

# Soothing Elements

Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork  
www.soothingelementsmassage.com (860) 963-2209

## Aromas for the fall and winter

### Enjoy seasonal pleasures, reduce stress

Oranges, cinnamon, apples, cloves. Aromas that bring back memories of cool days, family visits, and days spent cooking and feasting. Not only are these evocative scents enough to make a fall day feel cozy, but the aromas of orange, cinnamon and clove can reduce stress when inhaled. Here are two recipes to enjoy this autumn.

#### Orange Pomanders

The sweet scent of an orange pomander, a traditional Victorian craft, will fill a home with citrus freshness. Cloves can relieve nasal congestion and improve digestion — a bonus around Thanksgiving.

You'll need unblemished oranges, a pile of large-headed cloves, and a knitting needle or fork for poking holes. Punch holes in the skin of the orange, inserting cloves as you go. Make stripes or cover the orange completely.

Now place 1 tablespoon each of ground cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves in a paper bag and mix. Roll the clove studded orange in the ground spices to coat evenly.

Leave the pomander in the bag and store in a cool, dry area for 3–5 weeks to dry. Each day, roll it around in the spices.

When it's dry, shake off excess spices. Display in a bowl or hang with a pretty ribbon.

#### Mulled cider

Come in from the cold to the heady aroma of mulled cider. Cinnamon is another spice said to help the digestive system as well as fatigue.

Add cinnamon sticks, cloves and fresh orange slices to a pot of apple cider. Use whole spices, not ground, to avoid cloudy, gritty cider.

Simmer gently for at least 1/2 hour to allow



*Warm mulled cider can soothe digestion and even help relieve fatigue.*

flavors to infuse. Don't boil it as it can turn spices bitter. You can keep the pot warm for several hours — a crock pot is ideal.

Serve in mugs garnished with an orange slice or cinnamon stick. ❖



*When you have a stressful event coming up, schedule a massage before or after.*

## Make your massage a retreat this fall

### 5 ways to really unwind

It's a busy time of year. Remember your body and mind are wired to need breaks from stress. Here are five ideas to help you turn your massage session into a mini-retreat.

1. Schedule your massage sessions ahead. This can help you avoid being overwhelmed by pre-event anxiety or post-event let down.

2. If possible, sweat in a sauna or soak in a hot tub or herbal bath before your massage to give your muscles a chance to warm and relax. Afterward, sit or lie quietly in the massage room or other quiet space before reentering the world.

3. Don't go back to work or run errands. Go home and avoid the computer and telephone. Lie down, listen to music, or

do simple activities such as drawing or folding laundry to keep your mind in a dreamy state.

4. Take a leisurely walk or simply sit by a window with a view of trees, water or a garden. Relax your eyes and focus on the colors and textures of the earthly environment.

5. Before bed the evening after your massage, drink a cup of herb tea such as chamomile or lavender to help you sleep. Sleepytime® is a popular commercial tea many people like to help them get a good night's rest. ❖

Soothing Elements, LLC  
Laurie L. Swenson, LMT/Owner  
CT License #005388  
P.O. Box 525  
199 River Road  
Putnam, CT 06260

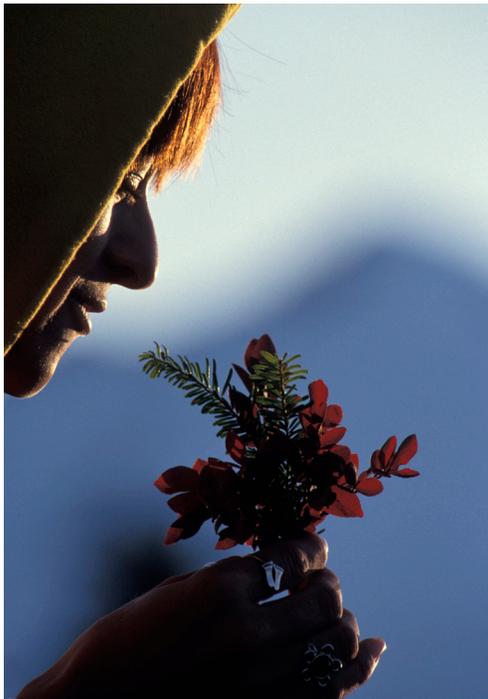


## Boost your happiness with gratitude

### How to reap the benefits of thankfulness

Some people consider the ability to be grateful the key to happiness. Focusing on what you do have instead of what you don't is basic to the experience of joy. Some of the most grateful people are those who have faced death, maybe because they truly understand the gift of simply being alive. Dawn Nelson was a massage therapist working with the frail and dying when she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. She writes eloquently about gratitude in her book, *Making Friends with Cancer*.

"If I cannot get out of bed, I can be thankful for the fact that I am able to turn my head, wriggle my toes, feel the smoothness of silk, smell the fragrance of the roses. . . . The simple act of noticing what one has to be grateful for has tremendous power over the mind. I use this process to get through difficult moments during my cancer treatment and recovery. I use it to shift my mood when I am feeling 'down' or to cope with unpleasant tasks."



#### *Plan a gratitude session.*

1. Get comfortable in a quiet place, inside or out. Turn off the TV and computer and don't answer your phone.
2. Think about what you have to be thankful for, what and who you cherish.
3. Silently thank people who have done something for you.
4. Write a personal wish for someone you are grateful for on a piece of paper. Sit quietly, repeating the wish several times. Then burn the paper, watching the smoke dissipate into the atmosphere.
5. Call or email one of those people to thank them.

Practicing gratitude is a simple way to bring more meaning, joy and satisfaction into your daily life. ❖



*To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven*  
—Johannes Gaetner