

## Wise Old Spruce

Written by Erica Blatt on September 30th, 2023 (*inspired by observations of the Norway Spruce at Pennypack Trust by the Mindfulness in Nature group*)

Sitting at  
this crossroads  
of trails,  
with furrowed  
eyes  
gazing  
out upon  
the aging  
forest,  
you've seen  
many more  
years than me,  
gaining  
strength and  
wisdom  
as you've  
fought (fought, fought)  
your way  
towards the  
sun.  
An abundance  
of old branches,  
even-sized  
and stretching  
your tips  
ever-more  
outward.  
How do you  
decide  
which  
branches to  
hold onto  
and which  
to let go of?  
Do you struggle  
with that  
like I do?  
Old branches  
may be full  
of wisdom

or full of  
tears,  
joyous memories,  
or heartache.  
Do I need  
them all?  
Perhaps  
that's what  
gives the  
power for all  
the new  
growth that  
you see.

And your  
tannin-scented  
needles,  
creating  
an acidic  
world  
below  
where little  
can grow.  
Is this  
purposeful?  
What should  
I make of  
this seemingly  
selfish  
quality?  
And yet  
your roots  
reach out  
to others  
of your  
kind.  
What can  
we learn  
from this  
extension?

Is this how  
you share  
wisdom  
with your  
neighbor?  
Perhaps you  
are not  
so selfish  
as I thought.  
And the creatures  
crawling in and  
out of your  
porous bark,  
would I be  
willing to share  
my pores  
with so many  
creepy  
crawlies?  
Perhaps you  
are not  
selfish  
at all.  
What I am  
learning  
from you  
is that  
perception  
may be  
deceiving,  
and judgment  
may come  
too quickly.  
Can I slow  
down  
enough to  
absorb all  
you are teaching?



