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ONE

# THE (CHALLENGE OF A NEW GENERATION

**Today's students need a NEW kind of leadership in order to FLOURISH.**

Generation Z is different than Generation Y - but too often adults continue to lead kids today the way they led Millennials.

Frequently, it is insufficient.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about students you know who are a little like Virgil—they are mature and seem to enjoy serving the needs of others, not just their own needs. Do you know any?
2. Now, discuss students who make up the “other side” of Generation Z—lost on their portable devices and into themselves and their selfies. How are they different?
3. How have kids surprised you over the last five years, both in good and bad ways?
4. When students are at their best, they “solve problems and serve people.” How are these actions a signal of maturity?
5. When evaluating your leadership, do you resemble an older style (like Blockbuster) or have you been able to adapt and connect to today's kids (like Netflix)?



## COURSE CORRECTIONS: TWO NARRATIVES FOR GENERATION Z

**We must** (CHANGE the way we see this DIGITAL generation.

Research reveals our “adult narrative” toward today’s young people has shifted. We are *afraid for them* instead of expressing *hope for them*. This is affecting mental health.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When it comes to leading young people, have you ever been guilty of “friendly fire?” Have you mistakenly hindered their growth or acted as if they’re the “enemy?”
2. Step back and assess your leadership. If you had taken part in our Harris Poll survey, what word would you have used to describe your primary emotion toward kids—concern, hope, fear, optimism, frustration, or excitement?
3. What fears do you harbor regarding Generation Z students? What are you most concerned about when it comes to their future?
4. Do you know any “paranoid parents?” What are their symptoms?
5. Why do you think so many adults have such a fear and concern for today’s kids?
6. When have you observed the power of “belief” in others, either positive or negative? How does your belief or narrative affect your actions?
7. How does becoming more controlling negatively influence students?
8. How have you observed Generation Z change the process of maturation? What did you look forward to at their age that they seem uninterested in? What are they interested in that you don’t understand?
9. In what context do you most need to change your expectations of young people?



# WHO ARE THESE KIDS ANYWAY?

**How the children growing up in the 21st century are *NOT* like Millennials.** Because Generation Z has grown up in such a different world, they've adopted seven characteristics we'd do well to understand. These traits can inform our leadership.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This chapter opens with the story of a ten-year old boy who won a developer's contest. Do you know any young people who are so advanced they surprise you?
2. In what situations have you seen Generation Z exhibit a desire for privacy?
3. Have you noticed the anxiety epidemic in students? Where and how?
4. Where have you seen students demonstrating how restless they are?
5. In what ways is Generation Z even more tech savvy than Millennials?
6. Talk about local illustrations of how adults have nurtured kids? Do you know any "snowplow" or "lawnmower" parents—those who are over-protecting kids?
7. Why do you think so many teens want to be entrepreneurs? Have you seen evidence of this?
8. Talk about examples where you've witnessed Generation Z desiring to do something redemptive in their community? Have you seen a student-led service project?



## TWO HUGE DIFFERENCES IN GENERATION Z

**Students face REALITIES today that kids NEVER faced before.**

As Generation Z grows up, they're experiencing two categorical differences—one internal and one external—that influence their development in a unique way.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Our world is full of tragedies. But what if we focused on the students who act heroically every day? Do you know any kids who've played the role of hero? What did they do?
2. Talk about the "Five Generations Coming of Age" chart. How have you seen kids' attitude toward authority change over time? How about their sense of identity?
3. What is your response to the "external changes" occurring all around Generation Z?
4. How has culture "seeped into" our living rooms and classrooms? What's the effect?
5. Have you seen adult behavior appear to be childish? When and where? How do these unhealthy examples eclipse any wise advice adults might have to offer kids?
6. What are the positive ways you've seen technology influence kids today?
7. Can you cite some negative illustrations our culture has affected kids, namely:
  - a. Sleeplessness?
  - b. Anxiety and depression?
  - c. Poorer memories?
  - d. Diminished attention spans?
  - e. Impulsivity?
8. If you had to choose just one, what is the biggest way you've seen 21st century culture impact children?



FIVE

# FACING THE NINE CHALLENGES

These **NINE** important issues deserve our attention as we **LEAD** them.

This chapter summarizes the nine significant challenges we will cover in the book, and the changes we must make in order to lead kids into healthy maturity.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the nine challenges seems most relevant to you right now?
2. What have you already changed in your leadership to address any of these challenge(s)?
3. The chapter includes the word “train” which was used by midwives. It meant “clearing out” the mouth so a baby could breathe. How is your leadership life-giving? Where do you fall short of this goal?
4. Talk about an example when you neglected to act or to lead in a way that you should have with a young person. What emotions were behind your inaction?



## (CHALLENGE ONE: EMPOWERMENT WITHOUT WISDOM

(COMMON SENSE is becoming UNCOMMON in our SMART world.

Students are empowered with resources (via smart devices)  
but may lack maturity to wisely use that power.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you identify a time you witnessed a child or teen misuse technology? What was the price tag? Was the problem simply that they were unready for it psychologically?
2. In this chapter, we discussed “artificial maturity.” This phenomenon occurs when kids are over-exposed to information but under-exposed to first-hand, real-life experiences. Talk about this reality. Where have you seen this in action?
3. How has our adult “safety first” paradigm unwittingly diminished teens ability to navigate risk?
4. Does “artificial maturity” play a role in so many young adults (ages 22-34) still living at home with parents? If so, how?
5. How do over-functioning parents, who intervene consistently in their kid’s lives, actually hinder their child from growing up with wisdom?
6. Can you think of any time you were guilty of causing this challenge? Has there been an instance where you “prepared the path for the child, instead of the child for the path?”





## SEVEN

# LEADING WITH FIRST HAND EXPERIENCES

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about the playground experiment at Swanson Primary School. What happens inside of kids when they're challenged to look out for each other or utilize "scary" playground equipment—situations where decisions are left up to them? How might this help them mature?
2. In this chapter we talk about how our leadership must evolve as kids age, from micro-manager, to manager, to supervisor to consultant. What do your kids need from you?
3. What steps could you take to become a "free range" parent or leader?
4. What age appropriate "risks" should your students be taking, under your leadership?
5. What could you challenge them to do, as they gain wisdom from experience?
6. Is it difficult for you to let your kids (students) fail? Why or why not?
7. How could allowing them to fail or fall actually equip them for the future?
8. In the list "Steps Leaders Can Take to be Engaged Yet Empowering," we discuss being both "intentional yet laissez faire." How can you balance these two qualities?
9. How could you implement the big "IDEA" with your students: Instruction, Demonstration, Experience, Assessment?
10. Who do you know that has created real-life experiences for students, enabling them to taste adulthood early on?



## EIGHT

# CHALLENGE TWO: STIMULATION WITHOUT OWNERSHIP

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where do you see examples of adults “prescribing” every step or activity for kids today?
2. Why do you think today’s generation of parents feels it is so essential to supervise and prescribe all the activities of their children’s (and teen’s) lives?
3. Have you seen any negative, unintended consequences of this prescriptive leadership?
4. With too much structure, students often fail to develop the ability to structure their own lives or plan and prepare for the future. Adults have always done it. Have you seen this?
5. In this chapter, we discuss how over prescribing can act like a thief, stealing from our kids. We list five consequences. (pg. 87) Which seems most relevant to you or your students?
6. Do you see a motivation problem in students today? Why do you think it exists?
7. Talk about “risk deprivation syndrome” in kids today. Have you witnessed teens display an inability to handle risk in a healthy manner?
8. One of the negative consequences of adults over-functioning is “moral hazards.” These occur when kids recognize that adults will spare them the negative impact for their poor decisions. Where have you seen this? What should you do?



## NINE

# MOVING FROM PRESCRIPTIVE TO DESCRIPTIVE LEADERSHIP

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what contexts have you practiced “metacognition” with your young people? Where have you enabled students to “own” the task they are working on?
2. Even though metacognition turns the ownership over to the students, why do you think students might push back on this style of leadership? What can we do?
3. When you ask a kid to do something, do you provide all the steps they should take to complete it, or do you cast a vision for the goal and let them figure out how to reach it? Explain your answer.
4. What steps do you need to take to transition from a “prescriptive” to “descriptive” style of leadership?
5. In this chapter, I introduce you to Dr. Uduak Afangideh, who rearranged the desks in her classroom, created learning pods that students led and even empowered her students to create the class syllabus. What could you do to transform your environment?
6. Which of the three elements that make metacognition work—risk, responsibility and reward—do you need to offer more to students and attempt more often?
7. Talk about the section: Letting Generation Z PROVE Themselves. Students learn best when we utilize:
  - P – Problem:** begin with a real dilemma that needs to be resolved.
  - R – Relationships:** insure that learning takes place in a social context.
  - O – Ownership:** let them determine the course of action to solve problems.
  - V – Visuals:** leverage images and metaphors to enable them to retain lessons.
  - E – Experience:** make sure the learning process leads to real experiences.
8. How can you leverage these elements when coaching your students to grow?



## TEN

### (CHALLENGE THREE: PRIVILEGE WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where do you see a sense of entitlement in the people around you, both adults and students?
2. What has a world of high expectations and assumptions done to the students of Generation Z, who have grown up feeling entitled to more than past generations?
3. Talk about Our SCENE Today. In a world of Speed, Convenience, Entertainment, Nurture and Entitlement, it is only natural to assume that: slow is bad, hard is bad, boring is bad, risk is bad and labor is bad. What can we do to combat these assumptions?
4. When we remove consequences for poor performance (or no performance) we do a disservice to kids. Mrs. Tirado's firing illustrates this. What naturally occurs when we don't allow students to suffer consequences?
5. Why do so many adults (parents and teachers) continue to do so much for kids today? Why do we have a difficult time quitting this over-functioning?
6. What do you do that may increase your student's sense of entitlement?
7. Have you spotted any of the inverse relationships between entitlement and resilience, gratitude, or happiness?
8. Talk about how conflict occurs when there is a difference between expectations and reality. Where does this most often happen with the students you lead?
9. What symptoms do you see in your kids that they may struggle with entitlement:
  - a. Impatience
  - b. Laziness
  - c. Comparison
  - d. Fragility
  - e. Irresponsibility
  - f. Anger
  - g. Disillusionment



## ELEVEN

# BREAKING FREE FROM THE SHACKLES OF ENTITLEMENT

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Parents, coaches, and educators everywhere are implementing new ideas to combat a sense of entitlement in their kids. What creative ideas have you witnessed?
2. In this chapter, we discuss three objectives that enable a young person to overcome the sense of entitlement. The first is meaningful work that provides big picture perspective. How does earning a paycheck via work combat entitlement?
3. The second idea is gratitude over what they already have. Gratitude stands in contrast to entitlement because it focuses on what we have, not what we want. How does a growing sense of gratitude oppose the sense of entitlement?
4. The third objective is that rights need to be coupled with responsibility. This means they understand there's a price tag to most perks they enjoy. Talk about this valuable idea.
5. In this chapter, we introduce the inverse relationship between entitlement and happiness. Someone who feels entitled to perks and breaks consistently, will likely experience high levels of unhappiness, as they'll always feel they deserve more. Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
6. Talk about the statement: "I cannot be disillusioned, unless I am first illusioned." How does this tie into a teen's sense of entitlement?



## TWELVE

# CHALLENGE FOUR: INVOLVEMENT WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This chapter opens with the story of a family that spares no expense to purchase equipment and training for their kids. Do you know any “extreme” families who over-commit to sports or other extra-curricular activities?
2. We are a generation of addictions, because almost anything kids want to do can be accessed “on demand.” How does this lead them to be over committed and feel overwhelmed?
3. Do you think kids are over-committed to after school and extracurricular activities? Why or why not?
4. Which of the O.D. statements do you observe most often in the students you lead?
  - a. Over-diagnosed
  - b. On-demand
  - c. Openly divergent
  - d. Overly distracted
  - e. Over-dosed
5. Kids with an External Locus of Control see outside forces in control of their lives. Kids with an Internal Locus of Control believe their success is up to them. What do you see in the young people around you? In your opinion, how did they arrive at that point?
6. What do you see this “external locus” doing to them?



## THIRTEEN

# COPING WITH THE ANXIETY EPIDEMIC

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have you already addressed anxiety or stress issues among your students?
2. The first of the ideas in this chapter is: margin. How can you create more margin in the daily schedules of your kids? Why is boredom a key hurdle for them to jump?
3. Have you ever used a “phone contract” with your students or your own kids? How could an agreement like this help with margin in their life?
4. The second idea surrounds practicing mindfulness. How do you or the Gen Z kids around you currently practice any of the aspects of mindfulness?
5. What are some ways that you could move your Gen Z kids from multi-tasking to mono-tasking?
6. The third idea is about getting kids moving again—physical activity and exercise, outside as much as inside. For millions of Gen Z kids, it’s a lost art. Have you observed this to be true?
7. Which of the steps in this section could your students begin taking? How will you encourage and motivate them to do so?
8. The final idea addressing solutions is about managing anxiety. What are you currently helping your Gen Z kids do to keep their stress levels under control?



## FOURTEEN

### CHALLENGE FIVE: INDIVIDUALISM WITHOUT PERSPECTIVE

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This chapter opens with the story of Ethan Couch's Affluenza. Do you know any kids who suffer from this strange new "disease?"
2. How do adults like Ethan's mom contribute to Generation Z kids believing life is all about them?
3. We noted that most young people believe adulthood starts somewhere around 29. When did "adulthood" begin for you? Why do you believe today's young people are delaying their transition to adulthood?
4. "Ego-centralization" is where your sense of self becomes oriented toward your own preferences and opinions, rather than outside forces. What were major outside forces that shaped you when you were young and helped you to form your sense of identity?
5. Dr. Kathy Koch identifies five beliefs of Generation Z. Have you seen any of these beliefs in the Generation Z students you lead?
  - a. I am the center of my own universe.
  - b. I deserve to be happy all the time.
  - c. I must have choices.
  - d. I am my own authority.
  - e. Information is all I need.
6. High school and college students are reporting a decline in empathy. Have you seen this lack of empathy in the students you lead? How and where?





## FIFTEEN

# GUIDING THEM TO FIND THEIR PLACE IN A LARGER STORY

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We start this chapter by telling the story of Francis Perkins. How have you seen outside passions like she had for worker's rights help kids become less focused on themselves? Do you know any students who developed a passion like this?
2. Do you encourage students to develop their "resume virtues" or the "eulogy virtues?" How could you motivate them to think about the eulogy virtues more often?
3. Do you think your students are overly focused on personal success? Why or why not?
4. We discuss four steps to help Generation Z kids find their virtues. How could you implement these four steps?
5. Have you noticed incivility in your students? Do they seem closed off to ideas other than their own? If so, why do you think this is happening?
6. Discuss Pauli Murray's "draw a larger circle" quote. (pg. 181) What does this mean? How can we help our students practice this?
7. We discuss eight ideas to help Generation Z kids practice "we" thinking. Which of these ideas could you put into practice?



## SIXTEEN

### (CHALLENGE SIX: ACCESSIBILITY WITHOUT ACCOUNTABILITY)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your greatest concern for kids as artificial intelligence becomes central today?
2. Have you seen any examples of students who feel empowered by this “on demand” world today, but have failed to be held accountable for their behavior?
3. What do you believe are the best steps both students and adults can take in a world where smart technology pushes us or prompts us to keep streaming and scrolling?
4. How do both adults and portable devices enable kids to live without accountability?
5. Why do you think our society evolved into a place where we often feel no one can tell us what to do or to judge us?
6. Have you seen illustrations of “elastic morality”?
7. In the section on “Five Sources of Morality,” which one to you see most often? Share an example of where you’ve seen this source in action.
8. What are the dangers you see in a world where we draw our morals from other people’s opinions? Do you see this happening to Generation Z students?



## SEVENTEEN

# PREPARING THEM TO LIVE BY VALUES AND ETHICS

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, describe the difference between relative and absolute values. Which of these do the students around you possess?
2. If babies can sense good and bad behavior, what is it that produces “poor, selfish behavior” in children as early as toddler age?
3. Jonathan Haidt describes how each of us make moral decisions due to an “elephant” and a “rider” inside of us. The “elephant” is our intuition or gut; the “rider” is our logical and conscious reasoning. Often, the elephant makes decisions and the rider will defend them. How have you seen this play out with people?
4. This chapter lists five dangers of living in the “intelligence age.” (pg. 201) Which one or two seemed most relevant to you and your students?
5. How do you enable students to make moral decisions? What are your frameworks?
6. How could you talk over the “Six Filters” for making ethical decisions with students? (pg. 204)
7. Evaluate yourself: do you think the kids you lead would say you have a strong moral rudder and make strong ethical decisions?
8. The “assignment” is key. If you and your kids don’t have accountability partners already, how could you begin to put them in place for yourself and for them? (pg.206)



## EIGHTEEN

# CHALLENGE SEVEN: FLUIDITY WITHOUT INTEGRITY

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Generation Z students jump from one social media app to the other, it tends to divide their sense of identity. Have you seen this in any of the students you lead? How?
2. Do the students you lead have a “finsta?” What do they use it for?
3. In what ways do students today resemble water being poured into a glass?
4. You most likely grew up during the “Gatekeeper Era.” Name some of the people, artists, or authors who you looked up to and followed. How did those people shape you?
5. Generation Z has grown up in the “Neo-Tribal Era.” What does the following quote about this era mean to you?
  - a. *“To them, there are no singular voices of influence. No religious, political, or philosophical leaders whom everyone can look up to. Just a thousand little voices that continually reshape their worlds.”*
6. In what ways are students today “dis-integrated.” Give some examples of how you’ve seen this.



## NINETEEN

# ESTABLISHING AN IDENTITY WITH INTEGRITY

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The elders in Aneyoshi, Japan left behind tsunami stones for future generations. What wisdom did elders pass along to you as you were growing up?
2. What do you believe Richard Rhor meant when he said, "...if you do not acquire good training in detachment, you may attach to all the wrong things, especially your own self-image and its desire for security?"
3. Today's kids are missing integrity, or wholeness. What do you believe it is going to take for the students you lead to become integrated?
4. In this chapter, we discuss rites of passage. Did you go through any rites of passage as an adolescent? What did you do? What was the experience like, and how did you feel after it was over?
5. Pre-liminal rites are for "cutting away" the old identity. What might healthy cutting away of childhood look like for Generation Z kids you lead?
6. Liminal rites mean that students need experiences that prepare them for adulthood. What experience could you introduce that will provide valuable lessons and life skills to the Generation Z students you lead?
7. Do you have any "post-liminal" ceremonies or celebrations that you provide for Generation Z kids after the prove themselves? What does this look like?
8. Are there any students that you could take through a rite of passage? What would this process look like for them? What skills would you develop in them?



## TWENTY

# CHALLENGE EIGHT: OPPORTUNITY WITHOUT RESILIENCE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you seen adults unwittingly reduce the resilience levels in kids, by making things easier for those kids? Where have you seen the following mistakes?
  - a. We risk too little
  - b. We rescue too quickly
  - c. We rave too easily
  - d. We reward too frequently
2. Have you seen any illustrations of the inverse relationship between opportunity and grit? (Example where kids have so many options they quit more easily and move to another one?)
3. Peanut allergies and other allergies are examples of where we got so good at making our lives germ free—we actually diminished the immune systems of kids. Name some other examples where our good intentions may have reduced grit in children?
4. This chapter lists some of the reasons for the “snowflake generation” including helicopter parents, grade inflation, virtual realities, technology and media and safe places in college. All of them are well-intentioned, but often leave young adults unready for the hardships of college and career. What do you think are the biggest factors?
5. How has the lack of tough conditions and controlling adult leaders left kids feeling they need us to make it? Why do so many young adults still rely on their parents?



## TWENTY ONE

# LEARNING TO BOUNCE BACK AFTER HARDSHIP

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of example where you've seen kids experience "learned helplessness?"
2. How about "learned industriousness?"
3. Talk about this statement: When kids feel hopeless, they begin to be helpless.
4. What kinds of leadership demotivates students most quickly?
5. Talk about how children need "stressors" to build resilience, but chronic stressors can eventually make them give up. Have you ever seen this?
6. Name examples of when your students practiced a "fixed mindset" and times when they practiced a "growth mindset." How can you encourage them toward a growth mindset?
7. Think about your daily interactions with Generation Z kids. How could you be a better provider of hope for them?
8. What could you do to better offer visual aids or examples of what's possible—reminding students of their potential and future possibilities?
9. In what areas could you increase the delegation of more control to your young?
10. How could you help kids move from false confidence to genuine confidence?



## TWENTY TWO

# CHALLENGE NINE: CONSUMPTION WITHOUT REFLECTION

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you recognized students unable to recognize “fake news?” How are the vulnerable to internet fabrications?
2. Why do you believe so many university professors claim students don’t know how to practice critical thinking?
3. Have you seen examples of “emotional reasoning” in students? Where?
4. Share your observations of the diagram: The P.R.I.C.E. of Social Media. Do you see these realities among students today? How about adults? (pg. 259)
5. The chapter concludes with two ideas: 1) Information requires application. 2) Consumption requires reflection. Do you agree with these ideas? Why are these important ideas for students to think about?





## TWENTY THREE

# TRAINING THEM TO BE CRITICAL THINKERS

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How well and how often do you host conversations with teens that require critical thinking? Do you lead these kinds of conversations often enough?
2. Maker Learning employs critical thinking to find solutions to problems. Can you think of a time when your students practiced Maker Learning? Talk about it.
3. When your kids problem solve, how well do they practice critical thinking? How is this like wearing 3-D glasses at the movies?
4. What role does empathy play in your kids' passion to solve problems for others?
5. Imagine hosting an experience where your teens practiced the five steps in "design thinking." (pg. 271) What could you do to set it up? What problem could they solve?
6. Do your kids hate boredom? How could you leverage margin to nudge them to reflect and solve problems?



## TWENTY FOUR

### SIX EXPERIENCES THAT ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO MATURE

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This chapter begins with the story of Jim Casey. What seemed most relevant to you about his story as a young man?
2. The first experience that enables young people to mature is to do something scary. Why do you think this is an important rite of passage for kids?
3. How do you enable young people to attempt something scary when they're hesitant?
4. Experience two is to meet someone influential. Why is this important? How could you foster an introduction to someone they admire?
5. Experience three is to travel someplace different. What does travel expose young people to that accelerates growth? Where could you take your students?
6. Chase a meaningful goal is experience four. How could you empower students to chase a big goal they desire?
7. Experience five is to wait and work for something they want. How does delayed gratification enable kids to mature? Why is it hard today?
8. Experience six is to practice a new habit. How could you enable students to start a new habit and make a trade off with their time?



## TWENTY FIVE

**(CHANGING OUR WAYS****DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Can you think of anything you've done as an adult leader that has hindered the kids under your leadership from building a mature, disciplined lifestyle?
2. What's a step you could take to move from trying to "wow" teens to trying to "win" them over?
3. What are core issues that the kids you lead feel passionate about? How could you help them find some and support them in it?
4. Every teenager is building their personal brand, whether they know it or not. How could you allow students to create a unique identity and brand?
5. How have you used the Pygmalion Effect with kids?
6. Have you ever accidentally sent the signal to your Generation Z students that you don't believe in them or that you think they are a worse generation of kids than in the past?
7. What is one big step you can take to display belief in the students you lead?