



# SPEC Elders Circle Reclaiming Elder Wisdom

Patrick Wilkie

4th Year Electrical Engineering  
University of British Columbia

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## We Are Only As Old As We Feel

What began with my late, timid entrance into a room full of white-haired folks transitioned quickly into an unforgettable, friendly, deeply soul-grounding two and a half hours. At some point nearing the end of our time together, I took note that not once in the experience had anyone distractedly checked their phone (what the outside world was doing) and let their energy be diverted from the gathering at hand. I struggle trying to recollect the last time that was the case in such a large group—everyone attentive, listening and engaged. It was a beautiful time together.

In my eyes, the highlight of this experience was the smaller sharing circles. We grouped in threes, which served as a container for more intimate memory sharing, and generated new friendships amongst the groups. For my first circle, I had the pleasure of meeting Lydia and Karen on the side veranda in the early evening komorebi. We talked about Victor Hugo, *If you meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him*, 'Hollywood Sands' in the '70s, and the complexity of family. Our conversation kept flowing naturally into the omnipotence of change, the wisdom to embrace impermanence, and the unexpected turns that life takes.

I found myself awestruck—what vivacity and beaming light shone from these two elders. We are only as old as we feel. It was beautiful and reassuring to engage with such a vibrant and diverse group of people, who have lived my lifetime three times over. They carry the experiences of that lifetime, and the perspective gained from reflecting on those experiences.

I look forward to the next Elders Circle meeting.