



WHAT IS MOOD OF THE NATION?

Mood of the Nation is a pulse check of people surveyed through Protobrand's online metaphor elicitation tool, Meta4 Insight™. This study provides a complete picture of how people feel, providing the 'why' behind their behavior. With Meta4, participants use imagery in an online environment to express themselves, allowing us to extract the underlying emotional and cognitive frameworks they use to make sense of the world. For this edition, we focused on how people relate to their homes.

YOU ARE WHERE YOU LIVE

It's finally Spring! The May flowers are blooming, the green shoots of economic recovery are perhaps starting to take hold, and Americans are once again beginning to focus their attention on improving their homes. But interestingly, our latest fielding of the Mood of The Nation reveals that the associations surrounding the home are born out of more than just the literal physicality of "house," location, or sense of place. Rather, our study on how Americans feel about the idea of home identified deeply entrenched feelings that transcend the four walls and emotional boundaries of the house, expanding the view of home to encompass self-identity. In other words, homeowners reflected thoughts and feelings about their relationship with their living spaces that defined a new prevailing sentiment: "You as your home, and your home as you." This sentiment is reflected in how people choose to live their lives, maintain their homes, and contemplate what their homes say about who they are and where they fit into the cultural fabric of society.

YOUR HOME IS WHERE YOUR HEAD IS

Our study also highlighted that home is the emotional headquarters of people's lives. In digging deeper, we also found the presence of emotional underpinnings and metaphorical frames that people use to understand the meaning of their homes. We found that home is defined by an expanded spatial sense of the existential self that exists deep in the recesses of the mind. At the root of these emotions, we found two core drivers of behavior that inspire a state of **Being**, which defines how people feel at home, and a state of **Doing**, which shapes the activities that people do to create a sense of meaning about home.

BEING

PROTECTION

Home acts as emotional body armor. It is a place of protection where the outside world is kept at bay and nothing can hurt a person.

ESCAPE

Home is an escape. Private and set away from the struggles that exist outside its walls, home acts as a daily peaceful vacation.

BELONGING

Home is where people feel that they belong and are loved. At home, people are surrounded by others who accept their idiosyncrasies and allow them to be authentic.

DOING

BOND

Family and friends create memories at home, and therefore home acts as a portal to access those memories.

SUPPORT

Home is the setting where life's major scenes are celebrated and mourned. In the midst of emotional occasions, people rely on the support systems that stem from their homes.

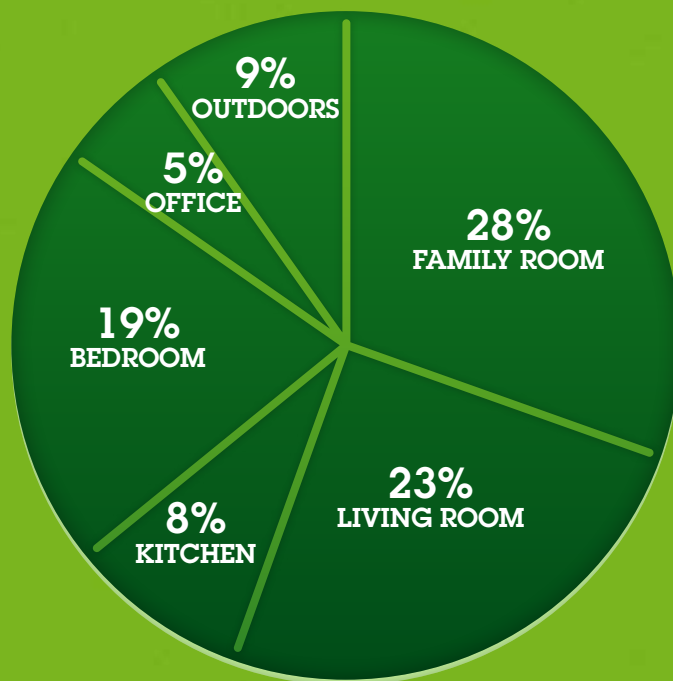
GROW

Home is where life's big decisions are made. Because home provides a sense of protection, it is a low-risk place to pursue new goals, challenge oneself, and nurture personal and familial growth.

"BEING AND DOING": ROOM-BY-ROOM

The core underlying psychology of how people relate to and choose to express their feelings about home is typically reflected through a particular room in the home. Most people have a favorite room where their sense of self-identity is amplified and their true sense of being and doing becomes most concentrated. Not surprisingly, for most people this emotional epicenter of home is either the family room or living room, in providing a temporal touch-point by which people can express themselves and feed off the prevailing mood and desired energy levels of the room (from vitality to serenity). But perhaps what's most surprising is that the kitchen ranks so low as a favorite room, despite being the social setting of emotional nurturing. By contrast, the bedroom is the favorite room of the home for 1 out of 5 Americans – in many ways it's a sanctuary for horizontal living (for doing more than the obvious!). The bedroom is a source of emotional replenishment and a pivotal point from which people can emotionally navigate their lives. For brands associated with the home, this provides an important emotional reference point from which they can enter the minds of the consumers, and become perennially relevant.

"MY FAVORITE ROOM"



"THE WHY" BEHIND MY FAVORITE PART OF THE HOUSE

FAMILY ROOM

Family-oriented social butterflies celebrate their family rooms as the emotional hearth of the home. It's a casual environment that encourages a wide range of fun bonding activities, including playing board games, watching TV, snuggling with kids, and engaging in lively conversation.

LIVING ROOM

Described as the "most done" room in the house, the living room is often the place where the homeowner has spent the most time and effort ensuring that the décor reflects their personality and design aesthetic. For this reason, the room adopts many purposes ranging from a personal sanctuary to an ideal location for hosting family and friends.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is a place of familial congregation where people support one another through life's most important events. Friends and family gather in the kitchen to both celebrate and mourn, making it a setting of powerful connection to important personal memories.

BEDROOM

Those who love their bedrooms appreciate the room's peace and solitude, which allow them to get away from the outside world and relax. By providing access to a safe and soothing mental space, the bedroom empowers people to imagine what they want their futures to look like and make plans for how to achieve their dreams.

HOME OFFICE

People who love their home offices talk about them as a place of solitude where they can spend time by themselves, reduce stress, and focus on the things that are most important to them. Acting as a protective bubble, the office acts as a facilitator of productivity and focus.

OUTDOOR (PATIO/YARD/DECK)

For many people, their favorite room in the house doesn't have four walls; it is the place where their home meets the great outdoors. Fostering relaxation and serenity, the outdoors provide a place to appreciate the simple things in life.

