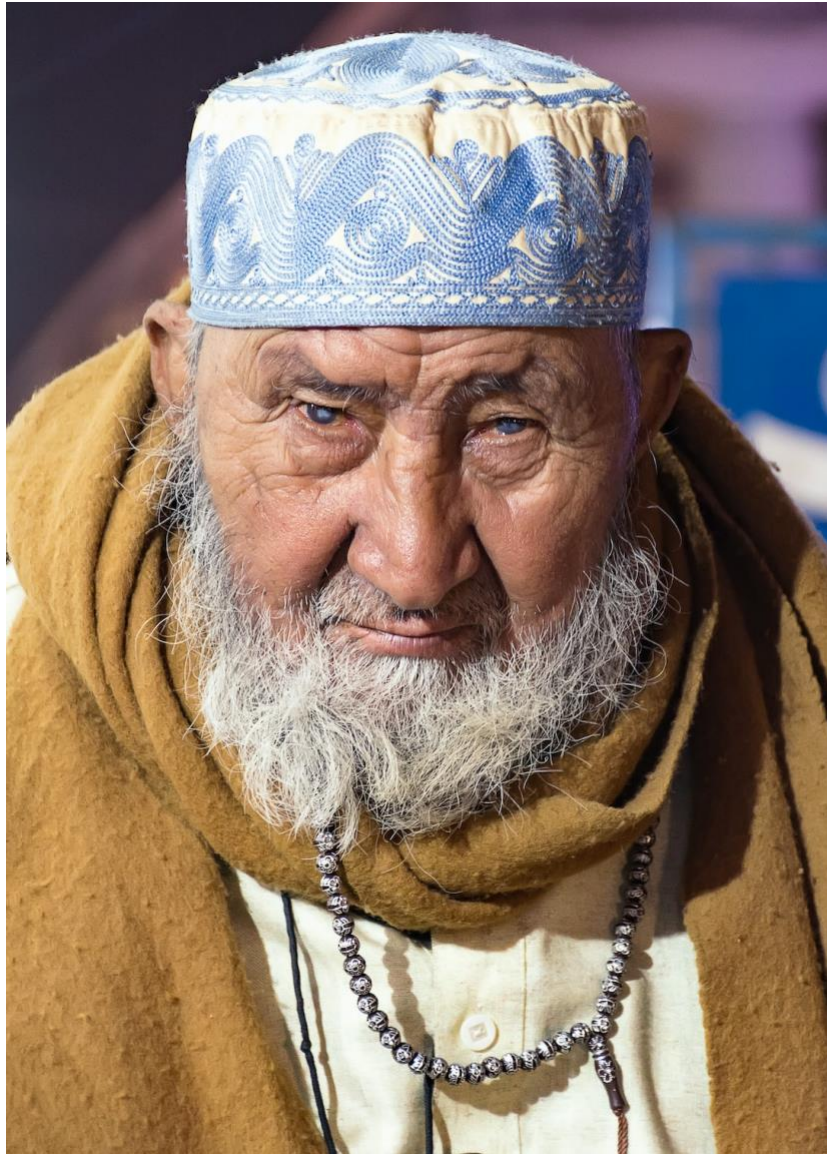




## Respectful Silence



Offering Sanctuary to homeless parts.

“On Friday night as I sat with my father in his assisted living apartment, I recognized  
'respectful silence.'”



My Dad, who suffers from moderate dementia and short-term memory loss doesn't read or watch TV anymore, because he can't follow the thread of thought. He sits all day thinking and sleeping, waiting for me to visit. Around Dad I can't act the same way I do at work – my energy and chatter would overwhelm him.

So, when I enter his room, I consciously enter a different state. I visibly slow down, walking slowly to the same chair (rituals are important), sit down and face him. I mention a few cheery sentences (weather, grandkids, etc) and then settle into silence. At that point Dad always says, "I know there was something I wanted to talk to you about, but I can't remember what it was." I pause and respond, "Perhaps it will come to you."

And we return to silence.

The space between us is full and comforting. As Dad recalls something he wants to talk about, he brings it up. My role is to acknowledge, verify, with my simple goal for the evening of bringing him a bit of happiness. Nothing more. I would like to think that I am offering a 'Sanctuary for homeless parts.' As for hearing the unseen, perhaps that will come in time."

## Reference

Personal Communication with Betsey A. Purinton, 2004

Image (search "sitting with old man") courtesy of: [Rizwan Saeed](#) @dilshad3

*The Tim Dukes Method provides an opportunity for self-reflective individuals to cultivate the capacity to receive into consciousness hidden aspects of the self, claiming your unique gifts – ensuring that today's brilliance successfully transitions into tomorrow's wisdom. The Tim Dukes Method is designed and implemented by Dr. Timothy Dukes for determined creatives to ensure long-term viability — as a continuing investment in the well-being of yourself, family, organizations, culture, society, and the Earth itself.*