

# Generational Profiles and Spirituality Perspectives

Compiled by Jessica Cruickshank

Generation	Years Born <sup>i</sup>	Pop. % <sup>ii</sup>	Highest generational value	Highest Spiritual Value <sup>iii</sup>	How God is perceived <sup>iv</sup>	Truth is:	Pain is:	Religious practice <sup>v</sup>	Spiritual immaturity to spiritual maturity continuum <sup>vi</sup>
Silent	1929-1944	7.2%	Loyalty in Relationships	Compassion and peacemaking	God is both intimate and distant, Mystery, God is father, friend, and lover			Introverted spirituality, corporate prayer, like church and corporate settings, want to explore and see "where the spirit is moving"	Indifference to suffering and justice = immaturity; compassion and being able to see another's point of view = maturity
Baby Boomers	1945-1964	21.2%	Immortality/Legacy	Transformation and transcendence	As a spiritual force that is imminent and omnipresent, as a person or energy, possible to understand through various religious traditions	What resonates with my inner being	Due to compromise	Extroverted spirituality, want community, Spiritual but not religious, dislike organized religion, spirituality ala carte, pioneered the megachurch and mixed spiritual practices, meditation and eclectic combination of religious practices from various religions, have a spiritual practice	Victim, self-concerned, and satisfied = immaturity; Commitment to transformation, openness, and 'seeking' = maturity
Gen Xers	1965-1979	24.2%	Competence	Survival (of what the Boomers did/do) and authenticity	An entity which indwells nature and all things, concerned with the whole, but not the individual, religiously agnostic	Unknowable as we are always limited by our filters	Life, expected, just a part of things	Spiritually introverted, deconstruction and reconstruction of religious systems, comfortable with ambiguity, seeking common ground, serving in ways that have visible impact and results, awe and wonder at the divine in all things, conversation and serving are religious practice	Hypocrisy = immaturity; authentic, transparent, sincere and personal congruency = maturity
Gen Y/ Millennials	1980-1996	27.4%	Community	Happiness and relational, need validation and approval	Both distant and near, light, energy, random unfolding of Life	Known by what makes me happy	Failure (means unsuccessful in achieving values of health and happiness)	Not spiritual as a generation, validating others points of view as legitimate, motivated to serve the immediate circle of friends and direct connections (not beyond that), do not evaluate or critically analyze beliefs, some argue that Millennials have created their own faith tradition <sup>vii</sup> , spiritual practices include activism and being in nature, largely believe that religion is not necessary or irrelevant	Lack of critical analysis of belief systems leads them to be inarticulate as to this. Meta-analysis of responses yield that unhappiness = immaturity; happiness/satisfaction and contentment <sup>viii</sup> = maturity
Gen Z/ Digital Natives	1996-2015	20%	Efficiency	Justice?? <sup>ix</sup>	Little information, but relationship is important <sup>x</sup>	Known by what I experience	Build a skill set to help you deal with it	<b>Very little is known</b> , but they are very interested in what has lasted and sustained - what is ancient <sup>xi</sup> (ancient-future tension)	Low relational = immature; highly relational = mature <sup>xii</sup>

These are generalizations constructed from large surveys and resulting data analysis. They are not meant to accurately describe any one specific individual, but rather depict the beliefs and behaviors of the generational cohort at large.

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<sup>i</sup> Howe, Neil; Strauss, William (1991). *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069*. New York: William Morrow & Company

<sup>ii</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_the_United_States)

<sup>iii</sup> Marbry, John R., (2013) *Faithful Generations*. New York: Morehouse Publishing.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid

<sup>v</sup> Ibid

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid

<sup>vii</sup> Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, where they believe God exists, that God watches over the world and wants everyone to be good and happy, and that happy/good people go to heaven when they die. Smith & Snell. (2009) *Souls in transition: The religious and spiritual lives of emerging adults*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>viii</sup> I, Jessie Cruickshank, find "Happiness" to be a loaded term and think that "Satisfaction and contentment" to be more accurate to the heart of value.

<sup>ix</sup> Jessie Cruickshank's speculation

<sup>x</sup> Personal ongoing research

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid