



A Klick Health POV

# Shaping Tomorrow

—  
Navigating the Cultural Forces  
Redefining Culture and  
Healthcare in 2025



**Meredydd Hardie**  
VP, Group Director Strategy  
Klick Health

# INTRODUCING CULTURAL FORCES FOR 2025

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# INTRODUCING CULTURAL FORCES FOR 2025

## Future Unfolded: Redefining Healthcare and Pharma Strategies

The world doesn't change all at once. It evolves—often in subtle ways that build momentum over time. For pharma marketers, understanding these shifts is essential. Cultural forces shape how patients think about their health, how providers approach care, and how systems adapt to meet new challenges. Ignoring these forces means falling behind, but embracing them unlocks new opportunities to lead.

At Klick, we call this philosophy **FuturePathing**—the practice of building optionality for the future. It's not about predicting a single outcome with certainty but preparing for a range of possible futures. By tracking the adjacent possible—the space where today's trends, innovations, and behaviors signal what's next—we can help brands build the flexibility and foresight they need to navigate change seamlessly.

## Why Culture Is Key

Every decision your brand makes today is part of a larger cultural context. Trends in behavior, technology, and values don't exist in isolation—they ripple across industries and impact how people make decisions. For pharma marketers, these cultural forces shape how patients, providers, and systems interact with your brand.

Take, for example, the growing expectation for personalized, on-demand experiences. No longer just a tech trend, these expectations represent a cultural shift that changes how patients engage with healthcare. Whether it's digital tools for managing chronic conditions or the increasing demand for transparency, cultural forces drive behaviors that define the health ecosystem.

Sensitizing ourselves to these signals gives us more than just insight—it gives us options. With the right awareness, we can identify today's decisions that will prepare brands for tomorrow's opportunities. The goal is simple: to position your brand to thrive across a range of future scenarios, no matter how the specifics evolve.

## WHAT THIS SERIES WILL DELIVER

Each year, Klick identifies the cultural forces we believe will shape the next 12 months and beyond. These forces are actionable frameworks for navigating complexity and staying ahead.

This year's series is grounded in FuturePathing. We'll explore the adjacencies that emerge from today's trends and innovations and show how pharma brands can leverage these insights to prepare for the future while shaping it. Identifying the foundational capabilities your brand needs helps it adapt and pivot effectively, no matter how the landscape evolves.

## YOUR FUTURE STARTS NOW

The future doesn't arrive in a single moment—it's always revealing itself in the present. You can stay ahead of the curve by tuning into cultural forces and recognizing emerging adjacencies.

Are you ready to see what's next?

Over the next few weeks, we will explore five key cultural forces shaping our world and the health and pharma industry in 2025. Each force will include our analysis and examples of the force coming to life, plus predictions for 2025 and the impact on patients, HCPs, and other stakeholders.

### **Cultural Force 1: Mediated Existence.**

We no longer engage with the world without a digital information lens to augment and inform our experience.

### **Cultural Force 2: Fractured Futures.**

The gender gap is widening and will become a rift, impacting areas like healthcare access, economic opportunities, and technology.

### **Cultural Force 3: Generation Algorithm.**

Algorithms are reshaping how we interact with the world on every level. It will be crucial to remain aware of these influences and seek to balance the efficiency of algorithms with the richness of human experience.

### **Cultural Force 4: Context Is Everything.**

As people navigate an increasingly complex world, the ability to contextualize information and experiences becomes not just a tool for efficiency but a necessity for meaningful interaction and decision-making.

### **Cultural Force 5: Emotions Running High.**

As people celebrate wins in one breath and confront frustrations in the next, these heightened feelings drive cultural shifts, sparking resilience and resistance.

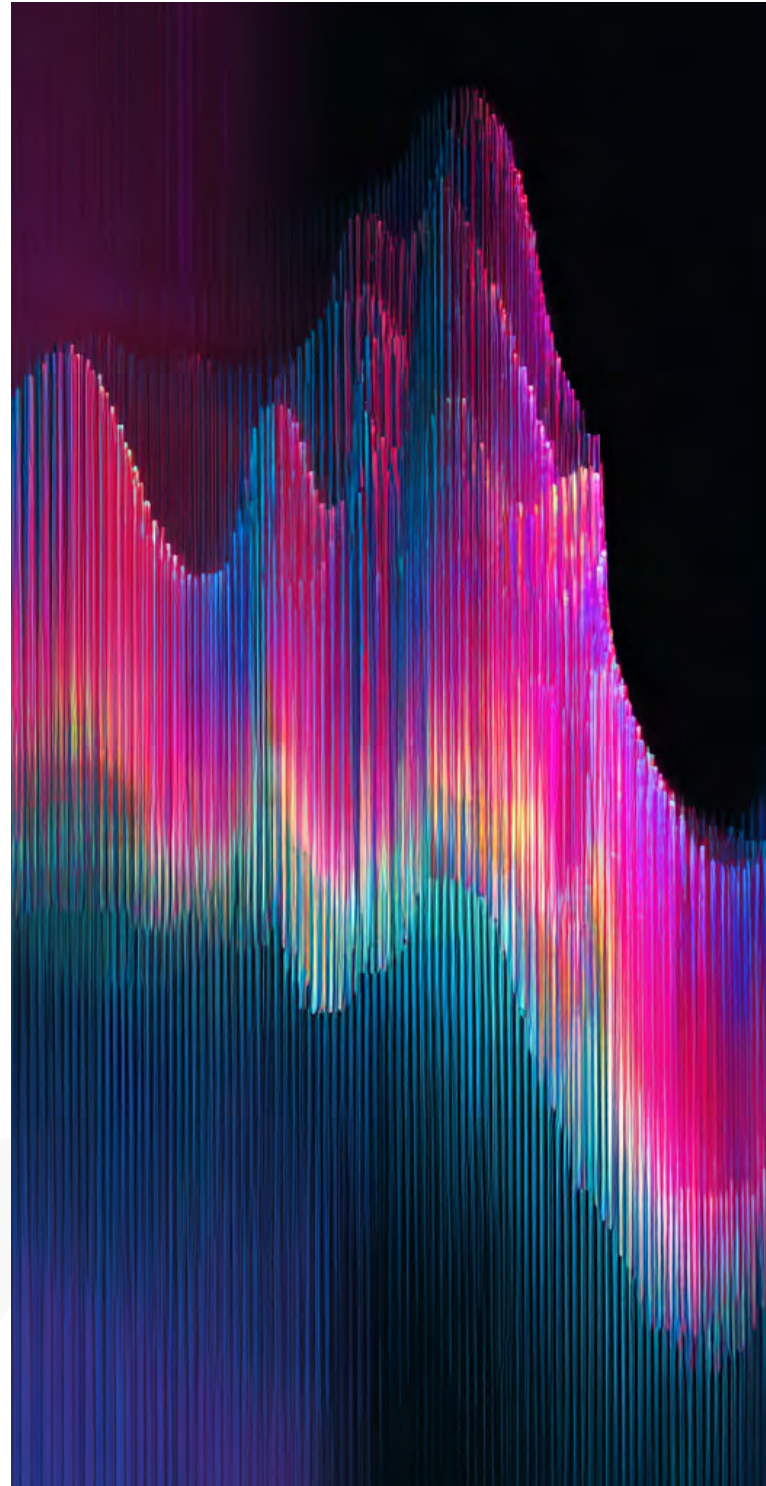


## HOW WE DO IT

We approach predictions of cultural forces in two different ways:

- 1. Ongoing cataloging and tracking of emergent trends throughout the year.**  
These trends are cataloged and tagged in a database. They include research studies and data points, news articles and events, social media posts and discussions, pop culture content and reactions, and anything that helps us understand the world around us.
- 2. Meta-analysis of trend reports.**  
The Strategic Futures team analyzes trend reports from sources as disparate as Gartner, Accenture, Spotify, Pinterest, and the UN, among others, to identify meta-trends and commonalities.

Klick Health's cultural forces and predictions are developed based on this research. Unlike other trend reports, we always bring a health and pharma lens to our work, ensuring that the identified cultural forces are relevant to our industry (although not exclusively about our industry). We develop implications and thought-starters for our specific audiences.





# LEAVES

Trends and Fads (Signals)

# BRANCHES

Cultural Forces

# ROOTS

Human Needs + Global Events and Changes

## THE MODEL

We use the following model to help us make sense of the chaotic set of trends that make up culture.

### Roots

All cultural forces are rooted in larger human needs and global events.

Key examples of **Roots include** the following:

#### Urbanization

The world is becoming increasingly urbanized as people leave rural areas to find employment and community.

#### Demographic Shifts

Many countries are experiencing shifts, including Japan's aging population and the youth movement in the Global South.

#### Climate Change

The realities and fears around global climate change are impacting day-to-day life in countless ways.

Global events, which are changing culture and slower-moving, are monitored by organizations like the UN and various US government agencies. These agencies produce annual reports detailing the most recent implications and making predictions about what's to come.



## Branches

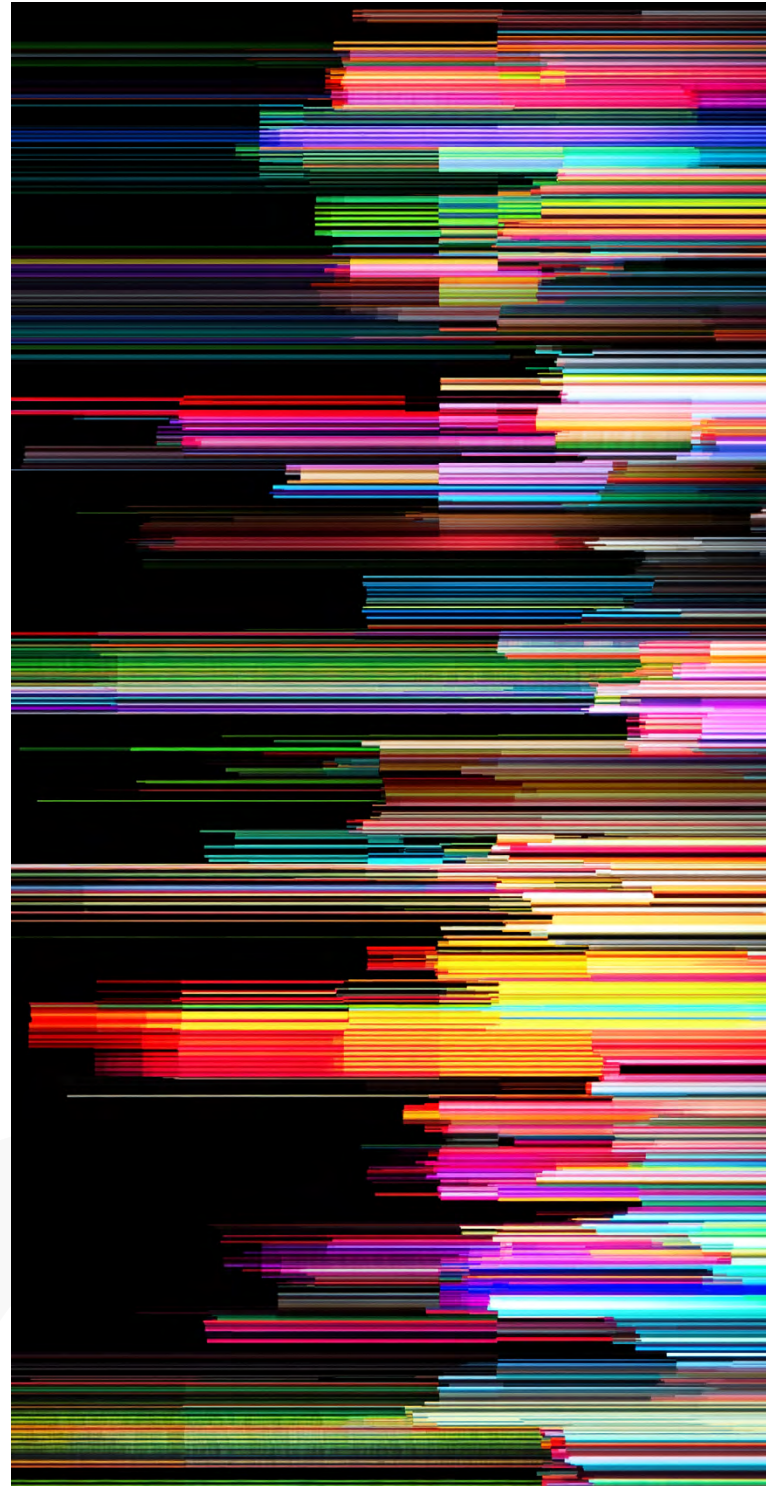
At Klick, we define cultural forces as the patterns moving in culture, identified by the accumulation of trends and rooted in larger global changes. Most often, these forces have been building and shifting for years before we name them; they take on different faces and impact our lives differently. In our model, these are the Branches. They don't disappear as quickly as the Leaves. The Branches are our focus when it comes to identifying cultural forces.

## Leaves

In our model, the signals that are easiest to see are the Leaves. These signals and fads represent a moment in time. They may disappear quickly, but they tell us something important about what's happening in culture. Trend-hunting organizations often report on these signals, and sometimes, a fad rises to mass-media attention—a TikTok format like “Brat Summer” or a trend connected to a big event like the movie *Wicked*. Our team observes, tracks, and catalogs these trends and fads throughout the year to help us see the emerging patterns.

We are excited to share Klick Health's cultural forces over the coming weeks. These reports culminate a year of observation, research, analysis, and discussion from strategists steeped in pharma and health. Understanding how culture shifts and changes is critical to predicting what comes next for us and our industry.

**Happy 2025!**



**CULTURAL FORCE 1**



# **MEDIATED EXISTENCE**

How digital mediation is reshaping  
healthcare, decision-making, and  
human connection in an  
increasingly curated reality

Life today is lived through a filter—often literally. We rarely engage with the world unmediated, choosing instead to rely on tools, reviews, and technology to curate, refine, and contextualize our decisions. Students, for instance, are reluctant to enroll in university courses without first checking their professors’ reviews online. Diners scrutinize menus and customer feedback before committing to a restaurant. And for many teenagers, stepping into the world without AirPods playing their personal soundtrack feels unthinkable. These small examples highlight a broader trend: we are increasingly navigating the world through mediated experiences rather than confronting it directly.

This phenomenon is not inherently good or bad—it reflects our desire for control and predictability in a world that often feels overwhelming. In many ways, digital mediation reduces uncertainty, making decisions more efficient and outcomes more predictable. Yet it also comes at a cost: a gradual erosion of spontaneity, serendipity, and direct engagement with the world around us.



## What to Know

Nowhere is this shift more evident—or more consequential—than in healthcare. Patients are relying heavily on reviews, online forums, and digital tools to inform their healthcare choices. While this creates a more informed patient population, it also introduces new tensions. The safety and reassurance of digital mediation can amplify anxiety and decision paralysis, leaving patients feeling overwhelmed by too much information or conflicting advice.

## Signals of Mediated Existence in 2024

### Growth in Wearable AR and Decision-Making

**Tech:** AR glasses and decision-making apps that filter the world in real time are expected to reach [much higher rates of adoption in coming years](#), further embedding digital mediation into daily life.

**Health Trackers:** [44% of Americans own wearable health-tracking devices such as smartwatches or smart rings](#), which track health metrics from sleep to heartbeat patterns. Oura Ring and Apple Watch are only the start of how patients are tracking their health. For many, an alert from an app or device is becoming more trusted than the body's own signals.

**AI-Driven Health Tools:** Patients now use apps and digital platforms to compare treatments, healthcare providers, and even medications, leaning on technology to filter complex options into digestible recommendations.

**Digital Detox Movements:** [A growing movement that acts as a counter-signal for mediated experiences](#) is evident in the rise of retreats and tools that encourage unplugging, signaling a latent desire for unfiltered engagement with the world.

## What This Means for Healthcare in 2025

**For patients:** The rise of mediated healthcare experiences means having access to vast amounts of information—but also grappling with the emotional burden of choice. Patients who rely on reviews and digital tools may find it harder to trust personal interactions with healthcare providers, reducing the richness of the patient-provider relationship. This could lead to healthcare decisions that prioritize convenience over nuance or even accuracy.

**For HCPs:** HCPs are already seeing a shift in patient behavior. Armed with data from online sources, patients come to appointments with specific expectations, sometimes based on incomplete or misinterpreted information. Providers will need to invest more time in explaining their recommendations, countering misinformation, and rebuilding trust. Additionally, the pressure to maintain positive online reviews could influence how providers interact with patients, leading to a more transactional dynamic.



**For Pharma and Marketers:** Pharma brands have a unique opportunity to both align with and challenge this Cultural Force. Mediated existence is fertile ground for targeted campaigns that meet patients where they are: on digital platforms, in review sites, and through decision-making tools. But brands must also recognize the human need for authenticity and spontaneity. Those who blend cutting-edge technology with genuine emotional connection will stand out in an increasingly curated landscape.

## The Future of Mediated Healthcare Experiences

In 2025, the tension between mediated and unmediated experiences will shape the healthcare journey in profound ways:

- **Enhanced Digital Trust:** Patients will expect pharma brands, providers, and platforms to prioritize transparency and offer clear explanations about how tools and recommendations work.
- **Human Connection as a Differentiator:** Providers and brands that emphasize direct, unmediated interactions will resonate with patients longing for connection in an overly curated world.
- **Rethinking the Role of Reviews:** As reviews and digital tools dominate decision-making, healthcare providers and brands may need to advocate for context and balance, encouraging patients to weigh both digital and personal inputs.

## Balancing Control and Connection

Mediated existence offers many advantages: control, convenience, and a sense of preparedness. But it also creates tension, as people yearn for unfiltered, spontaneous experiences that remind them of what it means to be human. For healthcare, this duality is critical. By embracing the strengths of digital mediation while carving out space for authentic connection, the industry can help shape a future that is not just curated but also compassionate.



CULTURAL FORCE 2



# FRACTURED FUTURES

What happens when people of different genders start perceiving health, risk, and care in fundamentally different ways?

As we enter 2025, people across different gender identities are not just facing different challenges, they are perceiving the world in increasingly different ways. Social media algorithms shape their digital experiences, workplace priorities are diverging, and even healthcare engagement looks vastly different. These gaps aren't necessarily leading to conflict, but they are creating misunderstandings, where one side struggles to see the pressures and expectations shaping the other's reality.

This growing gap has major implications for healthcare and pharma. Some patients, [particularly women](#), are demanding better solutions, driving innovation in FemTech and digital health. Others remain hesitant to engage in preventive care, increasing their long-term health risks. Brands and providers must navigate these shifting expectations carefully, recognizing that healthcare is about more than science and access, it's also about culture, perception, and trust.



## Signals of Algorithmic Intervention

### Women's Sports as a Cultural Movement:

[The explosion of interest in women's sports, along with ongoing pay-gap debates, reflects shifting cultural priorities and the evolving visibility of female-driven industries.](#) Women's elite sports generated over \$1 billion in revenue for the first time in 2024, a 300% increase since 2021. This surge was driven by landmark events like the NCAA women's basketball tournament and the Women's World Cup, which drew unprecedented global audiences.

### The Rise of Digital Health for Women:

Investments in FemTech, including fertility tracking, menopause care, and reproductive health, signal a new era of women-first healthcare innovation. [Companies like Maven Clinic have attracted substantial funding, with Maven raising \\$125 million in late 2024, bringing its valuation to \\$1.7 billion.](#) This investment underscores a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive women's healthcare solutions.

### Health Information Seeking Online:

[Women in 2025 are still more likely to visit health and well-being sites than men, with 88% of women accessing these sites compared to 80% of men.](#) This pattern is particularly pronounced among visitors to Healthline, WebMD, and other medical-information platforms.

## What This Means for Healthcare in 2025

**For patients:** Women will continue driving health innovation and engagement, leading to more personalized digital health tools and pharmaceutical campaigns designed for their needs. Even today, [women are still underrepresented in clinical trials.](#) Men, meanwhile, [may remain under-engaged,](#) increasing risks for preventable conditions. Addressing these gaps means ensuring both genders feel seen and supported in their healthcare journeys.

**For HCPs:** Doctors will need to tailor their communication strategies, recognizing that men and women engage with healthcare differently. When working with women as patients, the focus may be on cutting through decision fatigue and validating their proactive efforts. For men, providers may need new strategies to encourage earlier engagement, breaking down resistance to preventive care. [It's important to note that because more women than men are enrolling in medical school, the demographic of physicians is changing.](#)

**For Pharma and Marketers:** The rise of women's sports, FemTech, and digital health engagement presents massive opportunities for targeted marketing and strategic partnerships. However, brands must ensure they don't alienate male consumers, who still require healthcare engagement strategies that resonate with their needs and behaviors.



## The Future of Fractured Futures

As these gender gaps widen, healthcare will need to adapt. By 2026, we may see a world where certain groups drive most healthcare innovation and digital adoption, while others remain less engaged until later stages of illness, widening the gap in outcomes.

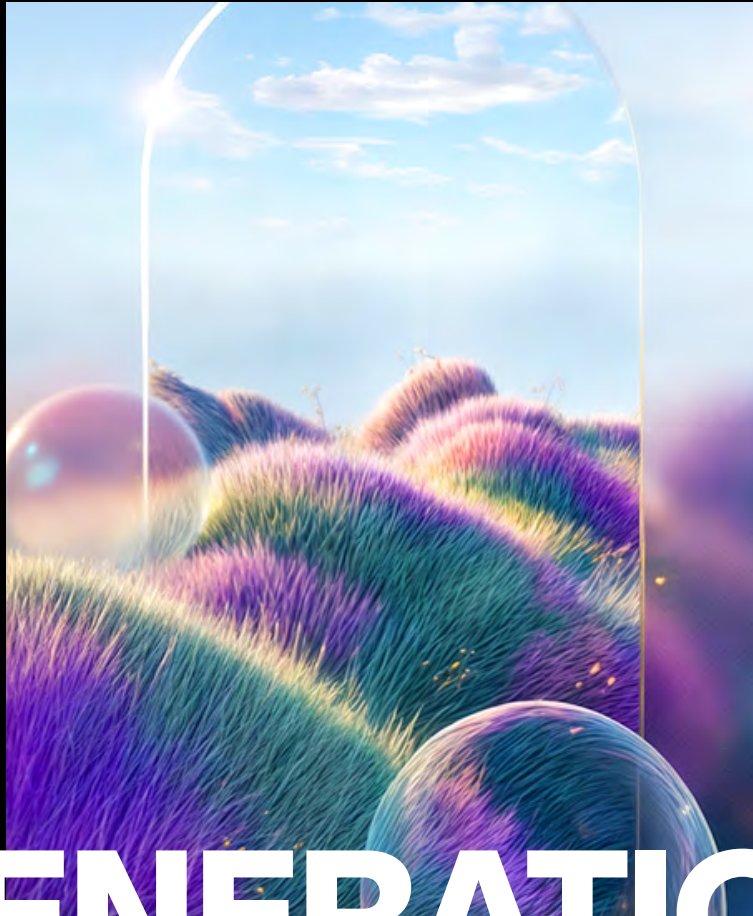
Klick Health is actively engaging with Fractured Futures, using creativity to address the evolving gender divide in healthcare with three recent campaigns: the award-winning campaign “[The Congregation](#)” for podHER turned a hardcover book into protest posters and a scannable map for reproductive rights, earning global recognition. Klick Health’s film [The Trial](#) also tackles gender-focused issues. Finally, [Love Captured](#) is a new, experiential dual-screen short film in support of global anti-trafficking organization The Exodus Road.

Pharma and healthcare brands that bridge this divide rather than deepen it will be the ones that succeed. The challenge is about more than offering different products.

Instead, it’s about understanding the evolving ways people perceive health, value care, and make decisions in an increasingly fragmented world.



CULTURAL FORCE 3



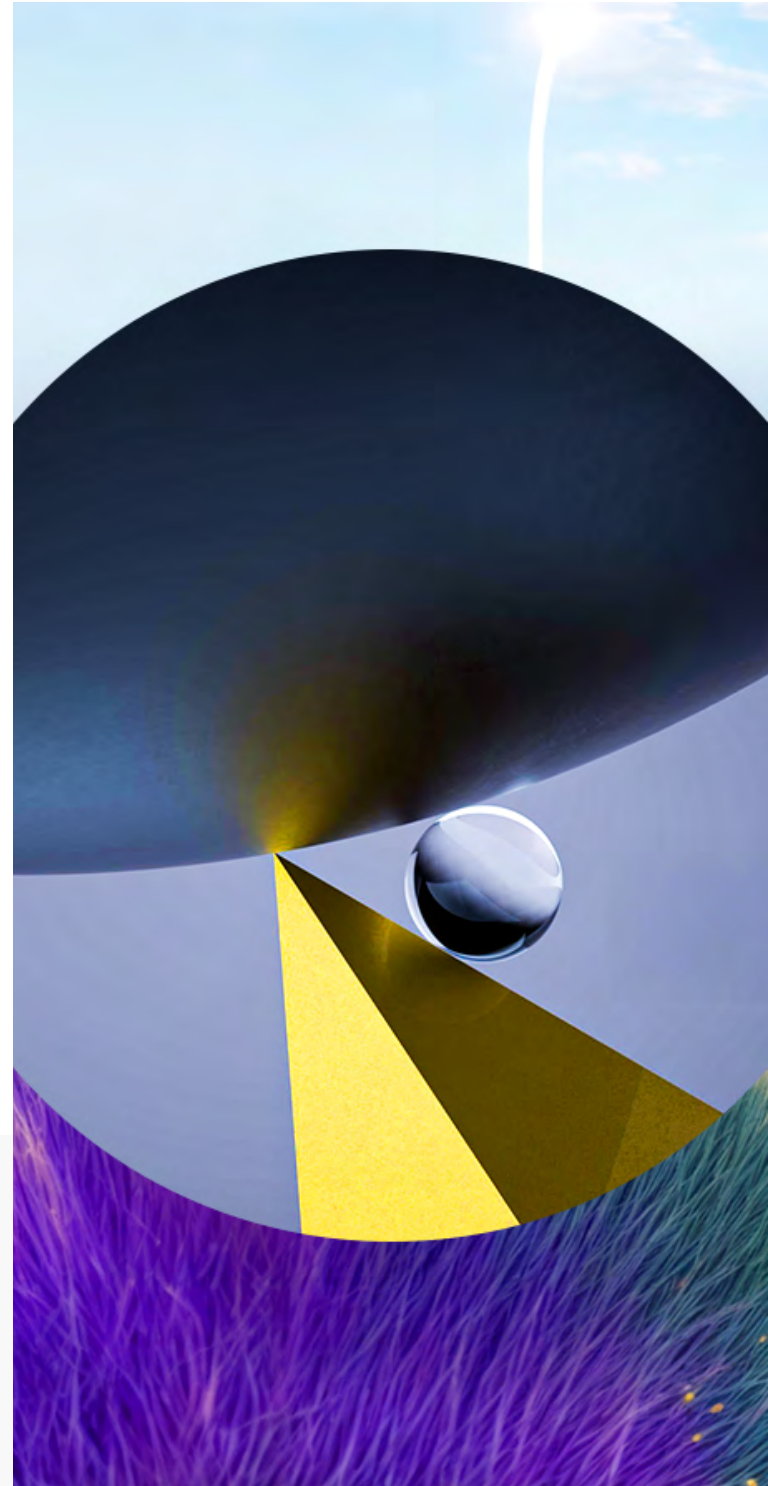
# GENERATION ALGORITHM

Outsourced Thinking:  
The Algorithmic Curation of Choice

For generations, making a decision—whether about health, career, or personal identity—was a process of gathering information, weighing options, and choosing based on intuition, experience, and available knowledge. Today, that process is increasingly outsourced to algorithms. Instead of searching for the best doctor, people check whose name ranks highest on a digital health platform. Instead of picking a career based on curiosity, students receive AI-generated lists of “ideal” professions based on past academic performance. Instead of exploring new interests organically, people are served recommendations that refine and reinforce their existing tastes.

At the same time, a counter-trend is emerging—one in which individuals are learning to work around, manipulate, or game the system. Some are deliberately hacking algorithms to increase their visibility to other users, bypass restrictions, or ensure favorable outcomes. Others are seeking out alternative ways of making decisions—such as relying on human intuition, randomness, or deliberate “unplugging” from automated recommendations.

For healthcare, pharma, and wellness, this shift presents a new challenge. How do brands, providers, and patients navigate a landscape where algorithms are both gatekeepers and tools to be manipulated? Understanding this evolving relationship will be crucial as we enter a future where thinking for yourself increasingly means knowing how to work within—and sometimes against—the algorithmic frameworks that shape modern life.



## Signals of Algorithmic Intervention

### **Patients Optimizing for Insurance Approval:**

[Some patients have learned to describe their symptoms in ways that trigger insurance approvals rather than denials.](#) If an algorithm prioritizes chronic pain treatments over lifestyle-related issues, patients may intentionally frame their condition using language that AI-based approval systems favor.

- This extends to pre-authorization processes, where patients and HCPs work together to strategically phrase diagnoses and treatment justifications to fit algorithmic criteria, ensuring access to necessary care.

### **The Rise of Algorithmic Activism in Wellness:**

[Beyond healthcare, some people are intentionally hacking algorithms for social good.](#)

Activists have used TikTok's sound trends to raise money for medical treatments, leveraging platform-engagement mechanics to boost visibility. Others use SEO tactics to manipulate search results, ensuring accurate health information appears before misinformation.

### **Patients Outsourcing Healthcare Decisions:**

AI-driven diagnostic apps are increasingly acting as first-line decision-makers, with patients relying on them to determine whether they need a doctor, what condition they might have, and even which medications to consider.

- Algorithm-based triage systems in telemedicine platforms decide who gets prioritized care, with automated risk assessments determining wait times and access to specialists.

## What This Means for Healthcare in 2025

**For patients:** For patients, algorithmic interventions create both convenience and complexity. While AI-driven tools can personalize treatment recommendations and streamline insurance approvals, they can also introduce biases, restrict options, and lead to frustration when decisions feel automated rather than human-centered.

**For HCPs:** AI-assisted diagnostics can enhance accuracy, reduce administrative burden, and help providers tailor care to individual patients. However, doctors also face new challenges, like insurance algorithms now dictating treatment coverage. Additionally, HCPs must counteract misinformation from patients arriving with AI-generated self-diagnoses, balancing digital convenience with medical expertise and human judgment.

**For Pharma and Marketers:** AI-powered systems are improving drug discovery, optimizing supply chains, and enabling hyper-personalized patient engagement. Search algorithms and digital formularies now play a crucial role in treatment access, meaning pharma brands must ensure their medications surface in digital decision-making systems while also addressing concerns about transparency, bias, and trust.



## The Future of Algorithmic Existence

As algorithms continue to shape how people navigate healthcare, work, and daily life, the balance between efficiency and autonomy will become even more critical. The next phase of algorithmic existence will likely be defined by:

- [Smarter AI-driven healthcare innovations that enhance precision and accessibility, such as Klick Labs' development of Voice2.](#) These AI models are capable of detecting Type 2 diabetes and hypertension through a brief voice recording, offering a non-invasive screening method
- How many people will become more strategic in interacting with AI-driven decision-making, learning how to navigate digital gatekeeping, and push back against one-size-fits-all recommendations
- The growing influence of algorithms prompting some people to seek to reclaim personal agency through deliberate randomness, non-digital decision-making tools, and intuition-based approaches
- AI becoming more precise in tailoring treatments to individual genetic, behavioral, and lifestyle data, but will also create challenges in ensuring patients retain the ability to make autonomous choices

The fundamental question of the future won't be "What should I choose?" but rather "Who—or what—is doing the choosing for me?"



**CULTURAL FORCE 4**



# **CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING**

Questioning the simple answer and  
intentionally looking for meaning

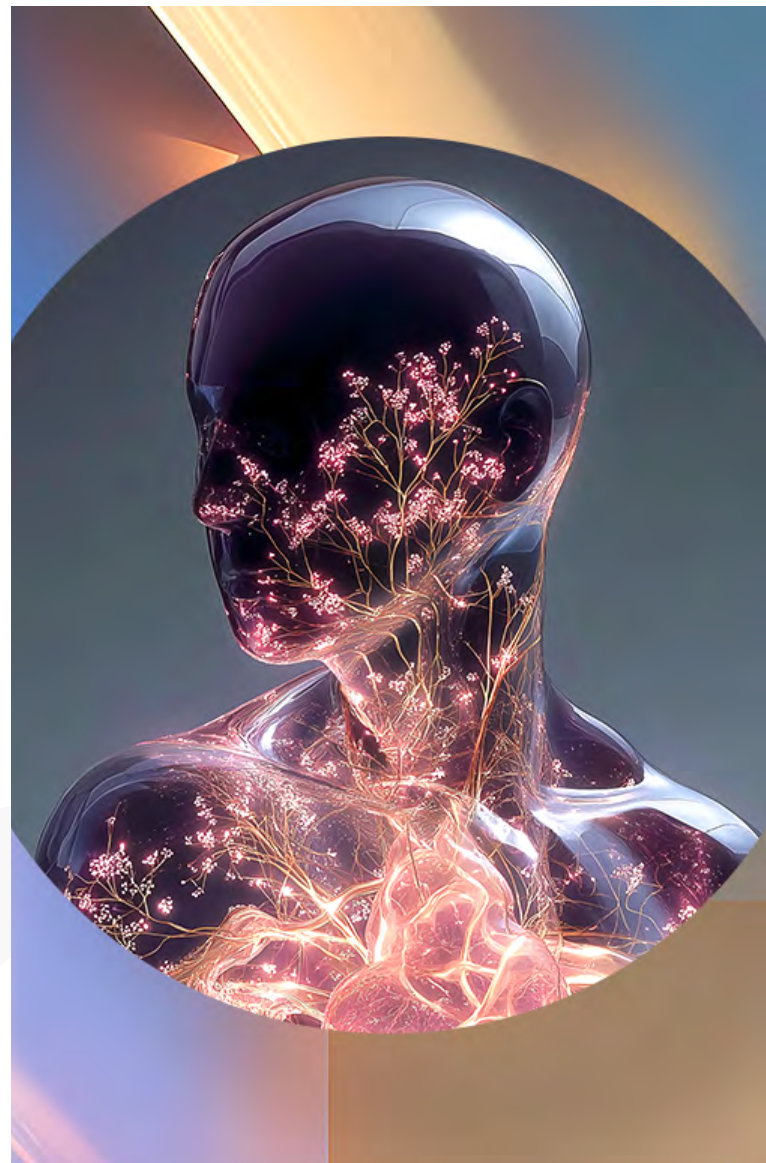
For decades, technological progress has streamlined decision-making, offering frictionless, curated experiences that reduce complexity. But as the world becomes more algorithmically optimized, people are realizing that stripped-down, decontextualized information isn't enough. Whether in politics, medicine, or personal choices, context is now essential to making informed decisions.

This shift is not about rejecting technology but about demanding more from it. People want broader, richer, and more multidimensional input that delivers a personalized experience. They no longer trust a simple answer—they want to know why something is recommended, how it fits into a bigger picture, and what tradeoffs are involved.

As technology mediates, automates, and personalizes experiences, people are grappling with control, trust, and autonomy in decision-making. These three forces reveal the tension between efficiency and depth, convenience, and agency:

- **Mediated Existence** is about curation, where people engage with the world through digital filters that remove friction.
- **Generation Algorithm** is about outsourced thinking, where people allow AI to pre-filter choices and streamline decision-making.
- **Context Is Everything** is about active engagement, where people reconstruct meaning by seeking, evaluating, and applying nuance to their choices.

Though distinct, they are deeply interlinked—as people accept digital mediation (Mediated Existence) and rely on AI to decide for them (Generation Algorithm), they increasingly demand transparency and control (Context Is Everything) to ensure those choices reflect their reality.



## Signals of Contextual Importance

### Misinformation and the Context Crisis:

[Misinformation has made people hyper-aware of context gaps. Fact-checking tools and media literacy campaigns in 2024 were pushing for “full context” in news and scientific reporting.](#)

The emphasis though is now on the individual as many organizations sunset their fact-checking [functions](#).

- Decontextualized information, like misleading health claims or AI-generated clickbait, faces increased public scrutiny. People are becoming more critical of oversimplified narratives.
- [Klick Labs has been proactive in addressing the challenges posed by deepfakes and misinformation.](#) They have developed tools utilizing vocal biomarkers to detect deepfakes, enhancing trust and authenticity in digital communications.

### The Cognitive Load of Context-Seeking:

People are increasingly overwhelmed by the amount of information they must process to make informed choices, leading to demand for tools that summarize complexity without distorting it.

- [New apps and AI features in 2024 aimed to provide “smart context,” offering deeper insights while reducing decision fatigue.](#) A good example of this is the Google Gemini Summarize This tool that is already integrated right into Gmail and the full GSuite of tools.

### Context in Consumer Behavior and Marketing:

[Brands that fail to acknowledge context feel “inauthentic” to modern consumers.](#) People now expect tailored messaging that aligns with their personal circumstances, cultural background, and current emotional state.

## What This Means for Healthcare in 2025

**For patients:** Patients increasingly expect personalized treatment plans that consider not just clinical factors but their whole life context. They are less willing to follow medical advice. Instead, they want to know why a treatment is recommended, how it compares to alternatives, and what factors were considered in the decision.

**For HCPs:** Doctors must now act as “context translators.” Instead of simply diagnosing and prescribing, they must help patients navigate medical choices in the context of their personal circumstances. HCPs are spending more time debunking decontextualized health information and providing their own contextual information as patients come in armed with research from AI-generated summaries, social media, and wellness influencers.

**For Pharma and Marketers:** Patients and HCPs need to understand how a treatment fits the bigger picture, not just what it does. Transparency is the new trust currency. Brands must be upfront about the limitations, tradeoffs, and situational nuances of treatments. There is also an opportunity to meet patients where they are with more personalized experiences that reflect the context of their own journey.

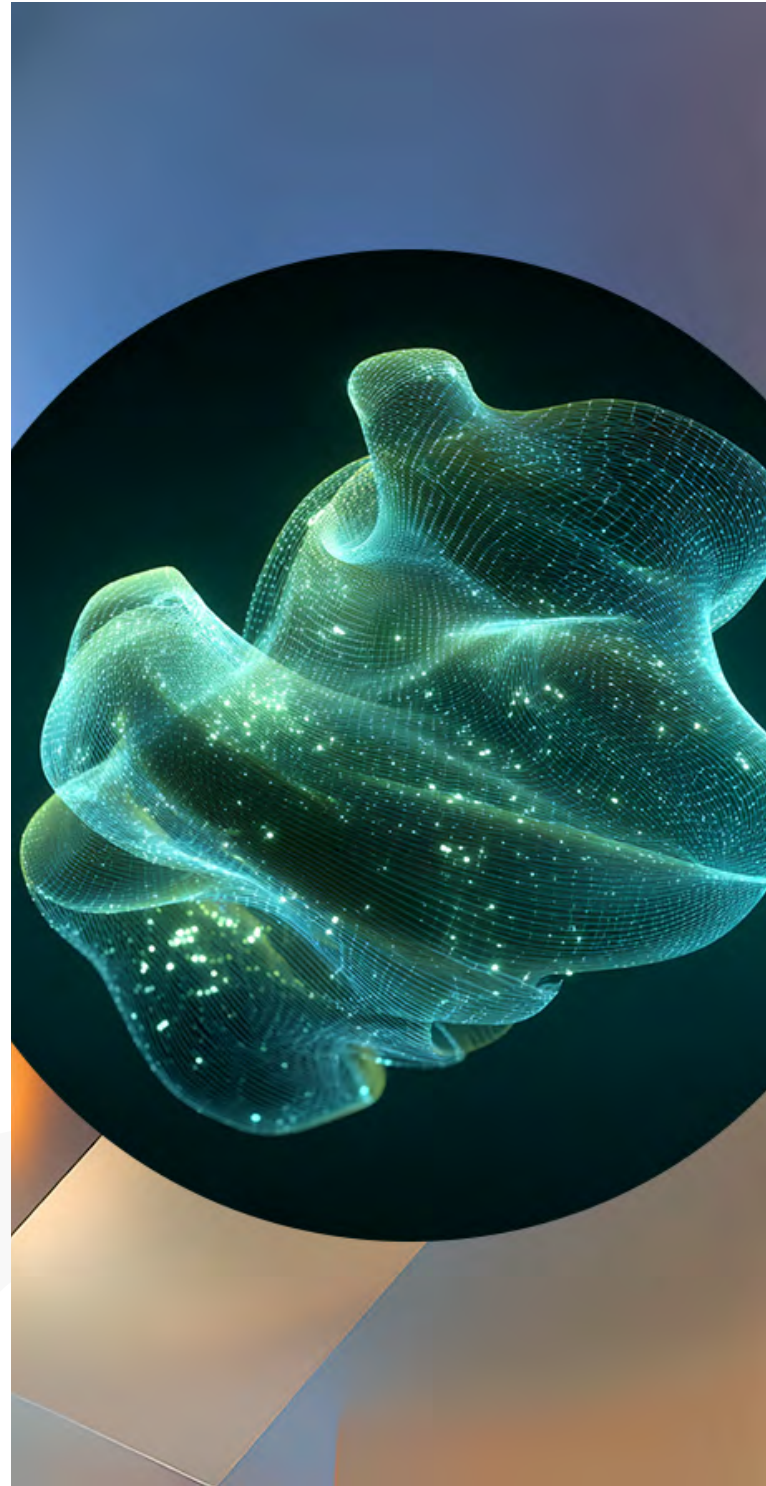


## The Future of Context

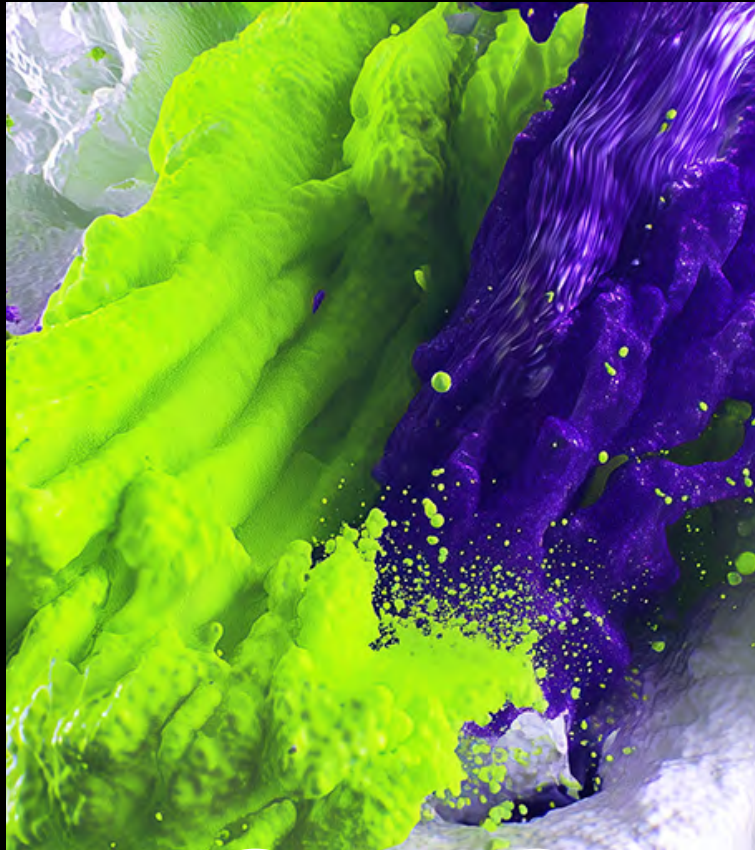
By 2025, context will no longer be optional—it will be expected. Patients, consumers, and professionals will demand depth, transparency, and justification for every recommendation they receive. AI will no longer just suggest options, it must explain why, show tradeoffs, and offer alternatives.

Klick Health has consistently demonstrated a commitment to creating campaigns that resonate deeply with diverse audiences by acknowledging and integrating cultural contexts. A notable example is their award-winning animated short film, [47](#), produced for Café Joyeux. This film tells the inspiring story of a 47-year-old with Down syndrome who, after numerous rejections, secures his first job at Café Joyeux. This café employs and trains people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. By highlighting the personal journey of overcoming societal barriers, the campaign fosters empathy and challenges preconceived notions about individuals with disabilities. This approach not only aligns with the cultural force emphasizing the importance of context in consumer behavior but also showcases how authentic, context-rich storytelling can enhance brand authenticity and consumer engagement.

The fundamental shift isn't just about having more information, it's about having the right information in the right context to make better decisions. In a world increasingly shaped by personalization and misinformation, context isn't just important—it's everything.



CULTURAL FORCE 5



# EMOTIONS RUNNING HIGH

Is emotional volatility  
redefining healthcare?

In a world of constant stimulation, people are feeling everything more intensely. Joy isn't just happiness—it's ecstatic, euphoric, almost defiant. Sadness isn't just melancholy—it's immersive, sometimes communal, and shared in digital mourning spaces. Fear escalates into paranoia, fueled by information overload. The emotional spectrum is being stretched in all directions, and people are living at the edges.

### Signals of Contextual Importance

**Resilience Training in Education:** [Educational institutions have started incorporating resilience interventions to equip students with coping strategies, aiming to prevent long-term mental health issues.](#) These programs focus on teaching mindfulness and emotional regulation to help students manage stress and emotional extremes effectively.

**Rise of “Vibes” Over Micro-Trends:** [In 2024, fashion and cultural expressions shifted from short-lived micro-trends to broader “vibes” that encompass entire lifestyles and emotional aesthetics.](#) This movement reflects a desire for more authentic and emotionally resonant cultural experiences, moving beyond superficial trends to deeper emotional connections.

**Prevalence of Societal Anger:** [A 2024 analysis highlighted a pervasive sense of anger in society, manifesting in both online platforms and real-world interactions.](#) This widespread rage is often undirected, increasing societal frustration and highlighting the need for effective emotional processing mechanisms. [We also see an information overload leading to paralysis, leaving people nowhere to discharge their emotions.](#)



## What This Means for Healthcare in 2025

**For patients:** Patients are navigating health decisions in heightened emotional states, driven by desperation, elation, or anxiety. They seek validation and emotional resonance from healthcare providers, often turning to AI-driven therapy and social media communities for support. The growing recognition of the mind-body connection means that mental and emotional well-being will play a bigger role in treatment plans.

**For HCPs:** HCPs must acknowledge that patients are arriving with intense emotions shaped by algorithmic amplification and real-world stressors. Providers will need new strategies for emotional regulation for themselves and their patients and balance empathy with evidence-based care. Expect more demand for treatments that address both physical and emotional health, including the rise of alternative treatments like psychedelics prescribed for mental health.

**For Pharma and Marketers:** Marketing must resonate with both extremes by acknowledging the deep frustrations and fears of patients while also tapping into the optimism of breakthrough treatments. Emotionally intelligent messaging will be key, and brands that validate, regulate, or enhance emotional experiences will stand out. From anti-anxiety medications to digital therapeutics, the pharma industry will be expected to help patients manage emotional highs and lows.

## The Future of Emotions Running High

In 2025 and beyond, people will continue to push the limits of what they can feel by seeking new ways to heighten, regulate, and share their emotions.

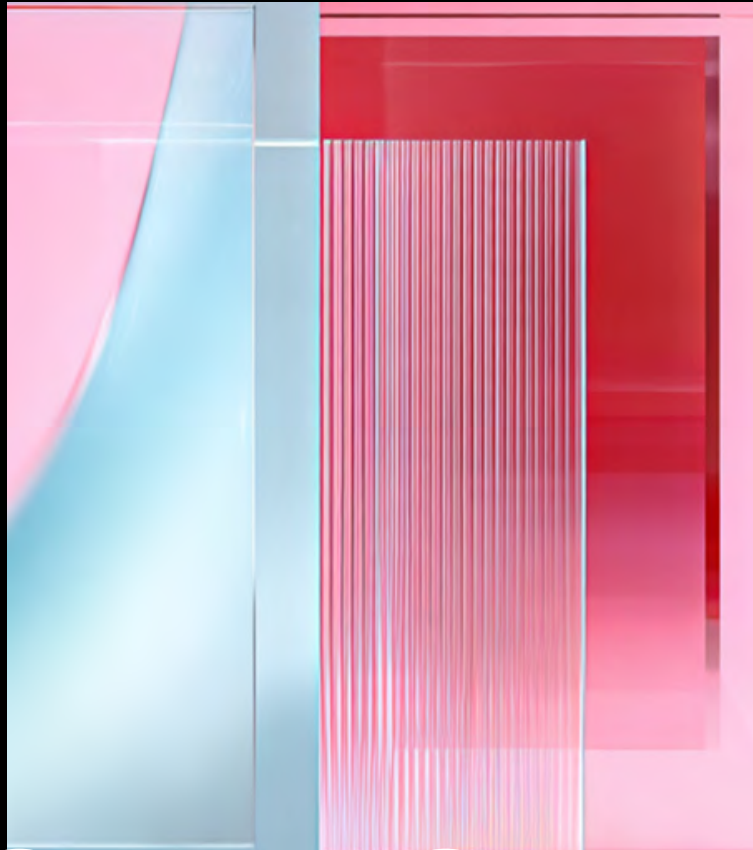
Klick Health's powerful animated short, [The Bridge](#), for PAWS NY depicts the parallel journeys of a man struggling with his mental health and an abandoned dog in New York City. The film taps into the rise of extreme emotions for a strong empathetic experience for the viewer.

We also produced the poetic stop-motion short, [18 Months](#). Created with Second Nurture, 18 Months follows Danny and Pete as they discover a newborn in a New York subway and spend eighteen months fighting to adopt him, transforming the classic nine-month pregnancy arc into a visceral quest that confronts outdated ideas of family and channels today's heightened emotions into a fierce celebration of unconditional love.

Healthcare, wellness, and pharma must evolve to meet this reality, recognizing that emotions are not just a personal experience but a cultural force shaping decisions, behaviors, and even health outcomes. Those who can help people navigate these emotional extremes—without dismissing or dulling them—will define the future of patient care.



**CULTURAL FORCES:  
YEAR IN REVIEW**



# **LOOKING BACK AT 2025**

Did the Cultural Forces Hold?

2025 was a year defined by tension: tension between convenience and complexity, connection and control, certainty and emotional overload. When we identified the year's Cultural Forces, we were spotlighting behavioral undercurrents already reshaping how people live, make decisions, and care for themselves and others.

Now, as the year comes to a close, we return to those five forces to ask: Did they play out as expected? Did they evolve? Or did something else emerge? In this article, we examine what held, what shifted, and what it all means for healthcare brands navigating a world that's anything but static.

## Cultural Force #1 Mediated Existence

As anticipated, the shift toward mediated experience continues. In 2025, the healthcare system is increasingly structured around digital tools, with wearables, real-time health monitoring, and remote care platforms now being core to how patients engage with providers. [The European Health Data Space regulation](#), passed this year, formalizes the exchange of health information across platforms, cementing digital mediation as a structural feature of modern care. In August, [Robert F. Kennedy Jr. \(United States Secretary of Health and Human Services\)](#) announced MAHA's (Make America Healthy Again) commitment to wearables, declaring "My vision is that every American is wearing a wearable within four years."

## The Future of Mediated Existence

In 2025 and beyond, people will continue to push the limits of what they can feel by seeking new ways to heighten, regulate, and share their emotions.

This force remains highly relevant. Digital mediation is becoming a baseline for how we interact with the world. However, infrastructure gaps and growing concerns about data privacy mean the experience isn't yet seamless. Brands must address both the benefits of mediation and the emotional need for real, human connection.

## Cultural Force #2 Fractured Futures

This force has only intensified in 2025. [New data from the European Parliament and UN Women shows persistent gender-based disparities in healthcare, particularly in diagnosis, pain recognition, and care access.](#) While global health equity has improved on some fronts, women continue to experience more years in poor health and greater systemic friction in navigating care. Cultural expectations and digital platforms are also reinforcing diverging experiences of health and risk across gender lines.

## The Future of Fractured Futures

This remains a powerful and necessary force. The story is more than differences in outcomes. In 2025, we've seen that it's about differences in perception, engagement, and trust. Healthcare brands must address these realities with specificity, inclusivity, and empathy.



### Cultural Force #3 Generation Algorithm

We're seeing this force evolve in real time. Foundation models are becoming embedded in health systems, influencing everything from treatment recommendations to insurance approvals, yet research in 2025 shows users are wary. People are no longer blindly trusting algorithms anymore (if they ever did). Instead, they're assessing, challenging, and in some cases gaming them.

[The viral Group 7 TikTok trend was sparked by singer Sophia James' experiment to test which of seven videos would be favored by the platform's algorithm—and it took on a life of its own.](#) What began as a test of reach became a cultural moment: users who saw the seventh video began identifying as Group 7, bonding over a sense of algorithmically determined belonging. Thousands joined in, declaring themselves part of an elite group, even arranging real-world meet-ups.

This is Generation Algorithm in action: individuals accepting, even celebrating, the idea that an opaque system quietly "assigns" them meaning and then actively plays with it.

### The Future of Generation Algorithm

This Cultural Force is still highly relevant, but more complex than passive adoption. People want personalization, but they're also aware of the limits—and risks—of outsourced thinking. Brands must design tools that empower, not dictate. [A great example is the evolution of patient companion apps. These are designed](#)

[to help patients manage and track all aspects of their treatment and health condition. The apps now go far beyond simple symptom and appointment tracking to using algorithms that combine different data sources to anticipate and predict potential challenges and setbacks.](#)

### Cultural Force #4 Context Is Everything

This force has only intensified in 2025. [New data from the European Parliament and UN Women shows persistent gender-based disparities in healthcare, particularly in diagnosis, pain recognition, and care access.](#) While global health equity has improved on some fronts, women continue to experience more years in poor health and greater systemic friction in navigating care. Cultural expectations and digital platforms are also reinforcing diverging experiences of health and risk across gender lines.



## The Future of Context Is Everything

The desire for richer, more personalized context is growing. What's shifting is how people want context delivered: not more noise, but smarter, more adaptive insights, particularly as we see the rise of "AI slop"—perceived low-quality AI output. This gives healthcare brands an opportunity to simplify without oversimplifying.

### Cultural Force #5 Emotions Running High

If anything, emotions have intensified. In [2025, studies continue to link social media use with emotional dysregulation, particularly among younger adults](#). Digital spaces reward extremes like rage, joy, and grief, and many are turning to emotional tech to cope. From AI-driven mental health apps to digital mood tracking, the line between care and emotion management is increasingly blurred.

[Gallup launched new research into the State of the World's Emotional Health in late 2024](#), reporting that "negative emotions worldwide remain far above levels from a decade ago, even after easing from their pandemic-era highs."

## The Future of Emotions Running High

Emotions are still running high, relevant, and growing. While this force is strongest in youth-driven digital culture, the emotional pressure is pervasive. Healthcare brands must offer resonance instead of information. Messaging, support tools, and care models must account for the emotional volatility patients bring with them.

## Wrapping up 2025

The Cultural Forces that shaped 2025 remain relevant. Each one has surfaced in different ways, through changing patient behavior, growing emotional complexity, and the increasing presence of digital systems in everyday decisions. Rather than fading, these forces are now part of the cultural backdrop that healthcare brands must work within.

As we prepare for what's next, we're keeping a close eye on the subtle shifts already emerging. New expectations, new technologies, and new tensions are beginning to form. In the months ahead, we'll explore the next set of forces shaping the future of health, care, and communication.





We welcome your questions  
and feedback. Please contact:

**Meredydd Hardie**  
VP, Group Director Strategy  
[mhardie@klick.com](mailto:mhardie@klick.com)