Ronald
A story of hope

Simone Schipper
Health care psychologist / master mentor Gentle Teaching

Before 1997: Fear ⟷ Control

Ronald

- Overwhelming fear and aggression
- Rigid routines for safety
- Restraint and seclusion

Caregivers

- Fear and uncertainty
- Control and strict routines
- Trapped in confrontation

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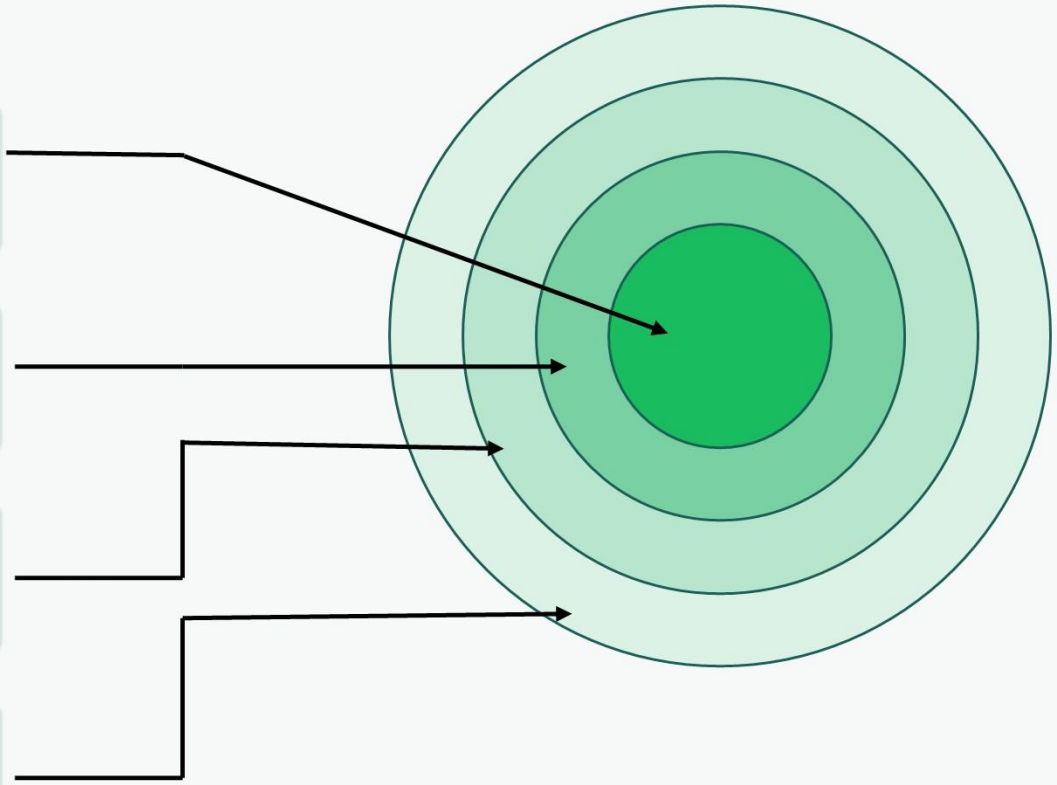
1997: How it all started.



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Four Gentle Teaching Dimensions

1. **Contact and safety**
   Calm, predictability, emotional safety.
2. **Reciprocity and connectedness**
   Interaction, exchange, participation.
3. **Deepening companionship**
   Stretching; facing difficulties together.
4. **Social development**
   Community, broader relationships.



The dimensions overlap and shift with what the person needs.

1997 – 1999: Fear ⟷ Trust

Dimensions 1 & 2 Safe, loved and loving

Caregivers

- From control to understanding fear
- Reassurance, connection and choice
- Alternatives to physical confrontation

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1997 – 1999: Fear ⟷ Trust

Dimensions 1 & 2 Safe, loved and loving

Ronald

- Asked to have his hands untied
- Enjoying physical contact.
- Expressed more feelings and concern for others
- Starting to trust caregivers rather than only routines.

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2000 – 2004:
Structure ⟷ Companionship

Dimensions 1-3 - Growing relationships and possibilities

Caregivers

- Humour and reassurance instead of escalation
- Adapting routines
- New experiences and participation at home

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2000 – 2004:
Structure ⟵ ⟶ Companionship

Dimensions 1-3 Growing relationships and possibilities

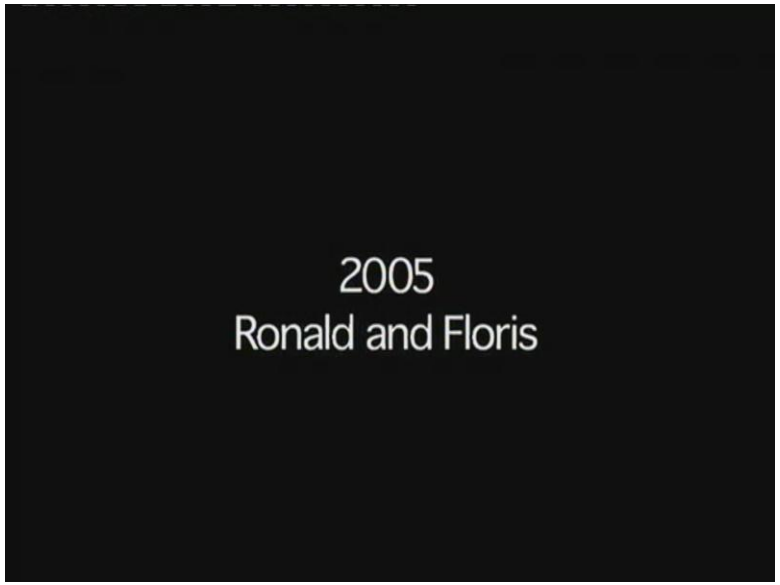
Ronald

- Less violent confrontations.
- Gradually free from restraints
- Became more involved in everyday life

Relationships opened the door to change.

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2005 - 2007



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2005:
Protecting ⟵ ⟶ Sharing difficult moments

Ronald

- Visited father in hospital.
- Say goodbye after father's death.
- Shared his grief with his family

Caregivers

- Stayed close
- Supported him in expressing feelings.

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2006–2020: Care ⟷ Sharing life

Ronald

- Music, cycling, swimming, trains….
- Social connections, humour and affection
- Increasingly part of the world around him

From being cared for to sharing life

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2006–2020: Care ⟷ Sharing life

Caregivers

- Became companions in everyday life
- Encouraged independence and connection
- Built on Ronald's interests and strengths

From being cared for to sharing life

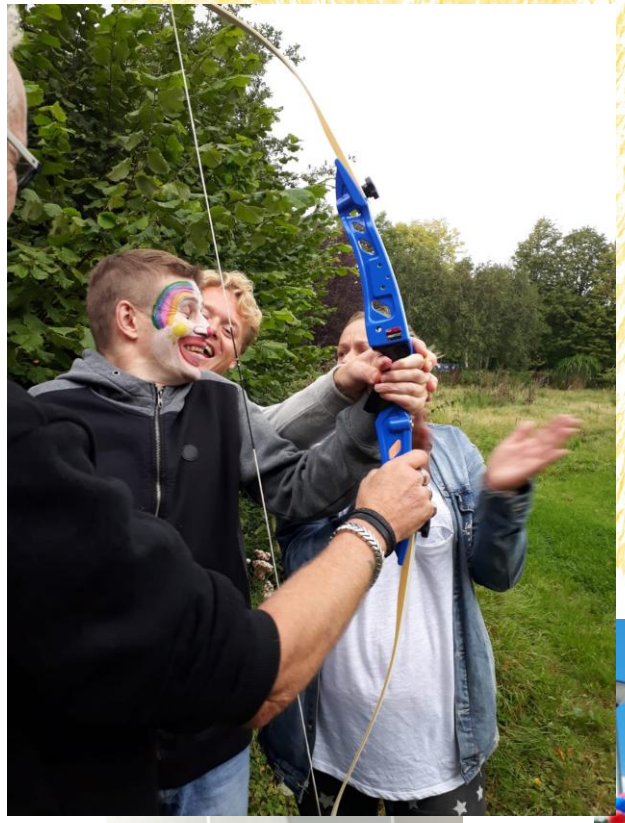
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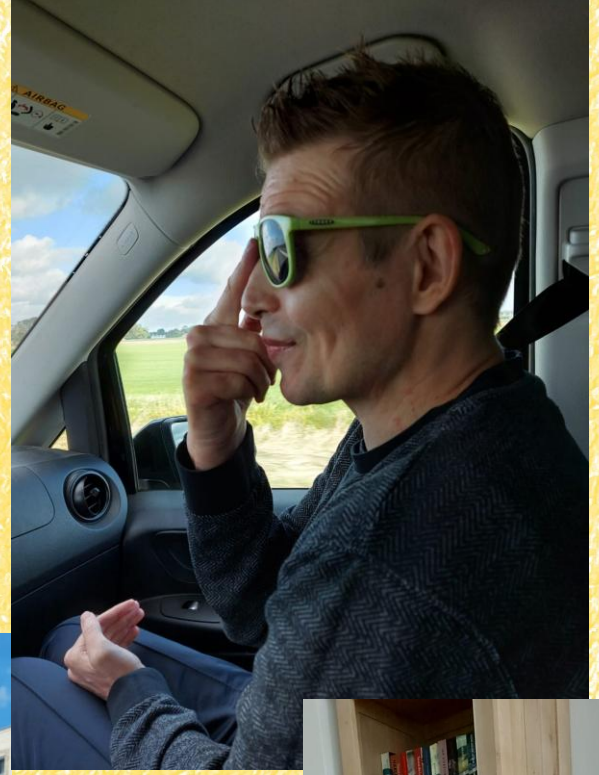
2009: Dimension 4



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2012: meeting Sanna







2019:

Watching himself with John McGee








2020 Looking forward to his new home

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2020: A new home, a new beginning

Dimensions 1 - 4 : getting trough major life changes

- **Ronald**
- Followed the construction with excitement
- Looked forward to moving.

- **Caregivers**
- Prepared for the change together
- Build on years of trust

Safety not only in routines- also in relationships

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2022: Facing illness

Dimension 1: Feeling safe and loved

Ronald

- Seriously ill and in hospital
- Needed familiar people close

Caregivers & family

- Comfort, reassurance, presence

When life became frightening again, companionship mattered most

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2022: Facing illness








o-Do List
nothing



2023: Facing fear ⟷ Recovering

Dimension 3: Safety and trust as a foundation for treatment

Ronald

- Received EMDR
- Regained confidence
- Swimming and enjoying the water slide.

- **Caregivers**
- Supported emotional and physical recovery
- Activities that brought him joy.

From surviving to enjoying life

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2023: EMDR

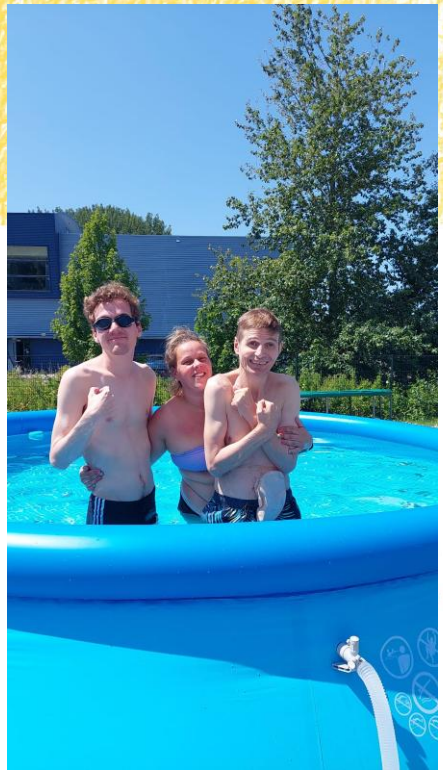


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2023: We can do it!!







2026: Doing ⟷ Being there

Dimension 1: Safe and loved

Ronald

- Increasingly physically vulnerable
- Needed comfort and familiar people.
- His world became smaller again

Caregivers & family

- Let go of routines
- Focused on comfort and connection

Being there mattered more than doing

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2026





2026: Celebrating Ronald's life

A story of hope, trust and companionship

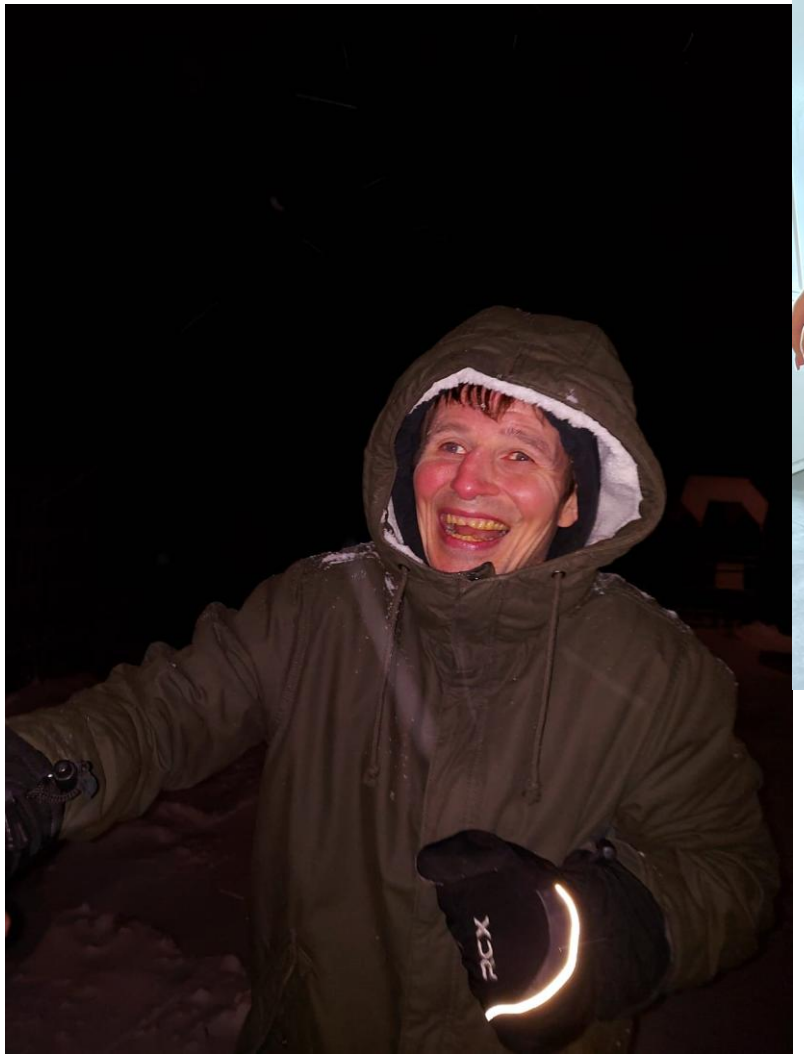
- Ronald changed
- His caregivers changed
- Their relationship changed what became possible

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Celebrating life



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Questions & reflections