

YOUR STEADY-SEASON GUIDE

The Steady-Season Guide

None of your fifteen domains reached Early Strain. That is worth naming.

The Complete Caregiver Wellness Assessment · Dr. James E. Francis Jr.

Every domain you scored landed in the Steady band. That does not mean caregiving is light, or that nothing is hard. It means that right now, nothing has tipped into strain. Caregivers are told when they are failing and almost never told when they are holding. You are holding.

Your strength: Steadiness. You have found a rhythm that is carrying you, and that is not an accident.

Your vulnerability: The season can turn. A fall, a diagnosis, a sibling who stops showing up. Structure built now is far cheaper than structure built in a crisis.

What this season is asking for: Maintenance, not repair. Protect the habits that are working, and build margin while you still have room.

START TOMORROW

Name the three things that are keeping you steady right now, and protect one of them on your calendar this week.

Before You Begin

You do not need to fix anything right now, and that is the point. This season calls for a different kind of work: noticing what is holding, protecting it, and building a little margin before the road changes. Steady is the best time to prepare, because you still have room to choose.

This guide asks for one small move a week, not a new routine. If you miss a week, nothing is lost and you are not behind. You are simply practicing what keeps a caregiver steady, so that it is there when you need it.

A word before you begin: steady does not mean finished. If one of your domains sat close to the line, read the profile it belongs to anyway. It will tell you what to watch for.

Your composite score and band are in your results email. Haven't taken the assessment yet? You can take it at form.jotform.com/262528323339055, or leave those lines blank and begin.

My composite score	
My band	
My highest-scoring domain	
Date I started	
Day 30 falls on	

Your Next Thirty Days

One small move a week, walked as a caregiver in a steady season. This guide was made to be written on, so use the lines.

Week 1 — Name What Is Working

You cannot protect what you have not named, and being steady is never an accident.

Start by looking at what is already working, because that is the part nobody tells you to look at. Write down the three things keeping you steady: a rhythm, a person, a habit, a boundary, a belief. Then choose one and protect it on your calendar this week, with a day and a time, the way you would protect an appointment for the person you care for.

This week's one move: Name the three things keeping you steady, and protect one of them on your calendar this week.

The three things keeping me steady	
The one I protected, and when	

Week 2 — Learn Your Early Signals

Strain rarely arrives all at once. It starts as small changes you can learn to catch.

Steady caregivers still have a first sign that things are tipping. For most people it is small: sleep gets lighter, patience gets shorter, meals get skipped, or the phone gets harder to answer. Write down your three, and tell one person who is close enough to notice. Then read the profile that matches your highest-scoring domain, so you know what to watch for.

This week's one move: Write down your three early signals, and tell one person what to watch for.

My three early signals	
The profile I read, and what it says to watch for	

Week 3 — Build Margin While There Is Room

Structure built now is far cheaper than structure built in a crisis.

Choose one piece of structure to build while you still have the energy for it. A backup person who could step in for a week. One page that holds the medications, doctors, contacts, and the place where the important papers are kept. A small buffer in your calendar or your budget. Pick one, finish it, and tell someone where it is.

This week's one move: Build one piece of structure, and tell someone where it is.

The structure I built	
Who knows where it is	

Week 4 — Rehearse the Turn

A plan for the hard day is not a prediction of it. It is a way of staying steady when it comes.

Ask yourself the question you have been avoiding, gently: if a fall, a diagnosis, or a sibling who stops showing up arrived tomorrow, who would you call first, second, and third? Write it down. Then decide what sign would tell you to retake the assessment early rather than waiting for Day 30.

This week's one move: Write your first three calls for the day the season turns, and put the Day 30 retake on your calendar.

If the season turned tomorrow, my first three calls	
The sign that would tell me to retake the assessment early	

Day 30: Checking In on a Steady Season

Thirty days is a good place to pause, not a finish line. Come back to the assessment and take it again. Watch whether your composite score moves, and whether any domain has crept toward Early Strain. If nothing has moved, that is a result worth celebrating, because holding steady is real work. If something has, you caught it early, which is exactly what this guide was for.

Week	Date I made the move	What actually happened	How the week felt (0–10)
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			

What I Want to Keep

The habit that mattered most	
What I will keep doing in month two	
What I still need help with, and who I will ask	

Where This Season Goes Next

Keep the habit of checking in: retaking the assessment every month or two is a simple way to notice change early. If your results move into Early Strain, turn to the 30-Day Plan for the profile that fits you best. When you are ready to build rather than only maintain, Appendix D of The Caregiver Reset Workbook lays out a fuller ninety-day plan, written for exactly where you are.

Tools for this season: The Conclusion and its Burnout Prevention Plan, the workbook's tool for staying steady.

His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
— Lamentations 3:22–23

This guide is educational, not therapy, counseling, diagnosis, or treatment, and it does not replace care from a licensed mental health professional. If you are in crisis, do not wait. In the United States, call or text 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available at any hour. Outside the United States, contact your local emergency number.