

Gen Z and the Joy of Living in Times of Crisis

Inter-generational attunement is much needed in all domains of social life to support the young generation as well as the future of the world.

Meaningful relationships, both intra and inter-generational, are core for the experience of joy of living for young adults.

AIMS

This research project explored the experience of joy of living during the times of the COVID-19 Pandemic for eight young adults of Generation Z. The exploration also covered the young adult's generational self-identity and their views about the world of today. This research and its findings promote inter-generational inclusion in communities, education, at work and in policy making.

DESIGN

Semi-structured interviews were used for data collection and the analysis was conducted using Structural Existential Analysis, a qualitative phenomenological method that helped explore the experience of joy if living in crisis within the four existential realms of the participants (personal, relational, physical and spiritual).

Approved by the ethics committees of NSPC & Middlesex University

PARTICIPANTS

8 young adults, age 18-25
5 males, 3 females
British born and raised (London)
All in higher or further education
All with a history of challenges in the family— chronic illness, conflict, mental health problems
None at risk of financial problems



THEMES - the TRIBE framework

Time: Gen Z's Awareness of Time

Responsibility: Gen Z are a Responsible Generation

Introspection: Gen Z are Natural in the Practice of Introspection

Belonging: Joy of Living for Gen Z is in Belonging

Essence: Gen Z's Broad Self-identity

IMPLICATIONS

- * Designing a tailored framework to address generation specific issues for young adults
- * In therapy, to explore reflections and experience of belonging & to explore the sense of self-identity & to explore the experiences of time and generational identity, including projected identity for young adults
- * In therapy, to pay attention to the relational world of young adults, including the therapeutic relationships—to promote meaningful connections
- * Older generations to take more of life mentors roles whilst allowing YA to take lead (in the therapy room, in the classroom, in the office etc.)
- * As a society & authorities to encourage (and help facilitate) YA to create communities based on their values and identity

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The research was a first to study the experience of joy of living for young adults in times of crisis, and hence it requires follow up studies with quantitative components. There was a limited sample covering mainly white British young adults representative for Western societies. The results cannot be generalised for other cultures. It would be useful to replicate the study in different cultures. The study had a rigorous methodology which makes it trustworthy.

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