

# Explaining Generational Differences to Youth, Young Adults

A lot of the time, elders are not being discriminatory, they are simply not participating in youth subculture.

*There is a difference.*

Many older generations are not interested in  
Extremely loud music,  
Heavy profanity,  
Highly sexualized dancing or clothing,  
Aggressive or dominating attitudes,  
Social environments that feel intense or overstimulating.

That does not mean they hate young people. Often, it simply means they are uncomfortable.

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## Subculture and Shared Culture

Some youth trends, like provocative dancing, very revealing fashion, loud party environments, or explicit music, are designed for specific social circles. They may be enjoyable within that group.

But they are not always conducive to  
Family gatherings,  
Professional spaces,  
Intergenerational settings,  
Quiet or rural lifestyles.

To someone who values peace, modesty, and calm environments, those elements can feel overwhelming, not because of race, but because of lifestyle and values.

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## Many Elders Grew Up Differently

For many older Americans, life centered around  
Church on Sundays,  
Family dinners,  
Outdoor life and nature,  
Community events,  
Working hard from a young age,  
Marrying and starting families early.

Their music was often  
Social,  
Danceable in mixed company,  
Family friendly,  
Less explicit.

Their clothing was typically  
Elegant,  
Modest,  
Upscale,  
Context appropriate.

This reflects the culture they were raised in.

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### **Discrimination and Preference**

There is an important difference between  
Discrimination, judging someone based on race or inherent traits,  
Cultural preference, not wanting to participate in certain behaviors or cultural environments.

An elder not enjoying loud, explicit music is not racism.

An elder preferring modest dress in their home towns is not hatred.

An elder wanting respectful language is not oppression.

It is preference and comfort.

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### **Why Some Elders Feel Annoyed**

Sometimes, elders are not angry, they are tired.

Many of them  
Worked very hard from a young age,  
Paid their bills without help,  
Cooked, cleaned, maintained homes daily,  
Raised families with fewer conveniences.

When they see younger adults who  
Avoid responsibility,  
Speak harshly,  
Act entitled,  
Disrespect shared spaces,

It can feel frustrating.

Not because they hate youth, or young adults, but because they value discipline, humility, and responsibility.

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### **The Learner Position**

As younger generations, we are in a learner position when interacting with elders.

That does not mean we minimize ourselves.

But it does mean

We do not force our subculture onto them,

We adjust our tone and dress in their presence,

We show respect in shared spaces,

We listen more and never dominate.

Respect is maturity.

It strengthens relationships.

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### **Soul Culture and Trend Culture**

Many elders value what could be called soul culture,

Depth,

Modesty,

Conversation,

Community,

Responsibility.

Younger culture sometimes values

Visibility,

Expression,

Breaking norms,

Individualism.

These are different cultural expressions.

Difference does not equal discrimination.

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### **It Is Not About Skin Color**

Generational discomfort happens across all races and backgrounds.

An older grandmother, a rural grandfather, a church matriarch, may feel similar discomfort with loud, sexualized, or aggressive youth/young adult trends.

It is about culture, not color.

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 **Bridging the Gap**

The healthiest path forward is mutual respect.

Youth and young adults bring creativity, energy, and innovation.

Elders bring wisdom, reservation, and long view thinking.

Both are necessary.

Forcing, intimidating, or dominating others socially, regardless of age, creates distance.

Respect, humility, and awareness create connection.

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