



[Contents](#)

Downtown 1	2
Midtown East Afternoon	3
Upper East Side 4	4
Upper West Side 1	5
Upper West Side 2	8
Upper West Side 3	10

Ctrl + click on any listing above to go there directly.

Press the HOME button on your keyboard to return to this page from anywhere.

Downtown 1



The Highline

JANUARY

At the start of the meeting a member mentioned that because of the last month's discussion on dealing with the holidays, she was able to invite a friend to lunch on her birthday (at the end of December) with the opening line: "You're the lucky winner of lunch with me on my birthday." Of course, the friend said yes. This was a departure from previous years when the holidays brought on depression, which made it harder to reach out and be sociable.

Ways to deal with being alone, and feeling lonely:

- Try new activities – being social and getting involved.
- Join TTN Special Interest Groups - log into the TTN website, NYC Chapter, to find activities that you like, which will help you connect with women in those groups.
- Sample the gym, art and cultural events at the JCC (jccmanhattan.org) on Amsterdam and 76th Street.
- If you like yoga, try Integral Yoga on 13th Street for Yoga classes.

Recommendations for getaways with health spas/retreats:

- Kripalu (in Lenox, Massachusetts)
- The Inn at Woodloch (in the Poconos)
- The Oaks of Ojai (in Ojai, California) The Oaks is in the mountains - it's very meditative

Which spa to go to would depend on what kind of activities (or not) you're looking for.

Local recommendations:

- Spear PT at 8th Avenue for Physical Therapy, Massage and Reflexology- a kind of massage for the feet using pressure points.

Midtown East Afternoon



Ed Koch Bridge

JANUARY

Health & Wellness Update

A member reported that she had re-visited a specialist MD recently and was surprised that a part of the doctor's fee was not covered by her Medigap policy.

Medical providers can be in one of three categories with regard to Medicare insurance:

- **Participating** providers, who accept Medicare and take assignment. They must bill Medicare directly and wait for Medicare payment. If you have traditional Medicare, then you or your Medigap insurance can only be billed for 20% of the Medicare approved amount.
- **Non-participating** providers who have not agreed to accept Medicare's approved amount. You usually pay their fee upfront and they submit a claim to Medicare, which reimburses you for only their approved amount. You will pay more out of pocket. Fortunately, the NY State Insurance Department limits the additional amount a patient must pay to 5% of the Medicare allowable. Patients who live in other states could pay up to 15%.
- Providers who **Opt-Out** entirely from Medicare. The patient must be notified before services are provided, and given an acknowledgement to sign confirming they are personally responsible for all non-emergency fees. There is no limit on charges.
- A practitioner who once accepted Medicare can change their status by simply filing a form. They do not need to notify all current or former patients that they no longer accept Medicare assignment, or have opted out of Medicare.
- More details are found in MEDICARE INTERACTIVE, available on the website of the Medicare Rights Center <https://www.medicarerights.org/> -a nonprofit source of accurate Medicare information.

Doctors who participate in Medicare are most often found in group practices, and particularly the faculty practices affiliated with medical schools.

- The Wright Center on Aging at Weill Cornell and the Martha Stewart Center for Living at Mount Sinai were suggested by members who are happy with their MDs.

New Year's Resolutions

- Eat Drink and Be Merry.
- Stop yelling at TV news programs and do something positive:
 - Participate in the Women's March, or another public gathering about issues that are important to you.
 - Join the TTN Civic Action Group to share information about the organizations and causes that you support.
- Pursue a New Hobby
 - Singing lessons
 - Knitting
- Plan a trip
 - Go with a group that shares your interests - such as dance lovers seeing ballet in Russia.
 - Look into Road Scholar, which has reasonably priced trips.
 - Join TTN's "Travel Mates" SIG to ask for trip planning advice and find traveling companions.
- Complete a Project
 - De-clutter or totally clean out your apartment.
 - Sell your apartment.

Upper East Side 4



Gracie Mansion

DECEMBER

Reaching Out For Help with a Health Issue

- Reaching out to others during medical issues, particularly ones that seem to paralyze us because we don't have the support we need to decide what to do, is why many of us decided to join a Neighborhood Group.

- Even if you feel that you don't know each other well enough yet, for something like needing help with a medical decision, having someone to talk it through with, to get some feedback, can really make a difference.
- Try to make connections now to other members of your neighborhood group, whether it's through a phone call or a get together for coffee. It will certainly help you bond more quickly with the members of the group, and they will also feel closer to you.

Should I Purchase a Medical Alert Bracelet/Necklace?

- One the members was trying to decide if this is the time to get one - she didn't want to burden her son with having to call him if she needed help.
- The meeting host went into her bedroom to bring us her own medical alert. She keeps it hanging on the headboard should she need it during the night. She indicated that was the best she could do, as she didn't want to wear it all the time.
- I guess it's one of those things we're in denial about as we're aging.

Upper West Side 1



Fairway Market

OCTOBER

A reading: *The Hidden Child Book Club** has 14 memoirs from the Holocaust, including group member Helga Shepard's, which she read aloud at the meeting.

The story of being sent away from Nazi Germany and her family through the Kinder Transport program is harrowing, but the writing is beautiful. While her father fled to Shanghai, Helga's mother languished, heartbroken, in a camp in western France. Helga and her brother were separated in England, and Helga moved several times, living with people who did not treat her like a daughter. At the end of the war, the reunion with her parents was made bitter sweet by the news of her brother's death in a boarding school accident. And the events of the war had taken their toll. A fortuitous move

to New York enabled a life of promise; however, the shadow of the Holocaust was, predictably, never far away.

* **Link:** [The Hidden Child Book Club Remembers: An Anthology of Holocaust Stories](#) by Susan Gold

Personal Appearance: Our Changing Bodies

Articles about “lookism” and the invisibility of older women were summarized, including “[Aging and My Beauty Dilemma](#)” by Debora L. Spar the President of Barnard, in which the author notes that it is difficult to overlook how thin and “worked on” the female power brokers of the city are.

- The themes of competition among women for looks, and power through looks, were very familiar.
- Was Spar sending the “wrong message” to Barnard undergraduates, or was she not so much advocating as noting the irony of this state of affairs after so much feminist work against “lookism.”?

The group then discussed the many elective surgical procedures women undertake to enhance their appearance and their self-image.

Vicious comments about women’s appearance during the presidential campaign were thought to have perhaps had an effect on the national discussion of these things:

- Men, too have reacted and perhaps revisited their attitudes; it was hoped that those opposed had consolidated their values through dialogue with women about their anger about the comments.
- By the same token, it was thought that the negative remarks about some women had perhaps also “given license” and validated the attitudes of his “base”.

NOVEMBER

Personal Appearance II

- C. has stopped using make up. She hasn't ever liked it, and feels free now to just skip it.
- K. recounted the recommendation from a colleague that a bit of lipstick would “brighten” her appearance. She was not averse, but finds it a nuisance to think about.
- S. told us about her 24 hour lipstick from L’Oréal and Maybelline.

- N. said she wouldn't any more leave her house without her make up as walk out of the house naked.
- J. feels she needs it; "Really?" Is foundation a necessary part of make up?
- Re moisturizers R. noted that the only real benefit to all the oils women use is as a sealant right after a bath/shower to keep moisture in the skin. You could use Crisco or baby oil or even olive oil.
- S. uses coconut oil from Trader Joe's.

Coming back to altering our appearance with make-up or worse, cosmetic surgery seems like a strong, "I am not okay." Members refused the, "you look younger than your age," type compliments. It was strongly felt that surgery should save our life and not be cosmetic.

We color our hair, to not look "old," and that's part of ageism, too. Aren't there cultures that respect older people?

Famous women present themselves with various choices re: makeup and augmentation. Hillary Clinton recently made a speech wearing no make-up. The group was divided on whether she looked "great" or not. Melania Trump isn't beautiful; she is simply a doll. She has so obviously experienced "augmentation". Michelle Obama, on the other hand, is naturally animated and attractive.

Why do we collaborate with these views of women as always in need of improvement? Are we in many ways complicit in our own subjugation? Or is it a question of doing what makes you feel better in presenting yourself to the world.

Then there's the "male gaze" in the movies - the camera that follows a woman's behind; Marilyn Monroe as prototype. Dove commercials attempted to present a more varied picture of female bodies but that campaign is no longer with us. There was consensus that in US commercial culture, the level of degrading images of women is even worse than before. Recent remarks by Donald Trump and Berlusconi of Italy were truly sobering to the group.

"What can we do?" Fighting issues connected to the female gender role is very important. The system does great damage, and we are women! Other members were less optimistic that anything could be done.

Upper West Side 2



116th St. Subway Station

NOVEMBER

Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living but Woody Allen has quipped: "But the examined one is no bargain."

- ***What does examining one's life mean to you? Has it changed over time and/or has getting older affected it?***
- ***Given your tendency to be introspective or not, does that affect how you choose partners or friends? Has that changed?***
- ***What are the advantages and disadvantages of being introspective/reflective about yourself?***

The discussion focused mainly on introspection.

- Some people are not particularly introspective and don't care to share. If you are introspective, it is still possible to be with people who are not. The friendship is experienced in a different way.
- There is a tricky balance between being self-reflective and ruminating. Too much of the latter can lead into downhill thinking.
- One person said she doesn't worry about small stuff anymore and tries to put things into broader context.
- Some people are comfortable in a group, some are not.
- Do we learn what we reveal from our families? This led to a discussion about talking with our Mothers. Most said they didn't have heart to heart talks with their mothers.

Recommended book: [Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking](#) by Susan Cain

DECEMBER

It seems natural to become more reclusive as we get older. How can we prevent this from happening and how can we expand our circle of contacts and become more engaged?

Many in the group agreed that it becomes easier to withdraw and not make the effort to be sociable as one gets older. On the other hand, people would actually like more connection with others and not be isolated. The following suggestions were made to get us more engaged with people:

- Push yourself to talk to people in your building.
- Go beyond your comfort zone and ask someone to have coffee or tea.
- Try different support groups such as grief groups, health related support groups and others.
- Take a class: art, bridge, painting, music, etc.
- TTN has many different kinds of groups, including groups for those over 70. Give some a try.
- Ask some friends over to your place to watch a DVD and serve popcorn.
- Find out if your college has events for alums.
- Get involved with a political or social action group (through church, political organization, etc.)

Finally, it was pointed out that in order to make new friends one has to ask people about their history, interests and pleasures. Listen well and don't interrupt. When appropriate, share you own interests and life experience. It isn't easy, but worth the effort.

A study in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry reports that **older people tend to be happier than younger people, and their happiness increases with age.** Do you agree or disagree with this conclusion?

Plusses: For the most part, there was no yes or no answer. Here are some comments.

- No need to please anyone but yourself.
- Doesn't care what anyone thinks about behavior or dress.
- No need to always be doing something important.
- Happy to have good health.
- Takes one day at a time - freedom to arrange time.
- Freedom to travel.
- Wonderful not to work if financially secure.
- Can lose self in activity without being sidetracked by other things - is able to disengage.

But:

- Health concerns limit "happiness".
- Thinks about "How much time is left?"
- Doesn't like living alone now.

- Has no children and wants to leave a legacy - something by which to be remembered.
- Would like to do something important.

Recommendations:

- Look into "Aging in Place" - shared housing.
- Important to make new friends. Find others who are alone and want to connect.
- Small things can make a legacy to family and friends.
- Some volunteer work can be very meaningful and self-fulfilling.

Upper West Side 3



West End Avenue

NOVEMBER

Two NY Times opinion pieces by David Brooks were the basis for the discussion:

[INTIMACY FOR THE AVOIDANT](#)

[READ BUBER, NOT THE POLLS](#)

The philosopher/theologian Martin Buber developed the concept of **I-It** relationships and **I-Thou** relationships.

- **I-It** interactions are often strictly utilitarian and businesslike, but they can be truncated versions of what could be a deeper relationship.
- **I-Thou** relationship is a personal, direct dialogue where nothing is held back - genuine empathetic communication.
- The "**I**" only exists in relation to the other person.

What is technology's impact on I-Thou relationships?

- 10 years ago there were no smart phones.
- Difficult to connect with young relatives and friends now - they text rather than talk.
- Best way to learn about their activities may be via Facebook.
- Stay current with new technology - Senior Planet and the Mid-Manhattan Library have excellent free classes.
- View technology as a "tool".
- Be a good example to others - stay calm and courteous on-line, remember that e-mails and posts never die.
- Maintain a balance between your online activity and more personalized communications.
- Continue to pick up the phone, or send a handwritten note.

Families are further apart today, what can we do to nurture intimacy?

- Take the lead in maintaining family connections.
- Plan ahead to meet; be flexible if they have busier lives.
- Use Facetime or Skype if the in-person get-togethers are infrequent.
- Follow the "No cell phones" rule during mealtime discussions.

How have our relationships changed at this point in our lives?

- Some of us have lost a spouse or a sibling.
- Friends have moved away.
- It is still possible to re-connect with a friend after a long time with if there was an I-Thou relationship beforehand.
- If old friends are gone, be open to making new friendships based on shared interests and values.
- Not all of us are naturally outgoing, but if we are willing to take a risk it is possible to develop new relationships at any age.