

A Breath of Fresh Air is Upon The Wind

Aromatherapy

Aromatic plants have been used for thousands of years, and over the centuries the medicinal Properties and applications of increasing numbers of new essential oils have been analysed and recorded by the pharmacists. Alchemy gave way to technical chemistry and with it went the interest in the interrelatedness of matter and spirit, and the interdependence of medicine and psychology.

Refreshingly today we are experiencing a revival and renewed awareness of essential oils and their therapeutic benefits on our wellbeing. The pioneering French doctor and scientist Dr Jean Valnet used essential oils as part of a programme by which he was able to successfully treat specific medical and psychiatric disorders. The results were published in 1964 as 'Aromatherapie', and, after monitoring this work with interest, we too are now involved in a measure of research and investigation.

The mind is, perhaps, the most discussed and least understood area of activity regarding essential oils. It is already known and documented that the olfactory nerve tracts run right into the limbic system (the part of the brain concerned with memory and emotions), which means that scents can evoke an immediate and powerful response on the cell metabolism in the brain, through their chemical properties and their aroma.

Studies carried out in Japan showed that the aroma of lemon increases concentration levels to a remarkable degree. On the psychological level the oil has a clarifying quality, good for mental fatigue, listlessness or emotional confusion. Essential oils have three different modes of action with regard to how they interrelate with the human body:

Pharmacological Mode

The chemical changes which take place when an essential oil enters the bloodstream and reacts with the hormones and enzymes;

Physiological Mode

This is concerned with the way in which an essential oil affects the systems of the body - whether they are sedated or stimulated;

Psychological Mode

Effects take place when an essence is inhaled and an individual response is made to its odour.

Gabriel Mojay, a practitioner of aromatherapy in 1990 founded the register of aromatherapists, writes:

"Energetically cool known for their calmative, relaxant action, as well as for their ability to regulate heart function, include Neroli, Jasmine and Lavender oils that are principally sweet and floral in their aromatic makeup"

Massage is a relaxing and nourishing experience in itself, not least because of the unspoken communication based on touch, but also because it ensures that the oils are effectively absorbed through the skin and into the bloodstream. This is the method favoured by professional aromatherapists.

Specific essential oils are chosen after a thorough consultation, taking into account the client's medical and personal background, factors such as lifestyle, allergies, posture, skin and general health, which enable an individual synergistic blend to be made up. The oils are blended with a base oil such as Sweet Almond, rich in vitamins, minerals and therapeutic fatty acids. Other base oils include Avocado, rich in lecithin; Calendula oil (anti-inflammatory and anti-spasmodic properties); and Evening Primrose oil, to name but a few.

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Aroma Aid for Fear

Essential oils can be used by sniffing a few drops (up to 4 drops) on a hanky or pillow, in a bath or vaporiser.

Frankincense - (Boswellia Carteri) - Used if your fears have their roots in the past.

Neroli (Citrus Aurantium)- if your nerves are on edge and upsetting your stomach.

Chamomile - Roman - (Anthemis Nobilis) or **Lavender** - (Lavandula Augustifolia) – Used for balance and sleep.

<p>It is advisable to first seek professional guidance on the use of essential oils Too ensure a positive reaction.</p>

"Food nourishes the body, but flowers nourish the soul!" – Proverb.

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