



GLOBAL WELLNESS
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EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

Awareness Action Kit
- AGE AND GENERATIONS -

Global Perspectives on Inclusive Well-Being:
The Role of Health and Wellness Coaching in
Fostering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and
Belonging

Empowering Individuals, Leaders, Service
Providers, and Advocates of DEIB Through the
Lens of Health and Wellness Coaching

- 2024 -



WELLNESS COACHING INITIATIVE
GLOBAL WELLNESS INSTITUTE

Welcome!

We are thrilled to introduce you to our **Awareness Action Kit**, designed to kickstart your journey into understanding the invaluable intersection of Health and Wellness with Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

This kit offers you a practical, actionable, and easily digestible resource to delve into the profound impact that Health and Wellness can have in fostering a culture of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, And Belonging.

Directly excerpted from our comprehensive 130-page whitepaper, "Global Perspectives on Inclusive Well-Being: The Role of Health and Wellness Coaching in Fostering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging," these resources are a simple gateway to a deeper understanding.

We invite you to download the complete whitepaper along with its accompanying PowerPoint presentation and 11-page infographic, available [HERE](#).

Within the whitepaper, you'll explore 10 distinct areas of diversity, each accompanied by its own Awareness Action Kit:

- 1. Race and Ethnicity**
- 2. Age and Generations**
- 3. Gender**
- 4. Sexual Orientation**
- 5. Religion and Spirituality**
- 6. Disability**
- 7. Socioeconomic Status and Social Determinants of Health**
- 8. Health Status**
- 9. Neurodiversity**
- 10. Weight Bias and Stigma**

Each kit provides insights into the definition of the specific type of diversity, why it's crucial, how Health and Wellness Coaching can play a pivotal role in supporting it, and real-life "Voices from the field" to enrich your understanding.

Additionally, each Awareness Action Kit comes complete with a "**Questions for Discussion Guide**" to prompt thoughtful reflection and dialogue, as well as essential "**Contact Information**" to reach out for further support or inquiries. There is an **(11th)** separate **Glossary of Terms Awareness Action Kit** to enhance your comprehension across all areas covered.

Happy discovering - we're excited you've joined us!
The Global Wellness Institute Wellness Coaching Initiative Team.

XI. Age and Generations²

X. Age and Generations

- **What it is**

One aspect of diversity that often gets overlooked is age, yet age is the one element of diversity every human will eventually share. Demographic aging and increasing age diversity have hastened the need for societies and employers to support individuals across their lifespans. For the first time in human history, there are five generations working side by side:

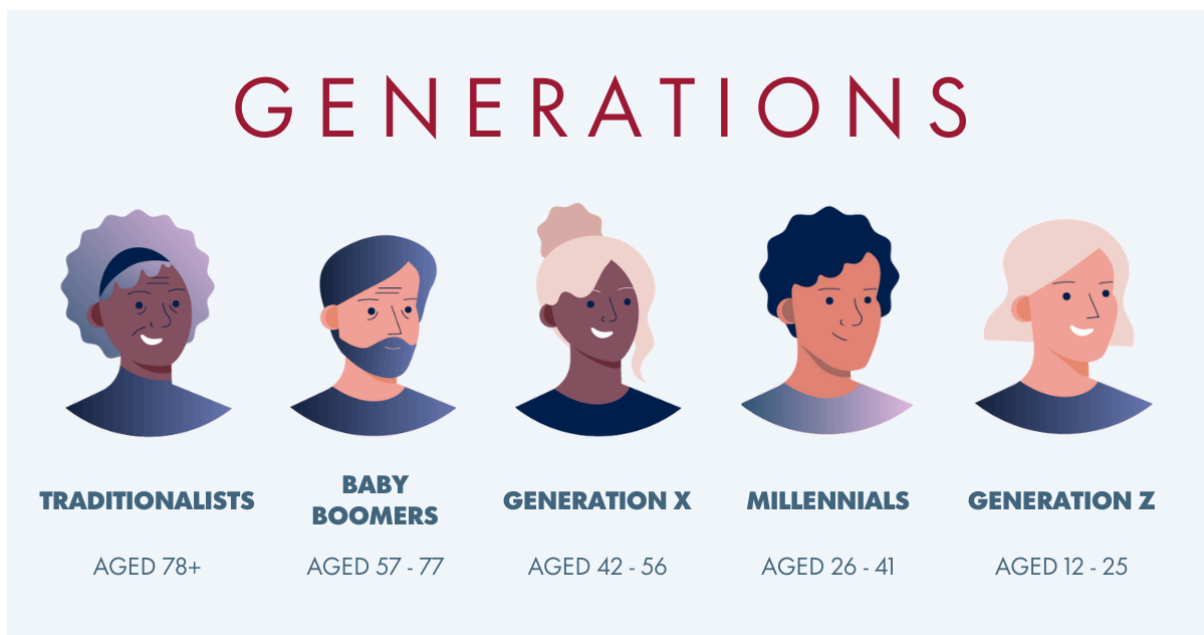


Image: Robert Half Talent Solutions

A generation is an age cohort whose members are born during the same period in history and who thus experience significant events and phenomena at similar life stages. These collective experiences shape the group's values and norms and can vary from culture to culture.

According to the WHO, every country in the world is experiencing growth in both the size and the proportion of older persons in the population. By 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over and the number of persons aged 80 years or older is expected to triple between 2020 and 2050. While this shift in distribution towards older ages, known as population aging, started in high-income countries, it is now the low- and middle-income countries that are experiencing the greatest change (WHO, 2023).

Ageism – discrimination against a person based on age – has serious consequences for older and younger people as well as for society. Ageism can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices, or policies that perpetuate ageist beliefs. It can obstruct sound policy development, and it can significantly undermine the quality of health and social care that people receive (WHO, 2023).

- **Why it matters**

On March 18, 2021, the *Global Report on Ageism* was launched by WHO, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the UN Population Fund. Combating ageism is one of the four action areas of the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030).

In the UK, The Lancet writes “Changing how we think, feel, and act towards age and aging is a prerequisite for successful action on healthy aging and for progress on the three other action areas of the Decade of Healthy Ageing: developing communities that foster older people's abilities, delivering person-centered integrated care and primary health services responsive to older people's needs, and providing long-term care for older people who need it.” (Mikton et al., 2021)

Older generations are exposed to ageism through common stereotypes that older people are frail, helpless, difficult, or unpleasant — leading to less favorable treatment than younger people receive. In healthcare settings, studies report that 1 in 5 Americans aged 50 and older experience discrimination, which can result in inappropriate or inadequate care, with over a quarter (29%) developing “worsening disabilities over four years” due to frequent healthcare discrimination (Elwell, 2022)

The nearly 25-year gain in human longevity over 100 years coupled with declining birth rates, means that the workforce is aging, and that people will need to work longer. The spread of ages in the available labor pool means that organizations will need to recruit workers across the age spectrum to continue to grow. Additionally, longer working lives will mean that employees will need to continually refresh skills and take longer breaks to provide the stamina needed for a work-life that spans 50-60 years.

In the workplace evidence shows that DEIB tools used to bridge age divides, can reduce conflict and generational stereotypes, and improve organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee turnover, and organizational performance (Jungmann et al., 2020, Kulik et al., 2000; Li et al., 2021).

Age-diverse teams bring together people with complementary abilities, skills, information, and networks and can offer better decision-making, more productive collaboration, as well as improved overall performance to build something that no generation could do on its own (Harvard Business Review, 2023; Wu & Konrad, 2021).

However, outdated beliefs about aging often persist in ways that diminish the impact an age-diverse workforce can have on the bottom line, and it has been found that only 8% of organizations include age as part of their DEIB strategy. Including age as an element in DEIB can help shift the workplace culture and empower people of all ages to contribute their unique skills and perspectives (Kita, 2019; SHRM Foundation, 2016).

Generational differences can become strengths by removing the lens of age and shifting the focus toward abilities, skills, experience, and knowledge. Age-diverse teams offer better decision-making, more productive collaboration, and improved overall performance — only if members are open and willing to share and learn from their differences.

Updated, proactive age management practices can contribute to staff morale by reducing concerns or fears while inspiring new ideas, confidence, innovation, and expanding the talent recruitment pool. Together, combating age barriers, motivating, and promoting age diversity, supporting health and well-being, and rethinking retirement through specific Health and Wellness Coaching initiatives can allow individuals, societies, and organizations to thrive.

- **How Health and Wellness Coaching can support this diversity**

According to the WHO, health is the one factor that determines the extent of the opportunities to make valuable contributions to family and community that come with additional years of life (WHO, 2023).

Health and Wellness Coaches have been shown to support individuals of all ages (Global Wellness Institute, Wellness Coaching Initiative, 2022):

Aligned values: Each generation protects its distinct set of values and beliefs. Misunderstandings and conflict may threaten these values. Supporting individuals to understand and align with their values can help individuals cope better with their own age and with the other generations. This is especially impactful in the context of the 5-generation workplace.

Age-appropriate health and well-being, especially in workplaces: A multigenerational society brings a wealth of knowledge, experience, and

innovation. However, it also presents unique challenges in developing effective wellness programs, especially in workplaces. To ensure the success of initiatives, inclusive well-being programs must cater to the diverse needs and preferences of all generations. A one-size-fits-all approach will not promote workplace well-being because each generation has its own values and priorities which must be respected and approached differently. Age-appropriate health and well-being initiatives must:

- Consider the characteristics and needs of each generation.
- Offer a variety of program options.
- Leverage technology for program accessibility.
- Encourage intergenerational collaboration and mentorship.
- Communicate and engage with employees effectively.
- Customize and personalize wellness offerings.
- Measure and evaluate success.

Individualized Health and Wellness Coaching can help meet modern-day DEIB age objectives through personalized attention or group strategies where everyone feels they belong. It focuses on action, supporting individuals to create the forward movement they need to make personal changes that perfectly meet their needs at their pace.

Preventative health: Biological aging is only loosely associated with a person's age in years, however, the most common health conditions in older age are non-communicable diseases including heart disease, stroke, and chronic lung disease. Maintaining healthy behaviors throughout life, particularly eating a nutritious diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and refraining from tobacco use, as well as undertaking health screenings all contribute to reducing the risk of non-communicable diseases, improving physical and mental capacity, and delaying care dependency.

Health behaviors: Although some of the variations in older people's health reflect genetic inheritance, most are due to their physical and social environments and the influence of these environments on fair opportunities and health behavior. Importantly, these factors start to influence aging from childhood. This means that an older person from a disadvantaged background is both more likely to experience poor health and less likely to have access to the services and the care that they may need.

Supportive environment: Evidence suggests that the proportion of life in good health has remained broadly constant, implying that the additional years are in poor health (WHO, 2023). If elderly people can experience these extra years of life in good health and if they live in a supportive environment, their ability to do the things they value can be like that of a younger person. If, however, these added years are

dominated by declines in physical and mental capacity, the implications for older people and for society are more negative.

Adaptive aging: In Health, Wellness, and Medical Coaching over the past decade, there has been a noticeable shift from unidimensional decline models of aging towards life-span developmental models. These models offer strategies that specifically address the adaptation of aging skills. This approach effectively bridges the existing paradox between findings that illustrate decreased capacities on biological, physiological, and cognitive levels and those that demonstrate a general sense of satisfaction and an experience of emotional well-being.

Viewing aging through the lens of adaptation has empowered coaches with novel approaches to address resilience, well-being, and emotional distress. This paradigm shift acknowledges the dynamic and evolving nature of the aging process, allowing coaches to tailor interventions that not only consider the physical aspects of aging but also incorporate strategies to enhance psychological and emotional aspects. This holistic perspective aligns with the growing recognition that successful aging involves adapting to the challenges and changes that come with advancing years, fostering a more comprehensive and positive coaching experience for clients.

- **Voices from the Field**

Multi-Generational Workforce

Nearly 40% of the workforce in Europe, the UK, and the US are over 50. In addition, today's demographics mean a projected lifespan of well over 80 years. Depending upon when one "retires", that sums up to 20-30 years of exciting, active life to prepare for (Deloitte, 2023).

For the first time in history, we have five generations represented in the workplace at the same time. However, while organizations are renewing their DEIB efforts, only 8% include age as part of their strategy. While research shows bias around sexuality and race has declined over the last 12 years, unconscious bias around ageism has barely shifted. The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission states that *age* is the one critical element overlooked by most companies' DEIB initiatives (Callahan, 2019, SHRM, 2016).

Yet, evidence shows that when DEIB tools are used to bridge age divides, they can reduce conflict and generational stereotypes and improve organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee turnover, and organizational performance (Jungmann et al., 2020; Kulik et al., 2000; Li et al., 2021).

An example of a strategy geared to combat workplace ageism and adapt to today's demographic reality, are workplace pre-retirement programs that provide holistic, multi-dimensional coaching for organizations and aged 50+ individuals (Kocher & Ben Dhaou, 2021). These programs provide coaching for organizations and aged 50+ individuals through five dimensions of well-being: Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Spiritual, and Financial, providing a truly holistic experience that addresses the specific needs of everyone (Kocher & Ben Dhaou, 2021).

Real Voices

"Working through my older years transitioning with a Health and Wellness Coach allowed me the insights, tools, and practical steps to embrace balanced well-being and achieve vibrant health to truly thrive."

"I never would have believed that working with a Health and Wellness Coach upon retirement would have allowed me such a new, fresh look at the future, with a life still full of opportunities and possibilities ahead."

"Working with a Health and Wellness Coach provided by my employer was the perfect guide to navigate how to thrive in my 60s and beyond."

"I was stuck at 58, working with a Health and Wellness Coach gave me a lot of motivation to start taking action now!"

Senior Living

Although resident wellness is increasingly a priority in senior living communities, few programs promote well-being in later life. A pilot wellness coaching program for 79 senior living residents with individual and group coaching sessions focused on their goals, revealed positive changes in health satisfaction, physical quality of life, psychological quality of life, loneliness, relatedness, competence, and sense of purpose. Residents reported high satisfaction with the program. These findings have implications for the application of well-being frameworks in later life, as well as the development and implementation of wellness coaching programs with older adults (Fullen et al., 2022).

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Want to contribute?

Health and Wellness Coaching Connection Blog Space.

It is our mission to empower individuals and businesses around the world to confidently partner with wellness coaches, optimizing health and well-being and clarifying wellness coach specialties and global guidelines through education and community resources. The GWI WCI Blog is one of these resources intended to advance the global Health & Wellness Coaching Community by providing accessible, evidence-based articles related to the field of Health & Wellness Coaching. Blogs will be posted on our area of the [GWI website](#) and cross-posted on LinkedIn.

Learn more here :

[Wellness Coaching Connection Contributor Guidelines](#)
[Blog-Newsletter Submission Form](#)

Please email us (gwiwci2023@gmail.com) if anything is unclear or if you have questions. We look forward to receiving your submissions!

Questions for Discussion Guide

Complementing our research, this Questions for Discussion Guide serves as an organized tool to facilitate ongoing discussion and contemplation on the pivotal role of Health and Wellness Coaching within the realms of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Intended for educators, students, and readers, this guide provides a structured framework for further exploration, encouraging thoughtful analysis and collaborative dialogue to advance inclusive practices in the field.

- What does a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace/world/community where everyone belongs look like/feel like?
- What are the gaps in your organization around this type of diversity?
- How might you champion greater inclusion in your day to day?
- How can you champion more inclusion and awareness around this diversity?
- What might be a personal obstacle to embracing this type of diversity?
- What unconscious bias might you have in this type of diversity?
 - How might you explore your unconscious bias?
- What is the greatest challenge for you concerning this type of diversity and why?
- Who might support you to better understand this type of diversity?
- In what context might you find this type of diversity most relevant (i.e. Workplace? Schools? Community?)
- Where (country, location, venue) might this type of diversity NOT be a challenge and why?
- What has been your personal experience with this type of diversity - from the outside or inside?