2008: Medical Studies in Pécs, Hungary

Spring 2013: Centered Riding Instructor Level 1

2013: HEAL - Human-Equine Alliance for Learning and Psychotherapy, Certified Instructor

Nov 2014: Cognitive Therapy Course

Autumn 2015: Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Course

Spring 2016: Group Therapy Course

May 2016: Completed Basic Course I-II-III Psychiatry

Autumn 2021: Completed all compulsory courses in Psychiatry specialization

2018-2022: Completed 4 years at the Institute for Psychotherapy, Psychodynamic Psychotherapist

January 2023: Approved Specialist in Psychiatry

01.08.22- : PhD Position

**Category:** Oral presentation

**Topic:** Treatment methods of equine-assisted psychotherapy: Individual therapies, family- and couple therapy

**Authors:**

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**Title:** PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH HORSES AS AN ADJUNCT TO DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY: A CASE STUDY

**Keyword 1:** Psychotherapy with horses

**Keyword 2:** Case-study

**Keyword 3:** Emotional Instability

**Abstract:**

**Objective:** Exploring the value of Equine-assisted therapy (EAT) is an complementary approach to psychotherapy that actively involves horses in the therapeutic process. There is ample clinical and anecdotal evidence regarding the value of horses as contributors to therapeutic interventions. The focus of equine-assisted therapy is not recreational riding but rather moment-to-moment opportunities to practice self-awareness, emotional availability, constructive relational skills, and self-regulation. Patients with emotionally unstable traits typically exhibit a consistently high level of symptoms, including frequent suicidal crises, self-harm, emotional instability, interpersonal issues, and intense internal pain. This patient group requires significant resources within the treatment system over time, with variable effectiveness and a high dropout rate from therapy. Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is one of several research-based, standardized, manualized treatment options for this

patient group. However, like other models, it faces challenges regarding outcomes, adherence/dropout, and duration of effect. Several studies have also expressed the need for more focus on patients' extensive social, relational, and functional challenges.

**Design:** In this case study, we aim to shed light on topics important for a patient with emotionally unstable personality disorder who is offered psychotherapy with horses as an addition to standard treatment.

**Results:** The patient has expressed, among other things: "It's so strange to feel in my body many of the things we talk about in DBT."

**Conclusion:** The article will elucidate how EAT can bring to life themes that are important in treatment through interaction with the horse and contribute to making DBT more feasible. The article will also highlight how equine-assisted therapy can complement existing offerings through examples from the case and experience from our ongoing treatment study.