How is Compeer Like Air and Water?

Betty was hesitant to be matched with a new friend through MHA’s evidence-based Compeer program. Betty’s daughter Taneka said, “She has had a lot of losses. . . she was covered in complete darkness.” But when Betty finally took a chance in February 2016 and was introduced to community volunteer Tonia Frazier, she said she immediately “loved her.” Betty said, “She’s immensely inspirational. She makes me smile, laugh, happy. We have good spiritual conversations and I feel good when I’m around her.” Even Betty’s grand-daughter Sierah thinks, “their relationship is sweet. She needed an outlet outside her family.” Speaking of sweet, some of their favorite outings have been for ice cream and cheesecake.

Tonia said, “It’s been a blessing and very humbling. . . I can feel her energy and it makes me feel good too.” She thought their 20+ year age difference may be a barrier but found, “When you share, you have a lot in common and it really brings the generations together. I think of her as family.” She felt an immediate connection to Betty’s daughter Taneka too.

When Taneka was asked if she’s seen changes in her mom during the year of their friendship she said. . .

Compeer is a considered a best practice program by the American Psychological Association. MHA has been making volunteer friendship matches since 1990, for adults living with chronic mental health concerns.

“This program is as needed as air or water. It’s like breathing life into you. I’ve seen a shift, growth, barriers break. It’s been an answer to my prayers. It’s been just me for years. Their friendship is like a flowing fountain—you can be refreshed. This speaks to my soul!”

Tonia was recognized as Compeer’s outstanding volunteer of 2016-2017. Tonia says of the friendship, “I got way more than I bargained for.”