



# THE RESILIENT CARERS COMPANION



# The Resilient Carers Companion

Support you can hold in your hands. Strength you can build every day.

Being a carer takes heart, dedication, and grit, but it can also take its toll. That's why we created the Resilient Carers Companion: a practical, uplifting brochure designed to support your mental wellbeing, one small step at a time.

Inside, you'll find:



## Quick Self-Check Tool

A simple, science-backed way to spot the early signs of stress, fatigue and burnout, before they take hold.



## Mental Health Resources

A curated list of free and low-cost support services, apps, and helplines tailored for those in the care sector. Because you deserve just as much care as you give.



## Daily Wellbeing Practices

Micro-practices that fit around your shift patterns, including breathwork, gratitude prompts, and calming habits you can do in five minutes or less.



## Journal & Reflection Pages

Dedicated space to check in with yourself, process emotions, and stay grounded. Writing it down helps let it go.



## Team Wellness Ideas

Turn staff meetings into moments of connection. Use our ready-to-go prompts to encourage kindness, laughter, and shared support.



**This isn't just a brochure — it's a lifeline.**

Let it live in your bag, your drawer, your pocket.  
Reach for it on the hard days. Share it on the good ones.



**Together, we're building a stronger, more supported care workforce, *one resilient carer at a time.***





## Part 1

## Quick Self-Check Tool

### How are you really doing today?

Use this tool once a week or anytime you feel off, to spot early signs of stress and burnout.

### The 6-Point Check-In

For each category, tick the box that best describes how you feel. Each option is colour-coded:

- **Green** – You're doing well
- **Yellow** – Caution: mild to moderate stress
- **Red** – Take action: high stress or burnout warning

#### 1. Energy

- I feel rested and have enough energy to get through my shift.
- I'm feeling tired but coping.
- I feel drained before the day even begins.

#### 2. Mood

- I feel positive and connected to others.
- I'm feeling low or irritable at times.
- I feel numb, tearful, or on edge most of the time.

#### 3. Focus

- I'm alert and able to concentrate.
- I'm a bit distracted but managing.
- I'm struggling to think clearly or stay present.

## 4. Physical Signs

- I feel physically well.
- I have some aches, headaches, or tension.
- I'm experiencing frequent illness or pain.

## 5. Motivation

- I look forward to my work and feel purposeful.
- I'm going through the motions.
- I feel detached or dread going to work.

## 6. Support

- I feel supported and know where to turn.
- I sometimes feel isolated.
- I feel alone or unsure where to get help.



### What Your **Results** Mean:

- **Mostly Green** — You're in a healthy zone. Keep using the practices in this guide to stay well.
- **Mostly Yellow** — You're feeling the strain. Take a break, talk to someone, and try the daily practices inside this brochure.
- **Mostly Red** — You may be close to burnout. Please seek support. Talk to your manager, GP, or one of the free services listed in the next section.



***You can't pour from an empty cup, refill yours today.***



## Part 2

## Mental Health Resources

### Mental Health Resources

**You care for others. These services are here to care for you.**

Whether you're having a tough day or feeling completely overwhelmed, support is always within reach, and it doesn't have to cost a thing.

### Helplines (Free & Confidential)

**Samaritans** – 24/7 support for anyone feeling distressed or struggling to cope.

**Call:** 116 123 (UK)

**Website:** [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

**Shout** – A 24/7 text service for mental health support.

**Text:** SHOUT to 85258 (UK)

**Website:** [giveusashout.org](https://www.giveusashout.org)

**Mind** – Mental health support and guidance, including resources for carers and frontline workers.

**Info line:** 0300 123 3393

**Website:** [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)

**Rethink Mental Illness** – Advice on managing stress, anxiety, and workplace mental health.

**Advice line:** 0808 801 0525

**Website:** [rethink.org](https://www.rethink.org)

## Mental Health Apps (Free or Low-Cost)

**Thrive** – NHS-approved app to manage stress, anxiety, and depression through CBT tools.

**Free via many NHS employers.**

[thrive.uk.com](https://thrive.uk.com)

**Calm** – Guided meditations, sleep stories, and breathing exercises.

**Free trial available; discounts for carers.**

[calm.com](https://calm.com)

**Daylio** – A private mood-tracking app that helps identify emotional patterns.

**Free version available.**

[daylio.net](https://daylio.net)

**Insight Timer** – Meditation and music for stress relief, focus, and sleep.

**Huge free library.**

[insighttimer.com](https://insighttimer.com)

## For Care Sector Workers

**The Care Workers' Charity** – Financial and emotional support, including counselling grants.

[thecareworkerscharity.org.uk](https://thecareworkerscharity.org.uk)

**NHS Staff Support Line** – Emotional wellbeing support for anyone working in health or social care.

**Call:** 0800 069 6222

[people.nhs.uk](https://people.nhs.uk)



### Need urgent help?

If you feel you're at risk of harm or need urgent support, please contact:

- ♥ **Emergency Services: Call 999**
- ♥ **NHS 111** – Non-emergency medical advice



**Asking for help is not weakness. *It's wisdom.***  
**You're not alone and never have to be.**



## Part 3

## Daily Wellbeing Practices

### Tiny habits. Big difference.

You don't need hours of free time to take care of your mental health. These short, evidence-based practices fit around your rota, no matter how hectic your day.

Try one in the morning, one mid-shift and one before bed, or just pick what you need, when you need it.

### 1. 30-Second Breathing Reset

**When to use:** Before starting your shift or after a difficult moment

- ♥ Breathe in through your nose for **4 seconds**
- ♥ Hold for **4 seconds**
- ♥ Breathe out slowly for **6 seconds**
- ♥ Repeat for **4 rounds**

Deep breathing lowers cortisol (the stress hormone) and activates your body's calm response.

### 2. One Line of Gratitude

**When to use:** At the end of your shift or in your journal

Write one sentence that begins: **"Today I'm thankful for..."**

This could be something big or small: a smile from a client, a hot cup of tea, a moment of peace.

Practising gratitude rewires your brain to focus on the positive, even in tough times.

### 3. Ground Yourself in the Present

**When to use:** If you feel overwhelmed or anxious. Say (or think) the following:

- ♥ 5 things you can see
- ♥ 4 things you can feel
- ♥ 3 things you can hear
- ♥ 2 things you can smell
- ♥ 1 thing you can taste

This sensory exercise brings your focus back to now, a powerful tool for stress.

### 4. Kindness Message

**When to use:** During staff breaks or in a team WhatsApp group

Send a short positive message to a teammate:

**“You handled that really well.”**  
**“I’m glad I’m working with you today.”**

Kindness boosts morale and builds connection, for them and for you.

### 5. Nightly Wind-Down

**When to use:** Before bed

- ♥ Put your phone away 30 minutes before sleep
- ♥ Take 5 slow breaths
- ♥ Reflect on: **“What went well today?”**

Good sleep starts with gentle routines. Even five minutes can help your body and mind prepare for rest.

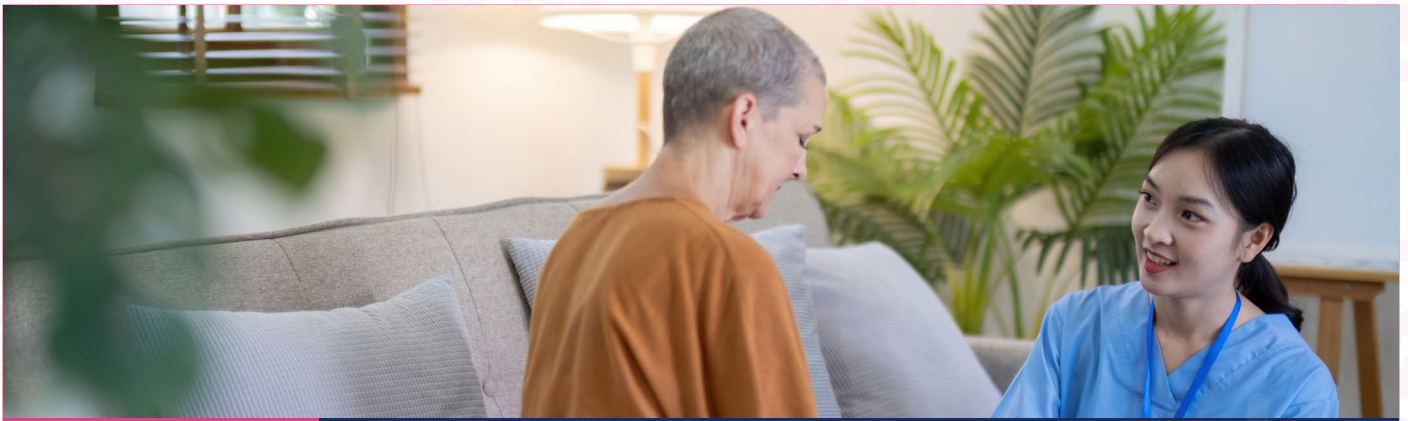


**Too busy for all 5? Just pick one.**

Small actions, done consistently, create real change.



**You deserve to feel well, not just on your days off,  
but every day.**



## Part 4

## Journal & Reflection Pages

### A safe space — just for you.

Caring is emotional work. The stories you hold, the people you support, the pressure you carry, it all adds up. Journaling helps you release what's on your mind and reconnect with how you are doing.

You don't have to be a writer. You just have to be honest.

### Weekly Check-In Prompts

Use these once a week, or whenever you need to pause and reflect.

1. **How am I feeling today — emotionally, physically, and mentally?**
2. **What has challenged me this week?**
3. **What am I proud of?**
4. **What do I need more of right now?**
5. **What do I want to let go of?**

### The Let-It-Go Page

Write down the thoughts, worries, or difficult moments you've been holding onto. There's no judgment here. You can tear this page out, scribble over it, or simply close the book.

**“You can't always control what happens in your day, but you can choose to release what no longer serves you.”**

## The Feel-Good File

This is your space to store joy.

- ♥ Write down compliments you've received
- ♥ Capture little wins
- ♥ Note down moments that made you smile
- ♥ Stick in thank-you notes or drawings from clients

On hard days, this page reminds you of your impact.



### Important Reminder

If your journaling brings up overwhelming emotions or past trauma, that's okay and it's not something you have to carry alone. Turn to the mental health resources listed earlier. Help is always available.



**Now take your pen and *begin*.**



## Part 5

## Team Wellness Ideas

### Because wellbeing is stronger when it's shared.

Your team meetings don't have to be all rota reviews and policy updates. Adding even five minutes of wellness can uplift the whole team and build a culture where people feel seen, valued, and supported.

Here are some ready-to-use ideas you can start today:

#### 1-Minute Mood Round

Go around the room and ask each person to describe their mood in one word or emoji.



No pressure to explain — it's just a check-in.

#### Kindness Circle

Pick someone each week to receive a round of kind words. Everyone shares one positive thing about that person's work or presence.

**"You always bring calm to chaos."**

**"You made my day easier yesterday."**

#### Mini Mental Health Tip

Rotate responsibility each week for a team member to bring a short wellbeing tip, app suggestion, or breathing technique to share.

**Create a team "care board" of tips in the break room.**

## Little Wins Wall

Use a whiteboard, flipchart, or notebook where the team can write small victories.

- ♥ “Got Mrs. T to smile today.”
- ♥ “Managed a full shift without back pain!”
- ♥ **“Helped a teammate finish early.”**

Celebrating the small stuff builds pride and morale.

## 5-Minute Laughter Break

End each meeting with something light, a funny video, a joke of the week, or “what’s one silly thing that made you laugh recently?”

Laughter relieves stress and reminds us we’re human.

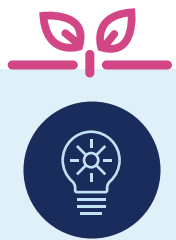
## Monthly “Time to Talk” Slot

Dedicate part of one meeting each month to open up space for the team to share what’s been tough or what they need more support with, if they want to.

A culture of care starts with permission to speak.

### Tip:

Make it easy to opt in or out. No one should ever feel pressured to share, these ideas are about inviting connection, not enforcing it.



**Team wellness isn’t a luxury. It’s the foundation of sustainable care.**  
**Start small, stay consistent — and watch what grows.**

# A Note from Jill



## You've Got This

Caring for others starts with caring for yourself.

We hope this Companion has reminded you that your wellbeing matters, not just on your days off, but every single day. Whether you're using the quick check-ins, journaling your thoughts, or bringing a little laughter to your next team meeting, every small step counts.

You're not alone in this.

For even more support, inspiration, and tools you can use any time, visit the **Resilient Carers Playlist**, a collection of short videos, calming audio, and practical advice created just for people like you.

## And Remember



**“I am resilient. I am worthy. I am not alone.”**

**Stick this somewhere you can see it. Say it on the hard days. Believe it on the good ones.**

*Jill Hudson*  
Your Big Sister



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