



Liz Fulcher  
Clinical Aromatherapist  
Aromatherapy Educator  
Aromatic Wisdom Institute

## **Aromatic Wisdom Podcast Episode #018** **Essential Oils & Affirmations for Holiday Stress**

This is the Aromatic Wisdom Podcast, Episode 18. In today's show, we're going to have a look at the six most common stressors of the holiday season. Then we'll also look at essential oil remedies and affirmations that will help you cope with each one.

You're listening to the Aromatic Wisdom Podcast with your host, Liz Fulcher.

If you're interested in learning about Essential Oils, hearing interviews with industry experts, and discovering ways to grow your own Aromatherapy business, this is the podcast for you.

For more information and show notes, visit the website at [www.AromaticWisdomInstitute.com](http://www.AromaticWisdomInstitute.com). Now sit back. Relax. Take a deep breath and enjoy as Liz shares a dose of Aromatic Wisdom.

Hi, Everyone! Thank you for joining me again at the Aromatic Wisdom Podcast. My name is Liz Fulcher. I have been working with essential oils since 1991 when they first came into my field of vision through an aromatherapy massage was given to my son when he was born in Rome, Italy, in May of 1991. That is what opened the door to the world of essential oils for me. It is quite an unusual introduction to aromatherapy, and, in fact, I wrote a blog post about it with that title. If you'd like to read that, I'll put a link in the show notes so you can check it out.

Before we get into today's content I'd like to share something that I am very excited about. It's a book I just had released on Amazon. It's called "My Book of Blends," and it is a journal-style book. It's called "My Book of Blends," because it's designed to be where you keep your favorite essential oil and hydrosol recipes. I've got a copy of the book in my hand and there is a dedication page. I created this book with my dear friend, Natalie Collins. She is a business coach and she also uses essential oils. I wrote the content and she did the design; it was a great collaborative effort. There is just a little bit in the first



pages on carriers you can use when blending; safe blending guidelines; how to use this book; there is a “my blends index”; there is a love factor where you can put your personal rating of your blend; blend names, because you want to give them a clever name; and how to use them. Then we talk about the different ways to use essential oils—what kind of blend you are making, the purpose of your blend, the ingredients in your blend, notes and preparation. And I have a little safety note. That’s kind of the basics about blending, so even if someone was new to using essential oils and blending, they could use this book.

The rest of the book has sections where you fill in your recipe(s). It’s all laid out for you, so that all you have to do is write in your recipe, the name, the ingredients, how much you love it, how to use it, the purpose, and so forth. I’ll put a picture of the inside in the show notes so you can see what it looks like. It’s fun and in fact, neither my name nor Natalie’s name is on the cover, because “My Book of Blends” means it’s your book: you write the blends that go inside the book. There is an acknowledgement of Natalie and myself on the inside but we don’t have our name out there because it’s meant to be for you. Of course, it’s December, and I have to say it’s a great Christmas gift! If someone is interested in getting into essential oils or is already makes blends, this book would be so great as a holiday gift, especially if you add some essential oils.

I’m excited about the book—I hope you love it! It is designed to be a tool for you in your use of essential oils and in your aromatherapy practice. I will put a link to the book on Amazon in the show notes.

All right. Let’s get into today’s content, which is: managing holiday stress with two things—essential oils and affirmations. I love essential oils, obviously, and I love affirmations. Affirmations are a positive statement set in the present. An affirmation is “I am feeling peaceful,” not “I will be feeling peaceful”, “I would like to feel peaceful,” or “I am becoming more peaceful”; it is right now! Even if you don’t believe it! Very often when you say an affirmation for the first time you feel like a liar. I trust the process of life—how many of us really trust it? How many of us really trust ourselves? It can feel like a lie in the beginning. Or, “today I feel peaceful and calm” when inside your guts might be all turned up with anxiety. If you just keep saying: “today I am peaceful and calm” or “today I feel light and happy”, whatever it is that you are not feeling, but would like to feel—state it in the present.

So that is what an affirmation is. There are tons of affirmations all over the Internet, but I recommend that you create your own because certain words will resonate with you. The other thing about affirmations is: don’t include the negative. Here’s an example—my



husband and I created an affirmation “our accounts are all paid in full,” which means we don’t have any debt. But I didn’t want to use the D word in the affirmation; I didn’t want to say, “we are debt free,” because I didn’t want to keep putting emphasis on the word debt. Debt, debt, debt..I did not want to keep saying that word! Instead, what James and I say is, “our accounts are all paid in full,” “there is enough to pay the accounts,” or “there is plenty”. “Our accounts are paid in full” allows to stay in the positive right now and state it how we really like it to be. If someone has an illness, you don’t say, “I am cancer free,” because you don’t want to keep saying the word cancer—you don’t want to give cancer power; you say, “I am healthy,” or “my body is in perfect health.”

You might have to rework the affirmations a couple of times, but you’ll know when it’s the right one for you because all of the sudden it will resonate with you. You’ll feel “right” inside and be pulled toward it. I always like to use a push/pull reference when I am dealing with something. If I am feeling pulled toward it, it resonates with me, it’s right for me. If I am feeling a bit of a push, like being pushed away from it, then it’s not speaking to me, it’s not right for me. So notice your push/pull when you are working with affirmations. If you really feel pulled toward something or it lightens you up, that’s your affirmation.

I jumped the gun and went right into the affirmations because I was so stinkin’ excited, but I’m going to go back now to start the content from the beginning and just talk about the stress of the holidays.

In the interest of full disclosure, I wrote a blog post on this topic last November. In November 2014 I did a blog post called “Managing Stress With Essential Oils and Affirmations.” I think it was a really good blog post and I got a lot of positive feed back on it and I thought, rather than try to reinvent the wheel, I’m going to talk about the content from that blog post and I’m going to add some new things. Also, a lot of people prefer to hear information rather than read it. I will put the link to that blog post in the show notes so you will now have two sources for this information.

Last Fall I put a message out on Facebook asking people “What stresses you out over the holidays?” in a word or two, because I didn’t want people telling me big, long stories. I said, just give me one word, two words—what aspect of the holiday season is the most stressful for you. I got 50 responses! In fact, I got them quickly: My family. My In-laws. Cooking. Travel. Buying gifts. People who forget the meaning of the holidays—not two words, but they made their point. Overspending—money is always a big issue over the holidays: overspending or not having enough—both create a tremendous amount of stress. Eating the wrong foods. Cleaning the house. Shopping and everything that goes with it: the



money you spend on shopping and having to buy for people you don't really want to buy anything for, buying something when you don't really know the person very well—for example, a Secret Santa at work. The whole driving to the mall/to the store experience, trying to find a parking space, trying to deal with the crowds inside the store. Even if you don't go anywhere, one of the things I personally worry about is “ohmygosh, will I order it in time? I've got to order that thing today.” Ohmygosh, Amazon's my best choice because it's fast. Will I order it online in time? The need for everything to be perfect. Worrying that that there isn't enough under the tree. Feeling the need to do everything all by myself. I don't have enough help. I have to do all of the decorations. I have to do all of the cooking. Here's a good one: lack of sleep, or probably more common for most people—is lack of rest.

There is a lot that happens at the holiday times and obligations and commitments; some people just have a lot of parties. I had a client come to me the other day and say, “I am so exhausted. If I go to one more Christmas party, I'm going to vomit.” Between her work, her husband's work, her kids' activities, she just had Christmas party after Christmas party and was exhausted and had no free time. You might have to shuffle your kids around to choral practice, and there just tends to be a lot of activities. A friend of mine has three kids, one in ballet and the other two are in sports, and she is super busy this time of the year. Lack of rest, lack of just stopping, chilling, and allowing yourself to refill the well a little bit can be a big problem this time of year.

Just take a second, take out a pencil and paper and put this podcast on pause (unless you are driving, of course), and write down your own stressors, the things that really get under your skin, that make you clench your jaw at this time of year. What gives you anxiety to even think about you facing that “thing”? Awareness is half the battle; understanding what your personal stressors are. If your stressors are your family, write that down. Once you are aware of it—family is one of those that people pretty much get up their nose about, I don't want to see those people I have to see once a year—but you may not realize how much shopping is something that is really worrisome for me. Then, find a solution once you understand what is creating havoc inside your brain you can start to change it.

I'm going to give you six very common causes of stressors at the holiday season, but pretty much all year as well. I'm going to give you an affirmation you can say for dealing with it when you notice this “thing” is coming up for you. Then I'm going to recommend some essential oils and a blend for you to go with the affirmation. Let's get started!



Perfectionism. Make this your mantra: Does it really matter? Ask yourself if, when you start feeling perfectionism coming in: the cake doesn't look right; I have to make 27 batches of cookies, I only have time to do a dozen; my mother-in-law wants me to look a certain way; I have to wear certain clothes; I have to be on time—does it really matter in the scheme of things? Think for a minute about your own best holiday memories. Was it the exquisite tree? Was it the gifts that you received? Was it the perfect table? Probably not. Generally, good memories are generated by experiences you have with people, with human connections, conversations. I read someplace, years ago, in a Reader's Digest book, a story that I've never forgotten where a family had five children and one bathroom. They always talked about having to put in a second bathroom. This family, every year, also went on a ski trip; they took all five kids on a ski trip. One bathroom, five kids, ski trips, and they never got the second bathroom. Years later, when the kids were older, in their 20s, the Mom who was writing the story said that one of the kids called and said, "You know, Mom, those years that we went skiing and had the ski trips? They are some of my best memories. That was awesome. Thank you for doing that for us." She said, "You know. No one would have ever called and said, 'Thank you for that second bathroom, Mom. We have good memories of that.'" That's not the stuff that counts. Human connections, human experiences are what count.

So, here's your affirmation for release from perfectionism: It doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful.

The blend I recommend I call It's all good: Lavender 5 drops, Neroli 2 drops, Lemon 5 drops. I recommend putting this in an inhaler, the kind in the plastic tube and I'll put a link in the show notes where you can purchase some. Add your essential oils to the cotton wick, pop it into the inhaler and carry it with you. Every time you feel panic that something is not the way you think it should be or you feel "ohmygosh!," simply open the inhaler, take a deep breath, inhale from your inhaler blend and repeat your affirmation: It doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful.

Trust me. Kids will remember a stressed Mom much more than they will remember anything else. They'll even remember a stressed Mom over not enough gifts...and stressed Dad's too! I am a woman so I am speaking from my own perspective, but stressed Dads are no fun either.

Overwhelm. Overwhelm can look a lot of different ways. It can look like exhaustion, it can look like anger, it can definitely look like resentment when you've simply taken on too much by yourself and you're trying to do it all. Heavens to Betsy—ask for help! You are



going to feel engulfed in responsibilities. Delegate! Get your kids on board. Please don't try to do a Martha Stewart look for your house. Only Martha Stewart can do that, and even Martha has people, and she points and shouts and tells them where to put stuff. If you have a big job to do, a lot of lights to put up or a lot of cookies to bake, get together with some friends and have a party. Say I'll help you with your house if you'll help me with mine. Let's make cookies together and have a glass of wine, listen to holiday music and chat and we'll get our Christmas cookies made in one afternoon. Make it fun. Sometimes less really is more.

Your overwhelm affirmation: I can ask for help and be powerful at the same time.

No more overwhelm blend: Vetiver 2 drops, Marjoram 2 drops, Sweet Orange 4 drops. I recommend you use this in a bath (don't forget to add to a carrier!). Put everyone to work and go into the bathroom, light some candles, put on some soft music, run a warm, relaxing bath and add these essential oils. Remember: you deserve it.

Crowds, Shopping, Parking anxiety. If you get out into that holiday chaos and you suddenly find yourself saturated with confusion, with noise, and the over-stimulation of the crowds—that's one that gets me, personally, I'm very easily over-stimulated by a lot of noise or things that are too loud, like music in a restaurant—much to the embarrassment of my sons I always ask them to turn it down in the restaurant or, if I'm sitting in the section where there is a speaker, I ask them to turn it down. It's just too much for me with the conversation and the music. Anyway, if you get into the holiday chaos and find yourself over stimulated and are going nuts, try this simple solution, your anxiety affirmation is this: Every breath I inhale calms me, and every breath I exhale takes away tension. Okay, and I said to stay away from those words! Lavender for peace; carry a small bottle of Lavender with you. When you feel ready to melt down, find a quiet spot, take out the Lavender, take a deep whiff from the bottle and repeat your affirmation.

Even if you are at a holiday party and there is too much going on, too many people are talking at you or if you just don't do well in that kind of social situation, go into the ladies' room, the men's room, the bathroom stall, pull out the Lavender, take a deep whiff. Drop your shoulders and take a couple of minutes to collect yourself.

Scarcity mindset. This is an important one because it's all about if there is enough. Very often anxiety comes from scarcity. Scarcity is in your head. Sometimes there is plenty but you fear that there isn't enough. Whenever you are fearing the butterflies of anxiety or worry, stop and ask yourself, "What do I feel there is not enough of?" Not enough money?



Not enough time? Not enough love? Not enough whatever? Scarcity is often a big cause of anxiety. Specifically, in terms of money, if money is tight, make your gifts! My goodness, as aromatherapists we have tons of skills. You can make a simple bath salt, a complicated body butter. Most people, especially if they are not very familiar with aromatherapy, are really happy with a pillow spray made with Lavender and water. You can make a nice little label for it and get some raffia and tie it up. I think people really appreciate that you've taken the time to make something. It means a lot more than anything you would find in the store.

The prosperity affirmation for this stressor is: There is always enough. I have everything I need because it's true!

The abundance blend that I am recommending: Basil ct. linalol 3 drops, Peppermint 2 drops. You're going to add these essential oils to a diffuser while repeating your affirmation. You'll say it every time the thought "there isn't enough" creeps in. There is always enough. I have everything I need because it's true!

Sadness or loneliness. Sadness or loneliness, it can be regret or sad memories. The holidays can just be a dark time for a lot of people when they miss loved ones who are no longer there or they just remember better times.

Here is your happiness affirmation: I am grateful to God for this wonderful life and thankful to everyone who has touched my life. If the word "God" doesn't resonate with you, put in there whatever does: spirit, universe, or grandfather. My husband refers to God as his grandfather. It's a Native American thing.

The cheerful inhaler/diffuser blend! Orange 3 drops, Lemon 3 drops, Bergamot 3 drops, Black Spruce 2 drops. Add those to an inhaler. I love those inhalers—they are fabulous! Take it with you wherever you go. Try to walk every day, get some light in your face and try to get some sunshine. I recently ordered from Amazon one of those therapy lamps that generate something like 10,000 lumens of light that I am going to be using in the morning. I am very sensitive to the dark of winter. Definitely keep cheerful essential oil blend in your diffuser/inhaler and always remember: gratitude, gratitude, gratitude—even if things were better or seemed better then. If you are missing your parents, stop and think a grateful thought because you can't be depressed and grateful at the same time.



Lack of good sleep. Too many parties, too many late nights, worry, being generally over-stimulated, too much junk food. Lots of sugar at Christmas time can really throw us out of whack. Essential oils of course are famous for helping people sleep, so by all means use anything that works for you for sleep and rest.

The affirmation is: I've done my best for today. I've earned my sleep for tonight. I am ready to rest.

A sleepy time blend that I like is Lavender, Vetiver, Roman Chamomile and Ylang Ylang. You're going to add these essential oils to your inhaler, but you can also put them in a diffuser next to your bed if that helps. I didn't give you a specific number of drops, but I would probably go easy with the Ylang Ylang—maybe two drops total. Lavender, Vetiver, Roman Chamomile and Ylang Ylang are all good for rest and sleep. If you're putting them in a diffuser just go ahead with one drop of each.

I will go ahead and put all of those recipes in the show notes, and of course, when you get the transcript, usually about a week after the podcast has been released, all of the recipes will be in there.

There you have it, the six most common holiday stressors, an affirmation for each one, and a blend to help you cope. Really do this work. It is worth it for your well-being. You are not alone in this world. You have family and friends and colleagues and people who are around you who will pick up your energy. Be mindful too of whom you are around during the holiday time. If you are around someone who stresses you, be gentle, kind and loving with yourself all year, but especially through the holiday season.

Now it's time for that segment you know as Smell My Life!

If you're new to the Aromatic Wisdom podcast, Smell My Life! is a quick little segment where I share some real world application of essential oils or hydrosols in my life. This week I have two!

I have been using Melissa in a diffuser for stress. Specifically, Melissa helps to reduce my anxiety. Bergamot is another one (Citrus bergamia). The Melissa (*Melissa officianalis*) plant is lemony which is characteristic of oils high in aldehydes—they have this nice lemony smell and it's very soothing to the central nervous system. So, when I get overwrought, as I do at the holidays and as many of us do, I will sit quietly in a chair and I'll close my eyes and drop my shoulders and try to go inside my body and inhale this Melissa essential oil. For me it works wonders and it's one of my "go tos: for anxiety.



The second way that I used essential oils this week is with my Christmas tree. We just put up our tree—it is not a real tree—I prefer a real tree but we just got out the old “fakey” because that’s what we had time to do. It looks beautiful but it just doesn’t smell the way a Christmas tree is supposed to smell. I took essential oil of Siberian Fir, one of my very favorites, and I sprinkled it on the tree. You want to watch that you aren’t sprinkling it on the light bulbs and things because of fire hazards, but you only need to sprinkle a little. You can also get a damp cloth, douse it with Scotch Pine, Siberian Fir, Douglas Fir; you might want to use one of the less expensive conifers for this, but anything that smells like Christmas to you will work. Wipe the limbs of the tree with it and it will emit this beautiful Christmas tree smell. Of course it’s all natural so you don’t have to use any stinkin’ fake stuff to get that Christmasy smell.

That’s Smell My Life! this week!

Finally, a quick, little Ask Liz. This is the segment is where you write to me and ask questions about essential oils, business, anything that you would like to know about aromatherapy.

I got this actually while I was recording. An email came in and I’m going to answer it right now. Someone asked if the new “My Book of Blends” has recipes in it. I’m not sure that I was clear about that. It is a journal book. I will put pictures in the show notes so you can see, but it does not contain any of my recipes. They will be your recipes, so it is a book where you put in your stuff. None of my recipes are in there. In fact, it is a place where you can record the recipes you learn from this podcast. I hope that answers that question.

If you’d like to write to me: [Liz@aromaticwisdom.com](mailto:Liz@aromaticwisdom.com), put “ask Liz” in the subject line and I will do my best to get to it and read it on the air.

That’s it for episode 18 of the Aromatic Wisdom Podcast. Don’t forget to go in and check out the blog, if you want to go to the website and sign up for the newsletter: [www.aromaticwisdominstitute.com/newsletter](http://www.aromaticwisdominstitute.com/newsletter).

Have a beautiful week and until next time, be happy. Be well.

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