

## Harvard Study Investigates the Home Ecology of Flowers

### Behavioral Research Concludes: Living with Flowers Strengthens Feelings of Compassion, and Decreases Anxiety and Worry

With people's desire for tranquility and stress relief stronger than ever, fresh research takes an insightful look at flowers and the important role they may play in our daily lives. A behavioral research study conducted by Nancy Etcoff, Ph.D., of and , reveals that people feel more compassionate toward others, have less worry and anxiety, and feel less depressed when fresh cut flowers are present in the home.

"Other research has proven that flowers make people happy when they receive them," Etcoff says.

"What we didn't know is that spending a few days with flowers in the home can affect a wide variety of feelings."

The Home Ecology of Flowers Study at Harvard uncovered three main findings:

#### - **Flowers feed compassion.**

Study participants who lived with fresh cut flowers for less than a week felt an increase in feelings of compassion and kindness for others.

#### - **Flowers chase away anxieties, worries and the blues at home.**

Overall, people in the study simply felt less negative after being around flowers at home for just a few days.

Participants most frequently placed flowers in their kitchens, dining rooms and living rooms, where they spend a lot of time at home. They reported wanting to see the blooms first thing in the morning.

#### - **Living with flowers can provide a boost of energy, happiness and enthusiasm at work.**

Having flowers at home can have a positive carry-over impact on our mood at work, too. The study found that people were more likely to feel happier and have more enthusiasm and energy at work when flowers were in their home living environments.

"As a psychologist, I'm particularly intrigued to find that people who live with flowers report fewer episodes of anxiety and depressed feelings," Etcoff says. "Our results suggest that flowers have a positive impact on our well being."

