Assessment and Treatment Strategies for Adults with Dementia Part I:

Using the Progression of Dementia to see GEMS®, not loss

Speaker Disclosure

Beth Nolan is the Director of Certifications and Research for Positive Approach® LLC

bethn@teepasnow.com

For more info and resources:

www.teepasnow.com
**Objectives:**

1. Describe characteristics and needs about what it means to be living with each GEMS® cognitive and physical abilities.

2. Identify GEMS® levels for PLWD as a means of IDing other skills
   - Part I: Sapphire, Diamond, Emerald
   - Part II: Amber, Ruby, Pearl

3. Demonstrate how this tool can be used as supportive means of communication to change the way we help people *live* with dementia
Position Emission Tomography (PET)
Alzheimer's Disease Progression vs. Normal Brains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Early Alzheimer's</th>
<th>Late Alzheimer's</th>
<th>Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Hearing: Sound – Unchanged
BIG Language CHANGE

G. Small, UCLA School of Medicine
**Sensory Strip**
**Motor Strip**
**White Matter Connections**
**BIG CHANGES**

**Automatic Speech Rhythm – Music Expletives**
**PRESERVED**

**Formal Speech & Language Center**
**HUGE CHANGES**

---

*The GEMs*

to understand how to give the right setting and care so they SHINE
• GDS: Reisberg’s Global Deterioration Scale (7)
• CDR: Clinical Dementia Rating (5)
• ACL: Allen Cognitive Levels (6)
• FAST: Functional Assessment Staging System
• Brief Cognitive Rating Scale
• HDS: Hierarchic Dementia Scale
• DSRS: Dementia Severity Rating scale
• Six Clinical Phases of Cognitive Decline
• FRS: Functional Capacity Scale
• GAD: Global Assessment of Dementia

Gem Dementia Abilities
Based on Allen Cognitive Levels

- A Cognitive Disability Theory – OT based
- Creates a common language and approach to providing:
  ✓ Environmental support
  ✓ Caregiver support and cueing strategies
  ✓ Expectations for retained ability and lost skill
  ✓ Promotes graded task modification
- Each Gem state requires a special ‘setting’ and ‘just right’ care
  ✓ Visual, verbal, touch communication cues
- Each can shine
- Encourages in the moment assessment of ability and need
  ✓ Accounts for chemistry as well as structure change
Now for the GEMS…

Sapphires – True Blue – Slower BUT Fine
Diamonds – Repeats & Routines, Cutting
Emeralds – Going – Time Travel – Where?
Ambers – In the moment - Sensations
Rubies – Stop & Go – No Fine Control
Pearls – Hidden in a Shell - Immobile

Sapphires

Brains are Still True Blue!
Clear & True – No dementia
You and Me on a GOOD Day
Normal Aging – No Dementia
Some are ‘Stars’ – Some are Not
Slower – but still shining
Sapphires

- Clear & True – No dementia
- May feel ‘blue’ over changes
- Importance of ‘time’ true to lifetime
- Can make their own setting ‘right’
- Will still need us in their lives
- Will like to shine at times
- Will set their own pace
- They can CHOOSE

Diamonds

Still Clear
Sharp - Can Cut
Hard - Rigid - Inflexible
Many Facets
Can Really Shine
Diamonds

• Uses Routines & Old Habits to function
• Can complete personal care in ‘familiar place’
• Follows simple prompted schedules - mostly
• Misplaces things and can’t find them
• ‘Resents takeover’ or bossiness
• Notices other people’s mis-behavior & mistakes
• Territorial – refusals!
• Varies in lack of self-awareness

Common Diamond Issues

• IADLs
  – Money management
  – Transportation - Driving
  – Cooking
  – Home maintenance & safety
  – Caring for someone else
  – Pet maintenance
  – Med administration

• Unfamiliar settings or situations
  – Hospital stay
  – Housing change
  – Change in family
  – Change in support system
  – MD visits
  – New diagnoses
  – Traveling or vacations
Emeralds

Changing color
Not as Clear or Sharp - Vague
Good to Go – Need to ‘DO’
Flaws are Hidden
Time Traveling

Common Emerald Issues

• Doesn’t do care routinely – thinks did
• Makes mistakes in sequence – unaware
• Repeats some care routines over & over
• Gets lost – can’t find where to do care
• Afternoon or Evening – “Got to go home”
• Limited awareness of ‘real needs’ –
  – Hunger, thirst, voiding, bathing, grooming…
• Has other ‘stuff’ to do…
Connect

• ID common interest
• Say something nice about the person or their place
• Share something about yourself and encourage the person to share back
• Follow their lead – listen actively
• Use some of their words to keep the flow going
• Remember its the FIRST TIME! – expect repeats
• Use the phrase “Tell me ABOUT …”

General Vision Changes

Sapphire: lost about 45° of field
Diamond: tunnel vision
Emerald: binocular vision
Amber: binocular vision; loss of object recognition
Ruby: monocular
Pearl: movement, familiar/unfamiliar
Receptive Language Changes

Sapphires: crowded & loud spaces more challenging, high pitched harder

Diamonds: Slower, missing consonants

Emeralds: missing about 1/4 words, needs pauses – better with rhythm

Ambers: 2-4 words; catches some key words out of context

Rubies: social chit-chat, music, rhythm, tone of voice

Pearls: familiar and friendly, calm or excite

Expressive Language Changes

Sapphires: word finding a little slower, pauses

Diamonds: varies with affect, word finding problems, mis-speaking at times of stress

Emeralds: repeats phrases or words, gets stuck in social, intonation matters

Ambers: repetitive, variable volume, echo

Rubies: less articulated speech, babble, hum or sing, rhythmic vocalizations

Pearls: sounds to single words, responsive
Dexterity – Hand Skills

Sapphires: still intact slightly slower

Diamonds: Slower, limited w/ bilateral skilled integration

Emeralds: individual actions are there, sequencing is challenging, more forceful

Ambers: heightened use of hands, skilled tool use decreased, strong

Rubies: whole hand with limited finger use – hold and carry, difficulty with release

Pearls: grasp strong, limited opening

Body Skills

Sapphires: sustained - slower

Diamonds: details not as good, globally Ok

Emeralds: better with dominant side, errors

Ambers: strong more than skilled, limited safety awareness

Rubies: whole body not segmented, front ok back not

Pearls: reflexive, great trouble with gravity or speed or movement
People Awareness Skills

Sapphires: sustained – slower to ID

Diamonds: recent ?, older/deeper better

Emeralds: recognize like/not like,

Ambers: can get lost in old-new relationships, will like or not like in the moment

Rubies: like or not like, familiar versus not

Pearls: voices, faces, touches, smells familiar or not

Place Awareness Skills

Sapphires: sustained → turned around

Diamonds: familiar feels best → gets lost in community & in unfamiliar places

Emeralds: if OK with what is seen is OK, if not OK seeks the old familiar –task or social

Ambers: OK if “here” feels OK, otherwise will go “there”

Rubies: may or may not have a destination more a movement or stillness pattern

Pearls: is what is experienced comforting
Time Awareness Skills

Sapphires: lifelong – crunched or expanded

Diamonds: more the past than now

Emeralds: lost in episodes or caught in loops

Ambers: in the moment not the task or sequence

Rubies: in the experience, not the time

Pearls: time has much less meaning

Situation Awareness Skills

Sapphires: sustained → tough to think

Diamonds: old emotions drive new interactions

Emeralds: has moments of time travel

Ambers: more sensory awareness than intellectual awareness; immediate

Rubies: only in moments, less body aware

Pearls: more inside than externally aware
Assessment and Treatment Strategies for Adults with Dementia Part II:

Using the Progression of Dementia to see GEMS®, not loss

Ambers
Amber Alert
Caution!
Caught in a moment
All about Sensation
Explorers
Amber Activities

• LOTS of touching, handling, mouthing, manipulating
• Focus on fingers and mouth
• Get into things
• All about sensation….
• Invade space of others
• Do what they like
• AVOID what they do NOT

Amber Interests

• Things to mess with (may be people)
• Places to explore
• Stuff to take, eat, handle, move…
• Visually interesting things
• People who look or sound interesting OR places that are quiet and private
• Textures, shapes, movement, colors, numbers, stacking, folding, sorting…
Rubies

Hidden Depths
Red Light on Fine Motor
Comprehension & Speech Halt
Coordination Falters
Wake-Sleep Patterns are Gone

Ruby Care Issues

• Contractures
• Skin well being – bruises, tears, rashes
• Pressure or friction
• Infections – UTI, yeast, URI, pneumonias
• Swallowing
• Circulation
Pearls
Hidden in a Shell
Still & Quiet
Easily Lost
Beautiful - Layered
Unable to Move – Hard to Connect
Primitive Reflexes on the Outside

Primitive Reflexes to Consider

• Startle reflex –
  – Sudden movement causes total body motion
• Grasp reflex –
  – touch palm – grips hard can’t release
• Sucking reflex –
  – sucks on anything near mouth
• Rooting reflex –
  – Turns toward any facial touch and tries to eat
More Reflexes

• Bite reflex
  – Any touch in mouth causes bite down

• Tongue thrust
  – Anything in mouth causes tongue to push forward and out

• Withdrawal – rebound
  – Pull away from stretch

• Gag reflex –
  – Any touch to tongue causes gag

3 Zones
Of Human Awareness
and the PPA™

Changing Attitudes through
Building Awareness, Knowledge and Skill
3 Zones of Human Awareness

- **Public Space** – 6 ft away or more
  - Visual Interactions & Awareness

- **Personal Space** – 6 ft to arm’s length
  - Conversations & Friendship

- **Intimate Space** – within arm’s reach
  - Intense Physical Closeness

3 Ways We Take in Data

- **Visual** – What we see
  - Visual Interactions & Awareness

- **Personal Space** – What we hear

- **Intimate Space** – What we touch & feel

**Positive Physical Approach™**

1. **Stop** moving 6 ft out
2. **Greet**: “hi” sign (open by face), say name
3. Moves hand into a **handshake** position
4. **SLOWLY** come in from the front
   - within visual range (or starts there)
5. Move into **Supportive Stance**
6. Hand shake–move into ‘**hand-under-hand**’
7. Move to side; **Get low** – sits or kneels
8. Make **connection** (wait for their response!)
9. Deliver a message – using V-V-T cues
Positive Physical Approach™

Hand-Under-Hand®
To guide and assist
Hand-under-Hand® Assistance

- Keeps you from hurting their wrist, arm, or fingers
- Keeps the person from squeezing your knuckles
- Keeps them from hitting or grabbing you
- Helps direct gaze – eye-hand coordination
- Pressure in the palm is calming

Hand-under-Hand® Assistance

Protects aging, thin, fragile, forearm skin
## High Risk

### Care Approaches to Consider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE of CARE</th>
<th>Preventative</th>
<th>Curative</th>
<th>Restorative</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Compensatory</th>
<th>Palliative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sapphire</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerald</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruby</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>