

A Klick Health POV

Shaping Tomorrow

—
Navigating the Cultural
Forces Redefining Culture
and Healthcare in 2024



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INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL FORCES

Welcome to Klick's latest series that explores the cultural forces and trends shaping our world in 2024.

Imagine this: You're working on your brand and you've spent months analyzing performance metrics and market share, you've done positioning work and message-testing research, but things aren't going as well as you know they could. Most of our time is spent looking at research that looks back. We need to incorporate research that helps us predict the future.

What if you could connect your brand to what's coming next instead of only reacting to what's already happened?

In pharma and healthcare, it's important to understand the industry-specific trends and changes. It's also essential to recognize the larger forces impacting the broader culture. Our industry isn't immune from these cultural forces—patients, HCPs, payers, care partners, and everyone else—we all participate in the wider culture. By understanding these cultural forces, we can predict challenges and identify opportunities early. Trying to fight culture is expensive and mostly ineffective. Leaning into cultural forces allows us to engage our audiences more deeply

around the things they care about—making our campaigns and messages work harder.

Klick has been actively monitoring and reporting on the most prominent cultural forces driving change in health and pharma for our clients. Now, we are excited to share it more widely.

Understanding these cultural forces at a general, societal level gives us a competitive advantage, but the real advantage comes when we can make the implications specific to your brand challenges. When we combine this thinking with rich data about the past and present, we start to be able to develop future-thinking scenarios that allow brands to shape the future and not just go along for the ride.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Each year, Klick Health identifies a set of cultural forces that represent our take on what will drive cultural change in the following 12 months and beyond. Cultural forces identify a way to make sense of our complex world and help our teams and clients anticipate what's next.

Over the next five articles, we will explore the key cultural forces shaping our world and the health and pharma industry in 2024. Each force will include our analysis and examples of the force coming to life plus predictions for 2024 and the impact on patients, HCPs, and other stakeholders.

Cultural Force 1: Questioning Reality: the impact of Generative AI (GenAI) and misinformation on trust and confidence

Cultural Force 2: Collective Isolation: how loneliness and extreme self-focus are alienating many from their community and support

Cultural Force 3: Value vs. Values: why brand values are even more important during times of economic pressure

Cultural Force 4: Reinventing Success: traditional markers of adulthood and success are less relevant than ever before, leaving many struggling to understand their future

Cultural Force 5: Friction Aversion: years of emphasis on smooth online experiences have left many people less equipped to cope with the friction of day-to-day life

HOW WE DO IT

We approach predictions of cultural forces in two different ways:

- 1. Ongoing Cataloging and Tracking of Emergent Trends Throughout the Year.**
These trends are cataloged in a database and tagged. They take the form of research studies and data points, news articles and events, social media posts and discussions, pop culture content and reactions, and anything that helps us understand the world around us.
- 2. Meta-Analysis of Trend Reports.**
The Strategic Futures team analyzes trend reports from sources as disparate as Forester, Accenture, Roblox, Pinterest, and the UN, among others, to identify meta-trends and commonalities.

Klick Health's cultural forces and predictions are developed based on this research. Unlike other trend reports, we always bring a health and pharma lens to our work, ensuring that the identified cultural forces are relevant to our industry (although not exclusively about our industry). We develop implications and thought-starters for our specific audiences.





LEAVES

Trends and Fads (Signals)

BRANCHES

Cultural Forces

ROOTS

Human Needs + Global Events and Changes

WHAT TO EXPECT

We use the following model to help us make sense of the chaotic set of trends that makes up culture.

Roots

All cultural forces are rooted in larger human needs and global events.

Key examples of roots include the following:

Urbanization

The world is becoming increasingly urbanized as people leave rural areas to find employment and community.

Demographic Shifts

Many countries are seeing shifts, including the aging population of Japan and the youth movement in the Global South.

Climate Change

The realities and fears around global climate change are impacting day-to-day life in countless ways.

Global events, which are changing culture and slower-moving, are monitored by organizations like the UN and various US government agencies who produce annual reports detailing the most recent implications and making predictions about what's to come.



Branches

At Klick, we define cultural forces as the patterns moving in culture, identified by the accumulation of trends and rooted in larger global changes. Most often, these forces have been building and shifting for years before we name them; they take on different faces and impact our lives differently. In our model, these are the branches, which don't disappear as quickly as the leaves. The branches are our focus when it comes to identifying cultural forces.

Leaves

In our model, the signals that are easiest to see are the leaves. These signals and fads represent a moment in time. They may disappear quickly, but they tell us something important about what's happening in culture. Trend-hunting organizations often report on these signals, and sometimes, a fad rises to mass-media attention—a TikTok format like GRWM (Get Ready with Me) or a trend like collecting Stanley Cups in every color. Our team observes, tracks, and catalogs these trends and fads throughout the year to help us see the larger patterns that emerge.

We are excited to share Klick Health's cultural forces over the coming weeks. These reports are the culmination of a full year of observation, research, analysis, and discussion from strategists steeped in pharma and health. Understanding how culture shifts and changes is critical to predicting what comes next for us and our industry. **Happy 2024!**



CULTURAL FORCE 1



QUESTIONING REALITY

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- There is a growing collective sense that we are becoming untethered from a shared reality.
- Signals like the widespread proliferation of generative AI (GenAI) and hyper-targeted algorithmic content are driving this sense of unreality.
- 2024 will be the end of a transitional period that is exacerbating this cultural force.
- One of the most significant impacts is the erosion of trust—something that is significant to patients, HCPs, and pharma brands alike.

REALITY CHECK: CHALLENGING TRUTH IN AN ERA OF AI AND MISINFORMATION

What to Know

- Skepticism of reality is intensifying as misinformation, hyper-personalization, and GenAI make it harder to confirm what's real.
- Trust and credibility are increasingly valuable as cultural "reality bubbles" spread, impacting media, healthcare, and broader society.
- As shared truth becomes harder to find, what will the 2024 landscape look like, with elections, healthcare access, and expert guidance facing new scrutiny.
- New tools like the one developed by Klick Health can use voice biomarkers to identify deepfakes and restore trust.



WHAT IS QUESTIONING REALITY?

In 2022, our internal reporting said, “It’s becoming harder to understand what is real or even comes to a shared definition of reality, something that the rise of GenAI is only intensifying.” That’s when we first named this cultural force and predicted it would be a major factor in 2023.

Today, it’s clear that there is still no way to really tell what is real and what isn’t—in fact, some people are questioning what reality even means. While GenAI is part of this, so is dis/misinformation, the erosion of expertise, and the continued dominance of conspiracy theories (including fun theories like the Mandela effect, a phenomenon where a large group of people misremember past events and pop culture. It’s named for a common misconception that former South African president Nelson Mandela died in prison in the 1980s—one of the first Mandela effects).

Clearly, this force has been present for awhile, but in 2024, we’re going to see it spread from a primarily online phenomenon to include offline reality as well. For example, proponents of various Mandela-effect conspiracies actively search for real, physical evidence of their beliefs. We will also see more outward recognition that this is happening and discussion of what it means.



The Signals

We introduced the concept of signals as leaves in our model of cultural forces in the introductory article of this series. Signals are the fast-moving trends and fads that represent a moment in time. As a collection, they can indicate the direction culture is moving.

Several signals and factors tell us about this cultural force, including:

Signal: Social Media Algorithms and Hyper-Personalized Content

- In 2024, we're going to see more people realize that the hyper-personalized content they consume online means they have a warped perception of the general importance of certain issues, people, and events.

Signal: News Bubbles and Ideological Gaps

- Beyond social media algorithms, news bubbles and ideological gaps create a fractured reality. Many people consume news and content specific to their point of view and never engage with other "realities." Pew has been tracking these bubbles for years.
- More recently, we've seen a growing divide on gender lines as the ideological reality for women diverges from that of men.

Signal: Growing Adoption of GenAI Image-Generation Tools by the General Public

- Right now, many people feel uneasy about the changes wrought by GenAI. We're in a transitional phase that's driving this sense of questioning reality as people experiment

with when and how to use and share AI-generated imagery. Seventy-three percent of [Americans believe that conspiracy theories are currently "out of control,"](#) and 59% agree that [people are more likely to believe conspiracy theories "compared to 25 years ago."](#) [Approximately 77% of Americans believe that social media and the internet are responsible for these increases.](#)

- As we enter 2024, we see more surreal theories fueling a sense of disconnection from reality. Mostly, these are jokes, but they're also signals that reflect the current cultural zeitgeist of feeling untethered from reality.

Signal: Surreal Content

In 2023 (and earlier), we saw many TV shows and movies with surreal themes. Questioning reality was baked into the concept, reflecting this sense of cultural unease. Consider the TV show *Twin Peaks*; it was incredibly surreal and full of dread and uncertainty. It premiered the same year Tim Berners-Lee brought the World Wide Web to life. This might be a coincidence, but the early 1990s was another time full of technological change and anxiety. Our media reflects the cultural zeitgeist; today, we see shows like *Severance* and *The OA* playing that same role.

- As we become more comfortable with GenAI and other technologies, our cultural need to cope through consuming surrealist content will diminish.



— SIGNAL SNAPSHOTS

“About one-fifth of Democrats and Republicans get political news in a kind of media bubble”

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REPORT | MARCH 4, 2020

About one-fifth of Democrats and Republicans get political news in a kind of media bubble

BY MARK JURKOWITZ AND AMY MITCHELL

While Pew Research Center's recent report on media habitation and the 2020 election found that many Democrats and Republicans differ from each other in their sources of news, about one-fifth of those in each party are in a more isolated kind of media bubble – getting political news in a given week only from outlets predominantly used by people who align with them politically, according to data from the Center's

About one-fifth in each party only get political news from sources with like-minded audiences
Of all adult young adults who get political news, election news from sources with right- or left-leaning audiences

Party	Like-minded audience news bubble	All other news sources
Democrats	20%	80%
Republicans	18%	82%

Note: Republicans and Democrats include those who say they do not party. Source: Survey of U.S. Adult News Habits, 20 Nov. 11, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

REPORT MATERIALS

- Methodology
- Election News Pathways November 2019 Survey

“A new global gender divide is emerging”

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A wide ideology gap is opening up between young men and women in countries across the world

Political ideology of 18-29s (0 liberal minus 100 conservative), by sex

South Korea | US | Germany | UK

Outside the west, there are even more stark divisions. In South Korea there is now a yawning chasm between young men and women, and it's a similar situation in China. In Africa, Tunisia shows the same pattern. Notably, in every country this dramatic split is either exclusive to the younger generation or far more pronounced there than among men and women in their thirties and upwards.

The #MeToo movement was the key trigger, giving rise to fiercely feminist values among young women who felt empowered to speak out against long-running injustices. That spark found especially dry tinder in South Korea, where gender inequality remains stark, and outright misogyny is common.

"Its not perfect,
but a two minute
recording would
yield better results"

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TECH · DEEPFAKES

A deepfake 'CFO' tricked the British design firm behind the Sydney Opera House in \$25 million scam

BY PRARTHANA PRAKASH
May 17, 2024 at 7:32 AM EDT



Arup was attacked by deepfake fraudsters earlier this year.
TERO VESALAINEN—GETTY IMAGES

"A deepfake 'CFO' tricked the British design firm behind the Sydney Opera House in \$25 million scam"

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What Will It Mean to Question Reality in 2024?

Questioning Reality for 2024 is the growing sense that we can't always tell what's real and what isn't. This includes a feeling that we don't all share the same reality. We believe it represents a collective uneasiness about a time of enormous change that is a transitional phase rather than an endpoint.

- Patients are already struggling to understand what information about their health they should believe. In-person connections to HCPs are going to become more important in 2024—as will the requirements for these busy professionals to combat misinformation.
- The misinformation and disinformation surrounding COVID has a long tail, still impacting our world today.
- Mental healthcare and wellness will continue to remain important as an antidote to the stress and anxiety induced by feelings of uncertainty.
- There will be a call for more transparency in healthcare communications and greater scrutiny on who is delivering these messages.
- The upcoming US presidential election and UK general election are going to be inflection points for this cultural force, moving us out of the transitional post-COVID period we're currently in. The search for "Sources of Truth" will become critically important in 2024. Generally, reputable sources like scientific journals and traditional news media may regain prominence.
- This is challenging in a time with large-scale layoffs of journalists at media companies across all industries.



The Impact and Future of Questioning Reality

The biggest impact of this cultural force is declining trust. Trust in the world, trust in friends and family, trust in oneself, and trust in organizations and brands. Trust is built on a shared foundation. How can we trust each other if we live separately and only with sometimes overlapping realities—especially if we already feel uneasy and uncomfortable about this fractured reality.

In the long term, we'll move out of this transitional adjustment period and accept that we live in a mixed-reality environment. Regulation won't be the only solution, more experience will also help.

How to Leverage This Cultural Force

Recommendations:

- We understand that our audiences of patients and HCPs are feeling shaken and lack trust. Anything we can do to use pharma-specific content to reinforce confidence and stability can counter those feelings and build loyalty.
- Avoid leaning into the “fake.” Brands should carefully consider public-facing products or campaigns that might erode trust.

The best way to put this understanding into practice is to start with the data you already have about your brand, competitors, and the market as a foundation. Then, we will use what we know about this important cultural force driving change in 2024 to project potential scenarios. Once we understand what can happen, we're better able to aim our brand at the most desirable potential future.



Interested in exploring how to build brand trust?

Reach out to Klick's Strategy
team today.



Meredydd Hardie
VP, Group Director Strategy

[Get in Touch](#)

CULTURAL FORCE 2



COLLECTIVE ISOLATION

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

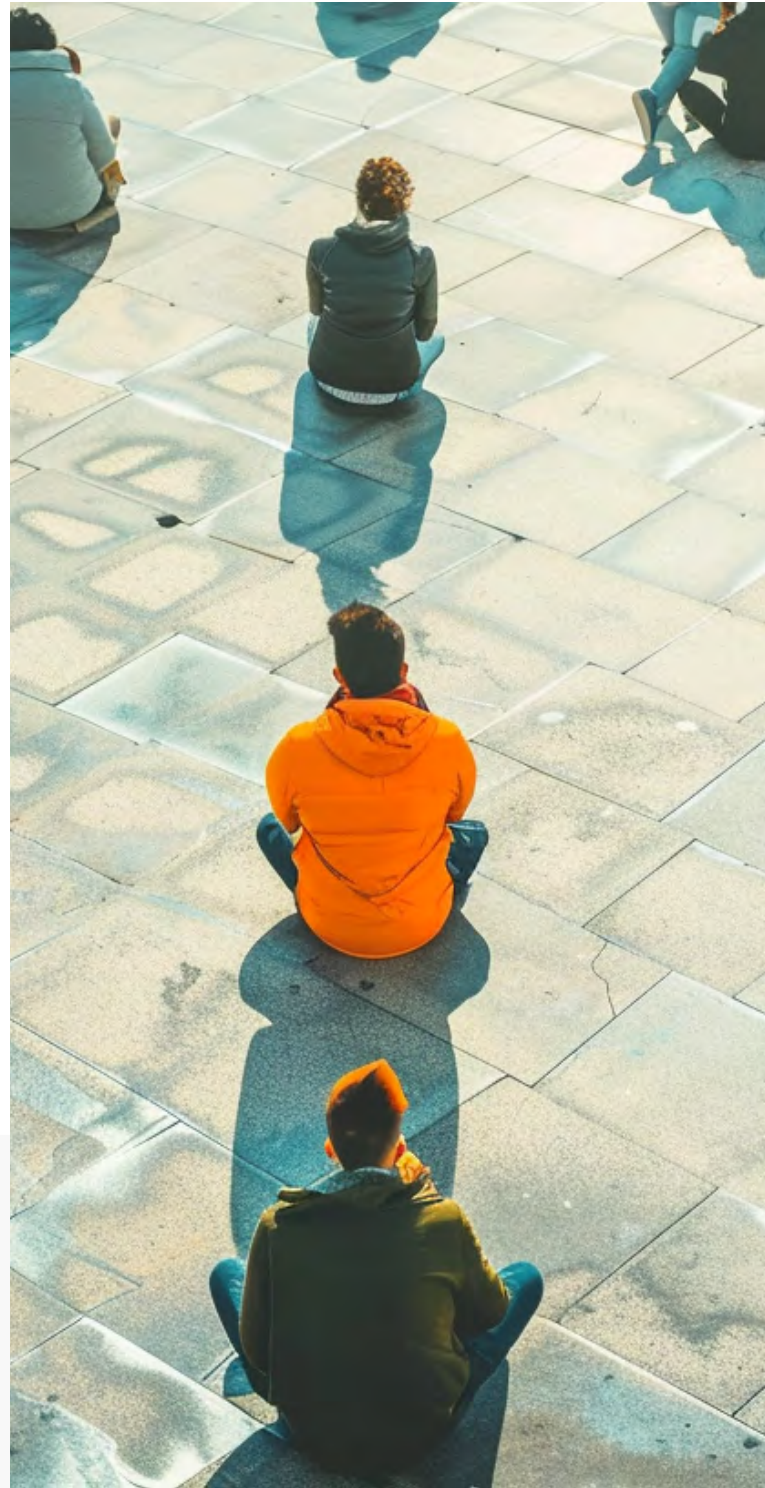
- The impact of collective isolation on patient behavior and expectations underscores the need for life sciences marketers to incorporate community-building initiatives into their strategies.
- The importance of cultural insights for guiding life sciences marketing strategies that facilitate the discovery of opportunities for enhanced patient engagement and support.
- Practical marketing tactics to counteract collective isolation, including the use of digital platforms for community engagement and how to craft support-focused content and establish patient advocacy partnerships to nurture connections and enhance health outcomes.

ALONE TOGETHER: DECODING THE PARADOX OF COLLECTIVE ISOLATION

What to Know

People lack connections, causing them to feel more isolated from each other, plus they experience a loss of belonging and community.

- We can see this cultural force manifesting through signals like the Friendship Recession and the Loneliness Epidemic, extreme self-care, the rise of shared event culture, and online buzzwords like “Main Character Syndrome” and “NPCs.”
 - In gaming, an NPC is a non-player character. The term has evolved to describe real-life people who are perceived to lack independent thought.
- Connections are fraying, but the need for community still exists; brands that foster that sense of community fill a real need.
- Community (formal and informal) is built into our assumptions about how healthcare works, and a lack of that support for patients and HCPs is going to challenge how treatment is delivered.



WHAT IS COLLECTIVE ISOLATION?

Last year, the Strategic Futures team at Klick discussed an emergent sentiment we called “Me, Myself, and I”: a growing feeling from many people online and offline in many situations boils down to the sentiment that “no one else is going to look after me, so I’d better do it myself.” It can manifest as both intense loneliness and potential extreme individualism.

It’s almost paradoxical that so many are experiencing the same feelings of isolation with little support simultaneously, which is why we call this cultural force Collective Isolation. There are typically many signals and drivers when it comes to a force this big in culture. In this case, we can look to both the decline in trust around institutions that have bolstered connections in the past (see the previous cultural force [Questioning Reality](#) for more on declining trust) and the fact that people lack real connections to others that might mitigate some of this extreme individualism.

Like the other cultural forces, the roots of Collective Isolation didn’t begin in 2023 and 2024, but we are seeing them come to a head. What’s different now is that people are beginning to recognize the impact of this force and make active efforts to create community in new ways.



The Signals

We introduced the concept of signals as leaves in our model of cultural forces in the introductory article of this series. Signals are the fast-moving trends and fads that represent a moment in time. As a collection, they can indicate the direction culture is moving.

Several signals and factors tell us about this cultural force, including:

Signal: The Loneliness Epidemic

- In 2023, the US Surgeon General issued an official advisory called “Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation.” In it, he says, “People began to tell me they felt isolated, invisible, and insignificant. Even when they couldn’t put their finger on the word ‘lonely,’ time and time again, people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, from every corner of the country, would tell me, ‘I have to shoulder all of life’s burdens by myself,’ or ‘if I disappear tomorrow, no one will even notice.’ **It was a lightbulb moment for me: social disconnection was far more common than I had realized.**”
- Health insurer Cigna reports that since 2018, when their survey was first conducted, there has been nearly a 13% rise in loneliness.

Signal: The Friendship Recession

- In 1990, 3% of men and 1% of women had no close friends, but in 2021 that rose to 15% of men and 10% of women.

- The trend of social disconnection goes hand in hand with the trend of shrinking friendship circles, sometimes called the Friendship Recession.
- In recent years, research that was first primarily connected with men has uncovered that social circles are shrinking for almost everyone. We have fewer good friends and a wider set of loose, often online, “acquaintances.”

Signal: Event Culture

- At the same time that we see this rise in evidence pointing to a lack of connection, we also see signals that tell us that the need for that connection hasn’t gone away.
- Big music events and other pop culture moments have become ways for people to create community and find connection. Look at the community formed around the Barbie movie, the Beyoncé Renaissance World Tour, and even the nostalgia people have for the Pokémon Go craze.
- People are doing more than just attending events (like in the past); they participate by wearing coordinated costumes or curated outfits and engage in little in-group rituals (like exchanging friendship bracelets or “everybody on mute,” where the crowd at the Beyoncé show goes silent together).



— SIGNAL SNAPSHOTS

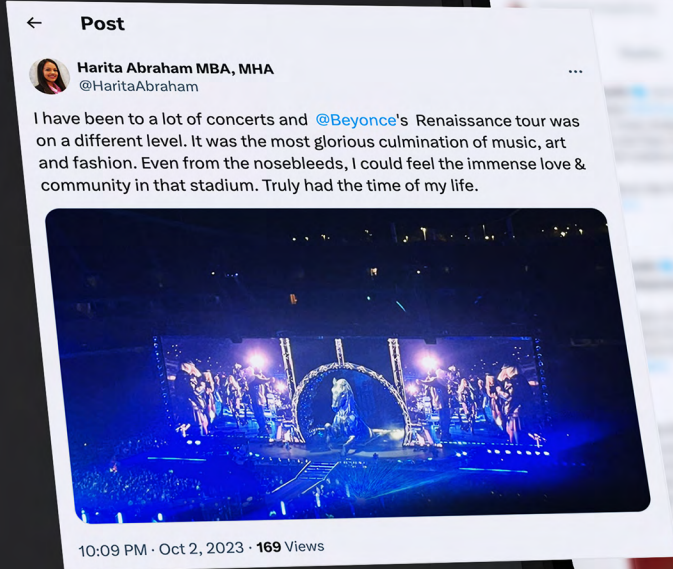
"I have been to a lot of concerts and @Beyonce's Renaissance tour was on a different level"

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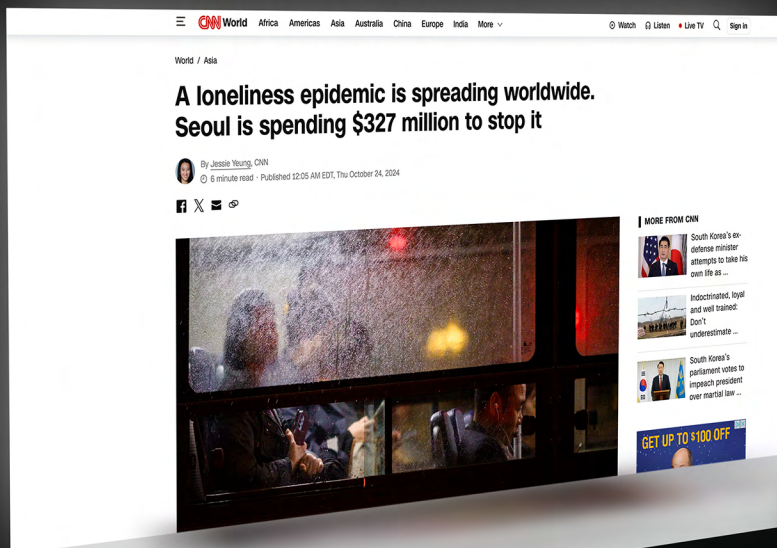
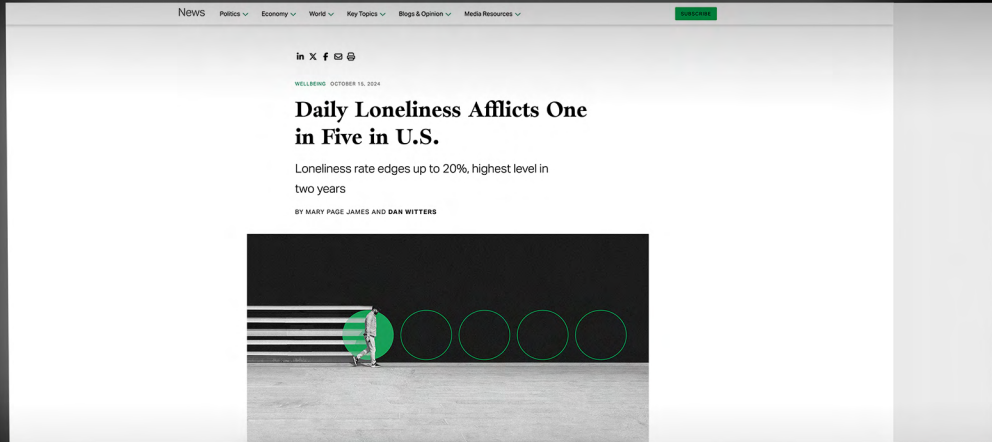
"The overwhelming sense of universal community during the summer of Pokemon Go"

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"Daily Loneliness
Afflicts One in Five
in U.S."

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"A loneliness
epidemic is
spreading worldwide.
Seoul is spending
\$327 million to stop it"

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What Will It Mean to Be Collectively Isolated in 2024?

People often turn to material things as solutions to feeling bad instead of relationships, and having mostly online friends exacerbates extreme behaviors. People lack support networks in difficult times.

- Care partners are critical in healthcare. What happens to patients when they lack people to rely on? They become more dependent on professionals. The HCP/patient relationship is going to become even more important as a point of connection.
- HCPs are people too and are also suffering from this collective isolation. This will only accelerate the existing levels of burnout and drive more from the profession.
- Retail stores and health centers have something in common—they can both focus on creating a sense of community that will increase connection.
- There will be increased development and implementation of innovative technologies and practices that enhance human connections in healthcare settings. Virtual health platforms, telemedicine solutions, and initiatives focusing on patient and healthcare provider experiences may gain prominence. The emphasis may be on creating environments that address medical needs and foster a sense of connection and support.
- As recognition of the impact of this cultural force becomes more widespread, we are already seeing an increase in intentional community-seeking, creating opportunities for communities and connections to form and grow.



The Impact and Future of Collective Isolation

We see the impact of collective isolation all around us. It's present as a factor in the increasing rates of mental illness and depression, the lack of patience and grace we have with each other both online and offline, and the commonly expressed sentiment of feeling overwhelmed. It's much easier to feel overwhelmed if we feel like we have to carry the burden ourselves.

In the longer term, new, more intentional communities may address some of the feelings of isolation for some people, but collective isolation isn't just a feeling, it's a real demographic trend, and there will be serious impacts on systems and organizations that have depended on informal community ties to deliver services. Those communities and connections will simply not exist for many people.

How to Leverage This Cultural Force

Recommendations:

- Consider that traditional expectations of community support and care partners for patients may not exist in the same ways we could rely on previously. We need to build in opportunities for connection and support like patient advocacy groups and non-traditional communities.
- Get creative when thinking about what makes a community and what might alleviate isolation. A recent study showed that users of an "AI friend" actually had better mental health than non-users. New challenges require new thinking and innovative solutions.

The best way to put this understanding into practice is to start with insights about your brand, competitors, and the market as a foundation. These are your own internal signals and can be combined with some of the signals in this article to project future scenarios. Using those scenarios, you can create a strategic roadmap that moves your brand and business towards a desirable potential future. The future isn't something that happens to you, we are all involved in shaping it.



Striving for connection?

Let us help you design strategies that foster community and engagement.

Talk to the **Klick Strategy** team today.



Meredydd Hardie
VP, Group Director Strategy

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CULTURAL FORCE 3



VALUE VS. VALUES

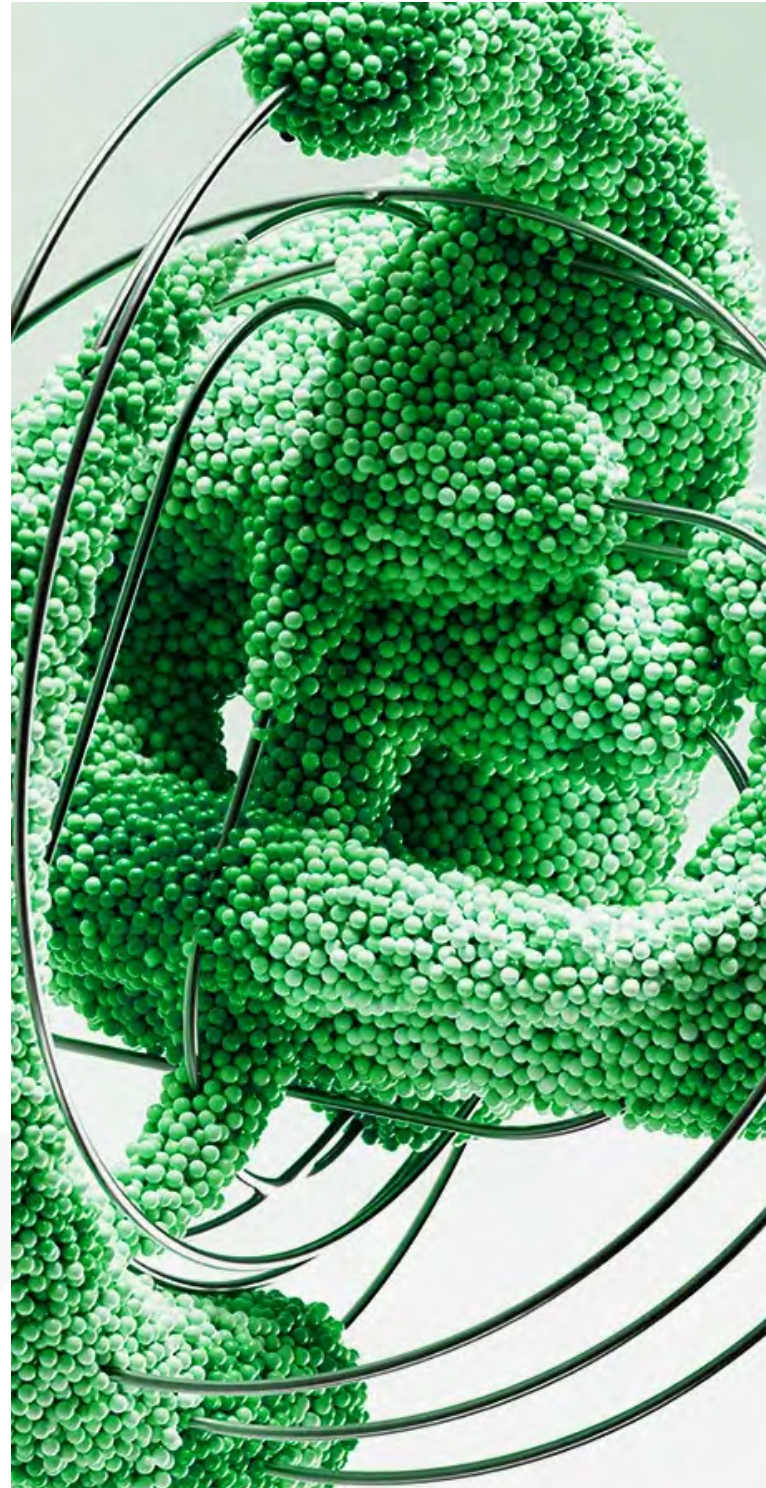
WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Economic pressures and growing turmoil are reshaping consumer priorities, necessitating a balance between personal values and financial constraints, particularly in the pharma and healthcare sectors.
- HCPs and consumers are increasingly emphasizing corporate values in their decisions, though economic realities often lead to a pragmatic approach, prioritizing cost over brand values.
- Consumer behavior is shifting towards practicality with a growing demand for transparency, affordability, sustainability, and value-driven marketing amidst economic challenges.

COST VS. CONSCIENCE: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW PARADOX OF CHOICE

What to Know

- Consumers, patients, and HCPs, especially younger ones, still look for brands that align with their personal values.
- Economic pressures necessitate a more pragmatic approach among consumers, patients, and HCPs. Economic challenges often force individuals to reassess their purchasing decisions, emphasizing the immediate impact on their wallets and the cost of living.
- The tension between the desire to support brands that align with personal values and the economic reality of limited spending power reflects a delicate balance. In such times, the perceived importance of “brand values” might take a backseat when faced with rising prices, job losses, and shrinking product sizes.
- For marketers, navigating this landscape involves a nuanced understanding of these shifting dynamics. Brands may need to find innovative ways to communicate their values without compromising on affordability.



WHAT IS VALUE VS. VALUES?

For years, marketers and researchers have talked about how millennials and other consumers are eager to support brands with values that match their own. That was a fairly straightforward proposition in more prosperous times, but in 2024, we're facing growing economic and labor turmoil.

In 2022, the Klick Strategy team talked about the "great re-prioritization," the idea that workers were no longer prioritizing work and pushing back on the expectations of capitalism.

In 2024, we're seeing a new shift in priorities, this one much more practical. For many consumers, it's as if a veil has been lifted as brands and corporations lay off thousands of workers, raise prices and shrink products, reduce customer service, and implement other cost-saving measures. Brand values can feel less important than the impact of a rising cost of living. Many consumers now say that price is more important than values when it comes to specific products—they may have been nice to have previously, but we can't afford that anymore. But at the same time, consumers are still using their buying power to drive change by boycotting brands that don't align with their values.



The Signals

We introduced the concept of signals as leaves in our model of cultural forces in the introductory article of this series. Signals are the fast-moving trends and fads that represent a moment in time. As a collection, they can indicate the direction in which culture is moving.

Several signals and factors tell us about this cultural force, including:

Signal: HCPs Emphasis on Pharma Corporate Values

- Outside a medication's functional characteristics, such as efficacy and safety profile, corporate reputation is the No. 1 factor that influences an HCP's decision to prescribe or recommend a therapy.
- 73% of healthcare professionals say that biotech and pharmaceutical companies should add value to society beyond providing their goods and services "to a large extent."
 - It's not just consumers who emphasize values when it comes to brands. HCPs care about values as well, especially as a sign that companies care about more than profits.

Signal: Carrefour "Shrinkflation" Campaign

- European mega grocery retailer saw the opportunity to connect with consumers around this cultural force in 2023.

- The brand identified shrinkflation (CPG products getting smaller while prices increase) as a key consumer issue and chose to align themselves publicly with their consumer.
- Carrefour stores used "shelf-talkers" and other approaches to call out examples of shrinkflation on shelves.
- These efforts built brand trust and reinforced their brand values without requiring consumers to spend more.

Signal: Rise of Thrifting to Maintain Sustainable Values and Save Money

- Resale shops have grown 7% yearly for the past two years, with over 25,000 stores in the US. Approximately 16–18% of Americans shop at thrift stores, and 12–15% shop at consignment or resale shops annually.
- The EU fashion-resale secondhand market is projected to double in the next five years and will be twice as big as the fast-fashion market by 2030.
- Thrifting is more than a fashion trend. The practice has been widespread for years at this point and is projected to continue to grow.
 - There is more going on than just being fashionable—thrifting offers a way to save money and participate in fashion without compromising values.



— SIGNAL SNAPSHOTS

“Carrefour puts
'shrinkflation' price
warnings on food to
shame brands”

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The Future of Strategy 2024

This report highlights key findings from WARC's annual survey of strategists worldwide and also unpacks three key themes considered pivotal to the future of strategy.

[Corporate social responsibility](#) / [Sustainability](#) / [AI & strategy](#) / [Briefing agencies, contracts](#) / [Account planning, strategic planning](#) / [Role of the planner, strategist](#) / [Talent, skills, HR](#) / [Strategy](#)

- Strategy's positive impact can be hard to measure and prove; level-up your value by knowing the commercial side of your clients' business, and the metrics that matter to them.
 - Although strategists see their roles as translators, there's a disconnect with clients in core areas like measuring effectiveness; on compensation, most strategists prefer a fixed/project-based fee.
 - Commitment to DEI is waning and goals related to climate and DEI are absent from client briefs; this highlights the tension of balancing commercial priorities with better outcomes for people and planet.
- Proving the value of strategy is even more important in the age of...

"The Future of
Strategy 2024"

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Counter Signal: Shein and Temu Domination

- The continued popularity of ultrafast ultra-discount brands like Shein and Temu underscores the tension of value vs. values. The brands' lack of sustainability is well-known, but fans are drawn to the low prices and instant gratification.
- **Shein's online net sales grew from US\$2.5 billion in 2019 to a projected US\$48 billion by 2024.**

Signal: Gen Z staying focused on mental health

- Gen Z consumers in the US want the brands they support to align with their values, especially those around mental health **(53% of Gen Z in the US want brands/companies to support mental health).**
- "We have to care because we're the ones that are going to be here for the next 70 or so years. We're going to reap the benefits—and possible consequences—[of our actions now] but when it comes to a budget, we don't have the money that some of the other generations have."

Gen Z panelist during a June 2023 CommerceNext event in New York City.



How Will the Tension between Value and Values Manifest in 2024?

This cultural force is full of tension. People want to live their values and don't feel great about compromising them, but economic pressures will continue to be a reality for many through 2024 and beyond. Consumers, patients, and HCPs are going to look for ways that they can stay true to their beliefs within their economic means:

- **Increased Demand for Transparency:** Consumers may become more discerning, seeking greater brand transparency regarding their pricing strategies, labor practices, and overall business ethics. Companies that openly communicate their values and demonstrate a commitment to accountability could gain trust in this environment.
- **Innovation in Affordability and Sustainability:** Brands might focus on innovating in affordability and sustainability. Businesses that can provide cost-effective products or services while maintaining a commitment to eco-friendly practices may resonate well with consumers caught between economic challenges and environmental concerns.
- **Evolution of Value-Driven Marketing:** Marketers may need to refine their messaging to strike a balance between emphasizing the practical benefits of affordability and addressing the ethical concerns of consumers. Campaigns that authentically showcase a brand's values, coupled with real-world economic considerations, could resonate strongly.



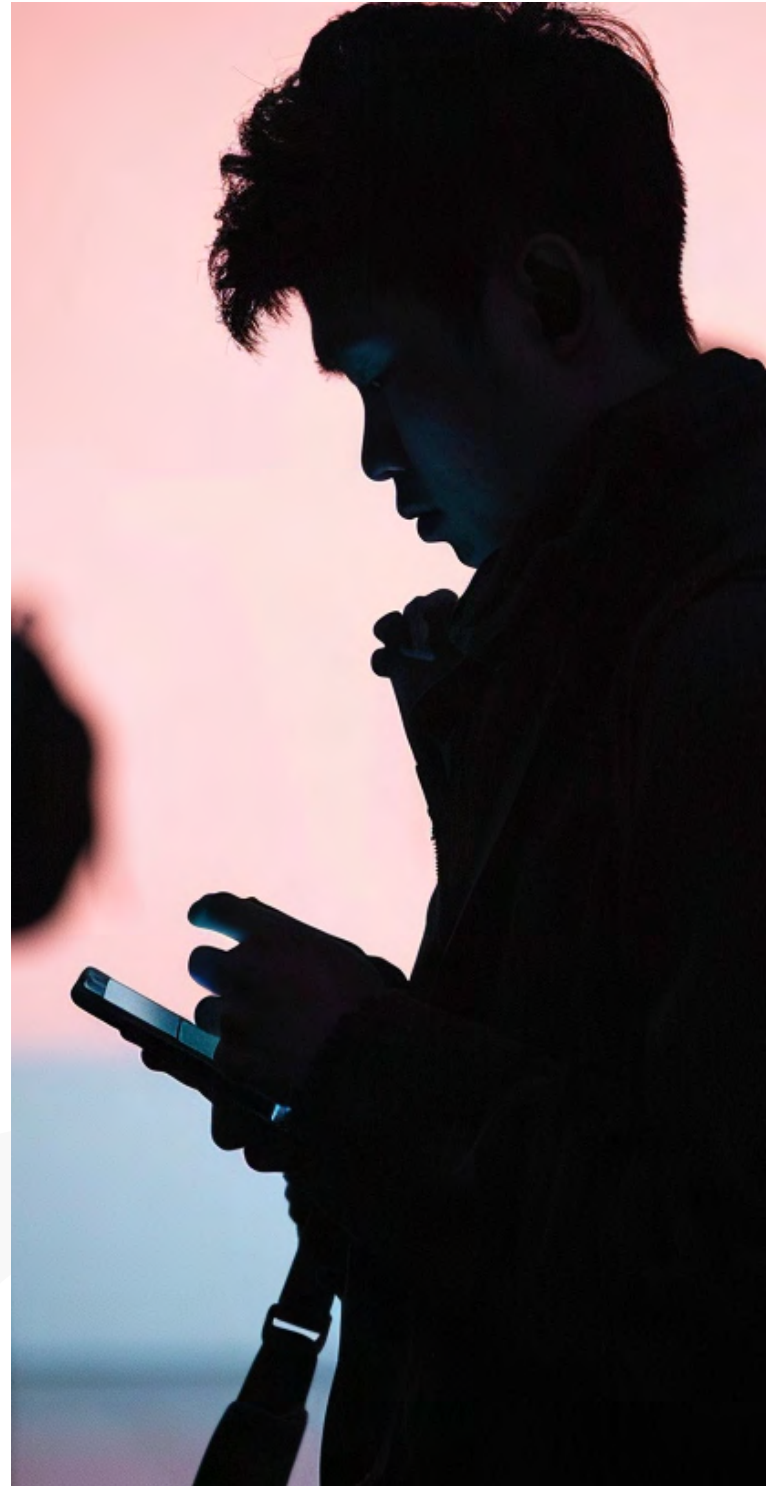
How to Leverage This Cultural Force

Recommendations:

Provide ways for patients and HCPs to feel that they are not compromising their values to afford what they need by emphasizing patient support.

- Continue supporting patient advocacy groups that align with your medications' therapeutic areas. This commitment demonstrates a commitment to helping patients beyond the product itself.
- Collaborate with healthcare providers to ensure they are informed about patients' economic challenges. Provide resources for healthcare providers to assist patients in navigating costs.
- Be as transparent and authentic in messaging and pricing as possible. "Value" encompasses more than just a low price.

It's essential to consider applying this cultural force at both the brand and corporate levels. Corporate and brand reputation play important roles in driving this kind of value. Strategic Futures and strategic road-mapping are practices that can work at multiple levels and are ideally coordinated to drive maximum benefit.



Are you struggling to balance collaboration, advocacy, and transparency with fiscal decisions?

Let Klick's Strategy team help you navigate this inevitable tension.

Let's talk.



Meredydd Hardie
VP, Group Director Strategy

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CULTURAL FORCE 4



REINVENTING SUCCESS

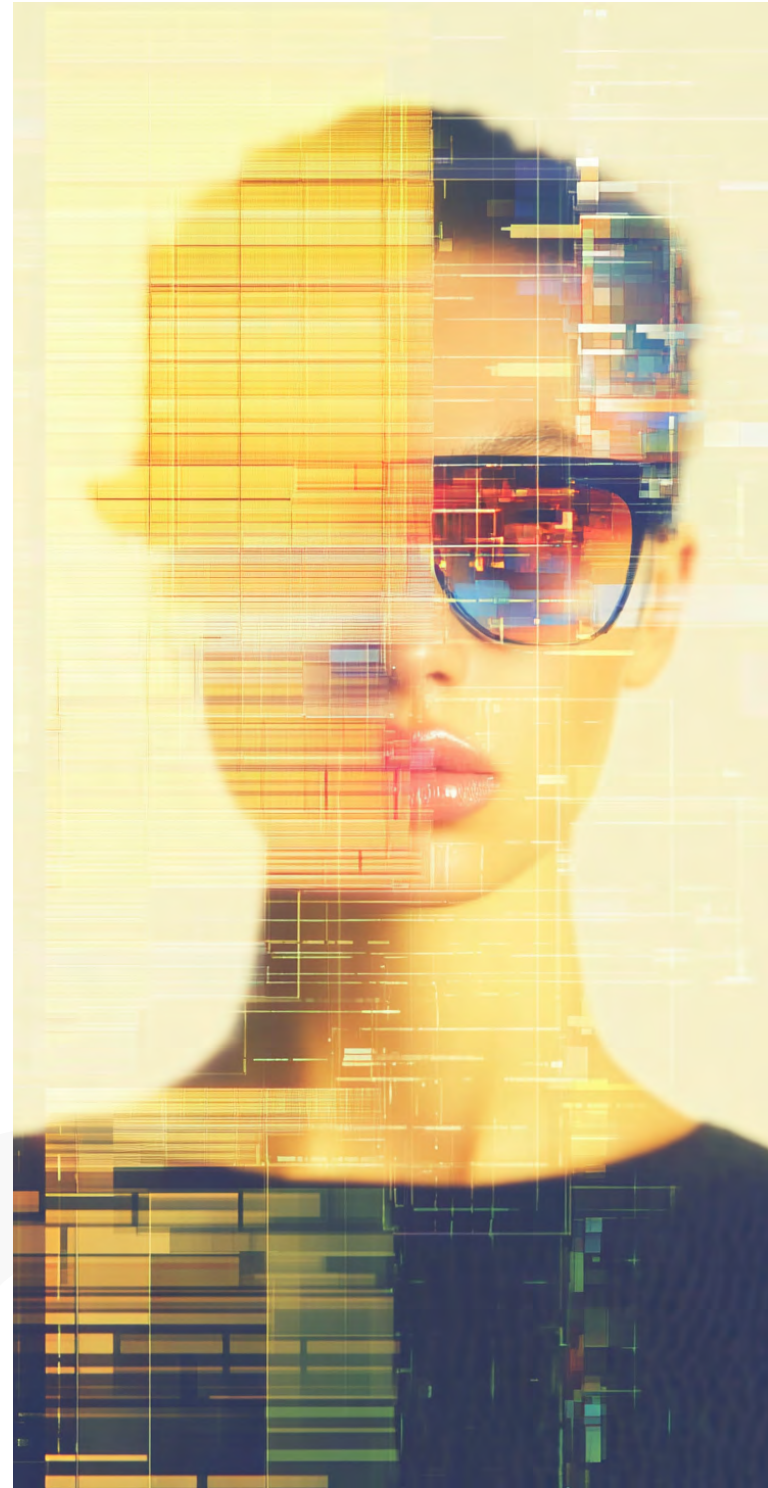
WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Personal definitions and milestones are replacing traditional indicators of success, reflecting shifting societal values.
- Generational tensions arise as digital media, especially social media, encourages diverse narratives of success, diverging from traditional norms.
- The healthcare and pharmaceutical industries must adopt a holistic, patient-centered approach to align with changing perceptions of success and well-being.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN SUCCESS: REDEFINING ACHIEVEMENT AND CULTURAL MILESTONES

What to Know

- Many traditional markers of success are either irrelevant or out of reach for many people.
- Individuals are now more focused on defining success and milestones on a personal level rather than adhering to societal norms.



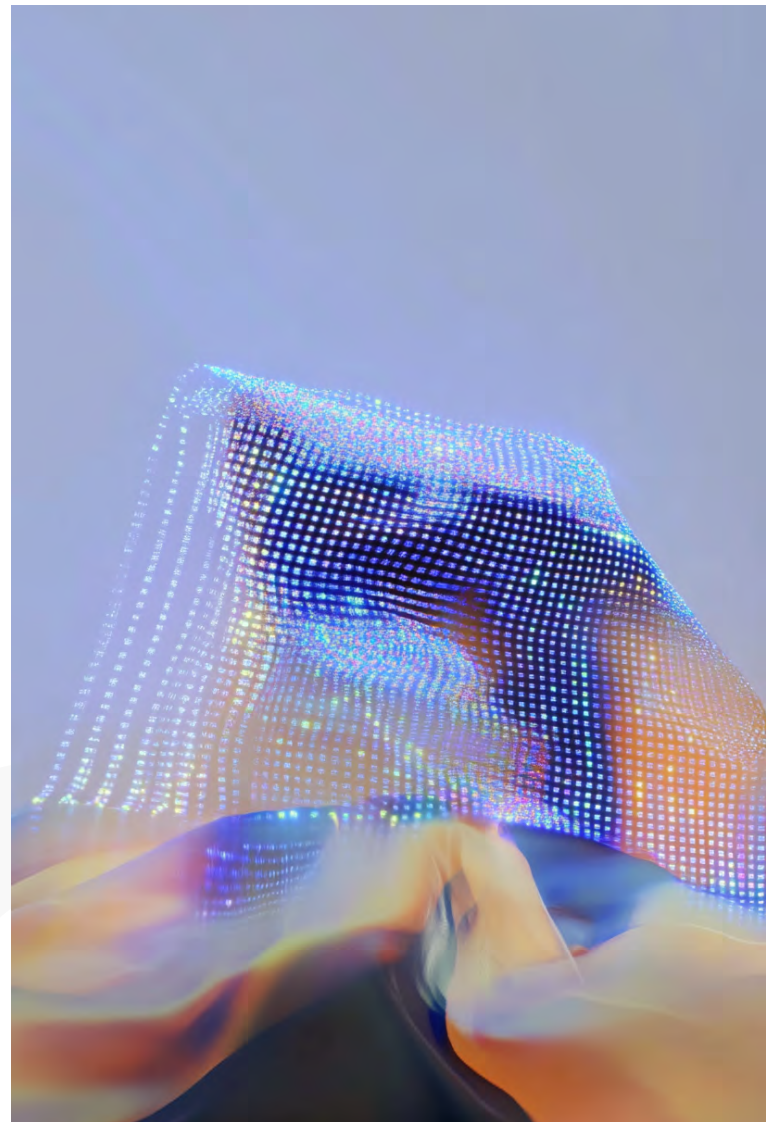
WHAT IS REINVENTING SUCCESS?

As many traditional milestones of success (e.g., marriage, buying a house, a successful career, children, certain professions, and job titles) become out of reach, consumers are redefining their futures with new milestones. These traditional milestones are still preserved in many aspects of culture as the norm.

We're in a period of flux where everyone is beginning to define this on a more individual level with minimal collective agreement (see the previous cultural force, [Collective Isolation](#)). This shift can cause tension between generations as values become misaligned. The tension is most pronounced as the expectations for certain success markers evolve and change—what was once a coveted goal for many can now be seen as undesirable. This includes career paths, working styles, marriage and children, and virtually every traditional marker of “success.”

Reinventing success is a natural consequence of the one-to-one media landscape created by the internet (among other things) and the drastic economic changes impacting things like homeownership and careers. As consumers, we have limited shared cultural touchpoints and now limited agreement on important milestones.

Navigating this period of flux involves acknowledging and respecting diverse paths to success. It also requires open communication between generations to bridge the gap in understanding and expectations. The search for meaningful milestones becomes a more individualized journey, reflecting each person's unique values and aspirations.



The Signals

In the introductory article of this series, we introduced the concept of signals as leaves in our model of cultural forces. Signals are the fast-moving trends and fads that represent a moment in time. As a collection, they can indicate the direction in which culture is moving.

Several signals and factors tell us about this cultural force, including:

Signal: Declining Homeownership and Marriage Rates

- In 2023, the proportion of households occupied by owners declined to 65.7%.
- Almost 90% of the world's population now live in countries with falling marriage rates. In the US, marriage has declined by 60% since the 1970s.
- Both homeownership and marriage are traditional markers of adulthood. Economic realities and changing priorities mean that fewer people reach these goals.

Signal: Death of the Monoculture?

- In 2017, many proclaimed that the final episode of the TV show Game of Thrones would mark the end of the monoculture—the last time so many people would watch the same show simultaneously. That may have been overstated to some degree, but we do exist in a fractured media landscape, one that encourages rapid trend cycles and hyper-targeted content.
- We have fewer shared experiences, not just in success milestones but in the content we consume, reinforcing the differences between generations and groups of people.

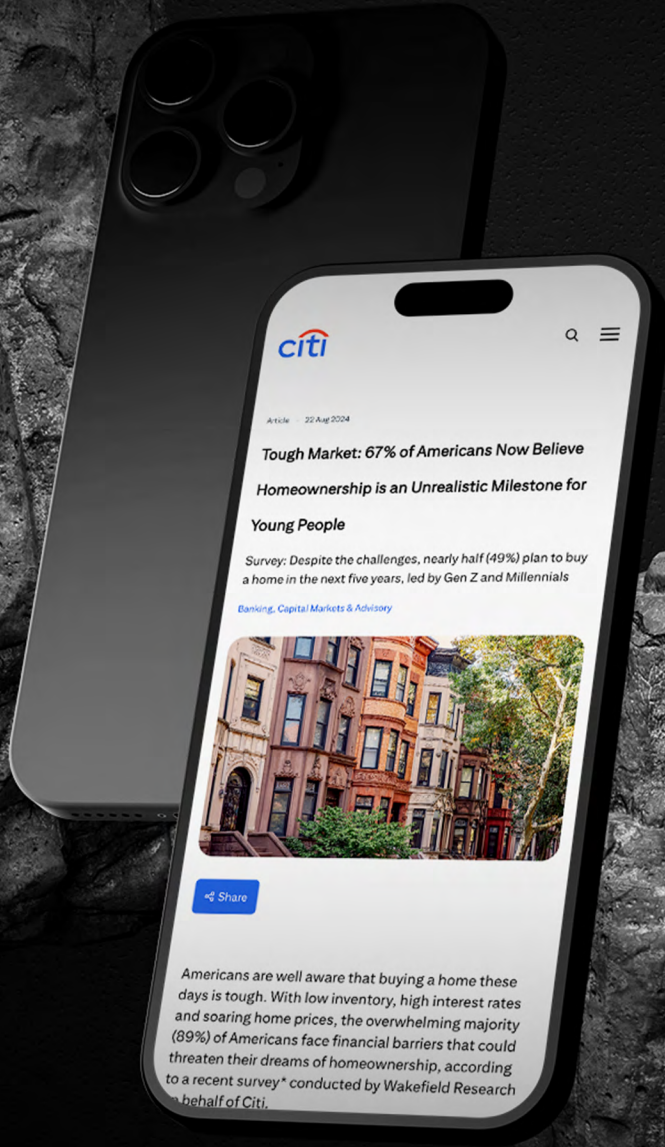
Signal: “Not-So-Quiet Quitting” Hits Healthcare

- “Quiet quitting” refers to the intention of employees to fulfill their assigned duties but nothing more—no overtime, no extra projects, and no long-term loyalty or devotion to the employer. This isn't typically as relevant in healthcare as it is in other professions, but there are signs that the same pressure leading to quiet quitting is present.
- In many HCP roles, the inability to quit quietly manifests as burnout.
- In the study “Quiet Quitting among Nurses Increases Their Turnover Intention: Evidence from Greece in the Post-COVID-19 Era,” 60.9% of nurses were considered quiet quitters, while 40.9% experienced high levels of turnover intention.

Signal: Clearblue Pregnancy-Test Campaign

- The key audience for Clearblue pregnancy test is in the middle of the Reinventing Success cultural force. The brand demonstrated their understanding of changing markers of success in a recent TV ad.
- The ad departs from the most frequent imagery of couples anticipating a child and includes a younger, single woman who is unsure.
- Clearblue has connected to a new affinity group rather than trying to hold onto the traditional milestones in what can be a very traditional category.





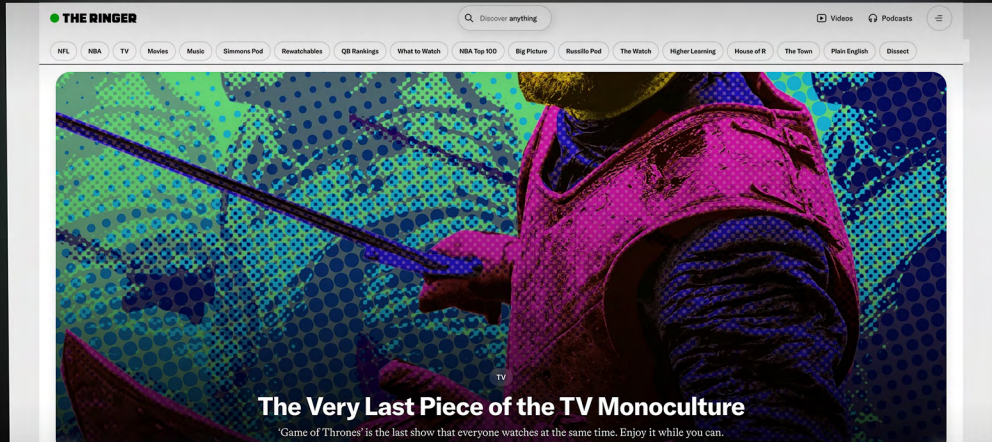
"Tough Market:
67% of Americans
Now Believe
Homeownership
is an Unrealistic
Milestone for Young
People"

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— SIGNAL SNAPSHOTS

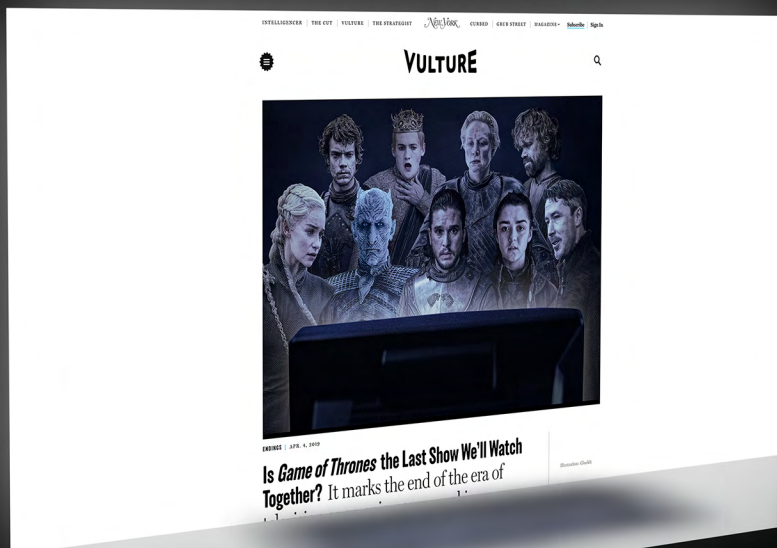
“The Very Last
Piece of the TV
Monoculture”

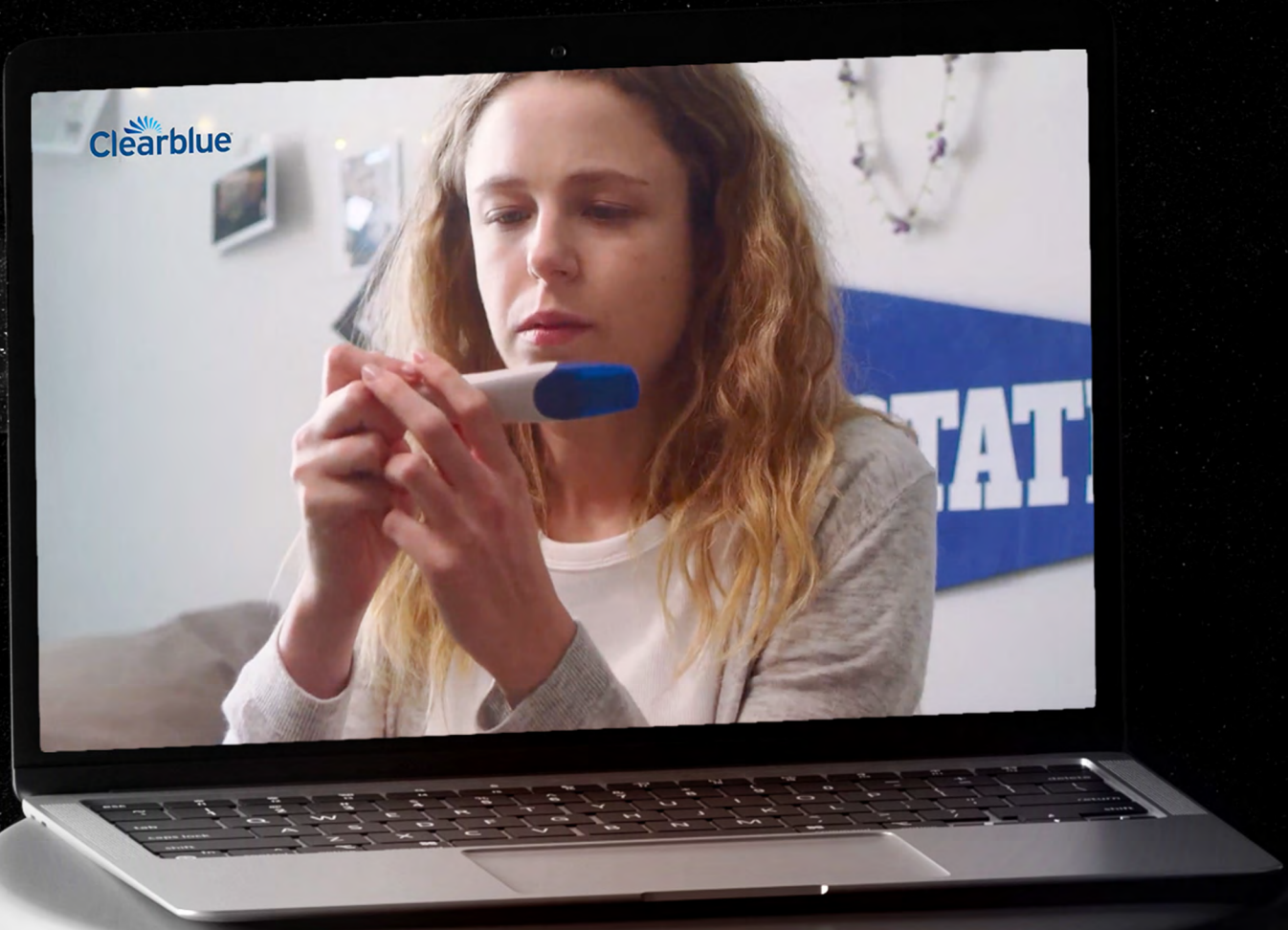
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“Is Game of Thrones
the Last Show We’ll
Watch Together?”

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Clearblue

"Clearblue
Pregnancy-Test
Campaign"

—
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Video](#)

What Will It Mean to Reinvent Success in 2024?

- Social media plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of success and milestones. Individuals often showcase their unique journeys, creating diverse narratives that can influence others' perspectives. We are exposed to more possibilities than before.
- Patients are often prioritizing different aspects of their health and well-being beyond traditional markers, such as mental health, holistic wellness, and quality of life, impacting their openness to some treatment options and long-term adherence.
- As we adjust to the new realities and develop new individual goals and markers, there can be a sense of an extended adolescence and youth culture well into the 30s and 40s.
- Lifelong learning and adaptability are becoming essential for all, but particularly for HCPs as they navigate a rapidly changing world and career landscape.
- The changing landscape is leading to more flexible career paths for healthcare professionals, allowing them to explore alternative models of care, such as telemedicine, concierge medicine, or community-based initiatives.



The Impact and Future of Reinventing Success

The shift in milestones challenges the conventional narrative of success, emphasizing a more holistic approach that goes beyond career achievements and material possessions. The impact extends to various aspects of life that influences career choices, relationships, and overall lifestyle decisions.

Generational tensions may arise as older generations uphold traditional expectations while younger generations seek non-conventional paths. Bridging this gap will require open communication and understanding, acknowledging each generation's evolving values and aspirations. Moreover, the digital age is pivotal in this cultural shift, allowing individuals to share their diverse journeys and perspectives globally. As a platform for self-expression, the internet contributes to the decentralization of cultural touchpoints, creating a more individualized yet interconnected society.



How to Leverage This Cultural Force

Recommendations:

- Pharmaceutical marketers and brands may need to diversify their messaging to resonate with patients on unique life paths, focusing on the broader concept of health and wellness.
- The key for all stakeholders is adaptability. Patients, doctors, and pharma marketers will need to navigate this cultural shift collaboratively, understanding and responding to the evolving expectations and values of individuals in a more personalized and diverse healthcare landscape.
- Overall, the cultural shift towards individualized milestones and well-being is likely to reshape the role of healthcare providers. Embracing a more holistic, patient-centered, and adaptable approach will be essential for healthcare professionals to meet the evolving needs of their patients in this changing cultural landscape.
- The emerging emphasis on cancer patient digital twins (CPDT) is a signal of this shift in health and pharma.

When we talk about reinventing success, we are talking about a huge demographic and cultural shift that has ramifications across all aspects of healthcare and society at large.

Applying the thinking from this article means looking beyond one industry or lens and considering the wider world. A good start is to develop scenarios across those multiple lenses and then develop industry- or brand-specific implications that can be incorporated into strategic and tactical planning. Another approach is to challenge assumptions around patients and care partners constantly—we can no longer assume care partners are spouses, for example.



Interested in how changes in conventional markers of success can be translated into personalization and connection? **Let Klick's Strategy team help guide and suggest opportunities to reach.**



Meredydd Hardie
VP, Group Director Strategy

[Get in Touch](#)

CULTURAL FORCE 5



FRICITION AVERSION

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Friction aversion is growing across social, workplace, academic, and medical settings, leading to efforts to minimize friction while educating consumers about managing inevitable challenges.
- The trend towards frictionless experiences is influencing societal behaviors and expectations and driving demands for faster healthcare services and curated online interactions.
- Signals of friction aversion include the rise of “pay to skip” services and administrative burden-reduction efforts while countermovements emphasize the value of deeper connections and accepting life’s inherent challenges.

FROM PATIENT BURNOUT TO PERFECTIONISM: UNPACKING FRICTION AVERSION IN 2024

What to Know

- Whether we recognize it or not, we are all searching for a more frictionless experience.
- This desire to avoid friction is present in social, workplace, academic, and medical settings.
- Brands and services have long sought to optimize customer experience and reduce friction. This practice has now expanded to include virtually every industry and setting.
- Our heightened expectations can cause us all to overreact to even minor annoyances.
- Friction can't be avoided entirely. Brands will need to find a solid compromise between reducing pain points and educating consumers and patients on how to manage friction.



WHAT IS FRICTION AVERSION?

In 2023, TIME magazine published an article titled, “Long Waits, Short Appointments, Huge Bills: U.S. Health Care Is Causing Patient Burnout.” The article describes the challenges patients face in getting treatment, not focusing on the big issues but rather the smaller, more mundane experiences of boredom, waiting, and administrative confusion. This experience can also be described as “friction.”

Living and working in a very online world optimized to reduce friction at every touchpoint has trained us to expect perfection and avoid friction at all costs. The rise of online platforms and technology has indeed conditioned people to expect seamless, frictionless experiences. Instant gratification and efficiency have become the norm, leading to a lower tolerance for inconveniences or delays. This trend is visible in various aspects of life, from customer service interactions to personal relationships.

On the positive side, increased efficiency and convenience can save time and enhance productivity. However, on the negative side, an aversion to friction may lead to a lack of resilience and adaptability when faced with challenges. Life inherently involves ups and downs, and the aversion to friction might hinder personal growth and resilience.

This cultural force can impact relationships, personal pursuits, and even societal norms. It's crucial to balance enjoying the benefits of a streamlined world and acknowledging the inevitable friction of real-life experiences.



The Signals

In the introductory article of this series, we introduced the concept of signals as “Leaves” in our model of cultural forces. Signals are the fast-moving trends and fads that represent a moment in time. As a collection, they can indicate the direction in which culture is moving.

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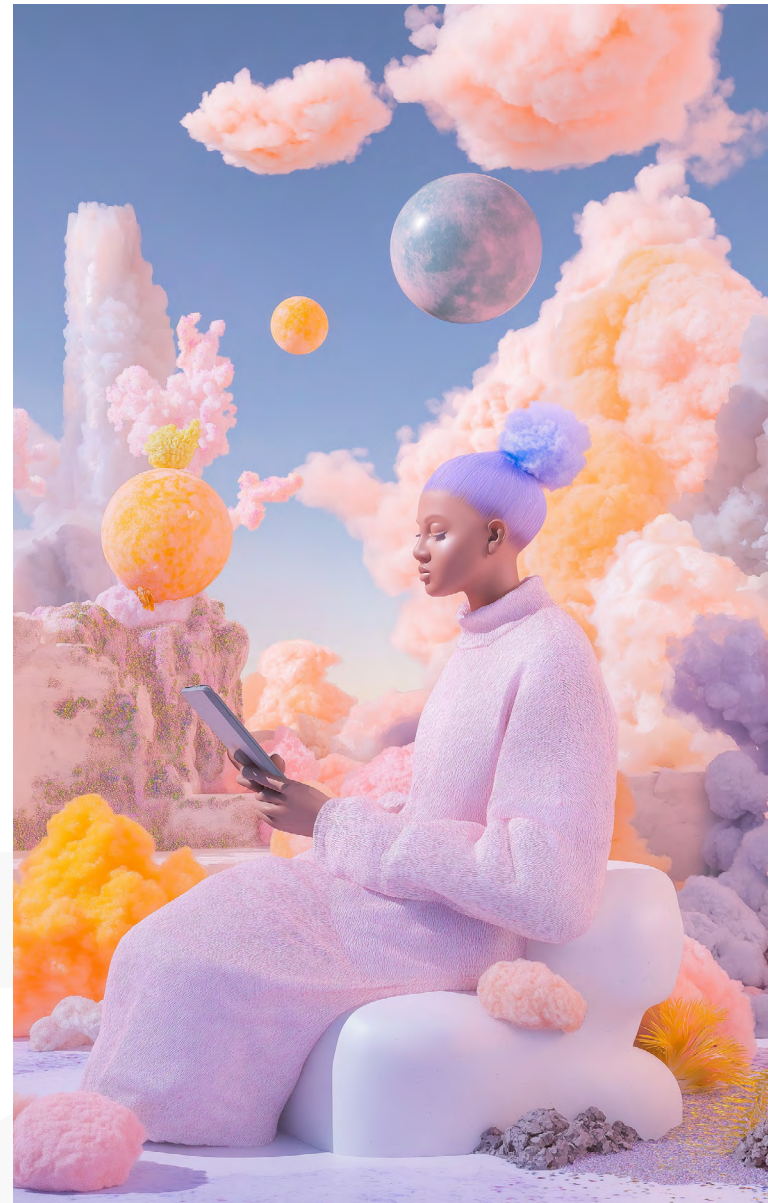
Signal: Rise of “Pay to Skip” Services

- Airports are hotbeds of friction at every interaction: check-in, baggage drop, security, boarding, and border control. Every step of a journey can be difficult.
- We can see a rise in programs that work to reduce or eliminate virtually all of this friction, most of which are pay-to-play:
 - Trusted traveler programs
 - The rise of airport lounge benefits and other credit card benefits like early boarding. According to Chase, lounge access is often the top-cited reason for its credit card sign-ups

Signal: Pursuit of Perfectionism

- A 2018 study found that “Recent generations of young people are more demanding of themselves, perceive that others are more demanding of them, and are more demanding of others.”

- As perfectionism rises and we become more demanding of ourselves and others, our tolerance for disruption diminishes. We have unrealistically high expectations and experience even smaller amounts of friction as frustration.



— SIGNAL SNAPSHOTS

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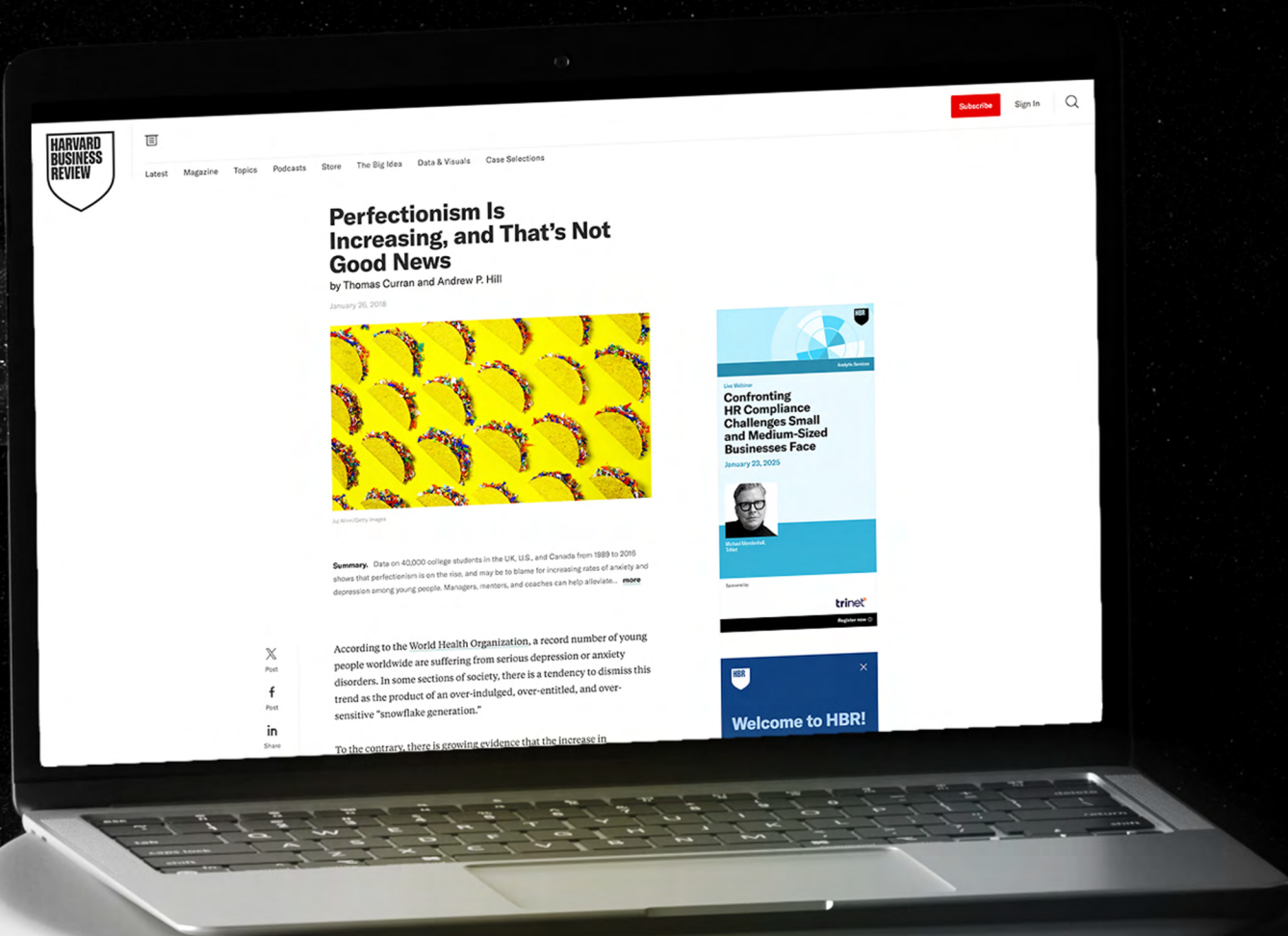
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Perfectionism Is Increasing, and That's Not Good News

by Thomas Curran and Andrew P. Hill

January 26, 2018



By iStock/Getty Images

Summary. Data on 40,000 college students in the UK, U.S., and Canada from 1989 to 2016 shows that perfectionism is on the rise, and may be to blame for increasing rates of anxiety and depression among young people. Managers, mentors, and coaches can help alleviate... [more](#)

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According to the World Health Organization, a record number of young people worldwide are suffering from serious depression or anxiety disorders. In some sections of society, there is a tendency to dismiss this trend as the product of an over-indulged, over-entitled, and over-sensitive "snowflake generation."

To the contrary, there is growing evidence that the increase in

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"Perfectionism Is Increasing, and That's Not Good News"

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Signal: Disney—A Case Study in Reducing Friction

- A study found that 42% of visitors to Disney World visited without children. Disney adults are drawn to the parks for lots of reasons, but one of them may be the ways that Disney has all but eliminated the experience of friction.
- As it's impossible to eliminate friction (lineups are inevitable), they have focused on making that experience as pleasant as possible.
- This shift wasn't accidental. Disney set out to "eliminate friction at every touchpoint" and created a world where the friction-averse can relax—an unexpected paradise.
- We can see a similar trend in the rise of all-inclusive holidays.

Signal: Paperwork Pushback

- A 2022 Doximity poll shows that 46% of physicians believe decreasing administrative burden would be the most effective intervention in reducing burnout.
- Two-thirds of doctors in a Canadian Medical Association survey report that time on administration tasks has increased over the past five years.

- No one becomes a doctor or healthcare professional because of a passion for paperwork. The passion is patient care and helping people, and the increase in administrative burden is friction that gets in the way of the true work—this is why the administrative burden is such a driver of physician burnout.



What Will Friction Aversion Look Like in 2024?

People are already working to remove friction from their lives (either consciously or unconsciously), and we can see this coming to life in social, professional, and medical settings:

- Patients may become more impatient and expect quicker solutions to their health concerns, leading to an increased demand for immediate appointments, rapid diagnoses, and faster treatment outcomes. Healthcare providers may face pressure to deliver faster results, potentially affecting the quality of patient care.
- The aversion to friction could continue to influence social dynamics, potentially leading to more curated online personas and interactions. People might be inclined to avoid controversial or challenging discussions, which could impact the depth and authenticity of online relationships, especially in a healthcare setting.
- Businesses and services might focus on offering highly customized experiences to cater to individual preferences, reducing the chances of dissatisfaction or friction. However, striking a balance between customization and the potential loss of authenticity or spontaneity could become a challenge.
- The continuous pursuit of frictionless experiences may contribute to stress and anxiety when individuals are faced with inevitable challenges or uncertainties. Addressing mental health concerns related to the pressure for perfection and the avoidance of discomfort could become increasingly important.



The Impact and Future of Friction Aversion

When we look at cultural forces, we must recognize that change doesn't happen in one direction. If there is a considerable force in culture, a counterforce often pushes back against it. Societal dynamics are complex, and trends and behaviors may not be universally adopted.

Countermovements emphasizing the value of deeper connections, slower-paced living, and accepting life's inevitable challenges may also gain traction, creating a nuanced cultural landscape. Balancing the benefits of frictionless experiences with the importance of resilience, patience, and meaningful connections will likely be a central theme in navigating the evolving cultural and societal impacts in the near future.

How to Leverage This Cultural Force

Recommendations:

- Healthcare providers and policymakers need to navigate this trend carefully, ensuring that the pursuit of efficiency does not compromise healthcare's quality, safety, and holistic nature. Illness and treatment will often be uncomfortable, scary, boring, and generally full of friction. Unlike Disney World, it isn't something we can optimize completely.
- Education and communication about the importance of patience in healthcare, especially for long-term treatments and preventive care, will be crucial to managing these potential challenges.

This article is our final exploration of the cultural forces shaping our world in 2024 and beyond. The Klick Strategic Futures team and wider strategy community will continue to explore the signals that inform us about our industry, world, and shared future throughout the rest of 2024.



While we may want to reduce friction, there are inevitabilities that we must face in the healthcare industry. Uncover strategies to create opportunities for great connection and prioritizing resilience with the Klick Strategy team. Reach out today.



Meredydd Hardie
VP, Group Director Strategy

[Get in Touch](#)

LOOKING BACK AT 2024



REVISITING THE FIVE CULTURAL FORCES THAT SHAPED OUR WORLD

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- As public skepticism toward information grows, people are increasingly taking control of their health, careers, and beliefs, empowered by a shift toward self-reliance and personal discernment over traditional structures.
- Despite economic pressures and a sense of social isolation, there is a growing movement toward community reconnection, as people and brands navigate the balance between affordability and shared, values-driven experiences.
- The desire for effortless, efficient interactions in daily life and healthcare is rising. Consumers expect brands to align with their personal values and provide purpose-driven experiences.

As we near the end of 2024, it's time to take a step back and assess the cultural forces that we predicted would be important in shaping our world (and the worlds of patients and HCPs) over the past year. From Questioning Reality to Friction Aversion, these trends have profoundly influenced behaviors, attitudes, and industry dynamics.

In this article, we'll recap how these forces have played out and consider their ongoing relevance as we look ahead to 2025.

Cultural Force #1 Questioning Reality

Questioning Reality remains highly relevant. The signals outlined in the original article remain active in our culture:

- AI-generated content
- Misinformation and disinformation
- Algorithmically generated news bubbles

Additional signals of relevance include increased discussions of AI regulation. Governments and tech companies have been examining and debating, in some cases, implementing regulations around AI to prevent the spread of misinformation. For example, recent EU regulations are focusing on transparency in AI-generated content.

[Accenture's 2024 Life Trends Survey](#) reports that 52% of people have seen fake news or articles, 38.8% have seen fraudulent product reviews online, and 52% have experienced deepfake attacks or scams for personal information and/or money.



While the core of Questioning Reality remains, it's evolving into a broader skepticism toward all forms of information. This perception includes a growing distrust of digital content and traditional media, experts, and institutions. People are increasingly questioning not just the content but the motives behind the information they receive, reflecting a deepening cynicism.

Healthcare isn't immune to this cultural force. One example is the increase in the number of DTC pharma sites. There is some analysis of whether pharma's move to DTC might disrupt traditional HCP-patient relationships, potentially amplifying the risk of misinformation if patients begin to rely on online or algorithm-driven advice without HCP oversight.

At Klick Health, the team in our Klick Labs has developed a tool to help detect deepfakes through the use of vocal biomarkers. This team recognized the spread of this cultural force and its impact on trust and are working on solutions. "Our findings highlight the potential to use vocal biomarkers as a novel approach to flagging deepfakes because they lack the telltale signs of life inherent in authentic content. These signs are usually undetectable to the human ear, but are now discernible thanks to machine learning and vocal biomarkers," said Yan Fossat, Senior Vice President, Klick Labs, and principal investigator of the study.

The Future of Questioning Reality

While "Questioning Reality" remains a topic of concern, its relevance could wane as people become more accustomed to the prevalence of AI and misinformation in daily life.

Recent reports suggest that public skepticism towards online content has increased, leading to a more critical and discerning audience. Additionally, efforts to enhance digital literacy, such as educational campaigns and the development of tools to verify the authenticity of content, are helping individuals navigate the complex information landscape more effectively. As a result, the initial shock and confusion that fueled this cultural force may diminish, making Questioning Reality less of a dominant influence compared to previous years as we come to accept our mixed reality environment.



Cultural Force #2 Collective Isolation

Looking forward, Collective Isolation is expected to maintain its relevance, particularly as economic pressures and evolving work environments continue to shape social interactions. The economic challenges many face, including rising living costs and financial instability, are likely to limit social engagement, further entrenching feelings of isolation.

Moreover, the persistence of remote and hybrid work models, despite some pushback towards in-office work, suggests that many individuals will continue to experience reduced in-person interactions, making collective isolation an ongoing issue. As these trends persist, the cultural force of Collective Isolation will likely remain a significant factor in shaping social dynamics and mental health. In fact, Gallup reported in October that “Twenty percent of U.S. adults in Gallup’s most recent quarterly data report feeling loneliness ‘a lot of the day yesterday.’”

Has a Counterforce Emerged?

A clear counterforce to Collective Isolation has indeed emerged, characterized by a resurgence in community-building and neighborliness. In recent months, there has been a significant increase in participation in local events and social clubs, such as running groups, book clubs, and community gardens. These activities are not just about socializing but are focused on rebuilding the fabric of a community frayed by years of isolation.

The Future of Collective Isolation

Several recent signals indicate that Collective Isolation will remain highly relevant, though it is being increasingly challenged by efforts to rebuild community. Surveys and studies continue to highlight the prevalence of loneliness and social disconnection, particularly among younger demographics. Media coverage of the loneliness epidemic remains robust, with major publications regularly discussing its societal impacts worldwide.

In-person dating apps and events are a growing antidote to the isolating feel of traditional dating apps, with [“attendance at dating and singles events targeted at millennials and Gen Z increasing 49% this year compared to last year.”](#)

This connection is critical to our health: Socially isolated people are at a 25% increased risk of cancer-related mortality and a 32% increased risk of strokes. Risk of heart disease also goes up by a staggering 29%.

The more distributed model of care emerging in healthcare (including telehealth and other options) may also contribute to Collective Isolation as a force. While this model provides convenience, it also risks weakening patients’ relational ties with HCPs, who traditionally offer guidance and support. As healthcare becomes more consumerized, there’s a risk that patients will feel isolated, managing treatments on their own without the sense of community or support that an HCP relationship provides.



Cultural Force #3 Value vs. Values

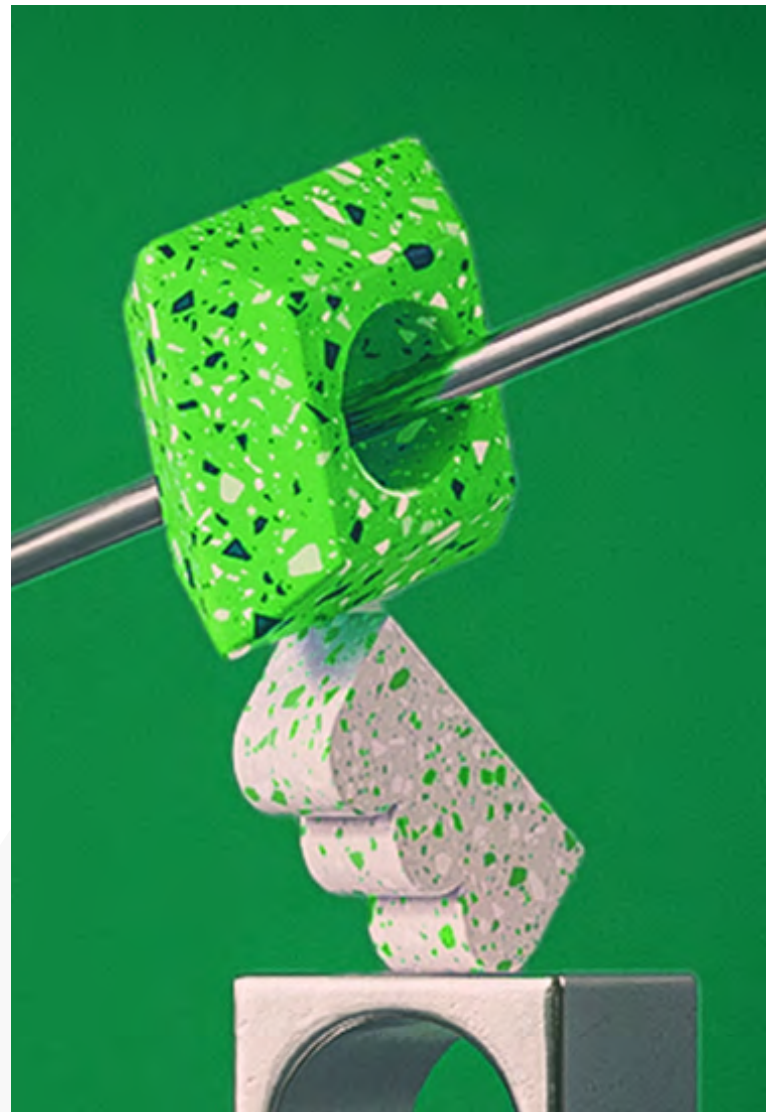
The Value vs. Values cultural force remains highly relevant as we move through 2024. The ongoing economic challenges, including persistent inflation and concerns over a potential recession, force many people to prioritize cost-effectiveness in purchasing decisions.

While the fundamental tension between value and values remains, there is a noticeable shift towards a more nuanced consumer approach. Recent trends indicate that consumers are not entirely abandoning their values but are instead seeking out brands that offer both affordability and ethical practices. This is seen in the growing popularity of affordable yet sustainable brands and the increased scrutiny of companies' social and environmental impact. This evolution suggests that consumers are becoming more discerning, demanding both value and values in a way that aligns with their financial constraints.

The Future of Value vs. Values

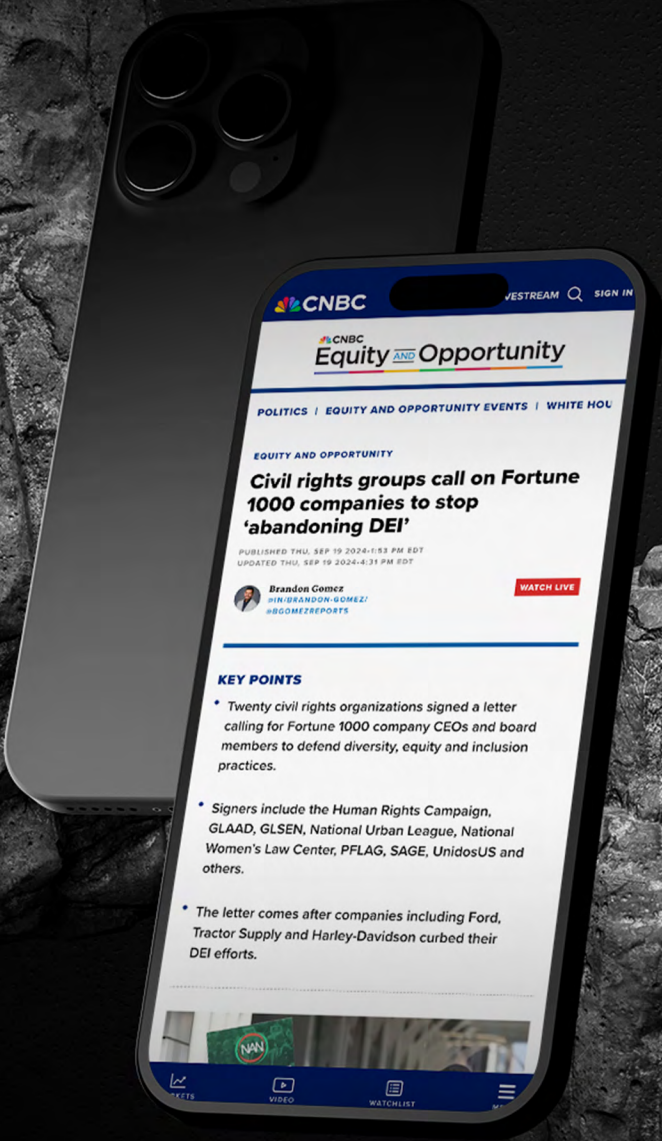
It seems likely that this trend will continue to drive consumers' and brand behavior over the coming years. While many people remain committed to inclusion and diversity, big companies are less inclined than ever to commit energy and resources to these initiatives. US companies have been making headlines for withdrawing their funding for DEI initiatives.

The next four years may represent a critical turning point in US health-equity initiatives. There are ongoing concerns about the future of the Affordable Care Act and other programs focused on supporting access to care and treatment. Millions of Americans will likely be without affordable healthcare.



“Civil rights groups call on Fortune 1000 companies to stop ‘abandoning DEI’”

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Cultural Force #4 Reinventing Success

As we look toward the future, the relevance of Reinventing Success is only expected to grow. Economic factors such as the high cost of living, student debt, and economic instability are likely to continue pushing individuals, especially younger generations, to redefine success in more personal and flexible terms. Additionally, the continued factors of remote work and the gig economy are expected to continue influencing how success is measured, with more people valuing experiences and autonomy over traditional career paths and material possessions.

Recent career trends indicate that more people are embracing nonlinear career trajectories, including frequent job changes, sabbaticals, and shifts in industry, as part of their success journey. This change reflects a broader acceptance of diverse and individualized life paths. In fact, PwC reports that “28% more employees say they are likely to change employers in the coming year than during the ‘great resignation.’”

The Future of Reinventing Success

There continues to be ongoing tension between those who uphold traditional milestones like marriage, homeownership, and stable careers as essential markers of success and those who reject these in favor of more individualized definitions. Citi reports that “...there’s a wide generational gap in attitudes

toward the financial benefits of homeownership: 87% of Boomers and 83% of Gen X believe homeownership is still one of the best ways to build wealth compared to 77% of millennials and 65% of Gen Z. This divide might be related to the uphill climb younger Americans face in the market: 35% of Gen Z and 28% of millennials are most likely to be held back from buying a home because they feel they may never be able to afford one.”

Additionally, economic pressures are causing some individuals to reluctantly pursue some traditional milestones due to financial necessity, such as choosing stable but less fulfilling jobs over more uncertain but passion-driven careers.

Success in healthcare now includes empowering patients to take control of their health rather than passively following traditional healthcare pathways. Integrating digital health tools and distributed care options reflects a response to generational expectations for accessible, flexible healthcare aligned with personal definitions of well-being.



Cultural Force #5 Friction Aversion

As we look ahead, the relevance of Friction Aversion is expected to increase, particularly as technology continues to evolve. The growing integration of AI and automation in various aspects of life will likely further reduce friction in everyday experiences, reinforcing the desire for seamless interactions. However, this trend also raises concerns about the potential erosion of patience, resilience, and critical problem-solving skills as individuals become increasingly accustomed to frictionless environments. The balance between convenience and the ability to navigate challenges will be a critical area of focus as society continues to adapt to these changes.

The Future of Friction Aversion

The relevance of Friction Aversion is evident in the continued expansion of services and technologies designed to minimize inconvenience. Behaviors like pre-researching experiences as diverse as a restaurant visit to a doctor visit speak to the desire to reduce uncertainty. Additionally, the increasing adoption of AI-powered customer service tools to reduce wait times and enhance user experiences reflects the ongoing demand for frictionless interactions. Some people are also beginning to understand that AI tools may offer some solutions to friction. Salesforce reports that “Nearly half (47%) of global desk workers express enthusiasm about AI handling tasks from their jobs (typically administrative tasks).”

In healthcare, wearable devices and real-time data analytics are often discussed as tools to help patients manage their health proactively, thereby avoiding the complexity of reactive care. These tools promise a frictionless patient journey by enabling early detection and continuous monitoring, ideally preventing severe conditions that require extensive treatment. However, while wearables help reduce certain pain points, they introduce others, such as data fragmentation across various devices and platforms.



Interested in what's on the horizon for 2025? Want to get ahead or leverage these cultural forces that may impact your business or spark ideas? **Let's talk.** The Klick Strategy team is excited to connect with you.



Meredydd Hardie
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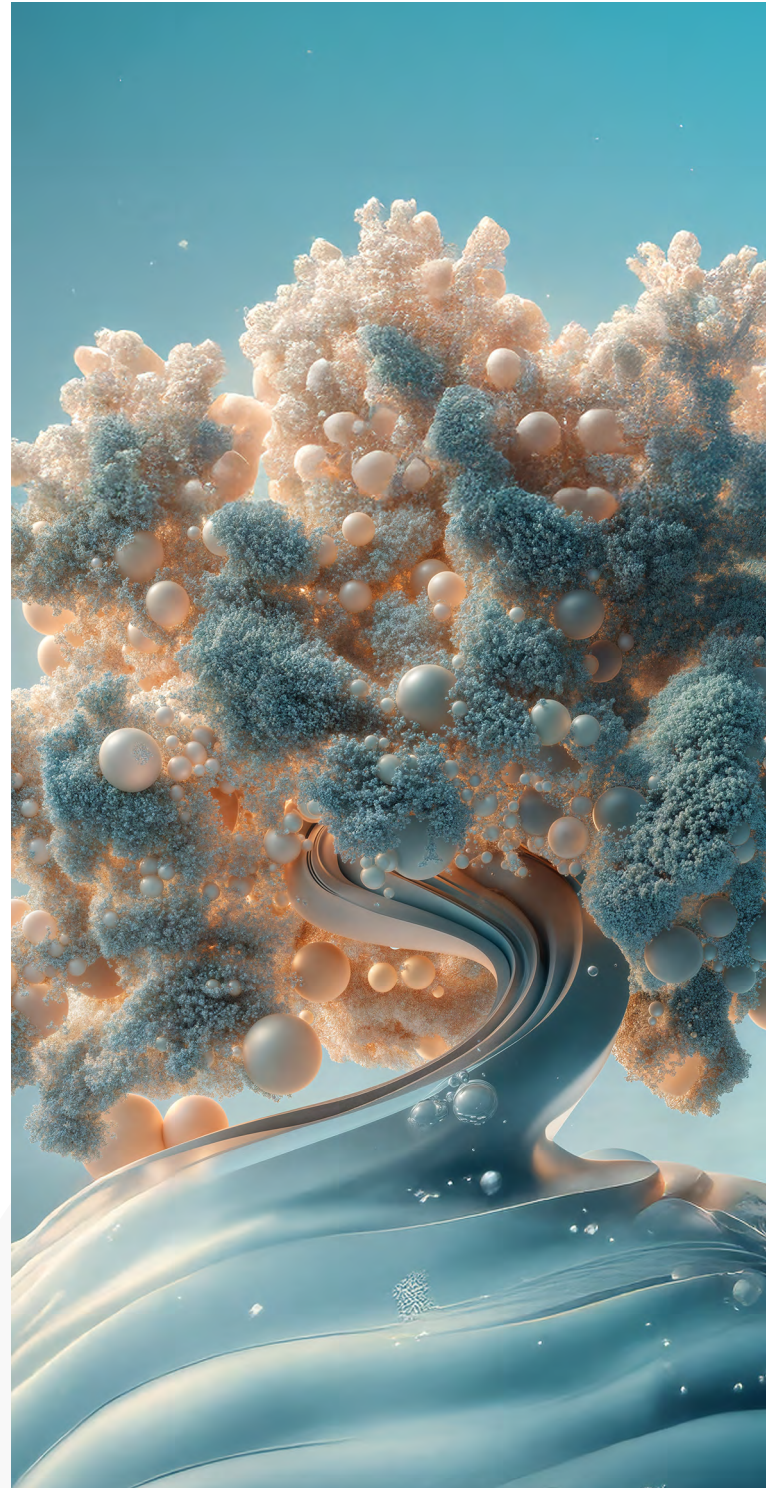
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CONCLUSION

It's clear that the cultural landscape continues to evolve. While some of the important cultural forces of 2024 may be waning in influence, others are adapting or giving rise to new trends that will define the year ahead.

Stay tuned for our upcoming articles, where we'll explore the emerging cultural forces of 2025 and what they mean for industries, brands, and society at large.

[Want to see it in action?](#)





We welcome your questions and feedback. Please contact:

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