

BECOMING AN ELDER Cathy Carmody, August, 2012

Leaving behind my journey of struggling and racing through
the white water of many rivers, I become the river,
creating my own unique way.

Leaving behind my self-imposed role as a tree upon
which others have leaned, I now become the wind,
with the freedom to blow whenever and wherever I choose.

Leaving behind the boxes I've created in my life, crammed with
roles, responsibilities, rules and fears,
I become the wild and unpredictable space
within which flowers sprout and grow.

Leaving behind the years of yearning for others
to see me as somebody,
I soften into becoming my future,
with permission from SELF to
continually unfold as I choose, without concern
for how others may see me.

Leaving behind years of telling and teaching,
I become instead a mirror
into which others can peer and
view reflections of themselves to consider.

Leaving behind the urge to provide answers for others,
I become – in the silence of this forest retreat
– the question.

Leaving behind the rigor of my intellect,
I become a single candle in the
darkness, offering myself as a beacon for others
to create their own path.
I become an elder.

Question for introductions: State your name, years of life experience, and in **ONE** sentence answer one of the following questions. Take a few minutes to compose your answer.

What is inspiring, challenging, or surprising you about aging? OR

Where are you in your aging process now?