

## **Friends for Life**

### **The Springs at Simpsonville's Approach to Memory Care**

#### **Friends for Life**

Our hearts are in all we do to care for residents at The Springs, and our approach to memory care highlights our mission of serving friends. We believe our residents – regardless of their stage in the dementia disease process – have strengths, and we can connect with each individual and his or her strengths as we help them to have meaningful engagement on a daily basis. We believe in inspiring and nurturing those in our care, just as we would do for a best friend. Our caregivers receive training that helps them determine appropriate prompts and cues to use for each person that will draw upon that resident's particular strengths. We help our friends experience joy in daily accomplishments that others may take for granted.

#### **Life Story**

Building a strong connection with a good friend begins by getting to know that person well. Our Friends for Life program also begins by learning our residents' life stories. In order to provide the best care possible, we want to know who each resident is and know what is important to each person. Only then will we know the best approach for meaningful interaction. Through information from family members, our caregivers are provided a much more personal understanding of our residents so they can build a stronger relationship with those they serve. When we know more about a resident's personality, values, interests, stressors, and motivations, we can honor and celebrate his or her distinctive personality by including favorite activities and rituals into a daily functional schedule. Life stories are also key in helping us manage the disease progression and any changes in behavior.

#### **Environment**

At The Springs, we pride ourselves on being family. In keeping with a family atmosphere, our memory care neighborhood is a home-like setting that is comforting, but also practical. All apartments lead to a common area where activities take place. Large windows allow natural lighting to assist in maintaining a regular day and night schedule and allow plenty of opportunities for nature-watching. The common area includes an aviary where residents can enjoy bird-watching. The indoor and outdoor flow make the neighborhood feel like a home while tenured staff, family members, and other care partners make the neighborhood feel like family.

#### **Everything is an Activity**

When overcome with boredom or a sense of not having anything of value to do, we can all become frustrated. Keeping residents with memory impairments engaged with meaningful activities helps prevent a sense of frustration. Instead, we view everything we do as an activity. Every activity allows opportunities for resident success and a feeling of gratification. Our caregiving staff provide supportive assistance without taking away personal abilities. Whatever a resident can do by himself or herself is recognized as a means of personal fulfillment. In fact, residents may regain some skills when given prompts and cues that recall old muscle memories to help them complete certain tasks.

#### **A Functional Schedule**

SimpleC computer technology helps us maintain a reliable daily schedule while also stimulating good memories and successful interactions. A functional schedule involves waking, dining, enjoying favorite hobbies and activities, personal care, and rest. Most importantly, a functional schedule also takes into account the person we serve rather than the tasks themselves. The ideal schedule has periods of high energy and periods of rest throughout the day and keeps each resident reminded of the next activity or

event of interest. Or perhaps there's a cue to relax and enjoy a favorite interest in between planned activities.

### **The Power of Music**

Music is such a powerful force. It can remind us of old memories, recall old emotions, improve our moods, and even give us a reason to move. Music has the power to ease both physical and emotional pain. It can also become a common language that overcomes other communication barriers. At The Springs Friends for Life neighborhood, karaoke is one of the favorite activities. Our residents enjoy singing along and dancing. Not only are they happy and actively engaged, but the dancing also provides great exercise and helps with mobility and balance.

To see just how much music can impact someone with cognitive impairments, watch one man's amazing experience: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fw7Y78aqf\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fw7Y78aqf_I).

### **Our Staff and Coaching for Success**

In addition to providing our caregiving staff with dementia-specific training, our dedicated memory care activities director plans all activities in the Friends for Life neighborhood to meet specific individual and group needs for our residents. All our memory care staff concentrate on resident comfort and care while also being cognizant of any changes in a resident's behavior, needs, capabilities, appetite, or overall condition. Being a best friend to each resident advances not only the delivery of care, but also the sense of personal success for each resident.

### **Families**

The Springs encourages family involvement as a key component of our approach to care. After all, you know your loved one best and can help us get to know him or her. We also want to be a resource for families through educational programs about dementia and its progression. We offer the Virtual Dementia Tour® experience to families and the community at large as a way to see into the world of a dementia patient. The Virtual Dementia Tour® was developed by award-winning geriatric specialist P.K. Beville, founder and CEO of Second Wind Dreams, and is a simulated dementia experience that can help family members and caregivers provide better care. The Springs staff believe our highest calling is serving our residents and their families.

### **What Makes Our Friends for Life Program a Success?**

- Higher staff-to-resident ratios
- Dementia-specific training for staff
- Dedicated memory care activities director
- Individual resident care plans that are updated regularly
- Using our residents' life stories as the foundation for their care
- Individual, cluster, and large-group activities based on resident interests and abilities
- Secure and easy-to-navigate environment
- Secure outdoor patio
- Peaceful setting with outdoor view of pond and walking path
- Indoor aviary
- Large windows that allow natural lighting
- Regular community outings
- Regular pet visits

- Dignified dining program including private dining area
- Healthy snacks
- Extensive and specialized staff training
- On-site wellness and therapy programs
- On-site beauty salon and barber shop
- SimpleC technology for 24-hour routine, interaction, and engagement
- IN2L technology for memory games, videos, fitness, and activities