

**"Stop telling me to
just breathe"**

When there's other ways
to cope!

THINGS LIKE:

AROMATHERAPY

COLD WATER SUBMERGING

EFT TAPPING

FORCED LAUGHTER



AROMATHERAPY

WHAT IS IT?



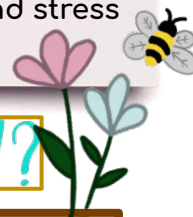
Aromatherapy is like a fast-pass to calm your nervous system!

Why? Well, when you inhale a scent, those tiny aroma molecules skip the brain's "thinking and analyzing" department and head straight to the amygdala — the part of the brain connected to emotions, memories, and stress responses.



REASONS TO TRY IT:

- **Stress & Anxiety Relief:** Oils like lavender and bergamot help lower stress hormone levels and ease anxiety.
- **Better Sleep Quality**
- **Pain & Headache Management:** Topical applications can soothe muscle tension, menstrual discomforts, and tension headaches.
- **Mood & Focus Enhancement:** Citrus-based oils (like lemon & orange) and peppermint can boost alertness, energy, and overall mood.



DID YOU KNOW?

That certain scents can instantly shift your mood?

Pair calming aromas (like lavender and peppermint) with slow, intentional breathing, and you create a powerful reset button for your body and mind. In just a few breaths, you can move from frazzled and overwhelmed to feeling centered, grounded, and at ease!

HERE' S HOW TO DO IT -

AROMATHERAPY

WAYS TO USE AROMATHERAPY

1 Inhalation - Take deep breaths straight from the bottle or place 2-3 drops on a cotton ball or tissue

2. Topical Application - Essential oils are highly potent and should always be diluted with a carrier oil (e.g., coconut, jojoba, or almond oil) to prevent skin irritation. A safe ratio is 1-2 drops of essential oil per teaspoon of carrier oil

3 Diffusion & Ambient Use
Electric Diffusers: Use an ultrasonic or nebulizing essential oil diffuser to disperse the aroma throughout your room.



4. Room & Linen Spray: Create a room spray by mixing distilled water, a few drops of oil, and a dispersant (like solubol) in a spray bottle.

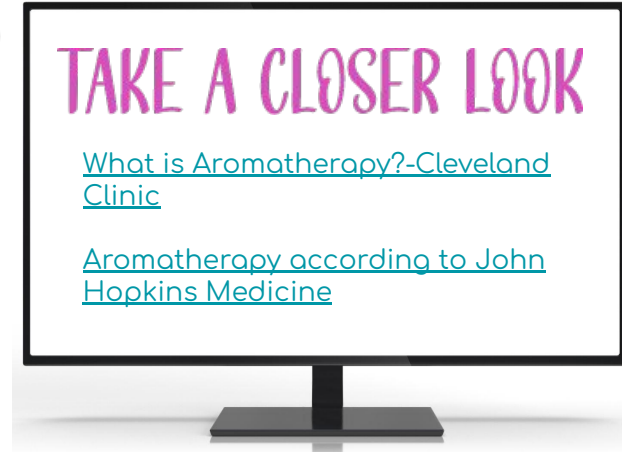
5. Shower or Bath: Enhance your bath by adding 3-5 drops of oil into steamy bathwater. For a shower, place 2-3 drops on the shower floor (away from the direct stream of water)



TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

[What is Aromatherapy?-Cleveland Clinic](#)

[Aromatherapy according to John Hopkins Medicine](#)



COLD WATER SUBMERGING



DID YOU KNOW?

Exposure to cold water increases endorphin and norepinephrine levels.

These endorphins can cause a similar sensation to a runner's high and can also lead to natural pain relieving and anti-inflammatory effects.

The water should feel uncomfortable but safe-not painful. A good mark is 10C or above!

WAYS TO PARTAKE:

Ice Baths:

Done for a few minutes with little movement in a tub of iced water up to neckline (try in a bathtub!)

Cold Showers:

Easily accessible, similar benefits and easy to incorporate. Try for at least 30 secs in the shower.

Open water swimming in cold temperatures:

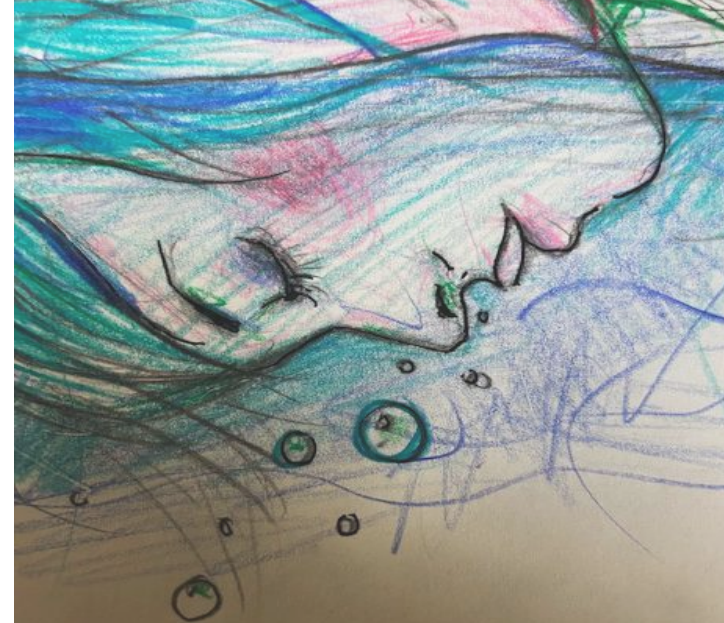
Location dependent and season dependent in some areas. Can be done while swimming allowing for longer exposure due to the exercise

Cryotherapy Chambers:

Produces a similar result with cold air, somewhat expensive at 40-100\$

Several Studies have shown that exposure to cold water can both have a positive effect on emotions and release both endorphin and norepinephrine. This can lead to pain relieving, anti-inflammatory and reduced stress levels.

Particularly with frequent exposure, it can reduce cortisol production from all stressors and more!



COLD WATER SUBMERGING

DIVE INTO MORE INFO:

[Stanford Cold Water Immersion](#)

[National Library of Medicine](#)

[Canadian Health Network](#)

[Mayo Clinic](#)

Studies were done on 20 minute open swimming in 13.6C sea water and 20C cold bath for five minutes.

Both groups of participants reported feeling a variety of positive emotions (i.e. alertness and attentiveness) while feelings of fatigue, depression and anger were significantly reduced!

Studies also conclude that the cold water doesn't decrease stress hormones, specifically cortisol, during the dip but significantly lowers them after. Entering 32C to 14C water all had no changes to cortisol but were lowered up to three hours after 15 minutes of immersion.



We're diving into EFT Tapping, a simple, almost silly, yet effective way to regulate one's nervous system.

This technique is known to help fight stress and depression, it helps reduce anxiety, pain, and is also used to improve sleep and more.

WHAT IS IT?

What is EFT? EFT is an acronym for [Emotional Freedom Technique](#). This is a holistic, but *evidence-based*, routine that involves tapping on specific points on your body while centering your focus on a feeling or issue that one wants to release.

EFT tapping, which was developed in the 1970s and '80s, is rooted in the idea of acupoints.

EFT TAPPING



DID YOU KNOW?

Many of the 'points' targeted are the same (or similar) to where acupuncturists place their needles during treatment.

So with EFT, you're basically getting acupuncture at home...minus the needles for those who don't picture sharp points as relaxing





The journey towards a path of healing and relaxation begins with the first 'Tap.'

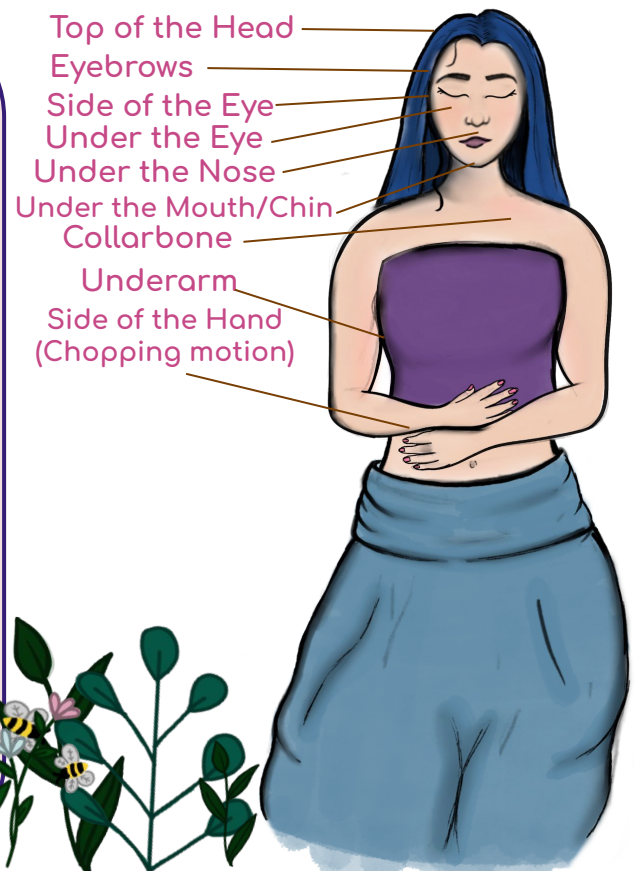
HERE'S HOW TO DO IT -

- 1 Put a name to what is bothering you. Whether it's a physical, emotional, or even spiritual issue-address it.
- 2 Find a comfortable place to sit down and set an intention for how you'd like to feel after the session.
- 3 Relax, clear your mind, and begin. Tap each pressure point at the intensity and amount that feels comfortable to you.

Have the tapping points in front of you, either written down or from a reliable website



EFT TAPPING



You can start with gentle taps 9-15 times each using 2-4 of your fingers.

Try and incorporate this as a part of your personal routine or have it be something you can turn to when you need a way to cope.

STELL TÖO WOO-WOO FOR YOU?

Here's some studies where conclusions show EFT as an effective treatment for emotional distress or for stress management:

- [EFT Study on Caregivers](#)
- [EFT Study for Postpartum patients](#)
- [Systematic Review of Clinical EFT](#)

FORCED LAUGHTER

WHAT IS IT?

Forced laughter is exactly what it sounds like!

Fake laugh like a maniac for a minute or two - alone, in front of a mirror, or with a friend; your choice! You might find it turns to real laughter because of the sheer ridiculousness, and either way, science says you'll reap the benefits!

Alternatively you could watch something funny - a saved TikTok collection, a funny movie or TV show, cat video compilations - the bottom line is simply to get laughing!



There is SO much research out there about the benefits of laughter. It benefits our mental, emotional, social/relational and even physical health! Want to know the best part? While our brains can tell the difference between stimulated and spontaneous laughter, our bodies cannot! The same physiological effect will occur, leading to improved overall well-being.

DID YOU KNOW?

Laughter has the ability to:

- Uplift mood
- Reduce stress
- Improve mental health & heart health
- Improve cognitive & respiratory functions
- Reduce insomnia
- Improve pain tolerance
- Improve circulation & reduce inflammation!

FORCED LAUGHTER

Watch this hilarious [BBC video](#) on laughter yoga

ACCORDING TO THE PROFESSIONALS-

[Laughter therapy: A humor-induced hormonal intervention to reduce stress and anxiety](#)

[Potential health benefits of simulated laughter: a narrative review of the literature and recommendations for future research](#)

[Therapeutic Benefits of Laughter in Mental Health: A Theoretical Review](#)

Read [this page](#) from Best Choice Counselling that does an excellent breakdown on the benefits of laughter - includes 44 links to studies and medical research!

"Laughter has a wide range of benefits, ranging from increase cognitive functions to improve respiration to enhance pain tolerance threshold to reduce stress hormones, with cumulative effects being the improved psychological well-being."

"While the human mind can make a distinction between stimulated and spontaneous laughter, the human body cannot."

"Laughter decreases serum levels of cortisol, epinephrine, growth hormone, and 3,4-dihydroxyphenylacetic acid (a major dopamine catabolite), indicating a reversal of the stress response."

HONORABLE MENTIONS: OTHER COPING MECHANISMS TO TRY

CLEANING



DRAWING



BEING OUT
IN NATURE



LISTENING TO
MUSIC



READING



MEDITATING



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES & CRISIS SUPPORT



[HealthLink BC - Mental health](#)

[Crisis Centre BC](#)

[Canadian Mental Health Association](#)

[BC Mental Health & Substance Use Services](#)

[Here to Help BC](#)

[Foundry BC](#)

[KUU-US Crisis and Care Society](#)

[Indian Residential School Survivors Society](#)



Crisis Lines (available 24/7):

- **9-8-8 (call or text)**
National Suicide Crisis Helpline
- **1-800-SUICIDE / 1-800-784-2433**
BC Suicide Prevention and Intervention Line
- **310-MHSU (6789)**
Mental Health & Crisis Response



Call 911 if you are in an emergency.

Get Help Finding Community Programs and Services

- Visit <https://bc.211.ca/> OR
- Dial or Text 2-1-1 (9am-9pm weekdays) to connect with a resource navigator





ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & LEARNING

[Moving Forward Family Services](#) - Offers counselling options to folks unable to access local support.

[Dialectical Behavior Therapy](#) - A free course for taking control of your thoughts, emotions, and relationships.

[Fountain of Health & Thrive Learning Centre](#) - Shares the science of wellbeing to promote your health and happiness.

Fountain of Health [Wellness App](#)

[Headspace](#) Mental Health & Mindfulness App

[Mindshift](#) App - Anxiety management through evidence-based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) strategies.

[Finch](#) App - Take care of your pet by taking care of yourself!



To learn more and register
ywcabc.org/nextstep





BUT WAIT THERE'S MORE!

We leave you with a gift.

Below is a link to a printable PDF of a 'Zine', designed by us for you to be able to have this amazing info on-the-go...that you can colour!

It comes with printing recommendations and instructions on how to fold it.

Feel free to print out a personal copy, pass it out to your colleges or loved ones, while enjoying our personal artwork set in black and white to ensure an enjoyable colouring journey! (And for cheaper printing - you're welcome :P)

The Next-Step Youth Program Cohort 9 worked incredibly hard researching and creating this infographic and zine. We hope these will be a good resource for folks in BC who need some mental health support during the rising mental health crisis, and for anyone who is down to try these quick, quirky coping mechanisms!

Treat all beings with kindness- but especially yourselves! <3

CLICK HERE FOR ZINE

