

# Summary and analysis of Florence Mayer's thesis by Professor Robert Anton

Defended on 30 March 2012 at the University of Lorraine  
(Nancy) Faculty of Pharmacy to earn her national Doctor of  
Pharmacy qualification, and entitled:

**"Therapeutic Uses of Essential Oils: Case Studies in a  
Retirement Home".**

1: The first bibliographical section summarises the general information that must be understood about essential oils, including definitions, characteristic quality profiles, main therapeutic properties, administration methods used (diffusion, internal or external use) and their many different uses. An overview of the living centres for the elderly as well as their specific physiological problems completes the introduction.

2: The second section describes the impact of using certain essential oils in the "Résidence Jacques Barat-Dupont", an EHPAD (Etablissements d'Hébergement pour Personnes Agées Dépendantes, nursing home) located in Nancy, France.

The care staff follows training modules on "scientific and medical aromatherapy". The various methods for use are described. These are:

- Atmospheric diffusion, in particular for sanitising the air, to neutralise certain repository infections (sinusitis, flu, etc.) and infectious diseases (the anti-septic properties of EO's are well known), and even to promote relaxation and physical and mental soothing
- Stroking and touch, which, via the skin, can be considered as a process of humanisation, reassurance and even physical comfort (for the blood flow in the legs, for example)
- Balneotherapy and aquatic treatments but also as a food supplement, laundry additive, etc.

- More impressive is probably the support for Alzheimer's disease patients in appropriate relaxation areas and for boosting their confidence through olfaction (reminiscence and memories of the past reappearing) but the results are still modest.

The quality of these essential oils is explained in detail in particular for chemotypes, and also for the molecular complexes present in the blends.

Besides the impact on the return to a previous state of homestasis, one of the considerable benefits is the reduction in the cost of medicines that are generally used. It is important to note, however, that attention must also be paid to possible undesirable effects that would require treatment to be stopped; allergies, dermocausticity or sensitivity to light, and certain precautions must be taken.

The 3rd section discusses the implementation of protocols for the use of EOs in another retirement home in La Meuse. After a detailed questionnaire on the general condition of the resident, protocols are put in place according to the pathologies. These protocols would, for example, relate to respiratory problems (coughing, shortness of breath), infectious diseases (flu, prevention), psychosomatic problems related to the central and autonomic nervous systems (anxiety, sleep problems, etc.), dermatological pathologies (bedsores, foul-smelling wounds). For these conditions, photos at different stages show spectacular healing results.

In conclusion, the clinical protocols used have been validated by doctors specialising in geriatrics (physiological conditions specific to internal ageing and ageing of the skin, and to the behaviour of the elderly). The results seem to be encouraging and the essential oils used are well defined. The thesis shows that this is a beneficial alternative medicine that seeks to increase well being, essentially by neurosenorial stimulation but also by contact with the skin which, in geriatrics, is worth highlighting and disclosing.

This study is an important contribution from the point of view of prevention, therapeutic care and physiology, all of which showcase the benefit of these essential oils.