

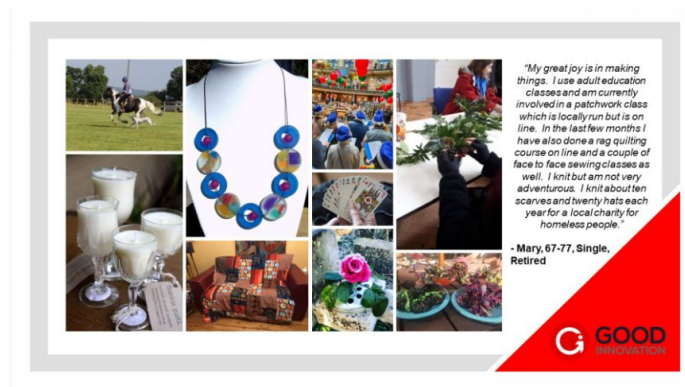
## Boomer Women Inspiration Series – 2. Habits, Hopes & Fears Good Conversations x Good Innovation

### Welcome to your weekly Boomer Women Inspiration Series

**Chapter Two – Habits, Hopes & Fears:** With our community jam-packed with Boomer Women busily sharing their thoughts and getting to know each other, week two saw us delving deeper into their lives. Across our three tasks this week, we asked them to share their weekly routines – including how they prioritise their all-important spare time – alongside their hopes and fears when it comes to the big areas of Health, Wealth, Retirement, Family and a Sense of Adventure!

Let's jump straight into some of what they shared with us.

Our Boomer Women are busy, and loving it!




When it comes to their spare time, there is a huge range of hobbies, interests and personal endeavours being pursued. While allotments and gardening are a consistent favourite, we also saw many delving into a variety of other hands-on activities such as patchworking, candle-making, embroidery, jewellery and mosaics to name a few. There is also a strong representation of more community-based affairs such as volunteering, including through the church, choirs and local games clubs such as Bridge.

There is a consistently strong sense that these women are eager to make the most of their spare time, particularly for those who are already retired:

*"I am very lucky and I appreciate that, now I'm retired, I am totally free to choose what I want to do and when. I also have the energy for my fun activities and time to recover from them. I am aware that at some point, due to health reasons and aging I won't be able to do all the things I enjoy so I am really going for it now, whilst I can."* – **Jayne, 57-66, Married, Retired**

But grandchildren and work are still on their minds





*"Choosing to sing as and when needed and looking after my grandchildren - I have very little spare time to myself as I literally teach everyday even though a couple of days are just for a couple of hours" – Jenny, 57-66, Divorced, Full-time Employed*

*I would like to travel more but we look after grandchildren two days a week. My week is largely set to a routine around childcare." – Sally, 67-77, Married, Retired*

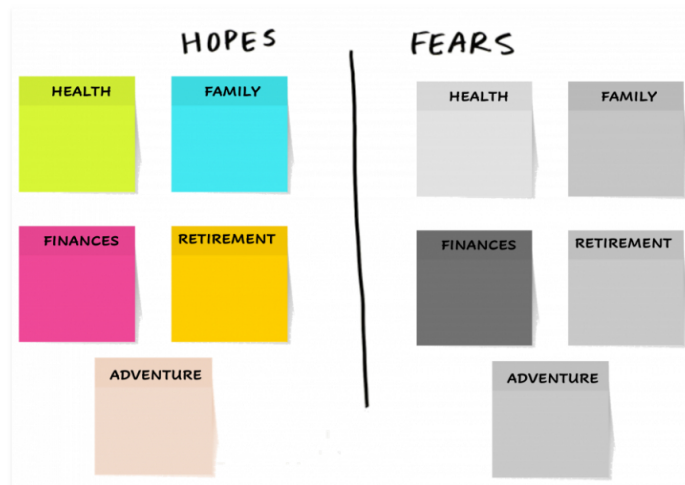
*On the 2 weekdays that I don't work I pack a lot in! On one of the days I do my volunteering sessions - this includes the admin for the community garden I'm involved in and a half day at the care home where I help with their gardening club." – Carmel, 57-66, Married, Part-time Employed*

*There are creative hobbies I've had to shelve (jewellery making and writing) because I just don't have the energy or time to do these at the moment with my work." – Josephine, 57-66, Separated, Full-time Employed*


However, many are experiencing the realisation that their available spare time is not always as plentiful as they might have hoped for at this stage of life. Recent economic challenges have hit home for some; this can result in keeping them in work for longer than they may have planned, forcing them back into part-time employment, or requiring them to help out more frequently with childcare when it comes to their grandchildren. Regarding the latter, they are willing to do it, but also agree that it does have the potential to feel like 'work' in itself, rather than existing as sheer quality time with the youngest members of their family:

*"Spending time with my children and grandchildren: this gives me so much pleasure, I don't do regular childcare (which would maybe change things and make it feel like work?) but frequently help out my two eldest daughters who live only 15 and 45 minutes away." – Vicki, 57-66, Married, Part-time Employed*

## Hopes & Fears: Health, Wealth, Family, Retirement & a Sense of Adventure



Health is a common concern for all


**HEALTH – somewhat Fearful**


*"I want to do everything in my power to continue in reasonably good health: by exercising and eating sensibly. Also, not to overlook any 'trigger' signs of illness but get them looked at by professionals so that any condition can be treated early, if required." – Beryl, 67-77, Married, Retired*

- Losing weight and better management of their diets
- Keeping physically active and mobile for as long as possible
- 'Getting lucky' by avoiding severe, dread diseases e.g. cancer
- Helping others with poor health through volunteering

*"I live alone and the fear of being ill and alone feels all too real. I fear disability and immobility far more than I fear death." – Mary, 67-77, Single, Retired*

- Being diagnosed with a 'big one' when it comes to disease: cancer, dementia, Parkinson's
- For those already suffering from chronic ailments, health is a dominant concern
- NHS not being able to care for them in the future due to current capacity challenges, therefore incurring higher care costs in the future
- Diminished quality of life, through lack of mobility, is a bigger concern than death – they fear becoming a burden on others



For many, health issues exist as a case of 'when' and not 'if'. Those fortunate enough to still feel physically capable are aware that they need to do what they can to limit future potential risks: losing weight and closely managing their diet are frequent strategies.

But they recognise that much of what might happen is beyond their control when it comes to dread diseases like cancer and dementia, meaning health issues are an ever-present concern. This is particularly true for those already suffering through mobility or on-going ill health.

Uncertain times make for the hum of financial worry

## FINANCES – somewhat Fearful



*"On an everyday level I will be happy if we just have enough to do what we need to and manage to go on a holiday once a year with some short breaks thrown in here and there."* – **Bernadette, 57-66, Married, Retired**

- Majority feel their financial ambitions are quite modest so don't need a huge amount: a bit of travel, seeing friends and family and access to a few hobbies are common ambitions, and feel achievable with current means
- Many feel fortunate to have options for the future that should cater to their financial needs: private and state pensions, as well as equity release through downsizing



HOPES

*"I worry that it is not going to be the fun time I had looked forward to, mainly due to poor finances. Time rich, cash poor..... Most things require money, just being home means more costs and going out is quite expensive. The cost of living crisis is quite noticeable."* – **Jayne, 57-66, Married, Retired**

- Rising interest rates, Cost of Living crisis, potential landlord or government pension changes make for an increasingly uncertain financial climate
- Reduced ability to leave anything behind, or to assist, for their own family as a result
- Not being able to afford the retirement hobbies they dream of, particularly travel
- Being forced to move out of the family home or further away from family due to rising costs



FEARS

Whilst many feel that they have options to cater to their present, fairly modest financial needs (state and private pensions, equity release through downsizing), the uncertain economic times of recent years mean that many are left feeling unsure of what the future might hold for them, and how this might impact on their aspirations for the years to come.

## Family provides a deep well of hope

### FAMILY – Hopeful



*"I hope to see my kids settled in adult lives, happy and healthy. Grandchildren would be nice! Why? My family are the most important thing in my life!"* – **Alex, 57-66, Co-habiting, Full-time employed**

- Spending quality time with family members, in particular grandchildren, is a big priority – beyond just offering childcare support!
- Seeing healthy, prosperous futures for their own future generations and doing what they can to support this
- Continuing to enjoy the sense of comfort and security that comes from a supportive family unit



HOPES

*"I fear that my children will struggle to be independent because of the cost of living. I struggle to see how my son will ever afford to move out."* – **Patricia, 57-66, Married, Homemaker**

- Concerns that their children won't be able to prosper financially in the same way Boomers were able to
- Family units falling apart through divorce, or members physically moving far afield to pursue work opportunities, within and beyond the UK
- Becoming a burden to their own children through decreased lack of mobility



FEARS

Family is a clear priority and source of joy, comfort and ultimately hope – for those fortunate to have them in their lives. Spending time with family members, and treasuring special moments together, provides a platform for a brighter view of the future.

But there are fears that future generations will struggle to achieve the same levels of prosperity, success or even comfort as Boomers were able to enjoy. This brings with it a sense of desire (obligation, for some) for many to provide help wherever they're able to.

## Retirement is something to be enjoyed!

### RETIREMENT – cautiously Hopeful



*"The feeling of freedom and losing all the stress from work is very special. I feel I gave my all to my career and now just want to enjoy myself for as long as I can."* – **Jayne, 57-66, Married, Retired**

- Generally positive sense of retirement providing them the opportunities to pursue freedoms through hobbies and interests that particularly excite them – they're looking forward to it / enjoying it!
- As a result, they generally all feel ok about it, but there is a sense of 'Who knows what will happen?' when it comes to health and finances – so it's not entirely care-free



HOPES

*"My concerns for my fun, sense of adventure, hobbies all hinge on good health, healthy finances and relationships. All that would stand in my way as I have stated earlier is changes in taxation, letting property and a reduction state pensions and all these are not solely within my control!"* – **Rita, 67-77, Married, Retired, BAME**

- Uncertainty and changes to health and financial situations are the biggest fears when considering retirement
- However, many are left feeling like so much of this is beyond their control: there is a sense of hoping for the best, while doing what they can in the present



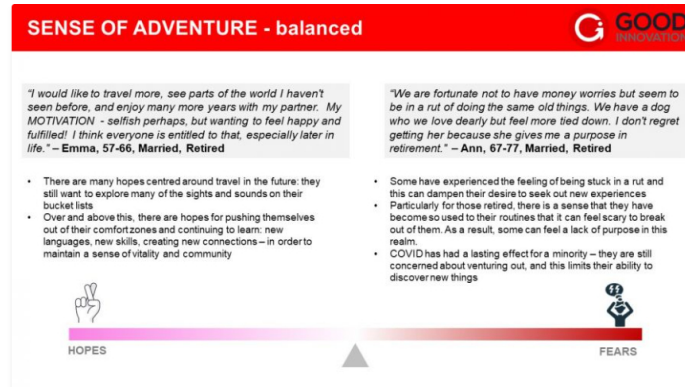
FEARS

Life is too short, and Boomer Women and their partners have worked too hard, to simply not enjoy the fruits of their labour. They are excited for the freedom they hope it will bring (and has already delivered for some) in order to pursue the hobbies and interests that truly matter to them.

However, this is tempered with cautious enthusiasm; you simply never know what might happen when it comes to health or wealth that might jeopardise future desires.



Maintaining a sense of adventure takes more effort than it used to



Boomer Women recognise the benefits of seeking out new experiences; it keeps them young, cognitively active and reaffirms bonds of connection within communities.

But as they've gotten older, they've realised that stepping out of their comfort zones has become increasingly daunting. As a result, incorporating a sense of discovery in their lives requires more conscious effort than it might have in their youth, and they fear that they may not always have the energy to pursue it as vigorously these days.

## A Good Conversation Thought Starter

Welcome to a new feature: our Charity Thought Starter. This is a small seed of an idea that we've stumbled upon that *might* have the potential to turn into something bigger down the line. It's something we'll be keeping our eye on throughout the remainder of the community to track its development, but wanted to share it with you now to mull over.

This week's seed is: **The ability of charities to provide a sense of purpose to Boomer Women**

**Charity Thought Starter**

For some Boomer Women, there can be a sense of a lack of purpose once careers have ended, children have moved on (or were never a consideration) and mobility might limit involvement in activities.

How might we position charitable involvement as a way to finding **Purpose** once more?





*"I am easily distracted and probably waste a lot of time since I retired. Being involved in the charity keeps me focussed and gives me purpose."*

**- Ann, 67-77, Married, Retired**

## What else are our Boomer Women talking about?

Finally, we wanted to share a bit of fun that our women are having on our community. With the ability to start their own discussions about whatever they might like, they've been talking about...the community, and how much they're enjoying it!

Life coaching ☆ 1 0



Alison

Is anyone else feeling that doing this market research is like getting paid for something you'd pay a life coach for!!

I'm finding the process of considering these areas of my life, the hopes I have and what might be standing in the way of fulfilling them. a really useful exercise. Fascinating!

Next week: We broaden our scope and hear what our Women feel represents the Best & Worst of their generation, what it means to age gracefully (or not!) and what marketing campaigns hit, or miss, with this audience.

Find out more: [hello@goodinnovation.co.uk](mailto:hello@goodinnovation.co.uk)

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