



December 2025 Newsletter

Thank You to Our Fall Fundraiser Donors

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this year's Fall Fundraiser. With 94 donations totaling just under \$9,000, our community once again demonstrated its commitment to bringing dignity, empathy, and meaningful communication to older adults experiencing cognitive decline.

To everyone who contributed—thank you. Whether you donated, shared the campaign, or encouraged others to give, you strengthened the roots of our work and helped new branches grow. We are deeply grateful for your support, your belief in the method, and your commitment to carrying Naomi Feil's vision forward.

Together, we continue to expand what is possible for caregivers and the older adults they serve—one conversation, one skill, one moment of empathy at a time.



5 Holiday Safety and Enjoyment Tips for Those With Memory Loss

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"During the holidays, many people get in the spirit of spending quality time with loved ones. For those with memory loss, however, the holidays may pose a number of safety challenges. Here are some tips to help everyone in the family have a safe and happy holiday season."

Rita Altman, R.N. shares five practical ways to keep celebrations both meaningful and safe. From maintaining familiar routines, to choosing decorations thoughtfully, to creating multi-sensory activities that build connection, her guidance helps families focus on what matters most: being present, patient, and engaged.

Rita reminds us that even when traditions change, moments of joy, purpose, and togetherness are still possible—especially when we “live in the moment” alongside the person we care for.

[Read the full article: 5 Holiday Safety and Enjoyment Tips for Those With Memory Loss](#)



A Welcome Message from Our New Executive Director

This month, we are delighted to share a personal note from Tamorra Sims, who officially steps into the role of Executive Director on January 1. In her introductory message, Tamorra reflects on the roots of her calling—beginning with her relationship with her “Gram Gram”—and on the decades she has spent shaping wellness, memory care, and caregiver-support programs across senior living communities.

Tamorra speaks to why Validation resonates so deeply with her: its commitment to dignity, empathy, and honoring the inner emotional world of older adults. She outlines her vision for expanding Validation's reach, strengthening

pathways for teachers and AVOs, and elevating connection as a form of healing for caregivers and families alike.

Her message is warm, mission-driven, and filled with purpose—and we invite you to read it in full.

[Read: A Note from Tamorra: Honored to Step Into This Work Together](#)



THE CORO CHRONICLES

Teacher Feature: Heather Easterling

In this month's Teacher Feature, Heather Easterling, CVT, shares how Validation has shaped both her professional practice and her personal life as a caregiver. As Senior Director of Resident Engagement at Sunrise Senior Living, Heather reflects on her journey from early Validation training in 2013 to becoming a Certified Validation Teacher, guided by mentors like Rita Altman and inspired by Naomi Feil's enduring legacy.

Heather describes Validation not as a technique, but as a way of seeing and being—one that prioritizes emotional truth, dignity, and connection. From training caregivers and designing creative engagement programs to supporting her own father through cognitive change, her story illustrates how Validation transforms not only care for older adults, but also the caregivers themselves.

[Read Heather's full reflection: *A Life with Validation: Professional Practice, Personal Calling*](#).

In a recent conversation on the Coro Health podcast, Heather reflects on how person-centered engagement and Validation-based communication can transform daily life for older adults and those who care for them.

Drawing on decades of experience in senior living, Heather speaks candidly about empathy, presence, and the small moments that create trust and belonging—especially for people living with cognitive decline. Her message is a powerful reminder that Validation is not just a technique, but a way of being with others.

[Watch the full podcast here](#)



Validation
Training Institute



NCCAP
NATIONAL CERTIFICATION COUNCIL
FOR ACTIVITY PROFESSIONALS



📅 Holiday Early-Bird Special!

Save \$25 when you register by January 1 — pay \$200 (regular \$225).

Memory Care: Validation for Activity Professionals

An 11-week online course designed to help you create deeper, more meaningful connections with residents—especially those with limited verbal communication.

This course teaches you practical ways to develop a deeper, more meaningful connection with residents, using real-world Validation techniques (the Feil Method) you can start using immediately

- ✓ 6 live interactive webinars
- ✓ Practical communication strategies
- ✓ CEUs + Validation Gateway Certificate
- ✓ Real examples from day-to-day practice

📅 Classroom opens: February 3

📅 First webinar: February 17

Give yourself the gift of new skills this season.

[Register now!](https://vfvalidation.org)

The Care Partner Channel

FREE ACCESS

[Click Here](#)



Dawn Method Training



Naomie Feil Training



UCLA Dementia Care



Teepa Snow & MLTV



Lien Foundation

**250 Films for care partners at home and in professional settings
training, education, practical tips, empathetic guidance & wisdom**

Partner feature: Memory Lane TV

We take a closer look at Memory Lane TV—a dementia-care platform designed specifically for people living with cognitive decline and those who care for them. Often described as the “Netflix of Memory Care,” Memory Lane TV uses personalized, multisensory experiences to support calm, familiarity, and connection when memory and language begin to fade.

The article explores the emotional reality of dementia for families and care partners worldwide, and reflects on how tools grounded in sensory engagement and Validation-based communication can help restore dignity and meaning at every stage of the journey. Through real stories and decades of research, it reminds us that even as memory changes, the need for empathy and connection remains constant.

[Read the full article and watch the short film](#)



AVO Feature: Rita Altman

This month we celebrate Rita Altman, MSN, RN, CVM, whose decades-long leadership in memory care have shaped the growth of Validation across the United States. Rita’s relationship with Validation began in 1998, when she witnessed Naomi Feil’s workshops at Country Meadows and helped establish

the very first Authorized Validation Organization (AVO) in America. Since then, she has become a Certified Worker, Group Worker, Presenter, Teacher, and ultimately the first Certified Validation Master in the U.S.

In 2024, Rita launched Rita Altman Memory Care Consulting LLC, which officially became an AVO on December 18. Through her new AVO, Rita is already leading Level 1 certification courses, supporting emerging teachers, and partnering with organizations like Crosslands, Sunrise Senior Living, and Second Wind Dreams to expand access to high-quality Validation training. Her mission is clear: to carry forward Naomi's legacy by helping more caregivers, families, and professionals find meaningful connection through Validation.

[Read Rita's full AVO spotlight](#)



VTI IS OPEN FOR NEW PARTNERSHIPS



As we look ahead to 2026, VTI is actively welcoming new partnerships with organizations that share our commitment to dignity, empathy, and person-centered communication. Whether you're a senior care provider, educational institution, health system, or community organization, we would love to explore how Validation training can support your teams and the families you serve.

If you're interested in collaborating, please reach out to us—we'd be delighted to connect.

jana@vfvalidation.org



Practical Validation Training Begins This January

Enrollment is now open for Practical Validation Training, a five-session, interactive online course designed to strengthen communication with older adults living with dementia. Led by Certified Validation Teachers Nancy Brown and Oran Aviv, the program combines hands-on skills training with personalized coaching to help caregivers apply Validation techniques with confidence in real-world settings.

Through three live workshops and two coaching sessions, participants learn to reduce stress, build trust, understand dementia-related behaviors, and respond with empathy rather than correction. With small class sizes, expert instruction, and an official Certificate of Completion, this course offers a practical, high-impact pathway for professionals, family caregivers, and anyone supporting older adults.

[Learn more and reserve your spot today.](#)

UPCOMING MEETINGS 2026

JANUARY

12
MON

Teacher Meeting

10am PT / 1pm ET / 7pm CET / 8pm IL

26
MON

AVO Meeting

10am PT / 1pm ET / 7pm CET / 8pm IL

FEBRUARY

03
TUE

German Teachers Meeting

6:00-7:00pm CET

24
TUE

French Teachers Meeting

7:00-8:00pm CET

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