

## Legacy Module 7.

# Talking 'Bout My Generation

*Taking time to talk in generation-specific groups can be a rare and revelatory experience.*

### **Purpose:**

To understand the defining events of each generation and their philanthropic ripples

### **Outcomes:**

- Individual reflection on what events and dynamics define your generation
- Increased understanding of these differing generational forces and identities
- Discussion of how these differences inform how we think about social change and philanthropy

### **Process:**

Fishbowl structure, group discussion

### **Materials:**

None

*This piece builds upon an activity developed by 21/64 called [Generational Personalities](#) © 2015 21/64, Inc. [21/64, Inc.](#) is a nonprofit practice providing multigenerational advising, facilitation and training for next generation engagement.*

### **Activity and Discussion:**

Begin by identifying what generations you have represented in your family. A common breakdown can be found below:

- The Greatest Generation – born 1901-1924
- The Silent Generation – born 1925-1945
- The Baby Boomer Generation – born 1946-1964
- Generation X – born 1965-1979
- Millennials – born 1980-1994
- Generation Z – born 1995-2012
- Gen Alpha – born 2013 – 2025

Divide the amount of time you have for this discussion by the number of generations you have represented. If a no-longer involved or alive family member of an older generation is still a strong presence in the room, or if you are soon to include new, younger generations, you might even hold a bit of time to consider them too.

Each generation will have the chance to be the focal point of questions and reflection. The rest of the group will ask them a series of questions:

- What have been the three to five defining historical events or forces in the broader country or world since your birth?
- How have these events defined your generation—and you?
- What do you see as prevalent stereotypes about your generation? What elements of these stereotypes ring true for you and your own experience?
- What do you feel is important for your family to know about how your generation impacts who you are and how you see the world—particularly with respect to social change and philanthropy?

After each generation has had a chance to share, debrief and discuss together. Some questions you might explore:

- What did you find most interesting about that exercise?
- What surprised you? What did you learn?
- How does having multiple generations at the table strengthen your giving? How does it sometimes make it more challenging?
- How can we intentionally capitalize on this breadth of generational perspectives to make our giving more enjoyable and more effective?

\*Sometimes offering examples can be helpful to get folks thinking. Here are a few:

- The Vietnam (or any other) War
- 9/11
- The elections of President Obama and President Trump
- The Great Depression
- Slavery, The Holocaust, Internment Camps
- Hurricane Katrina
- Sandy Hook shooting
- Legalization of same-sex marriage
- Immigration waves
- Suburban sprawl
- Introduction of new technology—private home phones, computers, cell phones, the internet