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INTRODUCTION

Millennials are perhaps the most scrutinized and labeled generation in marketing history. In many ways, this scramble to understand and categorize them was driven by a fear that Millennials would be the generation that got away, the generation that refused to engage with advertising. If Millennials were often characterized as "digital natives," it was the thirty-something, forty-something and fifty-something "digital immigrants" who needed snappy shortcuts into understanding this new breed of digitally empowered consumers. So they were grouped together and described variously as "entitled," "insecure," "Generation-Me," "socially conscious," and "slacktivists," among many other labels.

Now another generation is on the horizon: Generation Z (aged 2-20). If Millennials were a new breed, Snapchat-wielding Generation Z is surely a new species entirely. The scramble for suitable adjectives has already begun in earnest. Gen Z is apparently "independent," "pragmatic" and "self-educated."

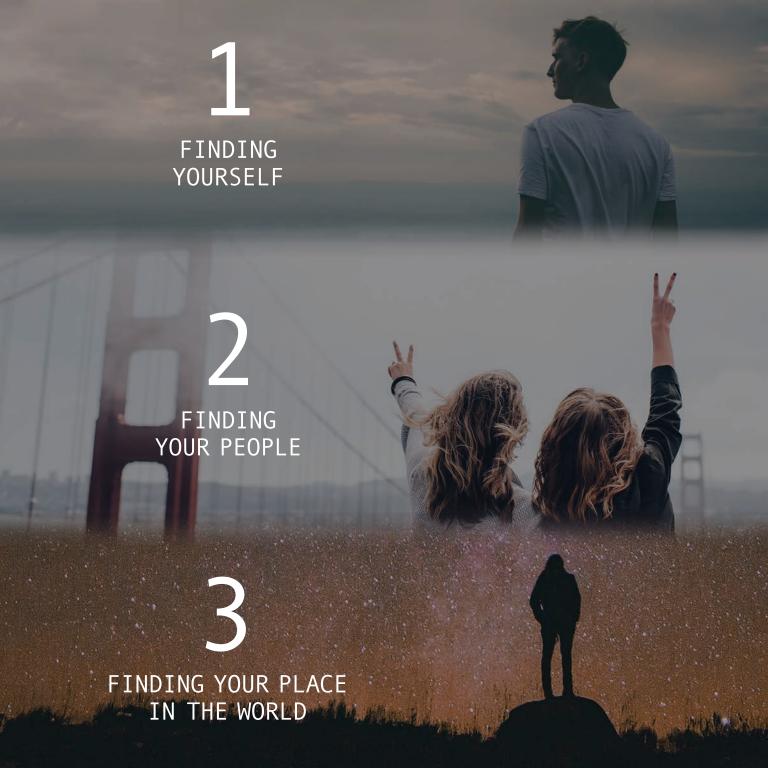
We do not intend to provide a new set of labels, or to add noise. In terms of approach, instead of dividing artificially between those aged 2-18 and those aged 19-35, we're seeing youth culture as a sliding scale based on attitudes and values (although age differences are called out where appropriate). This is the first step in humanizing and globalizing our latest thinking on an important cohort.

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE...

Despite the fast-moving world of social media and communication, it's reassuring to find that there are three enduring human truths about being young that are as true today as they ever were.

- 1. The notion of needing to "find yourself" has transcended generations. Being young is still ridden with angst because it is a time in which your identity is being formed. It is a period in which you're desperately trying to "figure things out" and specifically, "figure out" what kind of person you are. The backdrop to being a teenager is a complex tangle of emotions and hormones that you work your way through over time.
- 2. Friends are everything and "finding your people" or a group of people to hang around with is the key to establishing yourself and your happiness. Being seen as effortlessly cool is still the root of much social anxiety for young people.
- 3. "Finding your place in the world" is the third great youth pursuit that remains relevant across eras. By this we mean figuring out your values, your passions and your ideals, as well as establishing your sense of personal justice and right and wrong.

If we think about these three truths: finding yourself, finding your people and finding your place in the world, in some ways, you might argue that the fundamentals of being a young person haven't changed. However, the context of how people approach these goals has been completely reimagined!





TRANSFORMATIONAL TIMES...

Of course, the thing that changed everything is technology and the landscape is evolving so rapidly that the all-powerful triumvirate of youth brands—Snapchat, Tinder and Twitch—didn't even exist five years ago. Young people today aren't just Digital Natives, they're Accessibility Natives. They expect to get access to people, places, ideas and brands anywhere and at any time.

If we consider this through the lens of our three enduring truths, we see some fascinating shifts:



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