



August 2024 Angel of the Month | Ndaka Chigariro

Congratulations to Ndaka Chigariro, our Angel of the Month for August 2024. An angel to her very core, Ndaka joined the Newton/Canton team a little more than a year ago in June of 2023. Since then, she's cared for 26 different clients, sharing her warmth and charm while continuing to learn a great deal from everyone she meets.

"I find all my clients so fascinating. They're from all different backgrounds and places, so I get to hear their stories about their lives," Ndaka shared. "I'm good at breaking the ice and never nervous about approaching strangers, which allows them to really open up to me."

She believes this skill is something she learned at an early age growing up in Zimbabwe, where her mom ran a little pastry shop and developed connections with many of her customers. Ndaka would help her mom in the shop and watched her utilize many of the same skills that serve her well as a care professional. To this day, Ndaka feels one of her greatest assets is her ability to quickly determine the needs of her clients.

It doesn't take long to see why clients are quickly comfortable around Ndaka. Her tone of voice is calm and pleasant, while her thoughts on life and aging are refreshingly positive. "It's all about getting a better perspective on what the world is like through the things my clients share with me. It adds something new to my own personal experience and serves as a reminder that we don't exist in a vacuum," she said.

Before moving from Zimbabwe to the United States in the summer of 2021, Ndaka had been developing her skills as a care professional by taking care of seniors with a variety of debilitating conditions throughout her local community. When she applied to work for Visiting Angels, she had been taking care of a private client for a few months, preparing meals, taking her to doctors' appointments, doing laundry, and assisting with transfers. According to Ndaka, the client was very alert mentally, but her body was failing her. While care could be challenging at times, Ndaka used this experience to learn and grow. She was constantly communicating with the client's family, even when she noticed the slightest change from the day before. It's this kind of



attention to detail that makes her such an outstanding care professional for Visiting Angels Newton/Canton.

Case Manager Michael Albrecht noted what a relief it was to send Ndaka to one of his clients who could be a bit harder to please. "The client praised her for her ability to blend into the household and quickly establish a relationship with the family as well," Michael said. And, as any care professional knows, that's not always easy to do!

Senior Case Manager Elizabeth Quagraine has sent Ndaka to visit some of her clients and has been nothing less than impressed. "I could feel the positive energy radiating from her the first time I met her, so I had a feeling she'd take good care of our clients. Her attitude and approach to taking care of seniors is so refreshing and makes me feel so happy whenever I send her to meet someone new."

Fellow Case Manager Traci McCarthy joined Elizabeth in praising Ndaka. "She is one of those care professionals who you could send to any client and with confidence know she'll do a great job," Traci said. "She's skilled, reliable, and goes above and beyond for her clients. She's been able to handle some very tough situations over the past year with ease, keeping the client's case manager in the loop whenever necessary."

It's in those tough moments, though, that Ndaka has found that most clients are more than willing to work with her to overcome whatever the challenge might be. She believes that it's all about trust and understanding. For example, Ndaka talked about how she approaches meal preparation with her clients, allowing them the opportunity to choose the ingredients they like. She's also had instances where the client had a hard time communicating on the phone, so she'd offer to take calls on their behalf, instead of letting the client get frustrated.

From all the early feedback about Ndaka, Director of Client Services Julie McBain knew that Ndaka was a true care professional. "I kept hearing from the case managers about her ability to make a special connection with every client she works with" Julie said. "She really knows how to put the clients and their family members at ease."

From a case management perspective, it's helpful to have someone as reliable and confident in her abilities as Ndaka taking care of a client who requires a higher level of care. When help is needed in a pinch, the Newton/Canton case management team has grown to trust Ndaka. According to Case Manager Patrick Murray, "Ndaka is professional, reliable, and a great communicator regarding any client matters. She has been a true pleasure to work with since joining our team."

Reliability was a word that all our case managers used when speaking about Ndaka. Funny enough, it was also the first word that came to mind for Ndaka when asked why she loves working for Visiting Angels so much. "There's always someone available to talk with," she said. "If I need to talk to someone over the phone or if there's ever an emergency, there's always someone on the other end of the line."



Ndaka, thank you for touching so many of our clients' hearts and giving them a reason to smile. It's care professionals like you that make Visiting Angels Newton/Canton one of Top 100 home care agencies in the nation for client satisfaction. Your positive approach and refreshing perspective on learning a little something from everyone you meet is something everyone could use a little more of. We feel fortunate that many more of our clients in the coming years will get to know you and experience firsthand what makes you such an outstanding Angel.