

GardenSmart FRAN SORIN

Let happiness bloom

We gardeners know that flowers bring happiness, and research confirms this correlation. *Evolutionary Psychology* published results of three recent Rutgers University studies:

FLOWERS BRING SMILES.

Of 147 women of varying ages, those who received flowers smiled significantly more than those who received fruit and sweets or a candle.

A SINGLE BLOOM CREATES TALK.

Another study took place in an elevator where a single flower was handed to a man or woman. Both women and men who were presented with a flower (rather than a pen or nothing) were more likely to smile. They were



more likely to stand at a social distance (rather than an impersonal one) and were more likely to begin a conversation.

BOUQUETS BEAT DEPRESSION.

Retirees, whose average age was 73, were asked to keep a diary of daily social interactions. Those who received bouquets were happier and perhaps less depressed than those who did not, and they scored higher on memory tasks.