

dōTERRA® eBOOK



Emotional Benefits of Aromatherapy



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1 CHAPTER Emotions and quality of life

No matter our age, lifestyle, or geographic location, one thing that all humans have in common is that we all experience emotions every day. Emotions are an inescapable part of being a human, and they have a serious impact on our happiness and wellbeing. Although emotions are somewhat mysterious, they can be characterized as complex internal reactions that will differ from person to person.



Because we each have a unique personality and a unique set of personal experiences, each of us will experience emotions in different ways. We each have different methods for responding to and coping with emotions, and each person displays their emotions a little differently.

While our emotions can affect our quality of life in several ways, we know that they are very influential in shaping our motivations—which can then shape our behavior and way of thinking. Our responses to emotions

can have negative or positive effects on our quality of life, depending on how we choose to respond based on our personality or experiences. While each person experiences emotions differently, unchecked emotions can seriously affect anyone’s quality of life by impacting their emotional or physical health. Conversely, experiencing positive emotions and finding healthy ways to deal with negative emotions can lead to an improved quality of life. Whether we choose to deal with our emotions, or leave them unchecked, we will never be able to escape emotions entirely.





A scientific look at emotions

For decades, scientists have studied human emotions because of their mysterious nature and the vital role they play in our daily lives. Most scientists agree that emotions are complex, multi-factorial responses that are triggered by multiple mechanisms and stimuli. This explains why emotions are so complex and mysterious—they are multi-factorial, which means that they are dependent on a variety of factors or causes. Emotions are also complicated because they can be triggered by any number of means or stimuli.

Simply put, emotions are your response to the environment around you. This “environment”

includes your physical location, the people around you, any activities you are engaging in, and dozens of other factors (both in and out of your control.) Your brain will process these factors and determine how to respond emotionally. This response will usually lead to some sort of action, and is typically based on your previous experiences and survival instincts.

As mentioned, emotions and responses will vary from person to person because of our unique personalities and life experiences. An individual’s personality and experience will influence how they perceive stimuli and their environment. This is why we each have unique responses and ways of dealing with emotions—the same stimuli can be perceived differently by two people.

While there are a wide array of emotions, and countless possible responses, emotions can generally be categorized into one of two categories: positive or negative. As mentioned, positive emotions can help improve wellbeing and quality of life, while negative emotions can take a toll on the body, both mentally and physically when they are not dealt with properly.

Scientific definition of emotions: complex, multi-factorial responses that are triggered by multiple mechanisms and stimuli.

Multi-factorial: dependent on a number of factors or causes

Mechanisms: devices, means, or methods

Stimuli: something that stimulates or acts as an incentive, or creates a response

Negative emotions

Any emotion that we might feel throughout the day can typically be categorized as either a positive emotion or a negative emotion. Positive emotions uplift our mood and usually motivate us to act in a way that will help us maintain that positive mood. Negative emotions can also motivate us to act in a way that will uplift our mood; however, if these negative emotions are left unchecked, they can have serious effects on overall health, especially emotional health. As discussed, negative emotions can impact our quality of life, and even alter how our body feels and functions.

Handling negative emotions

To keep negative emotions from decreasing your quality of life, it is important to have healthy coping mechanisms. Because emotions vary from person to person, it should come as no surprise that methods for handling emotions will also vary depending on your personality, preferences, and other factors. For example, some people find physical activity and exercise to be an effective way to deal with negative emotions, while others prefer quiet reflection or meditation. Any number of activities (or a combination of several activities) can work to help an individual deal with their negative emotions.

When it comes to handling negative emotions, it is important to find a method that works for you personally. Consider engaging in a favorite hobby or pastime, confiding in a friend or loved one that you trust, practicing meditation or simply setting aside quiet time for relaxing. Finding an activity that you enjoy and that will help you work through any negative feelings is a healthy part of dealing with emotions.

Using aromatherapy to deal with negative emotions

In addition to developing healthy habits for dealing with negative emotions, you might also consider incorporating the use of essential oils into your regular routine for mood management. Although methods for dealing with negative emotions will vary from person to person, there is a wide variety of essential oils to choose from when it comes to uplifting mood and promoting positive emotions. Because each person is unique, it is helpful to have an equally unique set of oils, each with its own unique chemistry, to help soothe, calm, or uplift the mood. Once you learn about how to use essential oils to manage your mood, you will find that they can become a regular part of your routine for combating negative emotions in your daily life.



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Using essential oils for emotional benefit

Used anciently for their ability to influence emotions, essential oils are still useful today for managing mood and promoting uplifting feelings. Those who don't know about the rich history of essential oils and aromatherapy might assume that using essential oils for emotions (and other purposes) is merely a new trend or fad that will soon pass. However, the popularity of aromatherapy has continued to grow since ancient times as essential oils have constantly proven an effective method for managing emotions. In addition to historic examples of aromatherapy, more recent research and scientific findings have also helped to prove the success of essential oils for managing mood.

History of aromatherapy

Early usage

Although it was not always referred to as aromatherapy, the use of essential oils for emotional benefit dates back to ancient times. People in ancient civilizations often used essential oils, plants, and other plant materials for things like cooking, bathing, promoting healthy skin, and a variety of healthcare practices. In addition to these practical daily uses, essential oils were frequently used during burials, rituals, and religious ceremonies, as many ancient cultures recognized the power of essential oils on emotions.

Aromatherapy was used in ancient civilizations like Greece, Rome, China, and India—usually during meaningful events like religious ceremonies and other rituals. For example, Babylonians and Assyrians would



burn Frankincense during religious ceremonies due to its warm aroma that promotes feelings of peace and relaxation. In ancient Rome, soldiers would use Fennel before going into battle to help make them feel strong and brave.

While the idea of aromatherapy has developed and changed since ancient times, it is clear that the people of these ancient cultures recognized the power in using essential oils to influence emotions.

Aromatherapy in the 20th Century

Even though the practice of aromatherapy dates back to ancient times, it was not until the 20th century that the term “aromatherapy” was officially coined and scientists began to support the idea of using essential oils for emotional benefit. While many have enjoyed the benefits of aromatherapy for hundreds of years, it wasn’t until the 1990s that scientists were able to prove the connection between essential oils and mood management.

In the early 1990s, substantial research helped biologists better understand how the brain reacts to aromas. This research proved what people of ancient civilizations had already put into practice—essential oils can be used to create responses within the body, particularly to benefit and influence emotions. Although the science of emotions still holds significant mystery, we know that there is a connection between scent and emotions. Because of this connection, we also know that aromatherapy is a useful tool for managing emotions and uplifting mood.



Why use essential oils to manage mood?

As mentioned, each person experiences emotions a little differently, and thus, the methods for managing emotions will vary from person to person. While there are many options available for uplifting mood and coping with negative emotions, there are several benefits to using aromatherapy and essential oils to manage emotions.

A safe, natural way to manage mood

Depending on the individual and the emotion, there are seemingly endless methods for altering or managing mood. However, many of these options do not promote good emotional health or physical health. Unfortunately, some people use questionable or even potentially dangerous methods to manage or alter their emotions, which can lead to more serious problems down the road.

The benefit of using essential oils for mood management is that they can help soothe, calm, and uplift the emotions in a natural way. High quality essential oils are pure and potent, so only a little oil will be needed

to help the user achieve the desired effect. Although essential oils are extremely powerful, they come from natural sources, so they are still safe to use. By providing a safe, natural way to manage emotions, aromatherapy is a good alternative to many of the other mood management tactics out there.

Essential oils generate quick responses

As discussed, high quality essential oils are extremely powerful and potent. Typically, you will start experiencing some sort of response from the moment you open the bottle, because you will be able to smell the oil from a distance. This power and potency means that you will only have to use a small amount of oil to help manage your mood. While some methods for managing emotions can be ineffective, essential oils will generate natural, effective responses. By using aromatherapy for emotional benefits, you can harness the power of essential oils to help you quickly and effectively deal with the variety of emotions you experience on a daily basis.

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Essential oils provide a simple method that can be used in conjunction with other tactics

One reason that aromatherapy has been a popular method for managing mood throughout history lies in its simplicity. You don't need to be a professional in aromatherapy or a scientist to enjoy the emotional benefits of essential oils. Once you learn a little bit about essential oils and how they work, you can easily use them in your daily life to help manage your mood. After you learn the proper methods for applying essential oils, and understand which essential oils possess calming, uplifting, invigorating, relaxing, or other properties, it will be extremely easy to enjoy the emotional benefits of aromatherapy.

Not only are essential oils easy to use and apply, but they can be used in conjunction with other mood management methods to help you keep your emotions in check. Essential oils are often used with methods like massage or meditation, and even in conjunction with activities like exercise, bathing, or sleeping. This makes it easy to tailor essential oils and aromatherapy to your personal preferences—further helping you cope with negative emotions during your day-to-day routine.

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The science behind aromatherapy and its emotional benefits

While aromatherapy has proven an effective method for influencing emotions throughout several centuries, the connection between the brain and aroma is more than an ancient practice—it can now be explained scientifically due to extensive research and discovery. The science behind aromatherapy helps to explain how it is possible for different aromas to elicit certain feelings. As we learn about the scientific background of aromatherapy, we can better understand how essential oils are used to manage the emotions and influence mood.

How does the brain process aromas?

Anytime we inhale a distinct aroma (including the scent of an essential oil), that aroma will be processed through different parts of the brain in a special sequence. After inhaling an aroma, the scent will be processed in the brain's olfactory system, which is responsible for controlling our sense of smell. When an aroma is inhaled, it travels to the olfactory system by way of the olfactory nerve, so that it can be processed. The olfactory system is connected to the limbic system, a part of the brain where our emotions and memories are stored. This connection to the limbic system causes a response to the aroma based on any memories that are associated with that smell. The response produced by the limbic system of the brain often causes an immediate rush of feelings—also known as an emotional response.



An aroma is inhaled and travels to the olfactory system, which is responsible for controlling our sense of smell. The olfactory system is connected to the limbic system, where our memories and emotions live. The limbic system then produces a response.

Because our sense of smell is so closely connected to the part of our brain that stores memories and emotions, it is easy to see why specific aromas elicit specific emotions or feelings. The idea behind using

aromatherapy for emotional benefit is that the user chooses certain essential oils to trigger desired feelings and emotions, particularly when aiming to combat or dispel negative emotions.

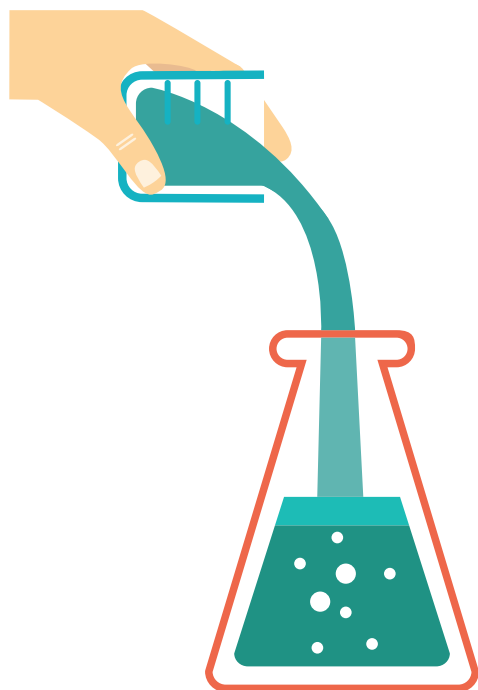
Understanding the special chemistry behind each essential oil makes it easy to target emotions and manage our mood, because it allows us to produce a specific response within the brain.

Chemical responses

As mentioned, certain aromas can elicit certain emotions by triggering our memories and creating emotional responses. While everyone has different memories and life experiences, it is possible to harness the power of essential oils to create a specific response. Each essential oil has a unique chemical profile, which gives

the oil certain properties and benefits. The chemical makeup of the essential oil will determine its attributes, benefits, and what kind of emotional responses it can produce. Therefore, it is possible to choose an essential oil based on its chemical profile for the purpose of eliciting a specific emotional response.

While there are many elements involved in the chemical makeup of an essential oil, many of the chemical constituents included in an oil depend on what kind of plant it comes from. Most essential oils come from plants, fruits, or plant materials, which will determine what kind of chemical constituents are included in the oil once it is produced. For a closer look at how the plant source and chemical profile of an essential oil can determine its benefits, take a look at the plant categories below.





MINT: With a high concentration of ketones, mint essential oils typically hold significant energizing, invigorating, and uplifting properties.



FLORAL: Composed mostly of monoterpene alcohols and esters, floral essential oils are known to promote toning and calming properties.



CITRUS: Using the monoterpenes known as limonene and beta-pinene, citrus essential oils typically have strong uplifting characteristics.



TREE, GRASS, HERB: Rich in esters, oxides, and sesquiterpenes, essential oils taken from trees, herbs, and grasses promote soothing, renewing, and grounding feelings.



SPICE: Phenols are the primary chemical constituents of most spice essential oils, making these oils particularly useful for their warming properties.

Calming and uplifting properties

While each essential oil has its own unique chemical makeup, every essential oil can be divided into one of two categories based on its chemical constituents—uplifting or calming. This is what makes essential oils so useful for managing negative emotions. When you lack motivation, enthusiasm, or inspiration, you can use essential oils with an uplifting chemical profile to help lift you out of a funk. When you feel frazzled, overwhelmed, or down, you can use calming oils to help promote soothing, grounding, or renewed emotions.

Calming oils

Essential oils that fall into the calming category typically contain monoterpene alcohols, sesquiterpenes, esters, and oxides. Here are a few examples of calming oils that can be used to promote soothing, grounding, or rejuvenating emotions:

Clary Sage

Eucalyptus

Frankincense

Geranium

Jasmine

Juniper Berry

Lavender

Roman Chamomile

Ylang Ylang





Uplifting oils

Primarily composed of ketones, phenols, and monoterpenes like beta-pinene and limonene, uplifting essential oils can be used to promote energizing, invigorating, warming, or elevating emotions. The following are examples of essential oils in the uplifting category:

- Cypress
- Douglas Fir
- Grapefruit
- Lemon
- Lime
- Peppermint
- White Fir
- Wild Orange

Creating a personalized experience

The beauty of aromatherapy is that it allows the user to apply particular oils in order to produce certain emotional responses and manage their mood. However, no two people are the same, and because aromas are processed in the limbic system where our memories and emotions are stored, it is possible for two people to have a different reaction to the scent of the same oil. While a chosen essential oil can elicit a specific response, it is important to remember that our reaction to an aroma will be based on our experiences, preferences, environment, and even our unique genetic makeup.

This is perhaps why aromatherapy has been in practice for so long—the user can create an individualized aromatic experience based on their unique experiences and preferences. No two people will have exactly the same response to a single oil, which makes aromatherapy a highly individualized method for dealing with emotions. Your personal experiences, emotions, and preferences will determine how an essential oil benefits you, which makes it easy to tailor your aromatherapy experience to your specific needs. No matter the individual or the oil, one thing is for certain—essential oils can be used to generate powerful internal responses that can help promote wellbeing.

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How do I use essential oils to manage my emotions?

Now that you have a better idea of the scientific principles that make essential oils useful for influencing emotions, you might be wondering, “How do I use essential oils when I want to manage my mood?” The key to successful mood management through aromatherapy is understanding the benefits that each individual oil has to offer. As discussed, each essential oil has a unique chemical profile that determines its characteristics and benefits. As you learn about each oil, its chemical makeup, and its benefits for emotions, you will be equipped to select the correct oil (or a combination of several oils) to generate the kind of emotional response you desire.

Aromatic application

While there are countless ways to apply essential oils, aromatherapy typically requires the user to inhale the aroma—one way or another. Yes, essential oils can typically be used aromatically, topically, or internally, but it is important to note that aromatic application works best for managing mood. Using an essential oil “aromatically” means that the user will inhale the aroma through the air. Whether you inhale the oil straight from the bottle, rub the oil between your hands and inhale from your palms, or diffuse the oil in an essential oil diffuser and breathe in the aroma through the air, there are many ways to use oils aromatically for aromatherapy.



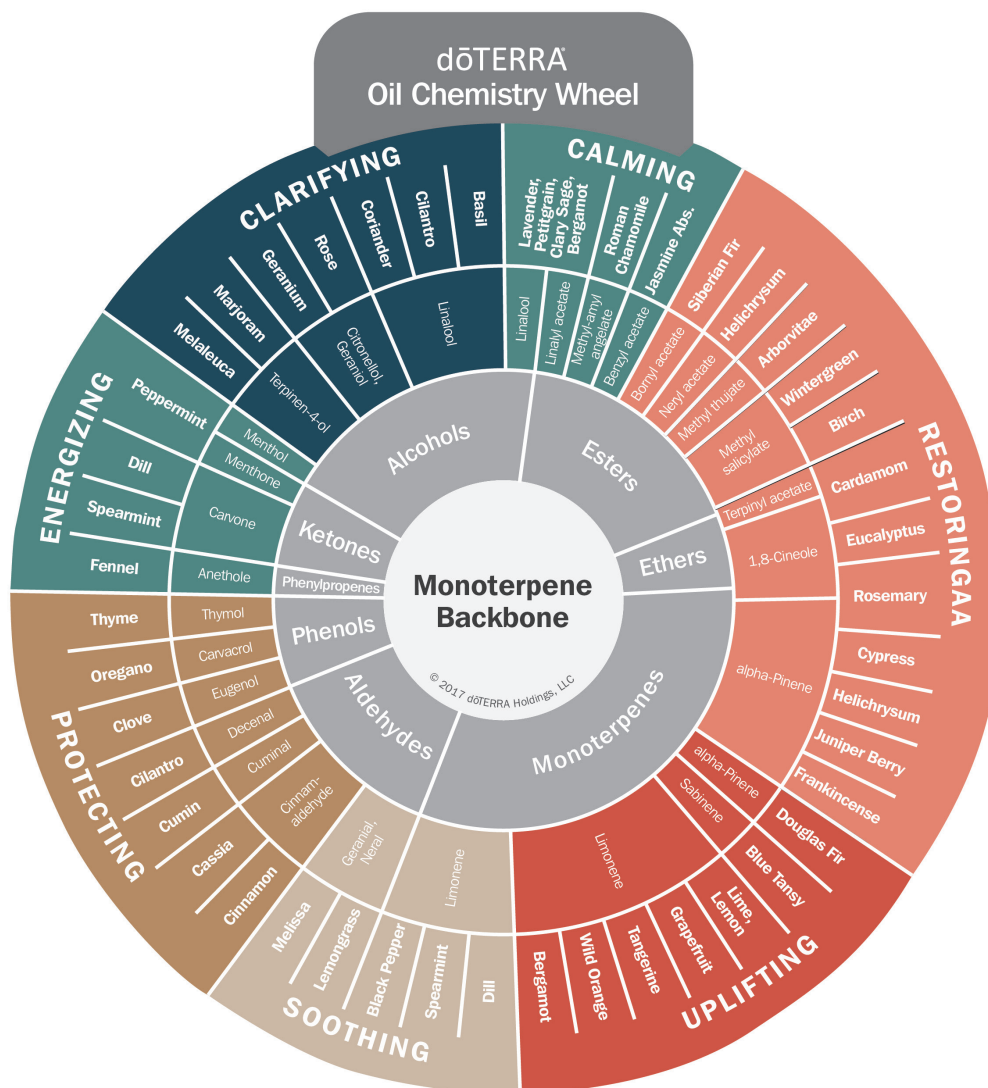
Topical application

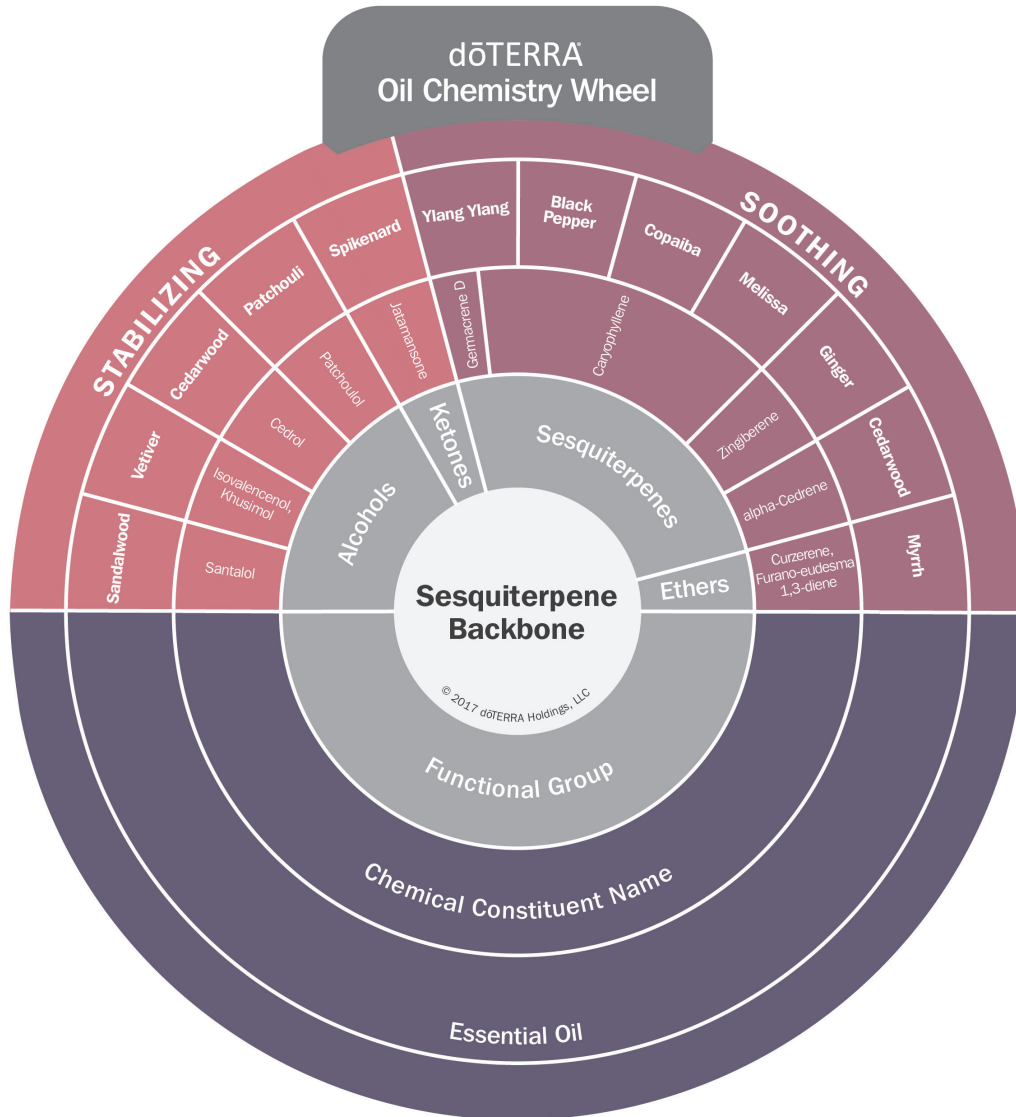
Keep in mind that topical use of essential oils is another effective application method for aromatherapy because it typically allows the user to inhale the aroma during application, and because the scent will remain on the skin for a period of time. Before applying an essential oil to the skin, make sure that the oil has been approved for topical use. If the oil has a particularly strong chemistry, or if you have sensitive skin, make sure to dilute the oil with a carrier oil before applying topically. The following essential oils should always be diluted before topical use: Cassia, Cinnamon, Clove, Cumin, Oregano, and Thyme.

Because there are several ways to enjoy the mood enhancing benefits of essential oils, we will discuss more application ideas for aromatherapy later on in this chapter.

Essential oil properties wheel

Even after learning about essential oils and their benefits, it can be difficult to remember the specific chemical makeup and emotional benefits of every single oil. Use the essential oil properties wheel below when you want to find an oil with specific emotional benefits.





These wheels list each essential oil, its main chemical constituents, and the key properties or benefits of the oil. When you are ready to use essential oils for mood management, there are a few simple steps that will help you achieve your desired outcome.

1. Determine the type of emotion you want to evoke
2. Find an essential oil with the properties that fit the emotional response you want to promote (soothing, uplifting, calming, energizing, etc.)
3. Determine the best application method to help you experience the emotional benefits of the oil (diffusion, topical application, massage, etc.)
4. Consider blending several essential oils together to experience multiple emotional benefits
5. Apply the essential oil using your chosen method, and enjoy the immediate emotional responses that follow

The best essential oils for mood management

Learn more about the emotional benefits of specific essential oils by reading the descriptions below. Remember, some essential oils should always be diluted before topical use, including Cassia, Cinnamon, Clove, Cumin, Oregano, and Thyme.

- Arborvitae: The grounding aroma of Arborvitae oil can help promote a sense of peace and calm.
- Basil: Diffuse Basil oil to lessen occasional anxious feelings.
- Bergamot: Both calming and uplifting, Bergamot can be used to reduce feelings of negativity and stress.
- Cardamom: The clear, refreshing aroma of Cardamom oil can help promote a positive mood.
- Cedarwood: Use Cedarwood oil aromatically to help relax the mind and body.
- Clary Sage: Clary Sage creates a restful environment while reducing feelings of stress and anxiousness.
- Clove: Many people use Clove oil for its stimulating and energizing properties.
- Coriander: Coriander oil can be used to promote feelings of calmness and relaxation.
- Cypress: The refreshing aroma of Cypress oil can be energizing and can help reduce anxious feelings.
- Douglas Fir: Use Douglas Fir oil to promote a positive mood and sense of focus.
- Eucalyptus: Eucalyptus is commonly used to lessen feelings of tension and promote relaxation.
- Frankincense: Use Frankincense oil to induce feelings of peace, satisfaction, and overall wellness.
- Geranium: Inhaling Geranium oil can produce a calming, grounding effect.
- Grapefruit: The fragrance of Grapefruit oil is light and uplifting for the user.
- Jasmine: Use Jasmine oil to evoke feelings of peace, joy, and self-confidence.
- Juniper Berry: When used aromatically, it can promote positive feelings and lessen feelings of stress.
- Lavender: People commonly use Lavender oil for its relaxing and calming properties.
- Lemon: Use Lemon oil aromatically to promote a positive mood.
- Lime: The chemical constituents of Lime oil make it useful for promoting emotional balance and wellbeing.
- Marjoram: For centuries, Marjoram oil has been used for its calming properties.
- Melissa: Use Melissa oil to help calm tension and nerves.
- Myrrh: Myrrh oil can help increase spiritual awareness and promote a creative, inspiring, energetic mood.
- Patchouli: Aromatic use of Patchouli oil can help ground and balance emotions.
- Peppermint: Use Peppermint oil for an invigorating energy boost.
- Petitgrain: The aroma of Petitgrain oil can help ease feelings of tension and promote feelings of calmness.
- Roman Chamomile: Use Roman Chamomile oil to promote peaceful, calming feelings.
- Rose: The scent of Rose oil can be emotionally uplifting.
- Sandalwood: Sandalwood oil can help enhance mood.

Spearmint: The fresh aroma of Spearmint oil uplifts mood while promoting a sense of focus.

Spikenard: Frequently used in aromatherapy, Spikenard oil is renowned for its grounding properties.

Tangerine: Apply Tangerine oil topically to help promote feelings of happiness.

Vetiver: Vetiver oil can have a calming, grounding effect on emotions.

Wild Orange: With a revitalizing aroma, Wild Orange oil can provide energy on a stress-filled day.

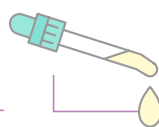
Ylang Ylang: Apply Ylang Ylang oil topically for a calming, uplifting effect.

Ideas for using essential oils to improve mood

Once you've chosen an essential oil that will help you manage your mood, there are countless ways to apply the oil for mood management success. Try a few of the application methods below to enhance your mood with the power of essential oils.



Place a few drops of your chosen oil in an essential oil diffuser and diffuse in rooms where you want to promote feelings of peace, energy, or positivity (your bedroom, office, study area, etc.).



Apply essential oils to the temples, shoulders, and neck to experience the mood-enhancing benefits as you inhale the aroma.



Use a spray bottle to spritz essential oils over your clothing and enjoy the aroma throughout the day.



Add a few drops of a relaxing, grounding, or soothing essential oil to a warm bath.



Place one to two drops of oil on your hands, rub the palms together, cup your hands over your nose, and breathe deeply to experience the emotional benefits of the oil.



Place a few drops of an essential oil on the floor during your shower (away from the water path), and breathe deeply.



Diffuse your essential oil of choice during your morning meditation or yoga practice.



Apply essential oils topically before physical activity to promote energizing, uplifting feelings.



Use calming, soothing, and grounding essential oils during your next massage to promote relaxation and enhanced emotions.



Spritz calming essential oils over your pillows and bedding to help promote peaceful thoughts as you go to sleep.



Rub uplifting essential oils on the bottoms of the feet in the morning to promote invigorating, energizing feelings, or rub calming essential oils on the bottoms of the feet before going to bed to promote peace and relaxation.

As you can see, aromatherapy is a simple, effective method for managing emotions and enhancing mood. You don't need to be a scientist or essential oil professional to take advantage of the emotional benefits that essential oils hold. Simply educate yourself about the different properties of each oil, and use the potent, powerful nature of essential oils to create a personalized experience that will help you to conquer, tame, and soothe the dozens of emotions you encounter every day.