



# *The Natural Healing Podcast*

*with Dr. Setareh Moafi & Salvador Cefalu*

*Episode 77: Depressed? Essential Oils to Help You Navigate Sadness & Depression (Part 1)*

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:00:03] AD// We all need support and community, and as a listener of the Natural Healing Podcast, we want to extend a special invitation for you to join ours. Visit [acenterfornaturalhealing.com/welcome](http://acenterfornaturalhealing.com/welcome) to be a part of our global online community. You'll get a free five step guide to fatigue relief, along with exclusive weekly insights and health tips that we only share via email. Join now at [acenterfornaturalhealing.com/welcome](http://acenterfornaturalhealing.com/welcome). We look forward to seeing you there. //AD

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:00:38] If you find that you're experiencing more sadness, more depression, more anger, more confusion than ever before, know that you're not alone. There is so much happening globally that impacts us on an individual level. But the thing to remember is that when the world feels like it's in chaos, that's an indicator that we need to cultivate our inner world more deeply. Because the external world is the collective consciousness. There is something that we are all a part of, that we actually can make a difference in simply by changing our individual consciousness. So today, what we're going to show you is how to navigate some of these really difficult emotions using essential oils. Because what we really want you to walk away with is this feeling of empowerment, knowing that even when life is really difficult, you can make the changes necessary because the consciousness that we need to change the world must be different from the consciousness that brought us to the place that we're in right now.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:02:02] Welcome to the Natural Healing Podcast, the show designed to guide, inspire and empower you to elevate your health so you can achieve your goals and dreams. We are your hosts, Dr. Setareh Moafi and.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:02:16] And Salvador Cefalu.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:02:18] A husband and wife team of acupuncturists and owners of A Center for Natural Healing, an integrative wellness clinic based in the heart of Silicon Valley.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:02:27] We're here to make the ancient wisdom of healing practical and accessible for your modern lifestyle.

*A Center For Natural Healing*

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**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:02:41] I specifically could say that with being overly consumed with current events. Yesterday, it just got to me where I just felt. Psychologically and emotionally, almost like paralyzed. It was very interesting because early after that, I listened to a lady talk on the radio and it was very interesting because she hit it right on the head. She talked about how Healing cannot come from the same place of the woundedness. So if you get caught up in what you see in the media and all the stories of people suffering. You're really just going to be expanding that consciousness and that energy, and you have to find deep within yourself the joy, the love that still shines within our spirit. Because that's what has to blossom to help heal the darkness that we almost feel consumed by when you look at the news today.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:03:54] And you know it is important to stay conscious and aware of the events, we're not saying that you should ignore what's happening and not have empathy and support for the plight of people suffering around the world because like I said earlier, that level of suffering, it goes in each of us when others in the world, as part of humanity, are suffering, we're also going to suffer on some level. But the point is that because we have the privilege, those of you who are listening right now have the great privilege of sitting and creating space in your lives to tune in to different podcasts like ours, to take time for yourself, to cultivate yourself, to learn new things. So the best way to apply that time and those skills is to bring more awareness and bring more healing within yourself. Because as you do that, you are actually contributing to the global healing. So instead of fixating and focusing on what's wrong in the world, we want to shift your attention toward what you can do right within yourself to make right with the world as a whole.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:04:54] Yeah. And so I thought, if we're going to tackle this topic of sadness and depression, which, as I was alluding to or alluding to, which is seemingly pervasive right now on the minds of many. So we recently addressed the topic of grief in our last episode, and to address the current events where we feel consumed with sadness and depression and apathy and melancholy and all these things where your energy is just down or you just feel tangled up inside. We thought we would break it down. There's many ways to look at this in the context of Chinese medicine. We thought we would break it down in a way that our teacher, Jeffrey Yuan, has taught us. And that



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relates to supporting the lungs and the liver. Because when we talk about emotions, we're talking about something that relates to the blood level, something that relates to experience, something that we can target as a reason for feeling a certain way. And then when we talk about the qi level. He, Jeffrey refers to it as the Wei Qi level where it's a mood. Like we're not sure why we feel down, we just feel we're having a frumpy day. And both those organs, the lung and liver, relate to the production and circulation of wei qi through the body. So we're going to address regulating the qi and invigorating the blood in terms of essential oils.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:06:34] So first let's do a little bit of a review. So if you've been following us throughout the past few episodes, we've been talking about the relationship between the metal element and the emotions of grief and sadness. So the lungs, when they are weak, when the qi of the lungs are weak, you have a higher propensity to experience sadness and grief. So we want to strengthen the qi of the lungs. But also it's important to regulate the qi of both the liver as well as the spleen and stomach. And I'll explain why that's so important. So first of all, your liver is the primary organ in Chinese medicine that regulates or moves qi throughout your entire body. So any time you're feeling frustrated, you're feeling agitated, you're feeling angry, you're feeling stuck in your life. That may be because there's excessive liver stagnation. So we want to make sure to smooth the liver qi so that we regulate those emotions so that everything can move smoothly. Now the liver also travels up into the diaphragm. So when the liver is stuck you're going to experience shortness of breath. You're going to feel like everything is kind of congested in your chest, and you're not going to be able to breathe deeply, which congests the qi of the lungs. So when we liberate the liver qi, we're also liberating the lung qi. And that's the main goal that you want to have when you want to regulate the qi. Now, the other aspect that's really important is to focus on the spleen and stomach.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:07:59] And the spleen and stomach are known as the earth organs in Chinese medicine. And the spleen and stomach are important in this way, because when you have stagnation in these two organ systems, not only are you going to have digestive problems, but you're also going to have problems with processing information, because the spleen is known as the primary organ that transforms and transports both food and thoughts throughout your entire system. So we want to make



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sure that the spleen doesn't have excessive dampness. So you want to make sure to avoid eating too much ice cream, having too much sugar, having any dampening foods, especially if you live in a more damp environment. You want to pay attention to that more because the environmental factors will also impact the internal organs. You want to make sure to regulate the qi of the spleen and stomach. So everything's moving smoothly. So you're having regular bowel movements so that your digestion is clear. Because when all of that is functioning properly, then your mind can be clear as well. And then we can start to work more by reducing those feelings of sadness and depression. Because in the five element system, the spleen and stomach, those two organs are part of the earth element, which is considered to be the mother of the metal element. So when the spleen and stomach are functioning properly, then the lungs can also do their function properly as well.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:09:22] But is the wood element that is the big oppressor here because as you said it, it conducts the qi flow in the body. And so if we are stuck emotionally or we feel frustrated, we're not expressing ourselves. That's what really will induce a lot of the liver qi stagnation. The tightening of the diaphragm and then the liver will oppress the lungs, as you were just describing. So you can get the liver insulting the lungs is another way that we talk about it. And you could also get the liver starts to over control the spleen and stomach. So you could get the gastric symptoms or the the irritable bowel symptoms. And the liver has a lot to do with your nervous system. And so if you're just highly stressed, then the liver qi is going to stagnate because you need a relaxed nervous system to harmonize the flow of qi of the liver and the flow of qi throughout your body. So this is why exercise is really important, because that's going to help liberate your qi. Of course. But the problem is, is that a lot of people are very athletic, have a lot of liver stagnation. And then that could lead to anxiety, it could irritability, you know, just a lot of further stress because even though they're exercising and liberating the Qi, it's almost like momentarily because they're not supporting the relaxation of their nervous system. And that is what really needs to be cultivated to induce the deeper effect on the body and mind. And that's what the essential oils will really help do. They really the oils that we're going to address are considered nerve irons or oils that are going to relax your central nervous system.



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**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:11:24] And also just be mindful when you do exercise. As Salvador mentioned, you don't want to do like excessive sweating and excessive exertion type of exercises, because that might give you momentary relief, but then it actually causes more stagnation in the liver. You'd be much better off doing more active practices that incorporate mindful movement with deep breathing. So like yoga practice, qigong, tai chi, things like that, because you can still get your heart rate up and get really vigorous exercise doing those practices, but then you're not going to have the negative side effects of doing excessive, like cardiovascular or really intensive weight lifting or something like that.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:12:01] Yeah. And it's important to do both, honestly. It's the way I look at it. It's just you really have to balance it out. Like people who are professional athletes or very athletic, and they're often tipping the scales in the really more assertive exercises. And that's why as they cultivate practices like yoga and tai chi and some of the softer exercises, it can really enhance their performance.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:12:29] That's true because oftentimes if you're only doing that and you're doing, let's say, a very gentle yoga or very gentle qigong, that may not be moving your qi enough and you may feel like you're still stuck. So if you do feel that way, even though you're doing those practices, you might want to integrate a little bit more active movement into your life just to get that qi a little bit more, circulating more.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:12:50] So the more active exercises are going to help invigorate the blood more. And we're going to address that in part two of this talk using essential oils.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:13:00] So the thing that's really important I think about the essential oils is, you know, we can talk about how you should do more movement, how you should change your lifestyle, how you should change your diet. But sometimes we feel so stuck and so burdened in our lives, especially if you have been going through patterns, let's say where you've been reading the news a lot and you just feel kind of frozen and helpless. The thing about the essential oils that's really beautiful is that they address. They go right into the brain. So from the olfactory nerve, when you smell the essential oils, they go up into the limbic system. So your emotional brain, so they



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literally can change your state of mind just by breathing in the fragrances. So you don't have to do anything. You don't have to try anything. You don't have to make any effort except to diffuse these oils to make a difference in your life. So the focus for this episode with the oils. So this is going to be a two parter. So today we're going to focus on tonifying or strengthening and regulating qi. So this is going to involve cooling your liver. It's going to involve relaxing the liver and the nervous system. So those are going to be the main targets of the three oils that we're going to talk about.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:14:09] And we'll begin with bergamot. Bergamot is an oil that is known to stimulate dopamine. So it's going to definitely help with depression and picking up your your mood when you feel down. I like bergamot a lot and it's unripened citrus. It's actually a citrus that's known to grow in Italy. And they use the citrus peels of this unripened citrus. And so it has a bitter and cooling effect on the body. And so that that bitter is going to help drain the liver. It's going to help cool down the liver. But when you think of something that's cooling, you think of something that's going to be relaxing. And so it's going to have that relaxing effect for irritability and anxiety. But it also has this like uplifting effect. So it kind of like brightens your mood and helps you helps you kind of come out of yourself when you're feeling down and out. Yeah.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:15:10] Bergamot is actually one of my personal favorite essential oils. It's one that we diffuse actually at the clinic quite often. And the thing to remember about some of these oils, especially if you're listening to this episode during the fall season, which we're in right now, and we're going deeper into that fall season. If you're in the Northern hemisphere, when you're in these more yin months of the year, the autumn and the winter, you really want to be mindful about the feelings that can erupt, kind of developing SAD syndrome, the seasonal affective disorder. So as we have less light, you're more likely to feel more sad. You're more likely to feel more depressed. So being mindful of that and knowing that you're going to have a greater propensity to feel that way, you want to try to introduce some of these oils kind of as a preventive measure, before you get too deep into those emotions.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:16:00] I like Bergamont and in general the citrus peel oils you consider lemon, lime, orange, all of these types of citrus peel oils to have an effect on your gut health too. So they're going to help relax the diaphragm and they're going to



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help. When you feel bloated, gassy, you can feel nauseated. You know, all these kinds of symptoms where well, they say it descends the qi. Especially bergamot. So so when you when she is not descending properly after you eat, then you could get reflux. You know, you could get acid regurgitation. So this is going to help cool that stomach. If it's too hot with acid and it's going to help descend the qi. So it's also going to be helpful if you tend to be constipated because the qi's not descending properly.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:16:48] And never underestimate the degree to which your gut health affects your brain health. So if you're feeling like you're not feeling very well mentally, you also want to make sure to examine the health of your gut, because very often the hormones and neurotransmitters that are produced to help us feel better mentally, like serotonin and dopamine, these get produced in the gut in large amounts in the digestive system. So when the digestive system is off, we're not having the adequate production of these hormones and neurotransmitters. And this really affects our mental state.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:17:26] AD// The Daoists believe that anything is possible, including miracles, and that when you open your heart, you open your world to endless possibilities. My audio guide, *How to Attract Endless Possibilities*, will teach you the exact steps to help you create your ideal life. And it's yours. Free when you sign up now at [setarehmoafi.com/miracles](http://setarehmoafi.com/miracles), you'll learn the four pillars that will allow you to shift your internal experience so you can begin manifesting exactly what you want. The life of your dreams is closer than you think. Visit [setarehmoafi.com/miracles](http://setarehmoafi.com/miracles) to start creating it now. That's [setarehmoafi.com/miracles](http://setarehmoafi.com/miracles). //AD

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:18:20] Bergamont is a really good oil for me because I tend to be a stress eater. Like some people are under stress, they don't eat. I'm the one who starts reaching out for snacks, and that's why I like to go to the library and do my work, because I need to get out of the house where I could walk into the kitchen too easily and distract myself. So Bergamont is known to regulate your appetite when you tend to be overeating with stress.



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**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:18:48] Well, because part of the reason why you would do that is just feeling worried or agitated or anxious or just kind of restless, and bergamot is really good for all of that.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:18:56] Yeah. So it's a great oil for the spleen and stomach. It's going to relax the diaphragm to help with regulating the liver's qi. And in doing so this is going to help liberate your lungs, lighten up your mood, help the day feel a little bit brighter.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:19:13] And it's a pretty safe oil to diffuse. But again, you really have to be careful if you have pets around because most of the citrus oils are not going to be good for dogs and cats. So do a little bit of research on that before you just start diffusing these oils in your environment. If you find that they are not going to be beneficial for the pets that you live with or people, because some people have allergies to some of the essential oils, you can simply buy a bottle and just smell it throughout the day out of the bottle itself.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:19:39] And what's the English tea that has bergamot.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:19:41] Earl Grey tea.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:19:42] Earl grey. So Earl grey is, you know, you got the black tea to give you a stimulant. You got bergamot to pick up your mood. So that's a nice drink if you can handle the caffeine. Absolutely. You know, it's a nice morning. A beverage to start your day with.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:19:59] And actually, I am very highly caffeine sensitive, and I've learned a trick that may work for some of you, which is with any tea, green or black tea. If you let it soak about 30s in boiling hot water, and then you drain out that first pass of water that you soak the tea in, it significantly lowers the amount of caffeine that you're going to be taking into your body. So then the next time you put water in it, the caffeine levels are going to be manageable for most people. If you can't tolerate caffeine at all, then obviously you don't want to do that. Okay.





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**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:20:32] The next oil that we'll talk about is patchouli. And patchouli is really good for harmonizing the center. So for harmonizing what's known as the middle qoa or the core of the body, it helps to strengthen the spleen. It's really good, especially if you have a weak digestive system. It helps to arouse the qi and reduce dampness. So dampness would be like if you're feeling very sluggish, if you have a lot of times when people experience dampness, they tend to have more loose stools and have like kind of a fungal terrain in the gut. So this is a really good oil for that. It helps with water retention. So if you feel like, you know, soggy throughout your body or a lot of heaviness, that's also going to be related to a fungal terrain. So this oil is also good for that.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:21:19] And an easy way to know if there's too much dampness in your gut is look at your tongue. Do you have a thick coating? Then you might have some candida brewing in there or too much candida. And that dampness will make your your brain soggy and you might feel depressed because of that and apathetic. So patchouli is a good one to start to move that excess fluid out of your system. They use it also for even breaking up blood stagnation, like for varicosities or lymphatic congestion. What I think is a neat aspect of patchouli is as it arouses the qi. It also helps you release pent up emotions, and that's often what keeps us feeling just stuck and keeps that liver qi stuck where we're just like, frustrated. And so this kind of helps liberate that and helps you start to maybe verbalize what's got you down or has your emotions in a knot.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:22:23] The third and final oil that we're going to talk about in terms of strengthening and regulating. The key to help you with depression and with sadness is cumin. And this is a common spice, actually, that's used very commonly in a lot of Asian cuisine and a lot of Persian cuisine. I use this spice all the time and I love it. It's really, really a great digestive aid, especially for people who have a weak spleen weak digestive system. It helps you break down the fats and proteins and carbohydrates of the foods that you're cooking, and it's really good for circulation also. That's one of the things that's important about cumin is that it can often help to. It's more of a warming spice, right. Spices are more warming. So if you tend to have cold hands and feet, this could be a spice that could be helpful, especially cold hands, because cold hands relate more to a weak spleen, whereas cold feet relate more to a weak kidney.



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**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:23:21] Yeah, and also the circulation into your into your limbs in general is supported by your heart. And and cumin is known to strengthen the heart. It's also helps boost low blood pressure. So we like this oil because it's something you could just use in your cooking. You know, it's not the most pleasant oil that you want to diffuse or even like use on your body. You kind of feel like you're a salad or not a salad, but you just feel like you're you're part of the cuisine if you use it on your body. But it's a great oil. I mean, it's a great herb to use because of its essential oils to just support you when you're feeling apathetic, when you're feeling depressed, when you're feeling down and out. Spice up your life with cumin in your life.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:24:10] Yeah. And it's really, really easy to use. It adapts to almost every dish. So you can just sprinkle a little bit on most everything. And we're talking about cumin not black cumin because there's two different kinds of cumin. So we're talking about the green colored cumin. That's very commonly used to spice up foods like an Indian cuisine. Even in Mexican cuisine you see it used a lot. And in Persian cuisine we love it as well.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:24:32] All right. And it's a qi tonic. So it's good for when you just feel lethargic and apathetic. So it's going to it's going to give you a little boost.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:24:41] So the three oils we talked about detoxify or to strengthen and regulate key to cool your liver, to regulate the liver and the nervous system, and also to help to regulate the spleen and stomach are bergamot, patchouli and cumin. And remember cumin is just a simple spice. So if you don't want to start using the essential oils, if you're worried about risks or side effects or whatever, or if you don't have access to them, just start introducing some of the spices from which the essential oils are derived into your diet.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:25:09] Yeah, I think that's a great way to to use spices. Yeah, it's almost like using cinnamon. Cinnamon is another one you could use to warm up and stimulate you. That's a common cooking.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:25:22] So in the next episode, we're going to go more deeply into this topic and develop our understanding of how to regulate the qi of how to calm



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the nervous system. But more so we're going to focus on nourishing and moving the blood as a way to regulate the feelings of depression and sadness. And we want to leave you with one thing don't lose hope about the state of the world. Remember that one bit of light can conquer all darkness. And if you keep working on yourselves, if you keep really focusing on the ways to regulate your system, you're going to see the system as a whole, the collective consciousness start to regulate as well. That is the best thing that you can do with your time and energy right now.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:26:04] Yeah, I mean, I think it's it's noble to want to be empathetic towards what's happening in other people's lives. But keep in mind, if we are just becoming emotionally wounded and psychologically dysfunctional in the process, we can't help anybody that way.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:26:26] Exactly.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:26:27] So we need to nourish our spirit. And keep our hope and faith alive for a better day and a better world.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:26:37] And with that, thank you so much for listening to another episode of the Natural Healing Podcast. Now we want to hear from you. Visit [acenterfornaturalhealing.com/depression](http://acenterfornaturalhealing.com/depression). And we're going to put both of these episodes, this one and the next one on there for you to go back to, to kind of gain a deeper understanding of what the essential oils can do to benefit you in terms of depression. And also once you visit that website, it's really, really important for us that you leave a comment because this is how we get feedback on the impact that the episode had on you, on what came up for you, and this helps us to develop more and future episodes for you. So until next time, thank you so much for listening.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:27:23] And as always, we look forward to next time. Bye.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:27:26] Bye.



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**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:27:27] Hey, if you haven't already done so, be sure to rate and review us on Apple Podcasts. This ensures that we can share this invaluable information with more listeners just like you.