

Validation News

A Newsletter from the Validation Training Institute

Validation is a method of communicating with and helping disoriented very old people. It is a practical way of working that helps reduce stress, enhance dignity and increase happiness. Validation is built on an empathetic attitude and a holistic view of individuals.



First Validation Worker Course in China

by Eric Portnoff, CVT
International Director of Memory Care &
Validation Training
Meridian Senior Living

In August 2015, Naomi Feil traveled to Beijing, China to provide an historic introduction of Validation in that country. By all accounts, Naomi's visit was a huge hit and created quite a splash in the senior living and Alzheimer's community in China.

China is facing an aging population crisis with a serious shortage of individuals in the care giver generation. They are looking to the West--and especially America--for modern ways to care for their aging population. The Chinese government is supporting partnerships between Chinese and Western companies to develop state-of-the-art senior living communities to spearhead the development of a professional assisted living sector in China. One such partnership is between Sino-Ocean Land Senior Living of China and Meridian Senior Living of the USA. This group invited Naomi to Beijing last year to begin the development of Validation in China.

Continued on Page 2

What's Inside

News 1st Validation Worker Course in China

Facility Receives "Quality Validation" Label

IVvalidate2Connect Results

Conferences Validation at Music Therapy Conference

What's New New Employee
New Masters
New Validation Team
New Italian Project
Website Hosts

Wisdom from Elders Things You May Not Know about Naomi
Poems: Growing Old



Stay Up-2-Date on Validation Announcements

Like us on Facebook, follow us on LinkedIn, Google + and Twitter: Validation Training Institute

Continued from page 1

First Worker Course in China cont.



Students participating in a Validation exercise

Almost 1,000 people attended Naomi's workshop in Beijing, and the media got involved, interviewing her on television. Her visit had a tremendous impact, inspiring many people to see the Alzheimer's experience differently. As a result, individuals and organizations are taking new approaches and exploring new pathways in China's response to Alzheimer's and the aging population crisis. After her visit, Sino-Ocean/Meridian decided to sponsor the first Validation Worker course in China and work toward developing an AVO. I was fortunate enough to be selected as the teacher for that course, which has resulted in the certification of 10 Validation Workers so far, with 2 more on the way.

Teaching Validation in China was an interesting and rewarding experience.

My biggest revelation was how similar people are in a very different part of the world. The basic human needs and emotions really are universal, and the situations and scenarios elders with dementia and care givers play out are identical to those I see in the USA. Elders basically miss home, want family, look for purpose through work and struggle the same ways people do in other parts of the world. And their care givers divert them, lie to them with good intentions, and argue with them about reality in China, too! So Validation is a breath of fresh air and a hopeful alternative in a part of the world that is starting at the very beginning.

Working with Chinese students was rewarding and enjoyable. In general, they were very studious, took the classes seriously and took lots of notes. Encouraging them to participate was a challenge, though. They do not volunteer, so I had to pick them and get the whole group to clap in order to get them to come up for exercises and role plays. Once on the stage, however, they participated with emotion and passion.

Working with a Chinese interpreter was a new experience, but less of a challenge than I expected. Having to pause between each significant thought actually allowed time to formulate the next concept, which was helpful. My Chinese translator, Emma Guo, was excellent and understood the deeper significance of the material, and we developed a rhythm and partnership that worked well. On the other hand, the pace of communicating concepts was effectively cut in half. Spending more time on the concepts left less time for exercises and role plays.

Despite the challenges of working in a country with a very different language and culture, teaching the first Validation Worker course in China was a colorful, challenging, exciting and fun experience. In addition to the classes themselves, the people I worked with were extremely generous, intelligent, helpful, kind, humorous and fun. Tasting several styles of authentic Chinese food in both fancy restaurants and from street-food vendors was a real pleasure. And who can argue with opportunities to visit the Forbidden City, the National Museum of China and the Great Wall? For all of these reasons I am grateful for this unique opportunity.

What's New!

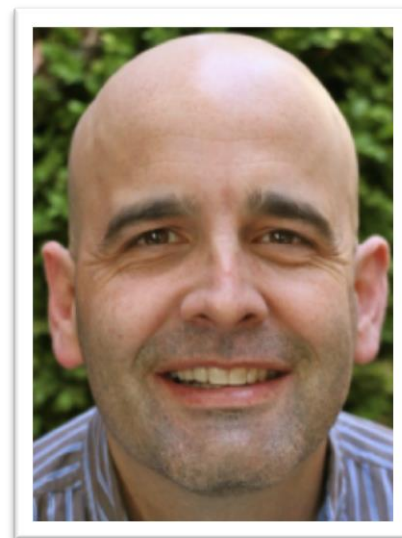
Dan Hiestand, VTI Director of Development

Dan is excited and proud to be a new member of the VTI team. After more than two decades working as a reporter, editor and marketing professional, he joined VTI this past April.

Prior to VTI, he worked as a nonprofit fundraiser in Eugene, Ore., for an organization that housed and supported individuals and families who were homeless. As VTI's first director of development, his primary goal is to raise monies through grants and donations.

"I'm thrilled and honored to lead this effort," said Dan. "VTI is doing important, meaningful work, and I look forward to helping the organization reach the next level."

For questions about fundraising, Dan invites you to contact him at development@vfvalidation.org.



New Certified Validation Masters

What a Journey – by Cinzia Siviero

I've known the Validation method for a long time; I've needed instruments to manage the difficult relationship with confused elderly persons in the Alzheimer-unit where I used to work. Captivated by the Basic Principles of the method I never stopped, I carried on. I became a Group Leader, Presenter and later Teacher. And now this important goal: Master. A hard, but surely, great journey! I don't feel like I have concluded something, but have achieved a goal: I now have other goals to accomplish that are waiting for me.

Looking back I see my teachers as great reference points, I've learned a lot by them. I see Naomi Feil speaking to those big amounts of people, and me, so small, next to her. I see the struggles as a teacher, the hours spent on the feedbacks, and also the great satisfactions. When I look back, I see also all of the elderly persons I was lucky to talk with and lucky to know. Pure energy! Listening and validating them, giving them courage, helping them with their cognitive abilities - I believe this made me a better person.

Looking forward excites me even more, because I have new things to do like being part of the Education Committee and supporting the others young, amazing Italian teachers; using my experience to help people is very rewarding.

I would like to encourage myself and all of us to continue to be motivated, without ever losing our primary target, like Naomi taught us: listening and using empathy recognizes the value of the person. That's something that makes the relationship dignified, something that makes the life dignified.



Cinzia Siviero, CVM (center) leading a Validation group

What's New! Con't

New Validation Masters Con't

Hello Dear Colleagues,

My name is Beate Scherer and I come from Germany; born on December 31, 1964 in Mannheim. I'm married; my husband's name is Jürgen; he is a nursing home director and we have a 17 year old daughter, Chiara who is following in our footsteps. She loves Validation and wants to become a Validation teacher. We also have a dog, Maya, who has become an important guide in my work. My husband and I share a love of music – specifically rock music. We've played in the same band since 1992; he's a drummer, I sing and write songs. You can find elements of Validation in my lyrics.



Beate Scherer, CVM

In 1996, when I was working as a teacher in a nursing school, I saw a workshop with Naomi Feil and was so blown away that I completed the three-level training in Validation:

1996 Validation Worker in Berlin

1997 Validation Group Practitioner in Switzerland

1998 Validation Teacher in Switzerland

In 1998, I organized the first Level 1 course in Mannheim. In 1999, I received the State-wide prize in Innovation for the successful introduction of Validation.

Also in 1999, I brought Validation to the Mannheim Academy for Social Professions, of the German Red Cross. Since then, I've taught 24 Level 1 courses (18 certified and 6 non-certified) and 7 certified Level 2 courses.

Since 2000: I've worked independently with many different organizations throughout my State as a Validation Teacher.

- advised and supported several workshops with Naomi Feil at the Mannheim Academy and the German Red Cross in Ludwigshafen
- taught Validation at many schools and academies, not only in the field of gerontopsychiatry but also guest students from China;
- given Validation presentations and established Validation in many institutions,
- trained police (including the police chief), ambulance personnel and the Alzheimer Association
- took part in panel discussions at symposia
- established Validation as an accepted method at the Training Center for Welfare in Stuttgart
- supported social work students writing their theses in Validation
- offered supervision to students and colleagues in nursing homes directly on the work floor.
- began family support groups
- annually present Validation at the nursing symposium in Stuttgart

Because I believe that it's important to always practice, I lead a weekly Validation group that begun in 1997. Guests in our group have included: Naomi Feil, Minister President Malu Dreyer from the Pfalz, colleagues from all disciplines from nursing homes, guests from China and Japan, many family members as well as students of social pedagogy.

In closing I want to recommend Qigong. It has become a fixed part of my training. It is a wonderful compliment to the theme, centering in Validation.

I am delighted to work as a Master in Validation since this year.

Best greetings from Mannheim, Germany,

Beate Scherer

What's New! Con't

News from Validation in the German Speaking Area

From Friday evening, August 19th till Sunday, the 21st, the first German-speaking Validation Master Meeting took place in Wachenheim, Germany. Hedwig Neu, AVO Representative and one of the 5 German-speaking Validation Masters, was happy to organize the Meeting in the AVO offices in Wachenheim. Unfortunately, Petra Fercher couldn't participate. At the end of the meeting, the group summarized the following results:

The German speaking Validation Master Team is born. This gives us the possibility to exchange our experiences on a regular basis and work more effectively on Validation developments in the German-speaking areas. We decided to meet personally at least once a year and via online or telephone meetings regarding future questions and themes when necessary. We all are grateful for this new team.



From left to right: Heidrun Tegeler, Beate Scherer, Hedwig Neu, Gunvor Sramek. Not pictured Petra Fercher.

The First Establishment in France has Obtained the Label QUALITY VALIDATION

The Residence "Le Septier d'Or" in Treize Septiers (Vendée) obtained this status in June 5, 2016. The certificate is the highest level of quality for home for the elderly disoriented who practice the Validation method.

After several training sessions in individual Validation and Validation group, two certified teachers in Validation from APVAPA were able to assess the results of this approach.

Congratulations again to the Residence "Le Septier d'Or" and his team!

Validation is Being Presented at the National Conference of the American Music Therapy Association

We are excited to announce that for the first time Validation will be presented at the National Conference of the American Music Therapy Association. Ashley Newbrough (CVW, CGP) and Jamée Ard (CVW), both music therapists, will be presenting a paper on combining music therapy with Validation® at the national conference of the American Music Therapy Association, taking place **November 10 - 13, 2016** in *Sandusky, Ohio*. Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy degree program.

Tech Company Partners with Validation Training Institute

IEQ Technology in Springfield, Ore., steps up to help VTI with technology services.

Editor's note: The Validation Training Institute (VTI) depends on a large network of outside organizations to accomplish its work. Moving into the future, VTI seeks to recognize these groups through "Partner Appreciation" articles that highlight their important contributions. Today is the first installment in that series.

From the time he and his wife, Jenny, founded IEQ Technology in 2011, IEQ President Timothy G. Woolley said giving back to the community was an important piece of his company's operational plans.



"For a small company we do quite a bit of philanthropic work," Timothy Woolley said. "We feel that providing support to worthy causes is something that every company has a moral obligation to pursue. While small companies can't contribute as much as larger organizations we feel that we can all find ways to be helpful that are within our means."

IEQ Technology is a software development and consulting firm specializing in business, research and e-learning software. The company employs a total of nine people that includes software engineers, developers, designers and office staff.

"VTI depends greatly on technology for its operations, especially considering that the people we serve—as well as our staff—are based in remote locations spread across the planet," said Vicki de Klerk-Rubin, VTI's executive director. "Web hosting and related technology support services are some of our most significant expenses, so this contribution is huge for us. We are extremely grateful for IEQ Technology's generosity."

Timothy Woolley said his company hopes to help VTI with its mission well into the future.

"We plan on being a long-term partner with the Validation Training Institute, providing any services that we are capable of providing," he said. "We feel that the work VTI does is meaningful and most importantly, kind. We're happy to support its mission."

Things You May Not Know about Naomi's Early Years

Recently, I was sent two huge boxes of contracts for Naomi's past workshops and asked to put information into spreadsheets so we can see the history of Validation. As I go through these historical documents, I am finding out just what an amazing woman Naomi Feil is.

Here are some of my impressions and surprises that I found out along the way. Did you know that in addition to hotel meeting rooms and conference centers, Naomi has spoken in gymnasiums, churches (Baptist, Episcopal, Interfaith), hospitals, nursing homes, colleges, convention centers, banquet halls, restaurants and theaters?

Naomi has spoken to groups of doctors, osteopaths, activity therapists, certified nursing assistants, nurses support groups, nursing home staff, and even the National Assoc. of Meal Programs.

In order to get her message to others, Naomi had to be willing to speak to anyone, for any length of time, and go anywhere. I found one contract where she agreed to fly out to Albuquerque, NM to do a 2 hour workshop, even though the contract stated that she must be hired to talk for at least 3 hours.

Things You May Not Know about Naomi's Early Years Cont.

Someone must have impressed on her the need for Validation in New Mexico for her to go there for a 2 hour talk. Naomi is still willing to go anywhere to speak about Validation as is evidenced by her trip to China last year.

I found it amazing that she was also willing to address the topic of sexuality expressed by people with dementia way back in the early 80's and even recognized that caregiver stress needed to be addressed in order for people to avoid burnout and get more joy in their work.

In addition to being a pioneer in the field of geriatrics, Naomi pioneered as a working-woman struggling to have it all. In addition to raising 4 kids, she scheduled and contracted her own speaking engagements, took care of the paperwork, arranged transportation and the equipment to show her 16mm films. She also wrote her own film scripts, did research and wrote articles on Validation.



Naomi scheduling a workshop in 1985

All of this was done on typewriters and then sent via the United States Postal Service. (I'm so used to my computer and receiving an answer the day I send off an email that I'd probably go nuts waiting to receive signed a contract that could be faxed or scanned to me.) If she spoke in Ohio, she drove herself to the speaking event and then got back home in time to cook dinner and help her children with their homework. If she spoke outside of Ohio then, she arranged for a babysitter to be there when the kids got home from school until Ed came home.

Back in the 80's if you wanted to hire Naomi to do a workshop you only paid \$450 per day or \$75/hr. Naomi needed a 16.mm sound movie projector and a person to run it plus a traveling mic with a long cord. People paid \$25 to hear her speak.

By the early 90's Naomi's fees were \$750/day and \$450/half day or less. Instead of needing a 16.mm sound movie projector, she needed a VCR in VHS format (not beta), flip chart, and clip on mic. People paid \$40 to hear her speak.

In case there is ever a Validation trivia game you might want to keep these bits of trivia in mind.

- By 1989 Naomi was an international speaker.
- Validation was still referred to as Fantasy Therapy in 1983
- The V/F in V/F Validation means Validation/Fantasy.

I'm still not finished entering all the contracts into the spreadsheet and I'm curious what new trivia will come out of these historical documents. In reflection, I'm awed by the intense work Naomi put into developing Validation and the efforts she put into spreading her pioneer work around the world.

Jana Stoddard, CVW
VTI Manager

Continued from page 7

“Il Filo della Memoria”

The project “Il Filo della Memoria” is the brainchild of some active Validation workers in two Alzheimer Cafés in Milan, Italy.

These Validation workers, with the support of Certified Validation Teacher, Cinzia Siviero, realized that most disoriented elderly are still living at home, entrusted to the care of their family members, often with very few means and in complete solitude. This is because they do not have the opportunity to attend an Alzheimer's Café or other care centers.

The aim of this project is to bring the Validation method into the homes of the elderly, thanks to Validation workers who are called into their homes for individual sessions. In this way, we take care of the elderly through a relationship full of empathy and listening, and we also support the family, who no longer feel isolated and learn new ways to interact with their elderly relatives.

More information: www.ilfilodellamemoria.it (in Italian)

An Alzheimer Café is a place where family caregivers and their relatives living with Alzheimer's, can go to relax, have a drink, interact with others in similar situations, get new ideas, hear lectures and share experiences.

Thank You for Supporting 'I Validate to Connect'!

The 2016 **"I Validate to Connect"** campaign officially ended on Oct. 15. This was VTI's first fundraising/advocacy campaign, and a chance for you (our supporters) to show you value Validation as a means for caregivers to connect with older adults experiencing dementia/disorientation.

In 2015, supporters helped VTI raise approximately \$50,000 to support the hiring of the organization's first grant writer. This year, the “I Validate to Connect” goal was to raise \$20,000 to help **provide seed funding** for the largest Validation study ever conducted *and* to spread the



word about Validation in general. In the end, we raised more than \$8,000 of that goal thanks to your efforts.

Supporters also stepped up to advocate for the Validation Method by using the hashtag “#IValidate2Connect” in their social media and sharing photos holding handmade “#IValidate2Connect” signs. This included dozens of employees and residents at **Meridian Senior Living**, our campaign's generous Foundation Level Sponsor (\$2,500).

In addition to many more anonymous donors not listed below, significant supporters of the 2016 "I Validate to Connect" campaign included:

Scott Averill	Kevin W. Carlin	Naomi Feil	Meridian Senior Living	Matching donation:
Frances Bulloff	Edward G. Feil	Steve Klotz	Victoria de Klerk-Rubin	In Memory of
				Linda Kalver

Thank you to everyone who stepped up, either financially or by helping us spread the word about the campaign through social media. Next year, we will be back with our second "I Validate to Connect" campaign, so stay tuned. Thank you!

Growing Old

A little more tired at the close of day;
A little less anxious to have our way;
A little less ready to fret and blame;
A little more care for a brother's name.

And so we are nearing the journey's end
Where time and eternity meet and blend.

A little less care for earthly gold;
A little more zest in the days of old.
A broader view, a more tolerant mind,
A little more love for all mankind,

A little more careful of what we say,
And so we are faring a-down the way.

A little more love for friends of youth;
A little more zeal for established truth.
A little more charity in our views;
A little less thirst for the passing news.

And so we are folding our tents away
And passing in silence at close of day.

HK Weil, Author

Please email Newsletter Publisher
jana@vfvalidation.org with any question,
comments, or suggestions. We accept
submissions for further newsletters.