

The Power of Aromatherapy

Fragrances can be one of the most powerful ways to revisit past experiences, both positive and negative. Just as fragrance can have a profound effect on our memory, it can also have an effect on mood, especially when paired with a routine that supports overall wellness. As we enter this stressful time of year, consider adding aromatherapy in the form of essential oils to help ease stress and support restful sleep.

Stress Relief

One of the most common essential oils, lavender, is very effective in its relaxing properties and in stress relief. Its floral aroma is a great beginner's oil and is well-tolerated by people sensitive to fragrance. The woodier fragrance of ylang ylang is also a fantastic fragrance for stress relief, although it is encouraged that the user combine it with another fragrance like lavender, as the smell of ylang ylang is strong and can cause headaches. Sweet orange, bergamot, and other citrusy fragrances have long been used in products for their uplifting properties. Users should be aware that citrus oils can cause skin irritation and should be diluted in a carrier oil if they are being used topically.

Restful Sleep

The shorter days and full schedules of the holiday season can cause sleep disturbances in many people. The aforementioned lavender, as well as valerian, neroli, clary sage, chamomile, and yes, even the old hippie standby patchouli, can be helpful in easing the user into a night of restful, restorative sleep.

Tips for Use

The best way to learn about essential oils is to try out a few! There are many ways to incorporate aromatherapy into your day-to-day life as part of a wellness routine. Ultrasonic diffusers can fragrance an entire room without being overwhelming, and a few drops on a cotton ball can perfume your car for days at a time. Not all essential oils are designed to be used on the skin, so use caution when choosing an oil and always look for the phrase "therapeutic grade" or "100% pure" and dilute all essential oils in an unperfumed carrier oil like sesame, jojoba, or almond oil, 12 drops of essential oil for every 1 ounce of carrier oil. You can also put a few drops into a child's bath, spritz your pillow with a dilution of 12 drops of oil per 1 ounce of water, or just sniff the bottle of oil whenever you feel stressed or overwhelmed.

Please refer to the sites below for additional, unbiased information, or ask Colleen at the front desk if you have questions!

<http://www.aromatherapy.com/>

<http://essentialoilbenefits.org/>

<http://www.naha.org/>