

Equine Supported Program (ESP) Elements of Practice Research Results

ESP Elements of Practice for Wellness:

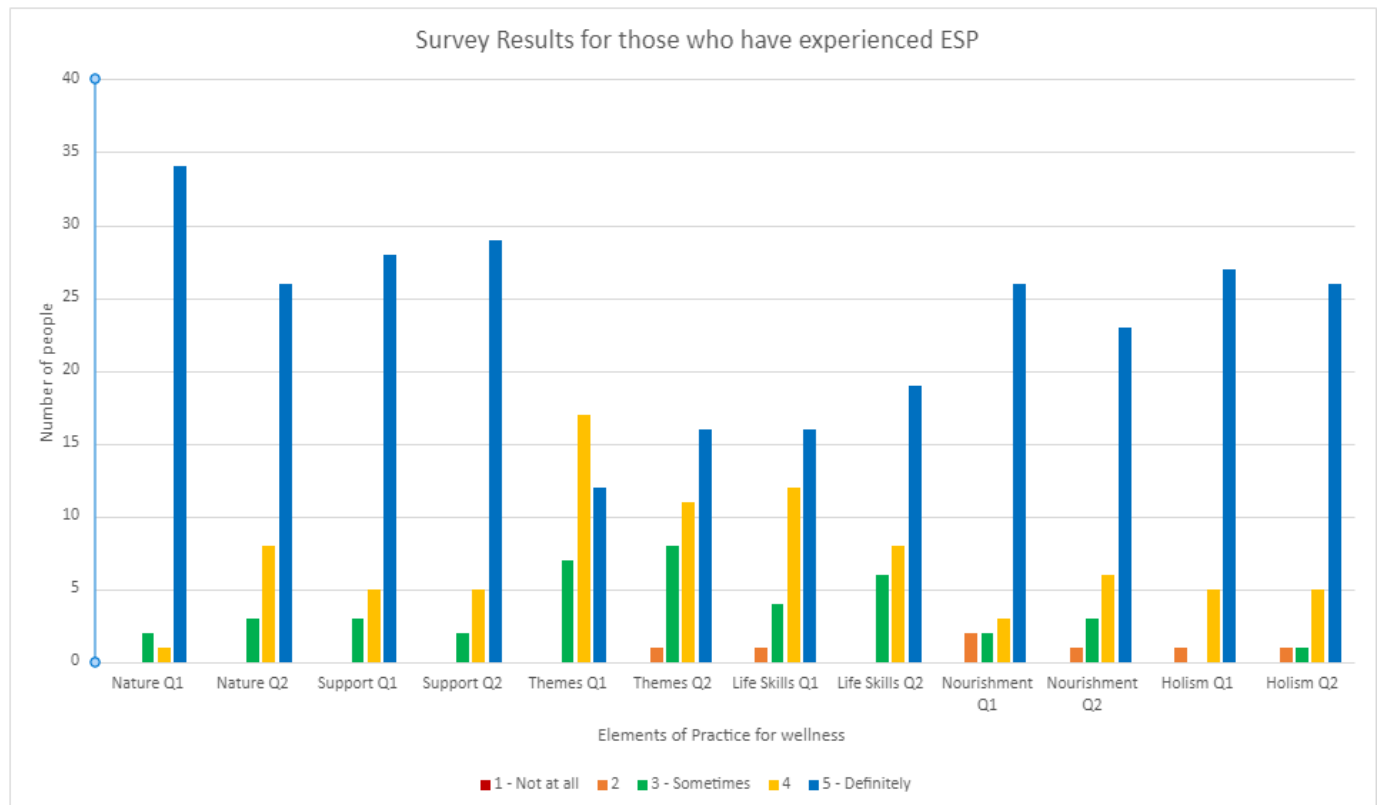
Nature, Support, Themes, Life Skills, Nourishment, Holism

Research completed by: Daisy Rivers and Equine Supported Programs (ESP)

Research report written by Daisy Rivers (Bachelor of Applied Social Science (Counselling) and Master of Social Work (Qualifying)) with the support of ESP.

Please find the survey questions attached at the end of this research document to revisit survey questions for either survey.

Group One: Those who have experienced ESP



Research findings for Group One: 37 respondents



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General overview:

81% of participants were female, and 18.9% were male. The participant age range was very diverse, with the ages spanning from under 18 to over 65. 47% of participants heard about ESP through word of mouth, and 25% coming through referral. 44% of participants are clients, 22% were from an organisation, and 33% answered other.

Many of the participants are from Tasmania, with answers from interstate and responses from the United States.

84% of those who answered from an organisation felt that as an organisation that they use some or all the ESP elements of practice within their organisation; Mission Australia is one of those organisations. Only 15% felt they do not use any of these elements of practice in their organisation.

As seen in the graph, results from the survey came back quite helpful, showing most of the participants having experienced ESP felt that it has contributed to their overall wellness, with most of the answers in the higher end of the scale for all the questions. From the comments left on the survey, participants have said that they find ESP beneficial, stating that ESP is nourishing, a safe space, and life-changing.

Nature:

For the first element of practice, Nature, results show many participants feel that 'Nature-Based Experiences' and allowing a 'Natural Process' to unfold 'definitely' contribute to their overall wellness. Close to 35 participants answered 'definitely' to the first survey question. Around ten of the participants stated that it only sometimes contributes to their overall wellness. This shows that this element of practice has significant impacts on the overall wellness of clients experiencing ESP.

Support:

The results for the element of practice 'Support' show that between 25 and 30 of the participants feel supported through ESP's gentle guidance and compassion and supported through meaningful,



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authentic relationships. This shows, by feeling supported, it is contributing to the wellness of those who experience ESP. Up to 3 of the participants indicated that their wellness only sometimes felt supported through ESP.

Themes:

The results from this element of practice (Themes) show an interesting array of answers from participants from the two survey questions around this element. The results in this element and the next element of practice are the most diverse. The results show that this element is the one that is least contributing to wellness, however in saying this, the results still show this is a helpful element of practice, showing that participants feel that Themes sometimes or more contribute to their personal learning, growth, and healing experiences, as well as connection to self and others. There were a few participants whose answers were not on the other side; this shows that some of those who experience ESP do not feel that Themes contribute to their overall wellness much.

Life Skills:

The results from this element of practice, 'Life Skills', again shows an interesting mixture of results. Many of the results offer a beneficial view, with many participants answering at the higher end of the scale. This indicates that many of the participants feel that ESP provides them with life skills. The question where some participants answered on the lower end of the scale was around ESP's Natural Way of the Horse 'Life Skills', and if it provided them with helpful human life skills also, the reason for these lower answers could be because of the newness of the Natural Way of the Horse 'Life Skills'.

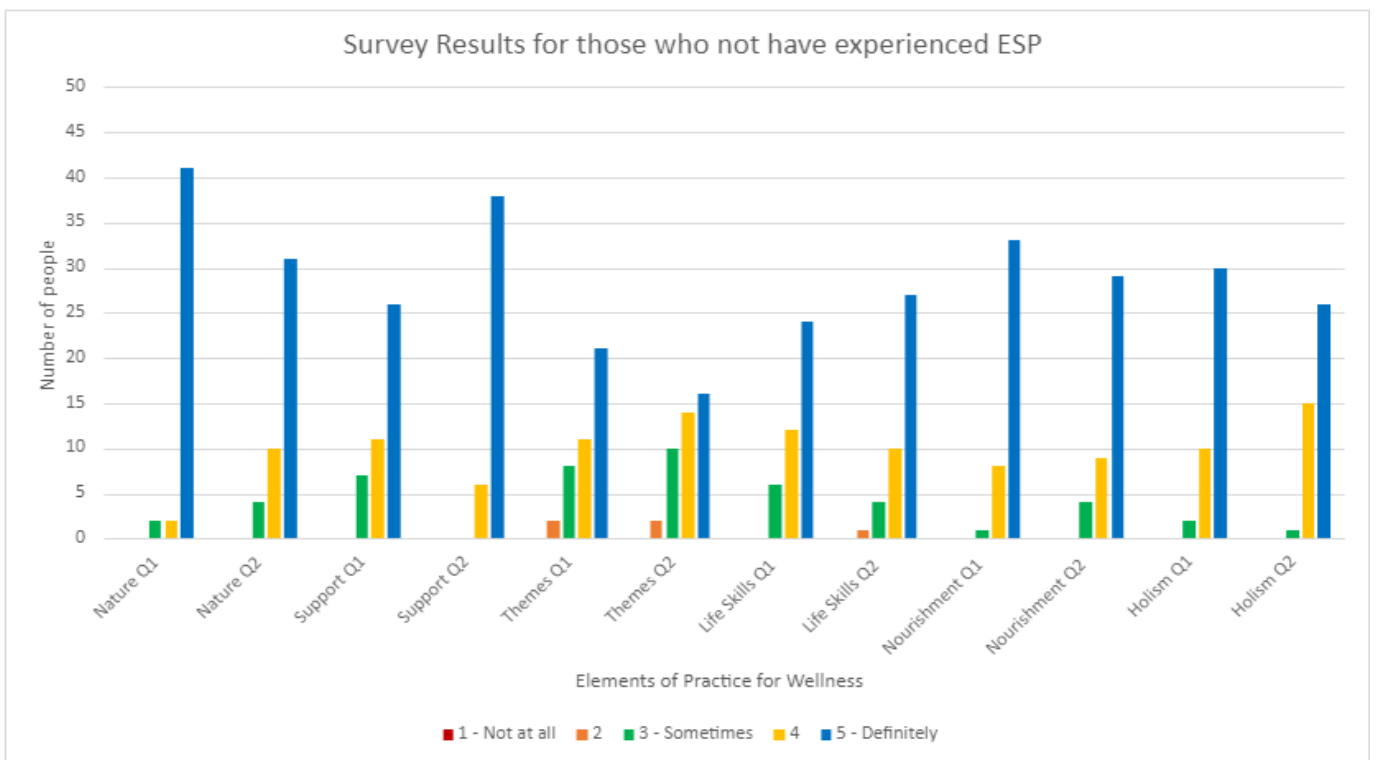
Nourishment:

The Nourishment element of practice results shows that many participants feel Nourishment through healthy foods, drinks, and social experiences within their ESP session. For those few who answered in the lower end of the scale, this indicates that they view this element differently.

Holism:

The helpful results for the Holism element of practice show how much participants value being viewed as a 'whole' and unique person and feel that this holistic approach has contributed to their personal learning, growth and healing experiences. Very few participants answered on the lower end of the scale; this shows how a holistic approach contributes to the overall wellness of those who experience ESP.

Group Two: Those who have not experienced ESP:



Research Findings for Group two: 46 respondents

General overview:

82% of participants were female, and 17% were male. The participant age range was not as diverse as the first survey, with ages from 25 to over 65, with 41% between 45-54. 56% of participants heard about ESP through word of mouth and 19% other. 73% of participants answered other about their relationship to ESP, and 15% were from an organisation. 80% of those who responded from an organisation felt that as an organisation that they use some or all of the ESP elements of practice



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within their organisation; these organisations include Mission Australia, Key Assets, Baptcare and Wendy Roberts Occupational Therapy. Only 20% felt they do not use any of these elements of practice in their organisation

Most participants are in Tasmania, with some answering from interstate, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom.

Again, as seen in the graph, results from the second survey came back quite positively, showing that most of the participants who have not experienced ESP have felt it would contribute to overall wellness, with most answers in the higher end of the scale for all the questions.

Nature:

The results for the first practice element of Nature show to be the most helpful out of all the elements in the not experienced survey, with over 40 participants answering 'definitely' to the first question. This shows participants feel having the practice element of Nature would most contribute to the overall wellness of those who experience ESP.

Support:

The element of practice (Support) has shown to be quite beneficial in the eyes of those who have not experienced ESP. With over 35 participants stating that 'Support' through compassionate, meaningful, authentic relationships is beneficial for overall wellness. This shows that this practice element is beneficial, showing that participants see how support is beneficial in ESP.

Themes:

Even though the result for this element of practice is the most diverse, it still shows that participants would find Themes beneficial in ESP, contributing to personal growth, learning, and healing experiences. As well as providing a sense of connection with others. Few participants expressed the feeling that this would not be beneficial, with some answering sometimes or lower on the scaling questions.



Life Skills:

Even though the result for this element of practice is the most diverse, it still shows that participants would find Life Skills beneficial in ESP; and would contribute to their own life skills. Few participants expressed the feeling that this would not be beneficial, with some answering sometimes or lower on the scaling questions. This could indicate that some might not understand this element of practice as much as others.

Nourishment:

The results from the practice element Nourishment shows that many participants would find Nourishment through healthy foods, drinks and social experiences beneficial in ESP.

Participants for this survey questions did not answer lower than sometimes; this shows how many participants feel it would be beneficial. Between 25 to 35 participants responded 'definitely' to the two questions about Nourishment.

Holism:

The results from the practice element Holism shows that many participants would value being viewed as a 'whole' and unique person and feel that this holistic approach would contribute to their personal learning, growth and healing experiences.

Participants for these survey questions did not answer lower than sometimes; this shows how many participants feel it would be beneficial, with between 25 to 30 participants answering 'definitely' to the two questions about Holism.

Comparison of both surveys:

Both these surveys follow a very similar pattern, with both groups of participants feeling less sure about the elements of practice (Themes and Life Skills). It seems those who have experienced ESP show a slightly more diverse range of answers.



Personal Note from the Researcher:

My name is Daisy Rivers; I did my undergraduate in counselling and am just about to finish completing my Master of Social Work. I very much enjoyed completing this research project with Equine Supported Programs. I have a significant interest in animals and love what ESP stands for. I feel I am a very holistic person, and I feel my values align with those of ESP, creating a perfect place to complete this research project.

Encouraging Survey Feed back comments about ESP :

uniquely powerful to be with animals and nature guided by a gentle caring soul. It's a beautiful program

I have completed this with my own experience of EAP, but have watched a client I bring to each session develop in confidence, maturity and feels safe and valued every session.

It is a life affirming experience, allowing time & space for internal and external reflection and experiences on many levels

Absolutely love the ESP program, it was significantly beneficial for my clients, and for my own overall Wellbeing just by being present for the client's sessions. Michelle has been an incredible mentor and teacher to these young people.

this is a fantastic experience for anyone who wishes to be involved

I have the tools to focus on my emotions and how to cope with them. I just need some put them into practice.

I am a parent of a young adult experiencing ESP for the first time - it made such a difference to my child's life.

It has literally been life changing, I was very alone in this world, when referred and very depressed. Attending is a major part of the week for me still 3yrs later.

I attended during a time of great personal turbulence and through time spent I realised the only change began with me.

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Would recommend it for others

So nourishing



Group one survey questions:

Nature:

1. Do you feel 'Nature Based Experiences' (including all nature and animal experiences) have contributed to enhancing your overall wellness?
2. Do you feel allowing a 'Natural Process' to unfold for yourself and others has benefited your overall wellness and relationships with others?

Support:

3. Have you felt 'Supported' through ESP's self-empowered / self-determined approach (i.e. gentle 'being with' guidance and choices, more-so than advising) to enhance your overall personal wellness, sense of purpose and fulfillment?
4. Have you felt 'Supported' through compassionate, meaningful, authentic (honest) relationships?

Themes:

5. Have 'Themes' (as a gentle focus) during sessions contributed to your personal learning, growth & healing experiences?
6. Have 'Themes' provided you with helpful meaning-making, clarity and a sense of connection to self and others?

Life Skills:

7. Have ESP's Natural Way of the Horse 'Life Skills' (Aware & Grounded; Curious & Engaged; Honest & Clear; Outside & with Nature; Reflect & Recover) provided you with helpful human life skills also?
8. Have ESP's Care & Fair for All guidelines (Think Safe; Stay Calm; Be Friendly; Ask for Help) provided you with helpful 'Safety Life Skills' also?

Nourishment:



9. Have you experienced a sense of 'Nourishment & Nurturing' through the provision of healthy foods (and drinks) for self and / or the animals or nature aspects?

10. Have you experienced a sense of 'Nourishment & Nurturing' through meaningful social experiences with others of own kind?

Holism:

11. Has ESP's 'Holistic' approach (through valuing individuals as a 'whole' and unique) supported your overall wellness?

12. Has ESP's 'Holistic' approach (as above) contributed to your personal learning, growth and healing experience?

Group two survey questions:

Nature:

1. Do you feel 'Nature Based Experiences' (including all nature and animal experiences) contribute to enhancing overall wellness?

2. Do you feel allowing a 'Natural Process' to unfold for self and others benefits overall wellness and relationships with others?

Support:

3. Do you feel 'Support' through a self-empowered / self-determined approach (i.e. gentle 'being with' guidance and choices, more-so than advising) is beneficial for overall personal wellness, sense of purpose and fulfillment?

4. Do you feel 'Support' through compassionate, meaningful, authentic (honest) relationships is beneficial for overall wellness?

Themes:



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5. Do you feel having a 'Theme' (i.e. Relationships, Nature, Feelings, Trust, Wellness etc.) as a gentle focus, contributes to personal learning, growth & healing experiences?

6. Do you feel 'Themes' are supportive for helpful meaning-making, clarity and a sense of connection to self and others?

Life Skills:

7. Do you feel ESP's Natural Way of the Horse 'Life Skills' (Aware & Grounded; Curious & Engaged; Honest & Clear; Outside & with Nature; Reflect & Recover) are helpful human life skills also?

8. Do you feel ESP's Care & Fair for All guidelines (Think Safe; Stay Calm; Be Friendly; Ask for Help) are helpful 'Safety Life Skills' also?

Nourishment:

9. Do you feel 'Nourishment & Nurturing' through the provision of healthy foods (and drinks) for self and / or the animal or nature aspects support overall wellness?

10. Do you feel 'Nourishment & Nurturing' through meaningful social experiences with others of own kind is helpful for overall wellness?

Holism:

11. Do you feel ESP's 'Holistic' approach (through valuing individuals as a 'whole' and unique) is supportive for overall wellness?

12. Do you feel ESP's Holistic approach (as above) contributes to personal learning, growth and healing experiences?