



Aromatherapy News

Green Valley Aromatherapy

April 2008

Did You Know?

Stress produces an emergency reaction from the body. It causes our heart rate to increase, our blood pressure to rise, and our stomach acids to increase. The adrenaline produced by the body causes our mouth to feel dry, our muscles to tense up and our digestion processes to slow. Cortisol, glucose, and lactic acid are released by the body in anticipation of the possible need for a sudden get-away.

But, did you also know?

Researchers have found laughter to have many physiological benefits that promote healing. When we laugh, immune inhibitors are kept in check so that the immune system can do its job. Laughing is also good exercise for the diaphragm and abdominal muscles, lowers blood pressure, relieves tension, improves thought clarity and reduces the amount of stress hormones in our bodies.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Aroma Friends,

I hope you are all experiencing some milder weather as we are here in BC. The clocks springing ahead to daylight savings time is such a boost for me; my mind and body appreciate starting the day and going home in the daylight hours.

I've decided to write about spas, having recently enjoyed a day to myself, and as they seem to be the focus of attention through the media and general conversation. Ten years ago women went to a spa for a special treat, and very few men would go. Now they are considered to be more essential to everyday health by both men and women.

Spas are also starting to specialize in certain areas such as skin conditions, relaxation, men's needs, women's needs; there is even a new mothers-to-be spa that has just opened in London, England. Spas are situated all over the world, some in remote areas, some in the city, some on huge acreages and even squished in small areas. Wherever they are situated, spas have grown into a multi-billion dollar industry.

I was told about a women's club in Shanghai, China. It is downtown among all the skyscrapers and offices where women typically put in 12 to 15 hour days and the competition is fierce. The club is designed to help the women cope with everyday working pressures.

They have a doctor and nurses on staff who are there to listen, advise, take blood pressure and perform minor surgeries. They offer all the different bodywork therapies including massage, aromatherapy, energy work, yoga, aerobics, muscle building exercises and many more. They also have all the usual spa techs, estheticians, nail techs and anything you can think of to help you get through long working hours. All of this comes with unique service, as many of these women have only a short time before they meet with a influential client, and they need to look and feel their best.

Through this multi-billion industry and the resulting media attention, the word is gradually spreading about "aromatherapy" although I am not sure if this is still the best term for our profession. The British Columbia Association for Practicing Aromatherapists is considering a new title, calling us "Essential Oil Therapists". What do you think?

Unfortunately, due to rising transportation costs, our prices will be increased effective April 1, 2008. You can [download](#) our most current price list from our website.

Barbara Greenwood
President

April Specials

20% Off Ylang Ylang

20% Off Rose Geranium

Stress and the Body - How Stress Affects the System

Tea was introduced into Japan some time around the 9th century. The customary drinking of tea



was at first medicinal, but gradually evolved to become something we do for pleasurable or sociable reasons. The ceremony that has been built around drinking tea was meant to be a lesson in patience, a way to demonstrate humility, and share time together. In Northern England there are cultural norms that have become part of almost every household. Each home you visit usually offers tea, and in some cases it is more than an offer, you are expected to take tea as declining is considered a breach of good manners. I started my working career employed at a book-binding printers at the tender age of 15 years. I remember an incident where a young apprentice caught his hand in a printing machine. The first reaction of the nurse was to "Put the kettle on!" Phoning the doctor or sending for help was done afterward.

Tea was offered in all situations whether celebrating events or commiserating tragedy. Tea was celebrated at new birth, in death, and everything in between. If you stop to think why, it makes sense. Taking the time for tea also meant you were taking the time to breathe, to mull over the options and think things through. It seems that stress has always been around.

At Green Valley our most popular essential oils are those related to the management of stress. It doesn't matter what colour you are, what age group, what religion or how wealthy you are. Stress seems to strike everyone, but some are more successful at dealing with stress than others. If you don't nip it in the bud, the effects of stress have a way of compounding; they can have a ripple effect showing up in ways and places quite distant from the original source.

The ripple effect can be different in each person, manifesting itself in a variety of ways such as over or under eating, muscle aches and pains from tension, fatigue, or a lack of concentration. For me, if I am stressed I don't sleep. If I don't sleep, I feel anxious and interactions with family are affected adding even more stress. My immune system gradually weakens making me vulnerable to catch every germ and virus around.

Being physically sick is the writing on the wall, and ignoring the body's pleas can lead to chronic illness. Increased use of antibiotics and other medications such as steroids and anti-depressants gradually affect all of the body's systems and in some cases can lead to auto immune problems developing. While not all illnesses are a result of stress, given our hectic lifestyles, maybe we need to make more time to just sit and have tea.

Stress Relief Massage

Who doesn't appreciate the soothing and invigorating effects of a good massage? Add it to the benefit of therapeutic grade essential oils and you'll understand why many professional massage therapists use essential oils for added benefit to their clients. If you're planning to give a full body massage at home, lay down a blanket covered by a towel on the floor. For a back and shoulder massage have the person sit backward on a chair, resting their head and folded arms on the back of the chair. Here's a basic recipe to get you started:

30 mls of sweet almond carrier oil
10 drops of bergamot
10 drops of geranium
5 drops of chamomile (roman)
5 drops of lavender

Essential Oil Profile - Ylang Ylang (*cananga odorata*)

By Barb Greenwood

Ylang ylang is known as the poor man's Jasmine. This exotic steam distilled plant is known as the flower of flowers where it grows in the Phillipines. The first part of the distillation process produces the

highest quality oil, while the tail end of the distillation process produces a poorer quality that is often sold under the name "cananga". Although the therapeutic qualities of the two are the same, the smell of cananga is less refined.

The calming relaxing effect of ylang ylang is probably the reason for its reputation as an aphrodisiac, particularly when the anxiety is of a sexual nature. The most important physical property of this oil is its ability to slow down rapid breathing, the symptoms that usually appear whenever a person is shocked, afraid, or anxious. Used in moderation, it can be very helpful.

Blend Profile - Transitions

By Barb Greenwood

I have never been able to master the art of meditation to its fullest degree. My way of meditating is to sit quietly with my cup of tea and let the thoughts come and go at will without trying to sort them. During one of these sessions I was wondering what my life was really all about, and what I could do to make it easier. It occurred to me that being able to plan a change, and being able to implement one were two totally different things. So, inspired by the theme of transitions I set out to create a blend to support change. Here's what I came up with:

Black Pepper has a warming effect and stimulates blood flow to help with lethargy and fatigue. It was added to promote strength and fortitude, qualities we need to be fearless in our quest for change. **Geranium** was added to help offer the warm hand of comfort.

Considered in aromatherapy to be a balancing oil, it can help to promote acceptance and healing. **Lemon** is a great oil to uplift and improve focus, and also stimulates the immune system to help you feel your best. **Rosemary** was used in this blend as it is considered to be a mental stimulant, supporting clarity as we make decisions and adjust to new situations.