

**TRUTH ABOUT
AGE**

McCANN
TRUTH CENTRAL



METHODOLOGY

This study is one of our largest studies to date: 28 quantitative markets with nearly 24,000 respondents globally (Canada, U.S., Mexico, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Brazil, Chile, Sweden, Norway, U.K., France, Spain, Finland, Denmark, Hungary, Germany, Turkey, Lebanon, South Africa, India, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, China, Japan, Philippines, Australia, and Portugal) and 36 qualitative markets (Canada, U.S., Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Sweden, Denmark, U.K., Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Nigeria, South Africa, Russia, South Korea, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Australia, Portugal, and Mexico).

INTRO

"Aging" is a theme that extends well beyond the older generation. Aging and attitudes toward aging affect people at every life stage and in every country around the world. In some regions, it means a population aging out of the work force, whereas in others, it means a population aging into the work force. In Japan, for example, 40% of the population will be 65+ by 2060, whereas in Bolivia, the average age is 24. Given these global dynamics, we believe it's time to expand the definition of aging and study the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors towards the concept of "age" more broadly.

So given all of that, this isn't a traditional "aging" study that focuses on the 65+ audience. The Truth About Age is a piece of comprehensive global research that explores aging throughout all ages.

Why? Because...

**AGING ISN'T
JUST FOR
THE OLD** & **LIVING
ISN'T JUST
FOR THE YOUNG**

In fact, according to our data...

People who fear
death the most
are in their

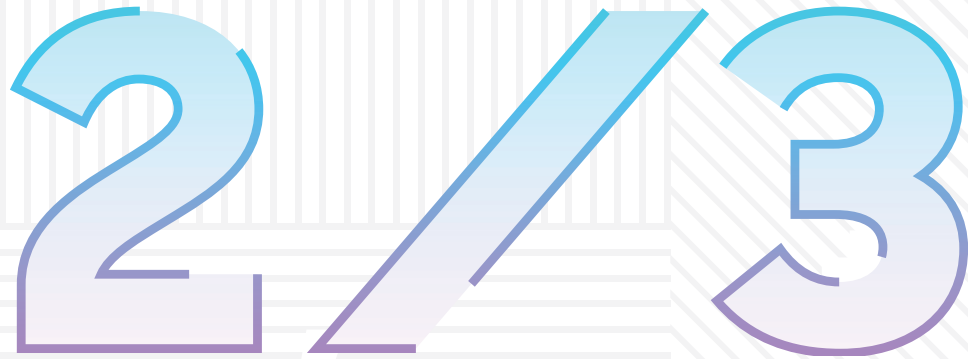
20s

People who think
about aging most
are in their

30s

People who worry
least about aging
are in their

70s



2 1 3

**Of people over the age of 70 believe
“you’re never too old to casually date.”**

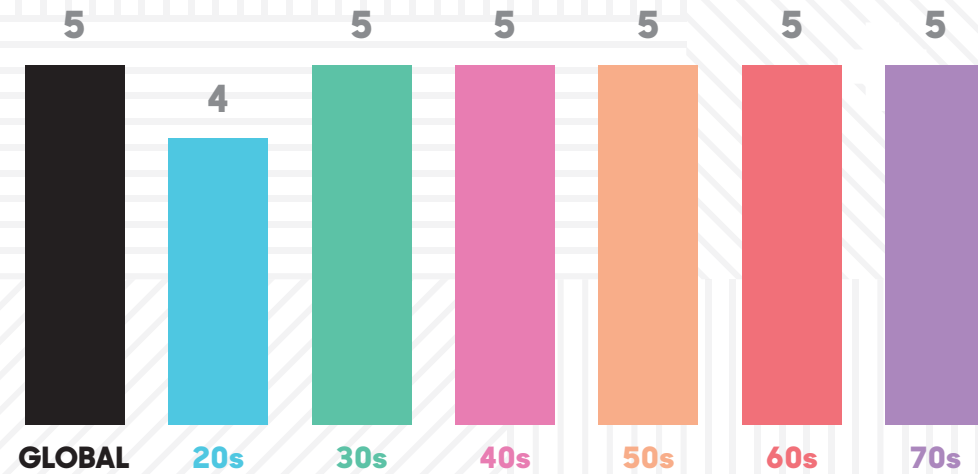
And when it comes to the “living” part, two-thirds of people over the age of 70 believe “you’re never too old to casually date romantic partners” (vs. just over half of 20-year-olds).

All of this indicates that we’re at a pivotal moment in human history, where traditional age norms are being challenged across every age group.

As uncovered in our last global study, the Truth About Youth, the concept of becoming an adult has become increasingly fluid and flexible. The term “adulting” has been used to describe a millennial generation who refuses to abide by the expectations traditionally associated with their lifestage, deciding “to adult” only on days and in moments when it suits them.

HOW OLD DO YOU FEEL?

1 is "not old at all" and 10 is "I feel very old"



But what of those at the other end of the age spectrum? In many ways we find mirror behaviors. For those older individuals, there may be days when this generation decides "to senior" but for the most part they are mirroring their younger counterparts by refusing to meet the expectations traditionally associated with their lifestage. 65+ parents in China are asking their children if they can spend their funeral money on travel, grandparents in Australia are too busy to see their grandchildren and Filipino retirees are starting businesses from home.

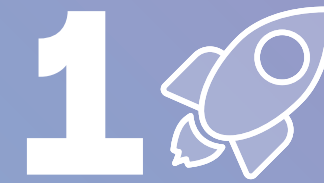
So just as young people age into adulthood in a profoundly different way than they ever did in the past, so too are people choosing to age across their entire lives in a novel and flexible way (think adulting, midulting, senioring).

However, if we look at culture at large, from media to politics to advertising, traditional age-led stereotypes are still rife. In fact, only 24% believe the fashion industry understands the aging population and only 30% believe media or news organizations understand the aging population.

HOW SHOULD MARKETERS RESPOND?

Marketers need to completely rethink the playbook with regard to the way they approach age across the spectrum (not just when it comes to marketing to "seniors").

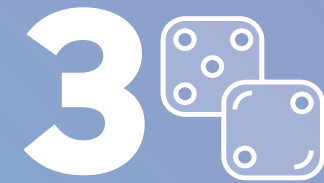
We've developed four principles to guide marketers as they rethink age-led demographics:



**START
YOUNG**



**CELEBRATE
THE GAINS**



**GO BEYOND
THE NUMBER**



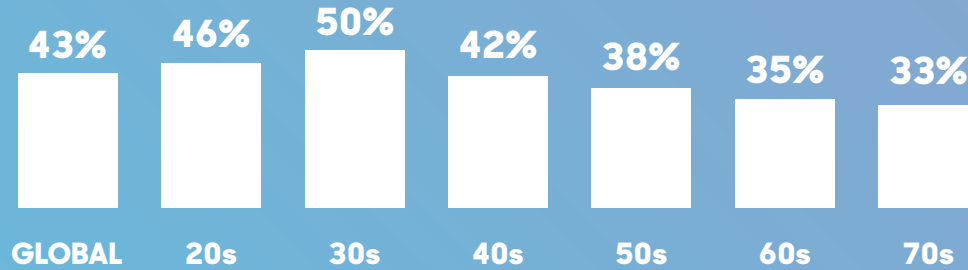
**PROMOTE
INTERGENERATIONAL
CONNECTIONS**



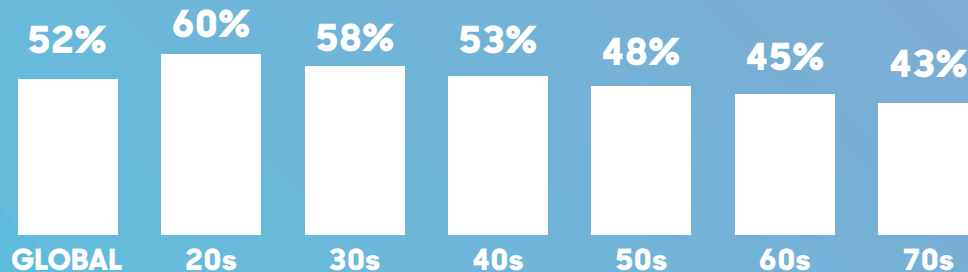
1. START YOUNG

Traditionally, the “aging” conversation is reserved for the over 50s but our data indicates that brands may be missing a trick. One of the findings that most surprised us was the tense relationship young people have with age. You could say that aging is more a problem for the young! People in their 20s and 30s have a far more negative attitude towards getting older than older people do.

I CONSTANTLY THINK ABOUT AGING



I WORRY THAT I WILL DIE ALONE



It’s interesting to note that these struggles are fully lived in the present; young people constantly reflect on the process of aging and the passage of time. Those small “age epiphany” moments can be just as transformative as traditional milestones of age like your 30th birthday, or leaving home for the first time (if not more!).

AGE MILESTONES

- Getting married
- Having a baby
- Retiring
- Graduating
- Leaving home

AGE MOMENTS

- "When I heard a 16-year-old using words that I'd never heard of like 'lit'. I have no idea what that is."*
- Australia, 20s
- "When I put in my year of birth and I have to scroll down forever."*
- UK, 40s
- "When I received my late-stage elderly healthcare insurance card."*
- Japan, 70s

Given the level of anxiety and misunderstanding experienced by those in their 20s and 30s, smart brands will find ways of beginning and reframing the age conversation much earlier.

TRUTH: Young people are thinking about and worrying about age more than any other generation...but no one is talking to them about it.

PROVOCATION: What if we address the challenges associated with getting older among young people and provide a more realistic—but optimistic—view of aging?



2. CELEBRATE THE GAINS

Too often the broader cultural conversation focuses on the “losses” associated with age (from reduced cognition to limited physicality) and aging is primarily framed as a negative process. And yet our data indicates that lives mostly get richer and happier over time. Two-thirds of people 70+ feel positive about the process of aging. This group also reports becoming more spiritual, liberal and idealistic over time, as compared with their younger counterparts (adjectives not often associated with the older population).

Within this context, it might not come as a surprise that new models of retirement are emerging. Even in cultures in which retirement is somewhat required of people once they reach a certain age, we discovered people all over the world find creative ways of “hacking” their retirement to their benefit.

There is an opportunity for brands to rewrite the narrative and focus on the gains at every age. This could come by developing new language and imagery to connect with different age groups. The loss-oriented language associated with the second half of life—“retirement,” “empty nest,” downsizing—is particularly in need of a rethink.

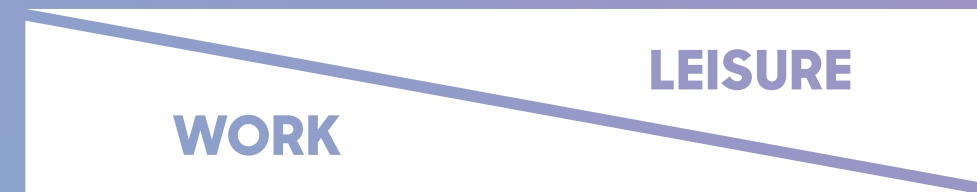
TRUTH: For many people, life gets better and fuller over time, but society conspires to convince us otherwise.

PROVOCATION: What if we create a new lexicon of aging that focuses on the real gains acquired along the journey?

OLD MODEL OF RETIREMENT



NEW MODEL OF RETIREMENT



WHAT “HACKING” RETIREMENT LOOKS LIKE AROUND THE WORLD

“I need to have some activity, so I would like to have a small store: I could have someone working there during the morning and I would work there in the afternoon.”

—Brazil, 50s

“I told my daughter: do not save money for my tomb. I’d rather she gave the money to me now so I can travel around.”

—China, 60s

“I don’t think of retirement, stopping to work completely, because we like what we do. We will continue to work because we want to feel we are still completely useful.”

—Philippines, 50s

“I’m already living my ideal retirement, my days are full, I’ve thousands of things to do... and when I was working I didn’t have time to dedicate to myself.”

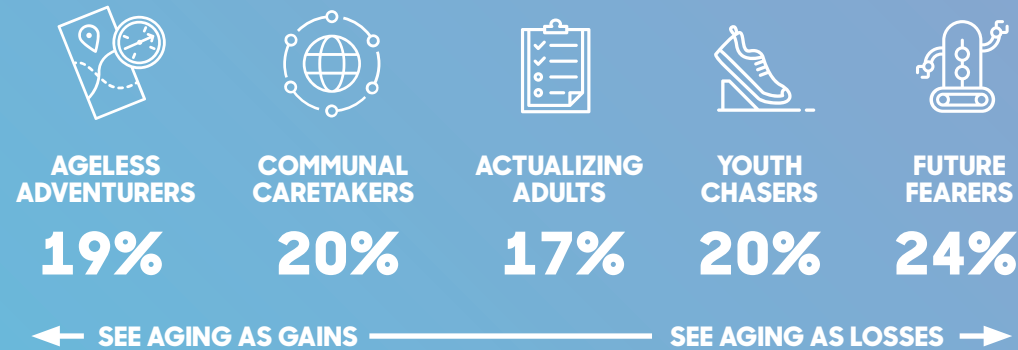
—Italy, 60s



3. GO BEYOND THE NUMBER

In general, age has become a less useful predictor of behavior. The fact of the matter is that everyone thinks about aging differently, regardless of their numerical age. We've created an attitude-led segmentation that explodes generational thinking through an "age agnostic" view.

GLOBAL ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION



AGELESS ADVENTURERS - See aging as a journey of limitless opportunities and personal growth.

COMMUNAL CARETAKERS - See aging as a time of engaging with community and enriching personal relationships.

ACTUALIZING ADULTS - See aging as a process of maturity and acquisition of adult responsibilities.

FUTURE FEARERS - See aging as a time of anxiety and uncertainty due to risks associated with old age.

YOUTH CHASERS - See aging as a decline and loss of their youth and vitality.

Moreover, once we explore market differences through the lens of this segmentation, the story becomes even more interesting. For example, Chile, a country projected to be the fastest aging country in Latin America, has the highest proportion of Ageless Adventurers relative to any country in the survey. This group is the most positive and open about the process of aging. Compounded with another third in the Communal Caretaker group, there is a lot of positivity to tap into within this culture.

CHILE



Brands need to interrogate their own consumer segmentations in new ways to ensure that they are consistently going beyond the "number."

TRUTH: Once we go beyond the number we can create a much deeper and richer understanding of age across ages and cultures.

PROVOCATION: How do we smash marketing stereotypes by breaking free of traditional generational demographics?



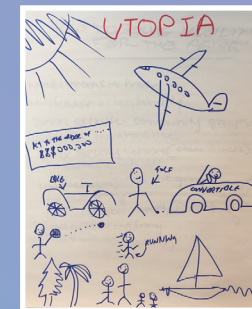
4. PROMOTE INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS

When we compare across markets, individual cultures prioritize different things in the pursuit of healthy aging. For example, whereas the people of India are more likely to believe that being respected by society is the key to aging well, the British stress the importance of a good sense of humor.



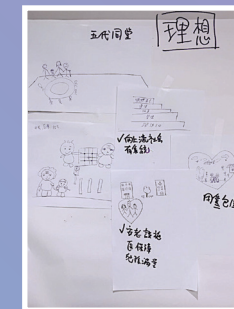
However, there is one consistent theme that transcends markets when it comes to aging well: spending time with people of different ages. When it comes to aging well, 70% of people say it's important to spend time with people who are younger than you, and 66% say it's important to spend time with people who are older than you.

And when we ask people around the world to present a vision of the world where people age in a positive way, the theme of intergenerational connections come to the fore across cultures. And healthy aging through connections isn't necessarily limited to close family and loved ones; it extends to how a society thrives overall through connections among generations.



CANADA

"The community is connected and taking care of one another."



CHINA

"Three generations having a meal as a big family."



GERMANY

"A community of multigenerational houses."

TRUTH: Intergenerational connections are seen as the key to aging well, but these are increasingly hard to come by in the modern world.

PROVOCATION: What if brands could build connections between the generations and co-create an age-positive future?

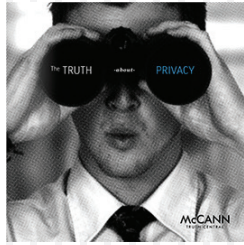
AGE PHILOSOPHY

In closing, our hope is that the research presents a clear argument that brands must develop an Age Philosophy. It doesn't mean brands shouldn't talk about age, but it should be informed by their category, and, most importantly, the meaningful role that the brand wants to (or has an opportunity to) play in people's lives.

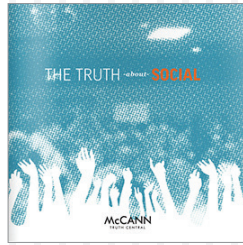
In the future, it will be appropriate for brands to talk about age in a more or less overt way. For example, brands in the beauty and pharmaceutical industries cannot operate in an age-agnostic way because they're dealing with problems that are correlated with age. The challenge for brands is then to strike a healthy balance between age-awareness without tipping over into age-obsession.



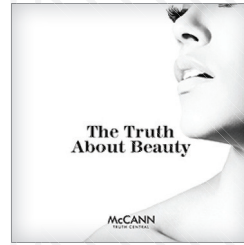
TRUTH ABOUT YOUTH



TRUTH ABOUT PRIVACY



TRUTH ABOUT SOCIAL



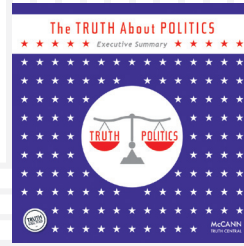
TRUTH ABOUT BEAUTY



TRUTH ABOUT MOBILE



TRUTH ABOUT MOMS



TRUTH ABOUT POLITICS



TRUTH ABOUT WELLNESS



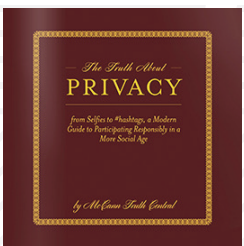
TRUTH ABOUT CONNECTED YOU



TRUTH ABOUT ADVERTISING



TRUTH ABOUT AFFLUENCE



TRUTH ABOUT PRIVACY UPDATE



TRUTH ABOUT SHOPPING



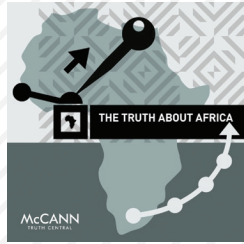
TRUTH ABOUT FANS



TRUTH ABOUT MESSES



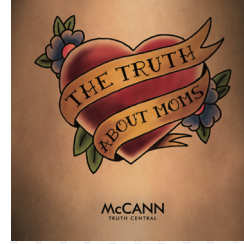
TRUTH ABOUT GLOBAL BRANDS



TRUTH ABOUT AFRICA



TRUTH ABOUT YOUTH UPDATE



TRUTH ABOUT MOMS UPDATE



TRUTH ABOUT WELLNESS UPDATE

ABOUT McCANN TRUTH CENTRAL

McCann Truth Central is McCann Worldgroup's global intelligence unit dedicated to unearthing the macro-level truths that drive people's attitudes and behaviors about life, brands, and marketing. Our team of trend and insight experts regularly author global studies packed with actionable perspectives that are as creative as they are analytically sharp.

McCann Truth Central has conducted over 20 global studies including Truth About Youth, Truth About Moms, Truth About Beauty, and Truth About Global Brands, just to name a few. The studies have covered 60+ markets, interviewed over 130,000 consumers, and contain millions of individual data points. The research findings have been presented at conferences across the globe and covered by Time magazine, USA Today, Refinery 29, PC Magazine, Campaign, Adweek, and many others.

To find out more about Truth Central studies and their implications, please contact us.

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