

How Your Later Years Can Be Your Best Years Your Later Years Can Be Your Best Years



Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan Virtual Presentation

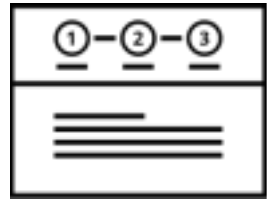
Tue, Nov. 10, 2020
Tue, Nov 17, 2020
7 PM – 8 PM

Norman Reiss
YourAgeDoesntMatter.com
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Agenda – Week 2



- Ageism and its Effects
- Ageism and the Pandemic
- Special guest – Ashton Applewhite, Author and Anti-Ageism Advocate
- How We Can Make the Most of the Rest of Our Lives



GetSetUp



About Me

- Past volunteer and staff member at [DOROT](#)
- [Virtual Senior Center](#) facilitator at Selfhelp Community Services
- Current Customer Success Manager at [GetSetUp](#)

About You



- How did you react to learning about Prof. Levy's research? Do you think attitude can make such a difference in how you age?
- How have you experienced ageism in your life?
- How do you (and others you interact with) feel about this stage of life?

What do **you** think about older adults?



A New Ageism – Fallout From the Pandemic

- More media attention on older people
- Spread misconceptions about aging (e.g. % people living in nursing homes, *all* old age is about illness)
- Has exposed ageism further (ask Ashton about this)
- Older persons who have lost jobs and won't be able to return to workforce
- Older persons not always included in clinical trials (until 2019)

The Pandemic and Older Adults

“What we are seeing in public discourse is an increasing portrayal of those over the age of 70 as being all alike with regard to being helpless, frail, and unable to contribute to society.”

“Older people have actually been less lonely and less depressed in quarantine than younger people...Research suggests that at least some older persons have developed resilience and coping skills that have helped them during this time”

“Every life has dignity and the moral test of any society is how it treats its most vulnerable members, including those who are old.”

How Ageism Negatively Affects Older Person's Health *(from Becca Levy research)*

Structural

- Denial of access to health care
- Exclusion from clinical trials
- Having resources, including medical services, rationed because of their age
- Limited work opportunities

Individual

- Decreased longevity
- Poorer quality of life
- Compromised social relationships
- Risky health behaviors
- Mental Illness
- Cognitive impairment
- Physical illnesses

More About Ageism

- Once you start looking for ageism, you will see it everywhere
- Distinguish between 'common' and 'normal' conditions (e.g. falling is common, but not normal.
- What is predictable is preventable.
- Older people are often ageist themselves

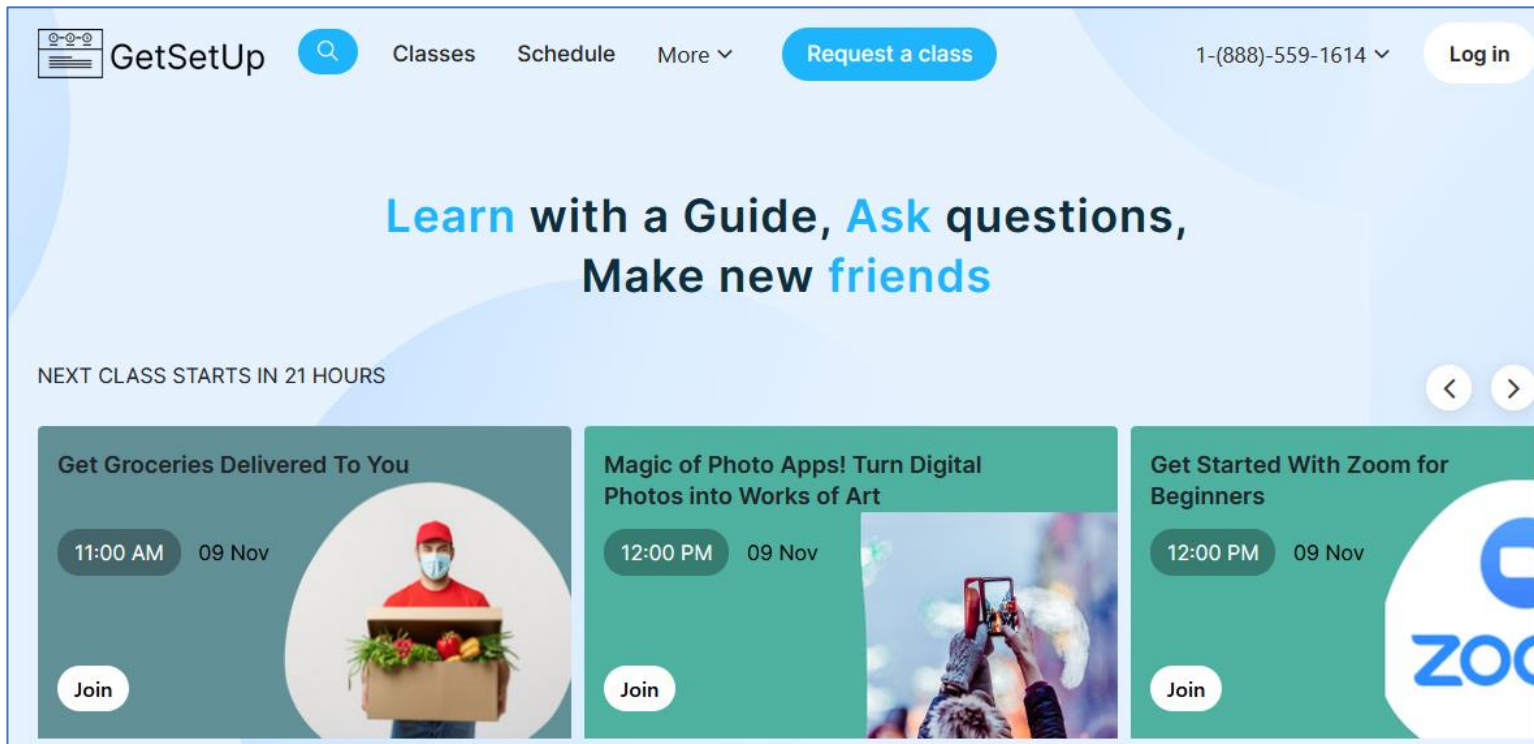
The role of lifestyle

- Eat food, not too much, mostly plants (Michael Pollan)
- The benefits of adding vegetables to your diet
- Exercise can be as simple as going for a walk
- The best exercise program is one you will do
- Once someone has been exercising for a while, rarely do they stop

Health care mostly focuses on treating problems that have already happened rather than preventing them from occurring

Why it's so important to keep learning

"Older people who continue to learn report heightened self-confidence and self-actualization, and learning keeps older people more involved in community activities, reduces their dependency on family and government-funded social services, and enhances their health and well-being."



The screenshot displays the GetSetUp website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the GetSetUp logo, a search icon, and links for 'Classes', 'Schedule', and 'More'. A prominent blue button labeled 'Request a class' is also visible. On the right side of the navigation bar, there is a phone number '1-(888)-559-1614' and a 'Log in' button. The main content area features a large blue banner with the text 'Learn with a Guide, Ask questions, Make new friends'. Below this banner, a notification states 'NEXT CLASS STARTS IN 21 HOURS'. Three course cards are displayed in a row, each with a 'Join' button. The first card is titled 'Get Groceries Delivered To You' and shows a delivery person with a box of groceries, scheduled for 11:00 AM on 09 Nov. The second card is titled 'Magic of Photo Apps! Turn Digital Photos into Works of Art' and shows hands holding a smartphone, scheduled for 12:00 PM on 09 Nov. The third card is titled 'Get Started With Zoom for Beginners' and shows the Zoom logo, scheduled for 12:00 PM on 09 Nov.

What Can We Do About Ageism?



- How we can address ageism in society and in ourselves?
- How we can improve the quality and quantity of our years?
- Guest speaker – Ashton Applewhite, Author and Anti-Ageism Activist

From Ashton's Book, 'This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism'



- People are happiest at the beginnings and ends of their lives. *Even as age strips us of what we cherish: physical strength beloved friends, toned flesh – we grow more content*
- All of us lucky enough to grow old—a privilege denied to many—will age into impairment of some kind. People age well not by *avoiding* chronic illness and disability but by *adapting* to them
- The critical starting point is to acknowledge our own prejudices
- It is impossible to predict the health and well-being of an individual (only) on the basis of their age

From Ashton's Book, 'This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism'



- Of people 65+, only 4% live in nursing homes. Of people 85+, only 10% live in nursing homes
- Half of those 85+ can do everyday activities without any personal assistance
- The hardest prejudice to let go of – against myself – my own future, older self – as inferior to my younger self
- The alternative (to ageism) is to see age as an asset
- Serious mental decline is not a normal or inevitable part of aging
- Focus not on what is lost but what remains

Stereotypes about older workers

- Can't master new skills
- Aren't creative
- Can't handle stress
- Miss work due to illness
- Can't handle physically demanding tasks (but how many jobs require a lot of manual labor?)

None of these stereotypes about older workers hold up under scrutiny
In addition to \$, work confers a sense of purpose, of belonging, and of social connectedness – what retirees say they miss most

Questions for Ashton Applewhite

- Ageism seems to be everywhere, even more so during the pandemic. Is there really hope that it can be different?
- **How can I address ageist tendencies in myself?**
- What if I see ageism in my friends and family? What if they won't (or can't) learn to see things differently?
- **In the years you've been advocating for older adults, what improvements have you noticed in reducing ageism?**
- In your book, you write *If older people seem preoccupied with their sicknesses and doctor appointments, It's partly because society denies them access to many of the things that once gave their life meaning.* How can we restore meaning to our lives?

10 Things You Can Do Now to Age Well

From Last Week: 5 Things You Can Do to Age Well

1. Stop judging yourself by your physical appearance
2. Celebrate all birthdays
3. Keep learning
4. Give back: Volunteer
5. Make friends of all generations

6. Take the initiative to build new relationships (don't wait for others to come to you)



7. Watch your language

- You're xx? Wow, you look great! (tip - don't say 'Thank you')
- How are you today, young lady? (what does your age have to do with looking good)
- Here's xx, he's xx years young.
- I'm having a *senior moment*.
- I'm 'showing my age' now but I remember...
- Look at her/him - she/he looks *old*
- I can't believe I'm xx - I don't feel xx
- She/he is too old to xxx
- Being reluctant to say how old you are

8. Make changes to your diet



9. Add more exercise to your life



10. Call out ageism when you see it



Resources

- [Old School](#)
- [This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism](#)
- [Your Age Doesn't Matter](#)
- [A New Ageism – Fallout From the Pandemic](#)
- [Will COVID-19 Make the Decline Narrative of Aging Worse?](#)
- [Aging in Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [How Ageism Negatively Affects Older Person's Health](#)
- [Food Rules: An Eater's Manual](#)
- [GetSetUp](#)
- [Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging](#)
- [World Report on Ageing & Health](#)
- [Still Kicking - Confronting Ageism & Ableism in the Pandemic's Wake](#)

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Questions?

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