

Don't worry be happy

Make the most of summer's feel-good vibes, address stress levels and get happy. Our experts give their tips and strategies for a wholesome life

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Fuel the senses

A great aromatherapist can create the perfect blend of oils to help with a variety of physical and emotional concerns. Complementary Therapist, Pamela Trodd shares her favourites to burn, diffuse or just take a deep whiff to get the benefits!

Lavender (*Lavandula Officinalis* -from the flower)

"This beautiful floral smelling essential oil is the most versatile that I know of. Over the years I have blended lavender with other oils, or used it on its own, and it always hits the spot emotionally and physically. I use it to help everything from muscle aches to aiding sleep and easing mental and physical stress."

Bergamot (*Citrus Bergamia* - from a small orange fruit)

"Over the years, I have found blending Bergamot for clients helps ease life's upsets and calms them if they are feeling worried. If you are feeling very low, this wonderful oil helps to lift your mood and become uplifted, refreshed and calm."

Frankincense (*Boswellia Carteri*-from the resin of the tree)

"When I smell this oil I just want to breathe deeply and relax. Its warm smell can ease hyper breathing and will help you to feel tranquil and at peace. This ancient oil is referred to by many religions throughout history and it is a lovely oil to use when meditating, as it can aid deep breathing and rest."



Top Tips

No time for a bath? At the end of your shower, pop the plug in and drop some of your favourite oil into the water around your feet. Take a deep breath of the aroma whilst the delicate skin on your feet quickly absorbs some of the oil - giving you the maximum benefit with minimum fuss.

Rub a few drops of Long Barn Lavender beauty oil into temples and pulse points on your wrists when the going gets tough. The added bonus of Chamomile in the blend will calm frazzled nerves quickly! (10ml £6.50)



Hypnotherapy - good or bad?

For people dealing with anxiety, worry has become a lifestyle rather than a state of mind. But can hypnotherapy really redress the balance? Hypnotherapist Annalise Kirk tells me that people use hypnotherapy to help with most types of anxiety, and within around four to six sessions you can already see a difference.

"It is more a mind-set that enables the client to focus on achieving their chosen therapeutic outcome," says Annalise. "I focus on the role of the client's behaviour, thoughts and feelings, because it is not the event or situation that causes the issue but the person's perception of the event that causes the problem."

"Each client is unique and so

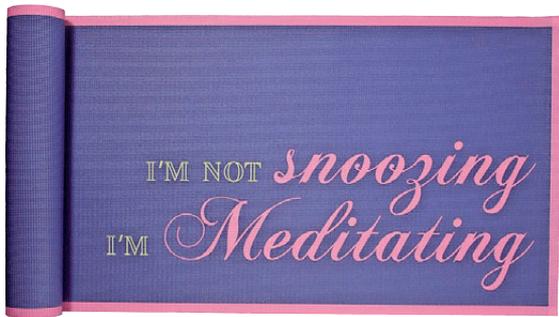
is their treatment plan. I use different techniques depending on the type of anxiety they are experiencing and equip the client with coping skills and strategies, such as self-hypnosis, to undertake and practice outside of the therapy session. The client can use these to deal with their issue, prevent any relapse of their anxiety and give them a feeling of self-confidence and control."

Rather than being the 'far-out' process portrayed by the media, Annalise states that hypnotherapy is actually involves normal, everyday, psychological processes. By using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques as well, the technique is supported by much evidence and research.



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Highstreet Best Buys



Far left: John Lewis meditating Yoga Mat, £20, John Lewis, Southampton
Left: Long Barn Pure Lavender Essential Oil 10ml, £6.50, Alresford, 01962 732099
Below: Gaiam yoga for beginners kit, £24.95, John Lewis, Southampton



Far left: Long Barn Lavender Beauty Oil 50ml, £18.95, Alresford, 01962 732099
Middle: Jo Malone home candle in Orange Blossom 200g £39, John Lewis
Right: Neals Yard Soothing Bath Oil 100ml £14.95, Pure Home Lifestyle, Winchester

Mindfulness - Stay in the moment

When we stress about things, our minds take us off to a distant place, and plot all the worst case scenarios of a potentially benign situation. Realistically we know deep down that this 'awful imaginary future' is unlikely to unfold. Practising mindfulness is a great exercise to remind us to stay in the present moment.

Take yourself off to your favourite Hampshire beauty spot - find a pebble or a pretty leaf, and place all of your focus on the object. Look at the patterns, the colours and feel the textures. What does it feel like? Is it cold, or warm, or even furry? Then close your eyes and take a deep breath - what can you hear? What does the air smell like? You can do this at home with a cup of coffee or square of chocolate, and take the time to really experience the taste and sensations too - mindfulness is all about taking the time to think about and appreciate our present situation - to live in the moment.



Find the right balance

Life Coach Jackie Fletcher shares her top five essentials for a balanced mind

Define: Imagine you're reflecting back on the ideal, balanced year you just enjoyed, and write down what happened, how you felt, what made it perfect and what was important to you.

Add and subtract: Every week, deal with one annoying thing that you're tolerating and add one activity you love. The result? More energy and more time to enjoy your life!

Break out: Take a proper lunch break. Get away from your desk, mindfully eat something nourishing, and get outside if possible - even a short walk can clear your mind and reduce stress levels.

Honour your values: Work out what's really important to you (such as belonging, achievement, learning, fun or spirituality) and ensure these values are all honoured to increase life satisfaction and contribute to a well-balanced life.

Love to work: Find a job that you love. If that's not currently possible, take positive action by researching your options; and be aware that we live in the feeling of our thoughts, so focus on the aspects of your work that are satisfying.

Get appy

Mindbloom: is an inspirational app that will help you to achieve daily goals and find that work/life balance. Remind yourself to eat a healthy snack, call a friend or get pumped for a workout and share your goals and achievements with friends.

Buddhify 2: brings bite size meditation to your fingertips with over 40 meditation exercises from five to 20 minutes long.

Sleep Cycle: uses the accelerometer in your iPhone to monitor your movement in bed to determine which sleep phase you are in. Waking up in the lightest sleep phase feels like waking without an alarm clock - it is a natural way to wake up where you feel rested and relaxed.