FROM INTERNATIONAL PILOT
to AUTHOR, COACH & SPEAKER

GROWING FORWARD

with Charlotte Hillenbrand



WHO HOLDS THE WOMAN WHO HOLDS EVERYTHING?

In the last issue of Lionhearted Magazine, I wrote about the friends who tell us the truth and stay close when the strong woman is no longer strong. Those friends are certainly part of who holds the woman who holds everything.

Maybe you also have a partner who holds you when things get out of hand – or helps ensure they don't.

But there is another woman I want you to consider: the one in the mirror.

What if you became one of the people who held you – not the only one, but one of them?

You would remind yourself that you are competent and capable and recognise that neither means endlessly available.

You would remember that self-care is not just spa visits and girls' nights. Real self-care means guarding your time and energy. Sometimes it means saying no when you want to say yes because it sounds fun, because somebody needs help or because you imagine you ought to.

You would set boundaries and communicate them lovingly, so both you and those who rely on you know what's available and what's not.

This is not about adding "hold yourself" to the list of things you must do, or about becoming entirely self-sufficient. It is about being honest enough to ask:

Do you really have to hold it all?

Are you genuinely indispensable?

Sorry if this hurts, but you're not.

So, ask the woman in the mirror what she can take off your plate. Not forever, necessarily, but for now.

What can someone else do at work? What can your family do at home?

Never mind the moaning; they'll learn. Perhaps they won't do it your way, but trading control for sanity and a little fuel left in your tank may be a lesson for you worth learning.

What doesn't need to be done at all during this season of your life?

We may be able to do almost anything, but we can't do everything at once. Some responsibilities belong to somebody else. Others belong to another time. Some were never ours to begin with.

Holding yourself does not mean refusing to lean. It means knowing your limits, putting down what was never yours to carry and allowing other people to take some of the weight.

And then, yes, let them arrive with hugs, cheers, cups of tea, glasses of wine, walkie-talkies or whatever you need.

Because we all need others to hold us. But we also owe it to ourselves not to make ourselves carry everything.

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