A Mental Health Foundation national inquiry

*Dementia – what is truth?*

Exploring the real experience of people living with more severe dementia

Toby Williamson
Head of Development & Later Life
Mental Health Foundation

- UK charity
- Mental health problems, learning disabilities, dementia, public mental health – all ages
- Social research, service development, influencing, information and guidance
Different realities – different truths?

• Believing that a deceased parent is alive and wanting to visit them
• Gaining comfort by holding a doll, believing it to be a real baby
• Not recognising a spouse or partner, or being convinced that a spouse or partner is an imposter or deceiving them
• Wishing to leave a care home and “go home” when the care home is where they now permanently live
• Seeking activities/roles that replicate jobs or activities the person did prior to developing dementia
Dementia – “delusions” or different realities?
We want to hear your views

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DementiaInquiry

http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/research/dementia-truth-telling/
Talk to the person you are sat next to. Can you describe a situation where you or someone you know who lives with dementia is experiencing a different reality.

1. **What did it mean to the person living with dementia?**

2. **What was the most helpful response?**

   - Telling the truth
   - Reframing/redescribing the experience
   - Distracting the person
   - Avoiding discussing the experience
   - Going along with the experience
   - Lying about/reinforcing the experience
   - It wasn’t clear
   - Something else