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Conform no more

Conformity is no longer something widely accepted, we are to think on our own and we are rewarded for embracing individuality. Jean Twenge in *Generation Me* states that individuality is wrong, that Generation Me, those born in the 80s and 90s, took a wrong turn promoting individuality. She argues we are promoting corruptness, too much openness, and a who-cares attitude. In reality by fostering individuality we are promoting innovation, integrity, and an all around being of openness. Without all of this the world would not be the same as it is today.

We are not a world that allows people to succeed by repeating the same task over and over. While some might see Generation Me as failing to meet the standards of other generations it is safe to say that, “If you're not failing every now and again, it's a sign you're not doing anything very innovative.(Woody Allen)” Of all of the innovative ideas a lot of them come from Generation Me or very close to being part of Generation Me. In a Forbes article we see that the average age of a CEO has progressively gone down. At the time of the article being written, in 2003, the average age of a CEO for a Fortune 1000 had gone down from 50.4 in 1995 to 48.8 in 2001, a fair amount of change for such selective and innovative companies. One could argue, those are not CEOs in Generation Me. You would be right, they are not! However, let me explain. Look at Dropbox, InstaGram, Facebook, Sendgrid, Foursquare, Quora, and Twitter. These are innovative companies that have popped up and taken over nearly all American lives in the last 48 months. Besides the fact that these innovative companies have captured the minds of not just the young in Generation Me but those also in Generation X, Y, and those even before that but they were all created by someone in Generation Me. How could one argue and say that conformity is good? What would conformity of gotten us? Twenge argues that the relaxed society that we are wrong for not conforming. In this day in age where by not conforming we are creating such innovative ideas that then are applied to each American’s life, it is not really possible to hold an argument saying that conformity is bad. Money should not be everything, right? You would be right, it is not. We all want to be unique, why does Twenge hate individualism so much? It is very hard to tell from her writing.

In a society where we can be open it allows us to share information more freely and understand ourselves better. Through this we can get better healthcare because we are now more open to talking about what used to be taboos. Women used to not be as open to their Gynecologist, which would hinder them from getting their best care. A broader example would be when it comes to our generations openness of sexual preferences. In a society that still does not officially embrace the LGBT(Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) community, Generation Me, for the most part, accepts LGBT individuals. It is those who are not part of Generation Me that are not open to it. While looking at the laws that prevent gays specifically from doing simple things, such as donating blood to save a life, it is built upon homophobic views which have no grounds (HIV/AIDs). When we are more open we do not feel as if we have to hide the truth which relieves a burden. Just as the Southern Methodist University motto is, *Veritas Liberabit Vos*, The Truth Shall Set You Free it will!

Many would say that Generation Me does not care about what others think. To a certain degree they do not, however one cannot get very far in life without upsetting a fair amount of people. As said in The Social Network, “You don't get to 500 million friends without making a few enemies.” An example would be from basic economics when it comes to speculation in the stock market. If there are speculators saying the price of oil will go up, whether it would of gone up or not is unknown but since the speculator said so the stock goes up. When one speculates that Generation Me is a bad generation then negativity is cast on that generation and then simple acts are scrutinized to the fullest extent possible.

While there are definitely drawbacks to our generation, Generation Me, through embracing our generation the society as a whole can benefit dramatically through our innovation, openness, and not a who cares attitude. Twenge’s negative views are unwarranted and are not well thought through.

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