

## **Memory Care GEMS - Ensuring Every Resident Shines**

Caring for someone with dementia is not easy. The mainstream outlook consists of negative messaging compounded by stigma due to a lack of awareness and understanding of the condition.

When discussing dementia, the focus is typically on what the person has lost as they transition through each stage. "... But if that's all you're thinking about, you're missing opportunities," Teepa Snow said.

Snow is a renowned dementia care and education specialist who developed Positive Approach to Care® and other methods such as the GEMS® dementia state classification model.

Her classification model differs from commonly used scales by identifying six different brain states and the shifts in skills and abilities a person can experience in any given moment, focusing on the present - not what was lost.

"Just like gems, each person is precious, valuable, and unique, and given the right setting and care, can shine," she said.

Understanding the GEMS States – sapphire, diamond, emerald, amber, ruby, and pearl – and how people with dementia experience the world, professional and family care partners can provide better care. They can then change their actions accordingly for a better connection and encourage participation in care tasks and activities.

Snow's methodologies shift the current narrative, radically transforming the experience of dementia to help people with the condition continue living meaningful lives, which is why our community implements her teachings into our memory care program and ongoing team training.

Our memory care director constructs person-centered care plans that highlight each resident's current abilities rather than focusing on what has been lost to help them experience happy, purposeful moments.