

Quiet time – it is important for you

By Penny Keay

The body has five senses: Sight, Touch, Smell, Taste and Hearing.

Of course, Aromatherapy deals with the sense of smell. Of the five senses, you have control over several of them and can easily 'turn them off'. Sight – close your eyes or turn away; Touch – simply keep your-self motionless; Taste – spit it out if it is offensive; Smell – this is harder to stop – mainly because you have to breathe; and last is Hearing – unless you wear noise cancelling headgear or are deaf, this one is one of the hardest of the senses to be deterred.

This brings up the topic of this article. Namely, how important quiet time is for your health and well-being.

The five senses are so important in a human's survival that we are side lined when one or more of them are lost. We depend on our sight to find shelter, food, water, recognize dangers. Touch and taste are important for many sensations; pleasure, pain, warmth, cold.

The two senses that are constantly on alert for signs of danger or threats are our sense of smell and hearing. Yes, even when we are asleep, our sense of smell and hearing are always working.

Our sense of smell of course alerts us of fire, or toxic or dangerous smells. We don't have to smell for wild animals any more but if we did, our sense of smell would be available to sense those odors too.

Hearing is always with us (unless you are deaf or wear the noise cancelling headgear). Whether we are awake or asleep our brain is constantly listening to sounds all around us. This constant 'listening' is a type of stress.

This cortisol surging stress is easily triggered by any foreign sound the brain cannot identify or it identifies as a threat. Gunshots, cars crashing, horns blasting, fire trucks, police sirens, explosions. You get what I'm talking about, right? The sounds that make our heart quicken if even for a split second.

If you are sleeping, you wake startled and sometimes have to try to recollect what it was you heard. It really doesn't matter, usually as by then, your adrenaline is surging and good luck trying to go back to sleep.

Just like the sense of smell, our sense of hearing will block out the 'common sounds'. While all along it is still listening for the strange, unusual noises that could be a danger. Ask any mother, she hears her kids playing but unless she hears the sound that says something is wrong (sometimes no sound at all) she is unaware of any type of threat or danger to her children.

Another example here is common sounds in your home are ignored, but go visit a relative and spend the night and you hear every 'weird' sound that your brain has to identify before you can fall asleep. The clock, refrigerator, the air conditioner or furnace the list is endless. At home, you know what it is and can easily block those sounds out.

The problem is we really need to give our brain a 'time out' from sounds, or at least try to minimize the sounds that keep our brain on alert too much of the time.

When was the last time you really sat quietly and I mean quiet? No sounds, no music, no traffic, no animal sounds, no children sounds, no phones, nor televisions – absolute quiet.

Most folks cannot remember when they were in absolute silence.

Why is it important for you to try to find time each day where there is no noise? It all has to do with stress. Many people that live in environments that have a lot of noise have more anxiety, more problems with sleep, they cannot deal with any form of challenges and their day to day performance will ultimately suffer.

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Think about it, most all of us have experienced loud noise, besides being detrimental to your hearing some of these make us feel – wired. It doesn't seem to matter whether the sound is a welcome sound like attending a concert or from a bunch of sirens, it will trigger our cortisol and adrenaline. And then, you try to sleep and well, that doesn't happen. More stress, the roller coaster has begun.

So what to do?

Find a time each day or two where you can turn off all noise producers for an hour or two. No televisions, no radios and definitely no phones or cell phones, no computers, turn off anything that alerts you.

It will be a bit strange for many folks to actually hear their own breathing. That is normal and is not a threat so no stress hormone is produced.

This quiet time is a great time to practice meditation or belly breathing (not chest breathing – too many people do that, you need to learn to belly breath). Slow easy breathing is a stress reliever too. You need to learn to breath correctly.

To help you quickly get into the relaxing state of your now 'no noise' environment you can use various essential oils known to help with relaxation and stress. Each time you enter into your quiet sanctuary, diffuse your favorite essential oil. Relaxing oils include: Lavender, Roman Chamomile, Mandarin, Neroli, and several others. If you like the smell of an oil and it makes you feel good – diffuse that.

Maybe you like grounding oils like Sandalwood, Cedarwood, Patchouli or Vetiver. You have lots to choose from.

There are also blends like: Calming, Relaxing, Take Five, Meditation, Mother Nature, Darryl's Citrus Dream, and many more you might find that help you to enjoy your quiet time.

Your brain will soon discover the scents you are using mean you are going to be quiet. This in turn will help you to improve your brain with things like memory, sleep, relieve stress, help you not feel so anxious and much more. When you are less stressed your productivity and creativity could increase.

It's a good thing to sit in quiet, or as quiet as you can possible be for several hours each day. This is the perfect time to use essential oils especially if you suffer from insomnia, anxiety or have had a stressful day with work or the children.

Sorry, if what is talking about here sounds like it is bedtime, it is not, it is just taking a couple hours to be in quietness.

As you experience the non-sound (of silence), not only will your sense of hearing become awakened but your other senses will too. You'll see, feel, taste, smell and hear better.

While being quiet, you can read, do a hobby, color, write a letter or in your journal, or just sit and look outdoors (my favorite).

Don't have any artificial sounds on. If you are looking outdoors, hopefully, it is a nature scene. Keep the windows closed as you don't want to hear any outdoor noises either. Unless of course, you are away from traffic noises and only can hear the soft gentle noises produced by Mother Nature.

Soft sounds like; the whispering wind through the pines, a light breeze through a screened window, the songs of birds. Again, if these sounds are too intense or too loud you really do need to block them out too.

When your life seems to be full of a lot of stress you must remember it is everything, accumulative throughout the day and night that is contributing to your state of health.

It is time to recharge yourself. Maybe the place to start is to begin with some quiet time and some beautiful scents to help you learn to go to your quiet place quickly - even when there is still too much noise around you.

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