

Let's Face It: women explore their aging faces

Guide For Use www.letsfaceit.tv letsfaceit@attbi.com

The women in LET'S FACE IT express ambivalence about changes in their faces, occasional yearning for an earlier look, a mismatch between their internal sense of self and their aging face, and unexpected shifts in their feelings as a result of speaking openly to each other. In the process they confront their deep values about beauty, culture, youth and age. And they discover there is no "correct" way to age — there is only one's own approach to the process.

GROUP VIEWING allows for immediate sharing of thoughts and feelings evoked by the film.

- ◆ Watch the film with family or friends
- ◆ Show the film in a group in which you participate — book club, sport or game group, women's organization
- ◆ Suggest the film to group leaders in the YMCAs, women's church groups, therapy and support groups
- ◆ Academic settings — college or adult education classes in women's studies, gerontology, psychology, American culture
- ◆ Retirement communities and senior centers

AFTER WATCHING - guidelines and questions:

Tell each other, one at a time, about your own experiences while watching. (Hold off on evaluation of the film itself until later.)

What brought up a strong reaction? What was familiar to you? What was startling?

When listening, simply listen — and notice your judgments.

1. What comes up for you about your face as a result of seeing the film?
2. How do you see yourself in relation to the prevailing cultural values about maturing faces?
3. What messages were you given by family members?
4. What do you do before you go out, why, and for whom?
5. How far are you willing to go to be attractive? Is cosmetic surgery an option for you?
6. What values would you wish to guide you as you evolve with your changing face?

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A SERIES OF SESSION on aging might consider some of the following activities:

LOOK at magazines, especially women's magazines. What messages and values are communicated? Compare with the presentation of women in TV and films. What are your personal values?

LISTEN to yourself and contemporaries chat about appearance and age in daily life. Listen for flattery, denial, support, advice, etc. Notice answers to "How old are you?" and the response to the statement. Role-play this situation in your group.

INTERVIEW each other using the questions raised in the film.

Work up your own set of provocative questions,

Why is looking one's age problematic? Are you flattered if someone thinks you look younger than your age? Explore the implications of your emotions. How do you distinguish vanity, pride, self-esteem from narcissism? How do you feel about the person/face you see in the mirror?

THINK about women older than yourself whom you admire. Share your thoughts with the group.

BRING to the group photographs of (1) yourself at different stages, recalling how you felt about these images at the time and how you see them now, and (2) women in your family of older and younger generations.

Make a graphic display of the group's early pictures:

Then, look at all the pictures without comment. Notice your own responses and how they change. Share your reactions with the group.

If you watch the film with people of different ethnicities/cultures, age or gender, listen to their responses. Notice the similarities and differences in the elements that constitute attractiveness.

RELATED ISSUES

Let's Face It can be used to generate discussion on a wide range of issues in relation to aging, the current trend of "anti-aging" products and the on-going prejudices of ageism, looksism, and sexism in the culture.

Medical Ethics

Socio-Economics

Role of the Media

Esthetics

Concerns about Aging