

Introduction

There are a lot of terms to describe different generations of offspring the last sixty-plus years. During WWII, this generation was known as the war-baby generation. After the war, there was the 'baby-boomers' which carried through the fifties into the 1960's. In the sixties, the 'hippie' generation came into existence, and after that the so-called 'yuppie' one. Today, the common term to describe the younger generation is 'millennial' mainly because of their being born close to the 'millennial' of the year 2000.

Why are we reviewing this short history? Because an examination of these generations helps explain why a book of this nature is needed.

Let's start with the 'war-baby generation. Their parents and grandparents came out of the 1920's and 30's. These people were a tough, self-sufficient group; they were witnesses of another 'great war', a great depression, the ascendancy of the industrial revolution, major scientific discoveries and inventions, and great wealth generation. There were still strong and cohesive family relationships and respect and a do-it-yourself attitude - and their life skills were handed down from previous generations to the war-baby one.

The baby-boomer generation appeared post WWII when couples that had put off having children because of the war conditions, now made up for it. There was peace, a booming economy, and the future looked bright. The life skills that had been passed to the war-baby generation generally were passed to the baby-boomer one, but there were gaps appearing; a lot of fathers were not present or were disabled, and because of the economic changes (moms' working, multiple work shifts, long hours, movement from agricultural to suburban, commuting, etc.). Still all-in-all, this generation succeeded in self-sufficiency and could still pass along life skills to the next generation.

Unfortunately, in the sixties the wheels came off the wagon! The 'hippy' generation came on the scene. What was the problem? The 'hippy' generation was a generation of rebellion. Rebellion against authority, societal standards, parental values and knowledge. The hippies actively repudiated much of the knowledge and experience from parents and grandparents. The mantra was to 'find their own way', experiment, and blaze a new path for civilization. It was the 'Dawning of the Age of Aquarius'. The valuable life skills that had been a heritage for much of the 20th century was now being lost. A valuable link in the chain had been broken!

Of course, the hippy generation didn't solve civilization's problems, and while some cool music was created and is still with us, one has to only come upon an abandoned hippy commune to realize that the new life skills embraced were not a panacea.

What about the children from the hippy generation parents? Since marriage or even monogamous relationships were one of the 'old generation' standards discarded, children grew up in a more fragmented parental environment. Not only was parental tutoring greatly reduced, what was there to tutor? Their parents had already broken that life knowledge chain. One thing the children did learn was rebellion against parental standards, and so thinking that they didn't want to live THEIR lives out of a VW bus, they grabbed hold of that swinging pendulum and dove into materialism, upward mobility, corporate success, portfolios and 401K's. They became upwardly mobile, or 'yuppies'. The Yuppies became high achievers with a desire for good income, good things, and expensive travel and entertainment. The income level was high enough so that many basic services could be 'hired out'. There wasn't a need to learn life lessons, except for the knowledge pertaining to their careers. Both Hippies and Yuppies come under the Generation 'X' or Gen X label.

Out of this generation came the Millennials. What is the millennial generation? It started in the 1980's and was originally referred to as Generation Y or Gen Y. One can imagine, with the genetic legacy handed to the Gen Y's from the Gen X's, why the Millennials need help making it in the daily trials of life. But it doesn't end there! The Millennials' progeny is coming! They are Gen Z! Gen Z, at this date, are still pretty young, which is why this book doesn't address them directly. The term 'snowflake' is sometimes applied to many young people, but I think if you wanted a good title for the Gen Z'ers, that would be 'snowflake'. It's not that they are all individual as snowflakes, but rather that snowflakes have no substance, easily and quickly melt, and drift with the currents. So I may use that term in this book just to save typing effort. By helping Gen Y'ers conquer life's problem, we can indirectly assist these Gen Z's or 'snowflakes'.

If you are a Gen Xer and have made it this far, then congratulations! You have learned life lessons the hard way, by trial and error. If you are a Millennial, then this book can be a big help. But, if you feel like you're doing OK, and you have snowflakes in your family, then PLEASE HELP THEM. So many are borderline dysfunctional. Out of pity and a sense of empathy, tie them down, pry the 'smart' devices from their clutches, look them in the eyes and READ what follows in this manual. This may be the only painless way they will get a clue!