

# Far-Reaching Effects of the GEMMS program

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When training, I ask our staff what encouraged them to pursue a career in healthcare, especially as it relates to Dementia. The majority of the answers included reasons such as they are taking care of a loved one with Alzheimer's or another form of Dementia and/or they knew or know someone with the disease. Therefore, some of our staff live in the world of Dementia.

The GEMMS program teaches staff how to approach and engage someone with Dementia, from early stages to more advanced stages. Because Liberty Senior Living is inspired by Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care, other aspects of training include integrating an understanding of Dementia with the care they provide to how vision change can potentially impact a resident's world. Staff learn about the different Gem States, or a different way of looking at the progression of Dementia. GEMMS approaches topics of challenging behaviors that may come with a Dementia diagnosis and sensory changes that may affect how staff provide care for a particular person with an empathetic and objective perspective.

Having this knowledge not only prepares them to provide exceptional support for the residents in Liberty's communities, but it also affects their personal lives as well. Staff going through the GEMMS program have a better understanding of what Dementia is and how it affects every aspect of the residents' lives, and since some of our staff care for their loved ones, they can apply GEMMS' philosophy of Genuine, Engaging, and Meaningful Memory Support when outside of the community.