

## STRESS RELIEF USING ESSENTIAL OILS

by Penny Keay

Stress comes in varying degrees. We all suffer from Stress. It can't be avoided. Most of us are able to cope with life and the stress we are exposed to day in and day out. We do not let things bother us.

**Mild Stress (Level 1)** - the kind caused from day to day life - you may feel tired, be easily irritated, have a few aches and pains and even have an occasional day of mild depression - a day of the blues.

**Stress (Level 2)** - This level is more involved and can have underlying physical problems, chronic infections, allergies, constant feelings of anxiety and depression, even underlying viral infections may be causing stress. You feel like you never get enough sleep. And the sleep you do get isn't good quality.

**Severe Stress (Level 3)** - This is the most dangerous to your health and well being. You are very depressed and are to the point where you may 'give up'. You feel hopeless, fearful and wish to withdraw from society. You are totally exhausted. This level and even in some advanced cases of level 2 you should seek help from your Physician.

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### MILD STRESS

Getting plenty of rest, eating right, exercise in moderation, taking time out for yourself all help our body and mental state to cope with day to day stresses.

But what happens when all of sudden you miss a night of sleep - you have a sick child, a bad day at work, a near mishap while coming home, no one liked what you fixed for dinner. Wow, nothing like getting dumped on!

Let this happen a couple days a week and pretty soon, you start to feel the stress. Most of the time we don't have day after day of stressful situations, so we have plenty of time to recuperate.

Stress can also appear from good situation, happy occasions. Buying a new house, having a baby, getting your dream job. On the surface these are all happy or good things. But each one has underlying stress producers.

In its mildest form - Stress is just the normal for everyone - the things that occur every day that we can cope with.

Here are a few things you can do to stop stress before it can get a hold of you:

- + Remember to take time for yourself each day.
- + Relax and breathe deeply for 10 minutes.
- + Make changes in your life to make things easier.
- + Do a personal inventory and see if you can make changes in areas that don't make you happy. Being happy doesn't necessarily mean - laughing, joking or even smiling. It means feeling content and safe inside. Of course Smiling never hurts!!
- + Use essential oils throughout the day to help you feel energized, and have mental clarity. After a long day, diffuse oils to help calm and relax you. Essential oils can help relax you so you can sleep.

Many oils help you with stress. Any oil you use that you enjoy is the best oil to use. Add more oils or use blends of oils.

Not sure where to start.

Here are lists of oils you can use - Pick one or two to start, then add more as you want. Vary them from day to day.

**Lavender** is at the top of the list. Known as the great balancer. The Mother of essential oils. Just like a real mother. She does just about everything. Every household should have **Lavender**.

More oils great at helping with stress include: **Yang Yang** , **Eucalyptus** (specifically citriodora), **Roman Chamomile**, **Geranium** , **Clary Sage**, **Sandalwood**, **Petitgrain** and **Mandarin**.

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Other oils such as: Bergamot , Melissa, Rose, Vetiver, Jasmine , Nutmeg, Frankincense, Grapefruit, Lemon, Marjoram, Neroli, Bay laurel , Vanilla, Yarrow and Litsea Cubeba, can give varying degrees of stress relief also.

Try this blend to help with mild stress

Marjoram - 15 drops

Ylang Ylang - 15 drops

Mandarin - 15 drops

Mix in an amber bottle. Diffuse as needed. Can be used in a Personal Nasal inhaler or in a Fan or Tealight diffuser. This is a very uplifting blend.

Stress involves many hormonal responses within our bodies. The adrenal glands produce the hormones that help us deal with stress. As stress becomes more of a problem in our lives it slowly works on our adrenal glands.

Stress level "2", which will be in the next issue, we'll discuss more of what happens and how our adrenal glands being overworked can cause unbalances in all our hormonal systems.

### Refreshing Stress Blend

Lemon - 10 drops

Lavender - 15 drops

Clary Sage - 5 drops

Blend in an amber bottle and diffuse.

Can be used in a Personal Nasal inhaler or any Fan diffuser.

This blend is nice in a bath also.

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## STRESS - THE PHYSICAL SIDE (LEVEL 2)

As stress continues to eat away at us - day in and day out, most of us are able to cope with all the little things that come up each day.

A little respite here and there and we are fine. But what happens to the few of us that never seem to get those badly needed days or a week here and there.

This is when our body starts to talk to us - subtly though it may be. You get a cold and it lingers on - not the normal 10 days, but into weeks.

You have constant aches and pains. Headaches or back pains are quite common when under stress. Allergies develop. You get constipated or have diarrhea or other stomach problems develop such as indigestion.

Occasionally you will even have panic attacks. Your heart races or you have palpitations.

Your sleep is suffering and what little bit you do get is chopped up in bits a couple hours and your awake, then you fall asleep again, and this cycle continues all night. You wake up just about as exhausted as when you went to bed.

Mind you, you may not have all of these symptoms but even one of two of them tells you that you are dealing with too much stress. If you don't change things you will end up in Stage or Level 3 of stress.

### EMOTIONAL CONCERNS (LEVEL 2)

Stress (Level 2) - On the emotional side of stress you may have constant feelings of anxiety and depression. You feel like you never get enough sleep. And the sleep you do get isn't good quality. Poor sleep in itself will make you feel 'dumpy' all day.

No one can please you, you feel you are letting others down, You get cranky and snap out at others for little things that you should easily let go. You may even pick a fight with someone and become very aggressive which is totally not your nature.

On the other hand you may withdraw, or have bouts of unexplained crying.

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Many oils help you with stress. To reiterate - Any oil you use that you enjoy is the best oil to use. Add more oils or use blends of oils.

If you are not sure where to start below are several suggestions. Experiment, trial and error will be the most rewarding.

Here are lists of oils you can use - Pick one or two to start, then add more as you want. Vary them from day to day.

### Try this blend to help with Level 2 Stress

Clary Sage - 10 drops

Roman Chamomile - 5 drops

Lavender - 5 drops

Geranium - 10 drops

Mix in an amber bottle. Diffuse as needed. Can be used in a Personal inhaler or in a Fan or Tealight diffuser. This is a very uplifting blend.

### Another wonderful blend to use is:

Ylang Ylang - 5 drops

Petitgrain - 5 drops

Sandalwood - 10 drops

Rose - 1 drop

Again, diffuse or use in a personal diffuser and use as needed.

The above blends are recommended from recipes in the book The Fragrant Mind by Valerie Ann Worwood)

Stress can involve many hormonal responses within our bodies. The adrenal glands produce the hormones that help us deal with stress. As stress becomes more of a problem in our lives it slowly works on our adrenal glands bringing them closer to exhaustion.

Since all the hormones are connected to one another in varying degrees, it only stands to reason that if you get an imbalance in one it eventually will throw off the others.

A quick example: When your adrenal glands secrete adrenaline, and also cortisol, it affects the body's output of insulin by causing the body to quickly raise blood sugar in response to the "flight or fright" response. The body then sensing an over-abundance of sugar in the blood, sends out insulin to clear the sugar away - storing it as fat.

There is also a correlation between insulin and thyroid hormones and many other hormones. So if the cycles continue with the undue stress, before long your body is very confused and is sending the wrong signals to the pituitary gland and other hormone producing glands. No wonder you get emotional, and / or physically ill.

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## GETTING THINGS UNDER CONTROL

Getting your stress under control when it is in Level 2 or beyond will not be a quick fix.

By this time you may have varying health problems to also deal with, these unfortunately may also be a contributing factor in causing even more stress. What a vicious cycle!

It is you or your loved ones that need to recognize there is too much going on in your life and you need to take control, relax and step back. Take time for yourself.

Start by taking back at least 15 minutes a day. Just for yourself. Find your most comfortable spot. Sit down, shut your eyes for a few minutes and clear your mind. Let all your worries disappear and give you a little peace.

Take a deep breath or two and then just sit there. Yep doing nothing but looking into space.

Now, don't you feel a little better?

Diffusing essential oils will help you, not only emotionally, to give you energy to carry on, but also to help you to unwind at the end of the day.

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Using essential oils will help with viral infections, bacterial and fungal infections. They can help with aches and pains, and that stomach problem too. They can help you to fall asleep more easily and hopefully stay asleep. Getting that all important rest your body so needs to heal.

You can easily find recipes or blends that can help you treat yourself symptomatically. The variations and choices are limitless.

One thing we have found throughout the years, is when you really 'love' an oil or two, where you just can't seem to get enough of it, it is probably because your body has sensed certain chemicals in that particular oil that it is missing in the delicate balancing act at the cellular level.

When you tire of one oil and then crave another, again, your body has fulfilled its need and then moved on to another essential oil that is fulfilling another chemical imbalance.

We recommend you vary your use of essential oils but always use the oils that make you feel the best!

Remember at Level 2 you can probably continue to work on self-treatment.

As always, if you are any type of prescription medication or being treated for any type of ongoing health concern, please let your physician know you are an avid user of essential oils.

Most of the time there is no reason to stop using essential oils but you should let them know, just so they know.

### **Stress Reducing Bath**

Roman Chamomile -2 drops

Lavender- 2 drops

Cypress - 1 drop

Fennel -1 drop

Ginger -1 drop

Vetiver -1 drops

Add to your bathtub filled with warm water and Enjoy a leisure soak for 20-30 minutes .

### **Quiet Moments**

Sandalwood - 6 drops

Ylang Ylang 2 drops

Lavender - 2 drops

Add these to your bath water as it is filling the tub. Add a cup of Epsom salts or baking soda or a combination to help you have a very relaxing and soothing bath. Soak for 20-30 minutes adding more hot water as desired. Adapted from Recipes in Aromatherapy by Valerie Gennari Cooksley, RN

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## **LEVEL 3**

This is when chronic stress has become very serious.

In this stage you are suffering from many physical ailments or complain constantly.

Constant sore throats, constant headaches, backaches, no energy, getting out of bed is extremely difficult due to lack of good quality sleep. You could be headed for a heart attack, stroke or other serious health crisis.

Your body is telling you - things have got to change. As time goes on your physical exhaustion will continue to weaken you physically and then mentally. You are Physically and Mentally exhausted. You have or are becoming ill due to adrenal burnout.

If you feel you are at this level, please see your physician. You may have some serious health issues you may need attended before you reach a crisis situation.

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If your doctor gives you a go ahead do continue to use essential oils. Again, use the ones that you enjoy. And don't forget try a few new ones too.

### **Stress - the Emotional side (Level 3)**

Emotionally you are a wreck, you are depressed, withdrawn. You don't feel like you can carry on - every minute seems like hours. Nothing seems to make you happy.

If you are a perfectionist you can't get anything 'right'.

You are slowly withdrawing from people around you and shirking all kinds of responsibilities.

You appear to be giving up. You hate this feeling, you don't understand.

You want to make things the way they were, but not sure where to start.

You feel like crawling in a hole and want to stay there forever, away from everything.

### **Where to begin the healing process?**

As hard as it may be, you need to carry on. You need to get up each day, put a smile on your face and continue on - one day at a time. If one day seems too long, carry on for an hour, - if that is too long, then for 10 minutes. Everyone can do anything for 5 or 10 minutes.

Do something each day just for yourself! This is important. You have to take back your life. Learn how to say "no" to others. For many of us this is hard to do, but do learn how to do it now.

Take a walk each day for at least 10 minutes - You don't need to walk for an hour, but 10-15 minutes will make a big difference. . Outdoors if possible. Breathe deeply while you walk.

Set up new routines. Include time each day to meditate. This is a great time to use essential oils.

Get your diet in order. Diet is what you eat. There are weight loss diets, or diets for specific health concerns. You are what you eat or don't eat! Evaluate what you are eating and make changes and improvements.

Get plenty of rest - sleep.

Drink lots of fresh water!

Do something fun!! Do it every day!

Did I mention get plenty of rest? This really is a big part of healing. Most people are extremely sleep deprived and this really doesn't help at all. You need to rest and give your body time to heal. Even if you don't fall asleep, you should lie down and rest every day for 20-30 minutes. Put your feet up, turn off the radio & television. Let your mind be clear of everything so it does not have to concentrate on anything. The best way to rest - climb into bed! Shut off the ringer's on the phones too!

If you feel you just can't cope anymore, please seek professional help.

A great book on the physical and emotional aspects of nervous exhaustion and adrenal burnout is a book by Jesse Lynn Hanley, MD - Tired of Being Tired. This book is great especially for those who like to do what they can on their own. Most of us who are aromatherapy enthusiasts like to try to do things on our own.

In this book she explains all the levels of stress, leading all the way to nervous exhaustion and adrenal burnout. This book is excellent for those of you that want to try to treat yourself, especially in the early stages of stress. She has many great suggestions.

Again, and she says it in her book too, if you are in adrenal burnout please be in contact with your physician.

There are many, many essential oils that help you deal with stress. You have to choose the ones that make you feel the best. Or that are effective for the results you are trying to achieve, whether it be calming, relaxing, uplifting,

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or giving you mental alertness. Use them in the bath, or shower. Just use them around the home, office, or in your automobile.

Mix them in lotions, or make a massage oil. There are so many ways to use essential oils.

As always, we recommend you read about aromatherapy and the different applications and ways to use essential oils.

If you have a question, please feel free to e-mail us and we will try to make suggestions to help you along the journey to enjoy nature's beautiful scents to help you with your health needs, physically, emotionally and of course spiritually too!

We hope these articles about stress may have helped you or a loved one.

The main points we wanted to make is that Stress is around us all. The way you deal with it, can make a difference on how it will affect your life and those around you. Essential oils can make a difference in your health, physically and emotionally. Using them can hopefully keep you on track, so stress won't get to the point of a burnout.

There are volumes written about stress - it can be mild to serious.

Whatever stage you are in, essential oils can be used - at the very least, you can have something wonderful to smell that nature has made.

### **For Extreme Stress**

Roman Chamomile - 25 drops

Clary Sage - 25 drops

Mandarin - 25 drops

Petitgrain - 25 drops

Spikenard -25 drops

Hazelnut oil 2 teaspoons

Mix all ingredients and apply a drop or two to the wrists, inside of elbows, on the temples and also rub a little on your solar plexus (this area is on your upper abdomen, just below the breast bone).

Apply once or twice a day.

( Adapted from recipes in "Advanced Aromatherapy" by Kurt Schnaubelt, Ph.D.)

### **Positive Energy Blend**

Lavender - 3 drops

Orange- 4 drops

Rose- 1-3 drops

Add to 2 ounces of distilled water and spritz often in the room you are working in.

Or use a diffuser of your choice or the [Personal inhaler](#).

This is a very wonderful blend. You should adjust the amount of rose oil as some prefer less.

Blend just the essential oils in an amber bottle then add to the distilled water or if you want they can be added to a tub of warm water to sit and soak in.

( Adapted from recipes in "Aromatherapy & Subtle Energy Techniques" by Joni Keim Loughran & Ruah Bull)

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