

15-Minute Caregiver Reset Plan

A gentle pause for the moments when caregiving feels like too much

Some days caregiving feels like too much. This little reset is here for the moments when you feel stretched thin, irritated, emotional, exhausted, or just done.

You do not need perfect conditions. You do not need a quiet house. You just need 15 minutes to breathe and come back to yourself.

First, give yourself permission to pause

Before anything else, remind yourself:

I'm allowed to take 15 minutes.

This does not make me selfish.

It helps me keep going.

Minute 1–3: Just breathe for a second

Before you do the next thing, stop. Sit down if you can. If you can't, that's okay too. Just be still for a moment.

Take 5 slow breaths. Nothing fancy. Just slower than the ones you've probably been taking all day.

I do not have to figure out everything right now.

I just need to get through this moment.

Minute 4–6: Name what's really going on

Ask yourself: What feels the heaviest right now?

- frustration
- guilt
- sadness
- anger
- exhaustion
- resentment
- fear
- the feeling that it is all falling on you

Try saying it honestly: This is hard. No wonder I feel like this.

Minute 7–9: Do one small thing for your body

Ask yourself: What would help me feel 5% better right now?

- drink some water
- eat something quick
- step outside for a minute
- stretch your shoulders
- wash your face
- sit in silence
- unclench your jaw

Minute 10–12: Talk to yourself a little more gently

When you're overwhelmed, your brain can get harsh. Try replacing that with something kinder and truer:

- This is a hard situation.
- I'm doing the best I can right now.
- I do not have to do everything at once.
- I'm allowed to need help too.

Minute 13–15: Ask yourself what actually matters next

Ask: What is the next right thing? Not everything. Just the next thing.

- make one phone call
- handle the next meal
- text someone back
- sit down for five more minutes
- write down a question you need to ask
- let one non-urgent thing wait until later

A reminder for the hard days

You are not failing because you need a minute. You are not a bad caregiver because you feel overwhelmed. Caregiving is heavy, and taking a short pause still counts.

Come back to this anytime you feel overwhelmed, overstimulated, resentful, exhausted, close to tears, numb, or like you have nothing left.

You deserve care too.