Daughters of Naomi

The Caregiver Burnout Check

For the daughter who takes care of everyone except herself.

The caregivers who give the most are often the ones who take care of themselves the least. Taking care of yourself is not selfish. It is necessary. A caregiver who never rests eventually breaks. — *Becky*

PART 1 · SIGNS TO NOTICE IN YOURSELF

Check what sounds familiar

- ☐ Exhaustion that sleep and rest don't fix
- ☐ Irritability that wasn't there before
- ☐ Feeling hopeless or helpless about the caregiving situation
- ☐ Pulling away from friends, family and activities you once enjoyed
- ☐ Feeling like caregiving has swallowed your whole identity
- ☐ Skipping your own doctor's appointments, ignoring symptoms, not taking your own medications
- ☐ Sleeping poorly, and treating it as just what caregiving feels like
- ☐ Leaning more on alcohol, food or other things to cope
- ☐ Resentment toward your parent, followed right away by guilt for feeling it

If several of these sound familiar, hear this: resentment does not mean you don't love your parent. It means you are a human being carrying more than any one person was designed to carry alone. It isn't a moral failure. It's a signal to get help, and to start with one thing on the next page.

If you ever feel hopeless, or have thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out right away. Call or text **988** (the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), or call 911 in an emergency. Your doctor can also refer you to a counselor.

HOW I'M REALLY DOING

Name what you're feeling: the anger, the grief, the guilt, the relief. All of it is real.

PART 2 · WHAT HELPS

Write in your first step

1 **Accept help when it's offered.** When someone offers a meal or an afternoon, say yes. You're letting them love you the way you've been loving your parent.

Someone I'll say yes to:

2 **Build in real breaks.** Adult day programs and respite care exist for exactly this. Schedule breaks before you're desperate for one.

A break I'll put on the calendar:

3 **Stay connected to your own life.** Keep at least one relationship, one activity and one space that belongs entirely to you.

The one thing I'll protect:

4 **Keep your own appointments.** Your health is part of the care plan. A sick caregiver can't care for anyone.

My overdue appointment:

5 **Tell someone the truth.** Find one person you can say "I am not okay" to and be believed.

Who I can be fully honest with:

6 **Let others carry you spiritually.** Let people pray for you when you have no words. Spend time in the Psalms, the most honest prayers in Scripture.

A Psalm I'll read this week:

THIS WEEK, ONE THING THAT BELONGS ENTIRELY TO ME

A walk. A long phone call with a friend who makes you laugh. A nap without guilt.

"You did the best you could with what you had. That is enough. You are allowed to rest now."