How can we create and deliver solutions where GenZers needs and planet needs are both satisfied?

The digital story World

Gen Z are digital natives. For this generation, online platforms and social media are a primary source of connection and information on the topics of health care, mental health, lifestyle, sustainability, and parenthood. (1)

Technology and the digital world is central to Gen Z's health and wellness practices: apps and wearables seamlessly become part of their daily rituals. Gen Z is the generation most interested in health monitoring and self tracking - for fitness, food and water intake, sleep, social media use, but also for their mental and emotional state. (2)
Advances in connected sensing and data sharing enable health care providers to have a holistic view of people's lifestyle and health to provide better care. (3)

Overall GenZ look for effectiveness, convenience, efficiency, and transparency in health services. Half prefer telemedicine to traditional in-person visits. (4)
Overall, traditional health care doesn't resonate with their holistic approach to health. Instead of traditional sources for health information (health websites, doctors and pharmacists), GenZ rather rely on social media (e.g. Tiktok, social media discussion) and social networks for answers to health and wellness questions (including drug prescription). The pandemic has accelerated this trend. (5)

The pandemic has led people to spend more time on social media, video calling, more e-commerce, but also resulted in more digital detoxes. New technologies (haptics, voice control, virtual and augmented reality) enable natural interactions away from the classical screen. (6)

Gen Z holistic approach to health and life

Gen Z have a holistic view on health and wellness: reaching a **balanced state of complete physical, mental, emotional and social wellness** is central to their identity. Personal behaviors like healthy eating, working out, managing stress, meditating, sleeping, building self-esteem, and having time to socialize with family and friends are seen as key to being healthy and happy.

Contrarily to millennials who seek fulfillment and identity through their professional life, more and more GenZ consider work as a mean to get income and focus on other aspects to reach a balance. For example, a majority of Gen Z show interest in **spirituality**. There is a growing popularity of healing rituals, mindfulness and astrology apps that fall under the expansive umbrella of wellness (despite conclusive evidence of their effectiveness).

GenZ feel **self-empowered** to control and improve proactively their own health. They have **high standards and expectations in health management**, which often fall short due to lacking alignment with day-to-day behavior.

The holistic approach to life reflects in the parenting style of Gen Z. They let the child explore and express their needs - an approach called **"baby-led parenting"**. This leads to high attention for the child's mental health and topics such as confidence, stress coping, emotional resilience and empathy.

The battle : anxiety, stress and social pressure

72% of GenZ say managing stress and mental health is their most important health and wellness concern. They are **constantly confronted with a socially constructed image of 'has it all and do it all'** (social, professional, relationship, identity&looks...) and pressure to be perfect fueled by socials. The constant comparison to others results in low self-esteem and a constant unsatisfaction or feeling of not doing enough. Furthermore, over-consumerism - pulled by socials - has also a negative impact on an individuals' psyche, resulting in developing a constantly unsatisfied state of mind. Finally, GenZ grew in a world of increased anxiety (i.e. shootings, terrorism, pandemic, climate change) and rapidly changing (fluctuating economy) over which they feel they have little control. The Covid pandemic has only amplified this anxiety. They fear for their future and that of their children, even to the point that many consider not having children.

If we focus on young parents, **the arrival of a child adds** tiredness, changes in the relationship with the partner and sexuality, and insecurities linked to parenthood. In particular, mothers who carry a high mental load and feel the pressure to successfully combine professional and family lives are subject to feelings of guilt and failure.

On the positive side, GenZ is a generation that embodies resilience, is pro-active in managing their mental health, and open to talk about it.

The inner conflict

Climate change and protecting the environment is No. 1 concern for Gen Z. They know the world is on fire, and that humans are responsible for it. They believe in the possibilities for an individual to make a difference, and take action - for example by working at green companies, purchasing from ethical brands, limiting waste, and eating vegetarian or vegan.

At the same time, they live in a **consumerism society** shaped around the believe that happiness and well-being depend fundamentally on material possessions, which is the main cause for Earth resources depletion and negative environmental impact.

For GenZ, this is a fundamental dilemma: how to act eco-responsibly while being immersed in triggers for over-consumption?

The paradox is that both awareness about climate issues and over-consumption go in hand with **wealth level**. The globally growing middle class increases this trend.

New business models drivers

The main motivation for second-hand consumption is **fair pricing**. Also, people see the **ethical and environmental benefits** of reusing items even if they don't always explicitly stated it.

For parents 'it makes sense' to reuse, since kids quickly grow out of cloths before they have reached their end of life. There is also a sense that another child should have the chance to use an item, because it has been useful to their own child and gave them pleasure. **Parent for who's** being awareness for second hand hygiene and safety are a concern. A barrier to buying second hand is **hygiene and safety**.

Gen Z in particular are increasingly embracing second-hand shopping, driven by a **desire for uniqueness and thrift, as well as a reaction against consumerism and the environmental impact of fast fashion**. As creators become **influencers**, Gen Z consumers seek to buy directly from them, cutting out the retailer as middleman. This opens new roads for business models and partnerships for Philips.

The battle: the difficulty to be a green parent

Gen Z are willing to protect the environment and combat climate change. At the same time, there is a preconception that green parenting costs money, time and energy. As young parents, they need convenient, safe and affordable products and services.

GenZ are inquisitive and actively looking for information on such solutions. However, the topic is overwhelming as companies are increasingly using sustainability-targeted marketing, and lack a good points of sustainability. GenZ is very critical towards brands who do not take responsibility or use greenwashing to cover up past harmful actions and as a reason to charge more for products.

Consumers want to see measurable, transparent and consistent actions backing up brands' ethical commitments (such as about sourcing, manufacturing, durability, safety, and direct environmental impact data). GenZ value craftmanship and want to see behind the curtain, to be able to know the production process behind products and services. To build trust and loyalty with the conscious consumer, brands also need to show humanity: the wins, the losses, the mistakes and the learnings. Additionally, as empowered creators and entrepreneurs, Gen Z don't simply want to be treated as passive viewers and consumers: they have ideas, feedback and advice on how to improve the products, services, content and brands they love and they expect their voices to be heard.

The treasure

On one side, we need to help GenZ in finding a balance in their health and well-being, particularly by supporting their fight against anxiety and stress. On the other side, we must enable them to be green parents in a way that is effortless and convenient and affordable sustainable solutions.

How can these two goals link and synergize?

If green parenting becomes effortless and takes a higher importance in the mind of GenZ, they will be more pro-active and take environmentally-friendly actions - remember that self-management and action give a feeling of contentments. In turn, if GenZ become greener, they will step away from over-consumerism and re-connect with nature, which will decrease stress and anxiety.

The main paradigm to transcend is the idea of GenZ that 'having it all and doing it all' will give them peace of mind. This is an unachievable goal. Rather, by embracing JOMO (joy of Missing Out), consuming less but better, they can reach a balance made of the essential ingredients for healthy people and a healthy planet.

Central nodes

Consumerism and over-consumption mentality

Awareness of climate crisis, willingness to act, believe that an individual can make a difference

GenZ holistic approach to life, desire to have and do it all (mental, physical, spiritual, social, professional, parenthood, romantic)

Stress, Anxiety, depression from multiple factors

Unclarity on how to be sustainable, confusing information, green washing and little access to sustainable solutions

Desire to be a green parent

Balance in physical, mental, emotional wellness and health (feeling and looking good)

Enablement of being a green parent (time and effort)

THE INNER CONFLICT: how to act eco-responsibly while being immersed in triggers for over-consumption?

THE BATTLE: how to fight the pressure and socially constructed image to have and do it all?

THE BATTLE: How to be a be a green parent while they feel it costs time, energy, and money?

THE TREASURE: Can we create a new balance made of the essential ingredients for well-being and sustainable behavior?