

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.



Clinical Column

by Naomi Feil

This clinical column will focus on a situation regarding communicating with difficult family members.

Adele Knox, a Wife Who Cares

Place: The office of Administrator, Charles Armstrong, CEO of a 123 bed senior facility in a Chicago suburb. This is his third meeting with 74 years old Adele Knox. Her husband, age 88, diagnosed with severe Alzheimer's/dementia is incontinent and occasionally abusive. Mrs. Knox lives alone. For the past six months, she been calling nursing and social work staff daily, complaining about her husband's treatment. The director of nursing assured Charles that the entire nursing staff is working hard to toilet Dr. Knox on time. The staff feels that Mrs. Knox is suffering from mild memory loss. Mrs. Knox visits each day. On two occasions, she found that her husband had not been toileted. Their 47-year-old daughter is divorced, struggling to put her son through college, and not much help.

Charles: "I'm glad you came to see me. Our director of nursing tells me you are not happy with the way we are treating your husband."

Continued on Page

What's Inside

Clinical Column Adele Knox, a Wife Who Cares.

AVO Reports Annual reports from Authorized Validation Organizations from around the world

What's New Announcements
More tele-courses being offered in Fall 2014
New AVOs



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Clinical Column cont.

Continued from page 1



Adele: I never said a word to that woman. I would have nothing to do with her. She lies. You know that my husband is a doctor – not an M.D., but a man who can control himself if that aide, Whatsername, would get him to the toilet on time. My daughter is a trained dental assistant, and she would never use those cheap diapers on people. Breathing hard, Adele Knox pounds a swollen, arthritic fist on the desk for emphasis. She continues, eyes narrowed, tone accusing: We certainly pay you enough!

Charles, his voice gentle with compassion:

This is a hard time for you, Mrs. Knox. We all know how much you care about your husband. We're trying to keep him as Independent as possible.

Adele: Well, you're not trying hard enough! This is the fifth time in one week I found him soaking wet and smelly. It's the cheap labor you hire to save money. If you don't do something I will call the Ombudsman and The FCC. The government will get you out of business.

Charles, his voice calm, controlled:

Mrs. Knox, here is your husband's Care Plan. You know that he has Alzheimer's disease. He is completely incontinent. You can see that we take him to the toilet every two hours.

Adele: You are making up a lot of excuses. They told me this was a good Nursing home. Well, they were wrong. It stinks!

Charles, rising to end the interview, his voice firm, but caring:

I'm sorry you feel that way. I will talk to the nursing director. We'll see what we can do to make you feel better.

Adele, a bit assuaged:

You better do something. I can't take this anymore. I feel dizzy all the time. This place is terrible! She stalks out.

Validation Intervention: Adele Knox, unable to face her own occasional incontinence and increasing memory loss, alone and afraid of losing her independence, is unable to face her husband's reality. She projects her nameless anger and fear onto the nursing home. Facts mean nothing to her. The administrator can never convince her that the staff is working hard to help her husband. Charles, aware of Adele Knox' feelings of helplessness and rage, needs to *use empathy* to build a trusting relationship. He recalls a time when he was finishing his training, when his wife had a miscarriage, when he was alone in a strange city. Like Adele Knox, he projected his anger and fear of failure onto his faculty advisor, who responded with empathy.

In the next interview, he uses these Validation helping techniques:

Be aware of your own emotions and shelve them during the interview

Center

Calibrate: A careful observation of the physical characteristics of the client

Re-phrase with empathy

Reminisce

Use the client's Preferred Sense

Adele: (bursts into the Administrator's office without knocking.)

Mr. Armstrong! I just saw my husband. He was sitting in the same position as yesterday. That aide never took him to the toilet. You have done nothing to correct the situation. As soon as I get home, I will call the Ombudsman. I can't take it anymore. I feel terrible. I have an awful headache.

Clinical Column cont.

Continued from page 2

Charles: (lays aside his rising anger at Adele Knox' abrupt interruption; focuses on his **Center** – a spot two inches below his waist – inhales deeply through his nose, follows the breath mentally, and washes it out from his Center. He is now open to Adele Knox.)

Charles: (*Observes* Adele Knox' physical characteristics: Eyes narrow, lips tight, breath rapid in short spurts, chin juts forward, fingers pointing, accusing, voice high, harsh) *Re-phrases* – repeats the gist of what Adele Knox has said, picking up her key words and her underlying emotions *with empathy*. He pictures his wife after her miscarriage.)

Charles: Mrs. Knox, you mean your husband was not taken to the toilet after **all** you have done?

Adele: (mollified, her tone softer, less harsh) That's Right! That awful woman did nothing! She leered at me. She makes me feel terrible.

(Adele views her world through her feelings. She uses many kinesthetic words. To build empathy, Charles uses her *preferred Sense*.)¹

Charles: I **sense** that you can't **stand** it anymore. You are at your wits end.

Adele: (her voice lighter, relieved) That's right! You hit the nail on the head! I have had it!

Charles: (*Reminiscing* to help her express her loss)

You helped your husband for so many years. Weren't you his dental assistant?

Adele: (Smiling slightly, looking up in memory) Yes. That's how we met. He was a good looking man.

Charles: He certainly was. I saw his picture. He still is.

Adele: That's why it hurts so much to see him in this condition.

Charles: Let's call the nursing assistant, Cheryl, and perhaps you can explain to her how important it is to take Dr. Knox to the toilet regularly.

Adele: OK. If you think it will help.

Adele Knox was able to express her feelings to the director of nursing. Together, with the help of the administrator, they designed a successful treatment plan. Although Adele Knox continued to complain as she aged, her anger lessened and she became a loyal volunteer. After each interview with Adele, Charles released his frustration to the Validation team, who understood.

NEW WEB-SUPPORTED LEVEL 1 WORKER COURSE

Many people interested in being trained as a Validation Worker/Practitioner face barriers to participating in a course. Barriers include the distance to a training site and subsequent cost and time incurred with travel.

Using web-based technology, we hope to reduce these barriers. We adapted the traditional 5-weekend Level 1 Worker Course into a Level 1 course with combined Web-based and two weekend session formats. Each week, students are expected to spend 2 hours in computer-based learning and practicum. Computer-based learning includes (a) live webinars, (b) review pre-recorded presentations and (c) review of peers practicum video and upload their own video. So far, we have completed most of the lecture/instructional components, the first of two weekend workshops, and have started to review practicum videos online. While we have had our struggles with technology hiccups, the students have been very engaged, especially in the weekend workshop. The video review seems to be going well and actually fewer tech issues with the web-posted videos compared to video tech issues with in-person classes (the old VHS were easy to use while current digital files could be harder to work with since there is no standard). There has been the need for some individualized tech support for some students to upload their videos but so far success. I think that we can improve our video conferencing software but the current webinar software seems to be sufficient if not optimal. We are always looking into other options to increase engagement (any suggestions would be appreciated). Student feedback so far has been positive. We are evaluating this first class and hope to have another one the east coast and one on the west coast starting in Fall 2014. Please contact Jana Stoddard jana@vfvalidation.org for pre-registration.

You can get more information at: <http://www.vfvalidation.org/web.php?request=telecourse> and <http://vfvalidation.org/web.php?request=tutorial&tnum=4&tpage=1>.

AVO UPDATES AND NEWS

Message from the Authorized Validation Organization (AVO) Coordinator, Vicki de Klerk

Well, there's good news and bad news. Let's start with the good news.

I am happy to announce that we have a new AVO in Barcelona, Spain. For all you Spanish speakers, please contact Carol Westerman, who is the President of:

Asociación Relay
Carrer Pou, 38
Átic 2
08016 Barcelona, Spain
(34) 629 139 766
westerman.carol@gmail.com
www.asociacionrelay.org

For those of you in Italy, I'm happy to announce a new AVO for *Piemonte, Marche, Lazio, and Calabria*

M&C Authorized Validation Organization

Via P. di Bismantova n.22,
20070 (MI) Italy

Contact: Cinzia Siviero Validation Teacher

c.siviero.validation@gmail.com

Marco Benetti, administration
marco.benetti@email.it

The sad news is that Tekla Larsson, the head of our AVO in Stockholm passed away after a struggle with cancer. Ersta Diakonie has not opted to continue its role as AVO in Stockholm. For those of you in Sweden who wish to have training or information on Validation, please contact the AVO in Karlskoga:

Maria Hedman
Demensteamet/Lötängen
108. Karlskoga kommun
691 83 Karlskoga, Sweden
Tel: (46) (586) 62093
mail: maria.hedman@karlskoga.se

For the future, please know we are currently in discussion with organizations in Israel, the Netherlands and Slovakia with the goal of forming training centers in those countries. This is a long process and one that takes investment. Their commitment to Validation is much appreciated. Should anyone reading this know of an organization that might be interested in becoming an AVO, please contact me.

For a complete list of Authorized Validation Organizations, please click *here*

<https://vfvalidation.org/documents/resources/en/AVOlist.pdf>

Wishing you well,

Vicki de Klerk

vdeklerk@vfvalidation.org

Continued from page 4

AVO VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA

Volunteers of America became an Authorized Validation Organization (AVO) in 2010. In 2010, the year VOA became an Authorized Validation Organization, one of the things that was emphasized by our Senior Vice President of Operations, Wayne Olson, was that having the privilege of being an AVO, we must be good stewards of that privilege. We would not only grow Validation within Volunteers of America, but in the long term care industry in general. At that time we brought Dianne Knettel, Certified Validation Teacher, to set this process in motion. One of our ideas was to grow more of our own teachers so we can have Validation become part of our over all philosophy in care for residents with dementia. As we entered the year 2014, it was very exciting to see our hopes come to fruition. We graduated seven new Certified Validation Teachers under the Volunteers of America umbrella. They include two V.O. A employees, Erin Wegleitner and Samantha Fritsche. All seven have completed the three levels of certification. In a special 3 year partnership with St. Benedict's Care Center, St. Cloud, MN, VOA was able to assist St. Ben's in the their own Validation program, including three teachers. Northern Mn and Mason City, Iowa can now boast to having Validation Teachers in their areas as well. Dianne has also just completed teaching an eight month Level 2 Class on the western slope of Colorado. This year, five of these amazing practitioners will take part in the next level, Validation Presenter, the next step toward being Validation Teacher. By the year 2015, Colorado will have its own Validation Teachers! Families and unpaid caregivers are also very important to VOA. Dianne provides complimentary hour long community and support group presentations, for which the families are very grateful. We have also begun to do introductory Validation training for other organizations outside VOA. Reduction of unnecessary drugs and non-pharmacological approaches in dementia care are hot topics across the nation. Dianne speaks to these issues at state and national conferences across the country, encouraging people to use Validation as an alternative to drugs or other unsuccessful techniques people have attempted. Volunteers of America is poised to have Validation really blossom in the upcoming years. Dianne is even going "International" this year. Ontario, Canada has contracted with us this year to do training. If you want to read more about our Validation Initiative go to www.voavalidation.org.

David Nilson
Volunteers of America –AVO Representative.

AVO WACHENHEIM HEDWIG, GERMANY

Since the last newsletter we have held:

- 3 family courses -2 of them in a modular format with 4 hours each, during 4 evenings.
- A 3 day workshop was taught by Hedwig. Attendees brought family members with dementia with them. Group leaders brought family members with dementia to Hedwig's workshops at day care units. During lunch and breaks Hedwig would observe family and caregiver interactions and advise on how to communicate more effectively. On the third day participants observed an informal Validation group of family members in attendance.
- Christiane Grünenwald is working with hospitals. There will be a dementia unit in 2 hospitals. The goal is for Validation Workers to accompany people with dementia to hospitals and the units will have nurses and other staff trained in Validation to validate them while at the hospital. It is hoped that a visit to the hospital will not trigger negative emotions requiring sedatives be administered and patient can be released back to their home early.

NEW AVO**AVO Plateforme Romande de L'Animation Socioculturelle GENÈVE, SWITZERLAND**

We proudly announce a new AVO for French speaking areas in Switzerland.
For more information, contact Danièle Warynski info@anim.ch (41) (22) 321 0143

AVO News continued from page 5

AVO BREMEN, GERMANY

Since the last newsletter, the AVO Bremen has offered and completed 3 Level 1 Worker courses, 1 Group Course, as well as training for nursing home personnel 'in-house'. Additionally, the AVO has sponsored:

- our annual Validation Workshop with Naomi Feil, this time in cooperation with the Bremen Shakespeare Company
- a meeting of Validation Teachers for support and networking and additional meetings for all the German AVOs for coordination and networking.

The teachers associated with the AVO have offered:

- 3-day trainings for Family Caregivers;
- Supervision/continuing education days for validation workers, group leaders and teachers;
- 14-day trainings for Family Caregivers;
- ½-day Refresher courses in various institutions;
- 2-day, 1-day, ½-day workshops and seminars all over the region;
- Coaching for staff, volunteers and family members in institutions
- Ongoing training in Validation as part of professional programs in nursing schools.
- Heidrun Tegeler, the head of the AVO has presented Validation at a variety of congresses and conferences and represented the AVO at the EVA meeting in Strassburg. She runs a weekly Validation group in a 'group home' for people with dementia involving family members and care staff.

AVO, JAPAN

The Validation Breakthrough 3rd edition will be translated into Japanese and published in the Summer of 2014. In July 2014, Naomi will be conducting workshops throughout Japan.

APVAPA, FRANCE

We are organizing two worker courses:

1. in Dole(Jura) beginning February 2014
2. in Laval (West France) Beginning April 2014

The contact person for the training is: Françoise.Desbonnet
APVAPA, Pdte Adj pour le suivi des formations
01 44 26 47 17 ; 06 70 09 37 16 francoise.desbonnet@sfr.fr

COUNTRY MEADOWS, HERSHEY, PA., USA

We are currently hosting 3 Worker courses and one Group course and will begin 2 more Worker courses in March, 2014. Plans are underway for another Worker course in York, PA and a Group course at Hershey in 2015.

WHAT'S NEW

WELCOME TO OUR NEW AVO IN SWEDEN, KARLSKOGA KOMMUN.

Maria Hedman, Master of Health Sciences, Director of the AVO, is planning Validation Certification Worker Courses. We are looking forward to working with her to expand Validation in Sweden.

Success Stories in Grafenwörth, Austria and Wachenheim, Germany

In November 2013, SeneCura was awarded its second Validation Certificate for Excellence for its facility in Grafenwörth. Five years earlier Grafenwörth received a certificate of excellence. Now, after renovations and additions, it has once again showed its excellence. This facility has integrated Validation principles and practice throughout its staff, its architecture, interior design and all aspects of care giving.

Also in November 2013, a Certificate of Quality was awarded to the second care giving facility of the Landesverein für Innere Mission in der Pfalz. The Bürgerspital Wachenheim facility has integrated Validation principles and practice from the Board of Directors' Mission Statement, to the dietary plan, the offering of activities, the use of its space, the integration of family members and volunteers, staffing levels and of course, the quality of care.

We extend a huge round of applause to Landesverein and SeneCura for being leaders in the field of geriatric care.

AVO News cont. from page 5

AVO KARLSKOGA, SWEDEN

A research team has been observing nursing staff who took the Level1 course under Lotta Isacs, CVT. Their work will be the background story to a dissertation in Swedish titled "Förhållningssätt och kommunikation i mötet med Personer med demenssjukdom---utvärdering av ett träningsprogram med validationsmetoden" ("Attitude and communication in the encounter with people with dementia---evaluation of a training program with validationsmetoden.") Here are links to the other abstracts in English:

<http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/10/20/1471301211421225> and

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23601158>

Karlskoga is trying to influence the planners of a nursing assistant program to provide an introduction to the Validation Method as a part of the curriculum. We are also trying to develop a Validation Unit at a nursing home. The goal is to have 75% of nurses and occupational therapists being certified as Validation Workers. Although much of the Validation Method's spirit is already involved in our work and municipality, we believe it will be easier to work in a more structured way on a Validation unit using the Validation Method.

VTI HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE: For those of you who enjoy social networking, the VTI has a Facebook page. "Like" us to catch up on the latest happenings with VTI, post pictures of you with Naomi, connect with others interested in Validation, and ask questions.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Validation-Training-Institute-VTI/180270068675784>

THE VALIDATION WEBSITE: Have you visited the website to see the latest Validation tutorial? For more information see: <https://vfvalidation.org/web.php?request=tutorial&tnum=4&tpage=1>

SUMMARY OF VALIDATION RESEARCH:

Ed Feil, Ph.D. has kindly written a summary of the Validation research that has been happening since 1967 to assist others engaged in research and anyone needing to prove the value of Validation. Follow these links to download the summary.

https://vfvalidation.org/web.php?request=research_on_validation and <https://vfvalidation.org/web.php?request=resources>

NAVA PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- **We are preparing** for the 3-day Validation conference in Dublin, Ohio sponsored by Viaquest and NAVA from May 7 to the 9th. **Day 1**-Teacher Meeting with all American teachers invited along with Naomi, and Masters: Vicki, Steve, Rita. The meeting will be led by the Masters and will be the largest meeting of teachers in the US to date. If every teacher and soon-to-be teachers came we would have 29 teachers. Wow!
Day 2- Naomi will be teaching a workshop at the Abbey Theatre on May 8 from 9 to 5pm. **Day-3**-NAVA general assembly meeting from 9 to 11am and a NAVA board meeting from 11:30am to 2pm.
- **Physicians Initiative:** started by Pres. Jim Day to develop an advisory board of physicians who would be willing to give testimony to the value of Validation for the humane and dignified care of seniors with dementia. The goal is to develop an advisory board that can help with the presentation of Validation to governmental officials so it would become a regular part of reimbursed care and a required part of training for nurses and health care workers in the field of gerontology.

Peace,
Pres. Jim Day

We want your feedback!

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

Coming Soon: Web-Supported Worker Course

BEGINNING TENTATIVELY IN September 2014, you can take a web-supported Worker Course where you have twice monthly webinars and 2 in-person weekend workshops in either Boston, MA or Portland, OR.
ed@edwardfeilproductions.com.