

Ways to Manage the Emotional Load We Carry

Here are some gentle things to try:

1 Notice What You're Carrying



Ask yourself:
"What am I responsible for... and what have I started believing I'm responsible for?"

Awareness is the first step toward change.

2 Practice Small Acts of Saying No



Try:

- "I can't do that this week."
- "I need some time to think about it."
- "I'm not available."

3 Stop Treating Rest Like a Reward



Try saying:
"My needs matter too"

4 Share the Mental Load



If you live with others, consider whether planning, remembering, organising, and emotional support are being shared fairly.

5 Notice Guilt Without Automatically Obeying It



Try saying:
"I feel guilty because I'm doing something differently."

6 Pay Attention to Your Inner Dialogue



Instead of:

- "I should cope better."
- "I'm failing."
- "Everyone else manages."

Try:

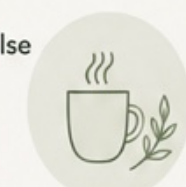
Would I speak to someone I care about this way?

7 Identify Your Early Signs of Overwhelm



- Irritability
- Feeling numb
- Trouble sleeping
- Constant tension
- Anxiety
- Feeling resentful or depleted

8 Create Space Where You Are Not Caring for Anyone Else



A walk.
Silence.
Reading.
Therapy.

9 Remember That Survival Strategies Have Reasons



Understanding patterns is different from blaming yourself for them.

10 Consider Support



Therapy can offer space to explore patterns of over-responsibility, trauma, boundaries, anxiety, and the pressure to hold everything together.

You do not have to keep carrying everything alone.