# Who Takes Care of the Responsible One?

5 Ways to Care for Yourself While Caring for Everyone Else

A free guide from David E. Edey, Certified Executor Advisor

## Sometimes, Just Showing Up Is Enough

When my mother died, I was doing what Responsible Ones often do. There were arrangements to make, people to speak with, and details to look after. I was grieving, but there were still things that needed to be done.

On the first evening of my mother's funeral visitation, people came and went. Some shared memories of my mother. Others offered condolences. I appreciated every one of them.

Then I looked toward the entrance. Standing there were three close friends: Sab, Ag, and Julie. They had driven all the way from Toronto just to be there. I hadn't expected them.

They didn't make a speech. They didn't try to explain my grief or find the perfect words. They simply stood beside me. And something inside me settled.

For once, I wasn't the person who had to take care of everything. Someone was there for me.

They never said the words out loud, but their presence told me everything I needed to hear: **We've got you.**

I've forgotten countless conversations over the years. But I've never forgotten that moment.

### The lesson I carried with me

Being the Responsible One often means being the person everyone turns to. But there are moments when we need someone to turn to as well.

Sometimes the greatest gift we can give someone who is grieving isn't advice, a solution, or even the right words. It's our presence.

**You can be the Responsible One without having to carry everything alone.**

## Five Ways to Lighten the Load

Grief doesn't arrive with instructions. And it doesn't wait until you've finished taking care of everything else. Here are five small things that may help.

### 1. Let someone show up for you

You don't always have to be the person offering help. Sometimes you can be the one receiving it.

**One small step:** Think of someone you trust. Reach out. You don't need a reason beyond wanting someone to talk to.

### 2. Share what needs to be done

After someone dies, there can be an overwhelming number of decisions and responsibilities. You don't have to handle every one of them.

**One small step:** Choose one task someone else could help with. Ask them directly.

### 3. Give your grief some room

It's easy to stay busy. There is always another phone call, another document, another problem. But staying busy doesn't mean you're not grieving.

**One small step:** Give yourself permission to stop for a while. You don't have to accomplish anything.

### 4. Have the conversations that matter

One of the kindest things families can do is talk before a crisis: about wishes, important documents, and who will take care of what.

**One small step:** Start one conversation with someone you love. You don't need to solve everything today.

### 5. Don't forget to live your own life

There will always be someone who needs you. But there is also a life waiting for you to enjoy.

**One small step:** Make time for something that brings you joy: a friend, music, a walk, a good laugh. You don't have to earn that time.

**Small steps count. You don't have to change everything today.**

## A Moment for Yourself

Before you put this guide away, take a few minutes to think about these questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

### Who is my person?

Who can I turn to when I need someone to listen, sit with me, or simply be there?

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### What am I carrying alone?

Is there one responsibility I could share with someone else?

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### What have I been putting off?

What is one small thing I could do for myself that would bring a little peace or joy into my life?

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## A Personal Note From David

For more than 40 years, I've worked with families facing some of life's most difficult moments. I've seen the weight that falls on the person everyone depends on. And I've been that person myself.

Being responsible isn't about doing everything alone. It's about caring for the people we love while remembering that our own lives matter, too.

If someone came to mind while reading this guide, perhaps today is a good day to call them. Ask how they're doing. Tell them you appreciate them.

I want to leave you with the final three sentences of Chapter 16 of *The Responsible One*:

**I see you.**
**I hear you.**
**I've got you.**

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