

HEARTBEAT SERVING WOUNDED WARRIORS®

At Heartbeat, we provide emergency assistance, morale-building, and innovative therapeutic services for Wounded Warriors and their families

Let the Healing Begin...®



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Back In The Saddle Warriors®

Equine-assisted Therapy

Back in the Saddle Warriors® (BITS) is Heartbeat's clinical and evidence based Equine Assisted Therapy which consists of American Hippotherapy.

For Wounded Warriors to include Vietnam forward to Global War On Terror /OIF/ OEF who are either active duty or out of the military including any branch in WA state. A Physical Therapist with American Hippotherapy Association Level II training and PATH Instructors set the therapy. Volunteers are also used as sidewalkers.



BITS Brochure
Click to Open



Movement of the horse is super important. We match the rider's needs with the type of movement a particular horse can provide.

Also TRUST is a huge component (Warriors have a lot of trust issues because of what they have been through). Trust in the horse, trust in the team, trust in THEMSELVES. Which is why we start slow.

We start with ground work: grooming, and teaching horse body language so the Warrior knows how to read the energy he or she is putting out. Trust development is also one of the reasons why we frequently have them close their eyes for short periods of time.

Stretching and warm up is standard for the horse and Warrior.



This evidence-based therapy improves muscle strength, psychological well-being, motor development, balance, and coordination.

Therapy addresses many injuries including:

- Spinal cord injuries
- Speech injuries
- Loss of limbs
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Traumatic brain injury
- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
- Diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Cancer

Activities in hippotherapy are completely dependent on what we are trying to accomplish for that Warrior.

One might need to increase strength in their legs, another might need to improve spine mobility etc. You cannot have rigid protocols in this field. You have to, as a therapist, go with the flow ... plan A, plan B. Whatever it takes.

Also there are a minimum number of people involved. It is NOT a group therapy, it is one on one.



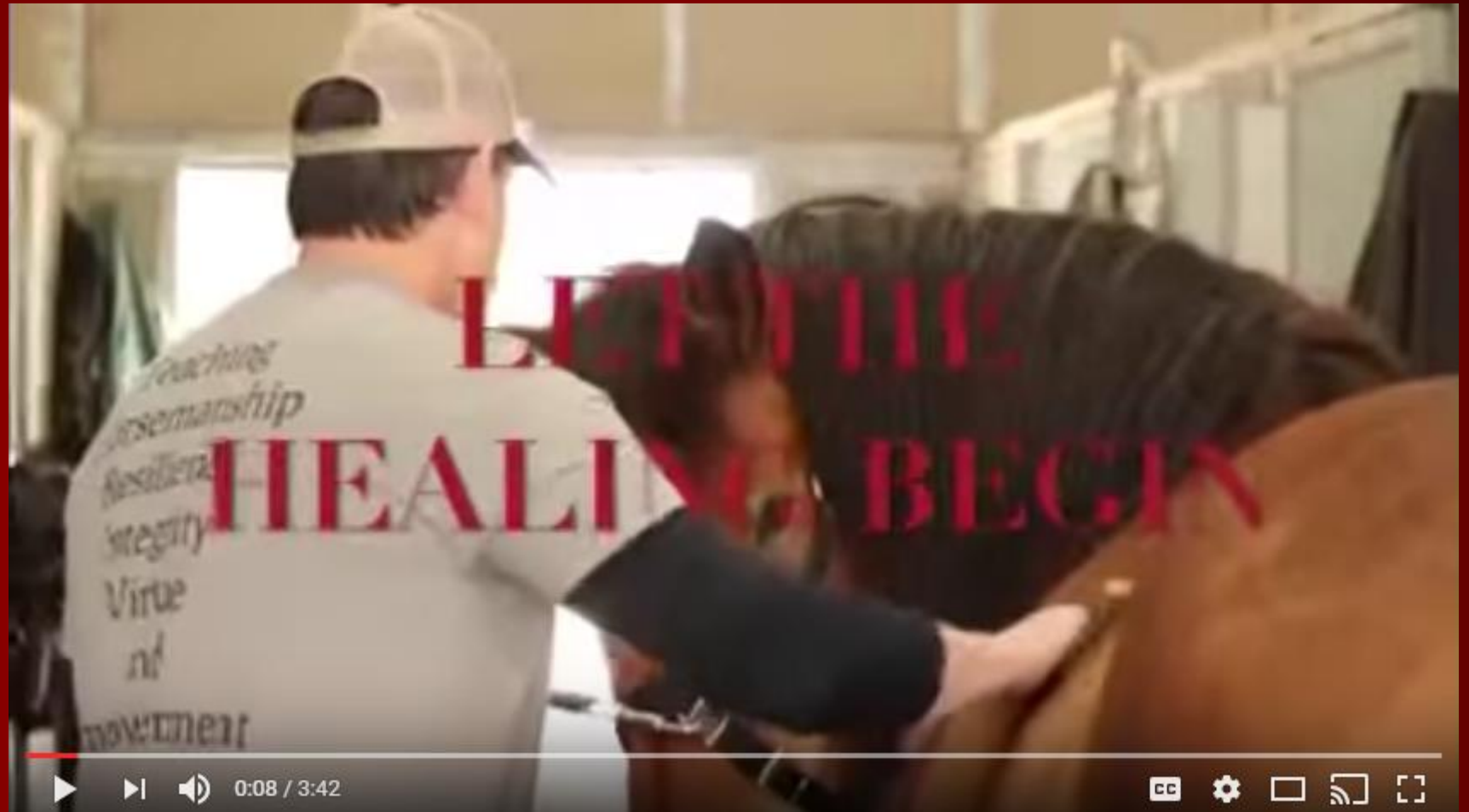


Why is hippotherapy a better form of PT both for physical and psychological issues and injuries?

It is the number of repetitions that can be accomplished in a short period of time, multiple areas of the brain are being simultaneously stimulated which opens the brain up to new learning. Moving forward through space at the same time you are exercising is much more powerful psychologically.

What makes hippotherapy so warm and engaging for the Warrior is that it is not a clinical setting. That is huge for the Warriors who have had to sit in so many window less rooms with medical intervention.

Connection to the animal and the ability for the horse to call the Warrior on their anxiety level. That is mirrored back to the Warrior in a way that is easy to receive. The Warrior is not TOLD about the anxiety level, he or she SEES it in themselves through the horse and is able to receive help in dialing it down. The same with anger.



Hippotherapy also allows the PT team to work on the Warrior's spinal rotation while their pelvis and hips are being simultaneously worked. That can NOT be done physically in a clinic.



SCUBA Warriors®

Therapeutic scuba diving for Wounded Warriors

Heartbeat Serving Wounded Warriors® pays for therapeutic scuba diving for injured service members from Vietnam forward to include Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), including OIF/OEF. We call this program Scuba Warriors®.

Warriors with physical injuries (including Multiple Sclerosis and Cancer), and/or psychological injuries, can benefit from this healing activity.



SCUBA Diving is Amazing



Class Information



This is an international certification course

- Skill based learning combined with education
- Homework, reading, group work in class and pool time
- A typical class involves
 - 4 days of 2 hours in the classroom
 - 4 days of 2 hours in pool learning skills
 - 2 day with 2 dives each of OPEN WATER instruction



There are up to 6 Wounded Warriors per SCUBA class

Work towards some therapeutic goals:

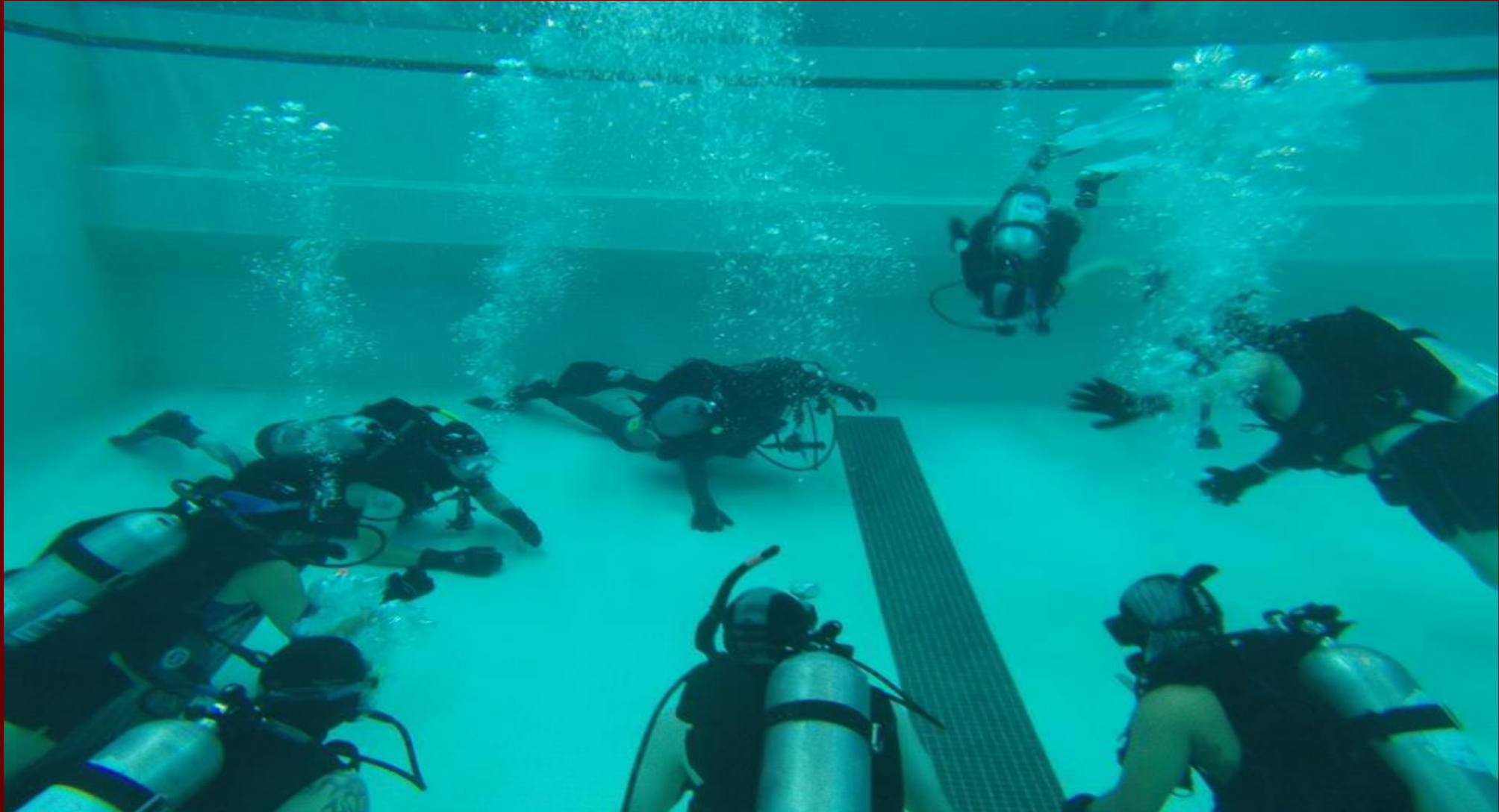
For example

- Conquering anxiety
- Decreasing frustration
- Decreasing body and head pain
- Learning to dive
- Increasing communication skills
- Decreasing isolation



Come to class with a willingness to share, have fun and learn

SCUBA Brochure Click to Open



Heartbeat's therapeutic scuba diving can help Wounded Warriors improve many areas of their health:

- Motor skills
- Muscle strength
- Blood flow
- Cardiovascular strength
- Pain reduction
- Mobility
- Psychological well-being
- Confidence



Life Under the Water ... Peace

Benefits Psychologically:

Painful, major injuries dramatically change the Warriors' roles in their jobs, in their families, and in society.

Sometimes they can no longer contribute. This is devastating to natural protectors, who push themselves to extremes, take charge, and perform courageous acts daily. One result is isolation.

Scuba diving, unlike many therapeutic activities, requires a buddy system. This social side of diving fights the long-term, damaging effects of social separation.

The underwater environment is also an opportunity for Wounded Warriors to realize how capable they are. Disabilities seem to disappear as they experience pain-free movement for the first time. The Wounded Warrior's newfound success contributes to positive, lifelong changes. Everyone benefits: Warrior, family, and society.



Scuba Warrior Chad Sullivan describes his experience with the program





K9 Healing Warriors

Heartbeat's newest therapeutic program

K9 Healing Warriors is available to any Wounded Warrior, in WA State; wounded or injured during Combat deployment who served in GWOT to include OIF and OEF.



K9 Healing Warriors

For those Warriors in WA state with TBI, PTSD and physical injuries, our program is set up to allow Wounded Warriors to get their lives back and be able to renegotiate the everyday challenges they face. Now they are not alone. The service dog gives the Warrior the confidence to go out into the community. He/she has his/her own buddy, who has his/her back. After the success of our pilot study, Heartbeat is implementing this program, for Warriors in WA state, with the hopes of accommodating ten warriors and their dogs in training during the first year.

This program will work and train Warriors who already have their own young dog. The Warrior and service dog team will train together. Some of the training might include: turning lights off and on, waking Warriors from nightmares, accompanying the Warrior in public places, assisting in balance, assisting with prosthetic devices and performing calming behaviors to facilitate reorientation. Also, the hypervigilance that most Wounded Warriors feel is reduced with the service dog.



Heartbeat is contracting with Cascade Service Dogs in Olympia. Training is extensive and will last a minimum of one year. As with all our other therapies, Heartbeat pays for all the costs.

This program is available to any Veteran, in WA state, wounded or injured during Combat Deployment who served in GWOT to include OIF and OEF.



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All of Our Programs are offered at no charge to the Wounded Warriors
and their families



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