

BALANCE

GOOD NATURE

ON THE SCENT

ESSENTIAL OILS CAN BETTER THE MIND. BODY, AND SOUL

BY TAMMY FENDER

While research has shown that essential oils can affect the body's physiological systems in powerful ways-to include supporting deeper sleep, lowering blood pressure, and reducing inflammation— I've also witnessed their capacity to soothe our most complex emotions and instill a sense of well-being.

Inhaling the aroma of a beautiful essential oil, such as sweet orange or sandalwood, has subtle but significant effects, as they interact with the brain's limbic system, an area that influences our emotions. Our sense of smell bypasses the thinking mind, which is why I like to start every morning by choosing one or more essential oils to wear for the day. I never really ponder the question of which to choose, but rather

allow my intuition to guide me toward a scent that is just right for where I

In the same way, I use essential oils as a diagnostic tool in my therapeutic work. Before any treatment, clients are presented with a series of 13 essences; they smell each unlabeled vial and then select which they like best. The process reveals what is needed to bring their body, mind, and spirit into harmony. A person choosing lemongrass, for example, might benefit from its uplifting profile. Someone drawn to eucalyptus might crave its clarity, intuitively recognizing its ability to dissolve confusion and sluggishness.

am in that moment.

To experience this incredible world of scent and transformation, consider putting together a small essential oil kit of your own. Lavender makes a great travel companion as it can ease you into sleep. Frankincense supports connectedness in meditation. Sweet orange is everyone's favorite mood booster. And vetiver helps you get grounded when life gets wild.

To work with your essences, quiet your other senses and turn your attention to smell. Inhale deeply or dilute your oils and try them transdermally, absorbing a single drop or two through the bottom of your foot or the pulse points on your wrist. Before a



shower, consider sprinkling rosemary at the base, allowing the steam to rise and invigorate your senses. I even love applying a single drop of a favorite essential oil to a closed book so that I can experience the aroma when flipping through the pages.

As you incorporate essential oils into your daily routine, I think you'll also find that each one presents an intimate way to connect to the botanical world and, ultimately, obtain a greater appreciation for our own true nature.

LAVENDER ESSEN-TIAL OIL (ABOVE) **CAN HELP TO** REDUCE ANXIETY, SUPPORT SLEEP. AND PROMOTE WOUND HEALING, ACCORDING TO A STUDY PUB-LISHED IN THE JOURNAL BMC COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE AND THERAPIES.