23rd July 2026

Regular

"Act with more regularity and greater certainty."

John Trusler, *The Honours of the Table*

Sorry to be somewhat personal, but as my father is no longer with us, I think I can get away with it … My dad could be obsessive about his bowels. Whatever was happening to him health-wise, he measured his state of well-being by the workings of his digestive system. "It's important to be regular," he was fond of telling me – because being regular mattered.

Again, you don't need this piece of personal information either, but I'll share it with you anyway … I take tablets every day, a prescribed daily amount. It doesn't matter what the tablets are for – that would be *too* much personal information. But the point is, I need to take them regularly or else my health will be compromised. In that sense, as I want to keep myself as well as possible, being regular matters to me too

More significant than bowels and medication, I've had conversations recently with a young lady whose Gran has died. As well as dealing with her own bereavement, she's also worried about her grandfather, coping with the loss of his wife after many years of marriage. She and her grandfather live at opposite ends of the country, so she's been working out how best to keep in contact, how often, what to say, and the like. As we talked through the options, we concluded that whatever worked best, the contact had to be regular. Phone-calls may be short, for example, but if they were regular, that's what was needed. In our most recent conversation, she told me that regularity was bearing fruit. "I like it when you phone," her grandfather had told her. "We don't need to talk for long, because sometimes there's nothing to say. But I look forward to you being in touch. Your calls reassure me that I'm still important to someone."

Being regular in our caring matters. We're not experts. We can't fix things, take people's pain away, hasten their recovery from trauma or loss. And our caring contacts don't have to be lengthy, or deep, or even particularly special. And, yes, sometimes there's nothing to say. But if our contacts are regular, if we offer people something to look forward to, if we're communicating to them that they're "still important to someone", then it's job done. My dad was right, you know. Being regular matters …

A prayer for today

Lord, help me to act with regularity, and with the certainty of love, in my caring. Amen.

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