

# THE TIES THAT *bind us*

Celebrating love in February usually involves hearts, flowers and expensive set menus, but it's also the perfect time to celebrate the women who make our lives a whole lot brighter. We meet six fantastic females who tell us what makes their relationship so uniquely special

## *Mother and daughter*

### *Lucy Makina & Eppie Kusada*

**Lucy, 38, is a chartered quantity surveyor and mother to Kuzi, 7**

"We moved from Zimbabwe to England when I was young and, being the eldest of four children, I often felt pressure to be perfect. But although I thought my mother was harder on me than on my sister and two brothers, I never once doubted that she loved me, and I knew that I could always rely on her no matter what.

"Seven years ago, I went into labour at just 24 weeks' gestation – the doctors didn't know why it happened so early. My daughter, Kuzi, was born weighing only 520g and doctors didn't expect her to survive. It was a real roller coaster of emotions, but Mum was my spiritual anchor, counsellor and companion. She would accompany me to the neonatal unit every day, and sit by the incubator with Kuzi while I went and expressed milk for her next feed, and hold my hand when I felt overwhelmed.

"Having Kuzi has made me look at my relationship with my own mother differently. The love I feel for Kuzi and my desire to protect her has made me understand why Mum was so strict and protective over me. We moved to Dubai just before Kuzi's second birthday, and Mum moved with us. When Kuzi was born she suffered a brain haemorrhage, and doctors didn't know if she would walk or talk, but she is a strong little girl and is now in mainstream school doing really well. Mum even volunteers at the school

to be near her during the day. Having Mum live with us brings me comfort and support every day."

**Eppie Kusada, 60, is a retired nurse and mum of four grown-up children**

"Lucy was a happy child, always singing, very friendly and smart. Plus fashion conscious; when we went shopping you could never choose for her, and if you told her, 'I don't have enough money' she would say, 'OK, you can buy it later when you have the money'. She never accepted second best! She was also generous and loved sharing to the point that, when I wasn't looking, she would take her plate of food and go and share it with her friends outside.

"I don't think I treated her differently from my other children, but because she was born first, perhaps there was more pressure on her to help with the others. When Lucy had Kuzi it's difficult to explain how I felt. I was happy to be a grandmother, but I wasn't sure she was going to cope as Kuzi was born so prematurely and was so delicate. But I had a feeling she would manage, because she is a fighter herself.

"Lucy is a very good mother, she would do anything for Kuzi and sometimes I wonder if it were me, could I do as well as she does? I'm not sure. Living in Dubai with them means I get to enjoy their company every day, and that my grandchild has become a part of my life. It's more than anyone could ask for."



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