

## AROMATHERAPY AND ANXIETY

"Aroma is the interface between spirit and matter."

Mindy Green at the 2015 AHG Symposium

The smell of roses has been used for centuries to ease anxiety, and **Rosa (Rose)** is a metaphor for paradise and spiritual unfolding; exquisite beauty and purity of rose flowers, placed on a thorny branch rooted in the earth symbolizes the mystic path to the divine. (Sufi's) The doctrine of signatures - the unfolding rose petals, mirrors the unfolding consciousness.

"Rose is sent to earth by the gardeners of paradise for empowering the mind and the eye of the spirit." Rumi

Original rosaries were made with real roses. Rose, the heart of Christian mysticism, was a metaphor for conscious unfolding. The word bead is derived from Middle English "bede," meaning prayer. Rose is used in ceremony to invoke higher states of consciousness and open the heart. Avicenna, the Persian polymath regarded as one of the most significant thinkers and writers of the Islamic Golden Age praised the effects of rose water on the mind and spirit: it has beneficial effects on brain function and cognitive power, saying "it enhances comprehension and strengthens memory." Susun Weed suggests "a touch of rose essential oil on the seam of your sleeve will wrap you in calming fragrance all day. Getting a massage with rose-scented balms will magnify the effect and can cause a marked decrease in anxiety."

**Melissa** in addition to being very helpful for anxiety as an herbal remedy, is very helpful in aromatherapy. It has been known to reduce high blood pressure and palpitations. Its relaxant properties act as a tonic and rejuvenator, calming nervousness and anxiety, releasing tension and relieving insomnia. (McIntyre)

Rubbed into the skin, **Pinus sylvestris (Pine)** is calming and refreshing and can be used for exhaustion, debility, anxiety and stress-related problems. (McIntyre)

**Salvia officinalis (Sage)**, when used as an herbal remedy, is a wonderful tonic to the nervous system. In Ayurveda, it promotes calmness and clarity. Recent research has shown it has strong antioxidant properties that help reduce the harmful effect of free radicals. However, used in excess as an essential oil, its constituent thujone may cause epileptic fits, convulsions or paralysis.

**Salvia sclerea (Clary sage)** contains a much lower concentration of thujone and, as an essential oil, is a much gentler remedy. In fact, clary sage is highly recommended as an essential oil for relieving muscle tension and anxiety, as well as other stress-related problems. (McIntyre)