

Healing The Spirit With Aromatherapy

by Nicole Buono

Plant therapy has been around since the beginning of mankind. "Aromatherapy can be defined as the controlled use of essential oils to maintain and promote physical, psychological, and spiritual wellbeing" (Mojay, p.10). Methods of application include massage, ointments and creams, compresses, steam inhalation, bath, and vaporization. "In ancient times, plant aromatics were used in ritual - as incenses, for purification, behavior modification, and as meditation aids" (Rhind, p 13). The word spirit means different things to different people, often having a religious connotation. "The spirit is expressed in many emotions, such as love and compassion, joy when witnessing beautiful natural phenomena, or being moved by music. If the health of the spirit is adversely affected by stress, there is a knock-on effect that can result in mental and physical illness" (Rhind, p.98).

When making blends to help heal the spirit, it is important to pay attention to top, middle, and base notes. "An oil's *top notes* are those that are light and fresh in aroma, and the first that the nose will discern. They predominate in the oils that evaporate more quickly. [...] The *middle notes* provide the heart, and often the bulk of the fragrance, and are for this reason to be found in almost all essential oils. The *base notes* are heavy and rich in character, and are the last to emerge from the scent" (Mojay, p.13). Essential oils affect the limbic system through the olfactory nerves. They can "relax the mind and uplift the Spirit" (Mojay, p.13). Essential oils are amazing healing tools.

Below is a list of some of the essential oils that can aide in healing the spirit, which will contribute to overall improved health of the body and mind:

Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) - Bergamot can help with releasing and circulating stagnant *Qi-energy* in the body, helping with irritability, and frustration. "Stagnant *Qi-energy* can lead

to depression, stress, and repressed emotion. [...] Bergamot oil encourages the release of pent up feelings - feelings that can lead not only to depression but also to insomnia, anxiety, and sudden mood swings. [...] Bergamot oil helps us to relax and “let go” (Mojay, p. 52-53).

Precautions include: Phototoxicity and possible skin irritant. Not for use in bath.

Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*) - Chamomile helps to smooth the flow of *Qi-energy* in the body. It helps to regulate movement of energy within the body to help nerves to relax, help to ease pain, and relieve spasm. Chamomile also helps to clear head and reduce inflammation. Chamomile has an energetic influence on the solar plexus. “Chamomile oil can help to relieve nervous stress of any kind, but is of greatest benefit for problems associated with a build-up of tension in the solar plexus. [...] Chamomile eases the tension of excessive ego-desire - and the frustration, resentment, and depression that frequently follow” (Mojay, p.61).

Precautions include: do not use during 1st or 2nd trimester of pregnancy. Take caution for those with ragweed allergies. Do not use for more than 10 days in a row with estrogen dependent cancer.

Frankincense (*Boswellia carterii*) - Frankincense oil has the ability to smooth the flow of *Qi-energy*. “Frankincense oil has profound psychological and spiritual benefits, long recognized by religious and spiritual traditions the world over. [...]” “The effect of frankincense oil may be linked on a fundamental level to that of Earth, where its ability to calm and center the mind reflects its gently tranquilizing, yet deeply clarifying, effect on the Intellect (Yi)” (Mojay, p.75).

Jasmine (*Jasminum officinalis*) - Jasmine oil is very effective for nervous anxiety, depression, and restlessness. It supports the *Qi-energy* of the heart and helps to uplift the mind. “Jasmine can reawaken passion and reunite it with love. [...] Jasmine is most

applicable for the kind of depression that results from unconscious restraint and repression - an approach to life based on values discordant with the individual soul and its true desires” (Mojay, p.85).

Precautions include: not to be used in pregnancy until about to give birth, overuse can disturb bodily fluids such as phlegm, may impede concentration (Sellar, p.90). Not recommended for children under 14. It is a phytoestrogen, not with estrogen dependent cancer.

Sandalwood (*Santalum album*) - “Sandalwood oil’s influence on the mind and Spirit relate at a basic level to its cooling, calming, and toning effect on the nervous system” (Mojay, p.117). Sandalwood was traditionally used during meditation and prayer. “Diminishing the tyranny of the intellect, of the incessant need to overthink, it instills in its place an experience of inner unity - a state where body, mind, and Spirit can re-align as one” (Mojay, p.117).

Precautions include: best avoided in states of depression as it may lower mood (Sellar, p.152).

Recommended blends to pacify and fortify the spirit include:

Blend 1 - In 20mL of carrier oil: 2 drops orange (*Citrus sinensis*), 2 drops bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) and 2 drops Roman chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*). (Mojay, p.156).

Precautions include: Orange (*Citrus sinensis*) - Not for use in bath, not for sensitive skin (may be an irritant), phototoxic, safe entire pregnancy.

Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) - Phototoxicity and possible skin irritant. Not for use in bath.

Roman chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*) - Do not use during 1st or 2nd trimester of pregnancy. Take caution for those with ragweed allergies. Do not use for more than 10 days in a row with estrogen dependent cancer.

Blend 2 - In 20mL of carrier oil: 3 drops bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*), 2 drops lavender, (*Lavandula officinalis*) and 1-drop peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) (Mojay, p.156).

Precautions include: Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) - Phototoxicity and possible skin irritant. Not for use in bath.

Lavender (*Lavandula officinalis*) - Not for epilepsy, not for low blood pressure, not for pregnancy (3rd trimester only), safe for newborns.

Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) - Not for use in bath, not for children under 5, not for use while using homeopathic remedies, not for pregnancy or nursing, not for sensitive skin, caution while using some medications (5-fluorouracil, cyclosporine, and cytochrome).

Blend 3 - In 20mL of carrier oil: 3 drops pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and 2 drops thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*). (Mojay, p.160).

Precautions include: Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) - Not for use in bath, not for pregnancy or nursing, not for sensitive skin, avoid with history of estrogen-dependent cancer.

Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)- Not for use in bath, not for children under 5, not for high blood pressure, not for pregnancy or nursing, not for sensitive skin.

“By altering the way in which sensory impressions are perceived and transmitted to the brain, essential oils ultimately alter what we consider to be real. This means essential oils can change how we see the world - they can change our worldview. This can be of the highest significance for true healing” (Schnaubelt, p.116). In a world filled with toxins and synthetics, it is more important than ever to implement natural healing into our daily lives. Essential oils can help to heal the whole being: body, mind, and spirit. For “The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth; and he that is wise will not abhor them” (Ecclesiastics 38:4).

Works Cited

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