



# it makes you feel important

## Rose's Reader Story

*“Everything that's been happening in the group has been very true. Real. This stuff that's written down makes you feel different.*

Rose is 77 and has been a care home resident for over three years. She recently reflected on her experience of the care home's weekly Shared Reading group. Before Rose told this story, we read Mark Van Doren's *Slowly, Slowly Wisdom Gathers* – a poem that stood out for her.

*You might have a friend here but they're not really interested in what you say. There's a lot of them, sad. Lots of people that don't feel happy, frightened to speak. You keep a lot to yourself. Whereas when you come and talk well, it helps. Opens up.*

*There's no one who really takes any interest so we'd miss you coming.*

***I don't think anyone else cares. It's only you who comes and does these things and it's something to look forward to. I look forward to the poems and I look forward to you talking, because you make sense [laughs] I would miss it. We'd miss it!***

*We're all pleased about you coming! We feel like somebody cares. We didn't know what to expect when we first started the group, but what we got was lovely! It makes you feel important, that you matter.*

*If you didn't come, we'd have nothing to think about. It's surprising what it does to the mind. Your mind starts wondering when you're unhappy, it wanders too much. After you've been and we've read these poems, I think it helps a lot. Everything in your mind seems clearer.*

***This is the only time we talk, you see. The rest of it is always in there [points to head] and we're not happy. It's not keeping it tied in. No good hiding away.***

*Everything that's been happening in the group has been very true. Real. This stuff that's written down makes you feel different. It makes you feel lucky to be here. Because whatever's in these stories is true - they say a lot. We like to listen to this thing - they mean something.*

*And your help coming here makes you feel better. It brings out what's been gathering here [hand on chest]. Not leaving it there. Leaving it there makes you unhappy. Bringing it out with the group. Whatever's been bothering you.*

*We're getting old aren't we? I think so because we were very unhappy. Well I was. I didn't have a good life. I suffered in the mind because Frank wasn't my son. I brought him up. He wasn't my son but I brought him up and done the best I could. It makes you wonder if they really care.*

*And reading about other things and other people makes you feel better. Other people have gone through worse. I thought mine was bad but I think some people have gone through worse. It's a shame because a lot of people have suffered haven't they. It makes you think 'well it wasn't too bad'. And sometime we didn't always have a bad time. It helps.*

***We like to know you're coming here because it brings back memories in a way. It's important not to chase them away – remember them! You start thinking about what you're life's been like and you think 'this is very important'.***

*See - you've had a life where you haven't always been happy, and you can't really put it into words, it just stays there [points to head]. But talking about these poems, I think it helps. They've got a lot to say these poems about life as if, that's the way life's got to be. It can't be good for everybody. We hope it is, but it never is, is it? These poems mean something don't they. They mean something because you can't wait to hear them, read them and think about how it's been a bit like the life we've had.*

**Get in touch and be part of the story**

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