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## SOURCES AND METHODS

- To observe and analyze the most frequent emotional manifestations in elderly people in the beginning stages of dementia;
- To register and monitor the psycho-physiological correlates of emotional reactions;
- To verify the efficacy of Validation treatment in reducing the most disturbing emotional states.

That method can be practiced with individuals or groups.

Validation is a true and appropriate non-pharmacological treatment, which makes use of different techniques depending on the stage of the illness, suitable for facilitating the relationship with the old person affected by dementia, preventing difficult moments and managing behavioral disturbances. The common denominator is the empathetic contact, 'to see from the other person's perspective as if from our own' without losing the 'as-if'. This gives significance to the daily act of caring. The goal is to confer dignity and restore value to a life that has been lived, that was compromised by the first phases of dementia. The worker also benefits from becoming 'validating' in the sense of giving value. The training course to become a Validation Worker is challenging, spread over a period of at least 6 months to allow for implementing continuous and gradual change and to arrive at the end of the course with a mastery of the techniques to be used in a spontaneous way. The goal is to move inside the relationship in the most appropriate manner, while maintaining authenticity.

The Validation method has been used with about twenty elderly persons with dementia in the early stages, who frequented day care centers and residential facilities in the province of Milan. The study began in November 2011 and ended in October 2012. As a tool for observation and verification, we used a form specially designed to detect somatic and neurophysiological correlates of the emotional reactions of the elderly persons before and after the treatment. Video recording was also used to analyze the changes in non-verbal

ELDERLY PERSON	AGE	EDUCATION	MMSE	FEIL PHASE
B.A.	76	primary	22	first
C.C.	89	primary	9	second
C.T.	89	primary	18	First
D.M.	80	primary	8	Second
L.R.	89	Middle school	21	First
M.A.	83	primary	24	first
M.N.	75	primary	15	Second
M.A.	76	primary	14	Second
M.M.	89	primary	5	Third
M.A.	80	primary	21	First
M.M.	86	primary	6	Third
M.L.	83	primary	19	first
M.A.	66	primary	23	first
P.E.	79	primary	14	first
P.C.	70	primary	22	first
R.R.	88	primary	13	second
S.G.	79	Middle school	12	second
S.A.	84	superior school	9	second
S.G.	87	primary	n.s.	second
T.P.	80	university degree	6	second
V.A.	85	primary	22	first

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIONS IN VALIDATION INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS		
Name Elderly Person .....		
Validation worker .....		
Put a tick to indicate the presence of the indicator		
	data	
	session n.	
	phase	
EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIONS OF THE FACE		
Observation	Before	After
Sad face		
Inexpressive face		
Eyes closed		
Eyes open		
Focused gaze and good contact		
Unfocused gaze		
Relaxed expression		
Frowning expression		
Wrinkled nose		
Pursed lips		
Jutting chin		
Smiles		
Cries		
Screams		
Sings		
Yawns		
POSTURAL MOVEMENTS		
Observations	Before	After
Rapid movements		
Slow and calm movements		
No movements at all		
Restless with specific gestures		
Sharp, accusing, trident voice tone		
Deep voice tone		
Tense muscles		
Relaxed muscles		
Closed posture		
Open posture		
Wandering		
PHYSIOLOGY		
Observations	Before	After
HRV (Heart Rate Variability):		
Heart rate		
Sympathetic activity ANS *		
Parasympathetic activity ANS *		
Balance Sympathetic/Paras.		
GSR (Galvanic Skin Resistance):	Middle value:	
Tonic activity 50-300 Kohms *		
Phasic activity 2-50 Kohms *		

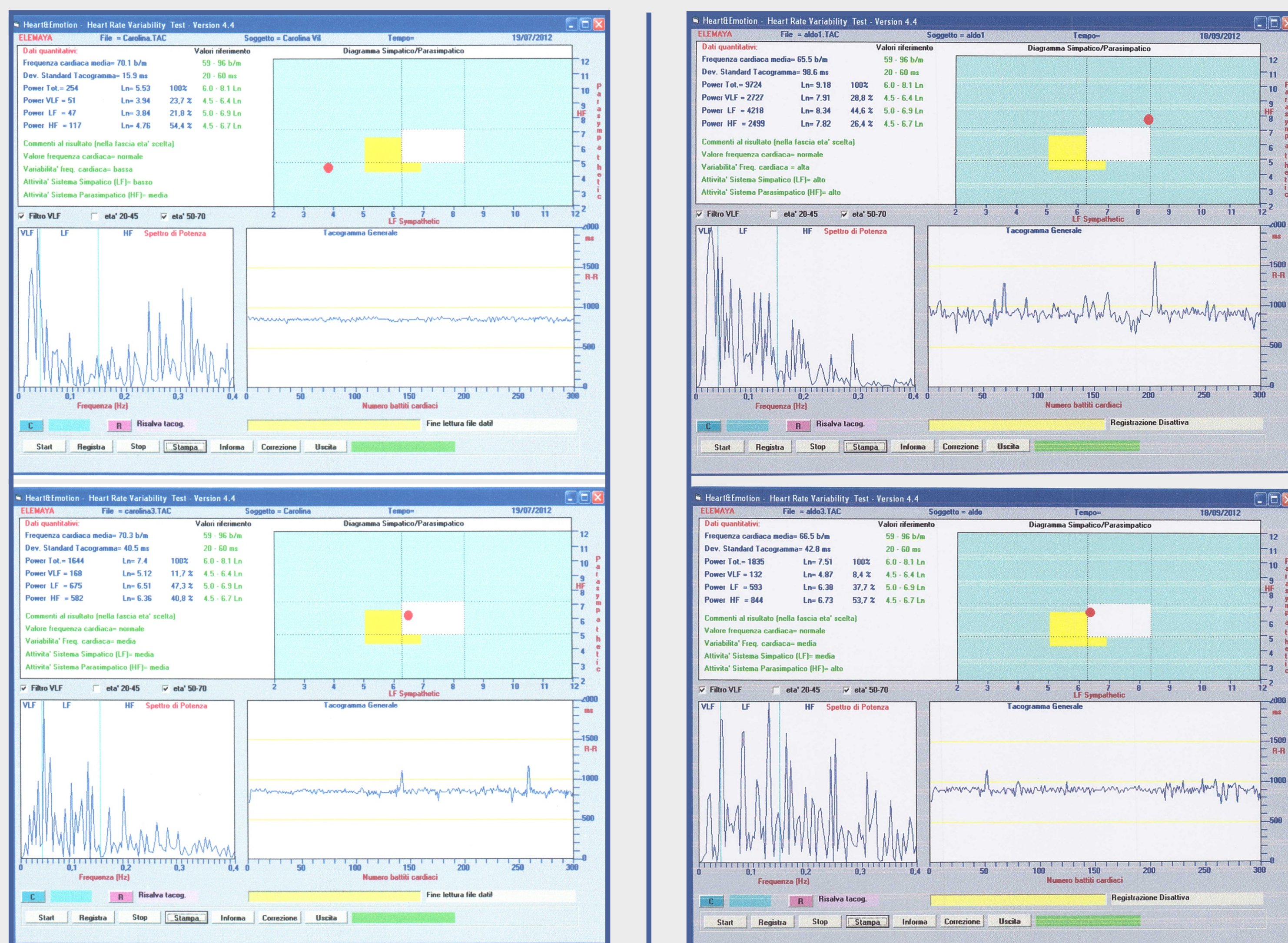
\* The frequencies of these indicators are measured with Instruments Etemaya, Heart and Emotion

communication, from the beginning to the end of the session. The effectiveness of the Validation method has also been tested through the use of the Heart&Emotion instrument, which made it possible to monitor the emotional reactions, using two psychophysiological variables: Galvanic Skin Resistance (GSR) and Heart Rate Variability (HRV).

It was observed that the most frequent emotional reactions among elderly persons affected by dementia are anxiety, fear, anger, and sadness, as evidenced by emotional, postural, physiological behaviors.

**BEFORE**

## AFTER



- A decrease in anxiety, tension and in some cases, aggression, by allowing the manifestation and expression of emotions;
- A fostering of emotional changes;
- An increase of self-esteem and well-being;
- A reduction in the need for physical and chemical restraints.

Moreover, the method proved to be interesting and useful for the families involved.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** *Feil N. Validation il Metodo Feil*, Minerva Edizioni (2008); *Morton I. La persona con demenza*, Erikson Edizioni (2004); *Neal e Wright Validation Therapy for Dementia - Cochrane Review* (2009);

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