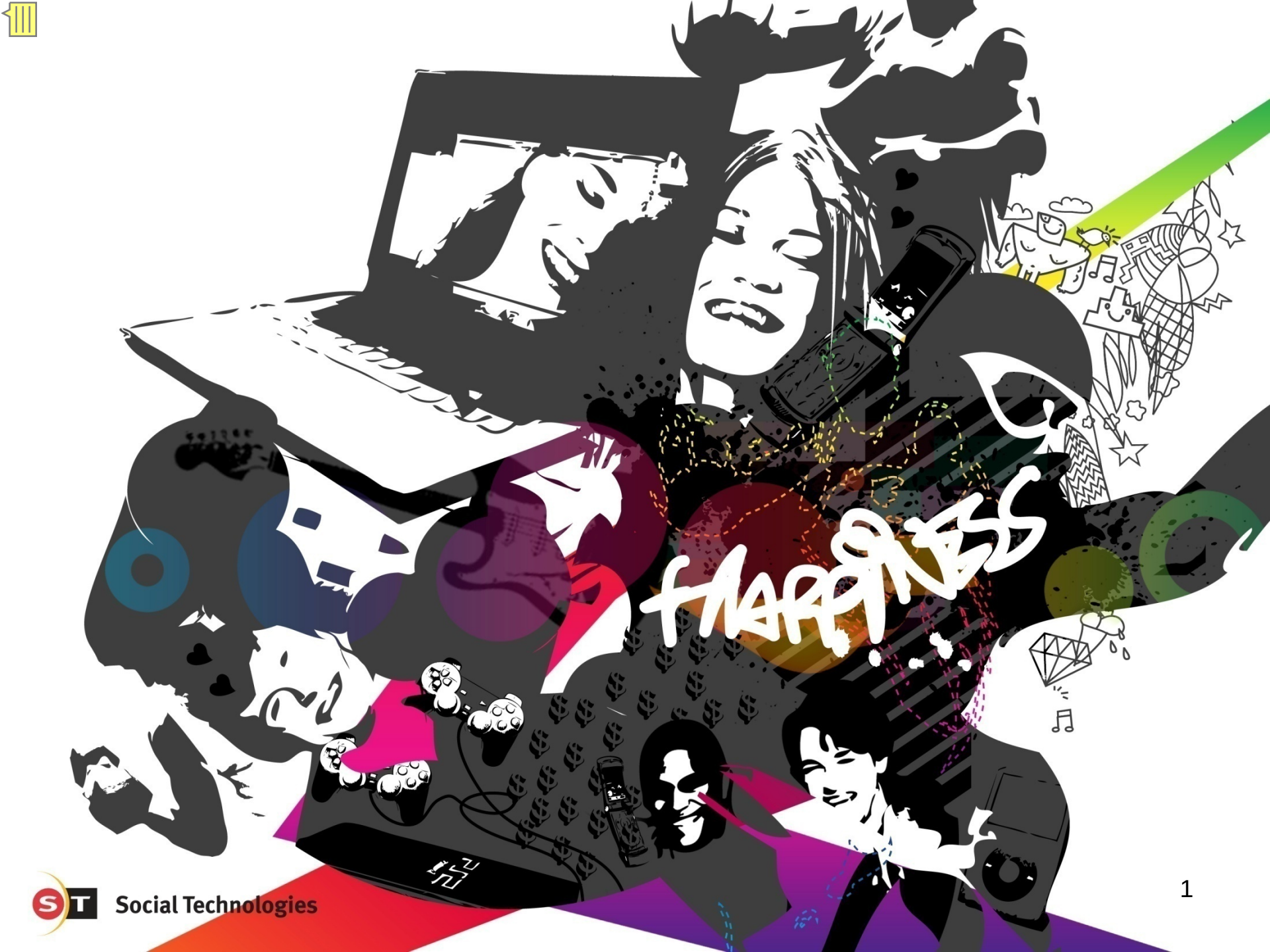
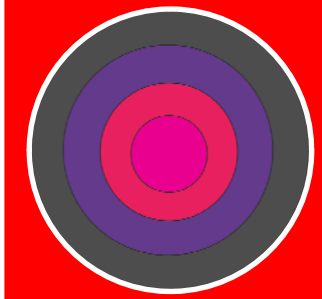


Social Technologies

Executive Summary



Project Overview

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Executive Summary

Youth will continue to perplex adults in their pursuit of happiness. They will exhibit a careful mixture of idealism and aspirations tempered with a grasp of realities and practicalities.

I have the power to change things I believe in…and that will make me happy.

Don't worry, be happy

I'm happy when I have the freedom to create, using technology as an enabler for self-expression and connection.

Transitional Tradition

- **BFF—**Friends are and will continue to be the most important relationship contributing to youth happiness.
- **Parents Needed**—Despite minor annoyances, youth will continue to depend on parents as a vital source of security and happiness.
- **Religion a la Carte—**Youth will increasingly seek happiness via spirituality and faith.
- **My Family Commitment**—A resurgence of interest among youth in traditional family structures will gain momentum.

All About Me

- **No Body's Perfect**—Body image and traditional routes to good health will be important aspects of happiness for many youth.
- **Money Matters**—Money is increasingly seen by youth as a means rather than an end. Relative wealth and status are more important than absolute.
- **Almost Famous**—Youth, especially younger, fantasize about fame, but are savvy enough to know it is unlikely and most will settle for a good career.

MyLife, MyTime, MyWay

- **Take Control—**Youth will take control of their own happiness.
- **No Challenge Too Xtreme**—Youth see few obstacles in their pursuit of happiness which they will not overcome.
- **Unplugged Meltdown**—Technology will stress youth… only when it is unavailable!
- **Uniquely Generic**—Growing youth individuality and self-expression will be tempered by the need to fit in, rather than rebel.

Virtual Community

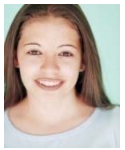
- **Tech Me**—Technology will be important for staying in touch and for the pleasure-of-the-moment.
- **Virtual & F2F**—Youth will make little distinction between face-to-face and virtual friendships; they will have many friends they never meet face-to-face.

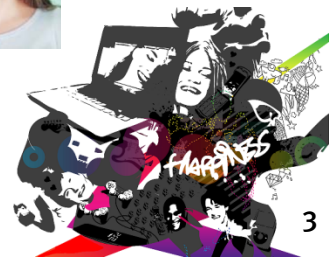
I'm going to plan to be happy… and I'm going to succeed by following my plan.

I'm in control of my own happiness and I can change anything that makes me unhappy.

Relationships are everything to me.

Things happen for a reason… and we should be thankful/ grateful for having had the experience.





Project Overview

Purpose

Explore and understand what makes US youth aged 12–24 happy, not only today, but also to:

- understand how this is changing from previous generations
- understand what today's youth is doing to ensure future happiness
- develop a picture of what these future states of happiness may look like

Phase 1:
Hypothesis Formation

- Review and summary of the literature on happiness
- ST scanning of internal knowledgebase, plus desk research
- Interviews with experts on happiness
- These streams of knowledge were brought together in a series of hypotheses about youth happiness now and in the future

Phase 2:
Validation and Exploration of Hypotheses via Field Research and Quantitative Survey

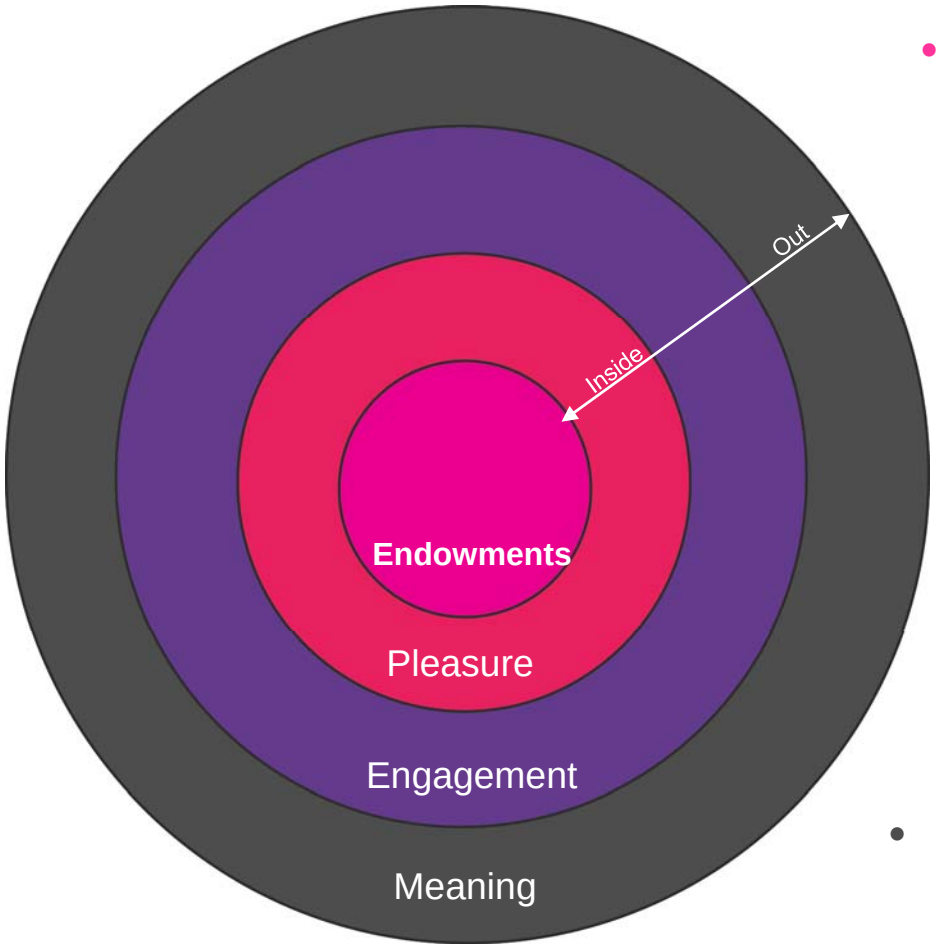
- Field research completed in 3 markets (Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Phoenix) using small-group discussion format in a "non-traditional" setting using MTV age segments of 12–17 and 18–24.
- Quantitative survey, 1,200 respondents (600 12–17 year olds and 600 18–24 year olds) aiming for the equivalent of 15 minutes of questioning with mostly set responses[*should this be "questions" not "responses"?] and some open-ended questions

Phase 3:
Creation of Happiness Forecasts and Future Personas

- Adjust and add to hypotheses based on Phase 2 findings and solidify into Happiness Forecasts
- Integrate findings in visual scenarios of "states of happiness" in the form of Future Personas

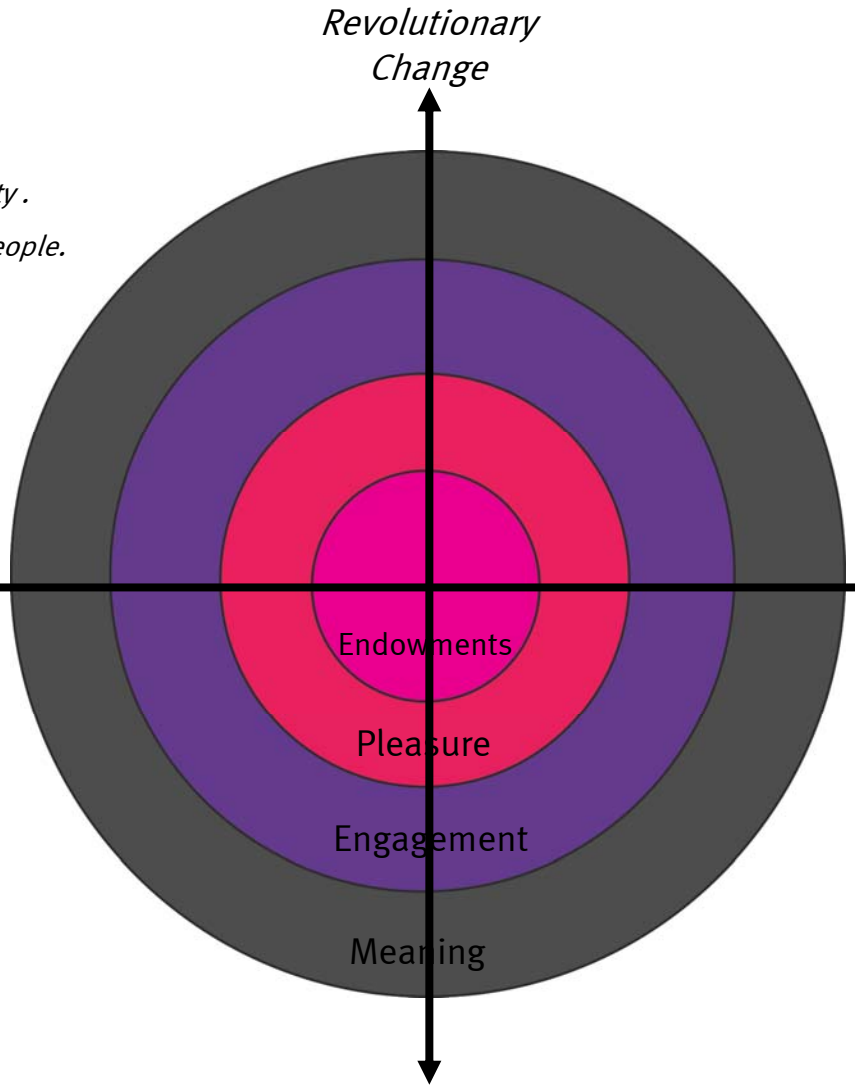
Happiness Defined

Happiness is… from the inside out or the outside in…the combination of what you're born with, what you like to feel, how involved you are with people, and your view of the bigger picture.



- **Endowments (In The Genes),** which relate to one's physical status, e.g., health, genetics, age
- **Pleasure (Feels Good),** which is purely about pleasure in-the-moment
- **Engagement (Connections),** which relates to family, work, romance, and hobbies
- **Meaning (Bigger Picture),** which relates to applying oneself to serve a larger purpose

Future Framework



Virtual Community

- *Strong sense of virtual community .*
- *Pervasive in the lives of many people.*

MyLife, MyTime, MyWay

- *Very focused on "my life", "my time", and "my way" .*
- *Many individuals don't think much about others in their daily lives and endeavors.*

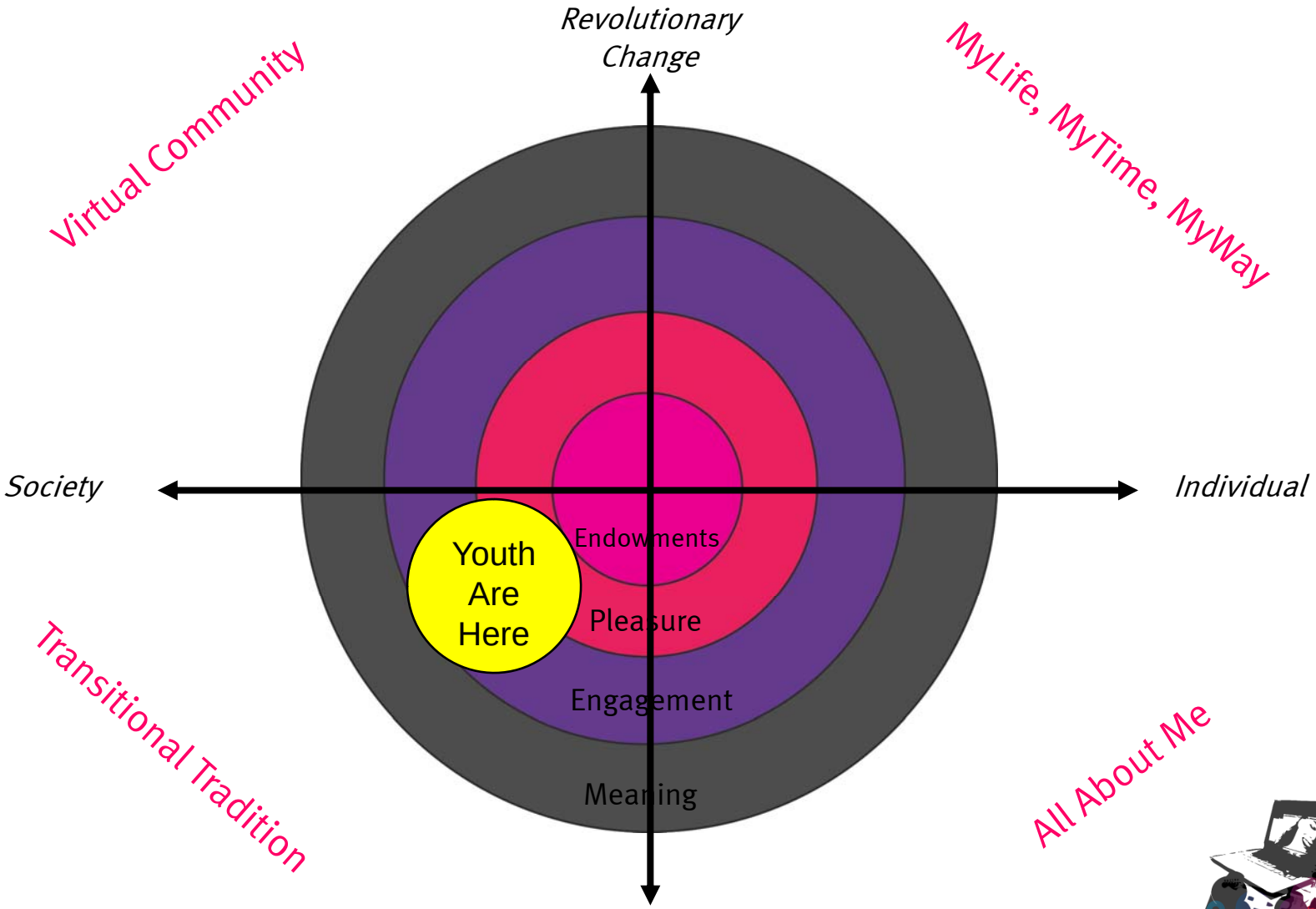
Transitional Tradition

- *Progressive transition of what we know today to what we will experience.*
- *Greater emphasis on "traditional" values and the people around any given person.*

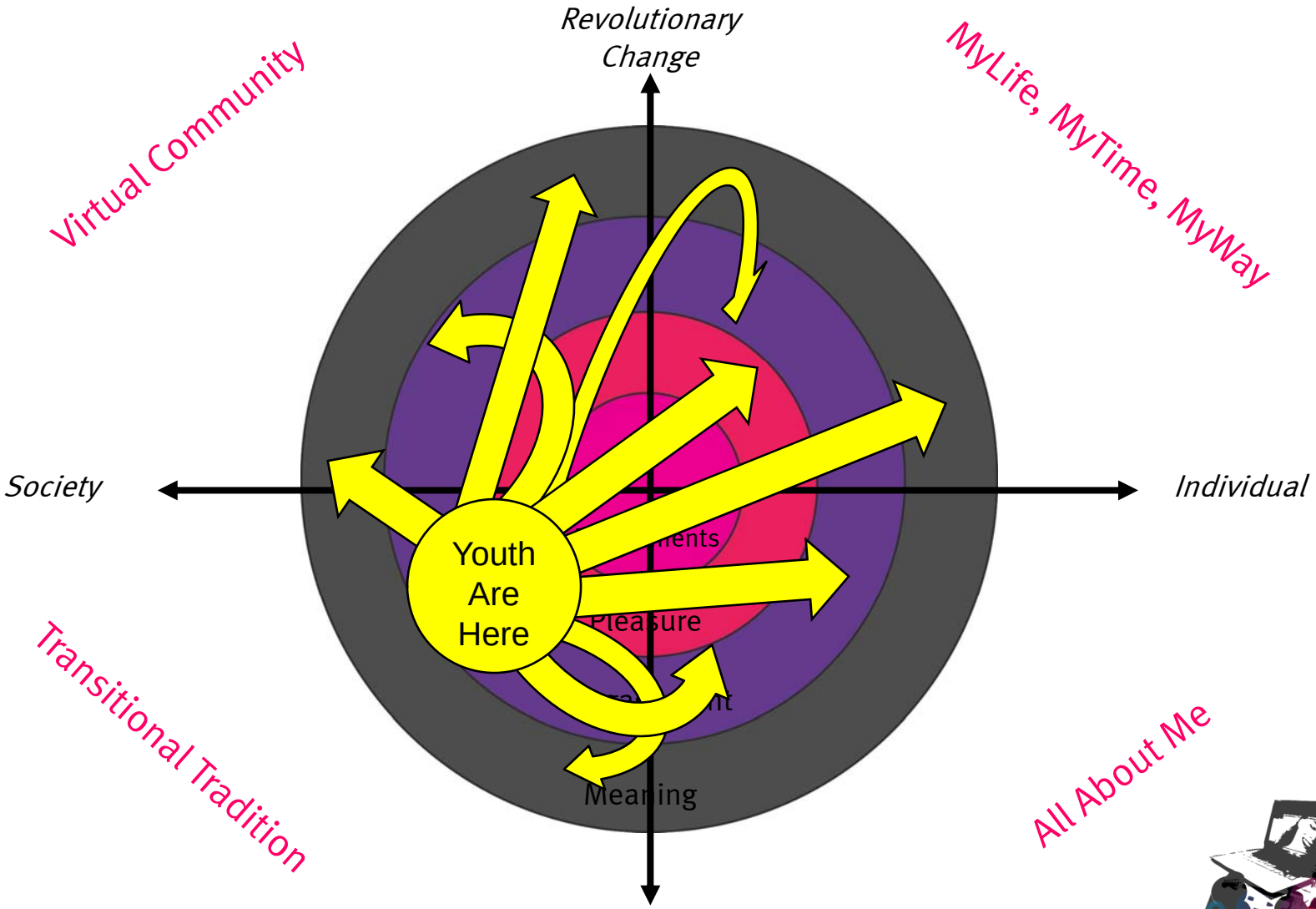
All About Me

- *Continuation and development of what we know today*
- *People are only focused on themselves.*

Where Are Youth Finding Happiness Now?

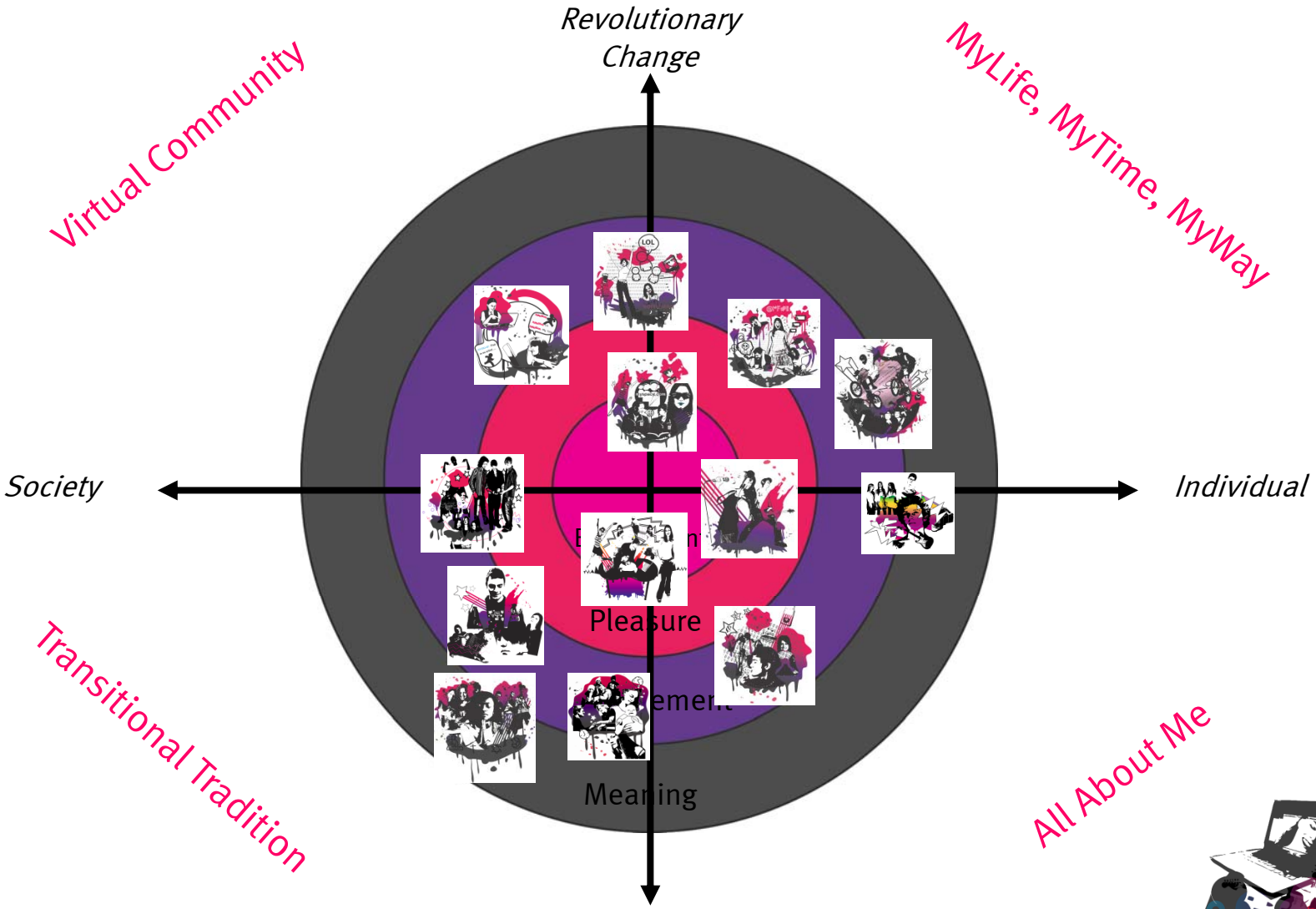


Where Are Youth Going to Find Happiness?



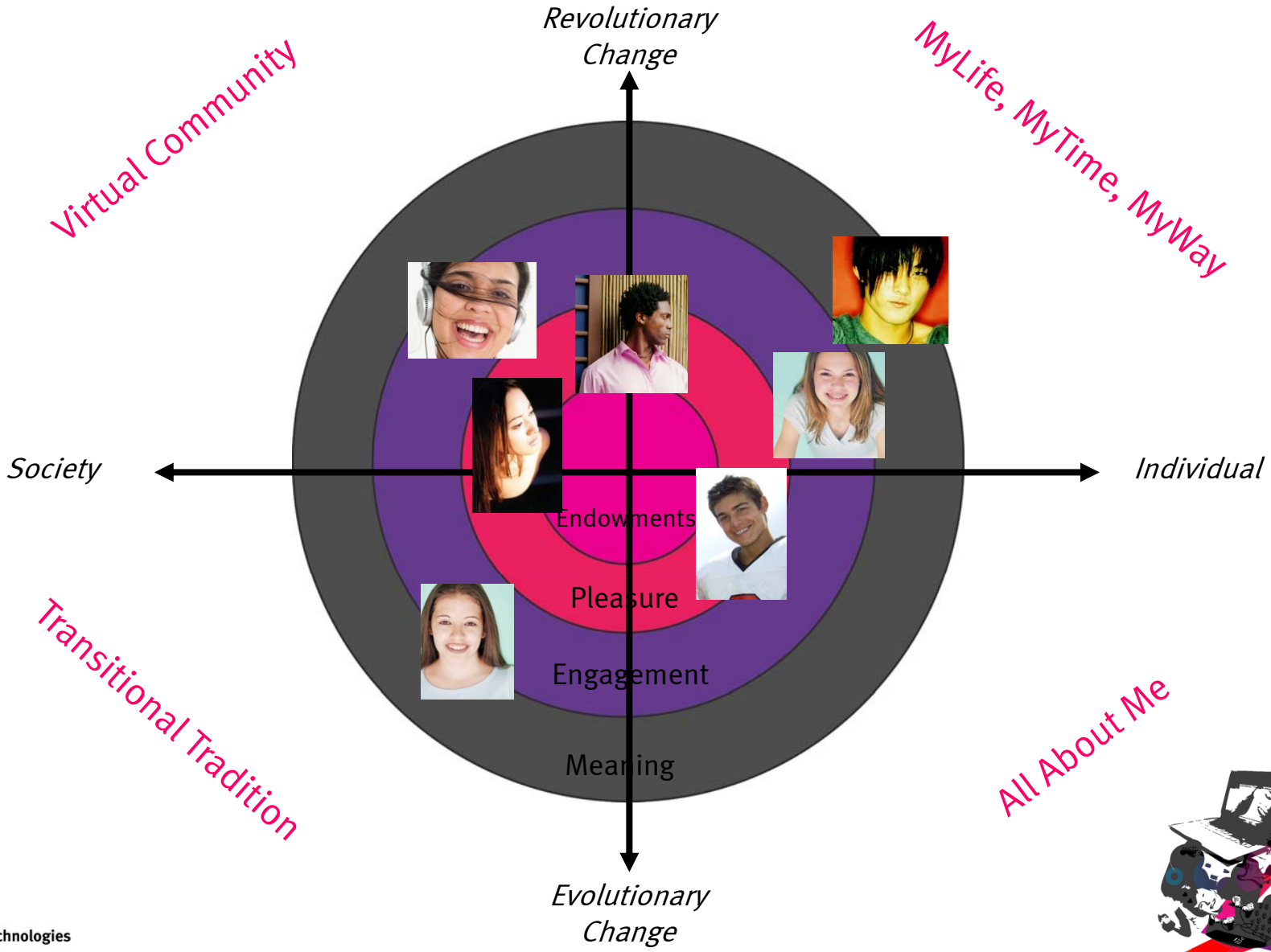
What Will Make Youth Happy in the Future?

We've got 13 Forecasts to Show You.



Who Will Be Happy in the Future?

We'll Introduce You to 7 Future Personas.



Happiness Forecasts

Thirteen happiness forecasts based on the primary and secondary research and our analysis

Forecast Descriptions

- Forecasts were developed for this project to demonstrate what we believed was going to be different about youth happiness in the future.
- The forecasts were originally based on our research that produced the dozen Phase I hypotheses, which in turn were validated and/or augmented or appended during our Phase II Qualitative and Quantitative research.
- In addition to a visual image representative of the forecast, the relevant values/ driving forces/ accelerators/ obstacles, as well as quantitative data points and qualitative quotations—from the youth themselves and from our expert interviews – have been included for the forecasts.

Values: The beliefs that the person may have about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life

Driving Forces: What may be driving the individual in a certain direction

Accelerators: What might increase this persona's development in speed or intensity

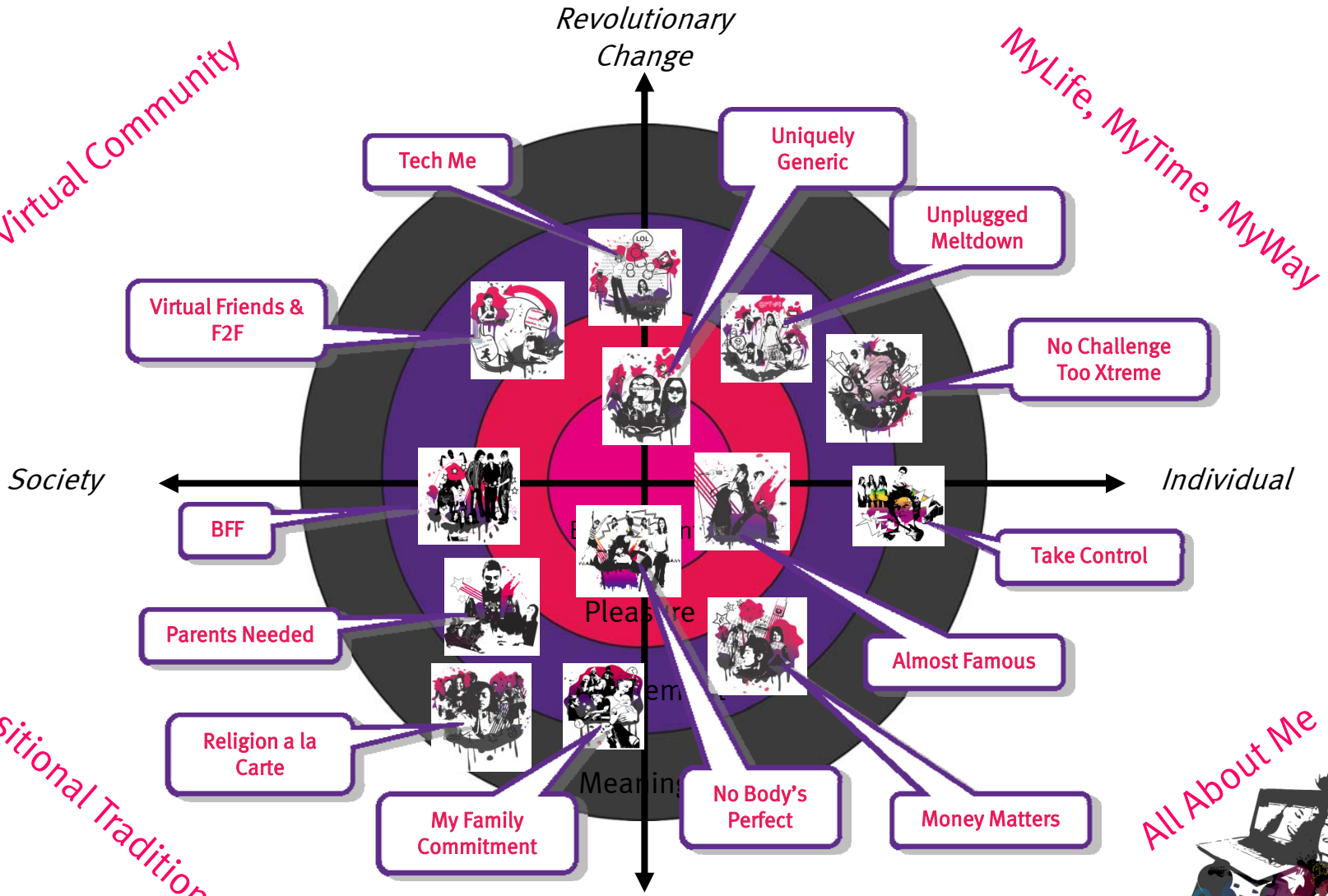
Obstacles: What may change or block the path the individual is on

Quantitative Research is highlighted for each of the forecasts to demonstrate the impact of a particular finding among the Youth population.

Quotations from our Qualitative Research are included to provide an expression or view of the forecast in Youth's own terms.

Expert quotes are also included for some of the forecasts as relevant.

Future Happiness Forecast Map



BFF

Friends are essential and will continue to be the most important relationship contributing to youth happiness.

% of those who say relationships make them happy:

- Relationships with Friends—85%
- Relationships with Family—76%
- Relationships with Parents—74%
- Relationships with Boy/Girlfriends—73%

80% say that having lots of close friends is very or somewhat important.

23% go out with friends to stop feeling unhappy.

67% say that going out with friends actually made them feel frequently or occasionally happier.

Values: Friend-focused, connectivity, commitment

Driving Forces: Connectedness

Accelerators: Technology to connect

Obstacles: Time compression

"If I didn't have my friends… I don't know what I'd do… I'd die." Tesla T., 12 years old, Phoenix

"I'd be unhappy without my friends." Damian B., 15 years old, Philadelphia

"I'd be lost without them. My true friends give me respect, trust, and being there. They are 'my sistas'. They are my family." Kiana E., 23 years old, Philadelphia

"Having someone to talk to, without judgment, unconditional love, support…is HUGE." Marissa C., 22 years old, Phoenix

Parents Needed

Despite minor annoyances, youth will continue to depend on parents as a vital source of security and happiness.

- 73% say that their relationship with their parents makes them happy.
- 80% of those who are "very happy" with their relationship with parents are happier with life in general.
- Nearly half of the respondents mentioned at least one of their parents as a hero.
- 30% say that their parents gave them the right amount of attention.
- 73% say that their parents are involved in their lives about the right amount.
- 42% say that their parents stress them out a little.
- 62% say they depend on their parents for financial support.
- 76% say they live with at least one of their parents—69% of boys and 57% of girls age 18–24

Values: Confident, career-minded, ambitious, family-oriented, into performance, security

Driving Forces: Parental fear, smaller household, competitiveness

Accelerators: Parents as "managers"

Obstacles: Lack of jobs, parents' declining health… At 35, I'll have to take care of my parents!

"My friends don't really cause me stress, but my family does." Nandi B., 15 years old, Atlanta

"My younger brother and my friends can really do things to make me mad, but family is always family." Andrew M., 21 years old, Philadelphia

"They can help you with things you might need, like homework, or give you a ride, but they can irritate you." Cameron B., 15 years old, Atlanta

"They are the core of everything and can make or break my life." Fred S., 19 years old, Philadelphia

"I'd be unhappy without my family." Isaac H., 12 years old, Philadelphia

Religion a la Carte

Youth will increasingly seek happiness via spirituality and faith.

Those who believe in a higher power tend to be happier—65% are happy in the moment; 70% are happy with life in general.

Those for whom religion and spirituality play a bigger role also tend to wake up happy—70% of these say it is the single most important thing in their life; 65% say it is very important.

61% say that living a religious life is very or somewhat important.

52% say that praying or meditating actually makes them feel frequently or occasionally happier.

Sex is associated with unhappiness for the younger respondents, but those who abstain until they are older have a different story.

Values: Traditional, friend-focused, family-oriented, believe in commitment

Driving Forces: Uncertainty, connectedness, rising spirituality

Accelerators: Technology to connect, authenticity

Obstacles: Secularism, time compression, outsourcing

"Religion sticks with you your whole life whether you realize it or not. It gives a sense of meaning and a path." Tanya S., 22 years old, Atlanta

"I'm not *religious*, but having spiritual life is important…I've based my whole life around it. There needs to be a purpose for life. If I didn't have it, I don't know where I'd be. Shapes my life." Steven B., 21 years old, Atlanta

"I'm religious. My parents used to fight a lot, then we started going to church and things got better. I feel good knowing there's a plan for me." Jessica V., 13 years old, Phoenix

"[Searching for meaning is a] very important aspect of my life… a driving force. No organized religion, but I'm very spiritual. Happiness comes from the spiritual side."
Gretchen S., 19 years old, Phoenix

My Family Commitment

A resurgence of interest among youth in family structures—including their own future spouses and children—will gain momentum.

85% of those surveyed think that getting married will make them happy and nearly half said they definitely want to get married.

90% think it is likely that they will be married to the same person their whole life, including 61% saying it is very likely.

47% say they definitely want to have children. 90% see children as a source of happiness.

56% say that having a family of their own is very important.

78% of respondents said that talking with family members made them feel frequently or occasionally happier.

Values: Traditional, family-oriented, believe in commitment

Driving Forces: Uncertainty, connectedness

Accelerators: Shrinking population "threat," conservative political gains

Obstacles: Peer pressure, divorce

"Having a family will make me happy, kids, I'd be unhappy if I didn't." Donja L., 20 years old, Philadelphia

"After I moved away from my family, it just made me realize that I wanna be in Atlanta near my family and friends, and how important they are to me." Tanya S., 23 years old, Atlanta

No Body's Perfect

Body image and traditional routes to good health will be important aspects of happiness for many youth.

42% say that people with good looks tend to be happier.

51% say that happy people do not tend to be better looking.

51% say that they worry somewhat about their personal appearance. Girls are slightly more likely to worry than boys.

20% say that their personal appearance makes them unhappy.

87% say happiness makes people healthier.

82% say happy people are healthier.

64% say exercising and working out makes people healthier, but they don't do the following to feel healthier:

- 85% say that meditation doesn't make them feel healthier.
- 93% say they do not take prescription medication to feel healthier.
- 91% say they do not take supplements to feel healthier.
- 97% say they do not take non-prescription diet pills to feel healthier.
- 69% say they do not take vitamins to feel healthier.

Values: Diversity, confidence, wellness

Driving Forces: New identity options, changing physiology, backlash against "unrealistic" media portrayals, growing social acceptance of different body types

Accelerators: Authenticity ("real people" marketing)

Obstacles: Proven health crisis, unchanging Hollywood/ fashion industry

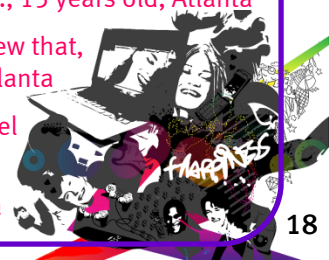
"At my school, skinny is what everyone's trying to be. People make fun of fat and also the skin-and-bones look." Vanessa A., 13 years old, Philadelphia

"The girls wanna look good… not fat, not anorexic." Nandi B., 15 years old, Atlanta

"I'm not someone who's gonna go to the gym every day, screw that, but I play sports and live healthy." Rurik N., 23 years old, Atlanta

"My mom tells me to do certain things…. [This] makes me feel self-conscious." JaNae H., 14 years old, Philadelphia

"I work out and eat healthy." Karen M., 24 years old, Atlanta



Money Matters

Money is increasingly seen by youth as a means rather than an end, but they are guilty of comparing themselves to peers for cues on wealth and status. If you've got it, spend it and show it.

Those with the highest family incomes are generally happier with life, both in general and in the moment.

73% say the kind of stuff they have makes them happy.

Those who can't afford to buy many things they want are less happy with life in general and in the moment.

36% say that the amount of money they have makes them happy and 42% are happy with the amount of money they have.

Being wealthy is very important or somewhat important to 62% of those surveyed.

69% say they want to be rich, but 51% say it is not at all likely or not too likely that they will actually be rich.

Values: Financially savvy, belonging, work-life balance

Driving Forces: Economic stability, time pressure, communities of interest, young and in debt

Accelerators: Economic growth

Obstacles: Peer groups are getting larger and more diverse… how do I keep up?

"I associate money with something you just need." Rurik N., 23 years old, Atlanta

"I'd take a little less money and do what I wanna do." Tanya S., 22 years old, Atlanta

"You want it [money] so you can pay bills and go out and have fun." Cameron B., 15 years old, Atlanta

"I think it's natural to look at your peers and elders to see what milestones they've reached and how they interact with others." Rurik N., 23 years old, Atlanta

"Money's a luxury… The focus isn't on the money; it's a means to do things." Karen M., 24 years old, Atlanta

Almost Famous

Youth, especially younger ones, fantasize about fame but are savvy enough to know it is unlikely and most will settle for a good career.

37% of boys and 34% of girls age 13–17 say they want to be famous, while 28% of boys and 20% of girls age 18–24 say they want to be famous.

18% think they will be famous.

Those who completed college are happier with life in general.

57% say school makes them at least somewhat happy, while 20% say school makes them very happy.

56% of those surveyed said that their career will be very important to their future happiness.

84% are confident that they will have a good career.

91% have goals for their future.

81% have career/work goals.

Values: Confidence, career-mindedness, ambition, self-expression

Driving Forces: Economic stability, “15 minutes of fame," democratization of luxury

Accelerators: Narcissism, celebrity culture

Obstacles: Outsourcing; great grades; poor personal website = no job at all!

“I want to be famous or a skater or baseball player, but I don’t think it will happen." Nik O., 12 years old, Phoenix

“In the future I want more peace and just a better life… a good job, and to take care of the kids.” Zachary G., 13 years old, Philadelphia

“I’d like to live in the city, have a high-paying job, have nice cars, and a good family.” Andrew M., 21 years old, Philadelphia

Take Control

Youth will take control of their own happiness by selectively choosing things that make them happy.

90% of those surveyed say they believe there are things they can do to make themselves happier.

91% say they have goals for the future:

- 81% have career/work goals, 64% education, 62% family, 63% money, 48% travel, 17% sports/athletics, 12% fame

Being successful is very important to 57% of those surveyed.

35% say they are planning to go to graduate or professional school.

"You can't just decide to be happy, but you can work toward it." Cameron B., 15 years old, Atlanta

"I hope to be happier, but I need to change the things that are making me unhappy and need to work at it." Michelle G., 15 years old, Phoenix

"Short-term hits may impact my happiness, but I'll just need to make changes." Chris W., 18 years old, Atlanta

Values: Confident, optimistic, demanding, comfortable with change, influential, opinionated

Driving Forces: Economic stability, increased choices

Accelerators: Psychological stability

Obstacles: Unfamiliar with handling setbacks

"People are on an eternal quest for happiness, but can't quantify what will make them happy. We think we are in control. We see a number of messages. But even research on lottery winners shows no dramatic change in life happiness after winning millions of dollars." —Professor Steven Nock, University of Virginia

No Challenge Too Xtreme

Youth see few obstacles in their pursuit of happiness that they will not overcome.

Concern for the future causes stress in only 20% of those 13–17 and 40% of those 18–24.

62% of those surveyed think that they will be happier in the future.

Compared to their parents:

- 35% said it would be about the same to get a good job.
- 41% said it would be about the same to raise a family.
- 40% said it would be harder to buy a house.

Only 15% are happy with the way things are in the world today.

Values: Optimistic, confident, comfortable with change

Driving Forces: Increasing options, personalized media, economic stability, new identity options

Accelerators: Esteem-building, economic growth

Obstacles: Less success than parents, unanticipated "unpleasantries"

"There's no reason not to be happy." Cameron B., 15 years old, Atlanta

"I think I'll be happier. I hope so." Andrew M., 21 years old, Philadelphia

"I think it will be great! I'll achieve my dreams and make a lot of money… have a passion for it." Tyler, age 13, Atlanta

"Kids are future-oriented, and see the future as happier more often than older people. As we age, our focus on when things are great tends to change." —Professor Steven Nock, University of Virginia

Unplugged Meltdown

Technology-dependent youth will experience extreme stress… only when it is unavailable!

35% say that technology does not make them happier.

Need to chill out and decompress:

- 25% say very often
- 36% say somewhat often

46% never turn off their cell phone when they choose to chill out.

33% never turn off their TV when they choose to chill out.

31% think unplugging from technology would add to stress and another 12% say they'd be a lot more stressed if they unplugged from technology.

Values: Multitasking, work-life balance, demanding, connectivity

Driving Forces: Digitally connected friendships, online recognition, technology-enabled freedom

Accelerators: Early/easy adoption of tech, high quality standards

Obstacles: Energy resources, helicopter parents

"I'd be stressed if I didn't have [a cell phone]." Cole M., 15 years old, Atlanta

"I get lost when my cell phone is broken. I can't get in touch with my parents and sisters." Maria Z., 12 years old, Philadelphia

"I need a cell phone for rides and to tell people where I am." Cameron B., 15 years old, Atlanta

Uniquely Generic

Growing youth individuality and self-expression will be tempered by the need to fit in rather than rebel.

Those who join groups are much happier both in the moment and with life in general.

83% of those surveyed said they would rather be their own person than fit in with their peers.

2/3 of those surveyed said they are happier in a group.

78% of those surveyed said that fitting in was either very important or somewhat important.

Despite known behaviors to the contrary:

- 82% say it's not okay to drink a lot of alcohol.
- 53% say it's not okay to gamble.
- 72% say it's not okay to smoke marijuana.
- 59% say it's not okay to download music or video files without paying for them.
- 76% say it's not okay to use a cable TV or wireless connection without paying.

Values: Self-expression, individuality, belonging, friend-focus

Driving Forces: New identity options, co-creation, personalization/customization, online recognition

Accelerators: "Have It Your Way" products and services

Obstacles: Lack of belonging; isolation

"I love tattoos. It's a great way to express yourself." David Y., 21 years old, Phoenix

"I love to do random, crazy things." Michelle G., 16 years old, Phoenix

"Drama is one of my favorite things because I like expressing myself." Taylor P., 15 years old, Phoenix

"It's good to know that when we're going though this teenage stuff, we're not alone." Michelle G., 16 years old, Phoenix

Tech Me

Technology will be important for staying in touch and for the pleasure-of-the-moment.

37% of respondents say they play videogames to stop unhappiness.

- 54% of boys and 30% of girls age 13–17
- 38% of boys and 18% of girls age 18–24

38% say that playing videogames makes them feel frequently or occasionally happy.

Half of respondents say that using the Internet actually made them feel frequently or occasionally happier.

61% say that technology makes it easier to make new friends.

60% say that technology helps them to be closer to family and friends.

In the previous 24 hours, half of respondents said they had sent and 71% said they had received a text message.

48% say they like using the Internet a lot.

19% say they like chatting online a lot; 31% like it some.

Half like text messaging a lot or some.

Values: Tech savvy, socially aware, multitasking, connectivity

Driving Forces: Immersive online experiences, online personas, physical and real worlds integrating, communities of interest

Accelerators: Tech, tech, and more tech

Obstacles: Lack of authenticity, impersonations

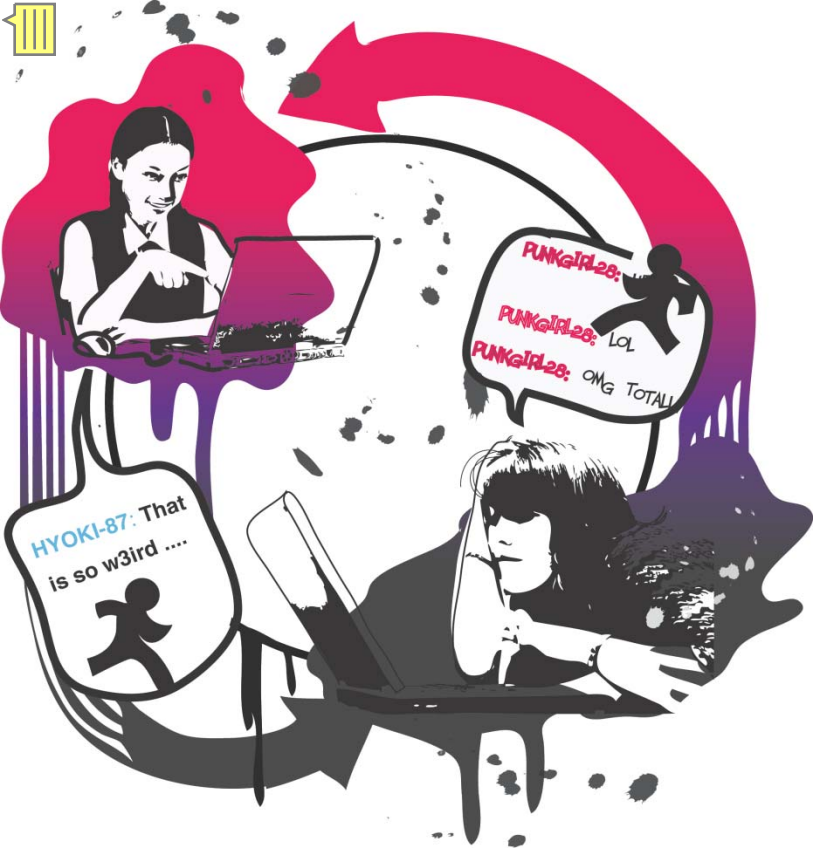
"I exist through my cell phone." Donja L., 20 years old, Philadelphia

"I take pictures of drawings and stuff and send them to my friends." Maria Z., 12 years old, Philadelphia

"I mainly watch movies because they're relaxing." Avery B., 12 years old, Philadelphia.

"I use my computer to talk to friends." Vanessa A., 13 years old, Philadelphia

"The iPod is the greatest invention ever." Andrew M., 21 years old, Philadelphia



Virtual Friends & F2F

Youth will make little distinction between face-to-face and virtual friendships; they will have many friends they never meet face-to-face.

62% have used social networking sites like MySpace and FaceBook.

53% have created their own profile for a social networking site.

33% say they have friends online whom they've never met in person.

9% say there is no difference between friends made online only and those made in person; 25% say there is a difference; and 67% had no opinion or didn't respond.

Values: Virtual is real, friend-focused, tech-savvy, multitasking, impatient, digitally connected friendships

Driving Forces: Virtual world, connectivity

Accelerators: Boredom with neighborhood, restrictions on travel

Obstacles: Lack of authenticity, impersonations

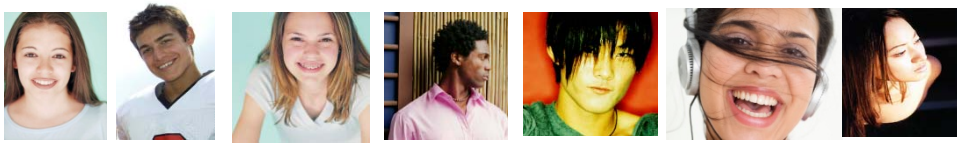
"I like my computer… to find funny stuff, connect with others… random people. Not a MySpace girl because I don't want to be stalked… but, I have made global contacts." Katherine K., age 15, Phoenix

"I couldn't live without it. I'm very shy and have a hard time meeting people. Without the cell, there would be no way to contact people for emergency/security." David Y., 22 years old, Phoenix

Forecast Summary:
Youth Will Pursue a Practical Approach to Happiness

- **3 strategies:** happiness is pursued by a mix of pleasure of the moment, relationships with family and friends, and the long-term search for meaning and purpose.
  - **Family, friends and faith:** recognize they can't do it alone in an uncertain and rapidly changing world, thus they are highly reliant on friends, and perhaps more than is recognized, on family, and perhaps a bit more surprising than that, on spirituality or faith
  - **But don't forget pleasure:** while recognizing the longer-term importance of relationships and a sense of purpose, they are not sacrificing the pleasure of the moment.
  - **Practical slant:** faith is not about an ardent conversion to religious causes; nor is family about a wholesale return to traditional family values, but a "keep what works and ignore the rest" approach
- **How "Practical" shows up:**
  - With Big issues: care, but only give time where they can make a difference
  - With friends. Self-express, but peek over shoulder
  - With parents. Parent annoying, but useful .
  - with fame. Want to be famous, but see the odds
  - with technology. Technology is a means, not an end. Comfortable and natural, the leading edge makes little distinction between virtual and f2f.
- **Don't be fooled by "appearances:** youth may come across as overly concerned with cool or perhaps cynical accusations, but family, friends, and faith is hardly the stuff of rebels.

Futures Personas



Seven Future Personas bring the survey's findings to life—depicting different aspects of youth's future happiness based on the happiness model and the forecasts.

Model and Forecasts Create Personas

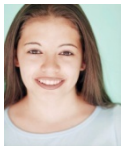
Model

Pleasure

Engagement

Meaning

Personas



Tradition is cool

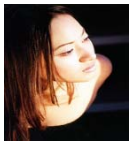
Taking charge

Practical when necessary

Technology is key

Hear me

Virtual is real



Indifferent

Forecasts

BFF

Parents Needed

Religion al a Carte

My Family Commitment

No Body's Perfect

Money Matters

Almost Famous

Take Control

No Challenge Too Xtreme

Unplugged Meltdown

Uniquely Generic

Tech Me

Virtual Friends & F2F

Personas Descriptions

- Personas were created to represent the overarching forecasts as they are likely to play out in the future. They illustrate how these forecasts might manifest in a real “representative” person.
- The demographics of the personas correspond statistically to the original demographic distribution. And they are distributed representatively across the quadrants in the happiness circle.
- In a addition to a short vignette and picture and the representative demographics, the relevant values/ driving forces/ accelerators/ obstacles from the forecasts have been included. And there is a view of how the personas might be viewed through the lenses of define/ relate/ connect/ create/ consume/ destroy.

How the person defines themselves

How they relate to others

What they connect with

An example of something they would create

An example of something they would use

An example of something they might undercut or dismantle—either on purpose or inadvertently

Values: The beliefs that the person may have about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life

Driving Forces: What may be driving the individual in a certain direction

Accelerators: What might increase this persona’s development in speed or intensity

Obstacles: What may change or block the path the individual is on

Future Happiness Persona Map

Virtual Community

MyLife, MyTime, MyWay

Revolutionary Change

I'm happy when I have the freedom to create, using technology as an enabler for self-expression and connection.

Relationships are everything to me. I thrive in the new technology where I can greatly expand my social circles and have the opportunity to have multiple communication devices going at the same time.

I have the power to change things I believe in... and that will make me happy.

I'm going to plan to be happy... and I'm going to succeed by following my plan.

Don't worry, be happy

Society

Individual

Endowments

Pleasure

Engagement

Meaning

Things happen for a reason... and we should be thankful/ grateful for having had the experience.

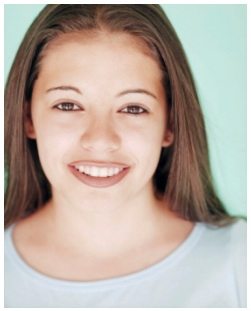
I'm in control of my own happiness and I can change anything that makes me unhappy.

Transitional Tradition

All About Me

Evolutionary Change

Charlotte Sings—Tradition Is Cool



Charlotte Sings
Age: 18–21
Ethnicity: Caucasian
HHI: $40,000—59,000
Education: College
Life stage: Student

Charlotte is everyone's friend, the one you come to when you need someone to listen. Very active in her church choir and other church youth groups, she is considering a year of missionary work or Peace Corps after she earns her degree as an elementary school teacher. Charlotte's favorite times are when she is helping someone. She claims her parents are her best friends but she has many other close friends. She loves outdoor activities and time spent in quiet meditation. Her goal is to be like her mother, in a happy marriage with children.

DEFINE Things happen for a reason… and we should be thankful/grateful for having had the experience

RELATE Bridge builder—can work with every group; is encouraging, provides "counseling" to friends

CONNECT Connects through traditional venues like church and school functions

CREATE Youth Bible Study Group

CONSUME Generic, value brands

DESTROY Contribute to the decline of dual-income-no-kids households

Values: Traditional, close to parents, friend-focused, commitment

Driving Forces: Uncertainty, connectedness, rising spirituality, parental involvement

Accelerators: Parents as "managers," technology to connect

Obstacles: Secularism, taking care of parents, others not meeting expectations

Pleasure

Take Control No Challenge Too Xtreme No Body's Perfect

"Not Lost" Jack—Taking Charge

"Not Lost" Jack

Age: 12–14

Ethnicity: Caucasian

HHI: <$40,000

Education: Middle School

Life stage: Student

On the surface, Jack can appear quiet and reserved, but he is always the one selected as captain of the sports team, the one the other kids think is cool and whom they follow. Jack's attitude is to take things as they come and he can usually turn everything around with a smile and a good line. This has caused him some troubles and he is not unknown to the local police for his escapades and small crimes of property destruction and larceny. He is happiest marching to his own drummer and likes to lead others in his direction as well.

Define I'm in control of my own happiness and I can change anything that makes me unhappy.

Relate Needs to be the leader and the best at something, e.g., sports, the gang

Connect Primarily connects through leadership, dynamic and changing relationships

Create Sports leagues; competitive activities in things he is able to win; his gang of friends

Consume Latest and greatest in apparel; bling

Destroy Contributes to the breakdown of the High School-to-College progression (either by going into pro sports or by going directly to jail—do not pass "go")

Values: Confident, optimistic, comfortable with change

Driving Forces: Economic stability, democratization of luxury, increased choices, new identity options

Accelerators: Esteem building, authenticity ("real people" marketing)

Obstacles: Unanticipated "unpleasantries," not as successful as parents, health problems, information overload

Pleasure Engagement Meaning

Money Matters Tech Me

Practical Betty—Practical When Necessary

Practical Betty

Age: 15–17

Ethnicity: Caucasian

HHI: <$40,000

Education: High School

Life stage: Student

Betty is the student council president of her high school. She has mapped out a career in accounting that she is planning to pursue at the local university. Happiness comes from accomplishing her goals, getting good grades, and being recognized for her contributions to her school and local volunteer organizations. She has close friends, with whom she enjoys outdoor activities. Home is central and she spends time with her parents and extended family. She's able to respond quickly to problems and doesn't get rattled by unjust positions.

Define I'm going to plan to be happy… and I'm going to succeed by following my plan

Relate Organizer; more traditional leadership (ambition); efficient

Connect Through formal structures, meetings, and action items; has close friends

Create Committee to perform public or community service

Consume Organizational tools; brand-name goods

Destroy Creativity and imagination

Values: Career-minded, financially savvy, ambitious

Driving Forces: Balance/wellness, growing affluence, democratization of luxury

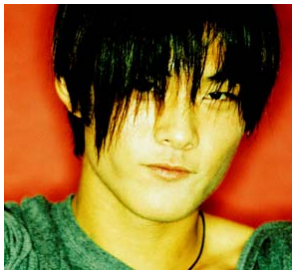
Accelerators: Continued economic stability, social norms

Obstacles: Large peer groups/competition, outsourced work, no job, information overload

Meaning

Take Control Uniquely Generic

Bono Esque—Hear Me, Hear Me



Bono Esque

Age: 18–21

Ethnicity: Asian

HHI: $100,000+

Education: College

Life stage: Student

Bono has made the saving the environment his chief mission. Previously it was animal rights, and before that the rights of the disabled in schools. This latter mission was prompted by his brother, who has Down's syndrome. He is not afraid to bend the rules in support of a just cause, and is sometimes viewed as self-righteous. He is happiest when he is passionately involved in something he believes in.

DEFINE I have the power to change things I believe in… and that will make me happy

RELATE Relates to those who share his values and/or are advocates for the kind of things he is passionate about

CONNECT Connection can be online or F2F but is to a limited group

CREATE Blogs, newsletters, protests, letters to authority/ decision-makers

CONSUME Diversity, eco-friendly, cause-related goods and services

DESTROY Society's view of traditional marriage; contributes to new definition of (emerging alternative) lifestyles

Values: Strong opinions, influential, friend-focused, demanding, comfortable with diversity

Driving Forces: Personalization/ customization, online recognition, new identity options, new rites of passage

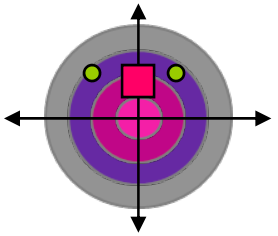
Accelerators: "Have it Your Way" products and services, empowerment of younger ages

Obstacles: Lack of belonging, legal barriers/ definitions

Pleasure

Unplugged Meltdown Virtual Friends & F2F

Nanosecond Neo—Technology Is Key



Nanosecond Neo

Age: 22–24

Ethnicity: African-American

HHI: $40,000—59,000

Education: Bachelor's degree

Life stage: Single

Neo works as a programmer for a large high-tech developer. His evenings are spent either engaging in an MMO game, where he has reached very high levels of skill, or watching the latest movies with his friends on the large-screen HDTV he recently purchased. Neo is never without his music: he has a server dedicated to the 300,000 songs he's collected—not all legally—and he listens to these on his iPod, through speakers on his computer, or on his phone.

I love to create and the Internet lets me rove the online universe to interact and use limitless digital media

Relates through technology, art, and music—all on the Net

Main connection is through MMO games and virtual worlds

Avatars, new uses for technology, shared music and video files

Technology, Internet, games, computer art, online music and videos

IP rights and third-party brokers for media

Values: Virtual is real, tech-savvy, multitasking, digitally connected, technology-enabled freedom

Driving Forces: Virtual social lives, online personas, online religion, communities of interest

Accelerators: Early adoption of new tech, high quality standards

Obstacles: Lack of authenticity, energy resources, impersonations

E. Ami—Virtual is the Real Thing

E. Ami
Age: 15–17
Ethnicity: Hispanic
HHI: $60,000—$99,000
Education: High School
Life stage: Student

E. Ami is always talking to someone. She can have 10 IMs going at one time, be on the phone, and have people all around her. The Internet has allowed her to find kindred spirits all over the world. She loves Skype, where she can actually chat or talk to them as well as email. Virtual friends have also helped give her confidence and overcome her self-image concerns about being over weight. She has also been the source of several rumors that have not ended well. She delights in building connections between her numerous circles of friends.

DEFINE My happiness comes from spending time talking, IM'ing, and sharing with friends all over the world

RELATE "Chat master"—she is the one to share and spread information, such as in chat rooms and blogs

CONNECT Connects through online tools, such as IM'ing and chat rooms

CREATE Blogging leads to new friendships and circles of friends

CONSUME Any communications media, especially services that let you keep track of contacts and conversations

DESTROY Anonymity on the Internet

Values: Virtual is real, friend-focused, tech-savvy, digitally connected, multitaskers, impatient

Driving Forces: Virtual world, digitally connected friendships, virtual social lives

Accelerators:
Boredom with neighborhood, restricted travel

Obstacles:
Lack of authenticity, impersonations

Pleasure

Almost Famous BFF No Body's Perfect Tech Me

Paris Pouts—Indifferent and Happy

Paris Pouts

Age: 13–17

Ethnicity: Cablanasian

HHI: $60,000—$100,000

Education: High School

Life stage: Student

Paris can often be found laughing with her friends in the hallways at school or, during the frequent times when she misses class, at the local eatery. She is very aware of the attention she gets for her looks and makes sure to dress to highlight her features and show her style. She's decided that there is just too much going on in the world around her to pay attention to any of it. It isn't that her heart isn't in the right place; it's just too much work to do something about it. "Don't worry, be happy," is Paris' motto.

Define Life goes on regardless of what I do. I should make the most of it and enjoy what and where I can.

Relate Relates to those who like to do the same things and show up at the same places

Connect Through events, occasions, and people that can provide service

Create Trends by showing up in a new fashion or using a new toy

Consume Name-brand items—the more affluent the better

Destroy Enthusiasm to change what's wrong

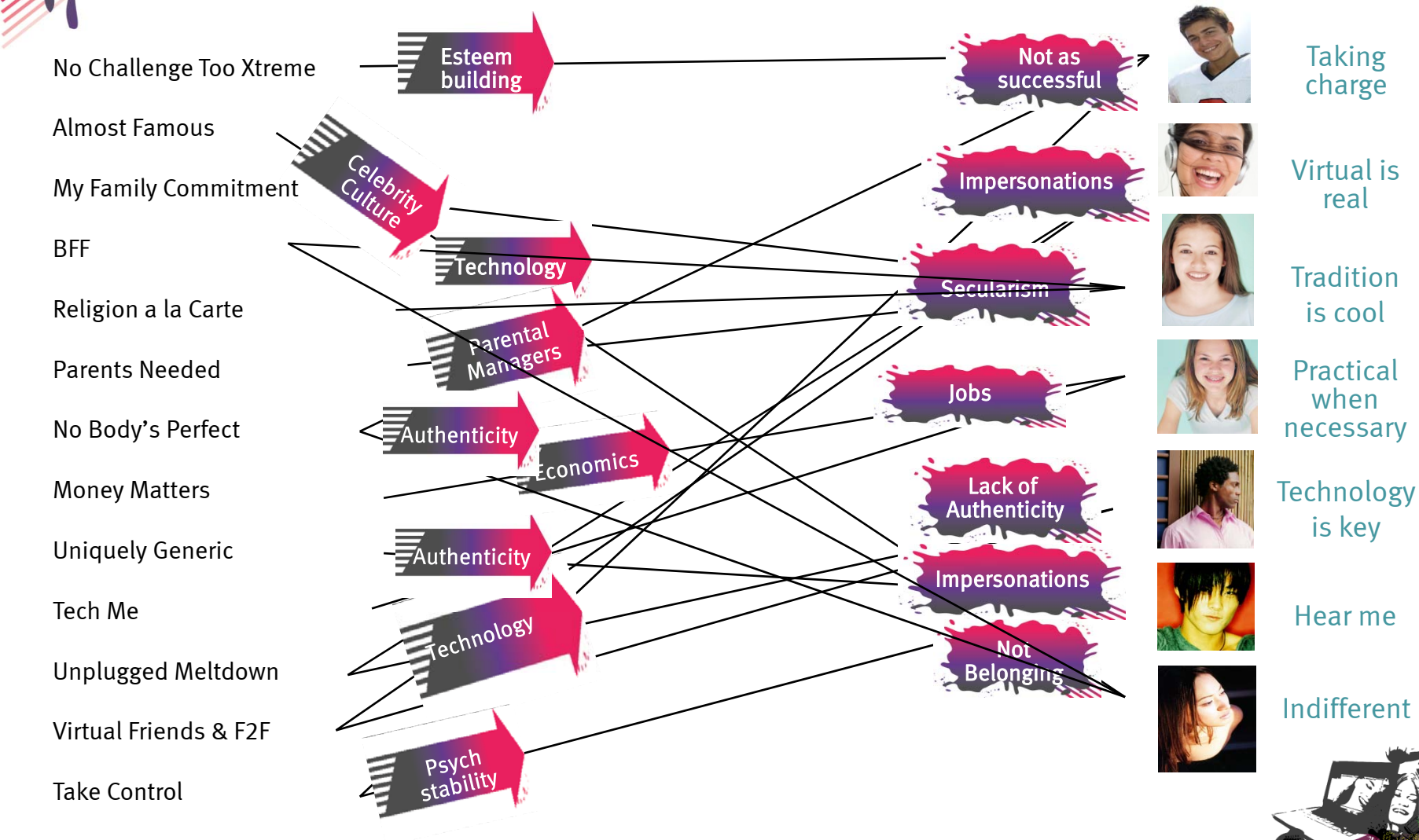
Values: Optimistic, ambitious, belonging, socially aware, individualistic, competitive

Driving Forces: Increased choices, personalized media, "15 minutes of fame," democratization of luxury

Accelerators: Attention, success with new approaches, increased connections

Obstacles: Competing trend leaders, competing demands for time/ attention, information overload

Key Accelerators and Obstacles Affecting Future Personas



Conclusions

What We Learned

- Youth are generally happier than our original hypothesis.
- Similarly, this study suggested that youth will take a more “active” view of their role in creating their own happiness both now and in the future than we initially suspected.
- The quantitative research suggested youth are more practical than our initial hypothesis. They are quite capable of delineating between fantasy and reality…and still finding happiness.
- We suspected youth were more annoyed with their “helicopter parents” than they actually are. While they do find them annoying at times, they readily acknowledge that they want and need their parents.
- We hypothesized that youth would increasingly use technology to find meaning in the future. The data suggests they are not there yet, using technology primarily in the quest for pleasure and engagement with friends.
- While we saw how important technology was to youth, we learned that not being able to keep in touch via technology was a greater source of irritation and stress than we realized.
- While our initial research did find that today’s youth are more traditional than previous generations, we were surprised to find the extent to which youth anticipate their own marriages and families with great joy.
- We detected a sense of youth being indifferent about things they state make them unhappy – choosing not to take action to solve larger problems that don’t directly affect them. What we learned from the data, and further analysis, is that it’s not about apathy, but more of a sense of being practical about what they feel they have influence over, and not wasting time on areas where they feel they cannot make a difference. Thus we added a new forecast on this topic.

Appendices

Phase 1 Original Hypotheses

Youth are not the happiest age cohort. Certain traits of being young—impulsive, indestructible, feeling angst and peer/parental pressure—remain constant.

- Youth are optimistic and anticipate happiness as they age.
- Youth happiness is found in the moment.
- Youth seek pleasure as the primary route to happiness.
- What actually makes youth happy is often different than what they think will make them happy.
- Body image issues will remain significant for youth in the future.
- While today's youth enjoy the pursuit of excellence, they are in danger of being over-managed by "helicopter parents."
- Youth are in danger of getting caught in the "hedonistic treadmill" as they try to keep up with their peers.

Technology will increasingly become an important tool for seeking meaning in the future.

- Expanding media and technology are sources of both fulfillment and stress.
- Changing nature of relationships in the digital age:
  - Expanding levels and platforms of communication create new nuanced complexities to relationships.
  - Online/ virtual relationships will be just as important as face-to-face relationships to youth in the future.
- Despite their commitment to digital lifestyles, today's young people will find happiness in "unplugging" at certain times.
- They could be open to medicinal engineering of happiness.

Rising spirituality points to a return to traditional routes to happiness.

- Youth are seeking balanced lives, prioritizing what fits their goals, personalities, and lives—not planning to "live to work."
- Youth will be partial to ethical consumption, that is, their purchases will reflect their values.
- Youth appear likely to return to a more traditional view of marriage as a route to happiness.

Phase 2 Findings

Qualitative (field research)

- Objectives were: to test the hypotheses developed in Phase One and to see what else youth might have to say that was not captured by the original hypotheses.
- Four discussion groups per city were conducted in three cities (Phoenix, Atlanta, Philadelphia). Each group comprised three to six participants. A total of 59 people participated in the 12 groups.

Quantitative (AP survey)

- AP's polling unit performed one of the largest media polls ever of young people—interviewing 1,280 people aged 13 to 24 and engaging them in what proved to be a 25-minute grilling about what makes them happy. The questionnaire had 101 items and the dataset has more than 350 data points.

Project Definitions

Values

- Values are the beliefs people have about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life, which in turn guide their behavior/ actions.

Driving Forces

- As defined in this project, drivers are typically broad in scope and long-term in nature, shaping the direction and evolution of trends and events.

Accelerators

- Accelerators move a forecast along its path more rapidly than expected.

Obstacles

- Obstacles inhibit or block a forecast from proceeding along its expected path.

Happiness Values Inventory

Multiple Mentions

- Confident
- Multitasking
- Optimistic
- Friend-focused
- Demanding
- Traditional
- Work-life balance
- Comfortable with change
- Career-minded
- Committed
- Ambitious
- Self-expressed
- Family-oriented
- Belonging
- Tech-savvy
- Strongly opinionated
- Influential
- Impatient
- Connected
- Close to parents

Single Mentions

- Performance
- Security
- Diversity
- Wellness
- Financially savvy
- Individuality
- Socially aware
- Virtual is real
- Digitally connected friendships

Happiness Driving Forces Inventory

Demography
- Smaller household
- Younger older/ older younger
- Increasing options
- Changing physiology
- New rites of passage

Economic
- Economic stability
- Competitiveness
- Young & in debt
- Co-creation
- Democratization of luxury

Technology
- Technology-enabled freedom
- Personalized media
- Online recognition
- Immersive online experiences
- Online personas
- Physical and real worlds integrating
- Digitally connected friendships
- Virtual world

Social
- New identity options
- “15 minutes of fame”
- Uncertainty
- Connectedness
- Rising spirituality
- Parental fear
- New identity options
- Time pressure
- Communities of interest
- Personalization/ customization
- Increased choices
- Backlash against “unrealistic” media portrayals

Happiness Accelerators Inventory

Technology

- Technology to connect
- Tech, tech, and more tech
- Early/ easy adoption of tech
- High quality standards
- Boredom with neighborhood
- Travel restrictions

Economic

- Economic growth
- “Have it your way” products and services

Parenting

- Esteem-building
- Shrinking population “threat”
- Narcissism
- Parents as managers
- Empowerment at younger ages
- Psychological stability

Social

- Celebrity culture
- Authenticity (“real people” marketing)
- Conservative political gains

Happiness Obstacles Inventory

Technology

- Great grades and poor public website
- Lack of authenticity
- Impersonations
- Poor website = No job at all!
- Energy resources
- Information overload

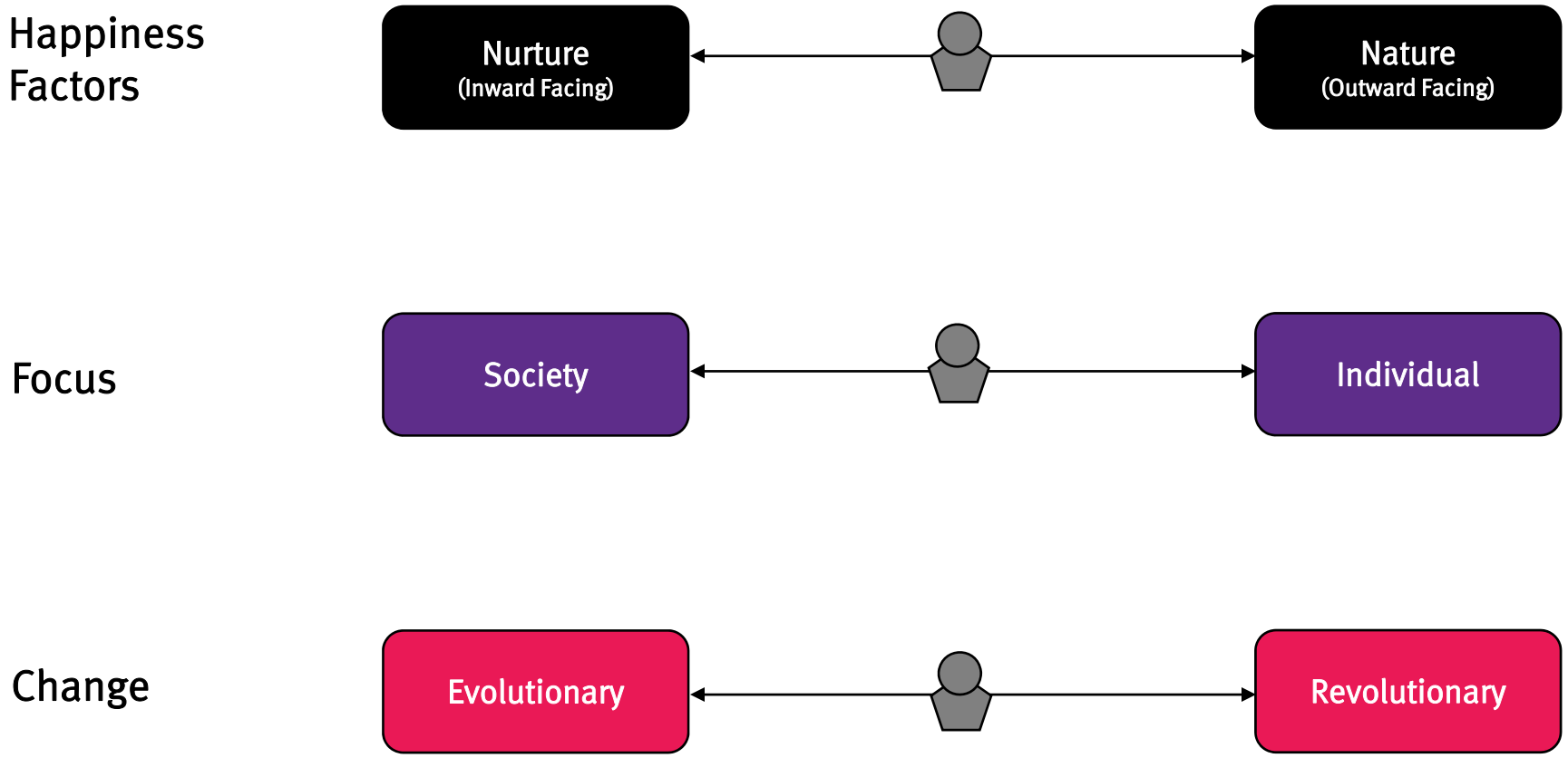
Economic

- Less success than parents
- Lack of jobs
- Outsourcing
- Unanticipated “unpleasantries”

Parents

- Helicopter parents
- Divorce
- Parents’ declining health… At 35, I’ll have to take care of my parents!
- Unfamiliar with handling setbacks

Social

- Secularism
- Unchanging Hollywood/ fashion industry
- Peer pressure
- Peer groups are getting larger and more diverse… how do I keep up?
- Lack of belonging
- Isolation (I’m so different, I don’t belong)
- Lack of authenticity
- Legal barriers and definitions
- Time compression
- Proven health crisis
- Others not meeting expectations
- Competing demands for time/ attention
- Competing trend leaders

Happiness World Conditions Dynamics