

ありのままでいいよ: **Designing for the Individual in Japan's Collectivist Society**

Japan is known to have a collectivist culture, which has been demonstrated through centuries of enforcing harmony, fulfilling societal obligations, and prioritizing the group over the individual. Whether it is family dynamics, work culture, or relationships, there are certain expectations that have come from Japanese traditions on how they must act according to their role. If anyone shows deviant behavior toward the norm, they may be rejected and shamed by family and friends.

Consequently, the Japanese individual may feel pressure to conform in order to avoid conflict, becoming a burden, or ultimately disappointing others; this creates an environment where people hide their true selves in order to fit into the homogenous culture. Through empirical and secondary research, this ethnographic study explores how this culture can impact a person, their self perception, and how they express themselves. Considering this paradox of collectivism, where the product of the system leads to self alienation and disconnection rather than togetherness, a design campaign has been created to promote the existence of individuality in this community. The aim of the campaign is to encourage the audience, young Japanese adults, to speak their mind, practice authentic self-expression, and ultimately spark an unspoken conversation on collectivism in Japan.