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### **Downtown 3**



Union Square Green Market

### **MARCH**

Before discussing the topic, we shared information about and reactions to plays, movies and exhibits that are still on and might be of interest to others in the group.

#### **How Your Job/Identity Shapes your Identity**

The discussion leader asked members to read the following article to prepare:

<http://www.thebookoflife.org/how-your-job-shapes-your-identity/>. Women our age starting out in the workforce didn't have many choices; we could be teachers, social workers, nurses, secretaries or stay-at-home housewives. The fields of medicine, law, business, academia, etc. were often closed to women (or at least not commonly considered suitable). It was noted that:

1. Some parents encouraged our career paths while others did not.
2. Sexism was a big factor—men designated as the breadwinners.
3. There was stigmatization of a married women and mothers working outside the home.

As more career paths opened for women as a result of the women's movement, some of our members changed careers. They went into careers that they had an interest in by taking courses and obtaining degrees. Some of the members just fell into their careers and rose to higher positions within their field. Others chose to stay home and raise their children who became accomplished adults.

## Eastside Afternoon



Bloomingdale's

## MARCH

### One place we would like to visit and why

- Africa – to live, to dance and take a volunteer vacation.
- Japan – for the temples, mountains and Asian design. The member talking about this topic reflected on a trip she took.
- Israel – family members who still live there, thinking on how long it's been since she's been home.
- Paris – for the romance, pastry, coffee. It's like a big museum. It's such a great walking city for the shops, the windows and the flowers.
- Carmel, California - known for its natural scenery and rich artistic history.
- China – this member wants to go back and relive an earlier visit, particularly to see the Chengdu Pandas and the Province of Shandong in Eastern China.

### Doctors we like

We talked about some of the doctors we like and thought it would be a good idea to put a list together. So far, we have recommendations for dentists, dermatologists, internists, ophthalmologists and podiatrists. It will be up to the individual doctors if they are taking on new patients.

### Dental work

One of our members mentioned that she went through a terrible dental procedure years ago which got severely infected. She mentioned Dental Save, which gives you discounts on procedures for practitioners in their network. She felt it particularly helpful for the higher priced procedures.

## April

### Doctors and Care

Sometimes doctors don't want to explain what they're doing. As a patient, this can cause concern about their competency. Could they make a mistake? Is this because they are arrogant and too full of themselves? We could decide not to come back to this practitioner.

We're physically naked, uneducated about why we're there. Hopefully we can find another practitioner with some bedside manner. Maybe we need to come to the visit with attitude. In the future we should do more research and find out as much as possible about the diagnosis or condition, so we can ask questions

One member shared that she surrounds herself with women doctors.

Another member makes sure to keep all her doctors in the loop. She asks to have all the reports sent to her PCP.

### **Exercises people can do to improve their balance**

Materials including 6 daily "must do" exercises were distributed from the Caring Collaborative program held in April 2017 presented by Celeste Carlucci called FallStop...MOVESTRONG.

One member shared special sunglasses she wears over her regular glasses. It was recommended by her ophthalmologist because of the UV protection and polarization. The company is Dioptics Sunwear. She indicated the reassurance she feels wearing them, particularly on windy days because of the wrap-around feature preventing dust and debris from getting in her eyes.

Another member had her apartment accident-proofed. This included dealing with carpets, wires and such. It was suggested to contact Dorot to see if they had this service. They will also help with the computer.

### **TTN Special Interest Groups**

There was some conversation about the difference between SIGS and peer groups. One of the members talked about mindfulness and that it's about how you relate to the world. Having a consciousness of your senses and well-being. One member shared a meditation she did on a raisin. It helped her slow down and contemplate what she eats.

### **Medicaid In-Home Nursing Long-Term Care**

One of our members is interested to get help in this topic. It was suggested she contact Shawndra at [coordinator@ttncaringcollaborative.org](mailto:coordinator@ttncaringcollaborative.org) with a request that an e-blast be sent on her behalf to find out what other caring collaborative members have experienced with this situation.

### Upper East Side 3



The Met

## **MARCH**

### **Physical Appearance**

We shared our concerns about our physical appearance as we age. When we look in the mirror, we ask ourselves “Who is that?” “What happened to me?” We also question ourselves about the clothes we want to wear but are uncertain because maybe at my age I shouldn’t wear that kind of outfit. These are part of the messages we tell ourselves. Should I keep my gray hair, or should I color it? One of our members shared some of her experiences when she recently decided to leave her hair gray instead of coloring it. What about thinning hair? Some of us shared our experiences and anecdotes about Rogaine.

Some members shared a recent experience having just had cataract surgery. She remarked, “Now I see what I really look like!” It can be shocking! Are face lifts done anymore?

### **Activities we can do to be active.**

One member mentioned an event at the 92Y called Lyrics and Lyricists coming up in May 2018. Another mentioned adventure walks. Some in the group play Canasta and Bridge. A recommendation was made for the member to join the Honors Bridge Club to get connected with other Bridge games and they can also learn how to play. Connections were made to join those games, which was fun because the members didn’t know the others played.

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House has exercise programs. You have to be of a certain age. This group certainly qualifies. Members shared the kinds of exercised they do to keep their flexibility including Pilates, aerobic dance to 60’s music, Zumba, a flex and stretch program. They serve three meals a day. The age range in the exercise class is 60-90 with an instructor at the class. She works with everyone, no matter your age.

A member shared her experience with knee pain and deciding whether to have a cortisone shot.

It was mentioned how a member sleeps better because she exercises on a regular basis. She keeps her TV in the living room and her bedroom as her sanctuary. She indicated this was helpful because the light that emanates from the TV is too stimulating late at night.

### **Annoyance with telemarketer robot calls.**



One member mentioned using “nomorobo.” It essentially rings once on your land line and hangs up the call for you. The service is free if your carrier offers it.

## **April**

### **Activities that bring fun, good health and/or fulfillment through volunteering**

The first topic focused on discussing activities that bring fun, good health and/or fulfillment through volunteer work, organizations, synagogue/church groups, special events, etc. There’s so much going on in New York City. Certainly, we can volunteer, but is it fulfilling? One member helps seniors at a Senior Center with their mobile devices, i.e. their cell phones. She particularly likes when she can see they understand how to use their device for the first time. It’s important to do things you most care about. To be around others vs. helping by yourself.

Another member mentioned she volunteers with JASA (Jewish Association Serving the Aging). Another did fundraising at the 67<sup>th</sup> Street Armory. She was also rewarded when she volunteered at a Senior Center where it was her responsibility to get Kosher cakes for the clients. The rewarding part was when the cake came into the room and everyone’s faces lit up!

ReServe is an organization for retired people who want to work in a nonprofit. They will match you up with an organization looking for your skills and talents. You have an opportunity to work 10-15 hours a week, though our members indicated it’s usually much more than that, for an hourly amount.

Volunteer Referral Center will help you find great volunteer opportunities to fit your interests and skills. You’ll need to make an appointment for a one-on-one interview.

Another member volunteers with the Nurse-Family Partnership where young mothers are given education and assistance. As a volunteer, this member plays with their children so the mothers can get the information they need. Also Reading Partners where the member went to a school and read to an elementary school age student.

There’s also Project Renewal. They take people off the street and teach them basics about having a job, i.e., what it’s like to have a boss. Our member taught Spanish to the partners of the clients. She indicated they offer a whole range of services and taught their clients basic skills that you and I may take for granted.

There’s also The Pound, where you can walk dogs. The program is offered through the East Side Settlement House. Another member read to a blind person at The Lighthouse. The member also indicated she helped the person with other basic tasks such as helping them to pay their bills. The member felt she was making a difference in the lives of people.

You can also volunteer through AARP, New York Cares, the Fortune Society, etc. The Transition Network has a special program with the Fortune Society offering mock job interview for their

clients. Another member worked at the ASPCA where she was able to match people with animals. Temple Israel on the east side does a lot of social action activities.

At The Bottomless Closet you have an opportunity to work with one client including helping them with their resume, their clothes for an interview and helping them with the basics of living.

One of our members, who's still working, takes off one week per month. During that week she does all the things she never has time for. She mentioned having two jars, one marked "good weather," one marked "bad weather." In it she had put individual tasks related to each jar that she wants to accomplish. One of the things she always wanted to do was to learn how to arrange flowers. She mentioned she went to a few local florists and offered to clean up the shop in exchange. She was amazed and delighted that a couple of stores said, "Yes!" Another member suggested thinking about what you don't know and ask someone to teach you. Have you ever wanted to get to Carnegie Hall? You can by being a volunteer greeter. You could also volunteer at the New York Public Library.

### **How do you find the best doctors?**

Sometimes it's recommendations from other people and sometimes those recommendations are not helpful because you don't have good chemistry with the practitioner. Everyone has a different take. What are the aspects of the being with the doctor that's important to you? How much time are they willing to give you? It's a personal connection you have with the practitioner. If you don't feel it, go to someone else.

A member mentioned how she researches about a new doctor before getting in touch with them. She will check what kind of reputation the hospital has. She will look on the Internet under the websites Vitals and Health Grades.

As we're all aging into Medicare, it was mentioned that some of our doctors opt out of Medicare.

**Where do we turn to for help with facilitating one's personal care and finances later in life, how do we prepare now?** A topic we just touched on which is important to all relates to members in the group who do not have family members nearby or someone significantly younger to rely on that we can trust. What are the options available? It's something that many in our age group think of, but do not know where to begin.

## Upper West Side 2



116<sup>th</sup> St. Subway Station

## **JANUARY**

### **End of Life Issues**

Although the topic may seem daunting or depressing, we had a very fruitful discussion, with many useful suggestions.

#### Funerals and Cremations

One member reported that she had pre-paid her funeral and that in doing so, feels she has organized things so that nobody will have to make all these decisions. She learned a lot in the process:

- Be sure and understand the fees being paid and whether they will go up in the future.
- The money goes into a special account which keeps the changes to a minimum
- By law you must be given a price list of all the details
- Read the contract. Include details such as who should be informed, where the burial will take place, whether a notice should be put in the paper.

Other members of the group have planned for cremations or want to have one. It is necessary to be careful since there are special places which handle them, and they are much cheaper than standard funeral homes. The same check list applies to this planning.

#### Digital Estate

It was brought up that after death all online accounts, subscriptions, credit cards, and automatic payments must be stopped by someone. Some members have set up a Password Manager which puts all your passwords in one place so that someone can find them and deal with one's accounts. Some names of these vaults: "LastPass"; "Password Safe."

We were also reminded that all legal documents such as Power of Attorney, Living Will, etc. should be checked occasionally.

#### Health Concerns

Most of us are worried about the prospect of dementia and other debilitating health illnesses.

Some discussion took place about how to end one's life. Half of the people over 85 will get Alzheimer's. One organization named that gives advice: "Compassion and Choices"  
One member has instructed her daughter that if she has dementia, to stop treatment of any illness other than for pain

### Help When Unable to Care for Oneself

Time was spent on how to get help, especially if you can't afford it. For example, there are ways to qualify for Medicaid even if you have money. There are Geriatric Social Workers or Case Managers who work with people when their physical and mental resources are less strong  
One of our members has a contact who is a geriatric social worker. She (the social worker) has offered to answer questions about these issues either by email or attending a meeting. She is very knowledgeable about city agencies and services for older people.

Other comments under the topic: What if you live alone? How does anyone know your situation? Some people have installed Alexa or Google Home - automatic speaker systems that respond to voice requests.

### **What are some tips for people who live alone?**

## **FEBRUARY**

### **Preparing for Medical Emergencies**

Having heard from a member who recently went to the hospital unexpectedly, we discussed many ideas for having our homes and documents for an emergency. These are things other than Healthcare Proxies, Living Wills and other legal documents.

- Have someone who is your "first responder" - to be with you when taken suddenly to the hospital
- Someone who can be your "advocate" at the hospital until your legal designate can get there.
- Make the following Lists explaining where things can be found in your home. For example: Documents - healthcare proxies, etc.; Checkbooks, Glasses, Keys, Addresses and Phone numbers

Other sets of instructions or information might be:

- Care of Pet
- Care of plants
- Move car

- Have a small bag of necessities ready to grab or for someone else to find to bring to the hospital: glasses, hearing aids, eye shades, moisturizer,
- Keep handy a list of your health history: meds, surgery, other

Reminder: on the CC NYC chapter website is a document called, "[What You Need to Know When You Go To The Hospital.](#)"

Although we did not discuss the legal documents mentioned above, it was understood that we all have them.

## **MARCH**

### **Apologies**

Some reasons for apologies:

- Antidote to guilt.
- To repair a rupture in a relationship.
- To acknowledge being wrong, mistaken or at fault.
- Because it's the right, responsible thing to do.

To be a 'real' apology, it should:

- Be a clear statement of "I'm sorry."
- Focus on the other person. Trying to make him/her feel better...not ourselves.
- Be an expression of regret.
- Be empathetic, understand and acknowledge the other person's feelings.

We also discussed:

- How upbringing and culture affect apologizing,
- The rudeness of people in NY.
- Personal examples of not knowing if or when we should apologize.
- Apologizing ahead of a request to apologize can disarm the offended party.
- How some people cannot apologize (possibly narcissists)
- How apologizing can be liberating.
- What to do if a person continues to repeat offensive behavior but always apologizes for it even though it may not be sincere.
- How to deal with insincere apologies, setting boundaries, or ending the relationships.
- Gracious acceptance of an apology helps mend the rupture.

We discussed honest communication in lieu of an apology... “This is what you said” .... “This is how I felt” ....

Sometimes changed behavior of the other person is more important than an apology.

We discussed when an apology is not necessary:

- Returning a defective item
- Asking for help
- Saying no

We discussed how men and women respond to similar disagreement situations.

Women tend to say, “I’m sorry but I don’t agree....”

Men tend to say “I beg to differ with... or “I don’t agree...” They seldom say they’re sorry.

(If you want more information on apologies, Google lists more than 22 million entries on its site.)

## **APRIL**

**Identify something in your home which is especially meaningful to you, and why.**

There were some nice back-stories.

### Upper West Side 3



West End Avenue

## **FEBRUARY**

### **Food**

#### **Do you eat different foods now than when you were younger?**

- Our favorite foods growing up were not necessarily healthy: Ebingers Bakery Blackout Cake was an essential feature of childhood in Brooklyn. Uncle Murray was proprietor of the famous smoked fish store on Broadway.
- A few of us had a chubby period that we overcame by eating better.
- The nostalgic Ebingers fan now regularly eats sprouted wheat bread, poached salmon, and salad with a healthy dressing.
- One member had no problems when younger, but eating out is now more difficult. Restaurant portions have become too large. She recommends taking home part of your restaurant meal. Watch out for bread and sweets.
- A member on the edge of chubby had a goal 15 years ago to lose weight for a wedding. She continued with better eating habits, and gradually took off a lot of weight in 5 years. Now she focuses on regularly eating salads and yogurt, and moderate exercise, to maintain her weight.
- Small meals of salad and all kinds of vegetables have always been the favorite foods of one member, who has been a picky eater since childhood.
- A member who had been chubby in middle school has since been at good weight by usually eating only two meals a day, especially if one meal is at a restaurant or an activity with a lot of tempting but unhealthy food. She eats very simple meals at home that don't require a lot of cooking.
- One member never learned to cook. She shopped for food that was prepared by her husband, who loved to prepare gourmet meals for their family. Since she lost her husband, most of her meals are eaten in restaurants.

#### **Do you cook more, or less?**

Although everyone concurred that sharing a meal at home is the best way to eat healthy and maintain connections with friends and family, their busy schedules don't always make this possible. Some of us eat out very frequently, often in conjunction with cultural activities with friends. Eating by yourself generally means spending less time cooking: just a simple salad, or a main course picked up at the store and re-heated.

### **What healthy food resources do you recommend?**

#### Restaurants with Healthy Options Where You Can Have a Conversation

- Café Upstairs – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Fairway Market – 74<sup>th</sup> & Broadway
- Henry's - 105<sup>th</sup> and Broadway

#### Healthy Quick Meals:

- Chopt – Amsterdam & 76<sup>th</sup> - near the JCC
- Sweetgreen – Amsterdam & 74<sup>th</sup>
- Le Botaniste – Lexington & 63<sup>rd</sup>
- Bare Burger - 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue
- The Little Beet – 135 West 50<sup>th</sup> near Broadway Theaters

#### Prepared Main Courses & Sides to eat at home:

- Whole Foods
- Citarella

#### Best Resources for special (not necessarily healthy) items:

- Absolute Bagels – 107<sup>th</sup> and Broadway (Bagels)
- Breads Bakery – 63<sup>rd</sup> and Broadway (Chocolate Bobka)
- Magnolia Bakery – Columbus & 69<sup>th</sup> (Cupcakes & Layer Cakes)

The following **Newsletters** were recommended as sources for accurate, unbiased information about food products and nutrition:

**Nutrition Action** Written by Dietitians and Food Scientists, published by the nonprofit *Center for Science in the Public Interest*. Evaluates brand name foods and restaurant dishes for healthfulness. Helps non-scientists understand which stories in the media about the latest health claims for nutrients and vitamins are actually true. <https://cspinet.org/nutrition-action-healthletter>

**Harvard Women's Health Watch** - One of the first Health Newsletters produced by a Medical School.

[https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/harvard\\_womens\\_health\\_watch](https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/harvard_womens_health_watch)

Both publications are available at the NY Public Library, on-line or at some branches.

Consumer Reports is not recommended for food product ratings (but a great resource for reviews of appliances and household items)

## **MARCH**

### **Creating a Legacy? Who Will Remember Me?**

We all read the New York Times article sent to us prior to the meeting: “If You Don’t Have Children, What Do You Leave Behind?” (3/4/18). In discussion, we each talked about the legacies we are creating and leaving to our families and community through past and present actions. We talked about the connections we make with family, friends, in the workplace, and in the community to create legacies. This led to a broader discussion (and concern) about how different generations have different priorities, and whether younger generations are making the kinds of connections that will create meaningful legacies. Overall, the consensus was that leaving family memories is as important (perhaps more important) as leaving more tangible assets.

### **There was discussion (and concern) about:**

- Associating only with older family members and friends as we ourselves get older
- Maintaining ties with younger family members, especially if we don’t see them very often
- Finding new and creative ways to stay in touch with family members
- Recognizing that relationships within families are dynamic - for example, your grandchildren may have different relationships with their parents than your children had with you
- Being socially engaged as a way to “connect” with younger generations and serve as role models and mentors
- Leaving a legacy of “example” - a moral legacy, a sense of values
- Giving the younger generation a historical perspective (e.g., what were 60’s and 70’s all about)
- Imparting to younger generations responsibility for the future
- Giving recent graduates a reason to pursue careers in public service
- Distributing an estate equally or according to need (no good answer); leaving money “in trust” (again, depends on circumstances)

### **The legacy we are leaving to family and society (in progress!):**

- Mentored individuals in the early part of their health professional careers
- Participated in an Inner-City Scholarship Fund paying tuition for a student, but also engaging student in the arts (became part of student’s extended family)

- Worked professionally with domestic and international students of all ages to help them complete their degrees; upon retirement continued to engage with students as a mentor
- Participated in March for Our Lives, which prompted godson in Switzerland to give a “shout out” of approval
- Maintained family ties no matter how challenging so that four generations came together in a time of illness (the importance of emotional bonds)
- Found activities to do as a family that everyone enjoyed, even if this didn’t happen often
- Connected with younger people in a structured way by teaching at a Buddhist Center
- Engaged in many types of political activities
- Developed new friendships

## Upper West Side 4



Soldiers and Sailors Monument

### **FEBRUARY**

#### **Is there enough fun in our lives?**

Our February meeting focused on whether or not there was enough fun in our lives, and we had a broad range of opinions. One talked about originally moving here long ago from out of state and is still in awe of how lucky she is to be living in NYC with all the cultural advantages at her disposal plus the enjoyment she gets from her many hobbies and travels. Others mentioned also taking part in many activities but how it sometimes feels that organizing them feels more like work and takes some of the fun out of it. Another person reflected on the fact that, while she does many things, she doesn't seem to laugh as much as she used to. Of course, several mentioned dealings with loss and the impact on their lives at this point. Some strategies mentioned to both reduce anxiety and add more fun into our lives were: meditating, being with positive people, ending toxic/manipulative relationships, having friends take turns making activity arrangements, learning new things, and trying to be in the moment.

### **MARCH**

#### **People we'd like to have dinner with**

We talked about people we'd like to have dinner with --whether they are living or dead, famous or not -- and why. We have a few therapists in the group and they were interested in people in their field, so there was an informative discussion about Karen Horney, Carl Jung and others. Two in the group selected Vincent van Gogh, one especially wanted to tell him how successful he'd become and hopefully then score a free painting! Princess Diana and Princess Grace made the list of another group member. She was interested in knowing what it was like for Diana to deal with the level of fame she was confronted with and live in such a fishbowl. Rosa Parks, a historical figure who displayed monumental courage and devoted her life to social justice, was also mentioned as a perfect dinner companion. Along with people from history who impacted enormous numbers of people -- Jesus, Leonardo da Vinci, George Washington and several writers -- a few people mentioned family members who could share things about the family's geographical origins, history and things about ourselves that were lost when they left us.

## Queens



The Unisphere

## JANUARY

### Learning to Ask Others for Help

We had a great discussion, prompted by an article **“Learning to Ask Others for Help”** by Claire Berman, which appeared on the website **NYCitywoman.com**.

Although it is not always easy, it’s okay to ask for help. Most of us are happy to help others but have a hard time being on the receiving end. Why is that?

- **Fear of being viewed as vulnerable:** Asking for help is not an indication of weakness; it’s a sign of strength.
- **Fear of rejection:** We don’t want to feel embarrassed or humiliated and don’t want to put our friends and family members on the spot.
- **Fear of the loss of control:** Many of us do not avail ourselves of the help that we need because (though we won’t admit it) we’re unwilling to cede any power to others.

We then discussed ways to make it easier to ask others for help.

- **Be as specific as you can about what you need and how much time it may involve.** This gives the person you are asking a clear idea of what you want so that he or she can make the commitment.
- **In so far as it is possible, be flexible.** If the person you ask cannot make it on Monday, ask if another time will work for him or her. Let the helper know there are options.
- **Politely provide an out such as,** “I understand that you’re busy, and if you can’t make it this time, that’s okay.” By saying “this time” you keep the door open.
- **If they accept, try not to micromanage.** Give your helper some leeway. Nobody will do it exactly your way. And you may even learn something!
- **Tell the help giver that you truly value her or his assistance.** Don’t make them feel uncomfortable by gushing too much, but remember to say thank you a lot!

## MARCH

### Ageism

Ageism is so normal that it is incorporated in our everyday language and subtle comments on older people. Ageist remarks are often overlooked or missed forcing older people to accept them. At the same time compliments towards older people are double edged. If you refer to an older woman as “young lady” you unconsciously perpetuate the idea that old is bad and young is good.

Signs of ageism in our society:

- Talking about older people with pity, anger, irritation and in a patronizing way.
- TV shows and movies depict older people as frail, confused, always slow and cranky.

If left unchanged, ageist comments can erode the self-confidence of older people and make them feel ostracized.

How to recognize ageist comments and actions:

- Words that are mean and hurtful (old hag, codger, over the hill, feeble, senile, etc.)
- Seemingly kind but still offensive endearments that call older people what they are not (sweetie, honey, young lady, golden years, etc.) instead of what they are.
- Generalizing about older people by what they can and cannot do (they’re out of touch, can’t teach an old dog new tricks).
- Assuming they are weak
- Oversimplifying words, speaking slowly, assuming they are technologically inept
- Speaking to others, like doctors or family members, about an older person when they are in the same room.
- Jokes that seem funny on the surface but reveal a grain of truth about the negative attitudes about aging.

How can we take control and reverse ageist behavior?

- Give it back; if someone says, “I’m glad you’re still up and around” very nicely say “I’m glad you’re still up and around too.”
- If someone gives you a compliment that you feel is an awkward ageist comment, and you don’t want to explain why you are offended, just say “What do you mean?” and let them feel awkward.
- Try not to perpetuate the negative stereotypes