

— A REFLECTIVE GUIDE

The Loop

Nobody Talks About

Too much responsibility → Resentment → Guilt → Repeat

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You're Not Imagining It

There's something happening that nobody really names.

You're carrying a lot and it probably feels sometimes like you're carrying everything. All the responsibilities that have gathered around you, the thinking and planning and anticipating, and the worrying about it all that goes on long after the tasks themselves are done. That weight is real, and it's significant.

But this guide isn't about the weight itself. It's about what happens *inside*. Because there's a pattern, a loop, that forms when you've been carrying more than your share for a long time. It runs in the background of daily life, and it's exhausting in a way that is entirely separate from how much you're actually doing.

You might have felt it without knowing what it was. By the end of this guide, you will.



A note before we begin:

This guide isn't here to fix anything. What I'm offering is something simpler — and in many ways more useful than a fix — a name for something you've been living inside.

Because once you can see something clearly, it starts to loosen.

A Little Context

You're probably the kind of person who notices what needs doing before anyone else does. Someone who steps in — not because you were asked, but because it was obvious to you that it needed to happen.

Over time, that quality has gathered responsibility around you. And the weight isn't just the tasks themselves. Around each practical responsibility sits an emotional layer — the thinking about it, the anticipating, the wondering how it will turn out, the managing of how others feel about it. That layer can go on for hours after a ten-minute task is done.

But here's what this guide is actually about: something happens inside that carrying. Something that most people feel but rarely talk about — because it's tangled up with people they love, and that makes it almost impossible to name out loud.

The Resentment That Arrives

At some point, alongside the carrying, something else appears.

It arrives unannounced — a flicker of something that feels uncomfortably like resentment. It might be directed at the people who don't appear to carry the same load: the ones who step over what you would have picked up without thinking, the ones who seem somehow to be moving through life more freely than you are. Or it might be aimed somewhere more uncomfortable still: at the very people who genuinely need you.

And what makes this particularly difficult is that these are often people you love.

You turn it over, looking for somewhere to put this emotion that makes sense. And so you don't say anything. You continue to carry the resentment alongside everything else.

— A REASSURANCE

I would like to offer you a reassurance here: the resentment you might feel doesn't make you a bad person. It makes you a person who has been carrying more than their share, for a long time, without it being properly seen or acknowledged. That is a human response to a very human situation.

The fact that the resentment is directed at someone you love doesn't mean you love them less. It means you're exhausted. And when you're carrying this much, the resentment tends to have more than one direction: sometimes it settles on the people around you who don't appear to be carrying the same load; sometimes — and this is the part that's harder to say out loud — it settles on the very person whose needs created the weight in the first place.

The Guilt That Follows

You'll have barely acknowledged the resentment before another emotion enters the scene.

Guilt.

I shouldn't feel like this. I love them. They don't do it on purpose. I'm being unfair. I'm being selfish. They have enough going on themselves. It's not their fault they need me. They didn't choose this either.

The guilt arrives like a correction — as though the resentment was a wrong response and the guilt is there to set the record straight. And because it comes wrapped in your own values (you do love these people; you don't want to be resentful; you know they have their own pressures), it can feel like evidence that the resentment was somehow wrong to feel in the first place.

So you push it down. You tell yourself to be more patient. You step in again. You help again.

And here is where it becomes difficult to escape: the guilt doesn't just follow the resentment. It *silences* it. It ensures that the resentment — the very signal that something isn't right — never gets properly heard. Never gets examined. Never leads anywhere that might actually help.

The people you'd normally turn to when something is weighing on you are often, in this case, the very people at the centre of it — the ones who genuinely need you, or the ones who don't appear to need to step in. Which means you carry this in silence, too.

And so the weight grows.

Why the Loop Repeats

You might have wondered why, despite being a capable and self-aware person, this pattern keeps happening.

You've probably told yourself to be less resentful. You might have tried, through sheer will, to feel more patient. Or you might have thrown yourself into doing more — as though helping harder would somehow dissolve the resentment before it arrived.

It doesn't work. And the reason it doesn't work is that the loop isn't a character flaw, and it isn't something you can override by trying harder.

It's a pattern. And patterns don't respond to willpower — they respond to understanding.

The loop runs like this: you carry a great deal, often more than is reasonable; the responsibility, sustained over a long period without acknowledgement, generates resentment; the resentment arrives and is immediately met by guilt; the guilt silences the resentment before it can be examined; and so you continue carrying — and the cycle continues.

The entry point into the loop isn't the resentment, and it isn't the guilt. It's what lies beneath the responsibility — the beliefs, the identity, and the patterns that keep you stepping in before you've had a chance to pause. Those are what keep the loop in place.

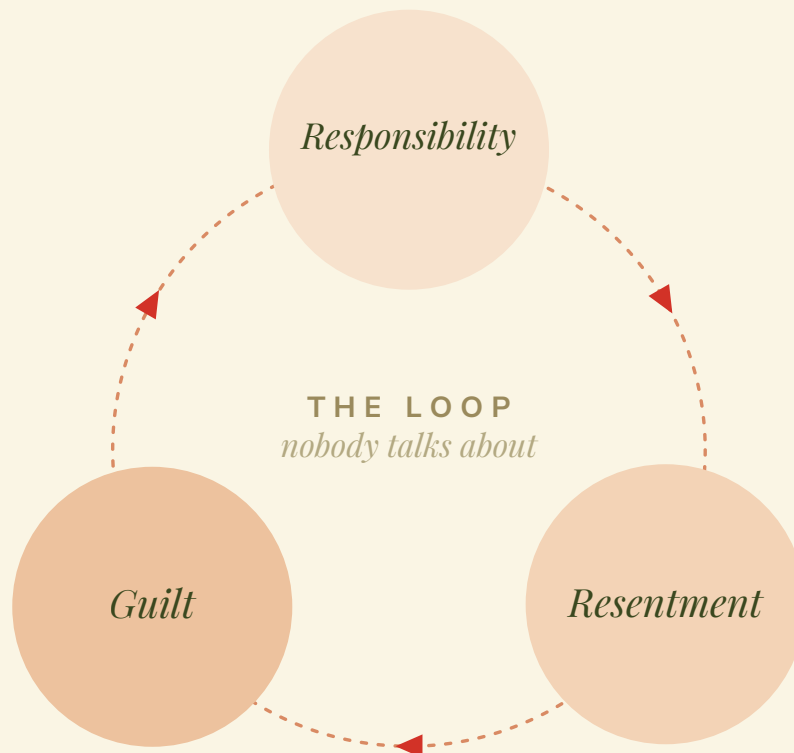
None of this means the people in your life are deliberately taking advantage of you. They probably aren't. This is rarely about bad faith. It's about patterns — about systems that have organised themselves around your strengths, and that have never had any reason to reorganise.

Section Three (continued)

THE CYCLE

- *you carry a lot*
- *the responsibility — sustained over a long period without acknowledgement — generates resentment*
- *the resentment is immediately met by guilt*
- *the guilt silences the resentment before it can be examined*
- *and so you continue carrying ... a lot*
and the cycle continues.

The loop repeats because the conditions for the loop haven't changed.



But here's what I've found, both in my own experience and in working with others: when you can see the loop — really see it, name each part of it, understand how one part leads to the next — something begins to shift. Not suddenly. Not all at once. But seeing a pattern clearly is the beginning of having a different relationship with it.

You can't loosen something you haven't yet seen.

Where Are You in the Loop?

These questions aren't here to be answered. They're here to open something up. Find a few minutes where you won't be interrupted, and sit with whichever ones feel most relevant to you.

1 Where in the loop do you tend to spend most of your time? In the responsibility, the resentment, or the guilt?

2 Is there a particular person, or a particular area of your life, where the loop shows up most?

3 When the resentment arrives, what do you typically do with it?

4 What would it mean to you if the resentment *wasn't* evidence that something was wrong with you, but simply a signal that something wasn't quite right in the situation?

A Note at the End

If you've recognised yourself in what you've read here, know that you're not alone in this.

The loop I've described is one that many capable, caring women find themselves in — often for years — without ever having a name for it. It's not talked about much, partly because the people who are living it are also the people who tend to carry things in silence.

Naming it doesn't fix it. But it is, I think, where everything else begins.

I know this not only because I've worked with women who have been through it, but because I've been through it myself. The experience of gradually losing my place in my own life under the weight of accumulated responsibility, and the resentment and guilt that gathered around it, is what led me to this work.

Celia

Celia Burns is a qualified coach based near Cambridge, UK. She helps women who are carrying more than their share of responsibility understand the patterns beneath the weight — and find their way back to the centre of their own lives.

— TO CLOSE

A final reflection

If this resonates with you and you'd like to understand more about what lies beneath the loop — the patterns, the beliefs, the identity that keeps it in place — and what it looks like to find your way out of it, you might be interested in my six-session, one-to-one coaching programme, *What About You?*, for women who are ready to change their relationship with responsibility, and recognise that they matter too.

It's not about doing less or caring less. It's about understanding what's been happening and beginning to experience your life differently.

If reading this guide and reflecting on the questions has opened something up, you're very welcome to get in touch.

— IF YOU'D LIKE TO EXPLORE THIS FURTHER

What About *You?*

What About You? is a six-session, one-to-one coaching programme for women who are ready to change their relationship with responsibility — and return to the centre of their own lives.

It's not about doing less or caring less. It's about understanding what's been happening — and beginning to experience your life differently.

If reading this guide and reflecting on the questions has opened something up, you're very welcome to get in touch.

[Book a free discovery call](#)

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