



Forty percent have made that decision because they find the news too depressing.

Then there's social media, which research has found 60% of users say has a negative impact on their self-esteem and 50% admit impacts on their relationships.

And yet for those of us who can ignore the pressures to go down the pit of despair, there are huge positives.

Positive thinking also makes us more resourceful because the alternative constricts the mind and makes us reluctant to try something new. Being positive reduces stress by helping us recover from challenges (both physical and mental) faster and it makes us more productive.

This is all great at a personal level but professionally, as communications experts too, there are benefits. Positive attitudes change the mindset in which we absorb media messaging – both editorial and ads. In fact, media is as important as a close family network in influencing a positive outlook on life.

What this means is that brands can take advantage of the benefits of positivity by placing their ads in the most positive environments.

As our research for Hearst showed, people who have a positive outlook on life and feel positive about media are 15% more likely to take action after seeing a message than those who have a negative outlook but still feel positive about media.

What's more, positive people are more likely to try new things, 100% more likely to compare a product with competitors, 91% more likely to buy a product or service they have seen advertised and 167% more likely to make a change in their routine.

It's perhaps no surprise that the research found that self-help/ improvement magazines are seen as the most positive media, or that magazines generally score better than newspapers for putting users into a positive mindset. But media such as music streaming

services also score well, as do TV brands.

It's too early to add right mood to our planning mantra of right time, right place and right context but it's a factor that brands looking to drive growth should consider.

Happy people make happy, growing brands. In these dark times, we could all do with more of both.

*Cover Illustration by Jamie Cullen*

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