

The photo shouldn't be a memory test

Louise Callin — founder and CEO of ReelLife Conversations — on turning old family photos into a fear-free way to talk with people living with dementia, and why the reframe mattered more than the technology.

Louise Callin spent nearly 30 years leading technology and transformation for global corporations before her mum's dementia journey pulled her toward something more direct. What started as an instinct at her mum's coffee table — spotting the colour, the object, the place that links one photo to the next — became ReelLife Conversations, a social care technology company built entirely around a single reframe.

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**The photos shouldn't be a memory test.
They are there as a supporting actor in the conversation.**

— Louise Callin, on Pharma Prescribed

The reframe is the whole product

Ask someone with dementia if they remember something and the failure to recall reads as a loss, every time. Flip "do you remember when" to "I remember when" and the pressure disappears, whether or not the other person remembers anything at all. The goal isn't to surface memories at all — it's to encourage interaction without fear of failure.

Built like an instinct, not a database

Photos go into ReelLife's family admin portal, facial recognition groups faces so a relative only has to name each cluster once, and the platform generates conversation prompts tuned so that each one guarantees the next photo picks up the same thread. Always having to think of the next thing to say puts real strain on carers, in an industry that already struggles with staff retention.

A harder sell, but a clearer one

Venture capital wants volume and return. Dementia care is personal and slow. Louise's answer was to make the business model itself the ethical argument: a low monthly subscription at scale, aimed at a genuine gap in a market where most existing technology covers medication tracking and safety monitoring, not the actual moment of connection.



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Louise Callin on Pharma Prescribed — at pharmaprescribed.com and wherever you get your podcasts.

Louise Callin is founder and CEO of ReelLife Conversations, a social care technology company helping families, carers and care providers create meaningful conversations for people living with dementia.