

# Case Study; Dementia Care

## The power of Doll Therapy

Linda is a resident at Windmill Lodge Care home in London. She lives in the later stages of dementia so her world has become smaller and engaging with the wider world is slowly diminishing. She is regularly encouraged to join in with individual and group activities at the home to maintain her physical and cognitive health. However, due to her condition, focussing can be hard.

Team members at the home committed to finding something she could really connect with to help maintain her focus.

They began doll therapy on February the 23<sup>rd</sup> with all of the residents to see who showed interest and became engaged. This type of therapy is really effective at decreasing anxiety levels and stabilising mood, as it gives people responsibility and someone to love.

Linda was in the dining room one day, when she was introduced to Alice, a Reborn Doll used during the therapy. They are very life-like and have been made to mimic the size, shape and feel of a new-born baby. Her face immediately lit up as she gently placed the doll in her arms and kissed her forehead. It was a very emotional moment and heart-warming to see Linda connect with the doll instantly. She had a very calm and caring approach and sat there cradling the doll with a big smile on her face.



Team members were so proud that Linda had found a focus for her feelings and to create a connection. Since the moment they met, Linda and Alice have been inseparable. She takes good care of the doll and has taken to the feeling of motherhood so well, ensuring the baby is fed as well as gently putting her to bed. It's helped provide structure and routine to her schedule and we have really noticed her improved social skills.

Linda's husband who visits her daily, said, "I have not seen my wife so happy in a long time, you have changed her life, thank you so much." He also expressed, "The way my wife holds the doll reminds me of when our children were babies, she would ask me to hold them when she wanted to eat, it is amazing."