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*Experiences Overview*



# Experience *Hearing and Vision Loss*

*Experience age-related hearing loss and visual changes associated with macular degeneration.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learners will identify barriers to independent functioning and implement support strategies based on an enhanced understanding of macular degeneration.
- Learners will clearly communicate with elders experiencing hearing loss through use of body language and face to face communication
- Learners will recognize the physical, social and emotional impact that vision and hearing loss have on individuals

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Alfred?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
  - b. What did you think was happening when Alfred was in the scene with the flowers?
2. Do you feel the cognitive test results accurately reflected your cognition? (Why/Why not?)
  - a. What could the doctor have done differently to achieve more accurate results?
3. Which Activities of Daily Living do you feel might be challenging for someone living with a visual impairment like macular degeneration?
  - a. As a caregiver, what are some things you might do to empower them?
4. What did you notice about the connection between your hearing impairment and your ability to comprehend written information?
  - a. Why do you think this happens?

# Experience *Vision Loss*

*Meet Tom, a vision loss specialist who lives with macular degeneration. Witness discussions around macular degeneration and treatment options, observe people's reaction to vision aid technology.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learners will identify barriers to independent functioning and implement support strategies based on an enhanced understanding of macular degeneration.
- Learners will clearly communicate with elders experiencing hearing loss through use of body language and face to face communication
- Learners will recognize the physical, social and emotional impact that vision and hearing loss have on individuals

## Discussion Questions:

1. What emotions and feelings did you see when Anita was communicating with Dr. Crumbliss about her macular degeneration and other vision conditions? Did those emotions change over the course of the exam?
2. What were some assistive devices that were highlighted in this module?
  - a. Do you/your facility have access to any of these?
  - b. Can you think of someone you care for who could benefit from them?
3. After witnessing Joe's reaction to seeing his wife's face clearly, how do you feel the low vision goggles could impact Joe's ability to be in relationships with others?
4. How did you feel about Tom's bike ride?
  - a. In your opinion, is quality of life more important than potential safety risks?

# Experience *Early-Stage Alzheimer's*

*Experience sensory and expressive changes and family dynamics surrounding functional changes. Learn how the lobes of the brain work together to execute complex functions.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will identify common early indications of cognitive changes associated with dementia.
- Learner will recognize that the visual and auditory distortion experienced by people living with dementia can cause challenges to daily living.
- Learner will identify strategies for successful communication and independence preservation.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Beatriz?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What sensory changes did you notice? (vision/hearing)
  - a. Which of these changes was most surprising to you?
  - b. How might these changes affect one's ability to complete/participate in activities of daily living?
    - i. What strategies could be used to support independence?
3. How did you feel when your family was in your kitchen?
  - a. Can you think of a situation that may cause your elder(s) to feel this way?
    - i. What strategies could you use to reduce stress/over-stimulation?
4. After embodying Beatriz, what changes do you plan to make when interacting with a person living with dementia?

# Experience *Mid-Stage Alzheimer's*

*Experience sundowning symptoms, frustration when completing self-care tasks and observe a family careplan meeting.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will understand how the changing brain affects one's ability to successfully communicate and process information.
- Learner will identify proactive practices to reduce sundowning triggers (keeping room well-lit, engaging elder in preferred activities, reducing noise and stimulation, etc.)
- Learner will identify successful methods of communication as well as potential detrimental effects of negative interactions.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Beatriz?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What could be done to reduce disorientation for elders who experience sundowning?
3. What did you notice during the careplan meeting?
  - a. Have you experienced meetings like this before?
  - b. As Beatriz, did you feel included in the care discussion? why/why not?
    - i. How could Nurse Gaby have communicated more effectively with you?
4. Other than memory loss, how does living with Alzheimer's affect how people process and engage with the world and people around them?

# Experience *Late-Stage Alzheimer's*

*Experience late-stage Alzheimer's symptoms including visual deficits and disturbances, receive care from a CNA, experience the effects of familiar music.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will prioritize elder well-being and identify meaningful ways to connect with those living with late-stage dementia (e.g. music, nature).
- Learners will have increased success completing care tasks by using intentional, positive care methods which meet the elder's current needs and honor personal preferences.
- Learners will reduce elder distress by understanding visual and sensory changes that occur in late-stage dementia.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Beatriz?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What did you notice about the way Veronika supported you?
  - a. How could you apply these principles to your caregiving practice?
3. What happened when they started playing music and dancing?
  - a. Why do you think this happened?
4. What advice would you give to family members who are wishing to connect with their loved one who has end-stage Alzheimer's disease?

# Experience *Receiving a Terminal Diagnosis*

*Experience frustrations related to unsuccessful treatments, Receive a terminal diagnosis with your family present, observe your wife and daughter processing the news.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will successfully support elders and family members through end of life conversations by recognizing the wide range of emotional responses people experience.
- Learner will empower elder to actively participate in plan of care meetings and honor their end of life choices.
- Learner will identify situations and conversations which may require a higher level of support from a social worker or end of life specialist.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Clay?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What emotions did your wife and daughter express during the doctor's appointment?
  - a. How did their emotional reactions make you feel?
  - b. Have you had a similar experience with family members during end of life conversations?
3. Did you feel that the doctor was speaking to you or about you?
  - a. After embodying Clay, what is something you wish the doctor had done differently
4. Being told you have 4-6 months to live, what would be your top three priorities? (ie: comfort, time with family, travel, time with pets, etc.)

# Experience *Dynamics of Hospice Conversations*

*Experience a trip to the emergency room, learn about hospice services and observe family dynamics as your condition worsens.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learners will provide insightful information to elders and families regarding benefits of hospice care and understanding what it means for each elder to have a “good day.”
- Learner will recognize that additional treatment is not always beneficial and promote elder choice in end of life planning.
- Learner will successfully communicate with families who may be experiencing strong emotions and identify community resources that may be beneficial.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel in the emergency room?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. Yvette had a very delicate conversation with you and your daughter. What communication techniques did she use to both diffuse the tension and support you both?
  - a. Have you ever met a family member who was resistive to hospice?
    - i. How did you respond? - Was the conversation successful?
      1. After embodying Clay, what (if anything) would you change about that interaction?
3. What significance might the blue heron have?
  - a. Have you ever had someone describe things/people that are not there toward the end of their life?
4. What are some of the symptoms you experienced as Clay, particularly in the latter part of the module? (Physical, emotional and spiritual)
  - a. How can a home hospice team address these symptoms?
    - i. Do you think needs are met faster or slower than if Clay had not initiated home hospice care? (Why/Why not?)



# Experience *Final Days of Life*

*Experience the final days of life, visualize the physiologic response to pain medication and physical manifestations of the dying process. Spend time with your family and observe post-mortem care.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will recognize signs of the active dying phase and non-verbal indications of pain.
- Learner will provide compassionate end of life care and support for family members.
- Learner will continue to treat the body with respect and preserve dignity while performing post-mortem care.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What did you notice about your body prior to receiving pain medication?
  - a. What changed once pain medication was administered?
2. After embodying Clay, what do you feel are the most important elements of care in the final days of life?
3. What has your experience been with death?
  - a. Have you performed post-mortem care before?
    - i. After embodying Clay, what (if anything) will you change regarding your post-mortem care practices?
4. What are some ways you can offer support and comfort to those who are experiencing loss? - Both during the dying process and after

# Experience *Becoming a Team*

*Embody an new caregiver experiencing supportive and unsupportive co-worker interactions. Identify ways to build trust and respect with your teammates.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Staff will understand the importance of treating co-workers as “customers” (the golden rule, assume positive intent).
- Staff will recognize the benefits of building a team where members play to their strengths.
- Staff will understand the importance of cultural competency in the workplace and facilitate a safe and judgement-free environment.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What did you notice about the way Sammy spoke to you?
  - a. How did that make you feel?
  - b. Have you ever felt frustrated while orienting a new person?
    - i. How did you handle that frustration?
    - ii. After embodying Hector, would you approach the situation differently?
2. What did Melanie do that made you feel successful?
3. Why were your co-workers upset with you?
  - a. How could this have been handled proactively to prevent this reaction?
4. Have you ever had to confront a co-worker about a sensitive subject (ie: tardiness, poor work ethic, etc.)
  - a. Did you find that easy or difficult?
  - b. What communication skills did you use? Were they successful?
5. How did Melanie address your tardiness without escalating the situation?

# Experience *Personalization of Care*

*Experience challenges associated with meeting the needs of elders with cognitive deficits and identify approach practices which lead to successful care outcomes.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will identify creative care approaches and improve elder success outcomes by personalizing the plan of care.
- Learner will recognize barriers to traditional communication and identify alternative methods to successfully convey messages.
- Learner will prioritize elder preferences to increase compliance and improve elder success outcomes.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What did you notice about Magda?
  - a. How do these observations affect the way you will deliver care?
2. Why do you think Magda was accepting of the finger sandwich?
  - a. Can you think of other dietary offerings that would meet her needs?
3. Magda was most successful when offered a choice of 2 shirts. Why do you think this was a better choice than letting her choose from her entire closet?
4. Did you find the care card helpful?
  - a. How did it support you as a caregiver?
  - b. Is there additional information you would have added?
5. What would you include in the report for the oncoming shift?

# Experience *Problem Solving*

*Experience frustrations and dignity concerns as an elder residing in a care home.  
Participate in a careplan meeting to address your concerns.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Staff will recognize the importance of timely responsiveness and how to provide exceptional customer service even when staffing is challenged.
- Staff will learn customer service skills such as positive body language, active listening and methods of diffusing tense situations.
- Staff will identify proactive approaches to preserve dignity and promote independence for older adults.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel when the caregiver decided to put an incontinence garment on you?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. As a caregiver, have you ever been unable to meet an elder's needs due to staffing challenges or other time constraints?
  - a. How did you handle this situation?
    - i. Was the elder/family receptive?
  - b. After embodying Gloria, would you choose to do things differently next time - and if so, why?
3. What are some communication techniques that Bonnie used to diffuse the situation and initiate effective problem solving?
  - a. Was there anything you feel that Bonnie should have done differently?
4. What are some reasons family members get upset / complain?
  - a. Have you ever had a family member aggressively approach you?
  - b. How did you feel about this interaction?
    - i. Do you feel there were underlying reasons they were upset?

# Experience *Early Signs of Lewy Body Dementia*

*Experience visual disturbances and change in motor function, visualize the changes in the brain that cause parkinsonian symptoms.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will recognize early warning signs of Parkinson's Disease / LBD
- Learner will implement strategies to successfully support elders experiencing visual disturbances and inconsistent motor functioning
- Learner will understand differences between Alzheimer's and Lewy Body Dementia and customize care approach to support each individual.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Dima?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What early symptoms did you experience?
  - a. Did any of these take you by surprise?
  - b. Which ones seemed especially challenging for your family to cope with?
3. What is something you could do to alleviate anxiety for someone with LBD?
4. What self-care tasks will likely become more difficult for someone with LBD/PD?
  - a. What strategies could you use to support them in maintaining independence?

# Experience *Progression of Lewy Body Dementia*

*Experience visual and auditory hallucinations. Learn coping skills that preserve dignity and reduce anxiety, attend a doctor's appointment with your family.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will understand the importance of routine and consistency for people living with LBD.
- Learner will identify and implement strategies to promote independence and preserve the dignity of elders living with LBD.
- Learner will proactively manage the elder's environment to reduce the risk of over-stimulation.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think earplugs are a helpful tool for those living with LBD?
  - a. What other self-regulating techniques could be effective?
2. What do you think triggered the hallucinations in the living room?
  - a. Can you think of a time when an elder with LBD experienced similar behavioral manifestations?
    - i. Do you recall what the physical environment was like?
    - ii. What could've been done to possibly prevent this occurrence?
3. How did you feel when your daughter-in-law said you "attacked them"?
  - a. After embodying Dima, has your perception of behavioral manifestations changed?
4. How did you feel in the doctor's office when the doctor was suggesting a plan for long-term placement?
  - a. How could the doctor have included you more in the conversation?

# Experience *Transitioning to a Care Facility*

*Experience moving into a long-term care facility and adjusting to a congregate living environment. Receive care and support from facility staff.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will provide culturally competent care by prioritizing elder preferences and honoring dietary restrictions.
- Learner will support families through the transition process by communicating effectively with family members and elder to build relationships and provide reassurance.
- Learner will identify situations which may cause over-stimulation and support elder in preserving dignity.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel when you arrived at the care facility?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What are best practices for a care community to support a resident who is new, particularly in the first 24 hours?
  - a. After embodying Dima, what is one thing you are going to do differently when welcoming a new resident?
3. What are some of the unique aspects of a person with Lewy Body Dementia and Parkinson's Disease adjusting to community care?
4. What are best practices for a care community to support a family during the initial intake and transition process?
  - a. How can staff begin to build trusting relationships with family members?
  - b. How often does your facility communicate with families during the first week?
    - i. After embodying Dima, is there anything you would change about your facility's current admission process?

# Experience *Life as a Transgender Individual*

*Experience growing up as a transgender individual, visualize the brain-body connections which determine cis or trans gender, navigate difficult conversations and life choices, experience hurtful comments from family and strangers.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will understand the brain-body connections which determine an individual's gender identity.
- Learner will provide culturally competent care and communication, honoring elder identity preferences.
- Learner will identify and stop discriminatory behavior relating to an individual's gender identity / sexual orientation.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Edward / Eden?
  - a. Did those feelings change as the module progressed?
    - i. Why do you think this happened?
2. Do you feel Jennifer's "conditions" for marriage were reasonable? (Why or why not?)
  - a. How would you feel if you were asked to pretend to be someone you're not?
3. How did it feel to see yourself as Eden in the photo?
4. As a caregiver, how might you support someone whose family has turned away from them the way that Eden's son did?



# Experience *Aging as a Transgender Individual*

*Participate in a support group for LGBT older adults, hear stories surrounding healthcare, housing, and family issues related to gender identity and sexual orientation.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will recognize importance of using affirming language and integrate this vocabulary into current practices.
- Learner will understand the differences between hormone therapy and gender affirming surgery.
- Learner will provide culturally competent, trauma-informed care to all elders.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Why is advanced care planning important in regards to LGBT older adults?
  - a. What happened to Louisa as a result of Wendy, her life partner, not being named on her advance directives?
2. What is something that you learned during this module that you did not know/were not aware of before?
  - a. How will this new knowledge affect your care practice?
3. Have you had an experience where the elder's family was unaccepting of an aspect of an elder that is core to their identity? ? (not limited to sexuality)
  - a. How does this disapproval affect the elder?
4. How did you feel when you were discriminated against as a trans person at the doctor's office? What should the different staff members have done differently to respond appropriately to Eden's requests and/or respect her privacy? (If non-medical, focusing on the nurse's response here is most productive.)

# Experience *Caregiver Burnout*

*Observe warning signs of burnout, experience negative drug interaction, identify associated risks and preventive self-care measures.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will identify dangers of caregiver burnout (medication errors, careplan violations/shortcuts, irritability, lack of patience, impaired decision making)
- Learner will engage elders in meaningful activities to enhance quality of life and reduce behavioral manifestations
- Learner will identify community resources to support informal caregivers and keep elders safely at home

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Hazel?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What are some things Cathy could've done instead of sharing her medication?
3. Was the ER doctor successful in supporting you and Cathy?
  - a. How did you feel in the emergency room?
4. What is one strategy you can use to reduce the risk of caregiver burnout - either for yourself or for someone else?

# Experience *Intervention and De-escalation*

*Observe abusive situations, determine how to keep elders safe and experience confrontations with family members and co-workers.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Staff will successfully diffuse tense situations and redirect elders using effective communication and active listening skills.
- Staff will gain confidence in initiating difficult conversations with family and co-workers to advocate for elder safety.
- Staff will have clear understanding of their role in preventing/reporting suspected/known abuse.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel when you confronted Jennifer?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. Have you ever had to intervene to protect an elder from an abusive interaction?
  - a. What strategies did you use?
    - i. Were they successful or unsuccessful?
3. What could you or your co-worker have done to possibly prevent/reduce Jennifer's frustration?
4. What communication choices worked best for de-escalating tense situations?
  - a. Can you think of additional ways to diffuse?

# Experience *Trauma Informed Care*

*Experience PTSD flashbacks and associated anxiety symptoms, identify common triggers and self-regulating practices.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will gain empathy and understanding of PTSD and identify common triggers.
- Learner will use positive approach tactics to safely and effectively support older adults experiencing PTSD flashbacks.
- Learner will promote self-regulation techniques such as deep breathing, guided meditation, and environmental adjustments (ear plugs, music).

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while experiencing the flashback?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What environmental triggers did you notice?
  - a. What could be done differently to reduce the risk of re-traumatization?
3. How did you feel when using the breath coaching/earplugs?
  - a. How would you use this technique to support someone experiencing anxiety?
  - b. Can you think of other times this technique may be useful in supporting older adults?
4. How has your perception of PTSD changed after embodying Harold?
  - a. How will this change your current care practices?

# Experience *Social Isolation*

*Experience living alone as a recent widower, struggling with technology, and suffer from loneliness and boredom.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will identify common causes of social isolation in older adults.
- Learner will recognize barriers to successful communication and adjust current practices to improve patient outcomes and promote independence.
- Learner will recognize dangers associated with social isolation and develop strategies to meaningfully connect with at-risk individuals.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Frank?
  - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. Why do you think Frank didn't follow up with the doctor?
  - a. How does grief further complicate this situation?
  - b. Can you think of a strategy to simplify Frank's medication management?
3. What did you notice about Frank's eating habits?
  - a. How might this impact an individual with diabetes?
4. Have you cared for someone who is socially isolated? (either in their home or a facility)
  - a. What challenges did you face as a caregiver/family member trying to alleviate loneliness and boredom?

# Experience *Consequences of Social Isolation*

*Experience living alone as a recent widower, failed communication attempts with family members, and worsening symptoms of uncontrolled diabetes which result in an emergent health situation.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will identify dangers of uncontrolled diabetes and importance of adhering to medication regimen and treatment plan.
- Learner will find connections between failed communication attempts and negative physical / psychological outcomes.
- Learner will identify opportunities for engagement and integrate meaningful touchpoints with socially isolated older adults to alleviate loneliness.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel while embodying Frank?
  - a. Did you notice any physical / emotional changes as the module progressed? If so, what?
2. Why do you think Frank got lost walking to the store?
3. After embodying Frank, what is one thing you plan to change in your care practice or personal life?
4. How were Frank's family, community, and environment ineffective at supporting his efforts to become less isolated?
5. What are some proactive strategies that could be implemented with a socially isolated individual to keep them safe and connected?
  - a. How can technology support these efforts?

# Experience *Community Inclusion*

*Experience living alone as a recent widower, chatting with a social worker about community resources, and successfully using technology to stay connected with family.*

## Learning Objectives:

- Learner will identify opportunities for meaningful engagement and promote independence while ensuring medical and safety needs are met.
- Learner will recognize the value in personalizing treatment plans to support individual's preferences and strengths.
- Learner will connect isolated older adults with community resources and/or refer a social worker to facilitate connections and empower them to age in place.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How did you feel when the social worker arrived at your house?
  - a. Why do you think some people are resistive to speaking with community support personnel?
2. What benefits might you get from engaging in intergenerational activities?
  - a. Does your facility/community have intergenerational opportunities?
    - i. Are they successful and engaging for both young and older participants?
3. Aside from delivering food, what safety benefit does Meals on Wheels offer?
  - a. Why might this be important for someone who is socially isolated?
4. Is social isolation an individual or community issue?
  - a. Why do you feel this way?



*We welcome your feedback!*

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