

## Sages & Seekers Program Tribute 2022

Dear Jennifer,

Coming into Sages & Seekers, I had no expectations. In my mind, this program was just another part of class, and I honestly was not looking forward to participating in forced conversations for an hour with a stranger. Moreover, I thought that it would be impossible to make personal connections with an older adult because of the reality that our life stages are currently radically different.

But man, was I proved wrong in so many ways. I won't lie, at the beginning of the program, I was scared of initiating the conversations and being able to sustain a meaningful conversation throughout the 40 minutes that we were given. With that worry in mind, I felt a lot of pressure going into the program. But I want to thank you so much for ridding me of that worry from our first conversation. You were so easy to talk to from the first conversations to our last words. I never had to worry about creating discussion topics or forming conversation starters because you were so good at letting the conversation flow in the directions that it took us. For that, I am grateful.

One of the things that I really appreciated about this Sages & Seekers program was the journey that we were able to take in becoming more comfortable with each other. Every week, I was excited to see what was in store for our conversations because I knew that every new topic would create unique discussions. In hindsight, I have really learned to embrace the path, rather than the destination, when it comes to fostering a personal relationship with someone. It truly was a joy to reflect on our early interactions and our most recent conversations, both of which have blessed me in so many ways.



Jonathan & Jennifer in our online program.

Towards the end of the program, I was especially touched by the deeper conversations that we shared. I was so encouraged by your willingness to share with me about your experiences with different situations, which helped me to be more vulnerable in my sharing. In those deeper discussions, I learned so much from your wisdom and experiences. In my pride, I thought that I wouldn't be able to learn from anyone other than myself. I was lost in the thought that the only person I could rely on was myself. So, it was so relieving to be able to break that thought process down and rebuild a healthier mindset that I could rely on others to share in my struggles. After all, this life is meant to be lived with people, not alone. And you were a big part of me realizing that truth. Through our sharing, I was encouraged to not only be vulnerable with you, but also with people in my life currently. So thank you.

I just hope I was able to encourage you in half of the ways that you have encouraged me. Thank you, Jennifer.

Sincerely, Jonathan