



# CARING TIMES

## Neighborhood Groups

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## Brooklyn



Botanic Garden

## APRIL

**Whether or not a year of relative confinement took away our interest in going places and doing things.**

Most of the group is still reluctant to mix much in person, even with our own group, all of whom are fully vaccinated. But a couple of others are beginning to try the subway, going shopping in midtown, and one or two are out regularly, even going to movies. If the CDC removes the mask requirement even indoors, it will be interesting to see if that makes a difference.

## Eastside Afternoon



Bloomingdales

## APRIL

### Outings

As the weather warmed, our mid-month meeting became an outdoor restaurant dinner, and once we brought sandwiches to Central Park and met there. In late April four of us met for dinner inside at a restaurant once, but not all members are comfortable with it; we are still trying to figure out what to do. We will try to meet in-person for our May CC meeting, with an option for joining remotely for members who are not yet comfortable being inside with non-family members.

A few of us went to see the Orchid Show at the Bronx Botanical Gardens; and the Met, both of which certainly enhanced our mental health.

**Topics:**

- **Pandemic-induced behavior;**
- **Worry about how we will resume our lives post-pandemic,**
- **How difficult it already feels to break out of the lockdown isolation we thought we couldn't tolerate, but seem to now be adjusted to;**
- **Dealing with loneliness and boredom;**
- **New recommendations for good books, movies, remote concerts and theater.**

We have become very good friends, which we feel is extremely important for a CC group. At times a couple of us have met for coffee, lunch or a walk without the entire group. We stay in touch via email and phone.

**Lincoln Square**



Lincoln Center

**FEBRUARY THROUGH APRIL 2021**

February – Dealing with difficult people

February – What brings you joy?

March – How do you want to shape the next stage of your life?

All of our lives have changed during this past year. Many of us have embraced some change. Has it changed our views on what we want in the next stage of our lives?

We are a lucky enough group of people to have the luxury of choices. What do you want to do, be, have in this next stage of your lives? What is essential to your well-being and what would you be ready to cast aside? And how important to you is all the stuff in between these two ends of this continuum?

Factors discussed related to a possible geographic change - medical help, rental vs. purchase, travel back & forth, short-term vs. long-term stays outside NYC, need to drive, get out of the City in the heat of summer.

## April – Family and Friends

We considered several questions related to family and friends at this stage in our lives: What is the role of family and friends in our lives? Is it more difficult to make new friends now? Do we have different goals and purposes for friendship now?

Friendship is important to all of us – people who have friends live longest, even longer than those who are close to family.

We make new friends through shared activities, reflecting what we have in common. Sometimes it is hard to take the first step – no one wants to reach out and be rejected.

There are different levels of friendship – some friends are your “good jewelry” and some are your “costume jewelry” – like friends vs. acquaintances.

All relationships require work. You often need to make an effort to build and sustain friendships. Some friends may not come through for you – but keep in mind that not everyone is thinking of you all the time – it may not be that the other person is rejecting you as a friend.

It can be difficult to end a friendship. “Ghosting” the other person is not a very appealing way to do it.

## **Midtown East -Day**



Citicorp

## **APRIL**

### **Practical yoga**

A member invited her Yoga teacher to give us a presentation on his Yoga class.

His name is Joe Williams ([threepillarsarts@gmail.com](mailto:threepillarsarts@gmail.com)). He has an extensive background in teaching Yoga, dance, voice, theater arts, et al.

The member explained that the class is a *practical* Yoga class. That is, it teaches yoga postures that one can use in regular life, like standing up from a chair, reaching for something, walking, and balance.

She said, "I came into the class with chronic back pain, little musculature, unable to take a deep breath, and really bad posture. Much of that has been alleviated, and I'm on the path to altogether better physical well-being."

The teacher is very attentive to the needs of his students and adjusts the exercises to accommodate their specific issues. Even if there are no issues, he's very careful to teach the poses in a way that the student will not harm herself, and he checks that we are doing them correctly.

Joe gave us a sample class which we found enjoyable and educational.

The classes the member goes to are mostly seated yoga with occasional standing classes. For now, all on Zoom.

Joe is willing to create new classes for anyone interested.

### **Murray Hill/Kips Bay**



Kips Bay towers

## **APRIL**

**Important life choices made in the past and how they affected our lives either positively or negatively.**

Most members reported positive choices including having worthwhile careers, marrying (or not), moving to New York, and taking early retirement. Once again, we're grateful for the availability of Covid vaccines, the coming of spring, and the opportunity to resume some normal activities.

**Where we stand with Covid, including to what extent Covid is winding down for us, the activities we're comfortable resuming, how being vaccinated has changed how we're living, and our plans through the summer.**

All of us are feeling less anxious about Covid after being vaccinated. Most members reported remaining cautious and continuing to avoid indoor restaurant dining, movie theatres, and crowded spaces in general. However, a couple of us have resumed eating in restaurants and feel comfortable going to a movie.

Only a few of us are currently planning to travel during the summer, although plans may change during the next month or two. We're looking forward to becoming more active as more people get vaccinated and Covid infection rates in the city continue declining.

Things we enjoyed or are grateful for included the many free or low-cost cultural and educational resources on the internet. Several of us are regular players of Mah Jong, Canasta, or other computer games.

## **Queens**



The Unisphere

## **FEBRUARY**

At our first meeting we had a small group and started off once again sharing information about who had gotten the Covid vaccine, suggestions for those who were still searching and any side effects as a result of both first and second doses of the vaccine. Although many of us have been able to get appointments it was so disheartening to know that for the elderly, people without internet access and others with language barriers it was near impossible.

### **Three questions**

- 1. If you had to teach a class for a day, what subject would it be and why?**  
One of our members felt she could give a good class about all types of benefits, like health and saving for retirement, since this was her area of expertise during her career. Another said she could teach a class about public speaking based on her early training as a teacher and from her experiences during her career with the Federal Government.

- 2. If you could play any instrument, what would it be and why?**  
Two members said they'd like to play the piano because it is so versatile and you can play so many different types of music depending upon your mood or the circumstances. Another said the violin for the exact same reasons. Still another said the harpsicord because it was so different and nobody plays it now.

- 3. What three famous people, living or dead, would you want at your fantasy dinner party?**

Ken Burns was mentioned because he seems so smart and could talk about the history of so many areas. Thomas Jefferson was another because he was smart,

well rounded, valued education and was the architect (literally and figuratively) of our country. We all wondered what Jefferson would make of the current state of our Democracy. One member thought Thomas Merton, a Trappist Monk who aside from being a theologian was a writer, social activist and scholar of comparative religion. We also wondered what he would have thought about the current state of affairs in our country. Finally, Lin-Manuel Miranda was suggested due to his incredible talent, and he could also provide some entertainment after dinner.

## **March**

### **New CDC Guidelines regarding activities once you are fully vaccinated.**

Most of us felt that some of the guidelines didn't make sense, and we would not be following them. For instance, getting together, indoors and without masks with non-vaccinated people. We also weren't comfortable eating indoors yet. Most of us felt that we've tried so hard up to now to stay safe that it was still too soon to take those risks. We agreed that when more people are vaccinated our comfort level would go up. We were however more confident that we could get together with friends and family, without masks and socially distancing, as long as they were vaccinated.

### **“Silver linings” discovered during this past year.**

A member mentioned that thru Zoom she reconnected with a friend who in the past she saw/talked to infrequently. Now they were connecting on a weekly basis, and the friendship has become very special. One member talked about all the classes she'd been able to take but had never had the time before. Another mentioned having more time to cultivate her hobbies. Still another said that she's learned to not sweat the small stuff.

## **Upper West Side 1**



Fairway Market

## **MARCH**

### **Pandemic activities:**

A member spoke about using the lockdown period for putting together, typing up, and self-publishing a collection of her short stories, published in literary magazines decades ago. She put the book on Amazon with a painting (done during the lockdown) as the cover.

A member continues to work on her family memoir — which she feels compelled to do for her children.

Another has been walking throughout the pandemic, but had a hip-wrench last week. This didn't stop her from going to the exhibit at the Frick, but she saw it all in a wheelchair. She started yoga at home and considers it a mindful pursuit. A form of meditation. She is now doing very gentle floor work as a prelude to more (to attain flexibility).

### **Meditation**

One member feels she is "inside of myself" too much, as it is, and she wants to be more "outside of self." So, meditation may not be where she wants to be right now.

Various methods of meditation were discussed. And what the practice actually is.

Our traveling colleague found concentrating on the dolphins outside her window in South Carolina helped her deal with the recent losses of her siblings — which has left her last of all of them. She found it healing and considered it a meditation.

Another quoted Thoreau: "Only that day dawns to which we are awake." This from an article she sent (Ref. below).

One practitioner talked about her experience with the Meditation Center in Northampton in context of learning (Ref. below).

One member will be taking a workshop with someone affiliated with the New York Insight Meditation Center.

Another discussed her Zen meditation practice over the years.

### **Fun things we've done**

Some of us are concentrating on and appreciating — maybe more than ever — our locale!!! A few of us visited restaurants recently: Luccia's, Chama Mamma and Taverna. A few have gone to museums: the Met and Whitney, which is featuring the Julie Mehretu exhibit in the present uncrowded circumstance.

One member mentioned a book, The Manhattan Nobody Knows, re: travel locally. Another ventured up to Cold Springs with a friend to join another friend, who lives there. They dined out on the deck at Valley Restaurant, facing Storm King Mountain (in Garrison on Route 9) — a lovely experience.

There's talk of Lincoln Center resuming some theater presentations outdoors. The Metropolitan Opera is having a struggle — never a money-making operation in any case.

Rich conversation followed about the Russian culture that has thrived and evolved in Brighton Beach

### **Some references:**

“Meditation is Not What You Think” - Jon Kabat Zin

[https://www.tiohundra.se/sites/tiohundra/files/JKZ\\_thinking.pdf](https://www.tiohundra.se/sites/tiohundra/files/JKZ_thinking.pdf)

AND a link to the Chopra site:

<https://chopra.com/articles/explaining-the-difference-between-mindfulness-meditation>

About The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society:

The leader was Mirabai Bush. One member attended a summer weeklong workshop with them and developed curriculum in ESL/reading-writing with a team that had mindfulness elements in the teaching of philosophy, speech and reading/writing.

<https://www.contemplativemind.org/?fbclid=IwAR0Zhl8zTM6xBB-AHJIHS-nryH6prBWIRRBnTyQOrBGhRIHIOHj8ZPc6BA>

About vaccines:

<https://jacobinmag.com/2021/02/finland-vaccine-covid-patent-ip?fbclid=IwAR3Jy6SC6Ysi8tgAq4LbfWXVxKM3VRuY1fVHrl0Ttglkj6nFsGk38ozYGA4>

Meantime, one colleague reported a piece of news re: vaccine production. According to an article (Ref. below), Finland had the formula for a vaccine that it was willing to release early and for free, but the major pharmaceutical companies managed to block this effort. It was noted that about 48% of health care workers have not yet gotten vaccinations.

### **Wise words to live by:**

One member began by citing the three words she has excised from her vocabulary: *should've*, *could've*, *would've*. This does not mean you can't look back. Does not mean you can't use regret to transform. But maintaining a positive position is the point.

Another cited Emily Dickinson's poem "I dwell in possibility."

We joked that all of our gratitude journals remain empty – not because we aren't grateful.

One colleague spoke about admiring Frances McDormand, who to her personifies old(er) age well by being so honest and forthright.

We dwelt on the word *Hope* – and someone quoted Emily Dickinson's "hope is a thing with feathers."

One colleague uses a meditation app: CALM (Tamara Levitt) which has aphorisms at the end, which she enjoys.

Someone else listened to Tripura Mandala on YouTube whose voice affected her deeply "I was a white lotus floating down a river" – a very calming voice. She is becoming more and more content. There are numerous ways of just being herself. No more beating herself up about things like gaining a pound, etc.

BE HERE NOW.

Talking wisdom of the spirit –

Pema Chodron has seen many of us through hard times.

One member has been exploring the northern end of the park -- start at West 106<sup>th</sup> Street – and can somehow circulate through to the Conservatory Gardens.

Approximately: go up to the Great Hill – down to the lake – into the woods, over to The Meer, and over to the Conservatory. Maybe she'll lead us in person. She also talked about the Judaic wisdom which she is extrapolating from *Shtisel* (Netflix series).

Thinking about the values we live by – she followed her father's wisdom “Never a borrower or a lender be,” but found that had its limitations. Should have bought a house in the 80s. We were reminded against the *should'a's*.

One of us took her words of living from her mother. If you think you're special or important something will come along to teach you. Or humility is important.

One colleague emphasized the word to live by is *independence*.

Another member quoted from Desiderata and sent us this link:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desiderata>

And one last quote:

To live content with small means; to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement rather than fashion; to be worthy, not respectable, and wealthy, not rich; to listen to stars and birds, babes and sages, with open heart; to study hard; to think quietly, act frankly, talk gently, await occasions, hurry never; in a word, to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common -- this is my symphony.

William Henry Channing, clergyman and reformer (1810-1884)

## Upper West Side 2



116th St. Subway Station

## February-April

**What we are looking forward to as the threat of virus begins to recede.** Some members are beginning to schedule outside meals at restaurants with family and friends. Some members are now open to travel. Others will take it a step at a time as it seems right and safe. At some point the group may consider meeting in-person at an outside venue or inside when it is considered safe health wise.

### Upper West Side 3



## FEBRUARY

West End Avenue

#### Pandemic activities:

Tutoring via English Speaking Union-English in Action Program and enjoying it very much; Zooming with youngish businessperson from Colombia working in the US and living in NJ with wife and daughter

[https://www.esuus.org/esu/programs/english\\_in\\_action/volunteers/](https://www.esuus.org/esu/programs/english_in_action/volunteers/) (another member volunteers in the Riverside Language Program

[https://www.riversidelanguage.org/volunteer\\_](https://www.riversidelanguage.org/volunteer_))

English in Action program (articles on excellent Harvard Business School website: HBS Working Knowledge <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/Pages/browse.aspx>;

Agrees about changed expectations; comfortable being in apartment with no particular schedule; does Zoom exercises, paints, time flies; mixed feelings about going to museums.

Feeling more goal oriented: monitoring health issues, seeing nutritionist, lost weight, more energy, relationships deeper, very grateful; phone banking for Scott Stringer (knows him from way back); doing environmental work; volunteering with Riverside Language Program; meeting new people online through Tinder (some in-person walks in park).

#### References:

- Quest Lab at CPW/86th Street good for COVID vaccine
- Defensive driving courses reduce insurance premium
- Good idea to photocopy COVID vaccine card

- Nice Matin (Amsterdam/79th) & Cafe Luxembourg (200 W. 70th) have good heat lamps
- Le Monde (Broadway/112th)
- Ellington in the Park (RSD/105th, seasonal, great river views)
- Kirsh Bakery (Amsterdam/87th)

**More References:**

Two courses at NYU: “The Novel” and “Let’s Go to the Movies” (watch movie beforehand then discuss on Zoom): <https://www.sps.nyu.edu/professional-pathways/featured-programs/lifelong-learning.html>.

Virtual Van Gogh experience coming to NYC this spring:

[https://vangoghexpo.com/new-york/?utm\\_source=partner&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=96017\\_nyc&gclid=EAIAIQobChMIIuN0Z2X7wIVA6\\_ICh3YjqCkEAAYASAAEgIYavD\\_BwE](https://vangoghexpo.com/new-york/?utm_source=partner&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=96017_nyc&gclid=EAIAIQobChMIIuN0Z2X7wIVA6_ICh3YjqCkEAAYASAAEgIYavD_BwE)

Daniel Mendelssohn’s, “An Odyssey: A Father, A Son, and An Epic,” and related New Yorker piece: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/04/24/a-father-and-sons-final-odyssey>.

Snorelab app really helps (records snores and suggests ways to remedy, free trial available) <https://www.snorelab.com>;

## **MARCH**

**Pandemic activities:**

Working with physician who heads kidney center in East NY to provide neighborhood access to fresh fruits and vegetables (high percent of residents receive kidney dialysis), would like to get Trader Joe’s to open a local store, other suggestions welcome (e.g., getting local politicians involved).

Working on series of collages on “skin hunger” and would like to write poetry (went through fallow period and now filled with ideas); name put forward for “Best American Travel Writing in 2021” and awaiting results.

Attended orientation to tutor via English Speaking Union and Riverside English conversation programs; inspired to write poem about “super kids” who don’t get enough credit for dealing with the pandemic.

**More References:**

“Bridgerton,” Netflix series over the top - explicit, engaging; movie, “United States vs. Billy Holiday,” mind-blowing acting (Billy Holiday truly the “grandmother of civil rights”).

## **APRIL**

**Pandemic activities:**

Rowed in Central Park (very few boats on lake), park dining re-opened, bird feeders in middle of Ramble, resumed volunteering at West 72nd Street kiosk; Central Park has a number of volunteer opportunities: <https://www.centralparknyc.org/volunteer>.

Painting won best-in-show at National Art League juried show in Douglaston, LI (congratulations!!!);

Slowly discovering safe ways to be outdoors (bird watching in Central Park, kayaking); continually writing and doing art; finishing collage addressing sexual abuse of little girls.

Out doing things almost every day (just sitting in park sometimes); reservations needed for High-Line; Philharmonic Hall opening sooner than expected; an innovative floating park being developed near old Pier 54 and High-Line: <https://littleisland.org>.

Involved in fundraising event for small foundation that addresses a genetic kidney disease affecting her family; wrote DeBlasio about contradictory Covid messaging (spikes *and* re-openings); info needed on how long vaccination antibodies will last and when booster shots will be available.

Spent so much time in apartment this past year reinforced notion this is “home” and should be as comfortable as possible, so new refrigerator, ceiling fan, stove...; seeing paintings in new light and doing better art than in past 20 years; great satisfaction winter walking and outdoor winter dining, being with friends, going to museums, relaxing at home;

Enjoyed Alice Neel exhibit at Met and Calder at MOMA, DIA-Beacon a big disappointment (half of huge space empty).

**Upper West Side 4**



Soldiers and Sailors Monument

## MARCH

### Updates

In general, there is more very careful socializing. Just going to a cup of coffee at Starbucks, sitting outside at a table has become a real treat. We live in strange times.

We are thankful for the companionship of our group, for Zoom, for the curated offerings from TTN, for snowdrop flowers popping up in Riverside Park and look forward to seeing sculptures in Riverside Park sometime in June.

### West Side Afternoon



NY Historical Society

## February, March, April and May

### Sharing the vaccination journey

- By February almost everyone had secured a vaccination appointment and then the series of snowstorms began. Worries about cancellations and dangerous travel conditions were voiced, but everyone ultimately received her shot close to the originally scheduled date.
- As second dose time approached, we shared resources about what side effects to look for, and which medications to avoid pre and post immunization. Then everyone reported on her personal experience, and how she handled the symptoms.
- Meanwhile, our group's youngest member and many of our friends and family members were just getting first shot appointments. Each week more locations became available.
- On April 15<sup>th</sup> the group had a 2<sup>nd</sup> shot Zoom celebration. All 13 members and their spouses were fully vaccinated!
- Anticipating that vaccination and the warmer weather will encourage members to be more active, we decided to meet only once per month effective May 13<sup>th</sup>.

### New experiences during covid that we plan to continue

- **Zooming with family & friends**

Visiting with far flung relatives for holidays and catching up with friends who've moved away was an unexpected, but positive, experience.

- **Keeping Zoom as an option for our group's meetings**

The use of Zoom as a back-up, especially in winter, will ensure that a majority of our members will be able to join the discussions.

- **Utilizing virtual md visits and urgent care**

Many of us used telehealth apps for the first time for urgent care, specialists' appointments, and even physical therapy when all medical offices were shut down by Covid last year. Some now find it a timesaving alternative to traveling to appointments with the doctors they see regularly.

- **Learning to meditate**

One member noted that she began to practice daily meditation during lockdown, and found it beneficial for stress reduction. It is a healthful habit she definitely plans to maintain.

## **CARING COLLABORATIVE MINGLE REPORTS**

**2021 – EAST SIDE**



**Sip with your Zip**

### **February 12th - zip codes 10003, 10007, 10009 and 10010**

The majority of members attending this mingle have lived in their zip code between 8-40+ years. For some, it's been the only place they have lived in New York City. One mentioned how much she loves living so near to Gramercy Park, but sad that she's prevented from entering. Everyone talked about how much they loved being able to walk around the neighborhood and how close it is to other neighborhoods and the theatre. I liked the statement, "You can get anywhere, but you don't have to go anywhere."

Another talked about the proximity of the Union Square Farmer's Market. She felt it's one of the best Farmer's Markets in the city. Another misses the Mom-and-Pop shops that used to dot the neighborhood. There's a sense of humanity that makes it feel like a neighborhood.

The conversation shifted to favorite restaurants and hangouts. Many talked about the Knickerbocker Bar and Restaurant which closed in March 2020. Lots of out of towners would go there for dinner. You might also spot people there that you knew.

The Village Tavern on 11<sup>th</sup> Street has a great spot on the corner. A member felt it will make it through the pandemic. She loves to walk over to Tomkins Square Park. She said, "it's a real park." The member mentioned that this park is known for the Women's and Children's Memorial. (You can learn more about the monuments in Tomkins Square Park [here](#).)

They hope the movie theaters in the neighborhood stay. There's the Village East Cinema and Angelika Film Center at 181-189 Second Avenue (at 12<sup>th</sup> Street). There's also Cinema Village at 22 East 12th Street also in zip code 10003.

Another member noted a Memorial to All Victims of the Holocaust at Lexington Avenue between 25-26<sup>th</sup> Streets. If you don't take the time to walk around the neighborhood, you wouldn't know it's even there.

Across from Little Poland (<http://www.littlepolandnyc.com/>) at 200 Second Avenue is Veselka (<https://www.yelp.com/biz/veselka-new-york?osq=Polish+Restaurants>) at 144 Second Avenue. This member thought it was doing pretty well. She reflected, "They must be in a lot of tour guides," as it's way beyond a neighborhood place. There's also the Friend of a Farmer (<https://www.friendofafarmer.com/>) at 77 Irving Place and 19<sup>th</sup> Street. And let's not forget Posto (<https://www.nychnicrust.com/location/posto-thin-crust/>) at 310 Second Avenue for thin crust pizza. Their salads are amazing!

There's a nice Indian Restaurant on Third Avenue between 18-19<sup>th</sup> Streets called Sathi (<http://www.sathinewyork.com/>). Eataly on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street is like the Walt Disney of Food. There's a restaurant on the roof that's only open in the summer. The food was great.

For Italian lovers there's L'Angeletto (<https://langeletto.com/>) at 327 Second Avenue at 19th Street. You can eat outside under heated lamps. They've been open about a year. There's also Frank's Trattoria (<https://frankstrattoriaonfirst.com/>) at First Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Novita at 102 East 22<sup>nd</sup> Street east of Park Avenue.

Hane Sushi (<https://www.hanenyc.com/>) at 346 First Avenue at 20th Street also has enclosed spaces to eat outside.

And for Greek food, there's Eleni's Restaurant (<https://www.elenisnyc.com/>) at 226 Third Avenue at 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

Members reflected how they used to go out once a week with a friend and eat on the street. She noted that NYU must have reopened recently because the outside restaurants were so crowded.

And when we're not eating out, there's Trader Joe's at Union Square. They're extraordinarily nice in that store.

The question was asked what members did over the holidays since they couldn't get together with loved ones. One member made it special by watching people walk by instead of feeling sorry.

What else are we doing during this pandemic? Some of us are auditing classes at City College. It's \$80 per semester. You can call up the school to ask when the registration is for the next semester at 212-650-7000. Some are studying another language through

Duolingo (<https://www.duolingo.com/>). They use a tutorial on their computer. It's a free mobile app.

There are also conferences on YouTube. Find classes at the Stryker Center at Temple Emanu-El. For exercise, there's Senior Planet, or the Hamilton Senior Center.

## February 26th – zip codes 10016 and 10017

Most of you have lived in your neighborhood from 6-40+ years. For some it was the first apartment you saw when you were looking for an apartment, because it had five closets. For others it was close to where you worked, and you could walk there; or you were attending nearby Baruch College for a degree; or you were able to secure an apartment through a sublease. You love the neighborhood because the transportation is good, the variety of restaurants, or just being able to walk around and feel the neighborhood.

One loves the bistro around the corner from her apartment called Le Parisien Bistrot at 163 East 33rd Street (<https://www.leparisiennyc.com/>) between Lexington and Third Avenues. The Morgan Library and Museum (<https://www.themorgan.org/>) is nearby. There's so much to walk around and see. Another favorite restaurant is the Turkish Kitchen (<https://www.turkishkitchen.com/>) at 386 Third Avenue between 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Streets.

For another there's a supermarket directly across the street and a pharmacy right in her building. She has genuinely nice neighbors on her floor. They were still neighborly during the pandemic. There are all these nice little gardens to visit also.

Another talked about her love of historic brownstones in the east 30's, great restaurants, shopping, department stores and the gardens between the buildings. She talked about eating outside with friends in her building.

It's so convenient. You can walk to the theater, Grand Central Station, Bryant Park, and many other places. Many talked about the closeness to Midtown. A member mentioned a Mediterranean restaurant and Sarge's Deli (<https://sargesdeli.com>). Another is loyal to the 2nd Avenue Deli (<https://2ndavedeli.com>). She feels the food is better. Another talked about walking her dogs on Third Avenue. She was friends with all the bouncers at the bars. It was great for security.

Another Turkish favorite is Sophra Grill (<https://sophragrill.com>) at 535 Third Avenue between 35th-36th Streets. The food is good, and they make their own bread.

There's Fairway, Trader Joe's, Eataly, and Madison Square Park. There's a hidden gallery on 25<sup>th</sup> Street called Swann Auction Gallery (<https://www.swannngalleries.com/>) which has works on paper including travel posters and photographs. Before each auction you can visit what's on display.

Another lives in a great building where the staff takes care of everyone in the building. She may also be spoiled by the 24-hour deli close by. Her favorite thing is to take the East River Ferry (<https://www.ferry.nyc/routes-and-schedules/route/east-river/>) down to

Dumbo in Brooklyn. It's such a nice ride on the water. She mentioned she walks around and then comes back. There are five different lines for the ferry. You can take it to Socrates Sculpture Park (<https://socratessculpturepark.org/>) in Long Island City as well as visit The Noguchi Museum (<https://www.noguchi.org/>). You can take the ferry to IKEA. New York Water Taxi runs the IKEA ferry from Wall Street's Pier 11. (<https://nywatertaxi.com/ikea-express-ferry/>).

During the Pandemic, Madison Square Park, (<https://www.madisonsquarepark.org/>) between 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> Streets is great to relax in and watch the dogs. Many talked about a preference to walk on Park Avenue, particularly during the Pandemic. Another member discovered Tudor City (<https://untappedcities.com/2013/11/20/history-of-tudor-city-peaceful-enclave-middle-of-nyc/>) in the East 40s. You can go through the park there. It's very lovely and quiet.

Another gave a shout out to her Caring Collaborative Neighborhood Group which met every week during the Pandemic. It brought the group closer. They're planning a meeting at an outside restaurant very soon. They try to go to Gemini Restaurant (<https://geminidiner.com/index.html>), which is where they were previously holding their monthly meetings. They accommodated the group with a private room in the back. We want to support them through this time.

Another started going back to Museums like the Modern Museum of Art (<https://www.moma.org/>) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (<https://www.metmuseum.org/>). She was surprised by how many people were there, even with a timed entry.

Another restaurant favorite is Noodles 28 (<https://www.noodles28ny.com/>) at 417 3rd Avenue, which has Chinese and Vietnamese cuisine. This member pointed out how much she loves their dumplings. There's El Parador Café (<https://elparadorcafe.com/>) on 34<sup>th</sup> Street that has a Mexican flavor. There's another Mexican restaurant that was mentioned, El Rio Grande (<https://elriograndeny.com/>) 160 East 38th Street between Lexington and Third Avenue.

### **March 12th – zip codes 10021 and 10075**

Everyone agreed, it's a neighborhood. One member related that she used to have a dog, and being out with the dog was a great way to meet other people.

There's great proximity to museums. Central Park has been a lifesaver during the pandemic. There's just something about being in nature. It's made living in the city during this time tolerable. Another member likes to walk along the East River. She also mentioned walking through Central Park on Sunday mornings with her son and how special that time together has become.

Another mentions she lives on a very pretty street. There are plenty of restaurants in the neighborhood, everything is close by.

Some of the favorite restaurants mentioned include:

**Jean Claude 2** (<http://www.jeanclaudenyc.com/>) is on Second Avenue (b/t 70-71 Streets).

**Persepolis**, (<https://www.persepolisnewyork.com/>) 1407 2nd Avenue (at East 73rd Street), Middle Eastern and Mediterranean Restaurant

**A La Turka** Mediterranean Restaurant (<https://www.alaturkany.com/>) at 1417 Second Avenue and 74<sup>th</sup> Street. They have a newly designed outdoor dining platform with an underfloor heating system.

**Orsay Restaurant** (<https://www.orsayrestaurant.com/>) at 1057 Lexington Avenue at 75th Street serves French food.

**Avra Madison** (<https://theavragroup.com/avramadison/>) is a bi-level authentic Greek restaurant located just steps from Central Park at 14 East 60th Street and Madison Avenue. They offer a 3-course prix fix lunch from 12:00-4:30pm. It's the same restaurant as the one in Midtown. Go for lunch, as dinner is quite expensive. They have a beautiful outdoor terrace.

**Bella Blu** (<https://www.bellablunyc.com/>) is located at 967 Lexington Avenue at 70th Street. A few members mentioned this was a favorite Italian restaurant. They have a wonderful outdoor space to eat for lunch or dinner.

**Brasserie Cognac East** (<https://www.brasseriecognac.com/>) is a French restaurant located at 963 Lexington Avenue. They also have a nice outdoor space.

Let's not forget **Mariella's Pizza** at 965 Lexington Avenue and 70<sup>th</sup> Street which has great old-fashioned pizza. It's between Bella Blu and Cognac.

**The Beach Cafe** (<https://www.thebeachcafe.com/>) offers comfort food with the best burger on the Upper East Side (according to their website) and a very affordable brunch. They are located at 1326 Second Avenue at 70th Street. One of the members mentioned she got to know the owner during the Second Avenue subway construction. He's a great guy.

Let's venture outside the neighborhood:

There's **Pascalou** (<https://pascalouny.com/>) at 1308 Madison Avenue at 93rd Street. They serve French food.

You can visit **Sotheby's** at 1334 York Avenue on the corner of 72nd Street for free when they have exhibitions. You can view highlights of past exhibitions on their website at <https://www.sothbys.com/en/exhibitions>.

There's lots to visit on the Upper West Side including **Lucciola** Italian Restaurant (<https://www.lucciolanyc.com/>) at 621 Amsterdam Avenue at 90<sup>th</sup> Street. They have a lovely terrace with individual pods and heaters.

Check out the book... **110 Things You Must do in New York City**. Or perhaps the book was **111 Places in New York That You Must Not Miss**: Revised and Updated Paperback (updated December 2019).

There's the **Lower East Side Tenement Museum: The Immigrant Museum in NYC** (<https://www.tenement.org/>) located at 103 Orchard Street. Check out their website for virtual tours. If you decide to go down to the area, the architecture around the Lower East Side is great.

One member took a Lower East Side tour with **ABC Food Tours** (<https://www.abcfoodtours.org/>). They also have a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ABCfoodtours/>. It was a lot of fun. We started at Yonah Schimmel knishes, then went to Russ and Daughters, Katz's Deli, the Pickle Man, etc. It had been advertised on Groupon. And don't forget Economy Candy. Take a peek... <https://sweets.serious eats.com/2013/10/economy-candy-lower-east-side-best-candy-store-nyc.html>.

There are also walking tours of New York that go all over town.

**Eataly** ([https://www.eataly.com/us\\_en/](https://www.eataly.com/us_en/)) on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street off Fifth Avenue in the Flatiron neighborhood where you can shop for high quality Italian food. (Not mentioned in this Mingle – they have a restaurant on the roof that's open during the summer.)

One member shared a coffee table book she has called **Walking Manhattan Sideways** – East to West. The book is not meant to be a travel guide, but its treasure trove of stories will spark the adventurer in all of us to explore Manhattan's side streets.

In July 2020, TTN offered a virtual private tour of **The Audubon Bird Mural Project** (<https://www.audubon.org/amp>). It's an impressive effort to create murals of over 300 North American birds, primarily in Hamilton and Washington Heights in Manhattan, where John James Audubon lived the last ten years of his life. NYC has many mural projects, but this is the most unusual and ambitious.

There's the **Moynihan Train Hall** (<https://nec.amtrak.com/project/moynihan-station/>), the newly expanded Penn Station now housed in the old Farley Post Office on Eighth Avenue from 31<sup>st</sup> to 33<sup>rd</sup> Street.

**The Frick Museum** (<https://www.frick.org/visit>) just re-opened with hours on Thursday through Sunday. Some members mentioned they would go to a museum now that they're vaccinated.

Some members mentioned they haven't been on a subway in over a year. They aren't sure when they will. Some reflected about people going back to work in their office. There will probably be much more job sharing and half-time workers. Midtown will probably never be the way it was. Some businesses will never go back. Employers have realized it more economical to have remote workers.

Everyone is looking forward to Broadway re-opening and being able to hug nieces and nephews again.

## March 26th - zip codes 10022 and 10065

We started off with the question: *Why did you happen to choose this neighborhood to live?*

The answers varied, one moved in with her husband, another didn't search, but instead moved into her daughter's apartment when her daughter moved out, another wanted to buy an apartment in this neighborhood because of the access to trains and buses, another didn't choose the neighborhood and moved here because she had a good friend in the building, for another, her sister lives nearby, and another said they wanted to live in the city and not be car dependent.

Everyone agreed the neighborhood is restaurant heaven – there's every flavor and every level of price.

If you're looking for take-out, you can rely on [www.delivery.com](http://www.delivery.com) and [www.seamless.com](http://www.seamless.com). You can order from any restaurant in the neighborhood.

Just click – you don't even have to talk to anyone! In the app, put in your address, and it will let you know which restaurants you can order from.

A favorite to order from is **Jimbo's Hamburger Place** (<https://www.jimboshamburgerplacenewyork.com/16093>) (212-355-6120) located at 991 First Avenue. The member added, "it's quick and delicious and was delivered exactly how I ordered it."

When life returns to being able to go to a restaurant, here are recommendations for 22 restaurants.

**Bistro Vendome** (<http://bistrovendomenyc.com/>) is a quaint European bistro in the heart of New York City featuring a charming terrace and bar at 405 East 58th Street off First Avenue. It has beautiful old wood with a bar in the front. The food is good, everyone is French and its comfortable to eat at the bar. They also have a nice garden. It was mentioned that the TTN Brunch Group has eaten there. They are very accommodating. It was suggested taking food to go and eating in a park nearby.

**Neary's** (<https://www.nearys.com/>) at 358 East 57th Street off First Avenue. They are open for limited hours for dinner only starting April 5th. It was mentioned that a film was made about Mr. Neary (Neary's: *The Dream at the End of the Rainbow* – available on Amazon).

A great feature of this neighborhood are the parks along the river which provides a lovely area to walk and sit.

**Parnell's Irish Pub** (<https://www.parnellsnyc.com/>) is in the heart of Sutton Place on the corner of 53<sup>rd</sup> Street and First Avenue. It's very friendly and usually crowded. One of the members mentioned she goes for the singers and has sung there herself on many occasions before the pandemic. There's another Irish Pub on Second Avenue between 57-58<sup>th</sup> Street that has two floors called **The Blasket** (<https://www.theblasketpub.com/>)

for fish and chips, right next to Pita Grill. It's a neighborhood pub featuring craft Irish influenced cuisine.

**Jubilee Restaurant** (<https://jubilee.nyc/>) brings authentic French cuisine and elegance to casual dining in a quaint and vibrant atmosphere. It's a higher end French restaurant. One of the members recommends the mussels with garlic and lamb chops. The people are friendly, and the service is nice.

**The Shadmoor Restaurant** (<https://shadmoornyc.com/>) is a seafood restaurant located on 2nd Avenue and 56th Street. Open for outdoor dining only. Their website recommends you order directly from them to avoid the extra charge from the online delivery services.

**La Villetta Ristorante** (<https://www.lavillettanyc.com/>) is an Italian restaurant at 398 East 52nd Street off First Avenue. La Villetta, "cottage" in Italian, is housed in a former carriage house whose building dates back to 1910. This unique space features tones of emerald green, colorful blue, red, and yellow stoneware and exposed brick walls giving it both an intimate and rustic feel.

**La Giaconda Restaurant** (<https://www.lagiocondanyc.com/>) opened its doors back in 1993. Today we are proudly offering more than 30 different wines by glass and over 60 different wines by bottle. It's located at 226 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street between Second and Third Avenues. According to its website, it's currently closed.

**Peking Duck House** (<https://www.pekingduckhousenyc.com/>) at 236 East 53rd Street, also between Second and Third Avenues. They put heaters in the ceiling for outdoor seating. Another member added, "If you want real Chinese," she would recommend **Go Noodle** (<http://www.gonoodleninemoon.com/>) at 1069 First Avenue between 58-59<sup>th</sup> Streets. You can reach them at (212) 888-6366. And don't forget that **PF Chang's** (<https://www.pfchangs.com/>) has four locations in Manhattan including the one at 938 Third Avenue 56-57th Streets and Land of Plenty (<http://www.landofplenty58.com/>) at 204 East 59th Street between Second and Third Avenue. It's Szechuan cuisine originating from Sichuan, China and it is well known by its spiciness.

**Angelo's Pizza** (<http://www.angelospizzany.com/>) is located at 1043 2nd Avenue on the corner of 53rd Street. They have an everything salad (which is particularly good) in addition to pizza and other Italian menu items.

**Rosa Mexicano** is opening again, though this location is smaller than the previous one. According to their website, the locations that are open are located at Lincoln Center and Union Square. The one in your neighborhood, on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street and Second Avenue is expected to open soon (Spring 2021).

**5 Napkin Burger** (<https://5napkinburger.com/>) at 1325 Second Avenue off 70<sup>th</sup> Street. And next door is **The Beach Café** (<https://www.thebeachcafe.com/>) which also touts the best burger on the Upper East Side in addition to comfort food selections on their menu.

**Mediterraneo** (<https://mediterraneonyc.com/>) located at 1260 Second Avenue, on the corner of 66th Street.

**Ko Sushi** (<http://www.newkosushi.com/>) has a nice outdoor space at 1329 Second Avenue at 70th Street.

**Mama Ganoush** (<https://mamaganoush.com/>) offers fresh Mediterranean food at 638 Lexington Avenue between 54-55<sup>th</sup> Streets is open for take-out and delivery.

**Morso** (<https://morso-nyc.com/>) at 420 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street between First Avenue and Sutton Place has a fabulous roasted Brussel sprout salad. They also have good pasta dishes. The tables aren't too close together and they have a very nice outdoor space.

**Ali Baba Authentic** (<https://alibabauthentic.com/>) at 1030 2nd Avenue between 54-55<sup>th</sup> Streets, serves delicious Turkish cuisine.

**Copinette** – American Restaurant and Bar (<https://copinettenyc.com/>) is a favorite of TTNER's. It's located at 891 First Avenue at 50<sup>th</sup> Street.

**La Pecora Bianca** (<https://www.lapecorabianca.com/>) at 950 2nd Avenue at 50<sup>th</sup> Street is a stylish and bright all-day dining restaurant featuring market-driven Italian cuisine, regional wines & aperitifs on tap.

The end of the discussion focused on CC Neighborhood Groups. One member mentioned that although her group is small, they have taken the time to really get to know one another including what they did for a living, their family situation, etc. They are enjoying bonding with one another. They started out as four strangers and now it feels like a close-knit group. That's what happens when you take the time to learn something about someone else and find out you have things in common.

### **May 7th – zip codes 10028 and 10128**

Everyone moved to the area for a variety of different reasons, whether they grew up here, went to church here, found a job here or always wanted to live here. It's a great neighborhood with lots of restaurants and resources to share.

One member mentioned she felt closed off until the Second Avenue subway line came along which provided transportation to Brooklyn and Queens. She mentioned she'd been to the beach in Brooklyn. Oh, I know the one she's talking about. It's in Brighton Beach. You have to take the Q for a long ride, at least an hour, but it takes you right there. The beach is certainly worth it if you love a good beach.

You can also pick up the ferry at 90<sup>th</sup> Street. **The East River Ferry** (<https://www.ferry.nyc/routes-and-schedules/route/east-river/>) route has lots of connection points along the East River. Check out the <https://www.ferry.nyc/appguide/> on your phone for all the routes to South Brooklyn, Rockaway, Astoria, Soundview, the Governor's Island Shuttle and soon to be launched, ferries to St. George (Staten Island) and Coney Island.

You could take the **ferry to Roosevelt Island**. The only point of access to the ferry landing is via a temporary path (which includes stairs) at East 90th Street and East End Avenue. It's expected that the pedestrian path along the East River Esplanade from

East 96th to the East 90th Street ferry landing will reopen and be ADA compliant once construction is complete.

Another talked about **Carnegie Hill**. It's a true neighborhood and she loves it for that reason. It's named after the mansion that Andrew Carnegie built at Fifth Avenue and 91st Street in 1901. Today the mansion houses the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, a branch of the Smithsonian Institution.

Carnegie Hill Neighbors (<https://carnegiehillneighbors.org/>) just started a "village" for seniors. Membership is \$100 per year. They have lectures, picnics and group events. You can also look up Health Advocates for Older People (<https://www.hafop.org/>). You can take unlimited classes there. Right now, it's all online. They will ask you for a donation toward the cost.

Also mentioned were two senior assisted living facilities that have opened. Inspīr Carnegie Hill On Manhattan's Upper East Side is described it as "the first-of-its-kind community offering urban senior living on a luxury level." It's located at 1802 Second Avenue at 93rd Street (646-978-9040) or visit ([inspirseniorliving.com](http://inspirseniorliving.com)). The member mentioned the name of the other one as The Bristal, (<https://thebrystal.com/find-a-community/manhattan-ny/york-avenue/>)

The Upper East Side **Edith Fabbri Mansion** has a rich, and surprisingly complex international history, reaching back to the history of the Vanderbilt's, as well as the Duchy of Urbino. Under the name The House of the Redeemer, the Fabbri Mansion is now a religious and spiritual retreat located at 7 East 95th Street (<https://houseoftheredeemer.org/>) (212-289-0399). The space is also used for events as well as concerts. Launched in October 1999, Fabbri Chamber Concerts presents an annual series of three concerts. They will resume their schedule this Fall.

Another loves having access to all the parks including Carl Schurz Park and Central Park with the Conservatory Garden. **The Conservatory Garden** is a formal garden near the northeastern corner of Central Park. It comprises six acres and it's the only formal garden in Central Park. It takes its name from a conservatory that stood on the site from 1898 to 1935. Enter at the **Vanderbilt Gate** (<https://www.centralparknyc.org/locations/vanderbilt-gate>) at Fifth Avenue and East 105<sup>th</sup> Street.

One of the members mentioned the **Museum Mile Festival** ([museummilefestival.org](http://museummilefestival.org)). It's held annually, usually on the second Tuesday of June. Stretching along Fifth Avenue between 82nd and 105th (which is roughly a mile) the streets are closed off to cars. This year, the 42nd annual Museum Mile Festival is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 8, 2021** from 6PM - 9PM, rain or shine.

The first Museum Mile Festival was held in 1978 with the aim of letting people experience the many museums along 5th Avenue, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Design Museum, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum -- with FREE admission to all. Many of the museums also provide art related activities for kids, and musicians and bands of various flavors can be found playing everywhere along the

avenue. The festival also plays host to a variety of street performers who entertain crowds up and down the mile-long stretch.

If you happen to be taking a walk in Carl Schurz, do stop in at **The Mansion Diner** (<https://www.mansiondiner.com/location/mansion-diner/>) (212-535-8888) at 1634 York Avenue, on the corner of East 86<sup>th</sup> Street.

**The Heavenly Rest Café** (<https://bluestonelane.com/>) ((212) 289-3400), is located in the Church of the Heavenly Rest at 2 East 90<sup>th</sup> Street. There is table service and a menu of light dishes including salads and toasts like the Avocado Smash with heirloom tomatoes, tahini, feta, and Balthazar bread. Its location is perfect for those of us visiting the museums nearby on Museum Mile.

The neighborhood is full of restaurants where you can eat outside with friends. It's also full of people, dogs and doormen. It's purely residential for which many of our members are grateful.

How 'bout having a guacamole sandwich at **Dunkin' Donuts**? It's located at 1391 Madison Avenue at 97<sup>th</sup> Street (212-423-0190). It's really good. They make it on sourdough bread. Our member told her friends about it and they like it too!

Then there's **Mojo Artisanal Chocolate Mousses** on east 97<sup>th</sup> Street. They have the most delicious mousses made in small batches with the best Belgian chocolate in East Harlem. According to their website, they list their address at 177 East 100th Street. You can call to make sure at 917-213-4480 or send an email to [info@mojodesserts.com](mailto:info@mojodesserts.com).

One of the members heard there's a **Trader Joe's** opening this month at First Avenue between 59<sup>th</sup>-60<sup>th</sup> Streets. It's where the Food Emporium used to be, under the Queensboro Bridge. Everyone was chiming in that it would be great if they had a little shuttle that ran up and down Second Avenue helping everyone with their bags. Maybe we should have a TTN excursion to Trader Joe's. Hmm...

There's a **Target** coming to 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue where B&N used to be. We hear it's a smaller store. According to their website, their store on 70<sup>th</sup> Street and Third Avenue has hours on Tuesday from 7:00-8:00am reserved for vulnerable guests.

Then there's **Butterfield Market** (<https://www.butterfieldnyc.com/>) at 1150 Madison Avenue at 85<sup>th</sup> Street. It used to be a Dean & DeLuca. It's expensive, but the quality of the food is really good. There's another location at 1114 Lexington Avenue between 77<sup>th</sup>-78<sup>th</sup> Streets.

One of the members mentioned a higher end Mexican restaurant at 343 Pleasant Avenue at 118<sup>th</sup> Street called **Bistro Casa Azul** (<https://bistrocasaazul.business.site/>) (917-805-0803).

Don't forget there's also a nice Mexican place near the Museum of the City of New York. They could be referring to **El Paso Taqueria East Harlem** (<http://elpasotaqueria.com/>) (917-472-7289). Another member mentioned **Rao's** (<http://www.raosrestaurants.com/>) (212-722-6709) at 455 East 114th Street, although

she hasn't been able to get a reservation there yet. They seem to be making money from other ventures like their tomato sauce.

If you feel like exploring, consider a visit to **Randall's Island and Wards Island**. They are conjoined islands, collectively called Randall's and Wards Islands. The island can be reached by the Triborough Bridge; the Wards Island Bridge, which serves pedestrians and bicyclists and links the island to East Harlem in Manhattan. It's just over the footbridge at 103<sup>rd</sup> Street. If you're interested in some history about the island, check out this link from the NYC Parks Department:

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/wards-island-park/history>. I learned that the footbridge leads directly into Wards Island Park and provides easy access to the scenic waterfront.

With the arrival of the nicer weather, it seems everyone is eating outside. A member mentioned **Felice** (<https://www.felicensyc.com/felice-83/>) (212-249-4080), an Italian restaurant at 1593 First Avenue at 83<sup>rd</sup> Street that's very nice, the food's good and they have a very nice brunch. In fact, there are good restaurants all over zip code 10028.

This same member suggested not eating at **83 1/2** at 345 East 83rd Street because it's overpriced and the food isn't great.

There were raves about **Gracie Mews Diner** (<https://www.graciemewsdinernyc.com/>) at 1550 First Avenue on the corner of 81<sup>st</sup> Street. According to their website, they're open 24 hours.

And don't forget **Café Evergreen** (<http://cafeevergreenchinese.com/home.html>) (212-744-3266), a TTN favorite, at 1367 First Avenue between 73<sup>rd</sup>-74<sup>th</sup> Streets. I have to thank another TTN member for this recommendation as it was the location for an in-person East Side CC Mingle last March 2020. I hope we can all meet up again there soon.