



10 & 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018

THE INSTITUTE, 459 TELEGRAPH ROAD  
MT PROSPECT, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

# Expansion – Expand Your Awareness, Practice and Business

THE EQUINE PSYCHOTHERAPY INSTITUTE CONFERENCE

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## Conference Program

Saturday 10 March	
9-9:30am	<b>Liberty Herd Meet</b> Meg Kirby
9:30-10	<b>Welcome to Expansion in the Institute - Introduce Institute Faculty</b> Noel Haarburger, Sue Lamond, Louise Atkinson & Debbie Walker
10-11:00	<b>Working with Addictions in Equine Assisted Practice: a theoretical overview</b> Noel Haarburger <i>From gestalt perspective Addictions are understood as ‘creative adjustments’ that have developed into chaotic or rigid habits of self- regulation and ‘seeking’ subjectively experienced as “out of my control”. These habits of self-regulation can profoundly constrain our functioning, health and relationships, as well as impair our movement towards emotional, physical, cognitive and spiritual integration. For many clients, addictive habits of thinking, perceiving or behaving are a core feature of their presenting struggles and are often their best attempt at surviving the impact of a dys-regulated nervous system, chaotic emotions and a misguided attempt at meeting one’s core developmental, spiritual and existential needs. This presentation will introduce participants to a developmental, relational and existential perspective of addictions, as well as outline a number of useful practice maps and equine experiments for how to work with addictions in a non-pathologizing, creative and phenomenological way.</i>
11:15am-12:15pm	<b>The Horse Wisdom Road to Recovery: a practitioner’s perspective on using the horse wisdom program to assist substance abusers during their rehabilitation</b> Louise Atkinson <i>Participants will be introduced to how the horse wisdom program can be adapted to assist recovering substance abusers during their rehabilitation. This is a step by step look at utilising this simple program and how it functions with recovering addicts. EPI certified practitioners will be inspired to feel confident to adapt the Horse Wisdom Program to diverse client groups.</i>
12:15-1pm	<b>LUNCH (Provided)</b>
1-1:30	<b>Self Compassion Practice</b> Noel Haarburger <i>Self Compassion Exercise.</i>
1:30-2:30	<b>The science behind Wellbeing : Models that work and how we can integrate this into our EPI Practice</b> Debbie Walker <i>This session is designed to provide you with information on 4 models of wellbeing that have empirical evidence that supports them. This is to not only support your own wellbeing but also gives vicarious support for our own fantastic EPI model. While Equine Assisted Learning and Psychotherapy is currently relatively unsupported by research, this session will support you in being able to speak with Schools, Doctors, funding bodies etc. about how our model absolutely has all the components of these established and research models.</i>

2:45-3:45	<b>Journey to Self-Care for equine Assisted Psychotherapy Practitioners and Equine Assisted Learning Practitioners</b> Sue Lamond <i>Is self care a part of the way you live or do you treat it as an activity? We work in an industry that can be intrinsically very rewarding, however balancing our continual work and life demands of caring for others and looking after our selves can present challenges. When do you say yes to work and commitments and when do you say no. Are you aware of how your work life balance is impacting your mental and physical state? I will be bringing some practical ways to gently highlight your level of self care as you’re working towards building a more sustainable and supportive equine assisted business.</i>
4-5	<b>Nguudu Barndimanmanha : Horses Making Good</b> Juli Coffin <i>This presentation will detail the implementation, evaluation and consolidation the approach of Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) in a setting where there is a demonstrated need for culturally appropriate, social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) interventions for at risk Aboriginal youth. Yamaji (Mid-west region in Western Australia) expressed particular concern over youth social and emotional wellbeing, and desired research programs that were strengths-based and focused on building cultural strength in the younger generation. There is a growing evidence base that EAL programs have positive effects on at risk youth. EAL is grounded in a strengths based approach, with a focus on developing social and emotional skills such as self-regulation, positive social behaviours, persistence, and coping ability. While there is evidence of EAL having a high impact on these outcomes to date there has been only one Aboriginal-focused EAL research program in Western Australia’s Midwest, facilitated by Professor Juli Coffin. The project yielded positive results, however there remains a need to explore the use of EAL as an effective mechanism for SEWB improvement in Aboriginal youth across a larger cohort over an extended period of time to allow for rigorous statistical analysis of longitudinal SEWB outcomes. The EAL approach has been utilised extensively in other countries with First Nations populations, resulting in outstanding success in a complex and often highly fluctuating space of identified need around those deemed “at risk” or “socially disadvantaged. Here is that story...</i>
5pm	<b>Close</b>

<b>Sunday 11 March</b>	
9-10am	<p><b>In the Presence of Horse: Meditation with Horse Practice</b>  <b>Valence Williams</b>  <i>Participants will be supported to step into awareness, embodiment and 'the way of the horse' in this activity designed to connect you with your self-experience whilst being supported by the horses' presence. Being in connection with Horses and the Natural World is a wonderful portal to a greater Awareness and Presence...lets resource ourselves in connection with horses!</i></p>
10:15-11:15	<p><b>The Horse Wisdom Program: Groupwork with Children</b>  <b>Nadine Delaney</b>  <i>Some practice examples of how the HorseWisdom program can be delivered with children, including practical considerations, program delivery and examples of experiments.</i></p>
11:30am-12:30pm	<p><b>Working with EAL Groups</b>  <b>Jackie Smith</b>  <i>There are many advantages for both clients and EPI practitioners in offering group EAL programs. In this presentation I will share with you my experience of working with adult groups and offer up some ideas for how you can extend your business to include group EAL programs. I will discuss the nuances and different considerations for working with different types of groups, including public groups, corporate groups and intact teams; present an overview of group development theory that will help you with the design of your next group session; and provide practical tips and techniques for effective group facilitation. This session also includes an invitation to share your ideas and experiences of EAL group experiments, and creates an opportunity to explore the potential for more collaboration across the EPI community.</i></p>
12:30-1:15pm	<p><b>LUNCH (Provided)</b></p>
1:15-2:15	<p><b>Equine Assisted Leadership: 1 Day EAL Corporate Groups</b>  <b>Meg Kirby</b>  <i>Participants will be introduced to an overview of this 1 Day EPI Model EAL Corporate Program, including the principles, theory and practice elements of the program. The core principles of 'horse wisdom' - awareness and authentic relationship - in effective leadership will be explored, both experientially and conceptually, including Q &amp; A.</i></p>
2:30-3.30	<p><b>Marketing and Business in Your EPI Practice</b>  <b>Louise Atkinson</b>  <i>Business Essentials for the EPI Practitioner. Introducing a new Business Essentials Coaching Program designed for EPI Practitioners. It was developed specifically to help kick start your equine assisted business and support you with marketing strategies! This program covers many of the key elements that will help your business to thrive and be successful. Importantly, we will cover some of the key factors to successful marketing, understanding who your market is and how to attract your clients using social media.</i></p>
3:45-4:45pm	<p><b>Small Group Reflection, Integration and Conference Closure Share</b>  <b>Meg Kirby</b></p>

# Biographies

**Louise Atkinson** (ACA Registered Counsellor, EPI Trainer & Supervisor, 4 Star Parelli Professional) EPI certified in 2014, the same year she gained her Counselling diploma. Louise has been a Natural Horsemanship instructor for over 20 years, where learning about the horse-human relationship inspired her to look into EAL. Louise is passionate about helping people become the best version of themselves, that they can be, as well as to help the downtrodden rise to be who they want to be. Louise offers EAC and EAL sessions from her property in Bullsbrook Western Australia and is also available for EPI supervision via Skype or phone. Louise has been involved with horses since she was 10 years of age, and is very experienced in many riding disciplines. She is currently pursuing eventing, working equitation and dressage goals, aligned with natural principles, and is bringing her young horse in to the competition world. However nothing gives Louise more pleasure than hanging out with the herd at home in their paddock.

**Professor Julianne (Juli) Coffin** is an Aboriginal Western Australian who has traditional ties to her grandparents' country in the Pilbara region (Nyangumarta). Juli was born in Ngala, Western Australia and has lived the majority of her life in the Pilbara. She is the proud mother of three children. Juli is a graduate of Edith Cowan University (Western Australia) and James Cook University (Queensland).

Professor Coffin is a prominent Aboriginal researcher with research expertise in cultural security, education and research across a diverse range of chronic diseases, nutrition, contextualising bullying, equine assisted learning and health promotion. Professor Coffin holds a Bachelor of Education, a Master of Public Health and Tropical Medicine (with distinction) and a PhD with an award in excellence. With a keen interest in Aboriginal languages and ways of learning Professor Coffin combines her education and cultural learnings to deliver the outstanding translation of research into practice that is always of an impeccable standard. She is highly regarded by her peers as being creative and innovative around some of the particularly controversial and complex areas in Aboriginal health and education.

**Nadine Delaney** is an Accredited Mental Health Social worker and completed my degree in 2001. I initially work for DoCS/FaCS (NSW Child Protection agency) as a Child Protection Caseworker for several years and then spent 7 years with Life Without Barriers (Out of Home Care provider) in roles such as Caseworker and Manager in their Out of Home Care Team. I was also part of their Practice Quality Team, that provided casework oversight, training and policy development. I was also the Manager of their NSW Reportable Conduct Investigation Team. I then took a break from that work while my children were young and ran 2 businesses with my husband.

Nadine completed the EPI training in 2015 and opened her private practice from her property in the Hunter Valley. Nadine provides clinical Social Work to children and young people, mainly providing this in the context of Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Learning. Along with Nadine's herd of 5 horses, she provide 1:1 sessions, group sessions and School Holiday Group Programs. Nadine's clients usually have special needs/disabilities, mental health challenges and complex developmental trauma. Their therapeutic goals usually revolve around support with self-regulation, social skills, sensory integration, building their awareness around emotions, establishing and maintaining relationships, building confidence, improving communication (including working with children who are non-verbal), finding appropriate ways to manage challenging behaviours and supporting clients with complex developmental trauma.

**Noel Haarbuger** has been a psychologist since 1997. He is a gestalt therapist, faculty member and trainer at GTA (Gestalt Therapy Australia) since 2001, and now works in full time private practice as a Psychologist and Psychotherapist working with individuals and couples, as well as offering supervision and professional development workshops to allied health professionals and organizations. He also practices and offers Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. He has worked extensively in a wide variety of counselling and psychological services since 1995, including most recently the role of Senior Psychologist at Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre for 4 years. Previous to this he has worked in family counselling, drug and alcohol, sexual assault, problematic gambling, men's behavioural change programs, and the mental health fields. Noel has a special interest in Trauma and somatic approaches to therapy, as well as integrating developmental/attachment perspectives, Buddhist psychology and non-dual spiritual approaches into his work. He is a certified 'Somatic Experiencing' practitioner, which utilises highly effective and safe body awareness methods for negotiating and releasing trauma, developed by Peter Levine. Noel is also an ongoing student of the 'Diamond Heart approach', a western psycho-spiritual school that integrates mindfulness, western depth psychology, Sufism and Buddhist approaches to personal and spiritual development.

Noel also co-facilitates as the senior trainer with Meg Kirby at the The Equine Psychotherapy Institute, offering the Foundation training program in equine assisted psychotherapy, and Advanced training programs.

**Sue Lamond** lives in Kyogle on a 200 acre property in the Northern Rivers of NSW. Sue has three beautiful adult children who have grown up and flown the nest. She has a successful EAP practice and is also the first EPI trainer outside of the Victorian Institute. This is her third year of training the EPI foundation course and she loves seeing and supporting the emergence of new practitioners.

As a successful counsellor, life coach, trainer and equine assisted counsellor who had previously studied Equine Assisted Counselling. Sue was drawn to the EPI model in 2013 where she trained with Meg Kirby and immediately transformed her existing Equine assisted practice to ensure she came into line with the EPI model. Over the last five years Sue has seen the benefits of working with in a model that has such a solid theoretically and ethically sound foundation.

Sue also works as a trainer and qualified supervisor for lifeline where she trains Crisis Supporter workers for the 13 11 14 crisis support line and frontline workers in NSW in the area of Domestic And Family Violence awareness and response.

Sue's current EAP practice has a client base comprising of one on one individual sessions both adults and children. As well as working with relationships Sue runs relationship groups, corporate groups, personal development groups, and therapy groups all from her facility on the Northern Rivers of NSW.

P.S. and the highlight for her this year is the announcement that she is going to be a grandmother.

**Meg Kirby** (BA, MASW, Dip GT) is an experienced Psychotherapist and Mental Health Social Worker of 20 years, Founder of The Equine Psychotherapy Institute and the EPI Model of equine assisted psychotherapy and equine assisted learning. As well as training and supervising over 150 students since 2011, she also has a small private practice in Daylesford, Victoria. Meg lives and trains with her colourful herd of twelve beautiful equine friends, and is a lover of all animals and the natural world. Meg has clinical experience in adult mental health, inpatient and outpatient child, adolescent and family psychiatry, personal development, addiction, group therapy, and organisational consultation and leadership. Meg published her first book on Equine Assisted Psychotherapy in 2016, "An Introduction to Equine Assisted Psychotherapy; principles, theory and practice of the equine psychotherapy model", and continues to be passionate about the role of the human-animal bond in health, wellness and healing for clients from all walks of life.

**Jackie Smith** is an organisational consultant and coach with over 20 years experience in management and leadership, organisational development, group dynamics and facilitation, with a Bachelor Degree in Economics (Monash University), Masters in Leadership and Organisational Dynamics (RMIT, Melbourne) and Certified Equine Assisted Learning Practitioner (EPI Model).

Jackie's vision is to create learning experiences that support the development of conscious leaders and their teams with the capability and commitment to utilise their full human potential both at work and in life. She passionately believes that EAL is a powerful method for self awareness and development of the social, emotional and leadership skills required for this change. Jackie is constantly learning from the horses and humans that she works with and seeks out opportunities for collaboration, co-creation and co-facilitation of learning programs and interventions.

**Debbie Walker** trained in the UK, Ms Walker migrated to Australia in 1993 and is a fully registered Generalist Psychologist with over 19 years experience, working in organizational, clinical and health psychology. Ms Walker along with her husband Noel is a director of Trinity Psychologists Pty Ltd, which was formed in 1999 and has provided psychological services to the Public, Corporate and Education sector since then.

Ms Walker is passionate about recovery from trauma, positive psychology, positive workplace cultures, positive leadership and actively seeking wellbeing and is a well-known speaker on these topics around Australia.

On a brighter note she has had the privilege of living with horses for 15 years. She completed her foundation training in 2016 and the Trauma intensive in 2017. Ms Walker Became a proud certified member of the Equine Psychotherapy Institute in 2017.

Ms Walker is currently in the first year of training with Somatic Experiencing Australia.

## Valence Williams

After a number of years as a horse trainer, including winning Reserve Champion Yearling at the Australian Brumby Challenge 2014, Valence noticed a dramatic shift in the relationship dynamic of horse and human which steered the course of her journey. Now offering services as an Equine Training Consultant, she is also introducing Healing Partnership programs & Meditation with horses. Valence hopes to assist people to learn how to train, connect & heal with their own horses in a Holistic way, via science based learning, ethology & energetic influences. Valence is a professional member of the IICT & is recognised in the modalities of Equine Meditation, Meditation Teaching, Holistic Counselling & Personal Training. She has recently completed a Diploma in Equine Psychology and enjoys Liberty interactions, Positive Reinforcement training and Meditations with her own herd.



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