

Caregiver Tired Is Different

✨Hey, Silent Warriors ✨

There's something we need to say out loud.

The person everyone is worried about...is not always the patient.

Sometimes it's the one standing next to them. Holding it all together. Quietly falling apart.

We are not fine.

We have not been fine.

And we've gotten very, very good at pretending otherwise.

Caregiver tired isn't "I stayed up too late" tired.

It isn't "I need coffee" tired.

It isn't "I'll sleep it off" tired.

It's bone deep.

It's soul tiring.

It's nervous system tired.

It's waking up exhausted...not because I didn't sleep, but because even in sleep, part of me is still on. Listening. Waiting. Ready.

At 3am, Kyle starts his day...already awake, already pacing the hallway. He has Lewy Body Dementia and Parkinson's, and nighttime doesn't mean rest to his brain anymore. Bedtime is a concept that's slowly slipped away from him. I have a 60-year-old man...stubborn and strong-willed his whole life...now fighting sleep the way a toddler does. I say that with every ounce of love in me, not to diminish him, but because it's the most honest way I know how to describe it. And it breaks my heart in ways I don't always have words for.

I now feed him. Every meal. I guide the fork, I watch his face, I make sure he's safe.

Something so simple. Something we never think twice about...until one day, the person you love can no longer do it on their own. It doesn't show up on my face. But it lives in my body.

That's what people don't see.

They see me functioning. They think I'm fine.
They don't see the cost.

Caregiver tired is doing the bare minimum and feeling like you ran a marathon. It's canceling plans you actually wanted to make, or not getting to make any at all. It's smiling while your body is screaming. It's being strong...not because you feel strong...but because someone you love needs you to be. It's pushing through because stopping isn't an option. Life doesn't pause. His needs don't pause. And so neither do I.

And here's what most people don't know: chronic caregiver stress doesn't just live in your mind. It disrupts your sleep, weakens your immune system, clouds your thinking, and quietly chips away at your health...often while you're too busy caring for someone else to notice it happening to you.

If you are a caregiver...especially one providing around-the-clock care...your tired is different.
Your tired is heavier.
Your tired is real.
And you are not weak for feeling it.

You are surviving on love and willpower in a way most people will never fully understand.
And that takes more strength than the world gives you credit for.

To anyone who has a caregiver in their life...please check on them. Not just "let me know if you need anything," but really check on them. Show up. Because we are often too tired to ask.

And to my fellow caregivers...do you feel seen in your exhaustion? Or do the people around you still not quite understand what this life really costs you?