

HARVARD-RADCLIFFE CLASSES OF 1960
DESCRIPTIONS OF SATURDAY AFTERNOON DISCUSSION TOPICS

A. Women Alone or Being on One's Own
(for **WOMEN ONLY**, but open to **ALL WOMEN**, including married, partnered women)

The discussion will dwell on such questions as “When did you start being on your own – in any sense of the term? How are you doing on your own? What are your thoughts on being on your own in the next few years? In what ways may being on our own actually empower us with a greater sense of self and authenticity?”

B. Exploring Unlived Potential and Neglected Aspects of Ourselves (for women and men)

Growing older may bring the advantages of more life experience, less pressure to conform, and a greater inner demand to give expression to unlived potential. Doesn't the present moment ask us to respond creatively to our gifts, uniqueness, and unfinished business in order to live fully? If so, what interests, avocations, aspirations, modes of creative expression, and what friendships, challenges, or causes from the past are we drawn to retrieve or pursue? What new interests, hopes, and dreams excite and inspire us at this time? How can we encourage one another to pick up neglected threads from the past and how may we support each other in following new inklings and nudges?

C. The Re-Arranged Life (for women and men)

All of us have suffered losses and lessenings. Most have lost parents, some partners, and kids have left home. We still work, if not on a fast track. Instead of buying more, we're throwing things out. Fewer marathons; more medications and fears.

We have less power, altered attachments, a different physical presence. It's disquieting but also very freeing. We can do whatever we want, if we dare....

We'll discuss how we're handling these re-arrangements, major and minor. Not gospel or formal guidance, but talk--of experiences, ideas, even warnings--in good company.

D. Experiencing Significant Loss: Ways of Facing It (for women and men)

At this stage in our lives, significant losses of various kinds are inescapable. This group will focus on the loss of loved ones and how we are coping with it. Must this unsought experience fill us with black despair, or is it possible to respond some other way, even relatively positively and life-affirmingly?

Come share your personal experiences and wisdom in this area as we discuss such loss-related questions as: “How are you experiencing significant loss/es in your life? Does your loss occasion a sense of personal diminishment? Does it ever surprise you by providing some valuable insights, important self-challenges, or pathways to new growth? What coping skills are serving you best? What general wisdom do you have to share with others?”

E. Anticipating Life after Retirement (for women and men)

Are you ready to retire, are you in transition, or are you already retired? This group will focus on planning for and entering retirement. How do we find new interests and pace ourselves in our daily existence? How does retirement impact or change our relationships with spouses/partners, children and grandchildren? This new, uncharted stage of life has the potential to be experienced as both good and/or bad. How do we make it work for us?

We hope the already retired will share experiences of the transition with those about to enter it.

F. Maintaining and Strengthening Personal Relationships in Retirement (for women and men)

When a significant part of our identity is defined by work, and when life has been structured by a work schedule for up to 45 years, it can be both rewarding and jarring to stop working. Then considerations of how we want to spend our time become paramount and our relationships are likely to be altered – for better or worse. How can we make the most of the time we have with people who matter to us, extending and deepening our social contacts while living each day in satisfying ways?

In this group we will consider these questions, share some of our personal experiences, and discuss other relevant issues that arise.

G. Life without Retirement (for women and men)

Most of us are now past the generally accepted retirement age of 65. Some of us have decided to continue working in our chosen field or vocation (so long as health of mind and body allow). We have made this choice not because we must, but because we continue to have passion for our work. We believe we still have something of value to offer within our fields and to our younger colleagues.

This discussion group is for those women and men who have chosen or are considering “life without retirement.” We are eager for all to share experiences, hopes, and concerns.

Radcliffe '60 Discussion Facilitators

Linda Abrams Braun
Penelope Addiss Yungblut
Kathryn Allen Rabuzzi
Martha Cohen Bial
Susan Diamond
Patricia Gillingham Lewis

Alice Hendrickson Eagly
Elaine Kotell Binder
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Helen Twombly Watkins
Katharine (Kitsy) Winthrop