

RICHARD KYTE

FINDING YOUR THIRD PLACE

Building Happier
Communities
(and Making Great
Friends Along the Way)

"Rick Kyte's insight into the vital human experience of connection and friendship is both scholarly and inspiring."
-Amy Dickinson, "Ask Amy" advice columnist

Finding Your Third Place

Richard Kyte

Rotary NCPELS

March 14, 2026



**D.B. REINHART
INSTITUTE**
for ETHICS IN LEADERSHIP



FRAZZLE

HOME OF

THE
WORLD'S

**LARGEST
TURKEY**

2 1/2 MILE AHEAD TO NEXT EXIT

Turkey Days 1967

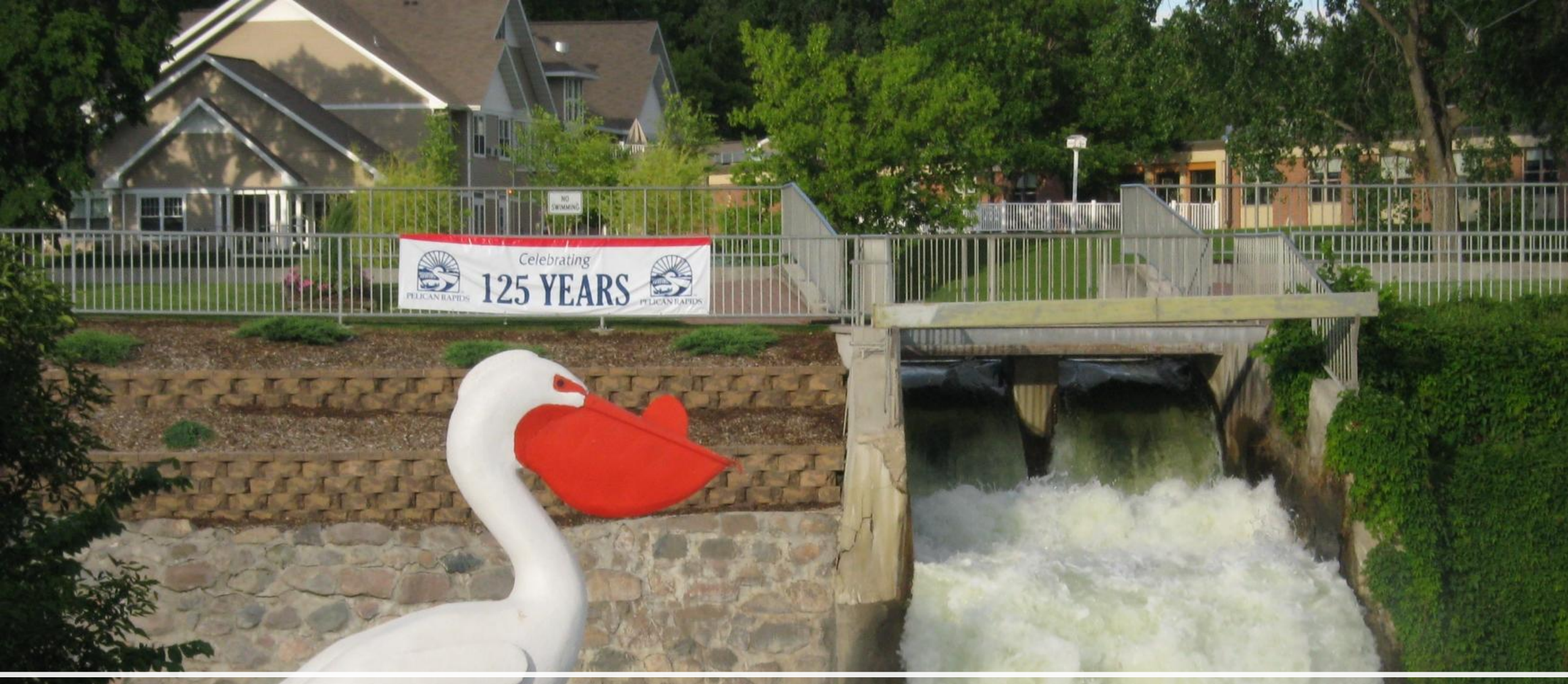


PET & DOLL PARADE WINNERS

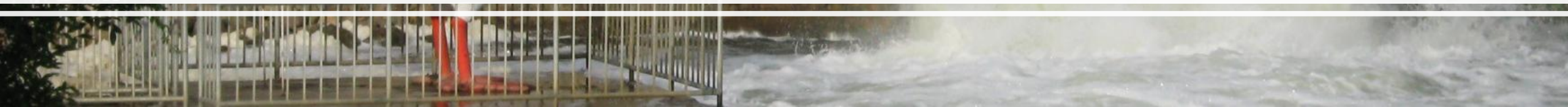
Winners in the Pet & Doll Parade on Turkey Day Saturday were (l. to r.) Bobby and Fred Daggett, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Daggett ("Happiness Is Frazee Turkey Day", 4th place; Ricky and Carrie Kyte, children of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kyte, ("Raggity Ann and Andy"), 2nd place; Mark Wothe, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alan Wothe ("Humpty Dumpty"), 3rd place; and Kristine Wothe, daughter of the Alan Wothe's, ("Old Woman In A Shoe"), 1st place winner.

Vergas





Pelican Rapids



Fergus Falls





BEMIDJI
PAUL

Bemidji

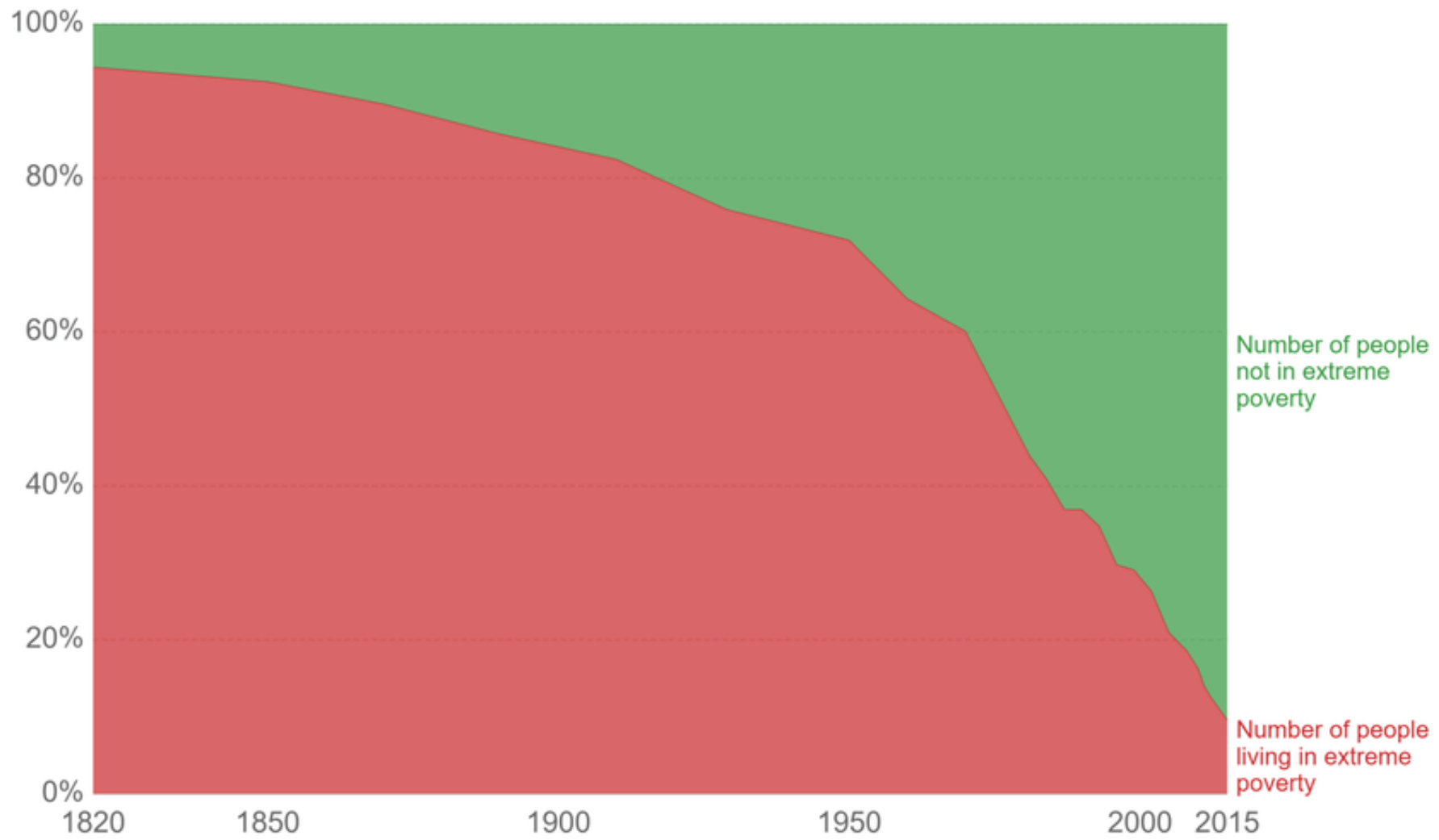
A large, illuminated turkey sculpture is the central focus of the image. The turkey is depicted with a red head, a blue wattle, and a large, fanned tail. Its body is covered in white, textured feathers. The sculpture is positioned in front of a dark, dense background of trees. A wooden fence is visible in the foreground, and a sign with the text 'FRAZEE MN' is placed in front of the turkey's legs. The lighting is bright, highlighting the turkey's features against the dark background.

FRAZEE MN

World's Largest Turkey Fire

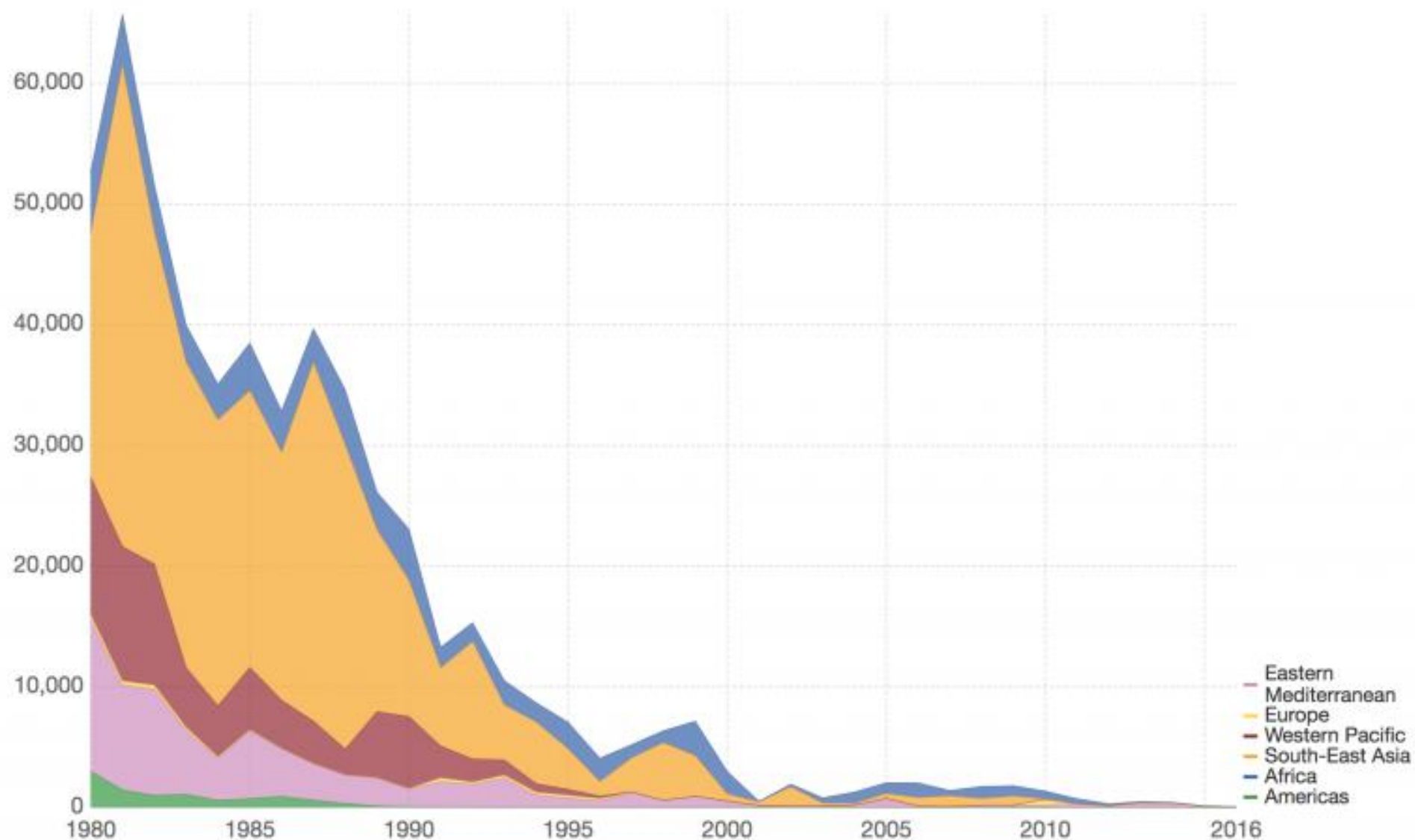


Is life today better or worse
than 50 years ago?



The number of reported polio cases by world region

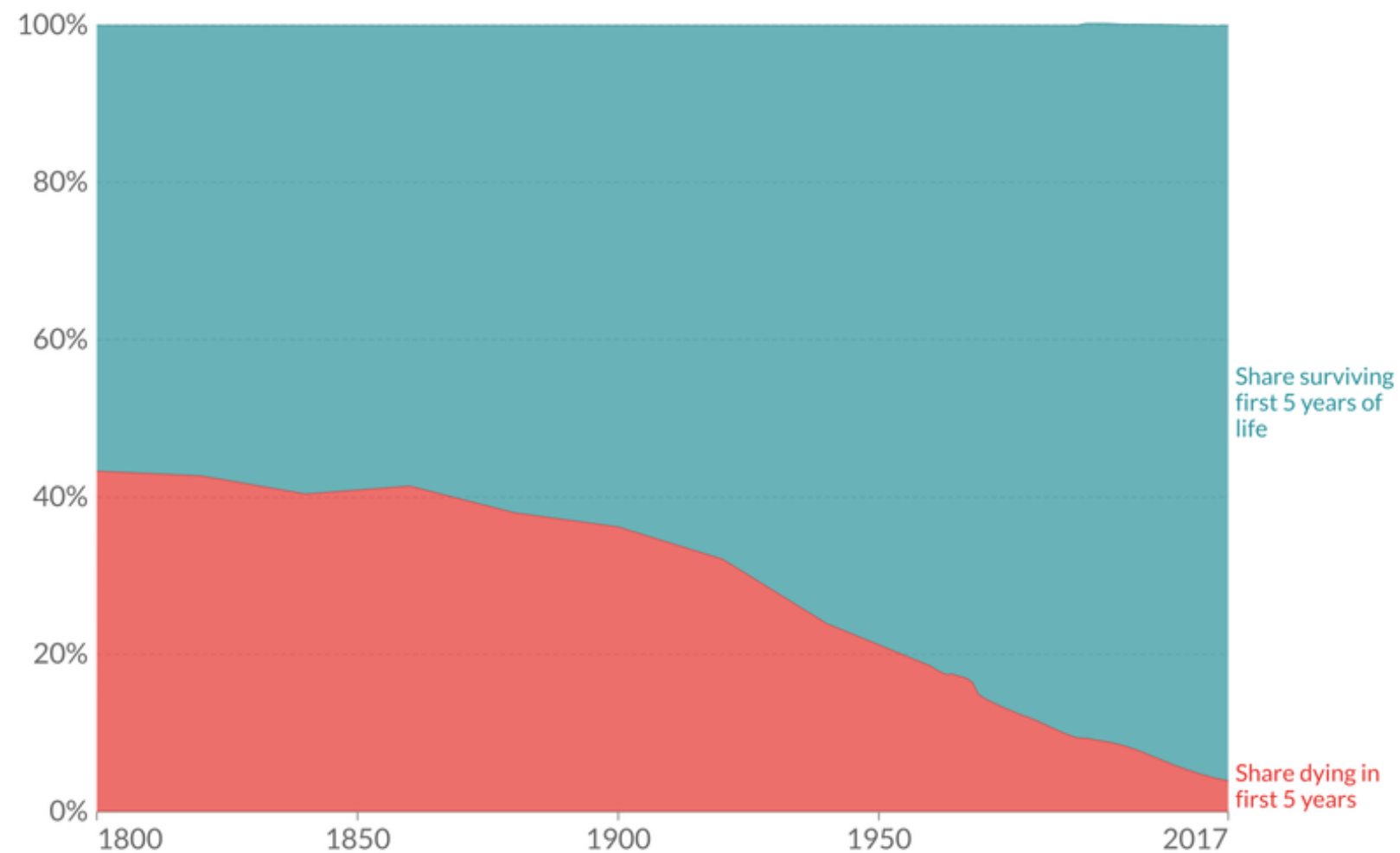
This includes the wild and vaccine (VAPP) type poliovirus (occurring indigenously and imported)



Source: World Health Organization, Report of Selected Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPDs) (2017)
OurWorldInData.org/first-draft-eradicating-polio-achievements-and-challenges/ • CC BY-SA

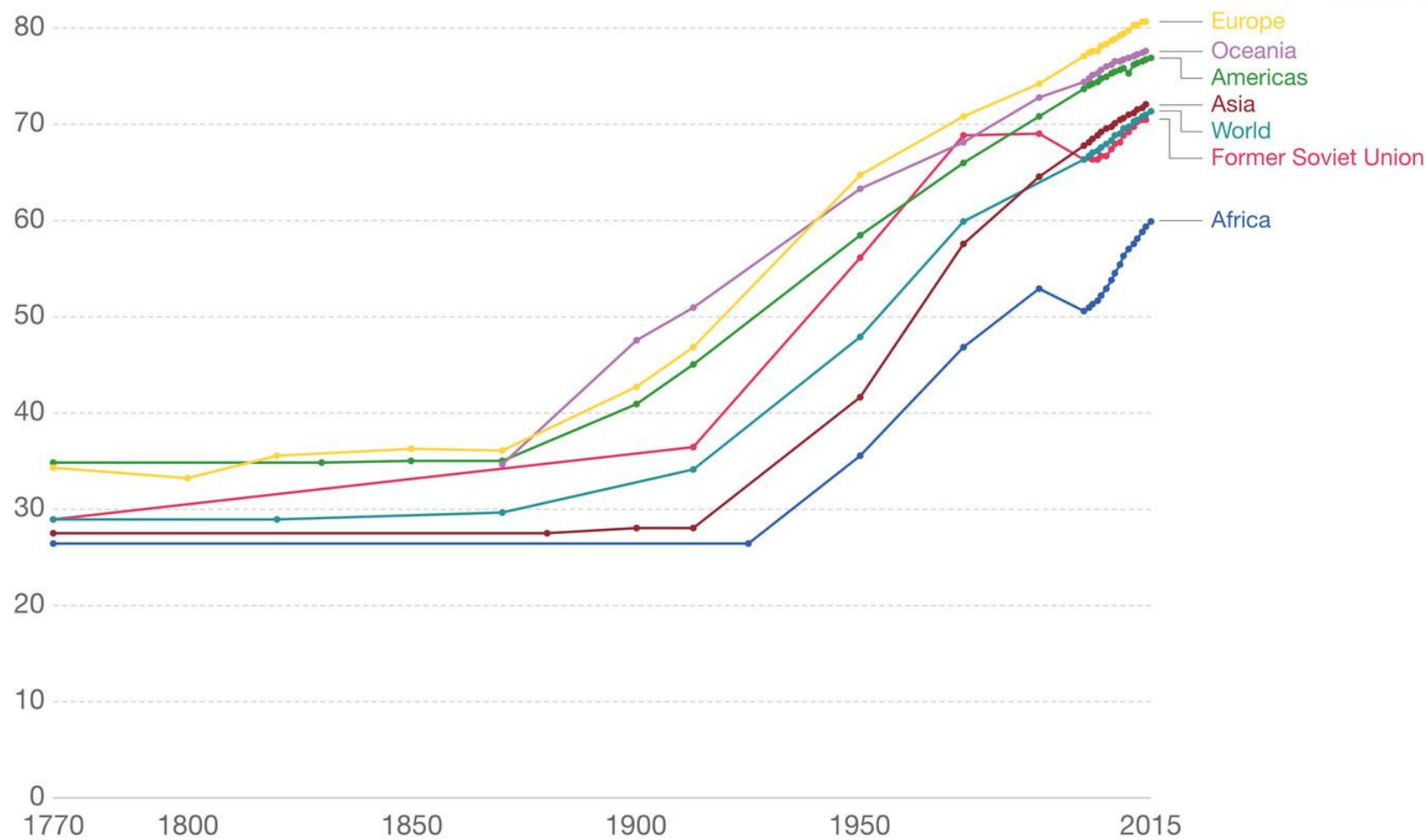
Global child mortality

Share of the world population dying and surviving the first 5 years of life.



Source: Gapminder and the World Bank

Life expectancy globally and by world regions since 1770

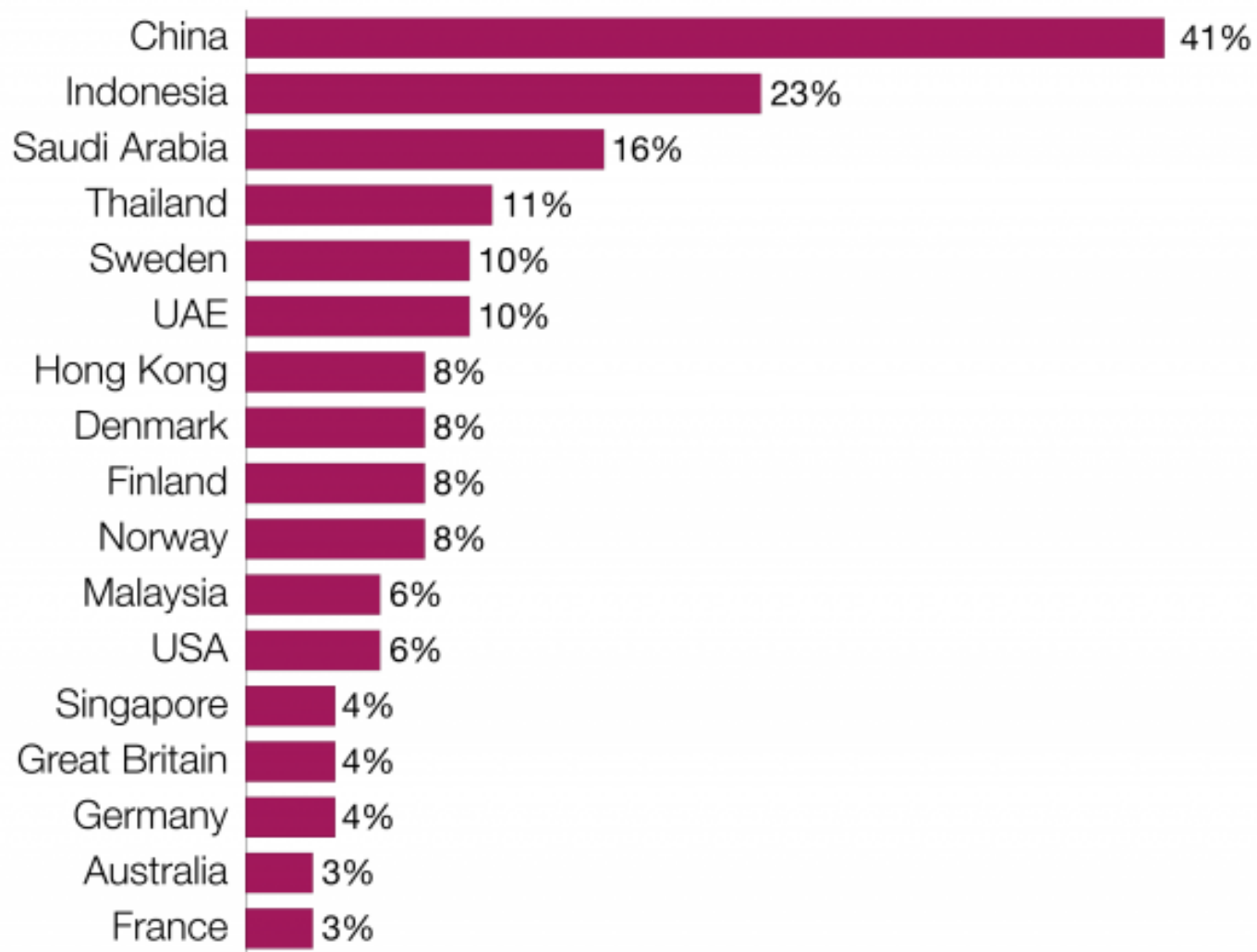


Source: Life expectancy – James Riley for data 1990 and earlier; WHO and World Bank for later data (by Max Roser)
OurWorldInData.org/life-expectancy/ • CC BY-SA

Share of the population who think the world is getting better

18,235 adults in the following countries were asked "All things considered, do you think the world is getting better or worse, or neither getting better nor worse?"

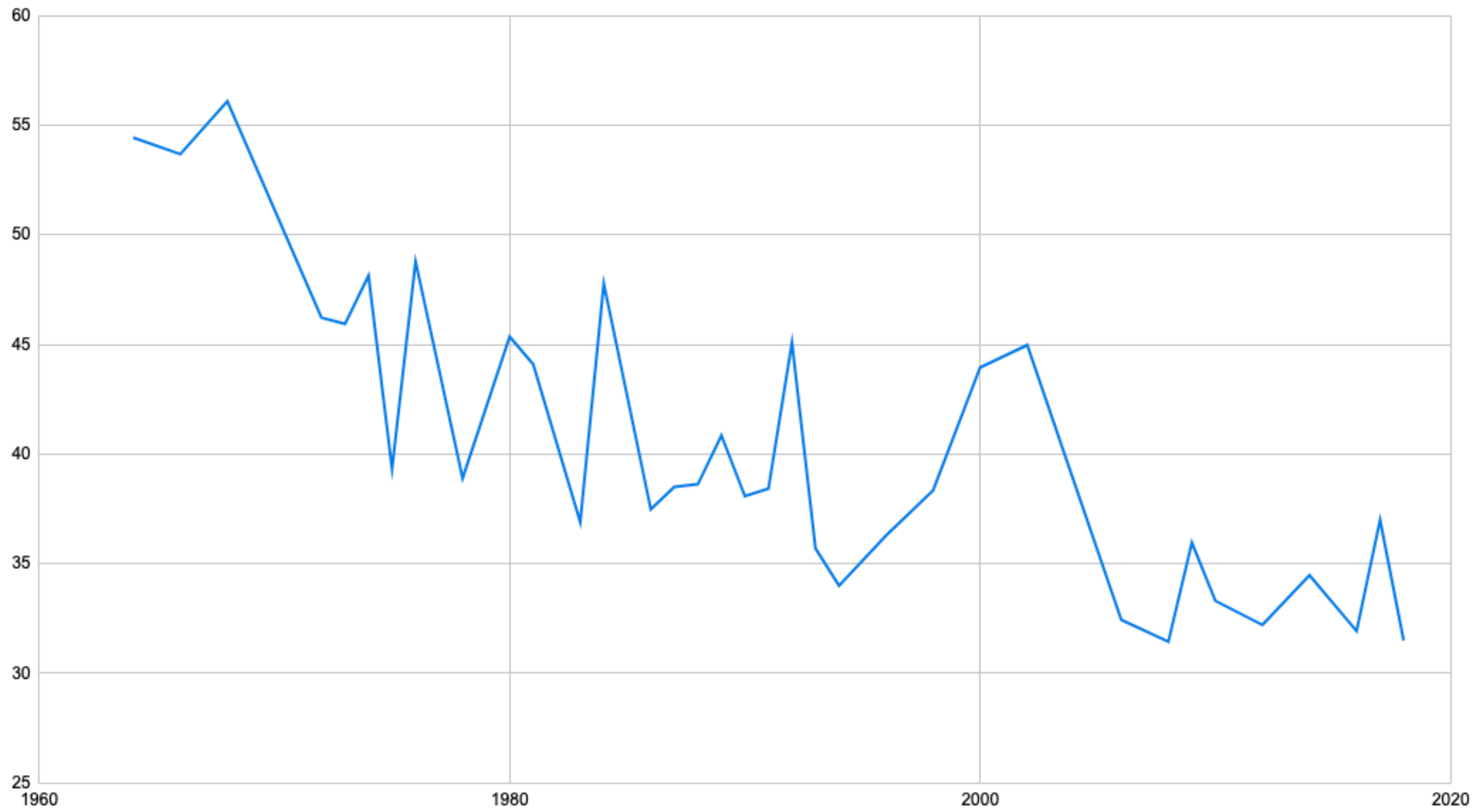
Our World
in Data



Data source: Survey conducted and published by YouGov (2015)
The is available at OurWorldinData.org. There you find more visualizations on this topic.

Licensed under [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) by the author Max Roser.

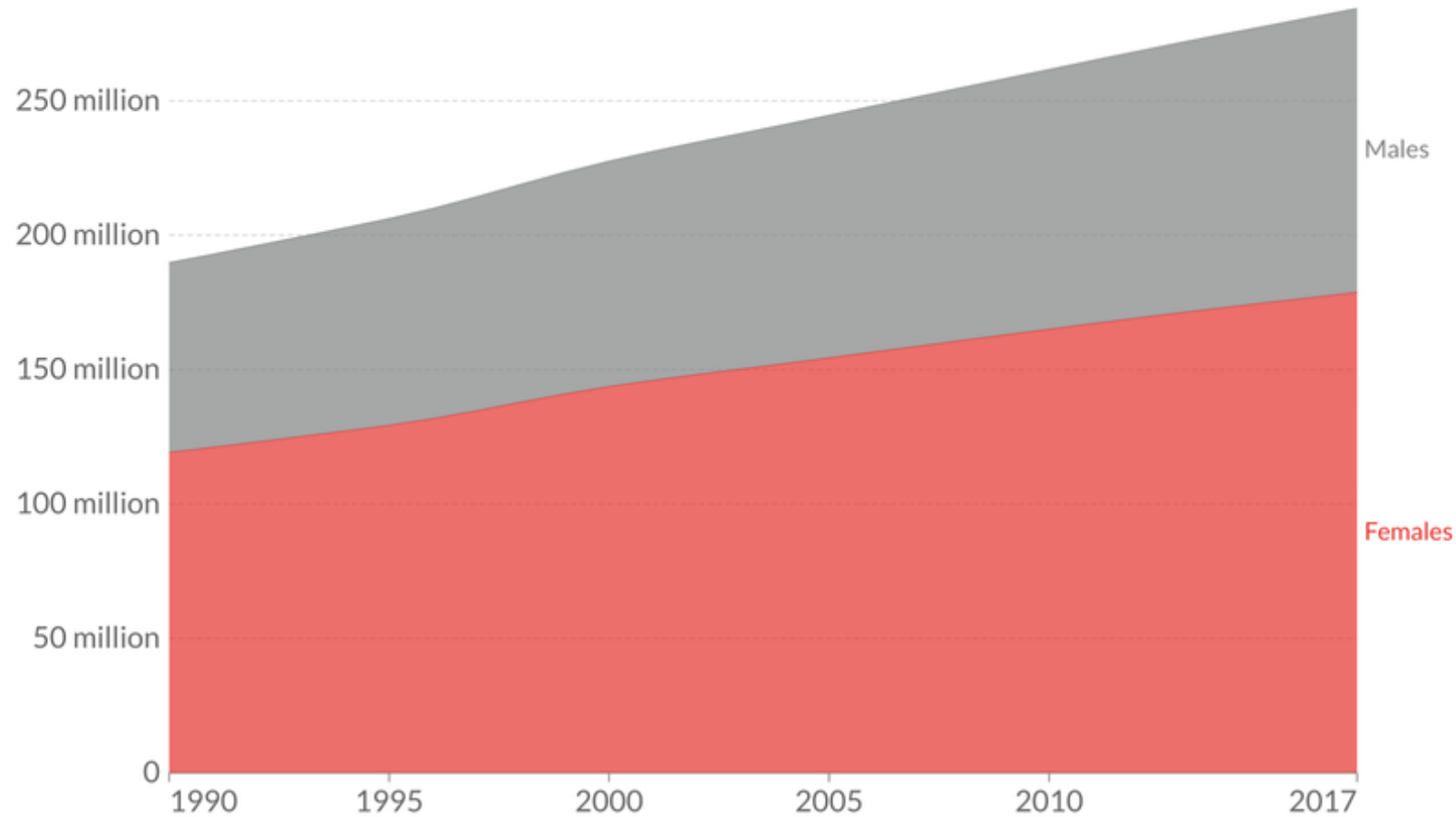
US Social Trust (% who say most people can be trusted)



Number of people with anxiety disorders, World, 1990 to 2017

Our World
in Data

Number of people with an anxiety disorder, differentiated by sex. This is measured across all ages. Figures attempt to provide a true estimate (going beyond reported diagnosis) of the number of people with anxiety disorders based on medical, epidemiological data, surveys and meta-regression modelling.



Source: IHME, Global Burden of Disease

Share of Adults Reporting Symptoms of Anxiety and/or Depressive Disorder, February 2023

All Adults

All Adults 32.3%



Age



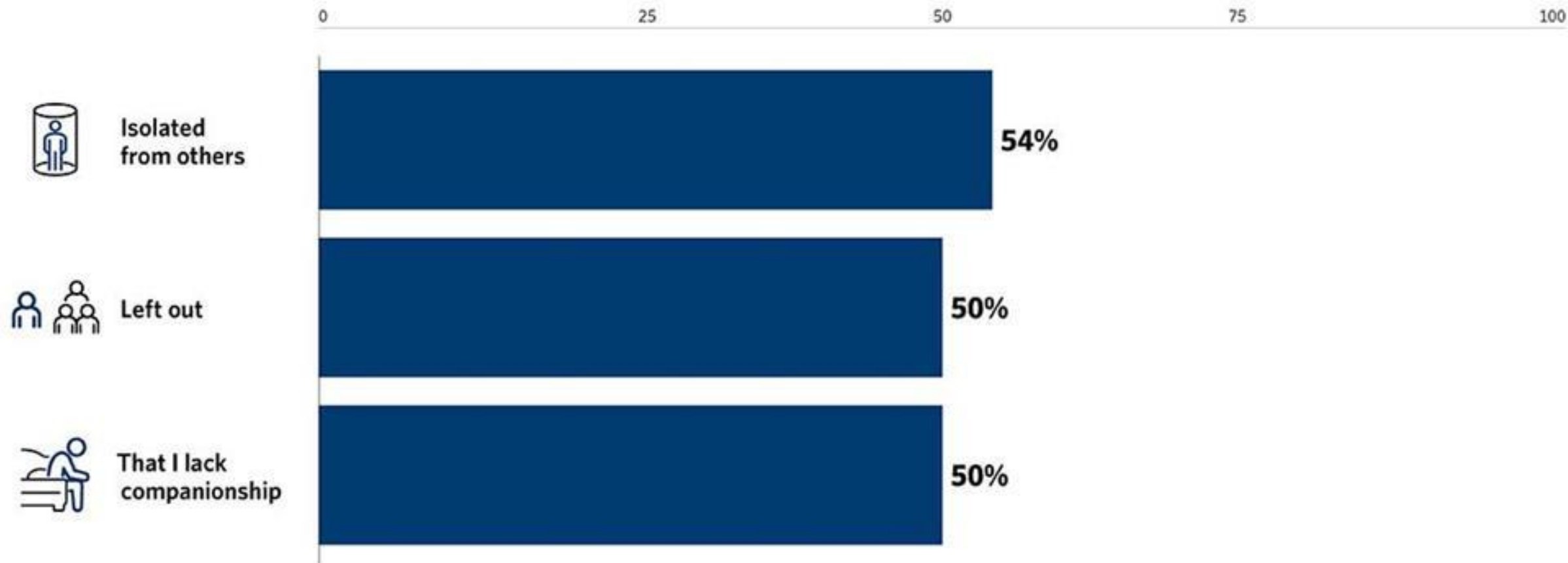
NOTE: Adults having symptoms of depressive or anxiety disorder were determined based on having a score of 3 or more on the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2) and/or Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-2) scale.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2023

KFF

Half or more of U.S. adults report signs of loneliness

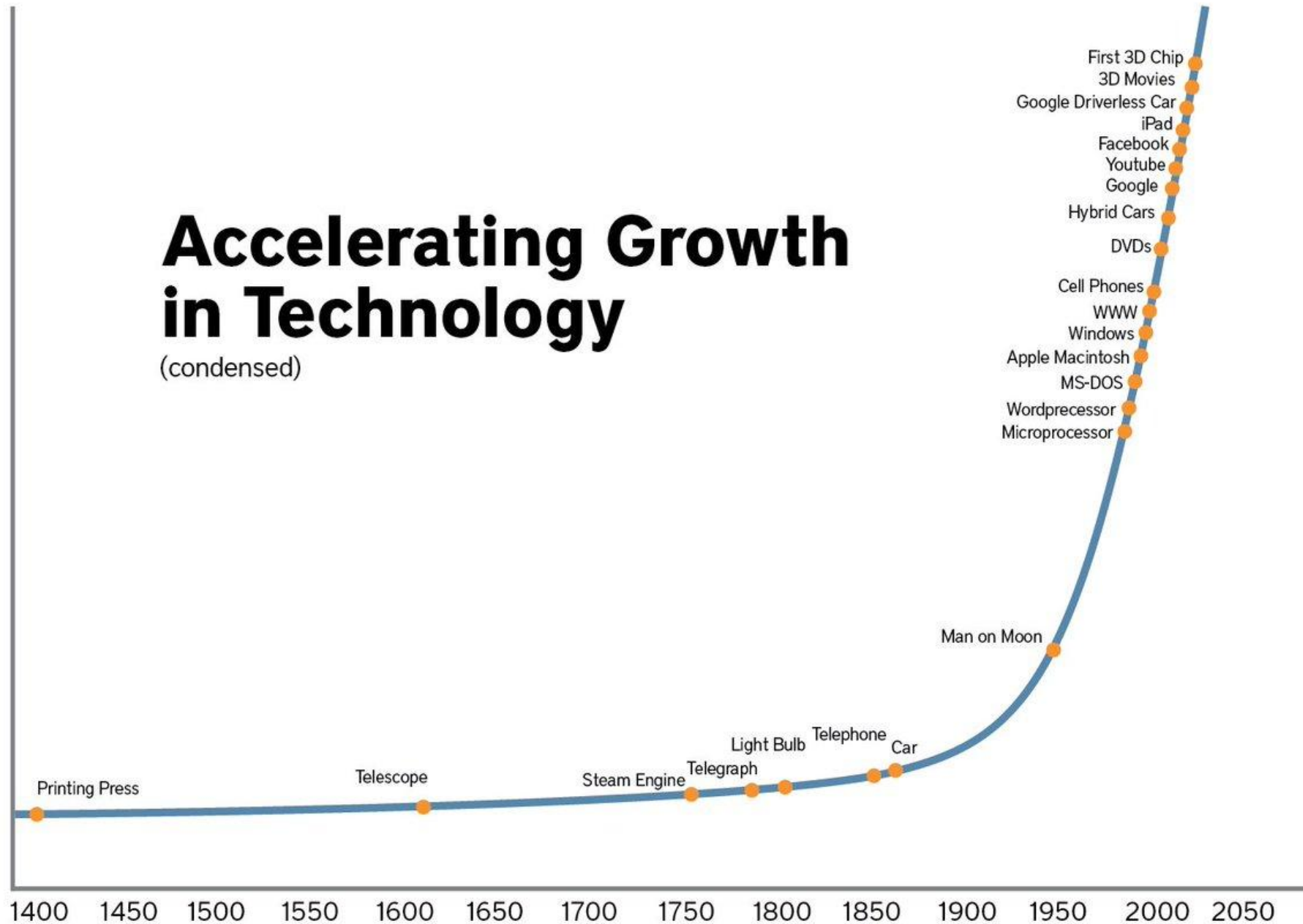
% WHO SAY THEY HAVE FELT THE FOLLOWING OFTEN OR SOME OF THE TIME



Why are we feeling worse
about our lives?

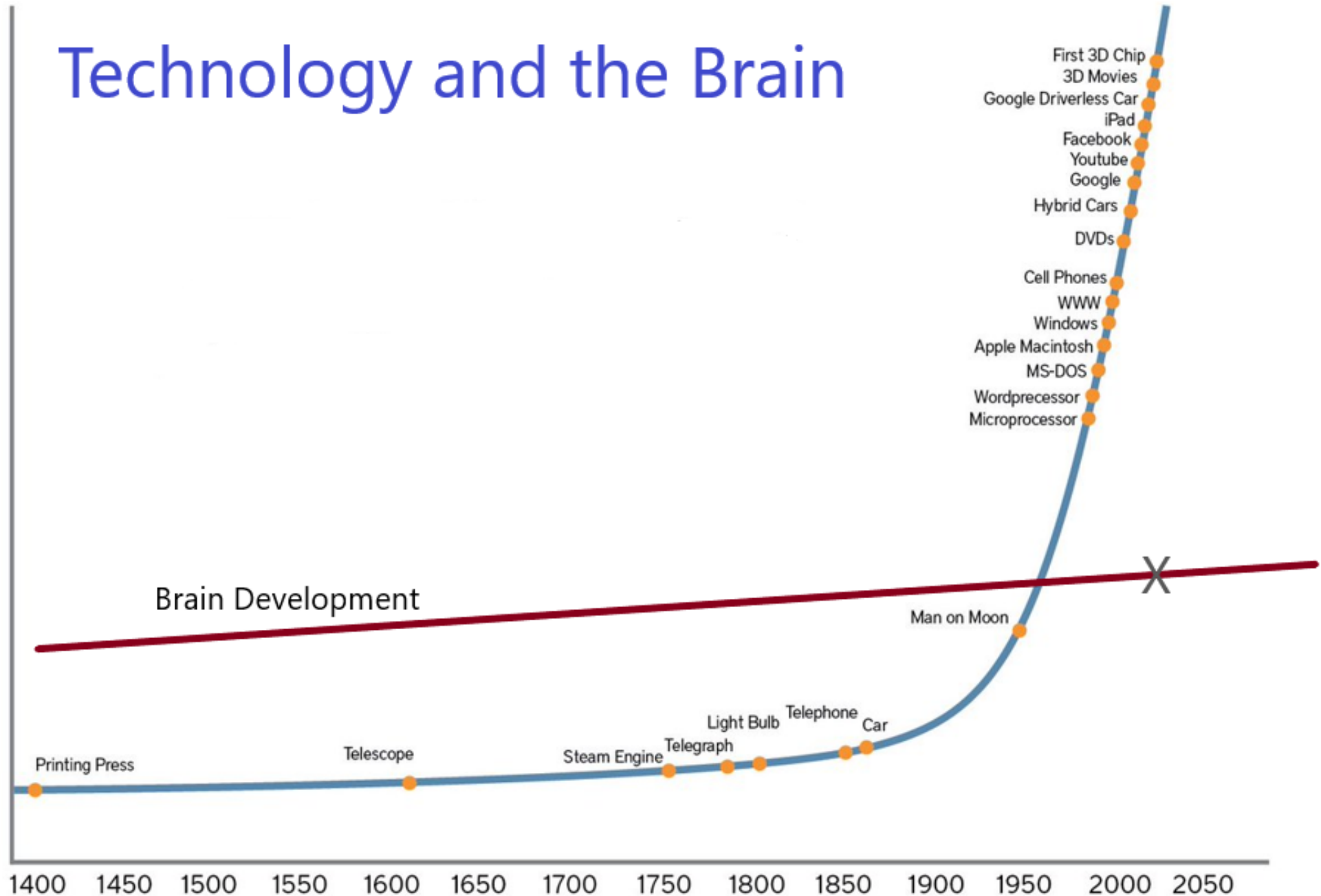
Accelerating Growth in Technology

(condensed)



Technology and the Brain

Rate of
change

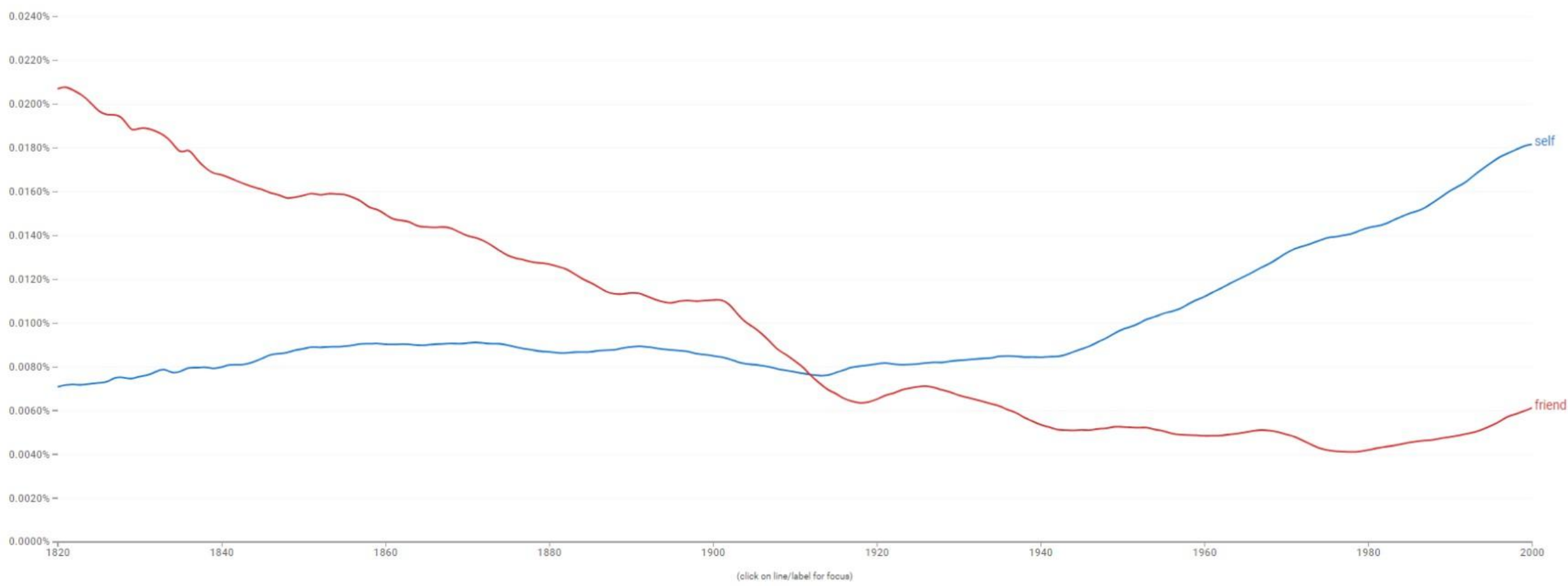


1820 - 2000 ▾

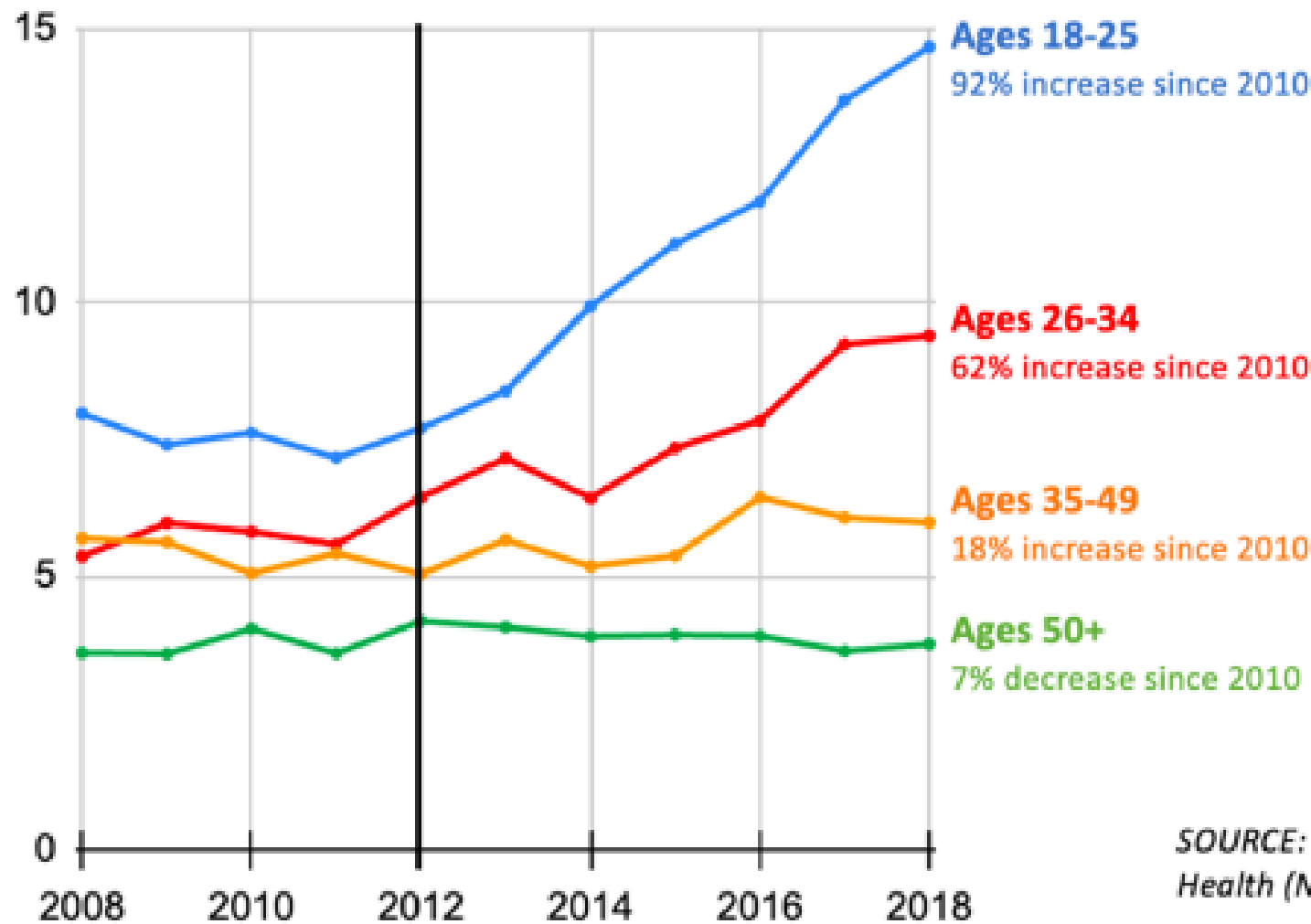
English (2019) ▾

Case-Insensitive

Smoothing ▾



% U.S. Anxiety Prevalence



It only hits Gen Z

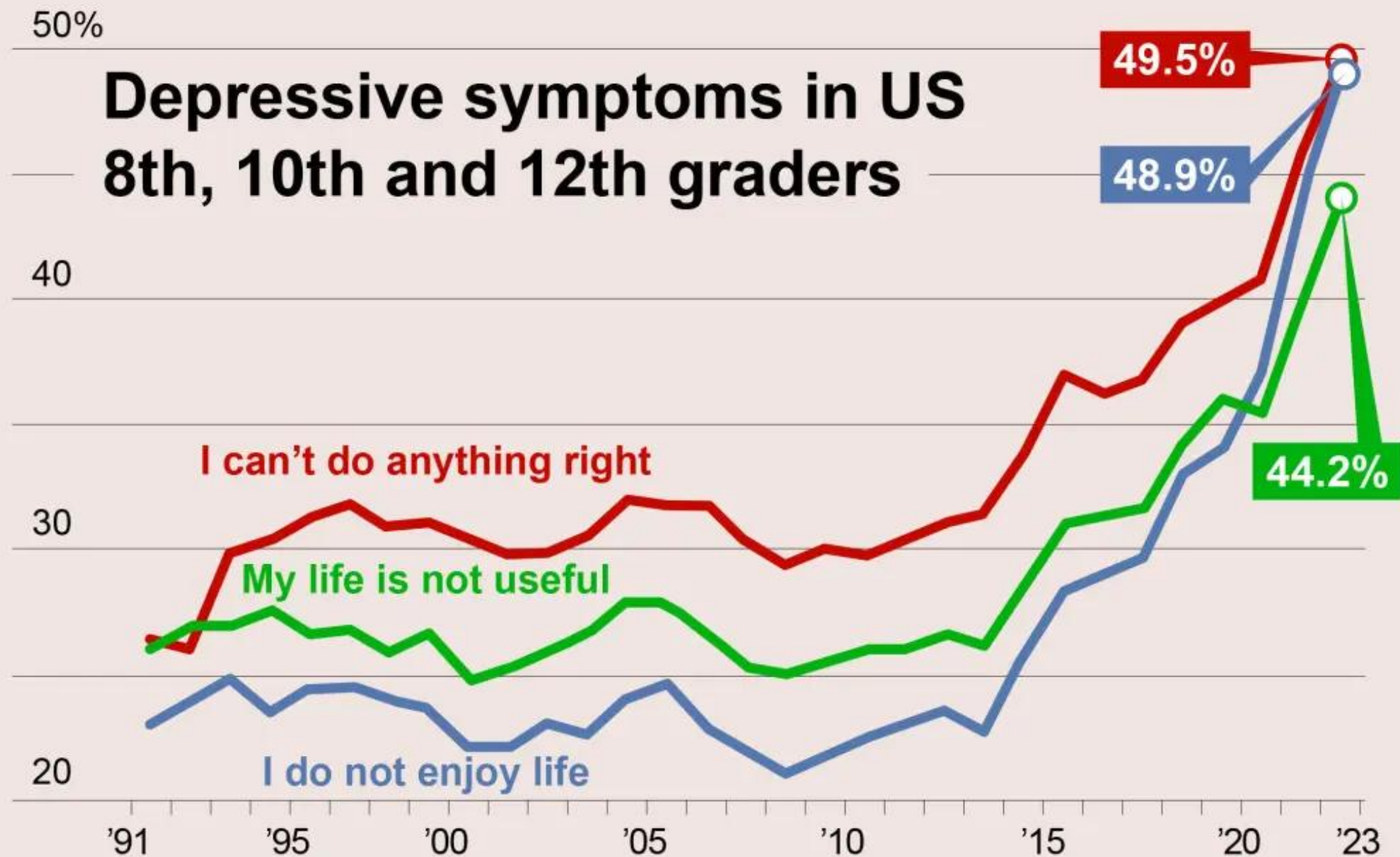
plus some late
millennials

Not much change
for Gen X
or Boomers

*SOURCE: National Survey on Drug Use and
Health (NSDUH)*

"Social Media is a Major Cause of the Mental Illness Epidemic in Teen Girls. Here's the Evidence." Jonathan Haidt, Substack, Feb 22

Depressive symptoms in US 8th, 10th and 12th graders



Source: Monitoring the Future,
analyzed by Jean Twenge

Note: 2020 data was collected in February and early March,
before schools shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic.

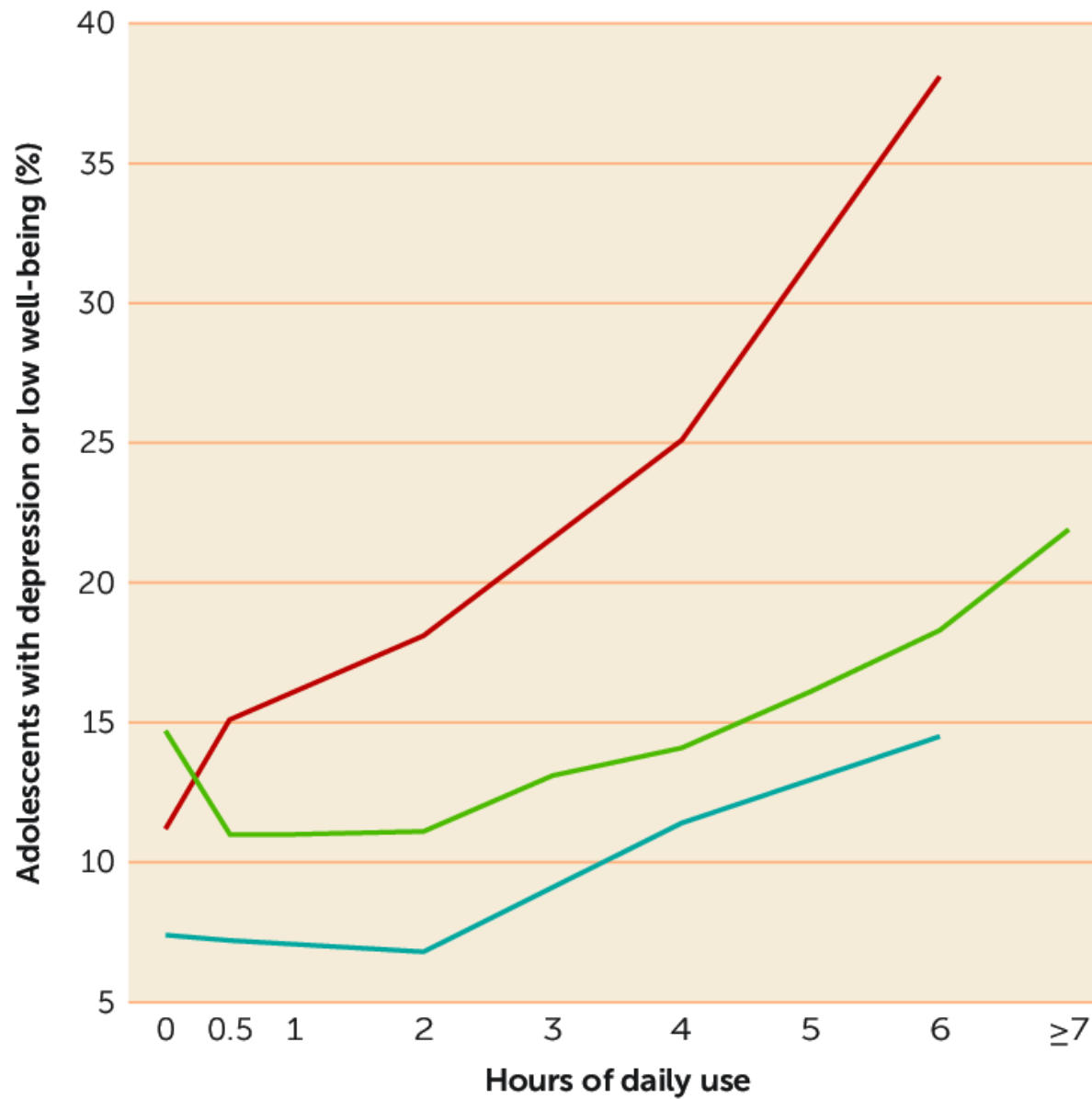
Young American Men Are Uniquely Lonely Compared With Their Counterparts in Other Rich Countries

*Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday?
How about loneliness?*

% Yes

	U.S.	OECD Median	Gap (pct. pts.)
All adults	18	16	2
15-34 men	25	15	10
15-34 women	18	16	2
35-54 men	15	15	0
35-54 women	20	14	6
55+ men	16	16	0
55+ women	17	19	-2

World Poll Data aggregated across 2023 and 2024



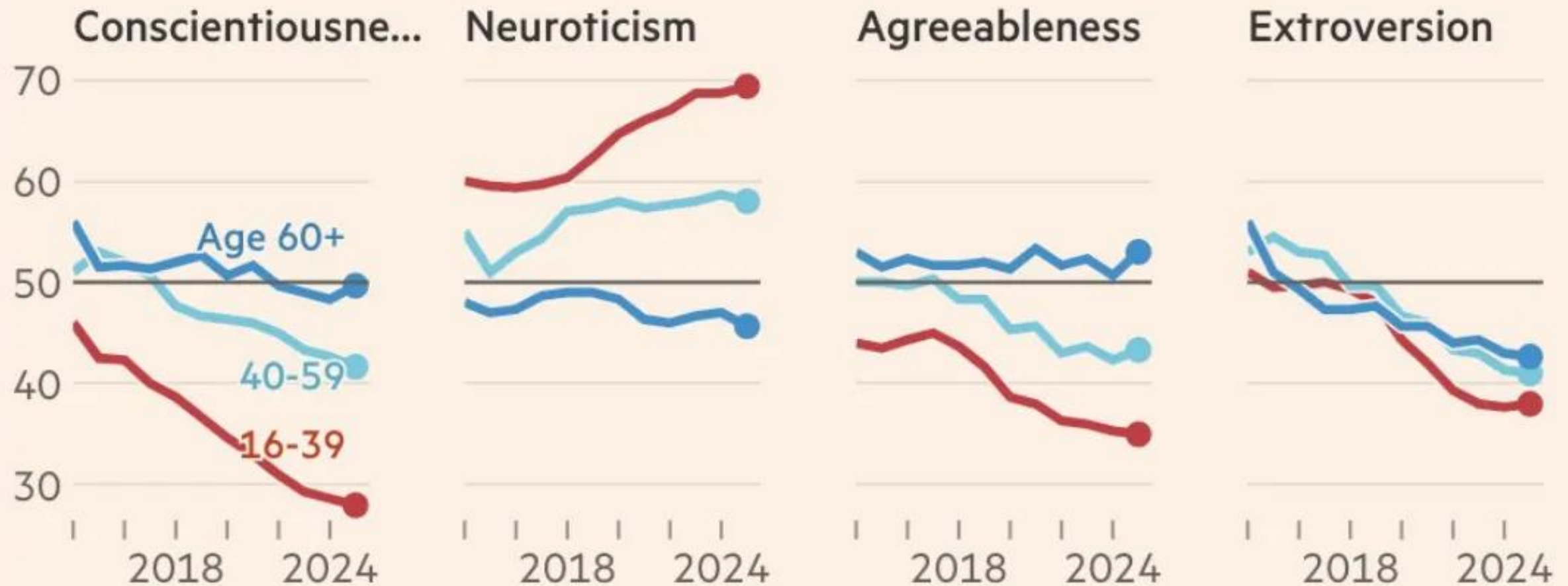
- Social media use and depression (girls)^a
- Social media use and depression (boys)^a
- Smartphone use and low well-being (total)^b

Age group	Average daily teenager screen time
8-10 years	6 hours
11-14 years	9 hours
15-18 years	7.5 hours

Source: CDC

Young adults' personalities are changing, with conscientiousness in freefall

Relative change in strength of different personality traits (2014 average = 50)
by age group



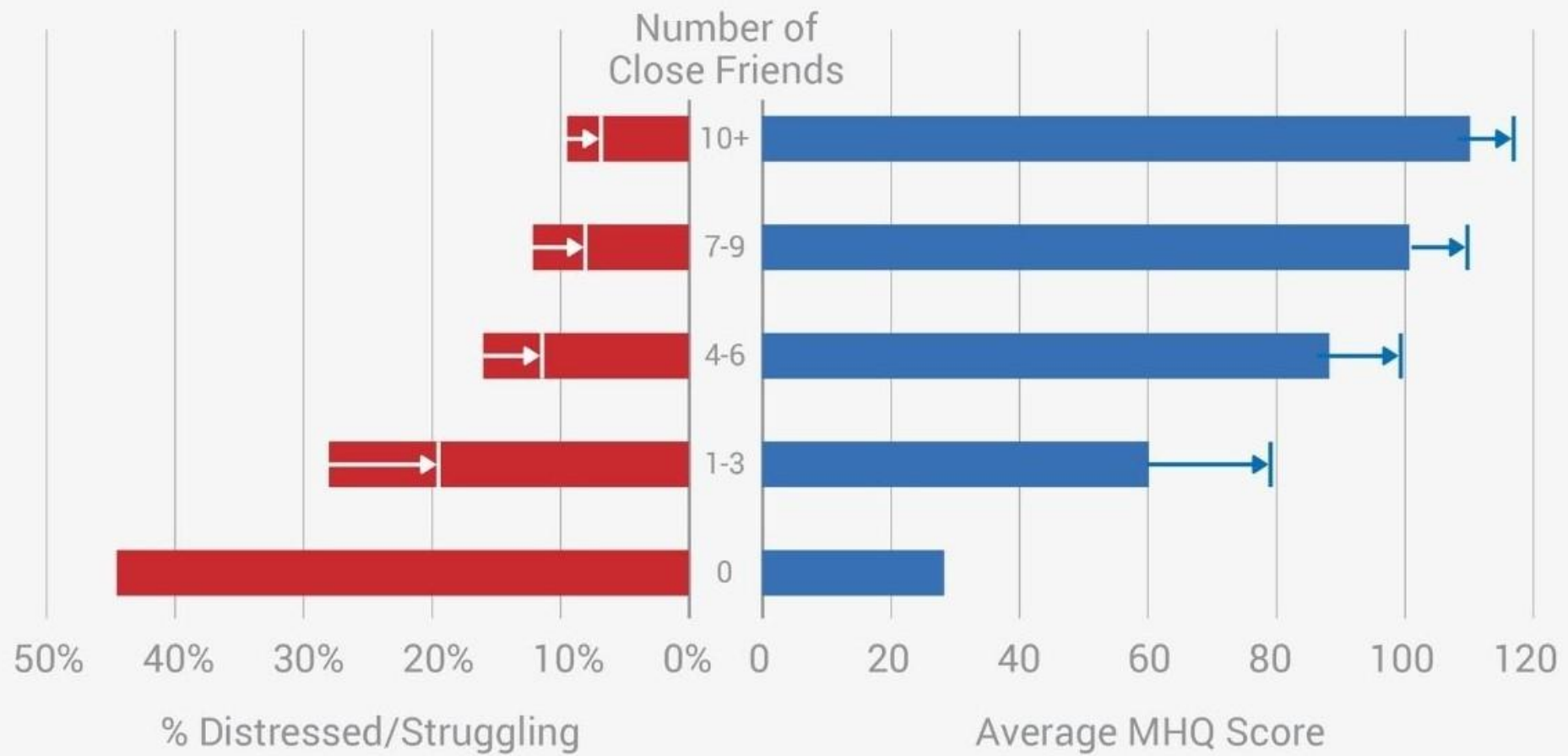
What can we do?

Rotary International Vision Statement

"Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, *and in ourselves.*"

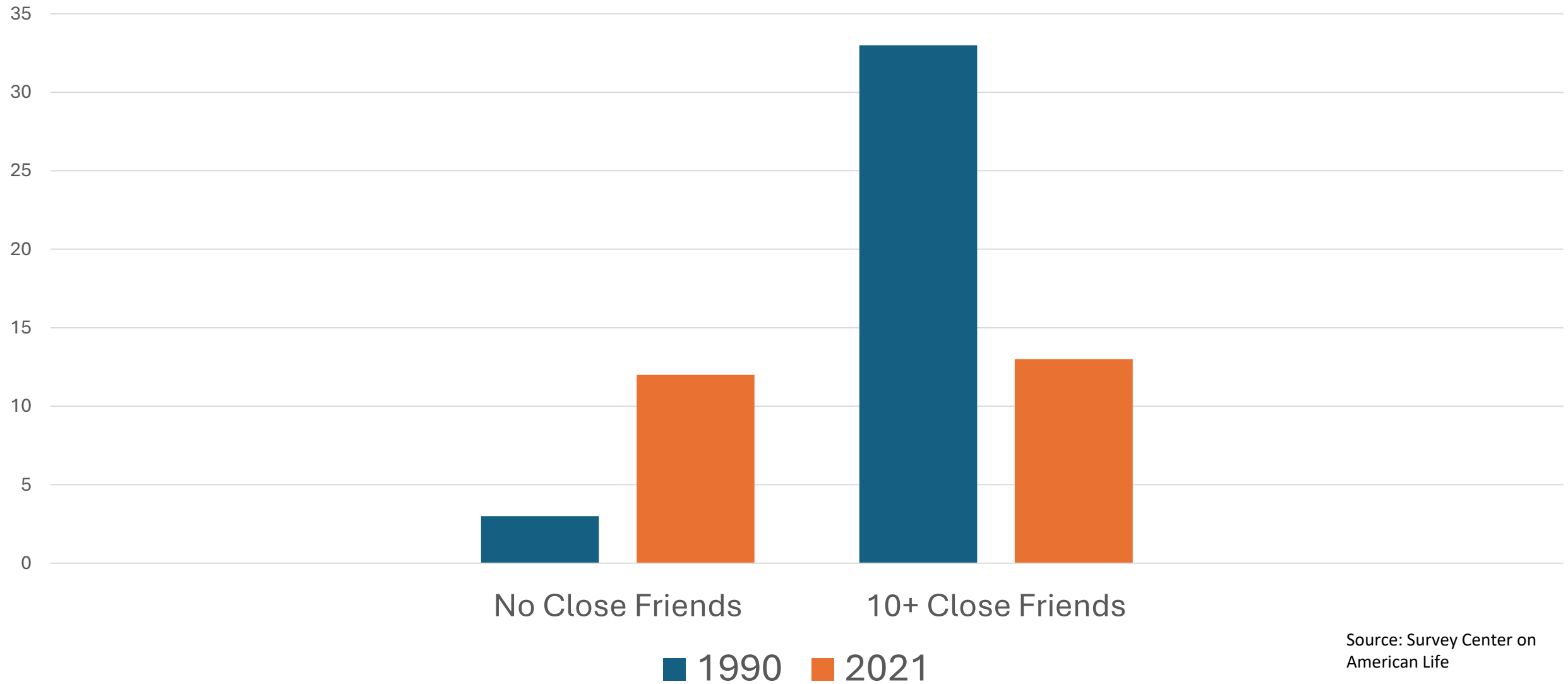
Number One

Prioritize
friendship

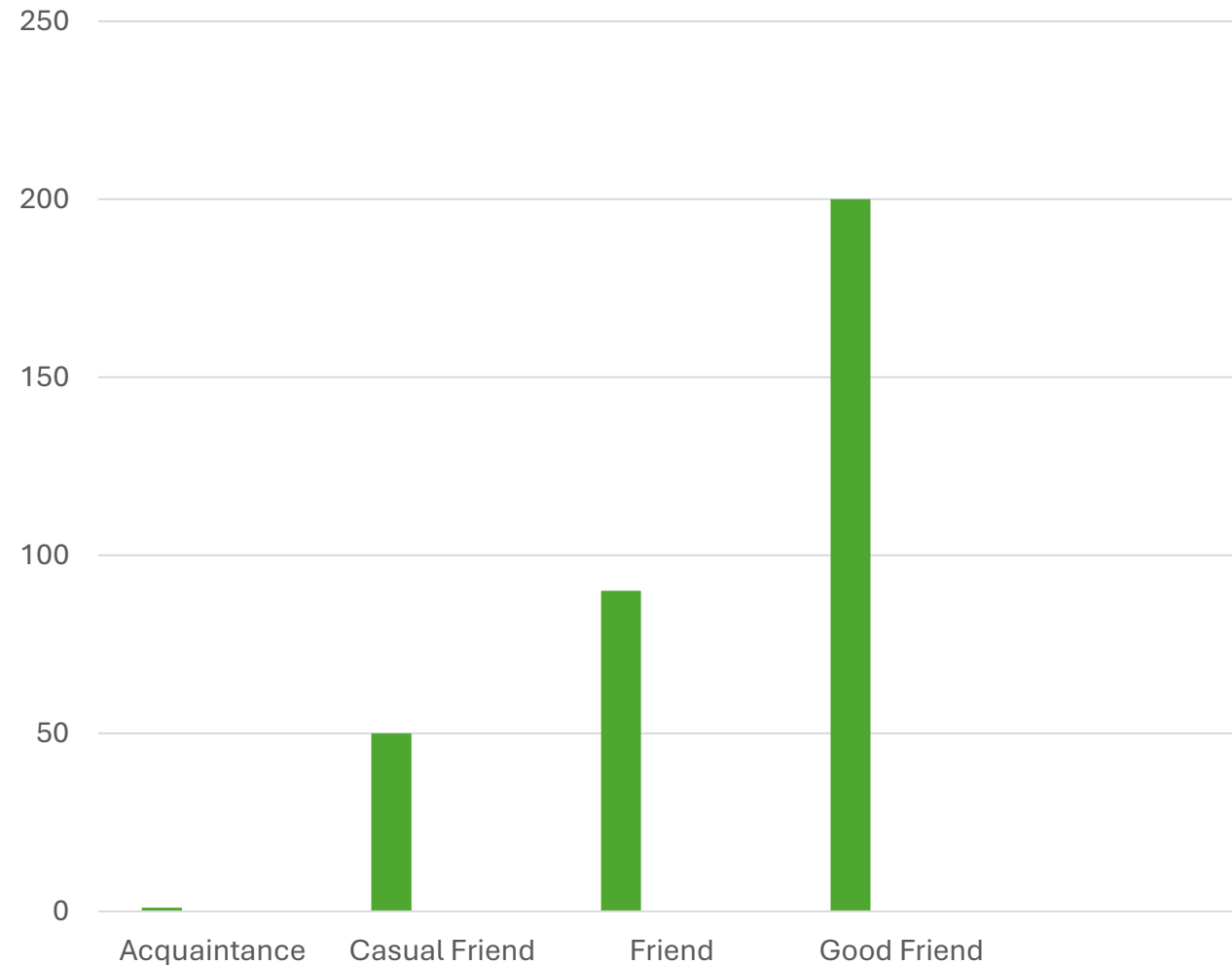


Source: Mental State of the World Report

Number of Close Friends has Declined



How many hours does it take to make a friend?



Hall, J. A. (2018). How many hours does it take to make a friend? *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 36(4), 1278-1296.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407518761225>

Number Two

Join a
Group

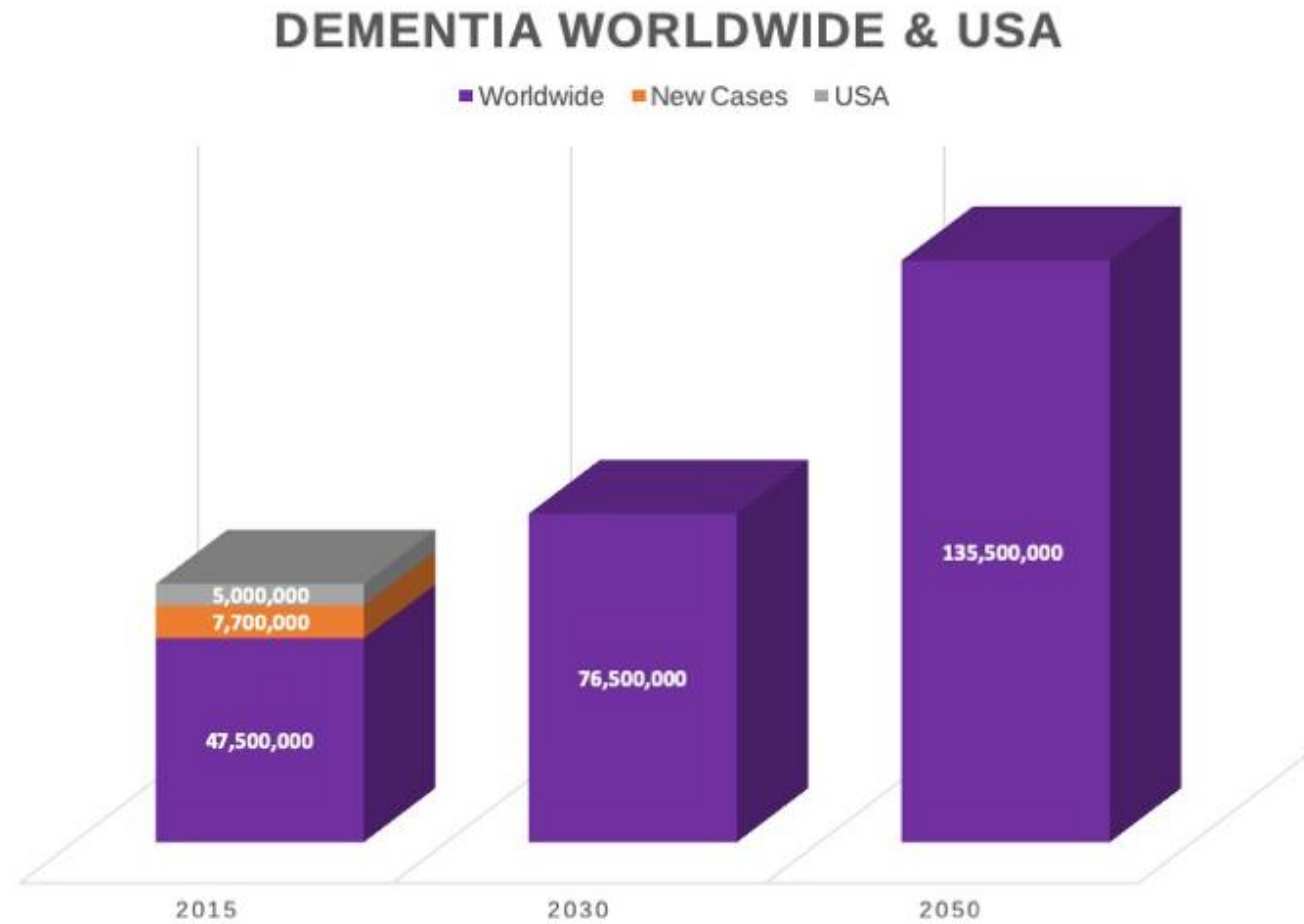
“Joining one club reduces your chance of dying in the next year by 50 percent.”
~Robert Putnam, Author of *Bowling Alone*



Social Connection and Dementia

“Observational study evidence indicates that greater social participation in midlife and late life is associated with 30–50% lower subsequent dementia risk.”

Sommerlad, A., Kivimäki, M., Larson, E.B. *et al.* Social participation and risk of developing dementia. *Nat Aging* **3**, 532–545 (2023).
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s43587-023-00387-0>

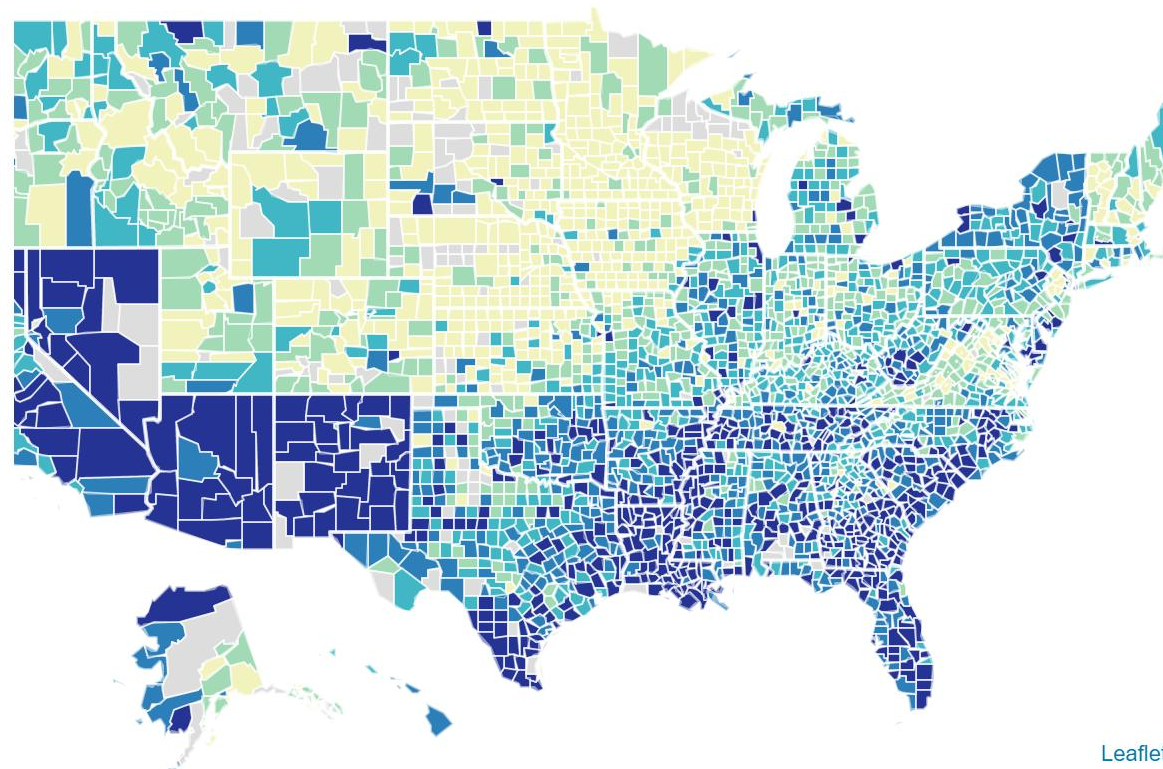


Social Capital Index

Community Health Subindex

Institutional Health Subindex

Collective Efficacy Subindex

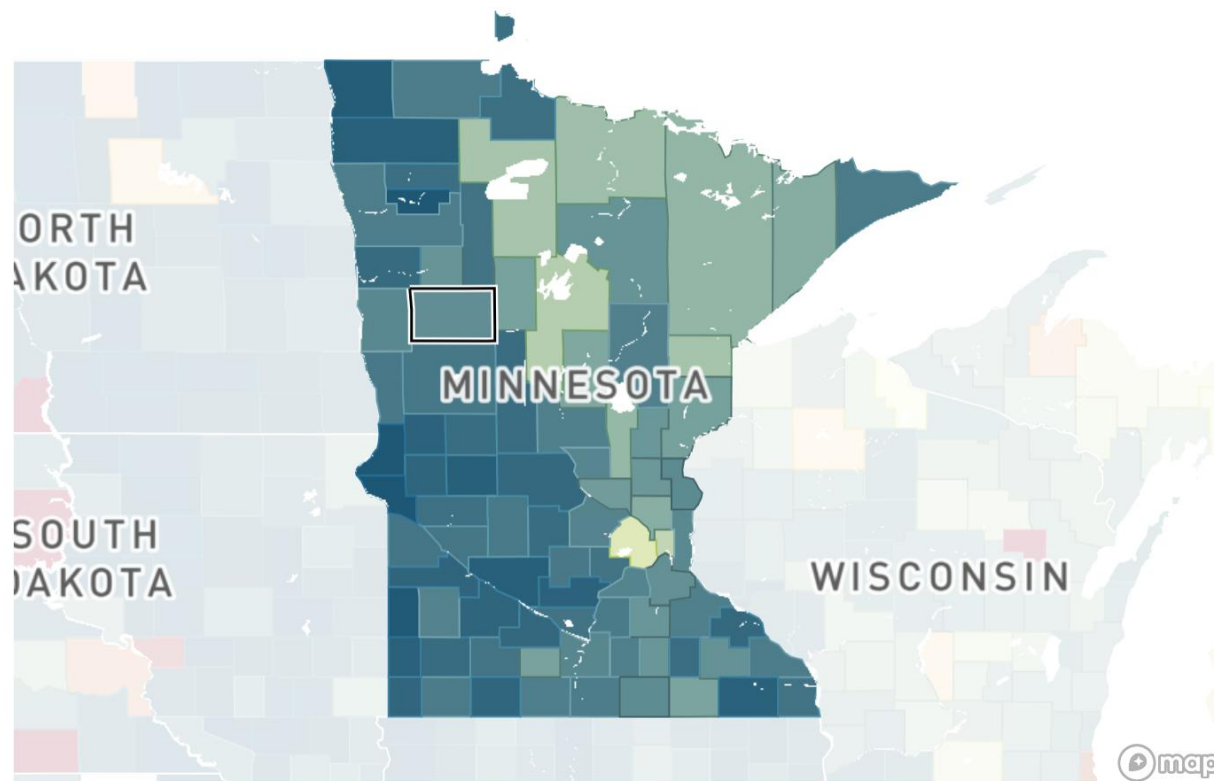


Leaflet



Upward Income Mobility

Becker County compared to counties in Minnesota



- This county exhibits **high** upward income mobility, ranked at the **83rd percentile** nationally.
- Children from low income families grow up to earn **\$40.4K** each year, on average.

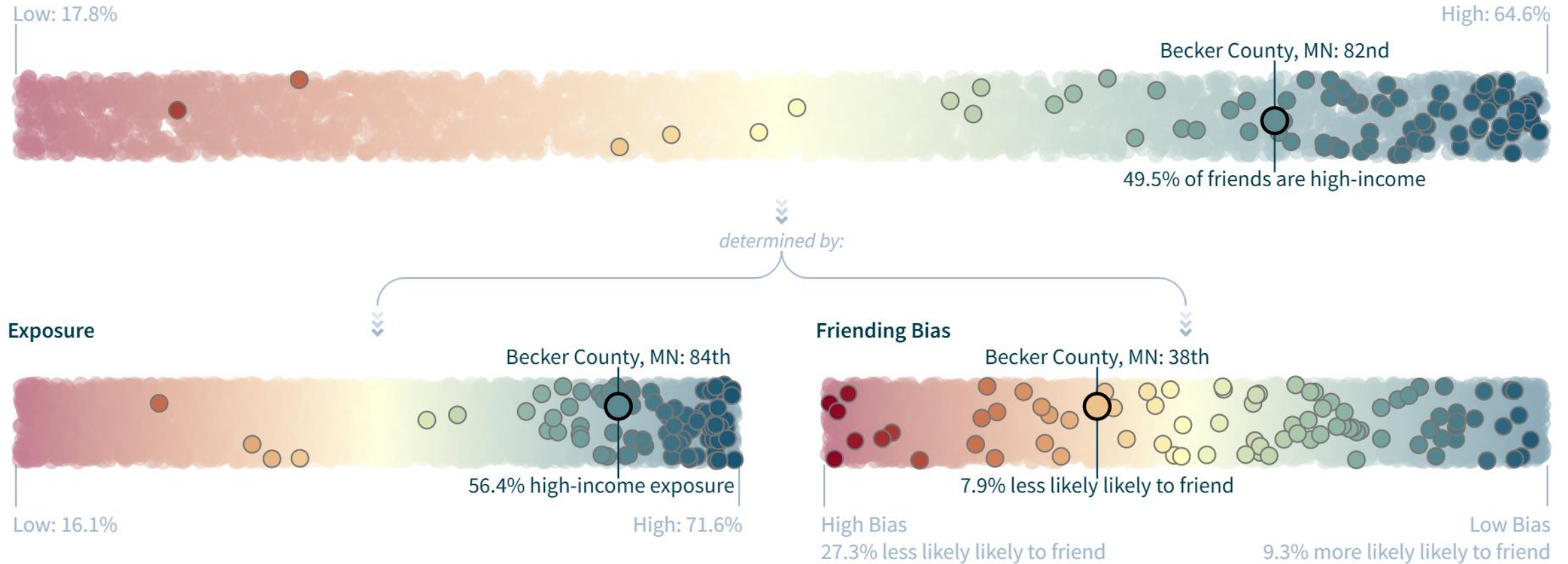
Exposure and Friend Bias

Determinants of Economic Connectedness (Current Income)

Becker County compared to counties in Minnesota

Economic Connectedness

Based on Current Income



Number Three

Find Your Third Place

Third Places

- Libraries
- Cafes
- Coffee Shops
- Churches
- Parks
- Gyms
- Taverns

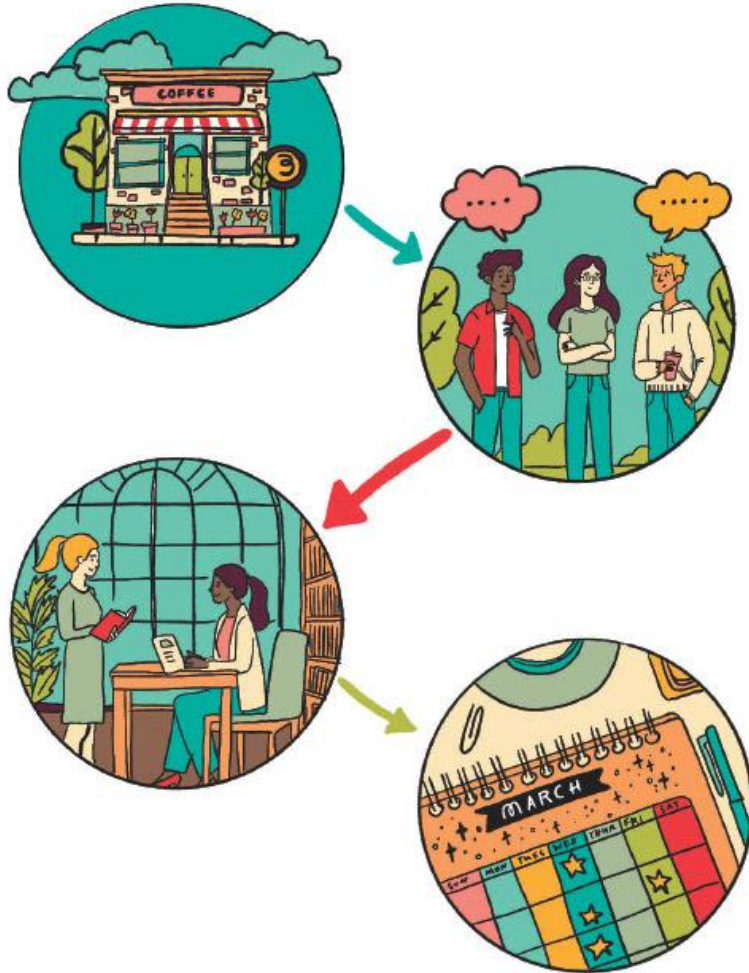




Some “third places” are not third places

“The Best Coffee Shops in Los Angeles” The Los Angeles Times

HOW TO FIND YOUR THIRD PLACE



1

Think about the things you like to do and then ask yourself: where do others who enjoy those things hang out?

2

Look for places that are convenient and accessible to you, places that are near your home or work or located on the way from one to the other. Talk to a few people you know from your work or your neighborhood or even folks you know on social media. Ask them if they would like to get together on a regular basis at a local coffee shop, tavern, bookstore, or gym.

3

Ask your local bookstore or public library if they know of any book clubs in the area that would welcome a new member.

4

Make a commitment to show up regularly. Think of your social life as a priority, not something you put at the end of a to-do list.



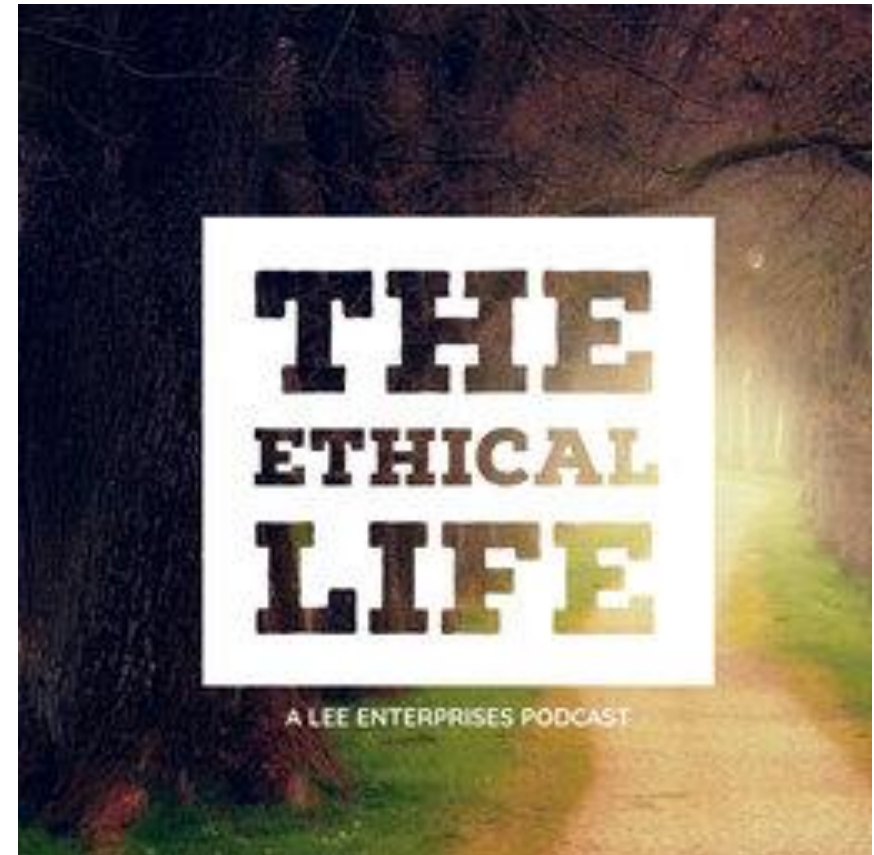
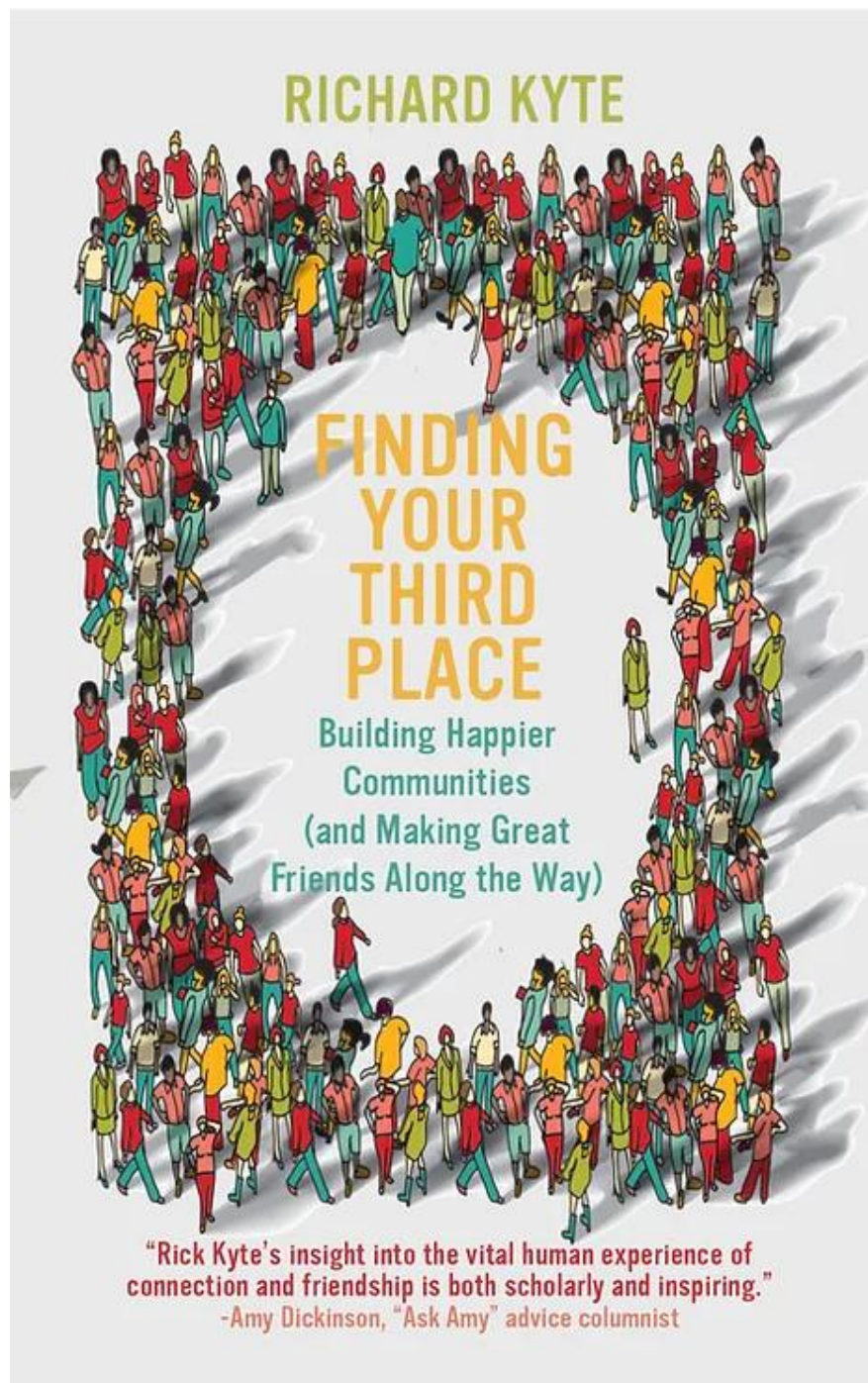






Frazee





richardkyte.net