



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

Staff  
Counselling  
Centre

# Caring Roles in Everyday Life: A Psychological Perspective

Carers Week 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> June 2026

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# The Hidden Role of Carers

- Every caring role is **different**
- Caring roles are often **invisible**
- Caring roles can emerge **gradually, or unexpectedly**

## Data on Carers in the UK

- 5.8 M unpaid carers in the UK
- 55-59s biggest proportion carers in England and Wales
- 1.7 M in the UK providing 50+ hours of care weekly
- 59% of unpaid carers are female
- 2010-20 4.3 M became carers, 4 M left role

## Data on Carers in the UK

- Sandwich Carers: 1.4 M aged 16-64

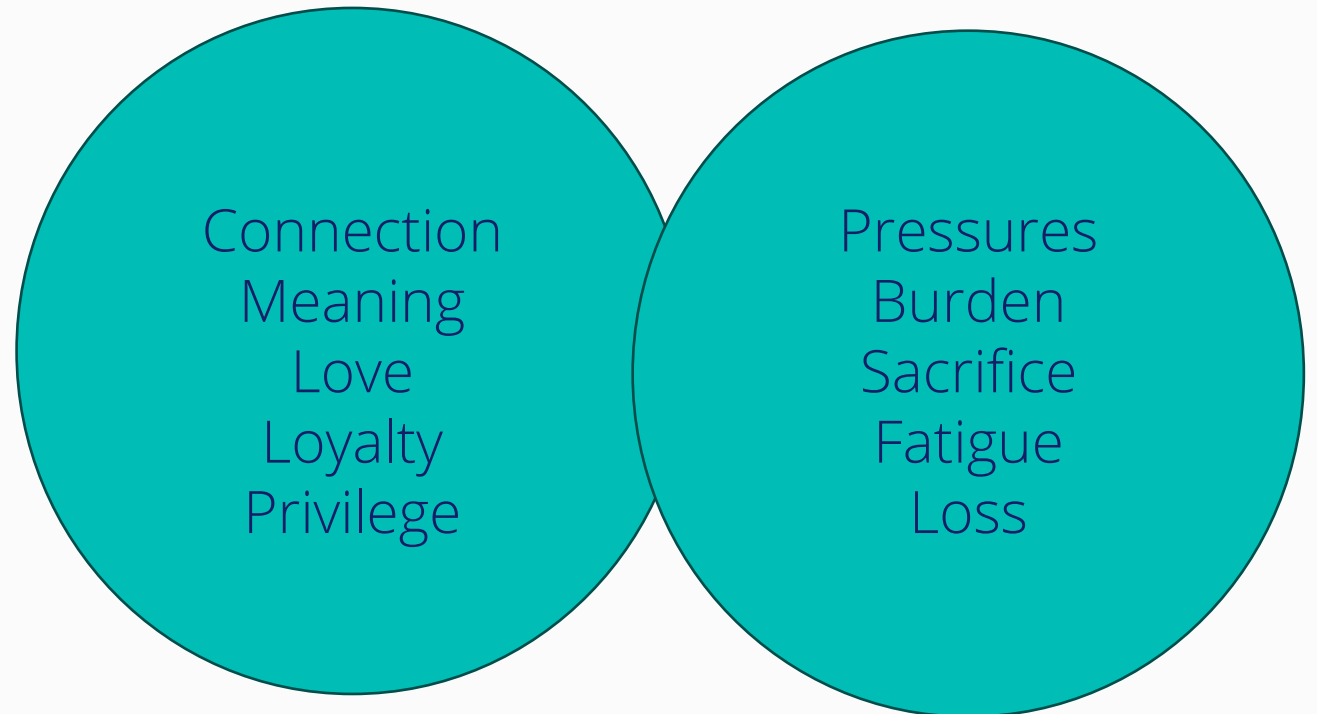
16-25% financial strain due to caring responsibilities (compared to 9% of all adults)

53-74% limits to work

Increased anxiety and depression compared to general population



# Caring: a Core Value



# The Psychological Impact of Caring



# Common Emotional Experiences

- Ambivalence and loyalty conflicts
- Chronic stress and uncertainty
- Ambiguous loss
- Caregiver's guilt
- Depletion and compassion fatigue
- Identity erosion and isolation

# Some Supportive Ideas

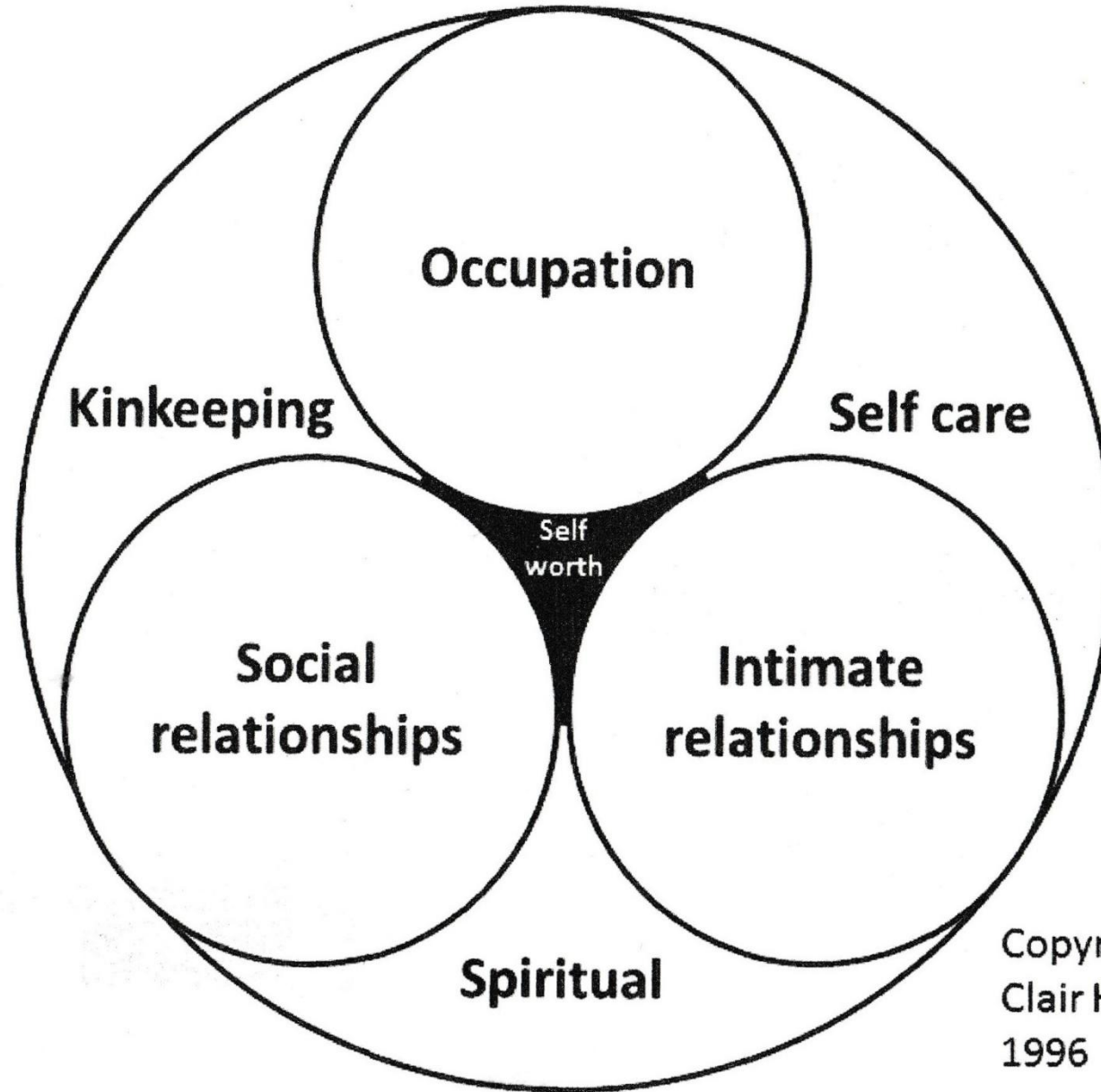




# The “Good Enough” Carer

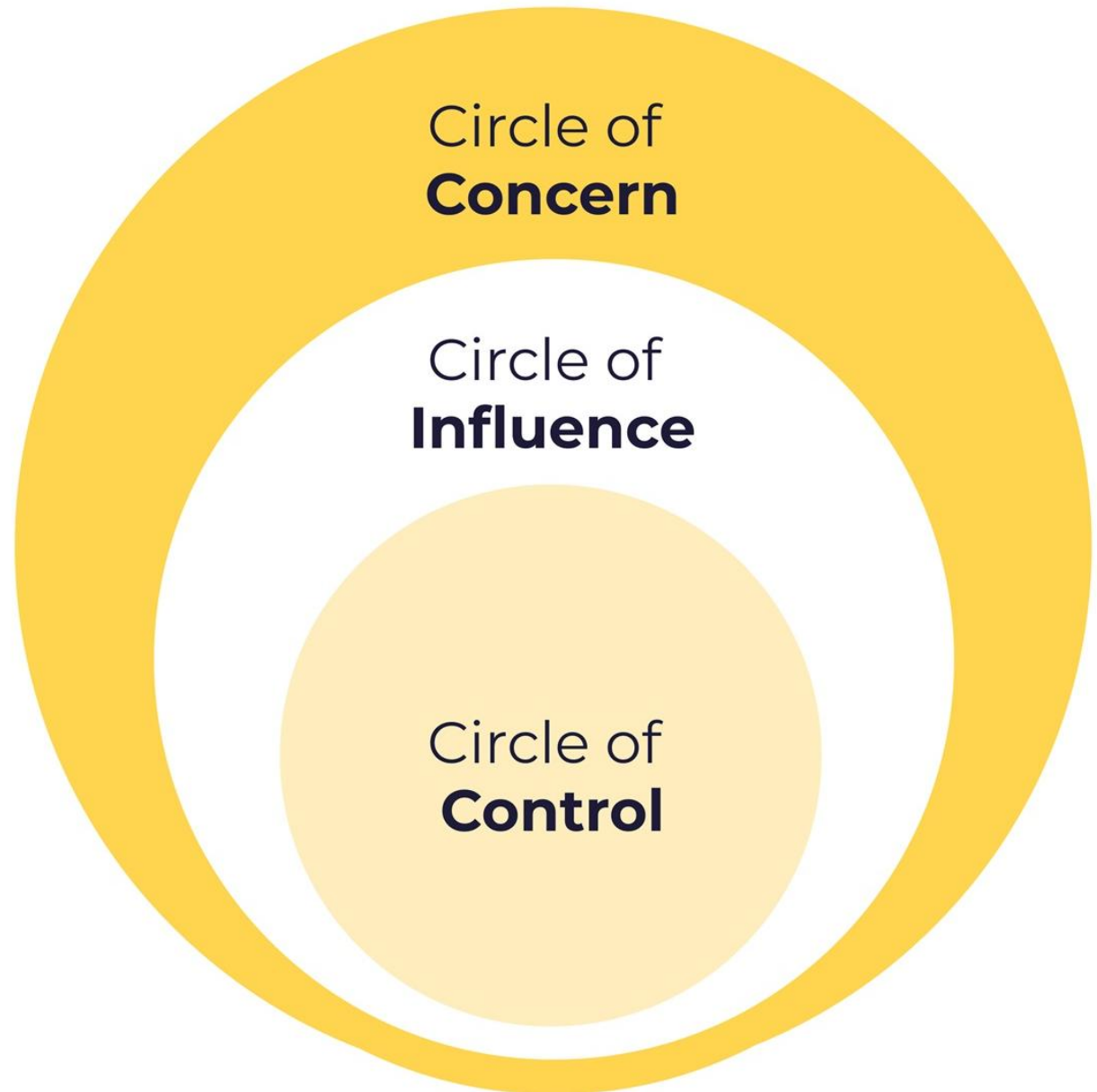


# Life Tasks



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# Circles of Control, Influence and Concern





# Support within the University

- SPACE – Supporting Parents and Carers at Cambridge  
(Carers @Cambridge Network):

[Supporting Parents and Carers @ Cambridge Network |  
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion](#)

- Staff Wellbeing:

[https://universityofcambridgecloud.sharepoint.com/sites  
/UoC\\_StaffWellbeing](https://universityofcambridgecloud.sharepoint.com/sites/UoC_StaffWellbeing)

- University Staff Counselling Centre:

<https://staff.counselling.cam.ac.uk/>

# External Support and Resources

- <https://www.helpinghandshomecare.co.uk/> University's partner company for emergency back-up adult and elder care for staff
- [Employers for Carers](#) (National organisation supporting employers to retain and empower employees with caring responsibilities)
- [Carers UK](#) (National charity for unpaid carers)
  - [The 'tipping point': When unpaid carers can no longer combine caring with paid employment](#)
  - [State of Caring 2024: The impact of caring on employment](#)
  - [Guidance for Working Carers](#)
  - [When caring ends or changes](#)
- [Jointly](#) (Carers UK has developed its own care co-ordination app, Jointly, which helps make caring easier and more organised)
- [Carers Connect](#) is an online forum for Carers UK members where you can talk about anything related to caring
- [Carers Trust](#) (National network of organisations specialising in the support and wellbeing of unpaid carers)
- [Mind](#) (Guidance on managing your own wellbeing whilst caring)
- [Rethink mental illness](#) (Guidance for caring for someone living with mental illness)
- [Mobilise](#) (Online support hub for unpaid carers)



Thank you for joining