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ViDaCS User Manual

USER MANUAL FOR
VIDACS SERIOUS GAME APPLICATION

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USER MANUAL FOR VIDACS SERIOUS GAME APPLICATION

ViDaCS serious game is an innovative tool that allows the man who is the perpetrator of violence or tendentially aggressive in intimate relationships to carry out ***a self-assessment of the impact that his own violent behavior has on his children***, witnesses of domestic violence; it is an emotional experience, built through the use of an immersive game (serious game), through which the violent father (perpetrator) will be able to experience the feelings experienced by the child in a situation of domestic violence.

The ViDaCS took in account the following theoretical assumptions:

- a) Fatherhood as core aspect in the treatment of perpetrators;
- b) Violence is a choice; and
- c) Seeing the impact and the consequences of violent behaviour on partner and children encourages empathy, responsibility, and motivation to the change.



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A virtual experience addresses to offer:

- a) a recognition of the difficulty to manage negative emotions that induce violent behaviours;
- b) an immersive emotional experience of domestic violence in the *shoes* of the child when he sees and hears violent domestic scenes;
- c) a recognition, from a child perspective, of their usual behaviors in classic “domestic scenes”; and
- d) an experience, in the shoes of their child, of alternative “domestic scenes” where the father decides and assumes “new” behaviors that avoid violent behavior.



ViDaCS serious game is a virtual reality experience that allows the user to enter a family scene of high conflict between two parents, just before the violence.

The scene is experienced first as a father, then relived as a child who assists to the interaction between parents. In the final part, the user returns to the role of the father who is entrusted with a range of actions that can be done when the son / daughter run away.

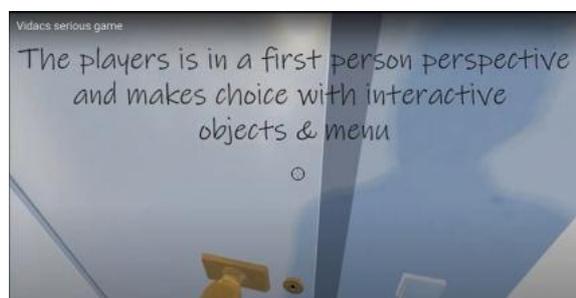
To obtain an effective transference, which would allow the identification "in the shoes of ...", ViDaCS have taken into account:



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1. Realistic daily scenarios (not luxurious or poverty situations, but ordinary people);
2. Dialogues spontaneous among the characters (ordinary voices that talking about simple common problems, without stereotyping languages or particular motivational and emotional situations);
3. Actions / reactions of the child (or adolescent) that show the real hardships that assisted violence often leads to (relational disorders, eating disorders, violence towards self and / or towards others, sense of abandonment and / or loneliness, desire to escape, fears and anxieties in general).





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What do you need for ViDaCS serious game?

To allow the use of the serious game, the presence of the wearable device and a PC, on which the reference software application will be install, is always required.

The immersion is allowed thanks to a helmet-shaped device that allows the view of the scene and a controller that allows the user to point and select the choices to be made to move forward in the scene.

In the game all interactions take place through multiple choice menus insert in the GUI (Game User Interface), they are activated during the virtual experience and with them one interacts through simple commands present on management controller of the wearable sensor.

This choice was made to limit the actions in total autonomy of the character, above all for the movements of the body type "to walk" to avoid consistent effects of motion sickness often tied to the VR for not habitual users.

The software Vidacs Vr run on a Desktop PC with an 8 core Intel CPU, 16GB of system memory and a NVIDIA RTX 2080 GPU.

The selected VR device is the Oculus Rift S, a second-generation VR headset with inside-out tracking, a technology which allows easy and immediate setup of the hardware in any room.

The Oculus Rift S offers a 2560x1440 80Hz LCD screen panel for reduced screen-door effect and a 115° field of view for a complete immersive experience.



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The headset rests on the head through the special headband designed exclusively for the Oculus Rift S in order to sit comfortably on the head for hours, the band also has two integrated speakers.

The Oculus Rift S includes two motion controllers called Oculus Touch, which offers positional tracking over six degrees of freedom, three buttons, two triggers, and analogue stick and finger gesture recognition. The controllers can be used to point to, grab, and activate virtual objects.



Context and step of application

Each session was articulated in various steps: welcoming and presentation of the project to the participants, the virtual reality experience and the final phase for the exploration of the experiences:

- At first, the user was welcomed, made to sit comfortably and thanked for the availability. A *Presentation sheet* was offered to him, before joining the game,



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which contained information regarding the whole project, its objectives and the serious game. **This first contact lasted 10 minutes.**

- Then, after verifying his understanding, the informed consent was collected and the participant was invited to sit comfortably on a chair in front of the PC monitor, he was put on the helmet and, with his consent, the scene was started and he could live the experience. It lasted 4 minutes. During this moment, the choices made by the user were recorded on an *observation sheet* by a trained operator, who noted also user's behavior, posture and movement during the game (memo). At the end of the experience, the participant was freed of the helmet and was asked to remain seated for a few minutes, to alleviate any ailments due to the virtual reality. **This moment lasted 10 minutes.**

- At a last moment, he was led to another room where the last phase of the session proceeded. Emotions, choices, thoughts and representations of the participant were explored through a self-report *questionnaire* and a *structured Interview*.

This last phase lasted an average of 50 minutes.



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VIDACS SESSION

**Welcoming and
presentation of
the project**

 **Data collection tools:**
Presentation sheet

 *10 minutes*

**Virtual reality
experience**

 **Data collection tools:**
Observation sheet

 *10 minutes*

**exploration of
the experiences**

 **Data collection tools:**
*Self-report questionnaire and
Structured Interview.*

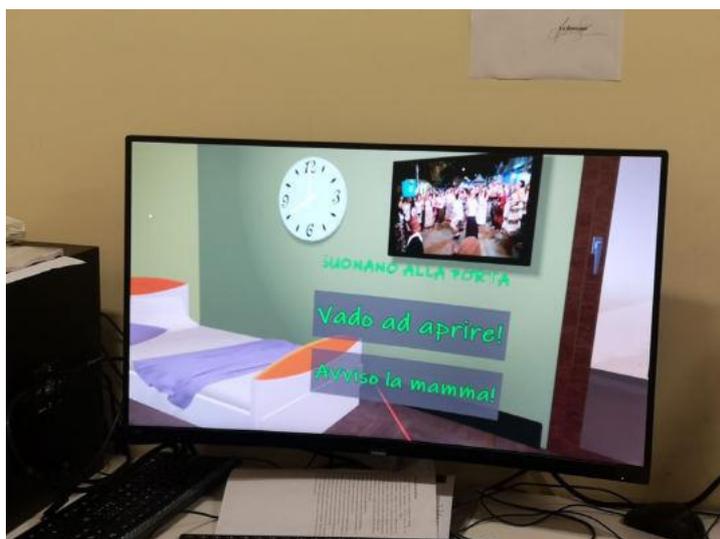
 *50 minutes*



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All the sessions were carried out in two different rooms: one used for the welcoming and the experience of virtual reality, the other for data collection. Both allowed to create a peaceful and welcoming environment.





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ViDaCS protocol

Each session of the ViDaCS serious game was guided by a protocol designed by the ViDaCS team, following a procedure that involved the use of various data collection tools: observation, questionnaires and interviews.

The protocol was characterized by the use of several schedules built ad hoc by the team for data collection.

This battery was composed by:

1. An *Observation schedule* for the detection of the choices made by the user (**Annex 1**);
3. A *Self-report questionnaire* to get a first feedback on the serious game and on the experience in each role. It lasted an average of 15 minutes (**Annex 2**);
4. A *Semi-structured Interview* to deepen the user's emotional experience and explore his thoughts and representations about it. It lasted an average of 35 minutes (**Annex 3**).

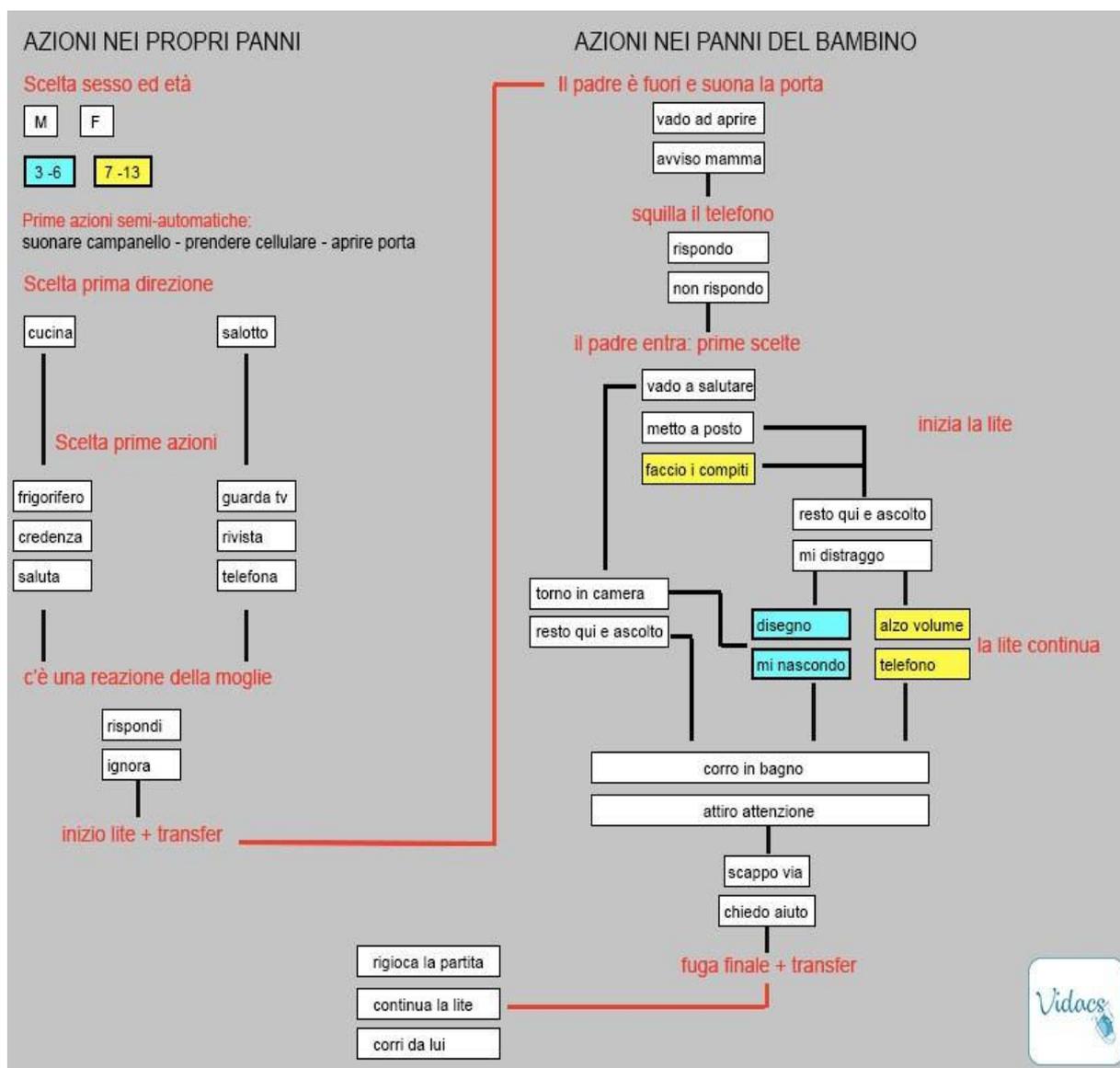
The sessions were conducted by 1 clinical psychologist and a participating observer psychologist; the clinical psychologist had the task of welcoming the user and manage the questionnaire and interview, while the participating - observer psychologist detected the user's choices on the observation sheet and he managed the game.



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Annex 1 Observation schedule



Memo:



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Annex 2 Self-report questionnaire



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QUESTIONARIO POST SESSIONE N°

Indichi il suo grado di accordo alle affermazioni mettendo una croce negli appositi spazi.

1. Le informazioni ricevute prima del gioco sono state sufficienti.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
-----------------	-----------	----------------------	----------------	----------------------

2. Le informazioni ricevute prima del gioco sono state chiare.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
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3. L'interfaccia e l'interattività (menù e oggetti) sono chiari ed immediati fin da subito.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
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4. Il gioco è facilmente giocabile.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
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5. Lo storyboard è facilmente comprensibile.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
-----------------	-----------	----------------------	----------------	----------------------

6. Dialoghi, testi e suono sono chiari ed esauritivi.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
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7. La durata del gioco è giusta.

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
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8. Dall'esperienza che ha fatto con questo serious game ritiene che è uno strumento efficace per entrare nella "scena" della coppia un attimo prima di un momento in cui le emozioni negative prendono il sopravvento?

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
-----------------	-----------	----------------------	----------------	----------------------

9. Dall'esperienza che ha fatto con il serious game Vidacs ritiene che ha le potenzialità di promuovere comportamenti che possono fermare le emozioni negative "un attimo prima" della loro azione?

Molto d'accordo	D'accordo	Abbastanza d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Per niente d'accordo
-----------------	-----------	----------------------	----------------	----------------------

10. Come ha vissuto il passaggio dal punto di vista del padre a quello del/della Bambino/a? Quali emozioni, sensazioni, pensieri hanno accompagnato questo momento del gioco?

11. Che tipo di difficoltà ha riscontrato?

12. Che sensazioni fisiche ha provato?

13. Aggiunga se vuole opinioni, riflessioni e note personali su qualche aspetto non esplicitamente citato nei quesiti precedenti.



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Annex 3. *The semi-structured Interview*

The questions:

- a. Do you want to add something to this experience?*
- b. What made you think / remember this experience? What made her live?*
- c. Who would you make it live / experience?*
- d. Under the same circumstance, would you make different choices than those given as options from the game? If yes, which one?*
- e. In the light of what has just lived, how would the scene reform? Or How would you wish things were going?*



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VIDACS TRAINING MANUAL

The training for the operators that deal with victims and perpetrators of IPV is recognized in all Guidelines, Conventions and laws about Gender Violence (Cismai 2017, Istanbul Convention 2011) as one of the most important points of programs for preventing violence against women and IPV.

Indeed, personnel working in the field of IPV is getting in touch with strong emotions, difficult to be elaborated, as well as with inner images and representations underpinning their work practices (Procentese et al., 2019).

The contribution of professionals to the comprehension and intervention about gender violence, as well as in avoiding secondary victimization, can be easily understood under an ecological perspective (Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2007; Di Napoli et al, 2019), as the one adopted by ViDaCS project.

Indeed, ViDaCS project proposes a holistic and multidimensional model for understanding and intervening to reduce violence of men against women. This multidimensional approach is widely supported in order to identify the risk factors of violent behaviors (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2013) and to overcome the fragmentation of measures contrasting gender violence. The ecological approach integrates different levels of explanation and interrelation about this phenomenon: individual, relational, organizational and collective/community levels; they have been widely analyzed in the literature, but mostly separately from each other.



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At a relational level, the intervention procedures adopted by personnel are considered. These modalities, affected by the operators' social representations and emotions towards the protagonists of the violent scene, can unaware negatively influence the taking charge of IPV. In particular, this issue is stressed when the operators face with the perpetrator, as emerged in ViDaCS in field research. Indeed, operators' emotions of fear and anger towards the perpetrators as well as their collusion with the perpetrators' modality of denial may lead the personnel respectively to an attitude of refusal towards the perpetrator or to the minimization of the violent act.

Based on these premises, ViDaCS planned a training for professionals strongly coherent with ViDaCS analytic model, i.e. following an ecological perspective, as a tool to work on the relational and organizational levels of the phenomenon. Indeed, we consider a specialized training for those working in gender violence services as a useful instrument to improve their procedure for taking charge perpetrators.



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In our view, some recommendations are particularly needed for the operators who get in touch with the perpetrators. Thus, within ViDaCS training, we took in account the following key aspects for adequate capacity building actions:

- a) Attention to prejudices and perceptions about the authors of violence often shared among the same operators;
- b) Attention to the "Denial" that men "bring" in the treatment;
- c) Building of treatment space: "How to create a resource space?";
- d) Reflection groups as a fundamental resource in this work context.

ViDaCS training program for professionals is directed:

- To gain a specific model for understanding violent behavior;
- To increase reflexivity, by which t personnel will be aware of their own emotions and thoughts, so facilitated in not taking only a one-sided position;
- To support the operator in coping with the denial mechanism, typically used by the perpetrator;
- To increase the operator competence in facilitating the process of perpetrator awareness of their violent actions and help them to find new strategies for coping with negative emotions.



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Plan for training

This document describes the training preparation plans of the two types of training activities: Theoretical-experiential training “Un attimo prima” and Operational training. The Theoretical-experiential training, addressed to the local stakeholders, professionals and citizens, is made up of three seminars. Each Seminar of the training concerns a specific issue and include an explorative and expressive session.

The Specialized Training for Professional- Operational Training aims to engage the team of trainers that could support and monitor the serious game session. This training includes 3 days of workshops.

THEORETICAL-EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING “UN ATTIMO PRIMA”

The theoretical-experiential training provides two different sessions: theoretical and experiential.

The training is addressed to professionals working in the local network that involve the health services, association and centers working with IPV and CAV (Center fighting Gender-based-violence).

To encourage the maximum participation of all participants in both, the theoretical and the experiential sessions, the group of participants in each seminar can be divided into two subgroups, each composed of maximum of 15



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participants. The two subgroups work simultaneously, that is, while one group engage in the theoretical session the other group is involved in music therapy session.

In order to be clearer as possible, we present into two different paragraphs the sessions of theoretical and experiential training.

THEORETICAL SESSIONS

The theoretical sessions for the operators that deal with victims and perpetrators of IPV is recognized in all Guidelines, Conventions and laws about Gender Violence (Cismai, 2017; Istanbul Convention 2011) as one of the most important points of programs for preventing violence against women and Intimate Partner Violence (Chiurazzi et al. 2015; Procentese et al. 2019; Chiurazzi and Arcidiacono, 2017; Di Napoli et al., 2019).

Theoretical sessions are based on the awareness that gender-based violence is a multidimensional and widespread phenomenon. It is possible to trace economic, socio- cultural and psychological aspects that intersect each other.

Violent behavior is often supported, ignored or even concealed by the life context; so, becomes important to consider that there is no one single subject as object of interventions to contrast gender violence. It is necessary that the professionals of socio-sanitary services commit themselves to the promotion of a culture that recognizes and contrasts the phenomenon of gender violence in all its forms.



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In particular, the operators, involved in anti-violence network services, represent the privileged participants of trainings, due to the importance of sharing common cultural and social matrices concerning the representations of the phenomenon.

The theoretical sessions have the general goal of sensitizing the participants to the recognition and contrast of gender-based violence and witness violence. It aims to consider different aspect of the topic and promote reflections regarding:

- cultural and psychological aspects of gender and witness violence; common representations of the phenomenon of gender violence;
- awareness, relational skills in one's profession;
- recognition of one's point of view, prejudices, experiences, representations of the phenomenon.

For each seminar, the theoretical session last 3 hours and is organized in three different parts:

1. in the first part the group conductor introduces theoretical contents with slides, books or articles, will support and lead the conversations about the contents;
2. in the second part, the group conductor uses a focus group technique (Corrao, 2000) with the aim of sharing reflections, thoughts and emotions related to gender violence professional or personal experiences; or will discuss with trainees on clinical cases;
3. in the final part of each seminar, the conductor ends the seminar with a group restitution; participants will fill out an evaluation questionnaire.



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In a constructivist epistemological and theoretical framework and in the second-order cybernetics perspective (Keeney, 1983). ViDaCS proposes a training methodology, that assumes the importance of the observer within the system that is being observed. The focus is on awareness of the professional's influence on his or her observations and is based on both/and rather than the dualistic either/or principles.

This training methodology starts from the awareness that the intimate partner violence, is “a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women and men, which have led to domination over, and discrimination against, women by men” (Istanbul Convention, 2011). So, we deal with a dominant cultural system in which “we” (women, men, children, professionals etc.) all grew up, which is present in our lives more than we can sometimes recognize.

Technical and theoretical competences and professional preparation alone may not be enough to exclude the danger of sharing or colluding with cultural assumptions encroached for decades into our culture. It is therefore necessary for Professionals in close contact with victims and perpetrators to work on the cultural premises that support and structure their values, beliefs and definitions (Deriu, 2012; Procentese et al 2019).

An interactive methodology will be used during the training in order to facilitate the participation and involvement of trainers and to share emotions related to intimate partner violence.

Expected outputs

At the end of the training from the operators involved we expect:

- a) Increased awareness of the phenomenon of gender-based violence, Intimate Partner Violence and witnessing violence;



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-
- b) Acquiring greater awareness of one's own experiences in relation to the phenomenon of Intimate Partner Violence and with specific reference to work practice;
 - c) An increased ability to recognize and share emotional states related to the meeting– real or imagined– with perpetrators and children victims of witnessing violence; and
 - d) The creation of a group motivated to continue the planned training and implementation activities.

MUSIC THERAPY SESSIONS

The experiential part of the training, based on music therapy, is introduced alongside the theoretical one since the Partnership assumed that working in the field of Intimate Partner Violence means, for the professionals, getting in touch with strong emotions, difficult to be elaborated.

In this view, operators essentially need to be guided and supported in:

- (1) recognizing the emotional experiences underlying the encounter with the various figures (men, women and children) involved in the phenomenon of Intimate Partner Violence; (2) identifying perceptions, emotions and representations that influence their own work practice.

We here refer to emotional experiences that could sound intolerable for the professional, due to ethical and moral reasons. Thus, they may be difficult to be caught through the verbal channel, being it more easily invested by defensive mechanisms.



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Choosing music therapy is a tentative to circumvent this obstacle: a methodological device with an introspective, creative and emotional power. Music therapy exploits the non-verbal channel of communication to explore, express and share emotions difficult to be verbalized.

Indeed, literature has widely recognized that music therapy can be a safe means of expressing unrepresentable emotional experiences, often kept "separate" and far from conscious perception or verbal communication (Rogers, 2003). This appears particularly relevant in the therapeutic work on Intimate Partner Violence: in these cases, the intimacy of the helping relationship risks violently recalling experiences and/or conflicting aspects connected to the representation of the perpetrator or victims.

The non-verbal, sound and aesthetic dimension of the music therapy device allows the practitioner to re-establish a connection with his or her buried emotions and to provide them with a "safe" symbolic form that can be approached without the danger of being overwhelmed (De Backer & Sutton, 2014; Robarts, 2003).

Since ViDaCs specifically aims to favor in perpetrators the ability to put themselves in the shoes of children who witness violence, music therapy sessions with the operators will focally explore their emotions in relation to these two figures, protagonists of Intimate Partner Violence: the perpetrator and the witnessed child.

The experiential session has been planned as a preliminary action to adequately train. In our view, the training is necessary in particular for those who will implement the videogame session alongside the perpetrators, to get a more comprehensive awareness of the solicited emotions.

Specific aims of the Music Therapy sessions are:



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- a. To promote, among the operators, a greater awareness of their own emotions related to the phenomenon of Intimate Partner Violence;
- b. To allow each operator to approach the sound-musical dimension as a means of expression and sharing of emotional states;
- c. To explore, recognize and share the emotional experiences emerging in the - real or imagined - meeting with the perpetrator;
- d. To explore, recognize and share the emotional experiences emerging in the - real or imagined - meeting with the child victim of witnessed violence.

Music and sounds, by virtue of their evocative properties, have the function of a sounding board capable of making the affective traces of one's own internal experiences more "audible".

In the first seminar, a receptive music therapy (Bruscia, 1989), is the privileged methodology. This technique is based on listening to sound-musical tracks and on the subsequent discussion and elaboration of the fantasies and sensations evoked by the sound.

The experience of receptive music therapy aims to promote an introspective listening mode that allow each participant to experience sensations, memories and thoughts starting from a body and pre-verbal dimension.

An immersive experience of receptive music therapy follows (50 minutes).

Between one track and another, two minutes of silence are provided to facilitate the participants' reflection process.

While listening, each participant has a blank sheet on which he can write down or draw thoughts/images evoked by the tracks. In this phase, the use of the verbal channel is not allowed.



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After listening to all tracks, a phase of group sharing and discussion follows (1 hour and 10 minutes). According to a flow for free associations, the group will share the emerged suggestions, and their possible connections with the project themes.

The final part of the session is reserved to fill out a self-assessment questionnaire about the participants' expectations (15 minutes).

The second seminar is semi-structured, since it focus more precisely on one project theme: the emotional experiences emerging in the - real or imagined - meeting with the perpetrator. Starting from input materials, the contents of the seminar recalls the gender dimension, with reference to the perception of power asymmetries between the sexes, and calling into question the operators perspectives.

Indeed, in a first phase (45 minutes), the professionals is shown one or more photos that portray scenes of gender violence (with the man in the role of perpetrator). Feelings, fantasies and memories evoked by the images are discussed in groups, privileging the possible references and/or connections with the operators' own working practice. In this way, we explore backgrounds into gender-based violence and the perceptions about the roles of the operators in responding to a perpetrator within a helping relationship.

Subsequently, the participants will be involved in an active music therapy session (Bruscia, 1989): through the use of their own body and of the special music equipment consisting of harmonic-melodic and percussion instruments, the operators take part in a free sound- musical improvisation in group (45 minutes). During this phase, the use of verbal channel is not permitted. The



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experience of free sound-musical improvisation allows participants to "put in sounds" unexpressed parts of the Self (De Backer, 2014) related to the contents explored in the warming up phase of this day. Indeed, during the active music therapy experience, participants is requested to try playing the instruments freely, being inspired by the theme of the session and by the images previously shown. We hope this will help "unthought thoughts" (Bion, 1962) to emerge: i.e., accessing emotional experiences that, due to their intolerable contents, it was not possible to "think" in the form of words.

The free sound-musical improvisation is followed by the verbal discussion and restitution phase (1 hour and 15 minutes), during which the group can listen to the "music produced together" and reflect on the emotional contents that emerged during the improvisation experience.

In the final part of the session, the participants fill out an experience evaluation questionnaire (15 minutes).

The last seminar follows the same structure as session no. 2, involving an active music therapy experience (45 minutes) with a subsequent discussion and verbal feedbacks (1 hour and 15 minutes). Contents of the seminar focuses on the emotional experiences linked to the meeting – whether real or imagined – with the child victim of assisted violence. Therefore, the seminar stimulates aspects related to the infantile dimensions of each operator and to their own representations of the relationship between parents and children.

The input-stimulus for the starting brainstorming (45 minutes) consists of one or more images showing a child witnessing an episode of violence. Thus, in the active music therapy experience the participants are required to try to play freely starting from the theme of the session and the shown images.



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In the final part of the session, the participants fill out a questionnaire to evaluate the experience and the degree of satisfaction of the experiential training (15 minutes).

Expected results

At the end of the music therapy sessions, we expect from the operators:

- a) An empowering of the symbolic functions of thought linked with complex emotions;
- b) The acquiring of a greater awareness of one's own experiences related to the phenomenon of Intimate Partner Violence, with specific reference to the working practice;
- c) An increased ability to recognize and share the emotional states linked to the meeting – whether real or imagined – with perpetrators and children victims of witnessed violence;
- d) A widening of the available communication channels, with specific reference to the sound-musical channel;
- e) The creation of a group motivated to continue the planned training and to be involved in the implementation activities.



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OPERATIONAL TRAINING

The operational training aims at:

1. building a team of trainers that could support and monitor the serious game session;
2. experimenting the Serious Game and deepening its main technical and emotional characteristics;
3. knowing and managing the pre-phase with the user, approaching the hardware and the wearable device, learning the short presentation of the serious game and to give the practical rules of use;
4. knowing and managing the game phase, observing the reaction of users (non- verbal behaviour and game choice) with the help of an observation tool to mark the choices of the game, the non-verbal and physical aspects and the requests that occurred during the game;
5. knowing and managing the post phase, offer a warm and welcoming emotional atmosphere to encourage the holding experience (Winnicott, 1974);
6. recognizing emotions and reactions generated by the virtual - and the real-encounter with the protagonists (perpetrators and children);
7. understanding which aspects of the serious game must be reviewed from a technical point of view to improve their effectiveness and gaming experience.



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The training is structured in three operational seminars. Each seminar lasts 8 hours, for a total of 24 hours for the whole training. Each seminar is divided in three different session.

The first session is a “self-experience session”: each operator experiment ViDaCS serious game.

A tutor manages this session, in which she will describe how play ViDaCS serious game to better approach to the hardware and therefore to the wearable device. This is the only phase guided and shared. When the user puts its device on, the tutor shows on the manual device the unique button to use for the interactions.

When the user is ready to start, the tutor starts the virtual experience (simply pressed the “play” button on the pc console). So, the user takes himself/herself virtual experience until the end.

When the user concludes the experience, it is necessary to take a few time alone and then takes the device off, and come in the room with the rest of participants; here he/she will receive the questionnaire to “return” to reality slowly, discussing together about expectations and therefore the degree of satisfaction and involvement in the gaming experience.

Only when all the participants will have carried out the game experience then the group will start the final session of reflection and comparison.

In the second session, there is also an “observative session”: the trainees will observe the other trainees during the game playing or other operators invited as volunteers. The trainees observe the reaction of players (non-verbal behaviour and game choice) with the help of an observation tool to mark the choices of the game, the non-verbal and physical aspects and the requests that occurred during the game. They have a focus on emotions and reactions generated by the observation of virtual experience.



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The third session is a “group session”: there is a moment of brain storming and emotional feeling. A focus group technique (Corrao, 2000) is used with the aim of sharing reflections, thoughts and emotions related to the Serious Game experience. The group discussion is managed by a conductor and a moderator. Following the principles of the "defusing" technique, used in situations of psychological and physical impact, the focus will be on the collective sharing of the experience of immersive reality. A group context will be set up to facilitate the free expression of memories, emotions and most evocative scenes by each participant.

Moderators encourages the conversation and the participation with the aims to:

- a. mitigate the potential risks of re-activation of traumatic experiences;
- b. recognize similarities and differences between the participant's experiences, but also between the operator's experiences and the victims or the perpetrators ones;
- c. develop empathy and the ability to "put oneself in the other person's shoes";
- d. offer a warm and welcoming emotional atmosphere to encourage the holding experience (Winnicott, 1974).



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Expected Outputs

1. Increased knowledge and confidence with VR and serious game;
2. Acquiring greater awareness of one's own experiences in relation to the serious game experience;
3. An increased ability to recognize and share emotional states related to the meeting– real or imagined– with perpetrators and children victims of witnessing violence;
4. The creation of a group motivated to continue the planned training and implementation activities.



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ViDaCS serious game is an innovative tool that allows the man who is the perpetrator of violence or tendentially aggressive in intimate relationships to carry out a self-assessment of the impact that his own violent behavior has on his children, witnesses of domestic violence; it is an emotional experience, built through the use of an immersive game (serious game), through which the violent father (perpetrator) will be able to experience the feelings experienced by the child in a situation of domestic violence.

The ViDaCS took in account the following theoretical assumptions:

- a) Fatherhood as core aspect in the treatment of perpetrators;**
- b) Violence is a choice; and**
- c) Seeing the impact and the consequences of violent behaviour on partner and children encourages empathy, responsibility, and motivation to the change.**

A virtual experience addresses to offer:

- a) a recognition of the difficulty to manage negative emotions that induce violent behaviours;**
- b) an immersive emotional experience of domestic violence in the shoes of the child when he sees and hears violent domestic scenes;**
- c) a recognition, from a child perspective, of their usual behaviors in classic “domestic scenes”; and**
- d) an experience, in the shoes of their child, of alternative “domestic scenes” where the father decides and assumes “new” behaviors that avoid violent behavior.**