

# Elder Circles January 2018

## *The Wisdom Journey Continues*

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The time has come: Register now for Gather the Elders!

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## Elder Circles Blog

# The Magic of Meeting in Circle

I've seen it happen enough times now that I trust it is coming: That moment when a new Elder Circle participant goes from being wary, unsure and self-conscious to being open, thoughtful and engaged.

Here's a scenario I've observed a few times: A new attendee comes in tentatively, and quickly claims a

# *You can't put it off any longer!*



**REGISTER NOW!**

for

# Gather the Elders 2018: Living with Change

Jan. 26, 2018

9 am to 12:30 pm

Jewish Community Center

**\$15 suggested donation  
includes breakfast**

With only a few weeks remaining until the doors open for the 2018 Gather the Elders, be sure to [register now and reserve your spot](#). There is no charge to sign up; donations are accepted at the door. No one will be turned away.

seat. As the Circle opens, she looks a little bemused by the careful explanation of the guidelines and intensions, the introduction of the talking piece, the day's topic. "Humph. Touchy-feely stuff," she seems to me to be thinking. She glances at her watch. When the talking piece comes to her on the first round, she answers briefly, and when another participant rambles on, she shifts uneasily in her chair.

But slowly, her unease drains away. She settles in, uncrosses her arms, gives full attention to each person, and when the talking piece comes to her, she shares deeply about things that are meaningful to her. In the final round, when asked for a word that describes her experience of the Circle today, she says things like: "Inspiring." "Calming." "Interesting." And best of all: "Fun!"

What happened to cause that shift? Magic – the natural magic that happens when we hear each other and are heard.

"I first discovered the power of the circle way in 1998," writes Margaret J. Wheatley in her foreword to "The Circle Way" by Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea (2010). "But that's not an accurate statement - we don't 'discover' circle practice so much as remember it. ... Circle is the way humans have always sat together and gotten to know one another."

Why should you come? If you enjoy thoughtful discussion, considering new ideas and meeting like-minded others, this is the gathering for you.

Tucson elders will share stories, activities, and inspiring ideas that plumb the meaning of our unique Wisdom Journeys.

"Living with Change" looks at the unsettling topic of *CHANGE* through a variety of lenses. Activities include thought-provoking speakers (see below), individual Wisdom Circles, and a tribute to Elder Circles Founder Del Jones. Music, art, guided movement and other interactive activities round out the morning.

Held at the Jewish Community Center, 3800 E. River Road, the event's doors open at 8:00 am for a delicious full breakfast. The program runs from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm.

#### Presenters:

- **Pamela Hale:** finding healing and transformation)
- **Deborah Knox and Sharon Kha:** finding a unique living arrangement
- **Vera Lander:** finding new direction through advocacy

**Reserve your spot!**  
**[REGISTER NOW](#)**  
**for 2018 Gather the Elders**

**Elder Circles  
Around Town:**

Recently I and another mediator met with two families at the City Court, with the goal of holding a conflict resolution circle to help them resolve their differences. The biggest problem was: We couldn't find a place in the courthouse to create a circle! All the seats in the courtrooms were fastened in straight rows facing the judge. The public benches were isolated islands facing nothing. Even the jury room – surely a good place for a circle! – had chairs lined up in severe rows. Luckily those chairs could be moved, we were able to create a small but cozy circle, and the magic happened as those families saw and heard each other.

As Wheatley puts it: "...Circle welcomes us back into a shape where we can listen, be heard, and be respected, where we can think and create together. Sitting together as equals, slowed down, held by the shape, drawing on ancient familiarity - just what we need at this time!"

As I enter into the New Year, I feel a little like a new Circle attendee - tentative, wary, uncertain. So much is changing, so fast, and so out of my control. But now I know to trust the Circle. Relax, it says to me gently. Uncross your arms and connect.

–Chris Medvescek

[About our January](#)

## January Schedule

Elder Circles focus on topics related to four cornerstones of aging: Life Review, Life Repair, Mentoring, and Leaving a Legacy.

Please join us at one of the many free Elder Circles held around town. Drop-ins are welcome!

### [Oro Valley](#)

#### **Oro Valley Public Library**

1305 W. Naranja Dr.  
Second Wednesdays  
Jan. 10, 10 am

### [North Tucson](#)

#### **St. Francis in the Foothills**

4625 E. River Rd. (at Swan)  
Second Fridays  
Jan. 12, 10 am

### [Northwest Tucson](#)

#### **Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center**

1660 W. Ruthrauff Rd  
(Wetmore & Romero)  
Third Wednesdays  
Jan. 17, 10:30 am

#### **Amber Lights**

6231 N. Montebella  
(near Northwest Medical Center)  
Fourth Tuesdays  
Jan. 23, 3:00 pm

### [Central Tucson](#)

#### **Jewish Community Center**

3800 E. River Rd. (at Dodge)  
First Sundays  
Jan. 7, 1:00 pm

## Blog Author



Blog author **Chris Medvescek** is a long-time mediator, Circle facilitator, trainer and program coordinator for the Center for Community Dialogue. Contact her at [cmedvescek@ourfamilyservices.org](mailto:cmedvescek@ourfamilyservices.org).

## Wanna Write a Blog?

If you're a regular Circle participant or Circle facilitator, and would like to share your thoughts about the Wisdom Journey or Circle experience in this space, please email Chris Medvescek, at [cmedvescek@ourfamilyservices.org](mailto:cmedvescek@ourfamilyservices.org). Word length is from 350 to 500 words.

### **LGBTQI Elder Circle**

Cornerstone Fellowship  
2902 N. Geronimo Ave.  
Third Saturdays  
Jan. 20, 1:00 pm

### East Tucson

### **Udall Senior Center**

7200 E. Tanque Verde  
Second Mondays  
Jan. 8, 1:00 pm

### **Sierra Del Sol Senior Living**

8151 E. Speedway  
Second Wednesdays  
Jan. 10, 10:30 am

### **Broadway Proper Retirement Community**

400 S. Broadway Place  
First Thursdays, 2:30 pm

*This Circle is on hiatus.  
Call Chris at 323-1708 ext.  
122 for more information.*

### Green Valley

### **Casa Community Center**

780 S. Park Centre Ave.  
Fourth Mondays  
Jan. 22, 3:00 pm

