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THERAPY LIGHTS

DO THEY WORK OR ARE THEY ALL HYPE?

The winter months can be dreary for folks who live in northern regions. The days are shorter and the sky is often obscured by clouds. This bleak weather can lead to seasonal affective disorder, or SAD. Depression, moodiness, and lower energy typically affect people with SAD more during the fall and winter months.

The disorder has several different causes, but the primary one is a lack of sunlight, which can have an impact on your body's internal clock. The winter climate can also reduce your serotonin levels, which influence your mood; bringing about feelings of depression.

To address this problem, manufacturers have developed light therapy devices. These therapy lights, or "happy lights," are bright lamps that can sit on your desk or end table. They simulate natural sunlight and are marketed as mood boosters that treat symptoms of SAD. Do these therapy lights actually work? Are they just placebos?

The answer to *both* these questions is "YES". There are a lot of therapy lights on the market, but they're not all equally effective and the difference is in their output. While most lights attempt to simulate sunlight, some devices have a weaker output, which means your body and brain won't respond the same way they do when in natural sunlight.



Consider this: Normal daylight (not direct sunlight), has the equivalent of 10,000-25,000 lux and direct sunlight can have anywhere from 30,000-100,000 lux. Some lights are marketed as having "5,000 lux" and others as "10,000 lux," that

is a big difference within the two! Now, compared to the average office lighting which puts out less than 500 lux they are definitely better but the effectiveness depends, greatly, on the lux.

In order to be effective, you need a lamp with at least 10,000 lux. After about 30-45 minutes of use, you should notice a boost in mood and energy. While therapy lights are safe and come with few side effects, they are not suited for extended use. Many lights come with a warning not to use them for more than an hour at a time. Using them for longer than an hour can cause eye strain, headaches, and irritability.

Therapy lights are not a cure-all. They can help, but they're a short-term solution. If you feel the effects of SAD or experience depression, consult with a health professional to determine what solution is right for you.



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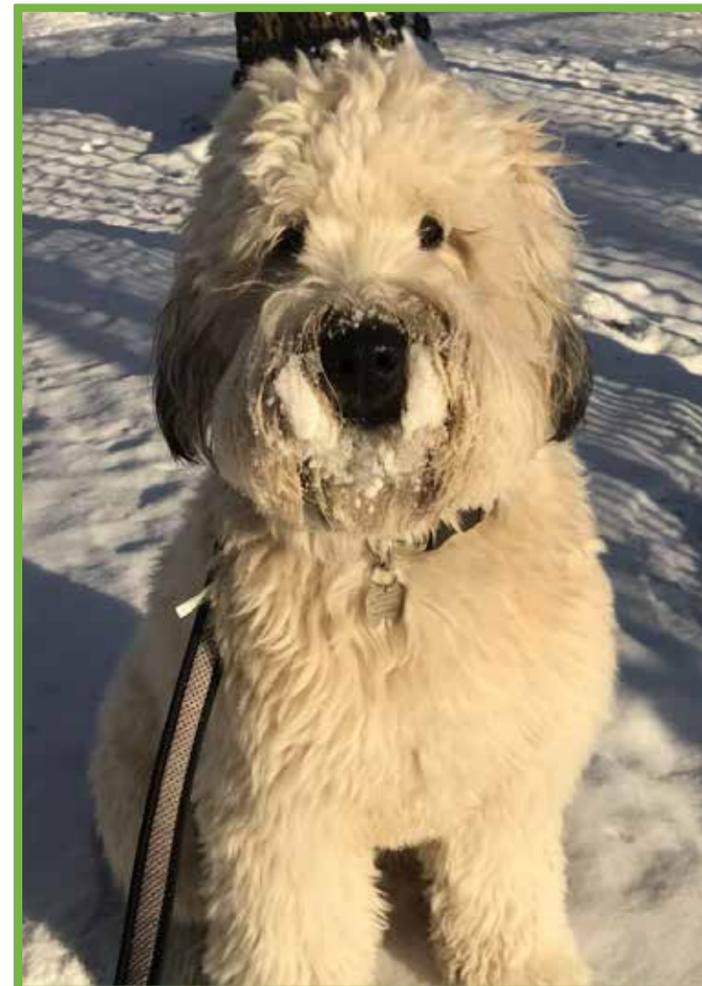


February 2019

Finding Confidence and Motivation

WHEREVER I GO

It is February — the month of Amethyst. We are moving right along through 2019! I used to make individual New Year's resolutions each year, but my husband's family started a tradition where we choose a word for the year instead of specific resolutions. Although it may not be consistent with SMART goal setting, I find that it allows me to adapt my goals throughout the year but still have a broader theme. Last year's word was "joy," and watching our puppy interact with the world around him constantly reminded me to appreciate those moments of joy (see photo of Alfred enjoying a snowy winter day).



At the close of 2018, Dr. Teplitsky gave gifts that fit with this idea to all the staff at Wrigleyville Dental, giving each of us a bracelet. The bracelets are made of a variety of stones, and we were able to select one that spoke to us. Some of the bracelets were made of lava rock to channel "grounding and calming," others were made of lapis lazuli to channel "love and protection." I chose the bracelet made of coral jade to project "confidence and motivation."

Now that you know my stones are projecting confidence and motivation, let me tell you a little bit about what I'm doing currently that aligns with my bracelet. Professionally, my motivation is always heavy on continuing education courses at this time of year. The American Dental Association hosts a national conference here at McCormick Place each February. Our whole team will be there to expand our knowledge on a variety of topics over the course of the weekend. Another conference I will be attending is the annual spring meeting of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology, which is hosted back in my hometown of Indianapolis this year. I also have plans to work through some online courses — it is always lovely to be able to soak up additional information from the comfort of my own home. The more knowledge I have, the more confident I can be in providing outstanding, high-quality care for all of you.

On the personal front, my motivation and confidence stem from being intentional about spending time redeveloping my identity outside the dental office. It used to be easy for me to answer questions about what I do in my free time for fun. With so much of my time out of the office spent on dentistry-related knowledge quests, I realized I must be intentional about carving out the time and staying motivated in the pursuit of personal hobbies. Otherwise, they tend to be pushed back on the list of priorities. This year, I plan to spend more of my downtime focused on physical wellness, as well as artistic and linguistic pursuits.

Come by the office soon and ask anyone on the team about their bracelets, if you're curious!

-Dr. Julia

A WALK IN THE WOODS IS “DR’S ORDER” 3 Ways Nature Improves Your Health

Our ancestors were deeply connected to their natural environment, mostly because their survival depended on it. With no Whole Foods available, those who could best track a mammoth, find water, and forage for edible plants kept themselves alive and passed on their genes. Given our history as hunter-gatherers, it’s no wonder contact with nature provides us with several health benefits.

A MEMORY BOOST In a University of Michigan study, a group of students were asked to take a memory test that involved repeating numbers back to researchers. Next, researchers separated the students into two groups. Group A took a walk around an arboretum and Group B walked along busy city streets. Afterward, they were asked to take the memory test again. Group A, the students who had walked in the arboretum, performed 20 percent better on the memory test. Group B didn’t show any marked improvement. Additional research has corroborated the memory-enhancing effects of nature.

A MOOD BOOST Observing the benefits nature has for cognitive function, scientists wondered what effects it might have on individuals diagnosed with depression. In one study from the University of Essex,

participants with major depressive disorder reported an improvement in self-esteem and mood after spending time in nature. Exercising while in nature resulted in even more of a mood boost for participants.

A CALMING EFFECT Research also shows that spending time in nature reduces stress. In a study conducted by Chiba University in Japan, participants spent two nights in the forest. Researchers evaluated their levels of stress hormones during and after this period and compared it to their normal work days in the city. Across the board, participants’ stress levels were much lower during the days spent in the forest and for several days afterward.

Today, we’re less connected to our natural environment than our ancestors were. Modern comforts and technology mean we don’t have to go outside to get our food. But nature is still accessible and you don’t have to go far to find it. In many of the studies, even minor exposure to the outdoors, like adding plants to your home or looking out a window during work, showed health benefits. This winter, find ways to bring a little more nature into your life each day. Your brain will thank you!

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6	5	6	4	1	0	1	6	2	3
4	6	2	7	8	1	5	3	3	3
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MAKE YOUR OWN AIR FRESHENERS

Unless it’s referring to a tree or houseplant, the term “air freshener” is something of a misnomer. Many of the air fresheners available to consumers put toxins in the air rather than removing them. In a test of 14 air fresheners performed by the Natural Resource Defense Council, the majority contained chemicals that are connected to hormone issues, birth defects, and reproductive harm.

Instead of relying on what’s available at the store, we’re far better off making our own, thoughtfully choosing refreshing scents sourced from nontoxic materials. After all, what we smell has an effect on our mood. When we inhale a scent, the amygdala, the area of the brain responsible for emotional response, and the hippocampus, an area responsible for memory, are stimulated. It’s the reason we experience such a strong connection to what we smell — just think of what happens when you catch a scent that reminds you of home.

Essential oils sourced from plants make a great base for a homemade air freshener. You may find a diffuser to be the perfect vehicle to spread a calming scent around a room, and you can also create your own spray air freshener to use in areas around your home, car, and office.

Here’s a simple recipe for a forest-inspired freshener. Cypress essential oils are said to have antibacterial and antiviral properties, the juniper berry is said to help combat feelings of apathy, and cedar wood brings the forest right into your home.

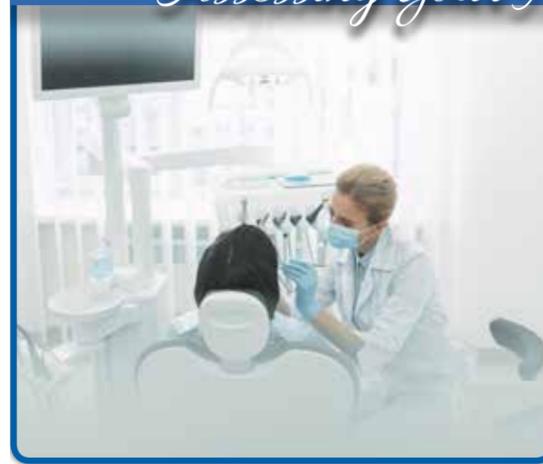
WOODSY AIR FRESHENER
Adapted from wellnessmama.com

- You’ll need:**
- 1 spray bottle
 - 15 drops juniper berry essential oil
 - 15 drops cypress essential oil
 - 20 drops cedar wood essential oil
 - 2 teaspoons vodka
 - Distilled water

First, put the essential oils and vodka into your spray bottle. Gently swirl until combined. Next, add the distilled water to fill the spray bottle. Cap tightly and shake to combine ingredients. Enjoy your woody freshener and rest easy knowing it contains only good things.

OUR NEW TOOL: THE ORAL POTENTIAL METER

Assessing Your Health, Starting With the Mouth



As you may recall from our December edition, we added a new “toy” called the oral potential meter to our office. The primary reason for this is because of its ability to measure electrical signals given off by metals in the mouth. With research showing the potential adverse effects of having many dissimilar metals in the mouth, we want to give our patients access to technology that offers the opportunity to address all issues using a Holistic method to help them feel better.

HOW DOES IT WORK?
The oral potential meter is able to measure amps, voltage, and the energy given off by each metal

inside the mouth. We can then treat a patient by dissociating the charge that is created and possibly address some of their medical issues in this way.

To go a little deeper, let’s look at the way the body runs on an electrical system. The heart beats and gives off an electrical signal — it’s how we can get readings with an EKG. When there are two or more metals in the mouth, saliva acts as a conductor and your mouth becomes a battery. This ‘battery’ can cause disturbances in the body, including the heart. People who feel tingling in their extremities, irregular heartbeat, heart palpitations, or other heart issues may be experiencing the adverse effects of this phenomenon, which can even cause respiratory problems. Basically, too much electrical conductivity in the body can result in all sorts of trouble. With the oral potential meter, we can assess if a particular restoration is emitting a high enough level of energy to cause health issues.

Thanks to this new addition to our office, we can use the oral potential meter anytime a patient has various metals in the mouth, including any two types of the following: gold, porcelain fused to metal crowns, silver mercury fillings, metal implants, or metal retainers. We are, now, better equipped to address your health concerns stemming from these metals and most importantly, help you feel better.

Creamy Poblano Chile and Red Pepper Soup

Inspired by PineandCrave.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup cashews
- 4 tablespoons oil (olive or avocado)
- 1 small onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 large leek, white part only, sliced
- 1-2 small dry-roasted poblano chiles, sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, coarsely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, diced
- 1-2 large red potatoes, cubed
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- 1 1/4 cup non-dairy milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional garnish: jalapeno pepper, sliced

DIRECTIONS

1. Soak cashews in milk for 30 minutes.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan. Add onion, leek, chiles, red bell pepper, garlic, and potatoes. Cook over low heat, stirring occasionally until onion is translucent, 5-8 minutes.
3. Add vegetable stock. Simmer until potatoes are falling apart, 20-30 minutes. Remove from heat.
4. Pour soup into a blender in 2-3 batches (or use an immersion blender), process until smooth. Return soup to the pan.
5. In a blender, blend cashews with milk until smooth, adding more milk or water if needed. Mixture should be somewhat thick but still easy(ish) to pour from the blender. Stir into soup. Heat soup on stovetop on medium heat for a few more minutes.
6. For extra spice, garnish with jalapeno.

