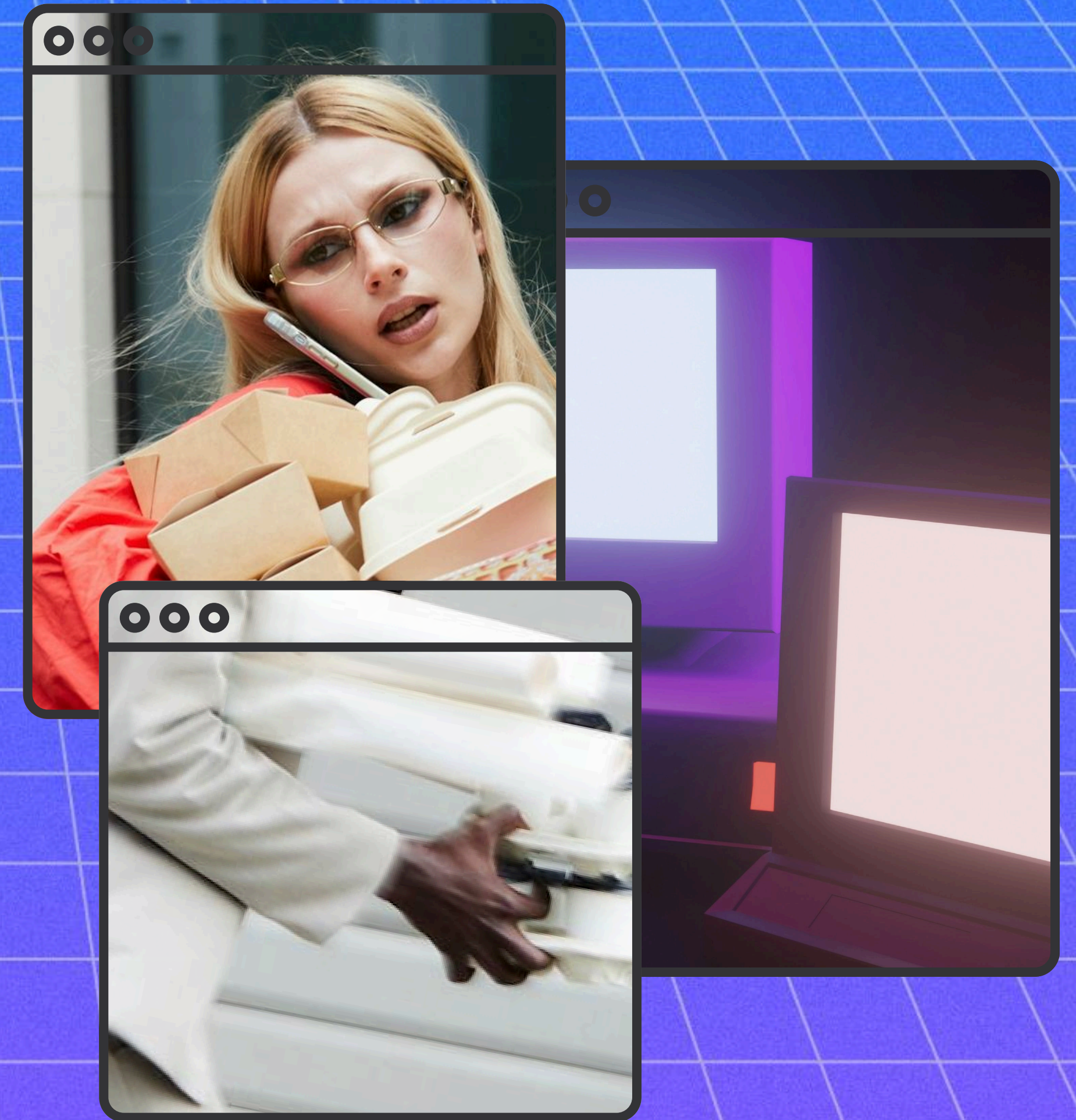


Americans Desire Autonomy and Choice in Daily Lives

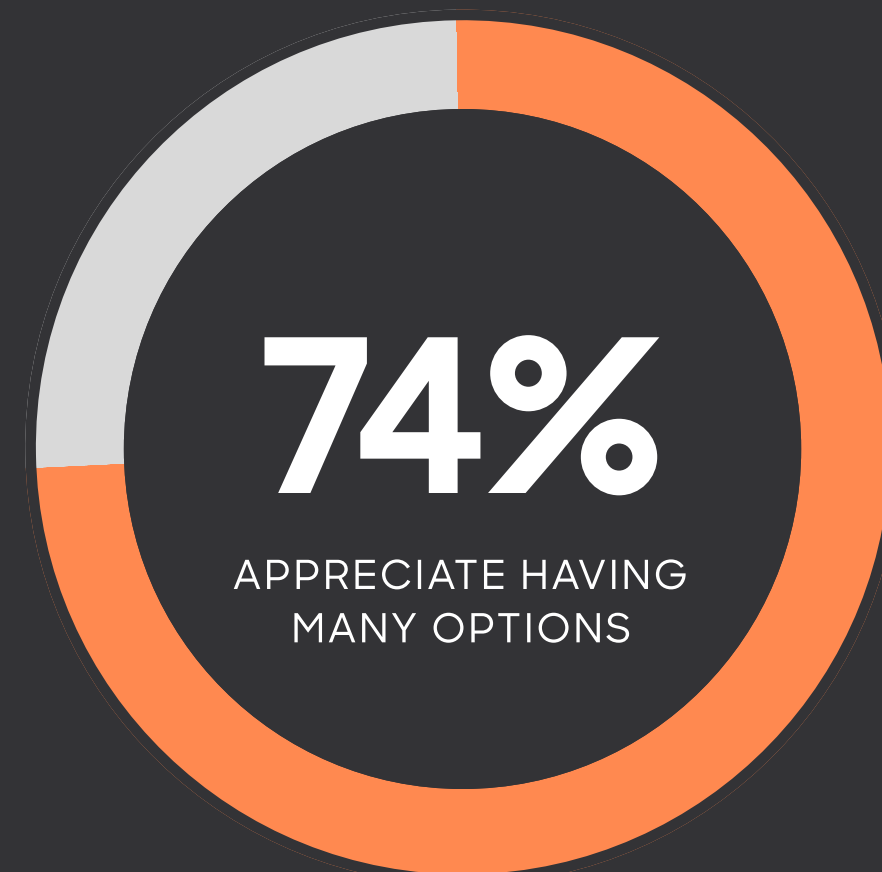




Firefox, the non-profit backed web browser, conducted a survey with market research firm YouGov, detailing how Americans navigate daily choices, the role of those choices online, and their anxieties about protecting privacy amid the rise of AI.

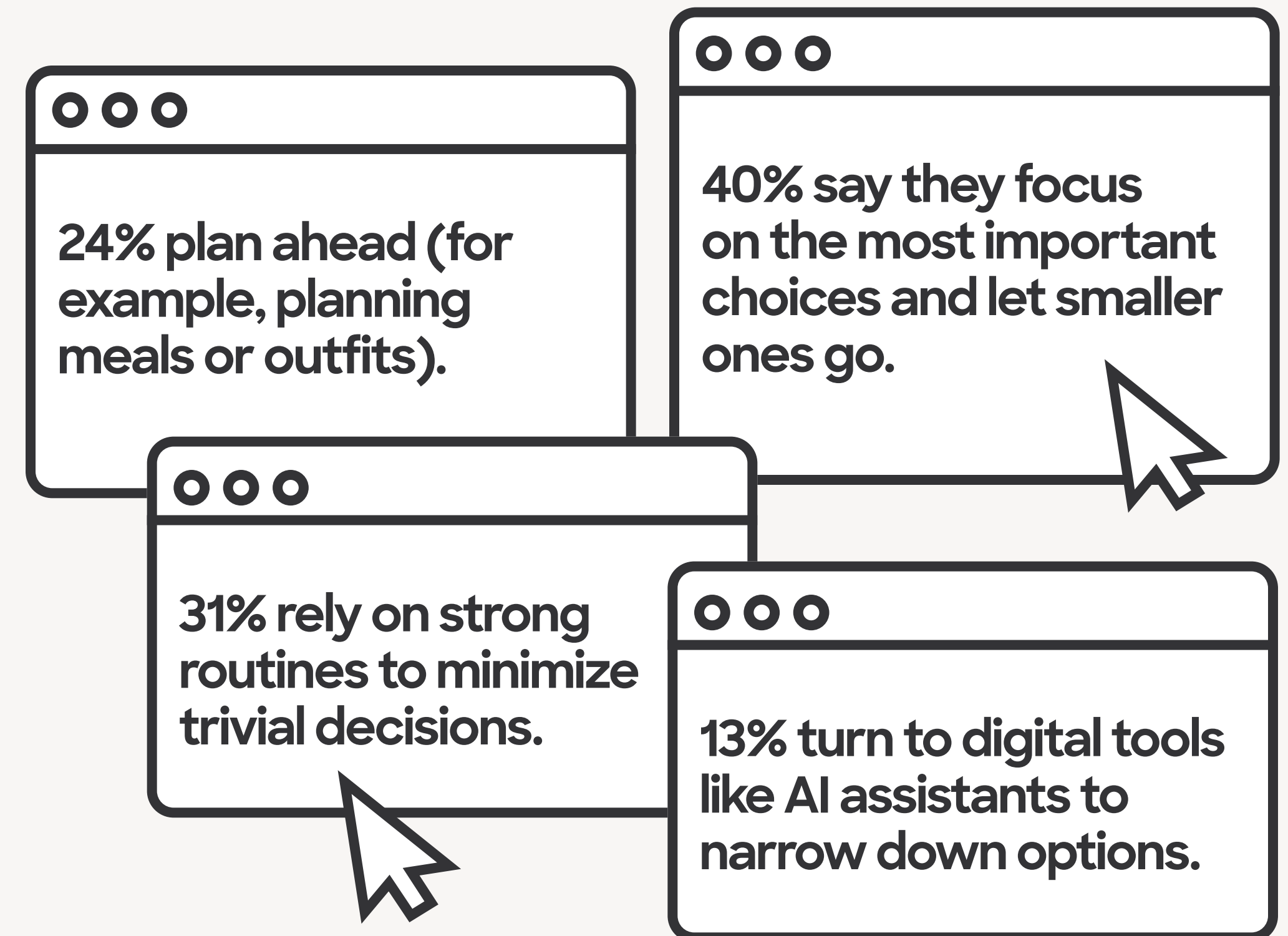
Americans value having many options. However, making numerous daily choices may take an emotional toll on some people.

The majority (74%) say they generally appreciate having many options, or at least don't mind them, even when there are a lot of decisions to make in daily life. (Q1)



However, 42% of respondents said these daily choices can lead to feelings of emotional burnout or fear of missing out (FOMO) for making the wrong choices.

Faced with many decisions each day, respondents report that they prioritize where to spend their mental energy and look for ways to reduce "cognitive load." (Q2)

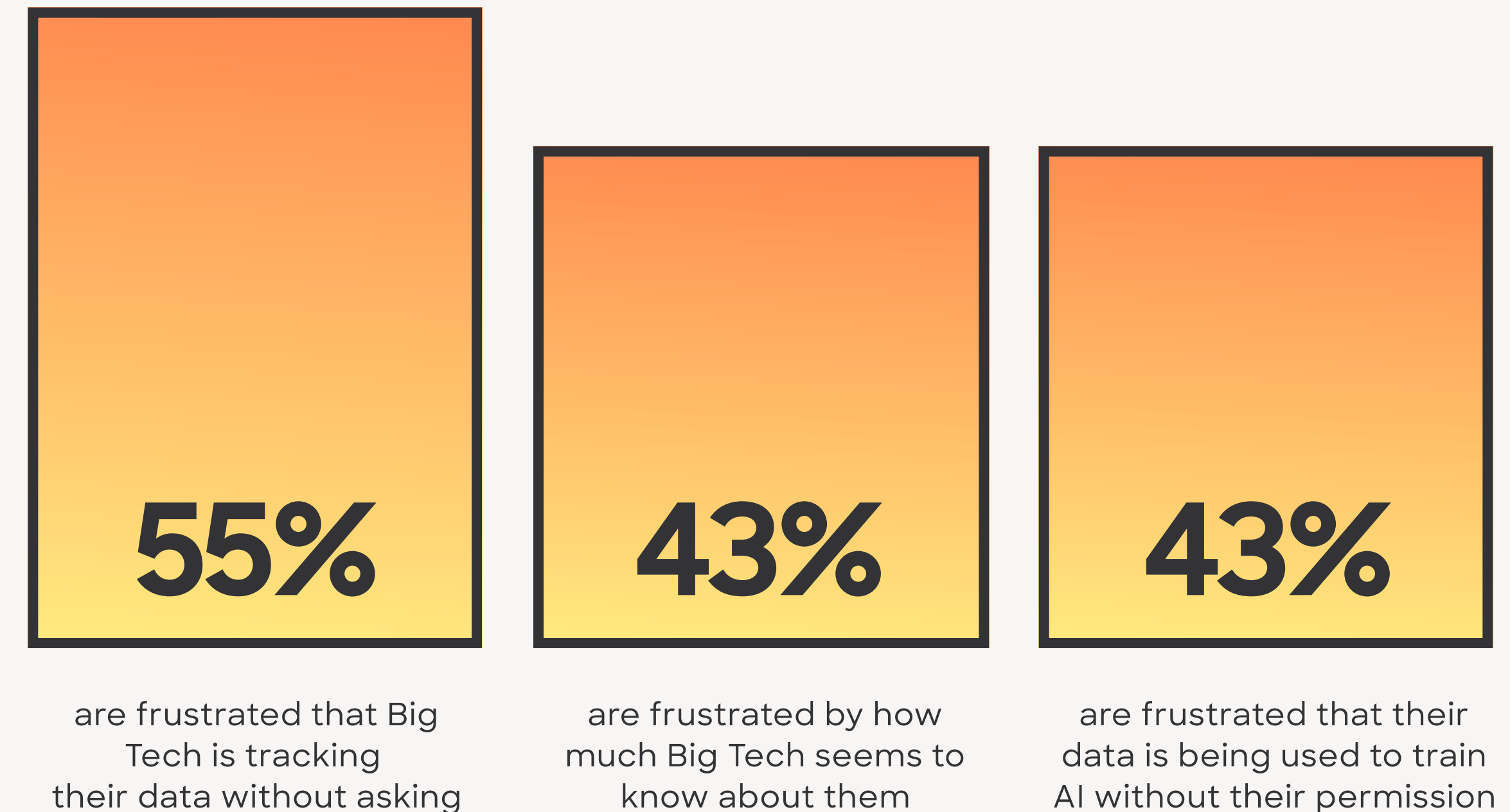




navigating choices

People want more control over their data and identity, but many feel overwhelmed trying to understand what privacy choices to make online.

RESPONDENTS REPORT WIDESPREAD FRUSTRATION WITH HOW LARGE TECH COMPANIES HANDLE PEOPLE'S DATA (Q3)



**In many aspects
of life, Americans
say they would
find limited
choices
frustrating.**

HOW FRUSTRATED WOULD YOU BE IF YOU HAD ONLY ONE OPTION TO CHOOSE FROM AND NO ALTERNATIVES OR VARIETY FOR THE FOLLOWING (Q4)

28%

if they had limited choice in
where and how they source
news and information

27%

if their entertainment choices were
limited to one streaming platform
or one form of entertainment such
as theater, concerts or gaming

23%

if they had limited choices
when it came to personal style

21%

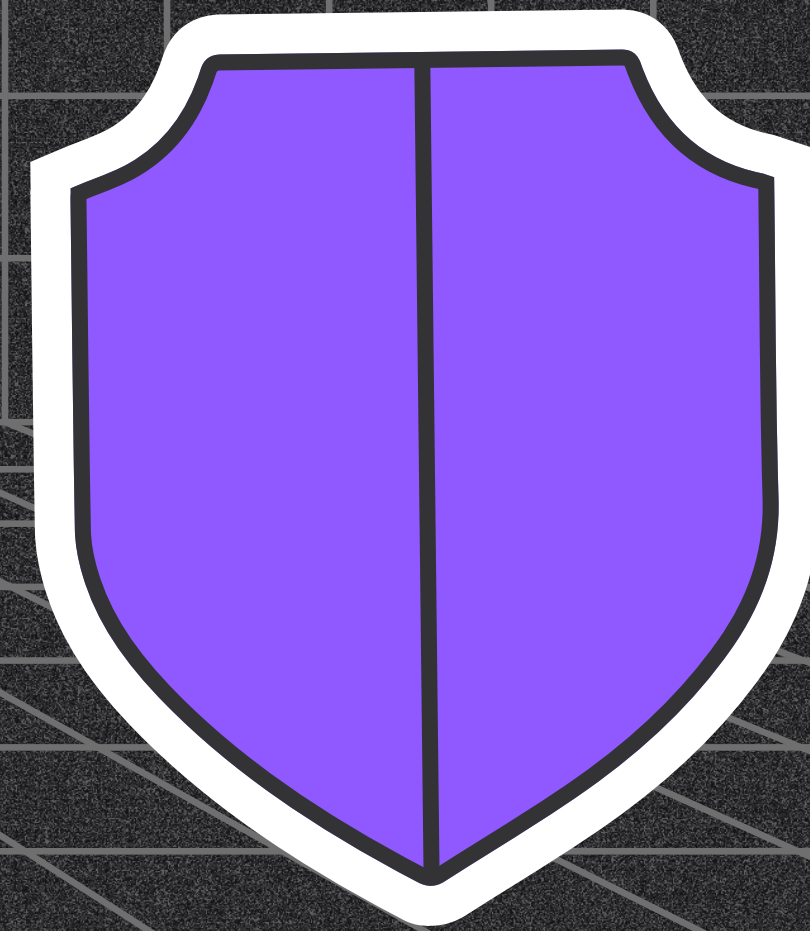
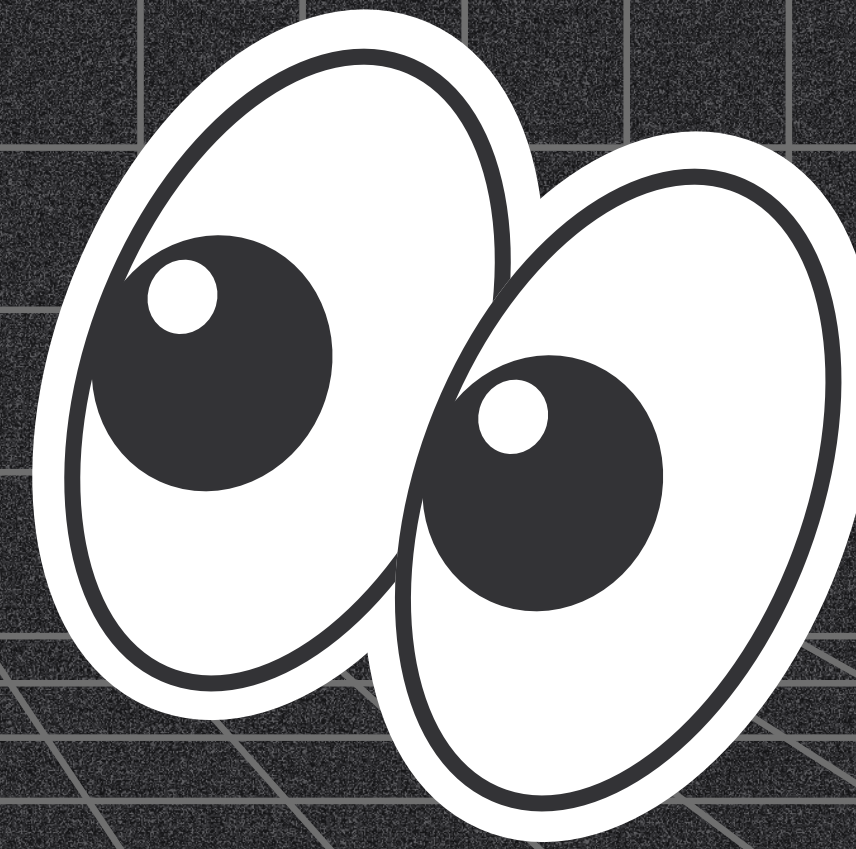
if they had limited choice in
personal tech like devices,
messaging apps and browsers

17%

if they had limited choice in
social media platforms

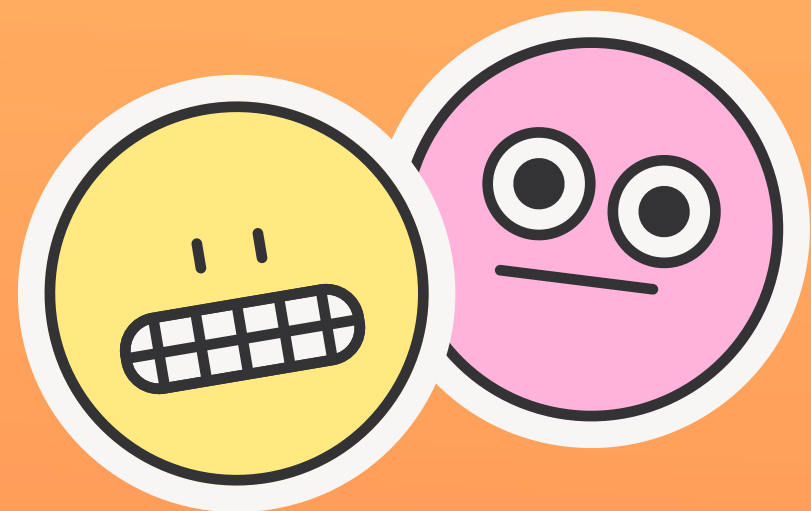


privacy matters





**Many Americans
are overwhelmed
by trying to
protect their
privacy online.**



THINKING ABOUT PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY ONLINE...WHICH ONE, IF ANY, OF THE FOLLOWING, BEST DESCRIBES HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY ONLINE? (Q5)

15%

feel in control and able to make meaningful choices to protect their privacy

30%

try to protect their privacy though it often feels overwhelming

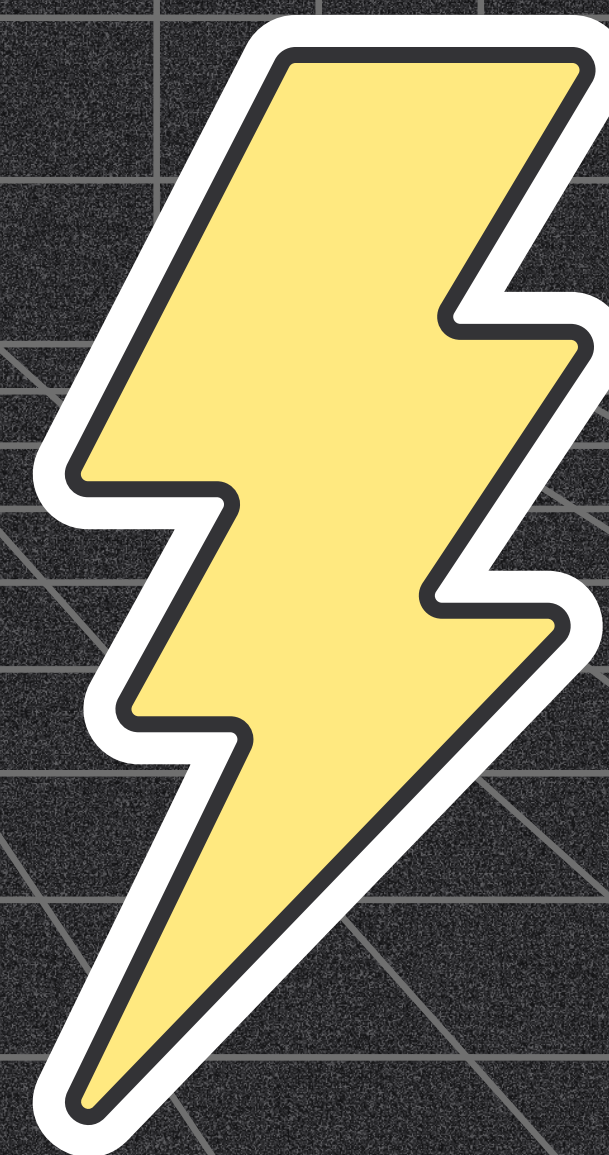
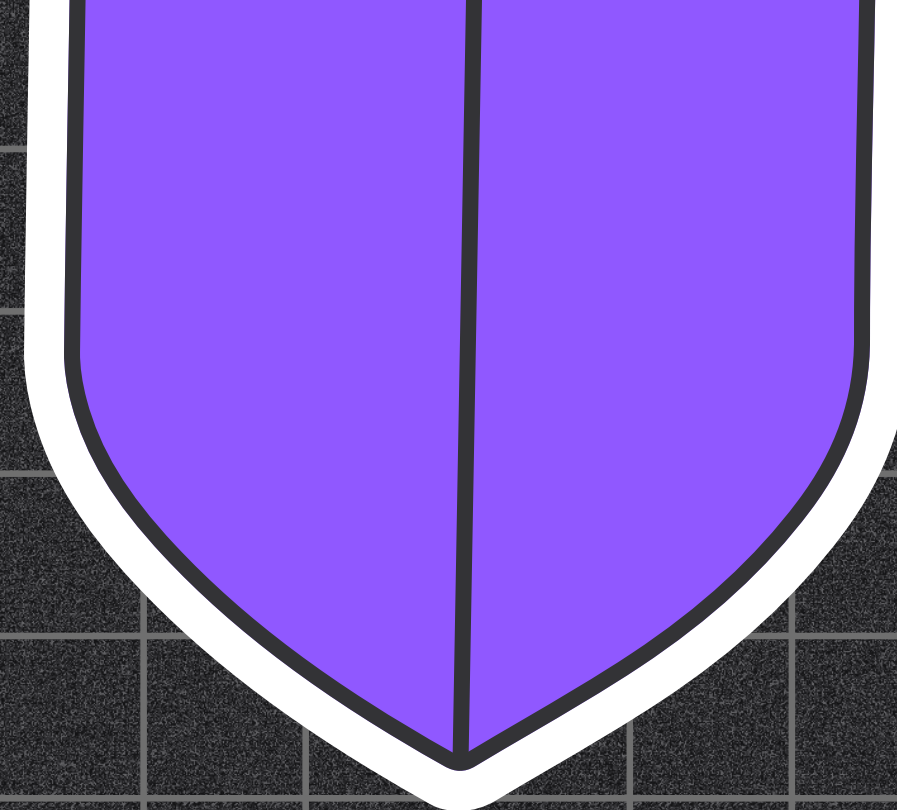
26%

believe that anything they do is too little, too late to stop Big Tech from having too much control or knowing too much about them

9%

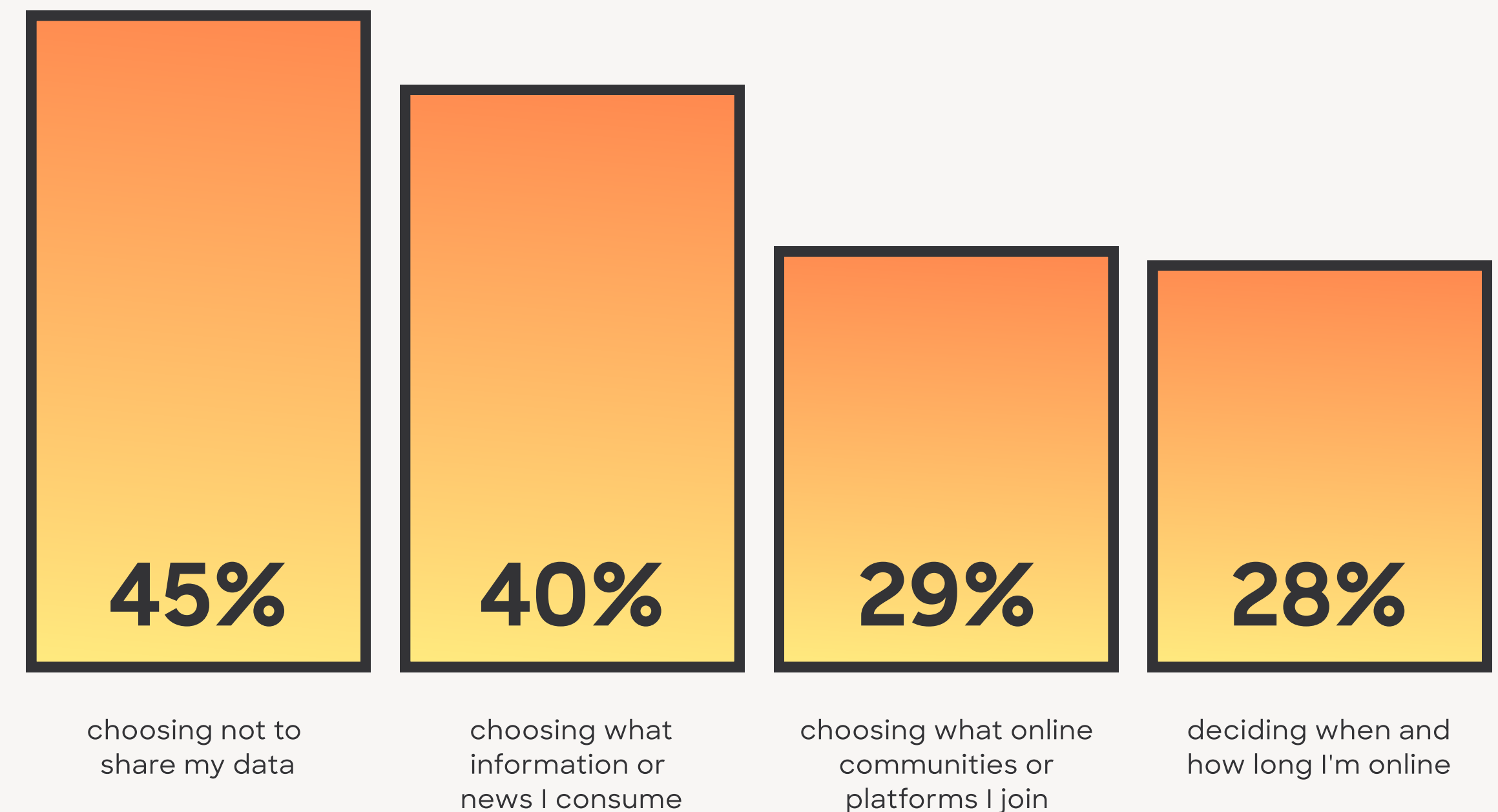
want to improve their privacy habits but haven't gotten around to it while only a very small percentage say they don't think about their privacy and are unsure why it matters

acts of defiance

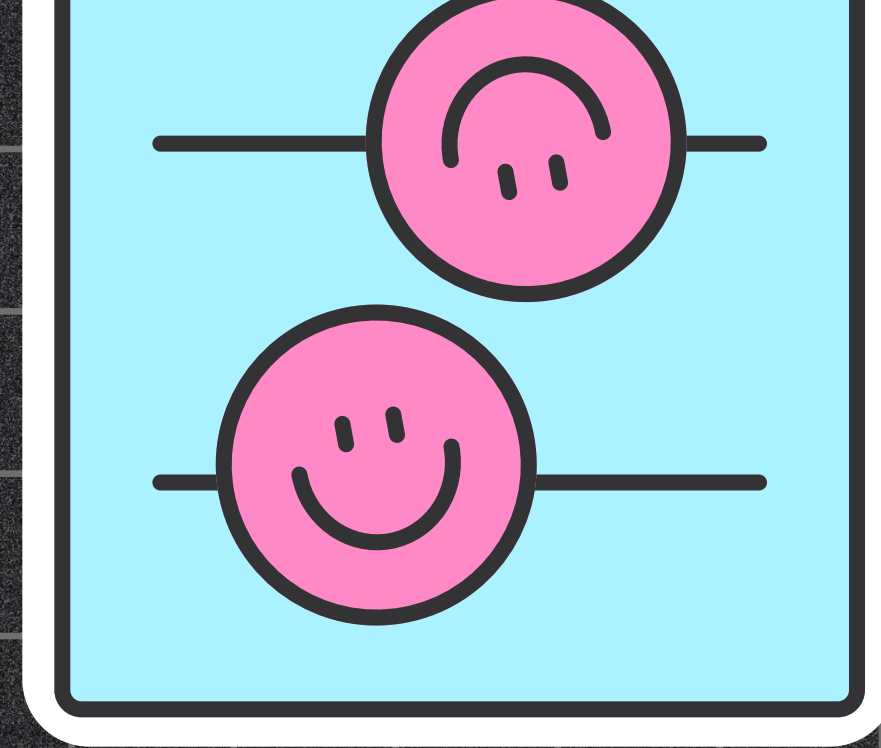


While many feel overwhelmed by daily decision-making and sometimes fall back on convenience, their strongest sense of independence comes from asserting control over how technology uses their data and what information they engage with.

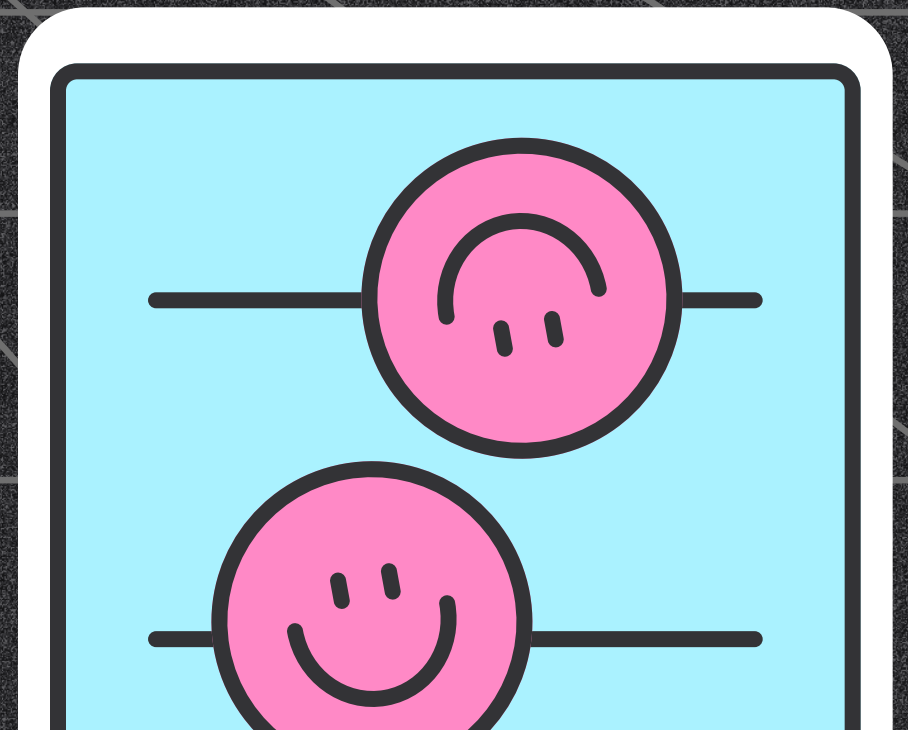
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING, IF ANY, FEEL LIKE THE STRONGEST EXPRESSIONS OF INDEPENDENCE ONLINE? (Q6)



gen z under pressure



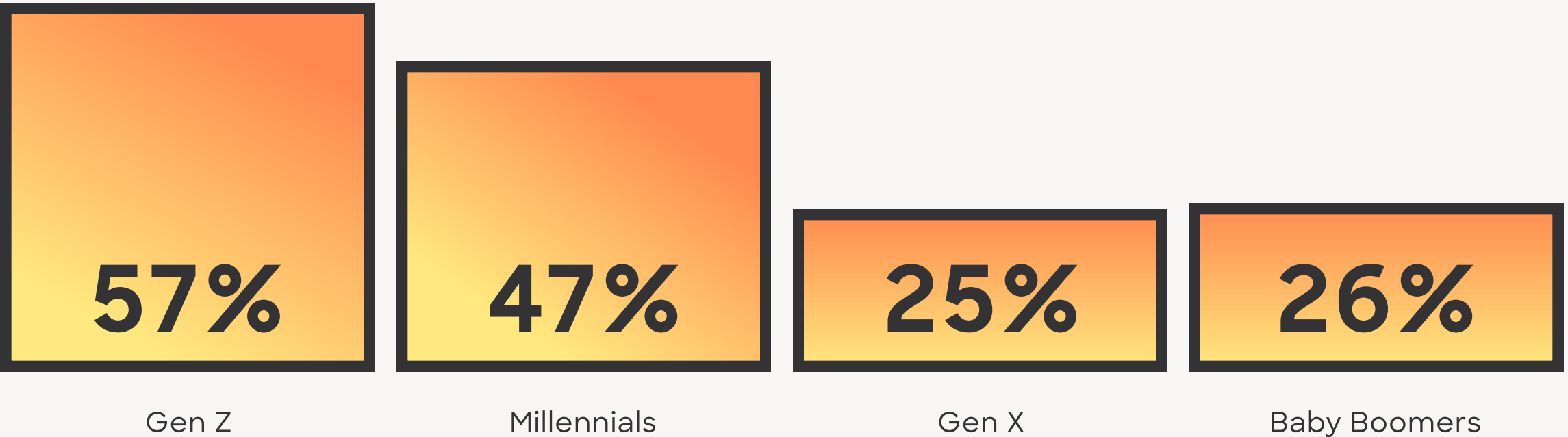
#@!*?



Gen Z emerged as the generation that most strongly felt both the weight of choices and the need to assert their individuality and protect their agency.

Younger people are the most likely to say the number of choices they make each day feels overwhelming or even like a burden, especially those aged 18–24 (59%). Young adults say the energy spent on small daily decisions makes it harder to focus on bigger life choices such as those about their career, education, or relationships (36% net agree), with many saying their generation feels under more pressure compared to others to “get it right,” making decision-making even harder (57% net agree).

BELIEF THAT THEIR GENERATION IS UNDER MORE PRESSURE THAN PREVIOUS ONES TO "GET IT RIGHT", WHICH MAKES DECISION-MAKING MUCH HARDER (Q7)



In contrast, 44% of Baby Boomers (age 61+) say they don't mind having many choices and options in life (24% also say they enjoy having many choices) and can make decisions without much stress. This was supported by 27% saying they do not need help to ease their cognitive load. When faced with daily decisions, 18–24 year old respondents report

they are likely to turn to technology and social media for help and inspiration, 21% say crowdsourcing opinions online via Reddit, TikTok or other social platforms to get input from others helps them reduce their cognitive load. They are also most likely to use digital tools, such as AI assistants that help narrow down choice options (19%).

**Despite these pressures,
the internet also serves as
a space where young
people find confidence
and self-expression**

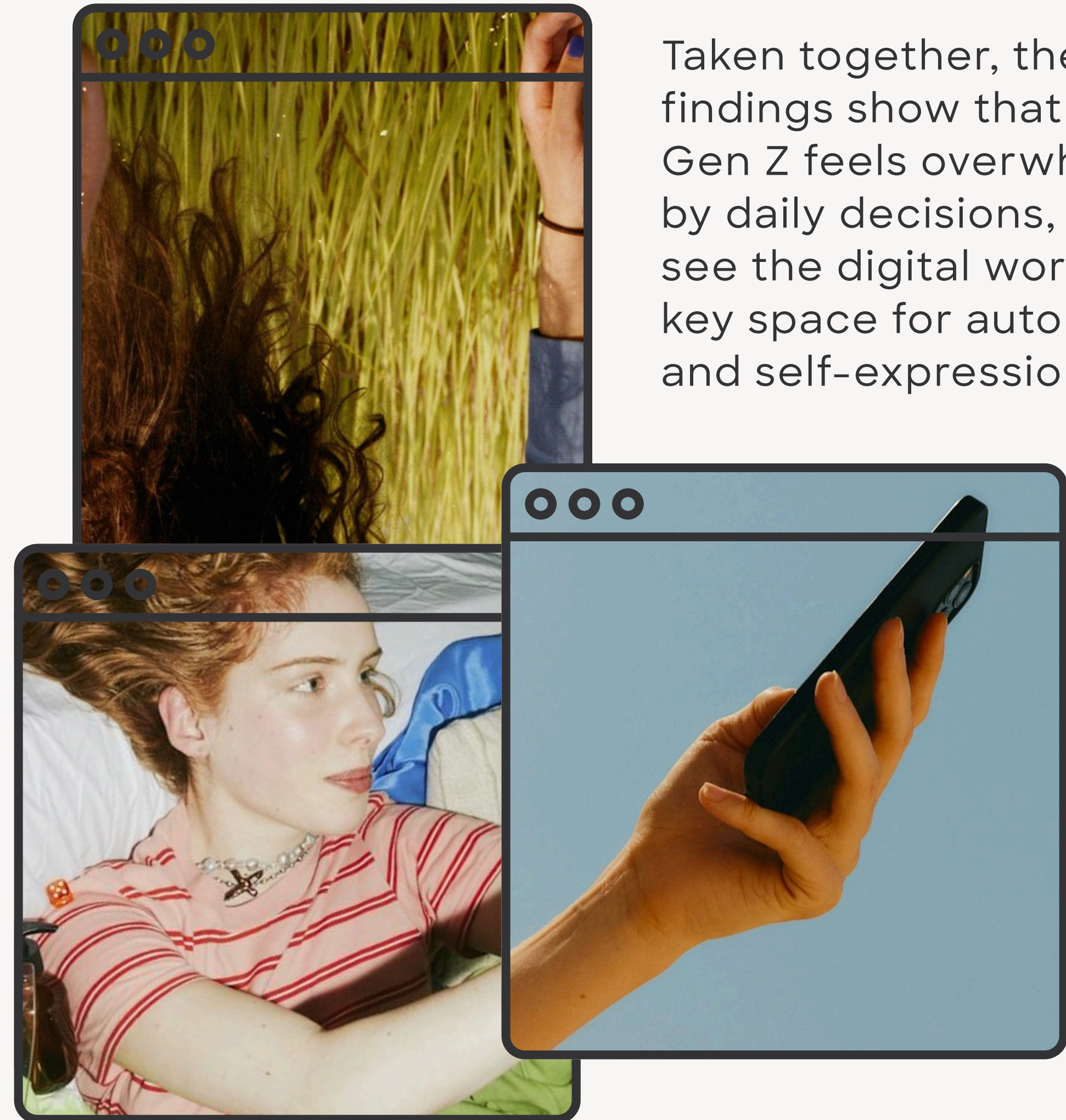
35%

of Gen Z say the internet makes them feel more comfortable expressing their authentic selves and gives them the confidence to explore new aspects of their identity (Q8)

18%

say that building a digital identity is an act of defiance that makes them feel independent online (Q6)

Taken together, these findings show that while Gen Z feels overwhelmed by daily decisions, they also see the digital world as a key space for autonomy and self-expression.



APPENDIX

Q1. Every day we make countless choices, big and small, that shape our lives. Thinking about making these choices and the options you have, which of these statements, if any, best applies to you?

Q2. For the following question by "cognitive load" we mean the total amount of mental effort and resources required by your working memory to process information and complete a task. Which, if any, of the following help ease your cognitive load and help you to make daily choices?

Q3. For the following question by Big Tech companies we mean large technology companies such as Meta, Microsoft, Apple, Google, etc. Which, if any, of the following frustrates you about Big Tech companies?

Q4. For the following question please imagine, you had only one option to choose from and no alternatives or variety.

Q5. Thinking about protecting your privacy online... Which ONE, if any, of the following, best describes how you feel about protecting your privacy online?

Q6. Which of the following, if any, feel like the strongest expressions of independence online? (Please select up to three option)

Q7. I believe my generation is under more pressure than previous ones to "get it right", which makes decision-making much harder.

Q8. The internet makes me feel more comfortable expressing my authentic self and gives me the confidence to explore new aspects of my identity

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on a survey of 2,610 U.S. adults (ages 18+) conducted online by YouGov on behalf of Mozilla from October 3–9, 2025. The figures have been weighted to be representative of the entire US adult population.

ABOUT

Firefox is a non-profit backed browser by Mozilla. Built with choice and user control in mind, it is an independent browser that prioritizes user privacy, transparency, and openness.

YouGov is an international online research data and analytics technology group. Its purpose is to give the global community a voice by collecting, measuring and analysing their opinions and behaviors and reporting the findings accurately and free from bias. For further information, visit www.yougov.com