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We will all get there someday

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An old man, perhaps in his late 70s, one evening kept asking his middle-aged son if he was dining out that evening. While the son replied the first time, the elderly man repeated his question several times, and the son, irritated with his father, told him to remain silent. On being reprimanded, the old man got up from his chair, hobbled to his room and came back with a tattered old diary, in which he seemed to have recorded some details. He opened a page, which was dated around the time his son was five and showed his son what he had written in that diary.

The words in the diary were, 'this afternoon, my young son kept asking me when I would take him out for an ice cream, and while I answered him once, he kept pestering me. I did not lose my patience and continued humouring him. After all, he is my child, and if I don't answer him, who will?'

Old people often repeat their questions, and I realise that like a child, the questions come from curiosity and not from arrogance or inquisitiveness. To answer their questions, even if repeated many times, is our way of telling them that they matter and that we value them.

I believe it is important for me to recognise that in time I will also grow old, and perhaps, display the same insecurity that the elderly man did, yet for now, when I have my wits around me, I may show compassion and kindness to elderly people.

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