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Artículos Científicos

Hipoterapia: alternativa para el abordaje terapéutico de las discapacidades neuromotoras

Hypotherapy: alternative for the therapeutic approach of neuromotor disabilities

Hipoterapia: alternativa para a abordagem terapêutica das deficiências neuromotoras

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Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio fue analizar la interrelación entre los elementos participantes en la tríada terapéutica (cliente o paciente, equino y facilitador) durante el proceso terapéutico de un paciente masculino de 27 años con diagnóstico de lesión medular C6-7. Para ello, se empleó la hipoterapia como una propuesta alternativa y complementaria para el tratamiento de personas con o sin discapacidad; esta es una actividad que promueve el potencial humano de desarrollo utilizando al caballo y a su entorno como la base de la terapia. La investigación fue planteada desde la perspectiva de la investigación cualitativa. Por sus características se considera como un trabajo de carácter exploratorio. El método empleado se ajusta a los postulados del modelo de la teoría fundamentada. El tipo de estudio fue el análisis de caso clínico. Para la recolección de datos se empleó la técnica documental biográfica. La información fue procesada mediante la técnica de análisis de contenido, con apoyo en las perspectivas teóricas de la neurofisiología aplicada al campo de la hipoterapia, la comunicación interespecies (humano-equino) y el enfoque centrado en la persona. Las observaciones obtenidas del análisis del discurso muestran claramente el cumplimiento de los principios señalados para cada uno de los modelos teóricos empleados. De hecho, los resultados obtenidos son similares a los reportados por otros autores en cuanto a la utilidad del caballo como coterapeuta en virtud de sus características y reacciones, las cuales poseen una importante similitud con las condiciones terapéuticas descritas en el modelo centrado en la persona para facilitar el proceso de cambio, es decir, la aceptación incondicional, la congruencia y la empatía.

Palabras clave: equinoterapia, equus diálogo, discapacidad.



Abstract

The objective of this study was to analyze the interrelation between the elements participating in the therapeutic triad (client or patient, equine and facilitator) during the therapeutic process of a 27-year-old male patient diagnosed with spinal cord injury C6-7. For this, hippotherapy was used as an alternative and complementary proposal for the treatment of people with or without disabilities; This is an activity that promotes human development potential using the horse and its environment as the basis of therapy. The research was raised from the perspective of qualitative research. Due to its characteristics, it is considered as an exploratory work. The method used conforms to the postulates of the grounded theory model. The type of study was the clinical case analysis. The biographical documentary technique was used to collect data. The information was processed using the content analysis technique, with support in the theoretical perspectives of neurophysiology applied to the field of hypotherapy, interspecies communication (human-equine) and the person-centered approach. The observations obtained from the discourse analysis clearly show compliance with the principles indicated for each of the theoretical models used. In fact, the results obtained are similar to those reported by other authors regarding the usefulness of the horse as a co-therapist by virtue of its characteristics and reactions, which have an important similarity with the therapeutic conditions described in the person-centered model for facilitate the process of change, that is, unconditional acceptance, congruence and empathy.

Keywords: equine therapy, equus dialogue, disability.

Resumo

O objetivo deste estudo foi analisar a inter-relação entre os elementos participantes da tríade terapêutica (cliente ou paciente, equino e facilitador) durante o processo terapêutico de um paciente de 27 anos com diagnóstico de lesão medular C6-7. Para isso, a hipoterapia foi utilizada como uma proposta alternativa e complementar para o tratamento de pessoas com ou sem deficiência; Esta é uma atividade que promove o potencial de desenvolvimento humano usando o cavalo e seu ambiente como base da terapia. A pesquisa foi levantada na perspectiva da pesquisa qualitativa. Por suas características, é considerado um trabalho exploratório. O método utilizado está em conformidade com os postulados do modelo da



teoría fundamentada. O tipo de estudo foi a análise de caso clínico. A técnica documental biográfica foi usada para coletar dados. As informações foram processadas pela técnica de análise de conteúdo, com suporte nas perspectivas teóricas da neurofisiologia aplicada ao campo da hipoterapia, comunicação interespecies (equino-humano) e abordagem centrada na pessoa. As observações obtidas na análise do discurso mostram claramente o cumprimento dos princípios indicados para cada um dos modelos teóricos utilizados. De fato, os resultados obtidos são semelhantes aos relatados por outros autores em relação à utilidade do cavalo como co-terapeuta em virtude de suas características e reações, que possuem uma importante semelhança com as condições terapêuticas descritas no modelo centrado na pessoa para facilitar o processo de mudança, isto é, aceitação incondicional, congruência e empatia.

Palavras-chave: equoterapia, diálogo equus, incapacidade.

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Introduction

To refer to the use of the horse as a health support resource, it is necessary to mention, first, that it is a relationship that has its roots in an ancient practice (Burbridge, 2004) that has been recorded in chronicles and legends that testify to the invaluable contribution that equines have had in each of the evolutionary seats of the human being. In fact, and despite the current dominance of science and technology in the fields of daily life, the horse remains a universal symbol around which the historical framework transmitted through chronicles that sublimate the qualities of these are still woven animals not only in terms of beauty, courage, grace and strength, but also of nobility and fidelity.

These details allow us to legitimize, in a way, the adoption of a current practice in the historical group, although “rediscovered” in recent years, which highlights the undoubted therapeutic benefits that derive from equine-assisted therapies. In this sense, and without this being a definition, it can be ensured - as indicated by authors such as Gross (2006), Ernst and De la Fuente (2007), Castillo (2011) and Bender (2012) that equestrian therapies are those activities that use the horse as an assistant by means of which the cognitive, physical,



emotional, social and occupational development of people who have a disability or not can be promoted.

The concept of equestrian therapies is a general statement used to characterize a nascent discipline that includes at least two types of practice with different applications and strategies: equine therapy and equine-assisted psychotherapy. Beyond the objectives and methods applied, both methods have in common their praxis, which develops in a natural environment that provides a broader and more diverse perceptual field than that experienced in traditional practices, which contributes to the achievement of proposed objectives (Pérez, Rodríguez y Rodríguez, 2008).

Noting the above, it is worth pointing out that the emphasis on this work has fallen on the equine therapy process, for which the interrelation of the participating elements (client, equine and facilitator) has been taken as an analysis point..

Equine therapy

Due to its peculiarities, equine therapy can be characterized as a form of alternative and complementary therapy that uses the horse as a natural resource that can be used to provide assistance to people with different abilities. In this way we try to influence the improvement of people's quality of life to promote their integration into society (Bender, 2012; Ernst and De la Fuente, 2007; Gross, 2006).

The division of equine therapy into three areas or fields of work has been proposed at the International Congress of Therapeutic Assembly - held in 1998 in Toronto, Canada. (Castillo, 2011):

- a. Hippotherapy
- b. Ride therapeutic.
- c. Horse riding as a sport for the disabled.

In relation to their practice, authors such as Caudet (2002), Gross (2006), Pérez, Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2008), Castillo (2011) and Bender (2012), among others, point out that the horse is usually preferred in practice therapeutic, instead of other species, due to three peculiarities inherent to its nature, which act concurrently on the rider, regardless of the condition of disability that presents:



- a. The transmission of body heat.
- b. The transmission of rhythmic impulses.
- c. The transmission of a locomotion pattern equivalent to the physiological pattern of human gait.

The conjunction of these actions during riding produces therapeutic effects at the neuromotor, sensomotor, psychomotor, sociomotor and functional levels.

However, in order to make clear the position from which the present work has been focused, it is necessary to point out that the concept of disability is linked only to the decrease of a skill in some specific area, which attempts to eradicate the nuance prejudice of disability that is implicit in other meanings.

According to the Person-Centered Approach, Rogers (1993) considers that the body of an individual is only a support where there are an infinity of potential capacities that, when released and developed, inscribe the human being in a dynamic of constant change; This is what Rogers calls the process of becoming a person. From this premise, it can be ensured that a person can present some type of disability, but it is not his disability, so he has the same potential to develop any skill with the only limitation that his own condition imposes on him.

Methodology

The present research was of a qualitative nature because - unlike the quantitative approach - it allows us to use techniques to collect and analyze the experience and discourse of the subjects, which are immersed in their natural context (Hernández, Fernández, Baptista, 2000). The objective of the study was to analyze the interrelation of the participating elements (client, equine and facilitator) during the therapeutic process of a 27-year-old male patient diagnosed with spinal cord injury C6-7.

The method used was the founded or grounded theory, which is basically a methodological design that serves to explain a segment of reality in its original scope; that is, the elements of the discourse and the meaning of the experience can be analyzed through the interrelation of the theoretical principles that underlie the subjective expression of the



narrator (Bautista, 2011). This serves to relate prior knowledge to the specific characteristics of the phenomenon.

The type of study was the clinical case analysis because the very nature of the problem places it in the field of health (Artiles, Artiles and Rodríguez, 2016). For the data collection, the biographical documentary technique was used (Bautista, 2011), while for the information processing the content analysis technique was used, which was based on the theoretical perspectives of the neurophysiology applied to the field of Hypotherapy, interspecies communication (human-equine) and the person-centered approach. To facilitate the analysis of the data, the model used by Barreiro (2015) was adapted, which basically consists of two moments: the first corresponds to the time in which the researcher suspends the reading of the text / speech to evaluate (by fragments) the experience experiential from the narrator's perspective; the second moment consists in relating this experience with the theoretical positions from which one tries to explain or understand the phenomenon.

Case study presentation

Patient characteristics: 27 year old male with diagnosis of spinal cord injury C6-7.

Characteristics of the therapy

Due to the characteristics of the patient, we worked with the modality of passive or basic hippotherapy (Bender, 2012; Gross, 2006). The duration of the sessions was approximately one hour, of which between 25 and 30 minutes (effective) were considered for the work of riding, as well as breaks to rest and perform respiratory exercises; the rest was used to establish contacts (at the beginning and end of the session) in which the patient could pet the horse and give him some carrots as a reward.

At the end of the session, the patient had the opportunity to stand for a moment while holding the horse's back, for which he was assisted by the floor assistants before returning to his chair. The exercises and patient support care meet the criteria set by Gross (2006) and Bender (2012). They worked with exercises in assembled position (front and back) and crossed over the horse's back in prone position.



Treatment duration

The treatment lasted approximately three months, during which time 12 sessions were held (once a week). The treatment was interrupted by the patient's personal needs.

Theoretical perspectives for data analysis

The data analysis was performed through three theoretical filters:

- a. The assumptions or principles inherent to equine therapy that allow us to explain the rehabilitation process and the expected therapeutic effects for each of the areas of functioning involved.
- b. The assumptions or constructs contained in the person-centered approach (ECP) used analogously in the analysis of the interactional process of the therapeutic triad (client, horse and therapist); In this regard, it should be mentioned that in this document the terms client and patient have been used interchangeably, as well as those of facilitator and therapist.
- c. C. Equus-dialogue formulation is proposed¹ as an innovative concept based on the learning of interspecies communication. This offers the possibility of interpreting, in a reciprocal way, the communication codes of the horses in order to understand the establishment of affective bonds in which one can recognize not only the expression of basic emotions for survival, but also feelings involved in the encounter or condition of human-equine contact; In any case, the direction of the encounter (approach-distance) depends in part on both the characteristic dispositions of the person in question and the character or disposition of the equine (Alonso, 2017, comunicación personal).

¹ The equus-dialogue is presented as a revealing concept of the dialogic process that takes place from the moment the reciprocal body reading begins between the equine and its human interlocutor until the establishment of a link generated by a projective identification mechanism.



Analysis and theoretical correspondence of the text

My name is ... I've been in a wheelchair for 11 years as a result of a cervical fracture. Throughout these years I have tried different types of therapies and each has brought some benefit in my recovery; however, equine therapy has given me more "things" than any other [] 1. I say "things" since it is difficult to explain, however, I will try to explain what makes me feel []².

Theoretical assignment

[]¹ In the context of this sentence the condition or state of contact indicated by Rogers and Gelind can be recognized (cited by Barceló, 2012); also, the interpretation of that line represents a positive change in the perception of the self as well as a clear attribution to its experience of the process.

[]² In this line the condition of re-congruence between the self and the current experience is appreciated (Rogers, 1998), which tacitly reveals a situation of strength in the face of threatening experiences. Simplifying, it can be said that the less feeling of threat the greater positive consideration towards others. In this condition the psychological adaptation is increased, and the organismic assessment acts increasingly as the basis of behavior regulation.

From the first moment I reached the equestrian and to my perception I had received the calm and tranquility of the trees and nature, the freshness and silence of the place [] 3; these elements de-stressed me and relaxed me almost suddenly. After talking with the teacher about how I would get on the horse (which is never easy) we proceeded to do it []⁴.

[]³ This segment indicates, as indicated by Pérez et al. (2008), that the positive effect of the natural context in which the sessions take place favors the reduction of stress conditions. In addition, the perceptual field constituted by novel stimuli broadens the possibilities of the contact experience.



[]⁴ The general context of the phrase and the emphasis stated in this last statement confirms the presence of the condition of openness to the experience formulated by Roger (1998), who points out that the more secure a person feels, the more open he will be to the experience.

That moment was a peak in my life, because I had a huge animal in front of me and the fact of giving it sugar, of feeling his tongue touching my hands, behaving in a docile and carefree way made me feel safe, lively and happy. []⁵.

[]⁵ In the general context of the phrase, the relevance of equus-dialogue in the formation of self-regulated cognitive / affective impressions is observed, which, on the one hand, reveals the presence of the conditions of unconditional acceptance and empathy proposed by Rogers (1988) . This also allows the possibility of interspecies dialogue to be reinforced. (Roberts, 2006).

When I got on Coronela for the first time, I had a sea of emotions, all positive, from the feeling of achievement []⁶ because I never imagined getting on a horse, I felt a kind of wheelchair release, since the movement, the height, the perspective, everything was new and exciting []⁷.

[]⁶ In these lines the construct related to the actualization of the self is reflected. According to Rogers (1988), the congruence between the self and the experience can be re-established through the tendency to actualize the self. In that sense, there is a moment of reevaluation around the perception of the self; that is, of his self-concept, of his self-image and of his self-esteem.

[]⁷ This statement allows us to appreciate, as indicated by Gross (2006), the effect assumed in the first principle of equine therapy in relation to feelings of security, acceptance and protection.

That day I closed my eyes and imagined that I was walking, since I felt how my hip moved and my legs how long ago I did not feel []⁸.



[]⁸ This segment refers to that indicated by Strauss (cited by Gross, 2006), not only on the recording of the gait pattern, but also on the sensation of movement generated by the horse's gait (locomotion principle; psychomotor effect). It is also linked to the development of muscle tone, the flexibility of the pelvic ligaments and the stabilization of the dynamic balancing of the trunk and head.

Throughout 12 sessions I have developed a link with Colonel, she is able to perceive my level of exhaustion and my agitation during the exercises []⁹.

[]⁹ The expressed in these lines has a great value because it demonstrates both the contact condition described by Barceló (2012) and the state or condition of empathy referred to by Rogers (1998) around the correct perception of the other's frame of reference.

Rebufa when I am relaxed and breathing deeply []¹⁰.

[]¹⁰ In this indication, the idea (by the patient) of a response (from the equine) to the emotional condition and physical condition of the client / patient can be appreciated, which is generated by the elaboration of a projective identification process².

I have also regained sensitivity in the lower back, legs, buttocks and even at the level of sphincters []¹¹.

[]¹¹ This phrase shows the supposed effect on the second principle of equine therapy (transmission of rhythmic impulses), while the impulses produced by the movement of the horse to the pelvis also touch the rider's legs and cause a relaxation of the adductor muscles and pelvic ligaments. In fact, they stimulate the erection of the spine and the functionality of the sphincters (Gross, 2006).

² In the conservative discourse of psychotherapies, projective identification refers to the transfer process between the patient and the therapist; However, for the purposes of this work, it has been used analogically to describe the affective bond (positive or negative) that is generated during the process of change in the client, horse and facilitator therapeutic triad.



Currently I have a better physical condition, I get more upright while sitting, my arms have also increased their muscle mass []¹².

[]¹² The content of this segment refers to the construct enunciated by Rogers (1998), that is to say, the organismic tendency of updating in which the innate tendency of the organism to develop its potentialities is assumed, either to conserve it or to improve it.

So far, what is written are just some of the things I have obtained, however, the greatest recognition I give to equine therapy is that unlike others it does not work only with my body as if it were only an object that needs to move []¹³, the equine therapy allows me to recover body sensibility and experience different emotions: happiness, achievements, pride, affection, well-being, among other emotions []¹⁴ that, sincerely, are necessary to move forward not only with therapy, but also with lifetime []¹⁵.

[]¹³ In this fragment the condition of an updated self is observed (Rogers, 1998) because it reveals an integral recognition by the patient of his own perception of disability in which the motor part is only one of his being as a person.

[]¹⁴ In this idea the condition of actualization of the mentioned self is appreciated, whose performance, for this case, involves both the organismic and the psychological field of the perception of the self. Likewise, it is evident - at least hypothetically - the result of the conjugation of the different principles and the consequent therapeutic effects on which the equine therapy is based (Gross, 2006).

[]¹⁵ The climax of the document warns the report by Längle (2008), that is, the emotion for the discovery of a meaning that tacitly expresses a responsible choice about how to face the daily life.



Conclusions

Of the methodological strategy

The methodological framework used allowed the client / patient discourse to be analyzed in a timely manner from the three areas implicit in the equine therapy process, that is, physiology, interspecies communication and the humanistic position of psychology.

Of course, affirming the precise correspondence between the discourse and the theoretical conceptualizations of our analytical referents is an almost impossible task, since the formation of judgments regarding the sense of the affective perceptions of the events is conditioned by bio-psycho-social elements. Spiritual (Sarmiento, 2003) implicit in the cognitive elaborations with which personal experience is symbolized.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the affinity of the statements contained in the discourse with the thematic fields used for the analysis should be noted:

I have been in a wheelchair for 11 years as a result of a cervical fracture. Throughout these years I have tried different types of therapies and each has brought some benefit in my recovery; However, equine therapy has given me more “things” than any other. I say "things", since it is complicated to explain, however, I will try to explain what makes me feel.

The general context of the phrase refers in a very precise way to the meaning of what Rogers and Gelind proposed (cited by Barceló, 2012) about the contact condition - which in fact constitutes one of the vertebral constructs of the approach - in which affirms that being of two people (one in the presence of the other) reciprocally affects the experiential field of both.

In the statement of Rogers and Gelind this concept clearly emphasizes the importance of therapist attitudes (over methods and techniques) as the path for change and personal growth. The attribution of exception regarding the benefit of the equine therapy that the patient declares provides evidence of a positive change in the perception of the self. In this sense, the decrease in the perception of threat can be indicated as a result of the organismic capacity of self-regulation, which redirects the condition of vulnerability towards



psychological adaptation, a situation that Rogers (1998) refers to as reestablishing congruence between The me and the experience.

From the first moment I reached the equestrian and to my perception I had received the calm and tranquility of the trees and nature, the freshness and silence of the place; these elements de-stressed me and relaxed me almost suddenly.

This phrase reveals a great wealth due to the link it has with the statements of the authors referenced in this analysis. In other words, the impression of astonishment and rediscovery of the gait pattern (for example) refers, in the first instance, to what Pérez Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2008) stated about the positive effect of equine therapy. In this regard, this author explains that the activities carried out in an open space and in a natural environment have a favorable effect on the psychological and emotional sphere of the patient and encourage the creation of links between the client and their natural and social environment.

In accordance with this idea, Gross, (2006) mentions that the rhythmic and smooth ride of the horse causes a “rocking” effect, which - summed up to the horse's body temperature - evokes feelings of safety, love and protection in the rider . In addition, the aforementioned contact condition between the facilitator, the client, the equine and their environment is clear.

After talking with the teacher about how I would get on the horse (which is never easy) we proceeded to do it.

This segment demonstrates that particular impact of the aforementioned contact condition, although in this case the reference is directed towards how the connection between the client and the facilitator generates feelings of trust. This link progresses as the process progresses, which de facto contributes to the gestation of therapeutic change. (Rogers, 1993).



That moment was a peak in my life, because I had a huge animal in front of me and the fact of giving it sugar, of feeling his tongue touching my hands, behaving in a docile and carefree way made me feel safe, lively and happy.

This is a truly important moment in relation to the equus-dialogue concept because it tacitly reflects the interpretation (by the patient) of the horse's movements and attitudes in terms of the warm relationship perceived by the rider, as well as the condition of unconditional acceptance and empathy (Rogers, 1998). This process demonstrates an attitude free of judgments and a perception of understanding regarding the limitations imposed by their disability.

Likewise, it can be noted that the projective identification process conditions the feelings experienced by the rider. On this issue, Netscher and Samaniego (2012) point out - around attitudes of congruence, honesty and empathy - a special provision that serves to reflect the feelings of patients. Therefore, it can be concluded that the emotional contact between the rider-equine binomial, as already mentioned, is an example of the interspecies dialogue (Roberts, 2006; Gutiérrez, Granados and Piar 2007). Simply put, more than just a probability, this is a verifiable fact.

When I got on Coronela for the first time, I had a sea of emotions, all positive, from the feeling of accomplishment, because I never imagined getting on a horse, I felt a kind of wheelchair release, since the movement, the height, the perspective, everything was new and exciting, that day I closed my eyes and imagined that I was walking, since I felt how my hip moved and my legs how long ago I did not feel.

This segment is equally important because of the emotional treatment it gives to the experience; Through the content of what was stated by the client, there is a clear correspondence with the condition of the ego update (Rogers, 1988), which essentially consists of an increase in congruence between the self and the experience. This generates the reevaluation of the self with respect to the perception of self-concept, self-image and, of course, self-esteem. In this same text, the sensations of “being walking” stand out, as observed by Straus (cited by Gross, 2006) regarding the neuronal recording of the gait



pattern, the sensation of movement generated by the equine's gait (psychomotor effect of the locomotion principle), the development of muscle tone, the flexibility of the pelvic ligaments and the stabilization of the trunk-head dynamic balance.

Throughout 12 sessions I have developed a bond with Colonel, she is able to perceive my level of exhaustion and my agitation during the exercises, it refreshes when I am relaxed and breathing deeply.

As mentioned by Barceló (2012), the mention of the development of the link with the horse confirms the fact that therapeutic contact can only occur when both participants are willing to engage in a relationship of therapeutic help.

On the other hand - according to what is expressed by great experts in the handling of horses, such as Nestcher and Samaniego (2012), Roberts (2006) and Gutiérrez et al (2007) -, the development of the feeling of empathy is recognized (identification positive projective) in the patient's statement of the horse's ability to perceive physical expressions of exhaustion, excitement or relaxation by emitting sounds with which the horse mirrors the rider's body movements.

I have also regained sensitivity in the lower back, legs, buttocks and even at the level of sphincters. Currently I have a better physical condition, I get more upright when sitting, my arms have also increased their muscle mass.

This statement about the improvement of the physical condition confirms what Gross (2006) expressed in relation to the fact that the transmission of the rhythmic impulses of the horse towards the pelvis, because when touching the rider's legs they generate a relaxing effect of the adductor muscles and the pelvic ligaments and stimulates the erection of the spine and the functionality of the sphincters. Along the same lines, Rogers (1998), when considering his constructive organismic tendency to update, presupposes that it is an innate instinct of the organism to develop or conserve its potential.



So far, what is written are only some of the things that I have obtained, however, the greatest recognition I give to equine therapy is that unlike others it does not work only with my body as if it were only an object that needs to move.

The meaning of this phrase - in accordance with Rogers (1988) - shows a deep reflection on the patient's perception of the Self, which is built to the extent that the client is discovered during the process in a more positive way and consistent with its possibilities for improvement. In other words, the patient resignifies his perception of himself and achieves the full recognition of his person being, in which the condition of disability is only part of his own being.

Equine therapy allows me to recover body sensibility and experience different emotions: happiness, achievements, pride, affection, well-being, among other emotions that, sincerely, are necessary to move forward not only with therapy, but also with life.

The above constitutes one of the most exciting passages of the discourse because it reveals a sense of how to live, of the power of choice, of the faith that rises above despair and of the responsible living with which everyday life faces.

According to Rogers regarding the usefulness of diagnosis in the planning of therapy, it should be understood that beyond biology the real problem of disability is, ultimately, in a cultural result that denies the access of people to full life, thereby impeding their possibilities of adaptation to the social environment.

In this regard, it should be noted that the immediate benefit provided by the human-equine relationship offers the opportunity to establish contact with an animal with whom, in a certain way, we can identify ourselves by virtue of the fact that their reactions constitute a reflection of our own attitudes. of approach or rejection towards interaction with our peers.

Rogers (1992) mentions that for many patients the relationship with the therapist may be, perhaps, the first experience of unconditional acceptance he receives, which is precisely what the patient perceives in his relationship with the horse; that is, the horse does not assess the condition of the rider or establish judgments of any kind: he only accepts contact with the



person and accesses the requested collaboration. However, the horse may, at times, experience a certain indisposition or reticence during the ride, which communicates with postural gestures and impatient movements, such as showing disagreement with the rider's attitudes, who, in short, must restore the condition of trust and respect to resume the collaboration agreement.

Other authors such as Chardonnes (2009) argue (taking Rogers as a reference) that the horse presents as a co-therapist, by virtue of its characteristics and reactions, important similarities with the therapist's conditions for facilitating the process of change. Brühwier (cited by Chardonnes, 2009) points out that the purpose of equine-assisted therapies is based on the recovery process, the constant reading of the body language of the equine-human binomial, which results in the formation of a reciprocal empathy loop during the ride that, by the way, remains enduring.

In this same sense, Chardonnes (2009) points out the approach of Behr (another important author with a Rogerian approach), who mentions two elements that being fundamental for the therapeutic success of the ECP, are extrapolated in ASD: empathy and authenticity of Therapists with their clients. To this idea it should be added that the conditions of empathy and authenticity are not limited to the therapist and his client, but are inclusive and permeate the therapeutic triad (client, horse and therapist) during virtually the entire process.

Obviously, the accompaniment function and the therapist's own affective resonance are actors that allow the patient to verbalize his sensory body experience, his psychological perceptions, his emotions and his needs. In addition, it will be the horse's qualities that facilitate patient insight.

In summary - and recapitulating the observations made throughout this document, and to specify in one sentence the usefulness of the person-centered approach as a source or resource of analysis of the equine therapy process, although in this case of therapies assisted with Equine in general - the following should be noted: during the process of human-equine interaction - in the context of a therapeutic relationship - an associative (contact) condition occurs that favors the creation of an affective bond (unconditional positive appreciation) that gives place to the formation of a condition of trust and openness to experience (congruence).



This creates a bridge of mutual understanding (empathy) observable as a situation of interspecies communication (equus-dialogue) that serves to enhance the physical-psychological-social and spiritual effects of the client or patient.

Finally, it must be considered that given the tacitly pre-paradigmatic nature of the state of equine-assisted therapies, the association between theoretical foundations and the moments of the process that have been exposed constitute per se a thematic articulation whose transdisciplinary nature promotes the transfer of the knowledge required to provide this new discipline with a theory of its own.

To the man who sleeps in us: ask ourselves every moment if we are men and at every moment answer us: no. The sketch is badly engineered of man, still to draw. A poor curtain for the big scene. Men call us? Not yet: wait (Jura Soyfer, citado por Frankl, 1983).



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