



Wednesday 25 February 2009

## **Always Look on the Bright Side of Life**

***New research reveals an optimistic outlook makes you more attractive – and it's contagious!***

The key to getting the most out of life is to be surrounded by optimistic, positive friends, according to new research from The National Lottery. Nearly 60 per cent (58%) of Brits believe a positive outlook is contagious and that optimists can boost the positivity of those around them, helping others adopt their upbeat attitude and feel better about their lives.

Our outlook on life can also have an impact on how appealing we are to the opposite sex – over half of those polled (52 per cent) found optimists, such as Del Boy Trotter, more attractive than professional pessimists (3 per cent) like Victor Meldrew.

The Lotto Optimism Report, conducted by the Social Issues Research Centre, explores the nature of optimism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain and finds that despite a reputation for being a pessimistic country, we are an overwhelmingly upbeat nation.

Three quarters of those polled considered themselves to be generally optimistic with 20 per cent of that group having just occasional bouts of pessimism from time to time. A tiny 6 per cent claimed to be generally pessimistic and a further 10 per cent shared this outlook with the occasional glimmer of optimism sometimes.

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# News

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Surprisingly, the older we are, the more optimistic we think we have become over the years. The over 55s were more likely than those in the younger age groups to agree their sense of optimism had grown over time (27 per cent) whereas young people (18-24 age group) were significantly more likely to feel their sense of pessimism had increased over time (40 per cent) than the older age group (30 per cent).

Despite our cheerful nature, we don't like to brag about our attitude – over a third (36 per cent) thought Brits tended to have a less optimistic outlook on life than other Europeans and 37 per cent thought we were less optimistic than Americans.

Dr Peter Marsh, co-director of SIRC and author of the Lotto Optimism Report, says: “The image of the British as a rather miserable race contrasts with our findings, showing the majority of Brits have a distinctively upbeat and optimistic outlook on life. However, it's a very British trait to play down our achievements. We may be as optimistic as any other national group but we just don't want to shout about it – that wouldn't be British at all!”

However, this positive attitude doesn't extend to the world at large – only 5 per cent of Brits feel optimistic about the future of our economy and only 4 per cent have hope for the environment or the state of the country in general. By contrast, it is the things closer to home that make us feel good – our family life (61 per cent), personal relationships (53 per cent) and social lives (31 per cent).

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While family life is something we feel the most optimistic about, it also is the strongest influence on our levels of optimism (72 per cent) followed by health (65 per cent), the state of our personal finances (54 per cent) and our love life (41 per cent). The state of the global economy however was seen as less important (12 per cent) even though this is likely to have a direct effect on personal finances.

Our life experience impacts our outlook on life as well as the company we keep. The majority (61 per cent) agreed that people become optimists or pessimists mainly as a result of their experiences in life whereas a quarter (25 per cent) thought people were born with one of these outlooks which could change with experience. Only 7 per cent thought were stuck with the outlook you were born with.

Beware of spending too much time with your more pessimistic pals if you want to hold on to your cheerful outlook – a negative attitude is almost as contagious as optimism with 42 per cent feeling pessimistic in the company of people who expect the worst.

An optimistic approach to life is fundamental to being a National Lottery winner – 51 per cent of major winners\* claim to have always known that they would win the lottery one day and state this as the motivation for buying their ticket.

A National Lottery spokesperson said: “Lotto players are life’s optimists and are open to giving something a go rather than never knowing what might have been. Thanks to a positive outlook on life, around 4 million optimists celebrate a National Lottery win every week with over £33 billion in prizes paid out since 1994.”

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# News

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I'm a Celebrity Winner and ex-Eastender star Joe Swash is the epitome of optimism – he remained positive throughout his time in the jungle, despite the numerous Bushtucker Trials and his upbeat attitude infected the camp of celebrities raising everyone's spirits.

Joe says: "If I had to single out a reason why I won I'm A Celebrity, I'd like to think it was because I kept a positive attitude throughout the whole experience. Staying optimistic helped me when I was missing my family or facing a particularly bad Bushtucker Trial – I was able to focus on the good things like the friendships I'd made and that helped me stick it out to the end."

- Ends -

## For further information, please contact Camelot Press Office: 020 7632 5711

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2184 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 3<sup>rd</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

\*Camelot research among publicity winners of major prizes, 2008

### Notes to Editors:

- Camelot Group plc is the licensed operator of The National Lottery and is committed to raising money for the Good Causes designated by Parliament. Camelot is not responsible for distributing or awarding these funds
- To date, over £22 billion has been raised for the Good Causes by The National Lottery, and more than 300,000 individual awards have been made across the UK – benefiting both large and small projects spanning arts, sports, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment. The National Lottery has given away over £33 billion in prizes and created more than 2,200 millionaires or multi-millionaires since launch in 1994.
- For further information on Camelot, The National Lottery and its games, please visit the following websites: [www.camelotgroup.co.uk](http://www.camelotgroup.co.uk) and [www.national-lottery.co.uk](http://www.national-lottery.co.uk)
- Now available to watch on Freeview channel 45 daily from 8.45am, on Top Up TV Anytime and at [www.itvlocal.com/lottery](http://www.itvlocal.com/lottery), National Lottery Xtra offers a wide range of exciting programming on all aspects of The National Lottery – from winners and Good Causes, to easy-to-follow guides to how to play lottery games
- Players of all National Lottery games must be aged 16 or over
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