

Virtual reality makes empathy easier

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activity in the personal space and body ownership networks. They also showed strong synchronized activity in parts of the brain processing threat perception when the man got close.

More information: First Person Virtual Embodiment Modulates Cortical Network That Encodes the Bodily Self and Its Surrounding Space During the Experience of Domestic Violence, *eNeuro*, [DOI: 10.1523/ENEURO.0263-19.2019](https://doi.org/10.1523/ENEURO.0263-19.2019)

First person embodiment virtual reality training activates brain networks to help you identify more with others. Credit: de Borst et al., *eNeuro* 2020

Provided by Society for Neuroscience

Virtual reality activates brain networks that increase your ability to identify with other people, according to new research published in *eNeuro*. The technology could become a tool in the treatment of violent offenders to empathize more with others.

Understanding someone's point of view is crucial for successful relationships. When this doesn't come naturally, [virtual reality](#) technology may be able to help the process. A first-person perspective virtual reality experience providing multi-sensory feedback can coax the brain into thinking a virtual body is its own body. This causes the brain to react to virtual events as if they are happening in the real world.

de Borst et al. used [functional magnetic resonance](#) imaging to monitor the brain activity of participants while they experienced a virtual reality animation of a man verbally abusing a woman, from the perspective of the woman. Before watching the scene, the participants went through virtual reality training embodied as the woman or as a bystander watching the woman. People experiencing the first-person embodiment identified the woman's body as their own and demonstrated synchronized brain

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