

Shifting the Paradigm: Perspectives on Generational Relationships

PREVAILING VIEW	EMERGING VIEW
Idealism, energy, and vitality are the purview of the younger generation.	Idealism, vitality, and energy can be accessed at any stage of life.
Wisdom and experience are the purview of the older generation.	Wisdom can be accessed at any age or stage based on each person's unique life experience and perspectives
Olders are teachers/mentors--youngers are students/learners. Olders need to transfer their knowledge of "how things work."	Olders and youngers can "co-mentor" each other, using each other's unique contributions to co-evolve innovative systems and solutions adapted to current and future challenges.
Age 30–60 are the productive years. Elders and youth are less relevant.	We are one generation alive together—whatever our age or stage of life. We need the participation and gifts of each generation in the "circle of life." Productive contributions to the challenges we face can be made even by the youngest or most elderly among us.
Naming and categorizing generations can inform how we understand and "manage" each other (IE. Boomers, Millenials, Gen X etc)	True collaboration and partnership require authentic conversation and engagement together beyond stereotypes and statistical norms.
My generation knows best (young buck–old buck)	Mutual compassion, curiosity, and respect lie at the heart of creating innovative possibilities together.

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Past family or other generational experiences color future relationships.	Safe, hospitable spaces which foster mutual compassion, forgiveness, love and healing form new “habits of the heart” and the ground from which innovative futures can emerge.
The next generation will have to solve our current local and global challenges. We had our day. Now it’s up to them.	Our challenges cannot be solved by the younger generations alone. We need to evolve a culture of shared responsibility and investment for our common future as long as any of us are part of the “circle of life.” The future of our species and this planet depends of all of us working in partnership across traditional boundaries of age and stage.