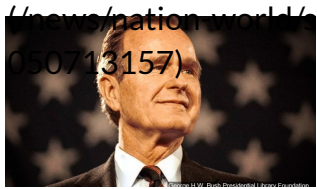


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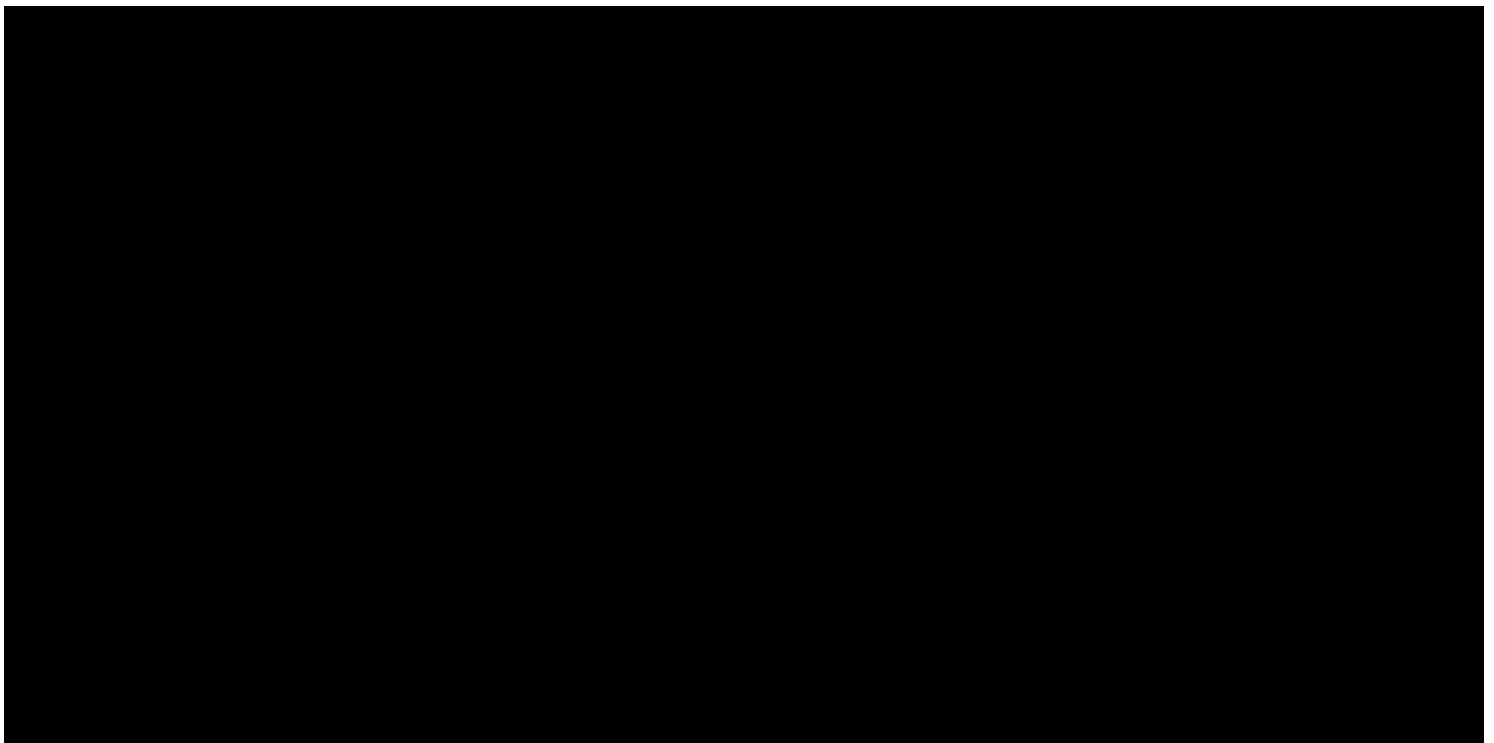
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## Experiencing dementia with a Virtual Dementia Tour

by Anna Velasquez

Thursday, November 29th 2018



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LEWISTON, ID – Now to a breakthrough when it comes to understanding dementia patients, and what they go through on a daily basis. It’s a virtual walk in their shoes, as described by a certified dementia practitioner and coach.

“Typically, what I have experienced is that they are not understood at all,” said Rick Bennett.

Rick Bennett is a certified dementia practitioner and coach. He’s here in Lewiston to help family members and caregivers understand what a dementia patient goes through.

“About mid-stages of dementia, you start losing your ability to communicate so you can't speak,” Bennett said.

Dementia is not a specific disease. It’s an umbrella term that describes a group of symptoms associated with a decline in memory or other thinking skills that reduces a person’s ability to perform everyday activities. About 70% of dementia is Alzheimer’s Disease.

“So, if you can't speak for yourself then how do you tell somebody that you're hurt, or that you're cold or that you're hungry or that you're mad or sad or depressed or frustrated?” Bennett explained.

In order to help us understand what dementia patients actually go through, Bennett’s close

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friend, P.K. Beville, created a virtual walk in their shoes, called The Dementia Tour, featured in this video provided by her company, Second Wind Dreams.

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Bennett said the virtual tour creates awareness and also gives you a real-life experience.

“As much as humanly possible I guess you take someone with a healthy brain, and convince it that it has the disease,” said Bennett.

Among the physical changes, you’ll wear special glasses to simulate impaired vision, gloves to mimic the loss of fine motor skills, and headphones with background noise running all the time. Then you’re given simple tasks to do, and discover how difficult and frustrating it can be.

“I was one of those that it shook up it really hit me hard,” Bennet said.

Bennett has also taken the virtual tour. He lost his mother to Alzheimer’s after spending years as her caregiver.

“My mom, at the time, had been gone about 16 years and I was having all kinds of flashbacks and that's why she did that and I kept saying to myself wow if I'd only known that,” he said. “If I only went through this tour back in the day when I was taking care of mom I could have been such a better caregiver. And that's really one of the greatest things particularly for those family caregivers is to have them go through that tour and say to themselves afterwards wow if I'd only known I would have done such a better job taking care of mom or dad.”

Guardian Angel Homes in Lewiston has a few spots left on Friday, November 30. It's a 20-

minute [FACEBOOK](#) and it's free. If you'd like to reserve a spot call [TWITTER](#) (509) 420-7070 [MAIL](#) [TRENDING](#)

...imate event and it's free. If you'd like to reserve a spot call (307) 123-7373.

The Virtual Dementia Tour is clinically proven to be the closest they can give a person with a healthy brain an experience of what the disease might be like.

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