

Massachusetts Welcomes Teepa Snow!

by Emily Kearns, PhD, MBA
Project Manager, Dementia Friendly Massachusetts



Join us in welcoming Teepa Snow for a one-day workshop on June 12, 2018, at the Winslow Academic Center, Lasell College, Auburndale, MA.

CEUs are available for nurses and social workers.

To register, [click here](#). For more information, contact Corrie Philips by phone, at (404) 277-4205, or [email](#).

Massachusetts is one of many states growing dementia-friendly communities so that individuals living with dementia can live well, in their community, feel welcomed, included, and supported, and experience a quality life. As part of a national and global dementia-friendly social movement, [Dementia Friendly Massachusetts](#) (DFM) invites people from all walks of life and all community sectors to show up for dementia, rather than run from it, and help reframe it through education, training, innovative programming, and cross sector community and culture-change initiatives. Memory cafes and dementia-friendly programs focusing on the arts, nature, fitness, travel, and more are proliferating! Even a dementia-friendly cruise departs this May from Boston to Nova Scotia, offering engaging dementia-friendly activities, excursions, and respite.

To better help lead this Massachusetts effort, Program Manager, Emily Kearns, attended the June 2017 [Dementia Action Alliance's](#) (DAA) annual conference – and was forever changed! Since then, she has been working closely with DAA to evolve Dementia Friendly Massachusetts' messaging and grow its capacity to be more inclusive and supportive of those living with dementia. Helping bring Teepa Snow to Massachusetts is part of this effort!

DAA's conference's clarion call to reframe dementia incited her to further evolve what it means to be truly dementia-friendly. Foremost, conference speakers – individuals living with dementia -- asked that we consider living with dementia not as a death sentence but rather an invitation to awaken to live more fully -- to live meaningful, engaged lives, full of purpose and connection. To simplify life and reduce stress to best manage their new challenges. They spoke about living with a cognitive disability and advocated for access to cognitive ramps, such as assistive technology. They want to be included in communities – including dementia-friendly movements – and not in a token way but in a full, purposeful way where their expertise is not only honored, but leveraged – used as a resource for the community effort. *Nothing about me, without me*, they reminded her.

Responding to the DAA advocates' messaging and the [World Health Organization's](#) reframing of dementia as a public health issueⁱ requiring a comprehensive, all-community response, Dementia Friendly Massachusetts is moving and shaking to change attitudes, and, very importantly, every touch point in the community. They aim to support people living with cognitive and memory challenges -- those too often left behind in this "age of accelerations," as Thomas Friedman refers to this moment in history. As our lives speed up and become increasingly digitized by big data and algorithms based on machines, those who cannot manage logins and apps are marginalized and terribly isolated. ⁱⁱ DFM aims to change this.

We invite you to join Teepa Snow on June 12th and dementia-friendly efforts beyond, to reframe our understanding of dementia, and, our fundamental humanity – supporting all people, with all abilities, in remaining connected and valued.

Emily Kearns is a sociologist, business strategy consultant, installation artist, and certified Reiki practitioner. Currently, Emily coordinates [Dementia Friendly Massachusetts](#). She also develops and facilitates innovative memory-supportive programming including: a memory-making café, a dementia-friendly fitness program at her local YMCA, and dementia-friendly activities for dementia-friendly cruises. Emily's personal experience supporting her parents who lived with dementia was life-changing, catapulting her into aging and dementia-related work.

Emily earned a doctorate in sociology from Boston College and an MBA from Northeastern University's Executive MBA program. She is founder and President of [Kearns Consulting](#) and Dementia Ways. For further information, Emily can be reached by phone, at 978-604-0830, or by [email](#).

ⁱ <https://www.dementiaallianceinternational.org/who-adopts-global-action-plan-on-dementia/>

ⁱⁱ Thomas Friedman, *Thank You for Being Late: An Optimist's Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations* Farrar, Straus and Giroux ISBN: 9780374273538