

HEALTH CARE IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD:

CHAPTER 4

Making the Consumer Experience Around Mental Health More Accessible

COVID-19 further amplified conversations around mental health. Its importance, nuance, and all-too-frequent inaccessibility are top of mind for health care brands and consumers alike. Holistic health's presence in today's zeitgeist gives health care brands an opportunity to partner with consumers on their journey to self-improvement, but only those who do it effectively will come out on top.

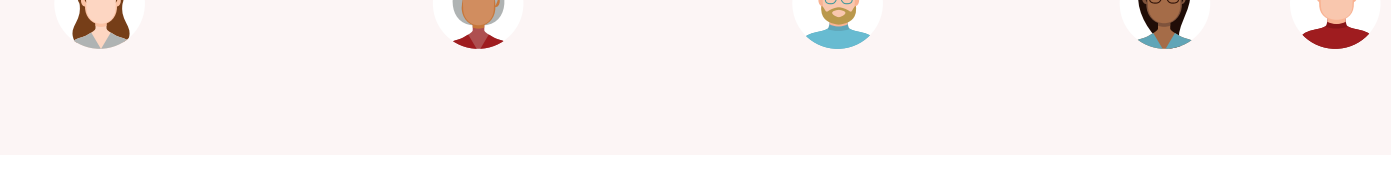
TIP 1

Acknowledge differences in routine and willingness to share among generations

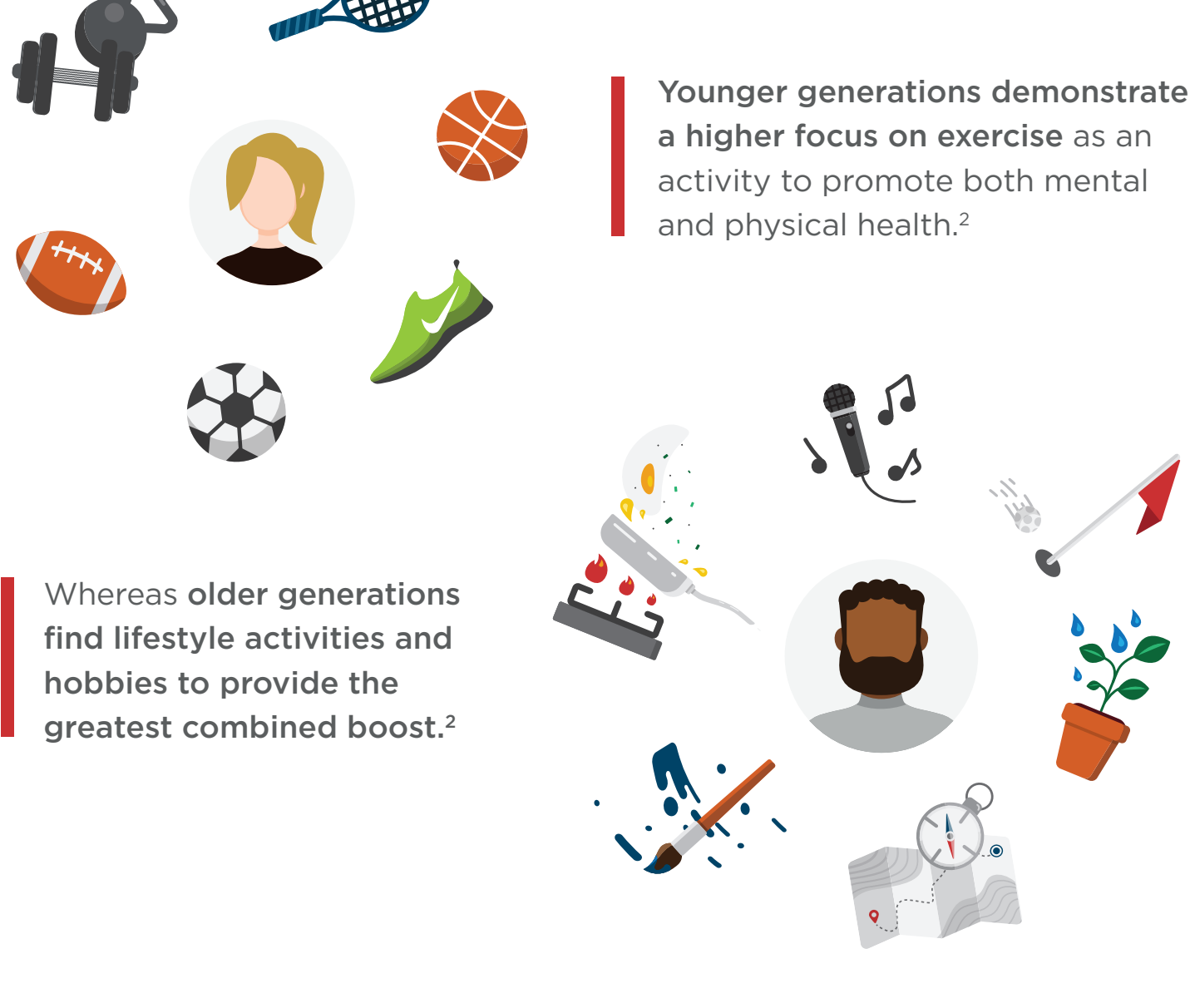
Younger consumers are erasing the stigma around mental health—one conversation at a time—by normalizing holistic wellbeing.

As a generation who has come of age during a chaotic social climate, Gen Z reports mental health struggles and high stress more than other generations, though a significant reason is likely their willingness to share.

PERCENTAGES OF GENERATIONS THAT HAVE RECEIVED TREATMENT OR THERAPY FROM A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL¹



This influx of conversation and awareness is inspiring older generations to take control of their own well-being; however, behaviors differ by age.



Takeaway

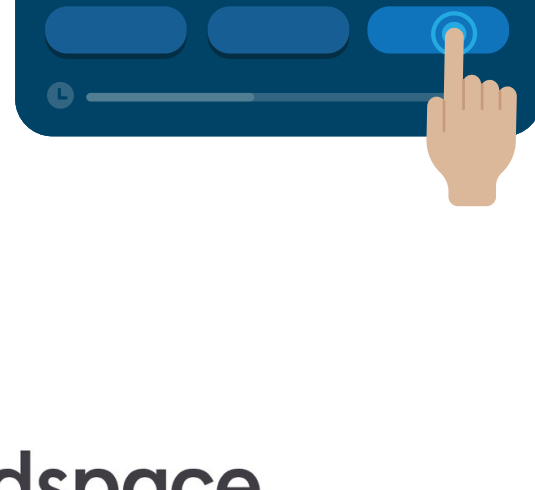


Differing comfort levels and approaches to mental health means health care brands must make a strategic decision when developing marketing & communications—do you want to reach a broad set of consumers or target one specific audience? Making an informed decision will allow your brand to resonate with your desired targets' needs.

TIP 2

Cater to consumers' existing habits and brand expectations

Infusing interactivity and technology into your offering helps make mental health feel more engaging. Mirroring the experiences we've come to know from other consumer brands makes it feel more approachable. As such, many health care brands are providing a new framework for thinking about mental and physical health, creating fun and engaging ways to connect with consumers.



Brand Spotlight³



headspace

Since its founding 10 years ago, popular meditation app Headspace's goal has been the same: "to put Headspace in places you wouldn't expect to find it." To deliver on that promise, Headspace partnered with Netflix in December 2020 to create *Headspace Guide to Meditation*. The animated series blends storytelling, education and meditation, which offers viewers the opportunity to learn about the benefits of meditation and to give it a try in a familiar streaming environment.

Takeaway



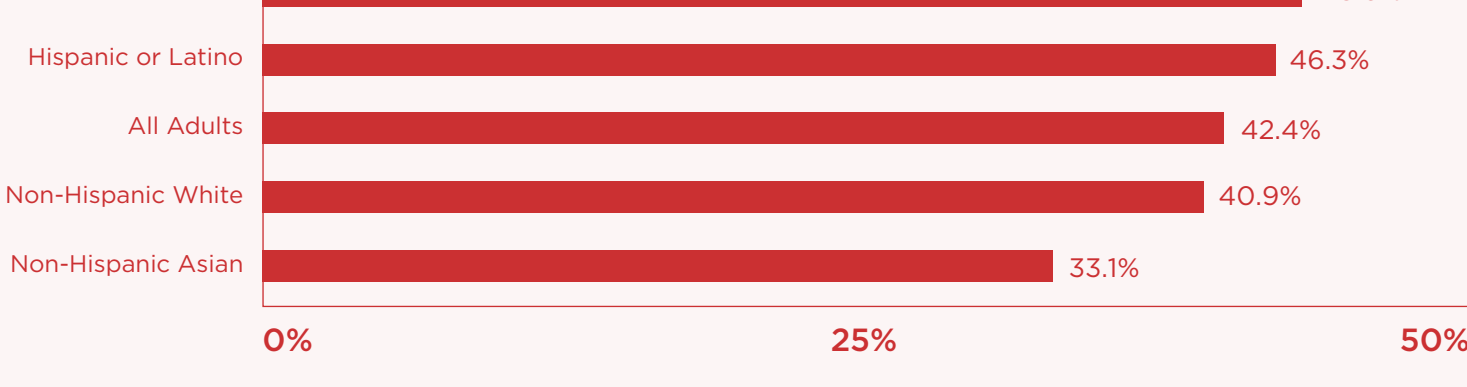
Consider how your brand can offer unique opportunities for consumers to engage with their mental health. Don't be afraid to think out of the box as conversations and treatment around mental health continue to evolve.

TIP 3

Address cultural and socioeconomic differences head on

Though communities of color have always faced challenges accessing mental health care, the pandemic disproportionately affected the health of these consumers.

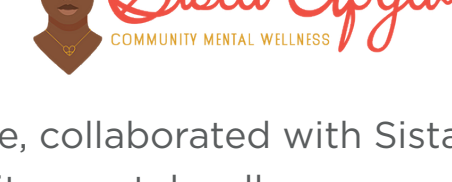
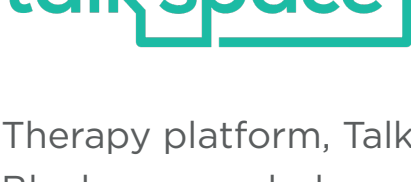
SHARE OF ADULTS REPORTING SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY AND/OR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, BY RACE/ETHNICITY



*Indicates a statistically significant difference relative to Non-Hispanic White adults at the $p < 0.05$ level. These adults (ages 18+) report symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder generally occurring more than half the days or nearly every day. "Other Non-Hispanic" includes people of other races and multiple races. Data shown are for December 9 – 21, 2020.

To increase accessibility across minority communities, brands are starting to explicitly address various challenges and offer relevant services.

Brand Spotlight



Therapy platform, Talkspace, collaborated with Sista Afya, a Black-women-led community mental wellness group, to broaden awareness of mental health issues in the Black community. According to Talkspace, "The crisis has created an opportunity, not just for political change, but for deeper forms of community and care." Published content addressed mental health through an intersectional lens, detailing the unique challenges people of color (particularly women) are facing when it comes to mental wellness in 2020.⁵



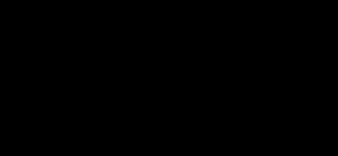
Takeaway



The onus is on health care brands to showcase their support for societal issues by taking action. It's not enough to just put out a statement of solidarity. Consider ways to alter or augment your service, offering(s) or messaging/communications to address the needs of diverse audiences.

PERSPECTIVES BY TIERNEY

Connect with Tierney today to learn more about how your brand can empower consumers to navigate the health care landscape. Visit hellotierney.com.



To reach us directly, contact: Tracey Santilli / tsantilli@tierneyagency.com

Sources:

¹ Axios. Mental health and sports comes into sharp focus. 2021.

² Gartner. ALIGN WITH CONSUMERS' EMPHASIS ON BALANCING HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19. 2020.

³ Culture. How Headspace Hopes to Manifest a Calmer 2021. 2020.

⁴ KFF. The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use. 2021.

⁵ Gartner. Wellness in 2021.