

Alt is denoting a version of something that is a challenge to the traditional version. Alt TikTok isn't just comedy or dancing; it goes deeper than that and has a major impact on the kids/teens/adults who use it. It has connected us over the course of this pandemic in more ways than we expected. There are 3 main concepts I see on alt TikTok: politics, fashion, and the trauma that millennials and gen z hold from the previous generation.

First, let's talk about the fashion of alt TikTok; it has popularized having your own style. Not everyone wants designer sneakers, shoes, and clothing and TikTok has made that ok. From my experience in middle school, you'd be made fun of if you say you got your clothes from a thrift store. There are also people encouraging people to "dress outside of their gender". I see men wearing skirts and fishnets, which is an amazing development. I'd never heard of such a thing as a man "dressing feminine" or even seen it until TikTok. They're also not LGBTQ+ which breaks down the stereotype that only gay men are feminine. This breaks down the gender stereotypes we are bound to and normalizes stepping out of them. In this way, TikTok encourages our future generation to say: forget everyone else, be selfish, and focus on your happiness since you're not hurting anyone.

Politics on TikTok has shown the younger generation the social climate we're in. We've been able to decide that things like homophobia, racism, and the selfishness of taking another's happiness because you don't agree is something we don't want for ourselves. TikTok has given our generation a voice. Even if we have no say in what goes on in our communities, we know what we're dealing with and learning what we can do to change it. When it's time, we can really advance our country socially.

The younger generations recognize the mistakes of the last when raising their children and want to fix them. We want to break a cycle of driving our kids away and giving them issues that they carry into adulthood. It's baffling how many people I see on my "For You" page who have stories about the horrid treatment they received from a family member or even their parents. Small things that even we didn't notice affected us. When you see those videos, you start to realize how many abusive traditions have been normalized and you have an urge to change them.

The goal of millennials and gen z is to change this world. We want improvement and we're willing to fight for it. I find that admirable and I anticipate going through with it.