

The Client

As a young woman, Linda was touring Paris on a bicycle when she literally ran into the man who would become her husband.

The collision was a scene from a charming romantic comedy. The love affair between Rick, an Australian architect, and Linda, an American accountant, started then and there. Unfortunately, while their love has grown stronger with time, Rick's memory has eroded.



The Challenge

When we met the couple, Rick's dementia had progressed substantially. Now there were only hints of the articulate, funny man with boyish charm who Linda fell in love with all those years ago. In his place was the new Rick. Now, if Rick didn't like something, he'd use a few choice expletives and strike out physically. He'd wreak havoc in their house, pulling things off tables and walls, breaking locks, and striding around the neighborhood from dawn until dusk.

Linda had been on duty 24/7 for seven years. She was scared for Rick's safety. She was exhausted. She was mourning. She also didn't want to give up control. After all, Rick was her husband. She understood him best.

She was right to be possessive. Many traditional home care agencies swoop in and take over. But Linda was extremely knowledgeable about dementia care. She'd spent years researching the disease and her husband's patterns. She didn't need someone to tell her what was best for him—she needed someone to partner with her.

The Solution

We brought in one of our experienced Care Partners, Debbie, and approached Linda and Rick's situation with respect and in the spirit of collaboration.

Together, we crafted menus (high in protein, low in carbs). We found ways to prevent Rick from sitting in his own feces (he was more comfortable changing in the closet than the bathroom). We discussed shift reports, tips for what worked, warnings about what didn't. We discovered how to get him the exercise he craved without his endless walks (badminton!). Linda found a brand of wellness briefs that whisk moisture away from the skin; we now recommend them to other clients. And, when Linda realized eight hours each day of one-on-one care wasn't enough but she couldn't afford more, we helped find a facility with rambling grounds that could accommodate Rick's needs. It wasn't as ideal as Tender Rose, Linda said. But it was the next best thing.

The Outcome

We helped transition Rick to the facility, working with him daily until he was comfortable. Today, Rick is content in his new home and Linda has her independence again.

She also has her husband back. With our help, they were able to transition from caregiver and patient to husband and wife. Rick is thriving. And Linda is teaching the new facility a few things about dementia care. We hope they're listening!