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Table of Contents:

Foreword

Chapter 1:
Aromatherapy- The Basics

Chapter 2:
Understanding Aromatherapy

Chapter 3:
Considering Aromatherapy

Chapter 4:
Using Aromatherapy Effectively

Chapter 5:
More Ways of Using Aromatherapy

Chapter 6:
Cures Using Aromatherapy

Chapter 7:
Healing Attributes Of Aromatherapy

Chapter 8:
Aromatherapy And Healing

Chapter 9:
Misusing Aromatherapy

Chapter 10:
Acquiring Aromatherapy Products

Wrapping Up

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Foreword

Aromatherapy – a word often associated with calm, sweet smelling and relaxing surroundings. Made famous for its mostly relaxing indulgent feature, using aromatherapy has also been known to be related to have medicinal qualities.



Aromatherapy Ambiance
Learn About The Healing Art Of Aromatherapy!

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Chapter 1:

Aromatherapy- The Basics

The basis of aromatherapy is in its use of naturally garnered essential oils. These oils are usually extracted from plant material and other compounds.

The flower based oils are usually for strong aromatic use, while the other sources of oils are mainly used for medicinal purposes. These oils are primarily extracted from flowers or delicate plant tissues which are already known for their various attributes.

Surprisingly, even in the culinary field, such elements are now becoming popular, especially among those with a more discerning palate. Though it should be noted here, such elements have long been used over time as a more traditional source of nutrition and flavor.



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The Basics

Sometimes divided into three distinctive areas of use, aromatherapy has proven to be an effective solution for many problems. Aerial diffusion falls in the category for environmental fragrance or disinfection.

Direct inhalation is encouraged to treat various respiratory problems like respiratory infections, congestion, tightness in the chest cavity and many others.

Topical applications are mainly for relaxing purposes such as massage, baths, compresses and therapeutic skin care treatments.

Theoretically, aromatherapy has been looked upon as an alternative to more invasive types of treatments. Besides being more pleasant as a treatment option, it can sometimes be used as a prevention element to certain diseases and/or dis-ease.

At worst, it can play a major role in relaxing the general state of an individual and perhaps contribute in some way to the more successful percentage of recovery when combined with more scientifically accepted methods of treatment.

Today there are many avenues of treatment to explore before embarking on a particular type suitable for the individual. However it must always be noted, before making a choice, one must always try to be as well informed as possible.

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Chapter 2:

Understanding Aromatherapy

The importance of understanding a particular topic, idea, or element is often overlooked in this busy world of today. To make matters worse, it is often difficult to find the time to really extensively explore particular topics. However, with the use of various modern tools, this task can be not only fun but very informative too.



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Digging A Little Deeper

Most people today understand aromatherapy as just another indulgent exercise the privileged few enjoy. However, upon taking the time to delve deeper, one is likely to find a whole new prospect relating to the very diverse use of aromatherapy.

Aromatherapy can be explored as an alternative to more invasive methods of treatments. Originating long before medical science made discoveries and break-throughs; aromatherapy had many success stories to back its many wondrous attributes.

The concept of using aromatherapy to treat wounds and burns first came about when a scientist burned his hand while conducting an experiment. Later, it was used again successfully, as an antiseptic to treat the wounded soldiers during World War 2.

Being the basis of natural materials, aromatherapy is a less dangerous method to choose from when deciding on the best suited treatment for various illnesses. In theory, aromatherapy is a treatment that may help in the prevention of disease by the use of essential oils.

When coupled with the more conventional methods of treatments, it has been found to produce impressive results, mainly contributing as a calming ingredient to the equation.

Aromatherapy can have a positive impact on the limbic system through the olfactory system. It has also been known to have direct pharmacologic effects. There have been studies to prove the connection between direct impacts of use between aromatherapy and other scientific methods. However, to date no conclusive data has been forth coming.

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Chapter 3:

Considering Aromatherapy

Some consider aromatherapy as a New Age alternative treatment, while others know its origins date back long ago.

Indulging in aromatherapy is a choice that should only be made after understanding the various aspects of this field. This is most important when choosing aromatherapy as an alternative to medical treatments when trying to treat, cure or prevent diseases.



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What To Think About

The general perception of aromatherapy is, getting the scent of an essential oil to infuse itself into the atmosphere to create a pleasing and relaxing state of body, mind and soul. To others it may be perceived as a relaxing massage session with the use of beneficial essential oils.

Using aromatherapy as a skin care regimen is also very popular. Many of the essential oils used have proven qualities that can contribute to the various needs addressed in skin care lines.

The requirements can range from, wanting to keep the skin looking young and supple to actually reversing the aging effects on the skin. Some forms of eczema and acne have been successfully treated with the use of the aromatherapy methods.

Aromatherapy is also an excellent way to get oneself into a meditative state. These meditative states are usually associated with yoga, tai chi, visualization or self hypnosis.

Trying various oils before deciding on the one that best allows you to reach the required level of mediation is sometimes needed. In addition, some research has shown that using aromatherapy can help create the mood for various scenarios with specific results in mind.

Though there is lack of conclusive evidence to show aromatherapy can be instrumental in treating certain disease, the fact remains that many people turn to this alternative treatment based on other success stories.

Traditionally, it is linked to the successful treatment of emotional and physical ailments. There is proven success with aromatherapy as a natural method to help the body cope with stress, anxiety and tension, which are all contributing factors or causes of other illness and disease.

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Chapter 4:

Using Aromatherapy Effectively

Aromatherapy has become very popular today. Though it is still (mostly) linked to idea of a relaxing therapeutic massage, newer uses are now being explored.

In ancient times aromatherapy was used for almost everything from relaxing to health solutions and even for culinary preparations. A lot needs to be understood before embarking on the journey of aromatherapy.



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What You Need To Know

If one is thinking of setting up an aromatherapy center or even considering the use of aromatherapy to treat a certain medical condition, buying the essential oils is a crucial aspect to consider.

Most essential oils today are so commercialized that it may not always be as genuine as stated on the labels. Careful examination of the label content needs to be checked and rechecked before a purchase is made.

Some labels can be quite deceiving in their purported capabilities. The condition and type of packing of the essential oils is also a very important feature that should be considered. Ideally there should not be any cracks or broken seals as this will contribute to the contamination of the purity levels of the oils.

Beside all this, the other important fact to consider is getting the best results through the method and choice of essential oils. Meaning, some essential oils work better when used the correct way, and the best results are assured if the recommended way is not taken for granted but adhered to carefully.

The method of inhalation is used to treat certain ailments like sinuses, headaches, colds, chest congestion and other similar conditions. This method is far more effective and quicker than taking oral or direct application on the skin.

Spraying a mixture of essential oils and distilled water is another method used to create a calming and relaxing atmosphere.

This method has proved to be beneficial when treating anxiety, depression, stress and other pressurizing conditions. Some conditions call for direct applications. However, the concentration of the essential oils needs to be considered before commencing. Essential oils can cause an allergic reaction to the individual.

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Chapter 5:

More Ways Of Using Aromatherapy

Essential oils were commonly thought of for just relaxation or therapeutic massage sessions, now aromatherapy is gaining fast advancement into other areas. Some of which are forays into treating ailments and some medical conditions that have previous success rates from using aromatherapy methods.



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What You Can Do

For years some cultures have used aromatherapy to treat wounds and scars effectively. Using essential oils that contain the Helichrysum ingredient has been proven to be beneficial when repairing damaged skin conditions.

Its strong anti-inflammatory and concentration of regenerative diketones is what makes it a highly regarded compound in addressing damaged skin problems. The pleasing earthy aroma it emits is also therapeutic.

Other essential oils that are also known for their healing properties for skin conditions are lavender, sage and rosemary. Sage is particularly effective in healing old scars and stretch marks but should only be used in small amounts because of the Thujone content which can be toxic.

Using aromatherapy to treat wounds is also widely practiced. This is because of the antiseptic elements that certain essential oils contain. Tea tree essential oil is commonly used to treat a wound until it is totally sealed, after which this oil is no longer needed.

Some aromatherapy treatments are also used when the desire for healthy, younger looking skin is sought. These essential oils are absorbed into the skin and in turn provide the skin with all the important nutrients needed for the healthy look and condition.

Aromatherapy is also used in other products besides skin care, such as bath salts, shower gels, shampoos and body lotions. This style of using aromatherapy is wonderful for creating the desired effects of sweet smelling and relaxing moods. Also aromatherapy in this form is mild and non-threatening as it is not in its purest form.

Aromatherapy can also assist in relieving impatience and irritability. Essential oils like lavender can have calming effects on the mental turmoil state and works by encouraging the senses to slow down and simulates peace.

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Chapter 6:

Cures Using Aromatherapy

Approaching a medical condition by exploring the possibility of using aromatherapy as a solution is definitely worth the effort.

Aromatherapy ideally works when the psychological and physical aspects are addressed together. When the psychological and physical aspects are taken into account, then various contributing factors can be studied carefully before any treatments are recommended.

The aroma therapist would have to consider factors like an individual's medical history, emotional condition, general health and lifestyle before putting forth any recommendations. This is a holistic style approach to treating a medical condition.



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Applications

Some of the other more interesting conditions that are successfully explored using the aromatherapy method are backaches, irritable bowel syndrome, headaches and depression, to name a few. A good percentage of these medical ailments can be due to stress. Thus by using methods to understand and locate the individuals stress causing source, the aroma therapist will be able to alleviate the medical condition in a more efficient manner. In some extreme cases, claims of total recovery have been documented.

Treating skin problems is another avenue where aromatherapy has been successfully used. Conditions such as dermatitis, acne, eczema, psoriasis, cellulite, varicose veins and stretch marks are just some of the conditions where the use of essential oils has either treated the condition or eradicated it completely.

Some patients have used aromatherapy to combat depression, hysteria, lack of concentration and panic attacks. Having tried other medically accepted methods which sometimes have undesirable side effects, aromatherapy has become a welcome solution.

Treating burns, bruises and sprains using aromatherapy essential oils to achieve surprisingly quick and effective results are also another option worth exploring.

Other areas where the use of aromatherapy is being successfully explored are asthma, bronchitis, flu, and muscular aches and pains. When making the choice to use aromatherapy as a possible treatment for any given condition, it is important to ensure that only a qualified aromatherapy practitioner is consulted and that all the essential oils used are of the highest quality.

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Chapter 7:

Healing Attributes Of Aromatherapy

The popular belief that most illness and disease are somehow linked to stress, anxiety and lack of proper daily nutrition has its merits. Unfortunately some illness and disease needs to reach a critical stage before it becomes visible or is detected. To avoid all this, one is encouraged, though unrealistically, to keep all negative aspects in life under control or eliminate them altogether.



Wellness

Aromatherapy can help contribute to this end. Primarily known for its calming properties, aromatherapy methods advocate the use of various essential oils to soothe the mind and body. Besides this, a long list of other conditions can be successfully addressed with the use of aromatherapy elements.

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Below are just a few examples of the capabilities and merits of using aromatherapy:

- ❖ Acne – lavender oil or tea tree oil to be applied directly onto the affected area. For milder cases, using a body bath lotion with these properties is recommended.
- ❖ Anemia – a concoction of tincture from the yellow dock root or an extract of dandelion leaf or even eating dandelion greens as a salad.
- ❖ Anxiety – chamomile, California poppy, passion flower, lemon balm
- ❖ Asthma – ginkgo biloba, mullein oil, a Chinese herb called shuan huang lian
- ❖ Bee sting – urtica urens , cantharis, lavender and vegetable oil mixed
- ❖ Body odor – alfalfa contains chlorophyll.
- ❖ Cold – eucalyptus oil in boiling water and inhaled. Gargle with a mixture of tea tree oil
- ❖ Cholesterol – chicory root, ginger
- ❖ Constipation – aloe vera juice, ginger tea
- ❖ Hair loss – saw palmetto, arnica, jojoba oil
- ❖ Headaches – chamomile relaxes, ginkgo biloba improves blood circulation
- ❖ Dandruff – flaxseed oil, primrose oil or salmon oil. Rinsing hair in chaparral or thyme
- ❖ Diabetes – huckleberry, tea made from most beans
- ❖ Diarrhea – blackberry tea, wild oregano
- ❖ Eczema – chickweed added to bath, stinging nettle, hazel ointment
- ❖ Indigestion – gentian root for better digestion, ginger, peppermint
- ❖ Nausea and vomiting – catnip leaves, chamomile flowers
- ❖ Menopause – for skin use geranium essential oil, orange blossom water, sandalwood essential oil

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Chapter 8:

Aromatherapy And Healing

Fast gaining popularity as a new age fad, aromatherapy is only recently being taken seriously as a viable alternative treatment method to conventional medical remedies. For most ancient cultures this method of treatment has long been practiced with successful results.



More In Depth Healing Info

Confusing the attributes that come with using the term aromatherapy is mainly caused by the commercial sector seeking to capitalize in this area. For many people aromatherapy is usually linked to some pleasing scent emitted from essential oils.

The effectiveness in the aromatherapy element is in the application and intent. Aromatherapy is meant to create a positive change physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually which is supposed to directly impact the body condition of the person undergoing a session.

However when products are touted to use or contain essential oils for aromatherapy purposes without actually comprising of the much needed dosage, it is no longer considered aromatherapy.

Aromatherapy or commonly referred to as the practice of using essential oils for medicinal and therapeutic purposes and covers many areas of healing properties.

There are many essential oils used as remedies for various physical conditions and complaints. Essential oils are also believed to contain anti-viral, anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties.

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Chapter 9:

Misusing Aromatherapy

The term aromatherapy has been so loosely used over the years for commercial reasons that it has become almost totally misleading.

Understood to mean a combination of two basic words – aroma and therapy, the word aromatherapy has been commercially used so widely that many false claims have been made over the years to promote and capitalize on it. A little time and research should shed light on this confusion.



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Be Cautious

Aromatherapy is actually a serious foray to embark upon as it involves the use of pure essential oil and other natural ingredients that are considered safe to use only if done correctly. Not understanding the attributes and purity of aromatherapy, can lead serious repercussion as not all natural and pure oils are safe for human use. Some essential oils can even be toxic in certain circumstances.

Pregnant women and lactating mothers should be weary when choosing to use aromatherapy. The strong scents can be harmful to babies as their senses and immune system are not fully developed yet. Also some scents can be off putting to the baby and this may affect the baby's sleep patterns and feeding schedules, thus causing health issues from the neo natal stage.

Though aromatherapy has calming effects, using some essential oils to sooth and relax a cancer patient may have adverse effects. A doctor's permission should always be sought before trying this form of therapy. Some of the essential oils may have negative reactions to the prescription drugs already taken by the patient.

The choice made to use aromatherapy as an alternative to other medical options, should only be done after extensive studies have been made on the advantages and disadvantages.

Although most illnesses and diseases are found to be the root cause of stress, anxiety and other pressurizing conditions, opting to treat the medical condition by using aromatherapy may produce minimal positive results to actually combating the disease or illness.

Overenthusiastic use or indulgence of aromatherapy can lead to serious problems, especially when medical advice has been ignored in making this choice. Some studies continually show little to no evidence in demonstrating efficacy against bacterial, fungal or viral infections, thus rendering it a poor alternative to medically proven alternatives.

In most countries around the world, the aromatherapy use is still related to the indulgent relaxing aspect. Hence there is no regulatory body that strictly governs the content and potency of each essential oil used for the aromatherapy session.

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Undiluted essential oils used for aromatherapy can sometime cause skin irritations and discolorations. In cases where the natural product has been exposed to chemicals in their growing stage, such as pesticides, chemical allergies can have a negative effect upon application. In more severe cases the presence of estrogens like elements, have been found to negatively affect the delicate skin of children.

Some cultures take the aromatherapy influence to the extreme. Ingesting certain ingredients is widely practiced and sometimes causes severe irreparable damage. As some of the essential can be quite toxic when ingested, medical advice should always be sought before advocating such a choice.

As with any bioactive substances the method of aromatherapy, using essential oils, and while safe for the general public can still have adverse effects when used by pregnant or lactating women.

Some of the ingredients and methods used in a particular aromatherapy session may cause negative side effects when interaction with other more conventional medicinal elements are present. Adulterated oils used in some aromatherapy sessions can also pose problems depending on the type of substance used.

Other safety issue like the unsubstantiated claims made by those advocating aromatherapy as a proven alternative treatment can be misleading at best.



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Chapter 10:

Acquiring Aromatherapy Products

Aromatherapy and essential oils are linked, and so when considering using this method for treatments or for other reasons, taking the time and effort to understand the fundamentals of aromatherapy is essential.

Essential because limited knowledge of aromatherapy can cause the wrong use of the essential oils, wrong methods of applications chosen or even the use of products which actually don't contain any essential oils at all.



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What's Good and What's Not

Poor quality oils severely lack the optimum benefits it promotes itself to have. In the course of processing these oils many factors should be considered if the end product is to provide what it promises to.

Some of the things to consider are; if there are added chemicals, preservatives, substandard quality of ingredients, poor processing environments and adulteration of the oils. All these factors are important because harmful side effects can occur if other than the required essential oil is contained in the packaging. At best only minimal therapeutic benefits can be derived.

Some vendors combine the essential oils with other chemicals and lesser grade ingredients for higher profit gains. These oils then become either useless or less effective. Label words like fragrance oil, natural identical oil, and perfume oil are all words that are misleading in nature. As there are no strict guide lines to follow, some vendors intentionally or unintentionally use words like therapeutic grade or aromatherapy grade, thus these terms should be ignored and the contents examined closely.

Packaging styles are also another important factor to consider. Don't be misled by pretty packaging as it is the content that is important. Also essential oils that are packaged in darker colored bottle can be the way a vendor "hides" the clarity and purity of its content. The use of plastic style packaging is also not wise as some essential oils react with the plastic, thus causing the quality of the said oil to deteriorate considerably.

Wrapping Up

Aromatherapy or otherwise known as essential oil therapy is a natural, gentle and non invasive way of treating a particular disorder. It can also be used to compliment an existing treatment regimen. Sometimes aromatherapy can also be used as the only treatment.

Because of its calming effect, aromatherapy can be used in treating ailments that require the patient to be in a non stressful state of body and mind. Some researchers have found that by inhaling certain scents, a

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patient can immediately bring under control the stressful nature of the predicament which contributes to the disease or illness suffered.

Hopefully this book has given you insight into how to utilize aromatherapy.

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