

# PREPARING LIFE FOR HEALTHY LONGEVITY



**Mirna Sisek-Šprem<sup>1</sup>, Ninoslav Mimica<sup>1,2</sup>,  
Mira Štengl<sup>1</sup>, Aida Križaj<sup>1</sup>, Ana Papić<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> University Psychiatric Hospital Vrapče,  
Department of Biological Psychiatry and Psychogeriatrics, Zagreb, Croatia  
<sup>2</sup> University of Zagreb, School of Medicine, Zagreb, Croatia

Among psychiatric patients the elderly are one of the most sensitive groups of patients due to:

- a lifetime of trauma
- somatic comorbidities
- sensitivity to pharmacotherapy
- medical and social issues
- frequently isolated and less functional

Therefore a personalized and integrated approach is required.

The search for the meaning of life has intrigued various civilizations since ancient times

- Aristotel (eudaimonia)
- Resilience (popular today)
- Ikigai (The Japanese secret for a long and happy life)
- Logotherapy – method of psychotherapy (V. Frankl)

In the past decade research has shown that searching for a meaningful life has a positive effect on a person's overall health and in reducing the risk of certain diseases, including dementia, stroke and heart attack.

LOGOTHERAPY can be used to empower the elderly because it:

- encourages patients towards a meaningful lifestyle and actions (most satisfying when directed at others)
- seeks out the patient's strengths, talents and aspirations from youth
- directs patients toward an active attitude about life
- focuses on identifying positive moments
- helps patients find peace with the past
- designs daily activities, especially those that restore the patient's sense of being needed by others
- emphasizes the value of every moment



Logotherapy helps to create a brighter perspective, reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression while dementia is slowed through cognitive skills training. Seeking the meaning of life and acquiring positive attitudes towards life has the preventative and curative effect necessary for increasing the lifespan and quality of life of the elderly.