

# CARE RECIPIENT EMPATHY VIRTUAL REALITY TRAINING

An *Embodied Labs* product offered by



## **Increasing & Expanding Existing Support Services to Caregivers Utilizing Training & Educational Opportunities**

Building upon the success of onsite Caregiver Simulations, Alabama Respite began offering care recipient empathy virtual reality experiences with Embodied Labs Virtual Reality (VR) training under the current Lifespan Respite grant. Each of four VR trainings allow caregivers, care providers, and healthcare industry students to experience Hearing and Vision Loss, Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's, and Terminal Diagnosis/End of Life Care through the eyes of a care recipient. VR training, experienced individually or in group settings, is available onsite statewide or by appointment at Alabama Respite.

Plans are under way to expand this training opportunity under the Lifespan Respite enhancement grant to first responders, law enforcement, and state and local agencies by collaborating with Alabama Lifespan Respite Coalition partners.

# Meet Alfred

- Each VR experience explores the beginning, middle, and end stages of a diagnosis through the eyes of a care recipient.
- First-person perspective while completing activities of daily living.

## DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE LIVING WITH Hearing or Vision Impairments?



**Dear care partners & caregivers,**

What if you had the opportunity to better understand the most common sensory impairments from a first-person perspective by stepping into their world?

### Come embody Alfred James in an engaging virtual reality experience.

Embodied Labs uses virtual reality (VR) technology to allow you to embody an immersive learning experience.

By becoming Alfred, a 74-year old Black man living with age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and high-frequency hearing loss, discover how you can transform your involvement and knowledge in your own care practice as a caregiver, care partner, advocate, or community member.

### Explore common questions about providing care for AMD & hearing loss:

- Why do they keep tilting their head or staring when I talk to them and engage in their care?
- I'm often raising my voice and repeating myself multiple times. Are they ignoring me?
- How can I communicate more effectively for someone with both hearing and vision loss?
- How do I understand someone's progressing sensory impairment, help them continue to engage in quality living, and enjoy their independence as much as possible?



Learn more from the developers at [www.embodiedlabs.com](http://www.embodiedlabs.com)

# Meet Beatriz

- 30-minute total VR experience
- 30-minute follow-up Q&A/discussion facilitated by Alabama Lifespan Respite staff

## DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE LIVING WITH Alzheimer's Disease?



Dear care partners & caregivers,

What if you had the opportunity to better understand changes caused by Alzheimer's disease (AD) from a first-person perspective by stepping into their world?

### Come embody Beatriz Rogers in an engaging virtual reality experience.

Embodied Labs uses virtual reality (VR) technology to allow you to embody an immersive learning experience.

By becoming Beatriz, a Latina woman living with AD, discover how you can transform your involvement and knowledge in your own care practice as a caregiver, care partner, advocate, or community member.



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### Explore common questions about providing care for AD:

- Is memory the only area impacted by AD? What other abilities or parts of the brain are affected?
- Why am I having trouble communicating? It seems like my words are not "registering"?
- How do I make sense of the changed behaviors that I see?
- How do I provide healthy support and foster independence with their care?
- Is there any quality of life with AD?
- I often feel overwhelmed. How do I get support? What is respite?

# Meet Clay

- VR can be experienced individually, or screen shared in a classroom setting for multiple participants to share in the experience.
- Alabama Lifespan Respite owns two portable VR kits.

## DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE LIVING WITH A Terminal Diagnosis?



**Dear care partners & caregivers,**  
What if you had the opportunity to better understand changes during end-of-life care from a first-person perspective by stepping into their world?

### Come embody Clay Crowder in a powerful virtual reality experience.

Embodied Labs uses virtual reality (VR) technology to allow you to embody an immersive learning experience.

By becoming Clay, a 66-year old veteran living with incurable lung cancer, discover how you can transform your involvement and knowledge in your own care practice as a caregiver, care partner, advocate, or community member.



Learn more from the developers at [www.embodiedlabs.com](http://www.embodiedlabs.com)

### Explore common questions about providing end-of-life (EOL) care:

- Do I feel prepared to have conversations about the end of life and provide supportive care during their transition to hospice?
- How will the end of life impact the physical care they might need?
- What does a “good day” look like for a person with a terminal diagnosis?
- I just want them to be comfortable and pain-free. How can I maintain a meaningful relationship with them without being overprotective?
- How do I tend to my own health and well-being when someone important to me is near the end of their life?

# Meet Dima

- Embodied Labs adds new VR experiences to its training library as they are developed.
- VR kit is a one-time investment.
- VR library, including promotional materials, is an annual subscription fee.

## DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE LIVING WITH Parkinson's or Lewy Body Dementia?



Dear care partners & caregivers,  
What if you had the opportunity to better understand Parkinson's disease (PD) and Lewy Body Dementia (LBD) from a first-person perspective?

### Step into the world of Dima Harb with an enriching virtual reality experience.

Embodied Labs uses virtual reality (VR) technology to allow you to embody an immersive learning experience.

By becoming Dima, a Lebanese-American immigrant living with LBD and PD, discover how you can transform your involvement and knowledge in your own care practice as a caregiver, care partner, advocate, or community member.



Learn more from the developers at [www.embodiedlabs.com](http://www.embodiedlabs.com)

### Explore common questions about...

#### Symptoms:

- What do I need to know about how PD or LBD will impact our family and my loved one?
- How will brain and body changes impact the care needed over time?
- How do I prepare for the challenging behaviors that are part of the disease? Does my loved one understand that they had an uncontrollable moment?

#### Relationships:

- How do I take care of myself when someone important to me has PD or LBD?
- How can my loved one living with LBD/PD and I maintain a meaningful relationship?

#### Professional Services:

- Is a residential community an option for my loved one? Can I "let go" of being the primary care partner? Will the community be able to accommodate the preferences and routines of my loved one?
- How can home health care support me & my loved one?

# Want more info?

- Contact Tracy Cieniewicz, Alabama Lifespan Respite Director, at [tracyc@ucphuntsville.org](mailto:tracyc@ucphuntsville.org) or 256-859-8300.
- Visit Embodied Labs at [embodiedlabs.com](http://embodiedlabs.com)
- Watch a short video here to learn more: [https://youtu.be/Cia9kb\\_fdSw](https://youtu.be/Cia9kb_fdSw)
- See Embodied Labs Virtual Reality featured on *The Doctors* (November 2019): <https://www.thedoctorstv.com/videos/could-virtual-reality-help-people-understand-alzheimers>