

## ***“Enabling the Good Life: A Report from Sustainable Brands and Harris Poll”***

### **Fact Sheet**

***Today’s version of the good life appears to be shifting; less focus on money and status, and more towards a pursuit of a simpler, balanced life that is rich with connections to people, community, and environment.***

- More than 7 in 10 U.S. adults (71%) say living the good life is different for them than it was for their parents.
- More than 3 in 4 U.S. adults (76%) agree that the good life requires making a difference for others in the world.
- Two in 3 Americans (66%) say “living a healthy, balanced life” is very important to what their vision of what living the good life means to them.
- When looking at the relative weights of each of the four dimensions in defining the good life<sup>1</sup> (*Balanced Simplicity; Meaningful Connections; Financial Independence; Personal Goals*), Americans report that “Balanced Simplicity” has the largest impact on defining the good life, followed by “Meaningful Connections.” Each dimension has the following weight in defining the good life:
  - Balanced Simplicity: 36%
  - Meaningful Connections: 28%
  - Financial Independence: 26%
  - Personal Goals: 10%

***We tend to think we are more divided than we are on our aspirations. In reality, there appears to be far more that connects us than divides us in terms of our hopes and dreams. Consumers share an underlying optimism about the possibility to achieve the good life.***

- About half of U.S. adults (51%) believe that people in Americans generally disagree on what the good life represents; yet 48% agree what it represents.
- No matter an or woman, young or old, Republican or Democrat, leading a balanced life that is connected to people and issues that matter has the largest impact on The Good Life. The relative weight of *Balanced Simplicity* for each demographic is as follows:
  - Men (37%) vs. women (35%)
  - Millennials (34%) vs. Gen Xers (35%) vs. Baby Boomers or older (38%)
  - Parents (35%) vs. Not Parents (36%)
  - Republicans (34%) vs. Democrats (38%)
- More than half of Americans (52%) believe their ability to achieve The Good Life is within reach, with another 1 in 4 (25%) saying they are already living it.

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked to rate 24 items on how important each was to what their vision of the good life means. These items were then categorized into four groups based on the results of a factor analysis. A survey technique called maximum-difference scaling (max-diff) was then used to understand the relative importance of the items in each group. This was then re-indexed to sum to 100% resulting in the following weights for each category: 36%: Simplicity, Balance, Health & Happiness; 28% Connections to People, Community, and Environment; 26%: Status - Money & The Ability to Enjoy It; 10%: Personal Goals - Career & Education

- And, nearly 4 in 5 (78%) believe things are going in the right direction, relative to personally living the good life.

***Cash plays a role but not necessarily king: Money and status continue to be a factor for Americans (and may be more important than some willingly admit); however, there is a strong emerging recognition that money doesn't buy happiness, and that there are deeper aspirations that matter to the good life for today's consumers.***

- By far, income (62%) is reported as the obstacle that is preventing Americans from living the good life today.
- About half of U.S. adults (48%) say they will know they've achieved the good life when they can buy whatever they want.
- However, more than 3 in 4 U.S. adults (78%) agree money can't buy happiness.

***There is a new role for business and brands to support people's journey towards The Good Life. Currently, brands do not appear to be optimizing the opportunity to help Americans achieve The Good Life as many people believe companies 'sort of' care, but don't deliver. In addition, consumers report that most industries have areas for improvement on key dimensions related to living The Good Life.***

- More than half of Americans (57%) believe companies care about the well-being of its customers.
- About 1 in 2 Americans (51%) feel companies care about helping people achieve The Good Life (51%).
- Yet, the majority (65%) feel the products and services that are available to them largely do not help them live The Good Life.
- On key dimensions of The Good Life (*Balanced Simplicity, Meaningful Connections, and Financial Independence*), there appears to be room for improvement – particularly in the area of Connections – for a number of industries.
  - The Food, Technology, and Appliance/Home Furnishings industries are all viewed as delivering well on the dimension of Balanced Simplicity (providing products & services that make life simpler). All others (Travel, Hotels & Restaurants, Financial Services, Fashion/Apparel, Personal Care Products, Materials & Packaging, and Transportation) are viewed as delivering moderately.
  - Nearly all industries (with the exception of the Food industry who is viewed as delivering well) are viewed as delivering moderately on the dimension of Financial Independence (providing products and services that provide good value for price paid).
  - The Food, Technology, Travel, and Hotels & Restaurants industries are all viewed as delivering moderately on the dimension of Meaningful Connections (providing products & services that help me connect with larger issues and a sense of social purpose). All others (Appliance/Home Furnishings, Financial Services, Fashion/Apparel, Personal Care Products, Materials & Packaging, and Transportation) are viewed as not delivering well.
- Three in 4 Americans (75%) agree that if consumers demanded more products and services to help them achieve The Good Life, companies would change to provide them.



- When asked which companies are doing the most to help their customers achieve The Good Life, the following companies came to mind for Americans: Apple, Amazon, Google, P&G, Microsoft, Panera Bread, Trader Joe's, Starbucks, Target, Tesla.

***At the same time, Americans appear to be engaged – they say they've taken some action with respect to their purchasing as a result of caring about the role of brands impacting our world – however, consumers are ALSO not optimizing their opportunity to influence/help brands deliver better products. They believe they can influence the behavior of brands by buying from them, but they don't as often as they could.***

- Four in 5 Americans (80%) say they are loyal to brands that help them achieve The Good Life.
- Nearly 2 in 3 U.S. adults (65%) believe they can influence companies to do better by buying from them when they do.
- More than 1 in 4 Americans (28%) say they have purchased a product or service because it represented their vision of the good life.

***Americans do not have a consensus how brands can deliver The Good Life: They don't immediately have ideas to offer brands how they can help. Brands need to take the lead, seek consumer insights and develop innovative products and services to support people to fulfill their aspiration of the good life.***

- People appear to be split on their opinions how brands can best support their idea of The Good Life. When asked how brands can best support them in achieving The Good Life, Americans reported the following:
  - financial benefits (18%),
  - health & wellness benefits (12%),
  - aiding personal connections (11%),
  - providing quality products (10%),
  - being customer-focused (8%),
  - fostering convenience (7%),
  - aiming to better the world (7%),
  - helping the planet (6%),
  - having good values (5%),
  - being employee-focused (2%),
  - having transparent/ responsible manufacturing (2%).

30% said they didn't know how brands can best support their achieving the good life.



## About Sustainable Brands

[Sustainable Brands](#)® is the premier global community of brand innovators who are shaping the future of commerce worldwide. Since 2006, our mission has been to inspire, engage and equip today's business and brand leaders to prosper for the near and long term by leading the way to a better future. Digitally published news articles and issues-focused conversation topics, internationally known conferences and regional events, a robust e-learning library and peer-to-peer membership groups all facilitate community learning and engagement throughout the year. Sustainable Brands is hosted by Sustainable Brands Worldwide, a division of [Sustainable Life Media](#) headquartered in San Francisco, CA.

The Sustainable Brands and Harris Poll research provides insights for companies and brands leaders who want to know how to do business in an emerging environment where consumers are not just purchasing their products or services on their own merits, but who are also seeking guidance from companies in helping consumers attract the connections and simplicity they desire for a Good Life.

## About Harris Poll

Over the last five decades, Harris Polls have become media staples. With comprehensive experience and precise technique in public opinion polling, along with a proven track record of uncovering consumers' motivations and behaviors, Harris Poll has gained strong brand recognition around the world. Harris Poll offers a diverse portfolio of proprietary client solutions to transform relevant insights into actionable foresight for a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant and consumer packaged goods.

## Research Methodology

The survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Poll in conjunction with Sustainable Brands, supported by Ketchum. April 10 – 14, 2017. A total of 1,074 interviews were conducted among U.S. adults 18+. The data were weighted to ensure that relevant demographic characteristics of the sample matched those of the U.S. general population. All respondents (not only those who met the qualifying criteria) were weighted to U.S. Census Bureau demographic profiles for the U.S. population 18+ on gender, age, region, education, income, and ethnicity. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

## About Ketchum

Ketchum is a leading global communications firm with operations in more than 70 countries across six continents. The winner of 19 Cannes Lions and an unprecedented five *PRWeek* Campaign of the Year Awards, Ketchum partners with clients to deliver strategic programming, game-changing creative and measurable results that build brands and reputations. Ketchum, is a part of Omnicom Public Relations Group.