

e-book

9 Steps for a more relaxed life



Simple steps to apply in your daily life and at work
to reduce stress and tension

Essential.blue

Do you suffer from stress or tension?

Then you are not alone. Research shows that we are all experiencing increasing levels of stress.

Stress is useful when you have to react quickly to danger, but it is harmful to your well-being and health in the long term. Moreover, it can ruin your life.

When I am stressed, I go to my lavender garden. Being active outside in nature helps against stress. Unfortunately, not everyone can always go out into nature.

It is important to solve the causes of stress. Take health problems seriously and go to the doctor in time.

I can tell you how lavender can help with stress and tension. In this e-book you can read why lavender is soothing and how you can use lavender when you suffer from stress.

If you have any questions or ideas, please email me or comment on my blogs.

Good luck to you!



Mariette van Schaik

Owner Essential.blue



Content

What you can read in this e-book	3
Why too much stress is bad for you	5
Why lavender is soothing	8
How can lavender help?	9
Lavender bath salts	11
Showering with lavender soap or a lavender body scrub	13
Vaporizing lavender essential oil in a diffuser	15
Dripping lavender oil on your pillow before going to bed	15
An eye mask and pillow filled with lavender	17
Stress ball made of wool and lavender	19
Massage with lavender oil	22
Put lavender bags between your clothes	24
Put a bouquet of lavender in your home	24
About the author & Essential.blue	26

9 x Lavender for a more relaxed life

In this e-book you can read:

- Why stress is not good for you.
- Why lavender is soothing.
- 9 Ways in which lavender can help with stress or tension.



Disclaimer: This e-book has been put together with the utmost care in order to inform about the calming effect of lavender.

The author is not liable for any negative consequences that may result from the use of this book. Please note that lavender can only help as a supplement. Consult a doctor if you are under a lot of stress or have health problems. Keep an eye on the shelf life of home-made products and work hygienically.

Photographs

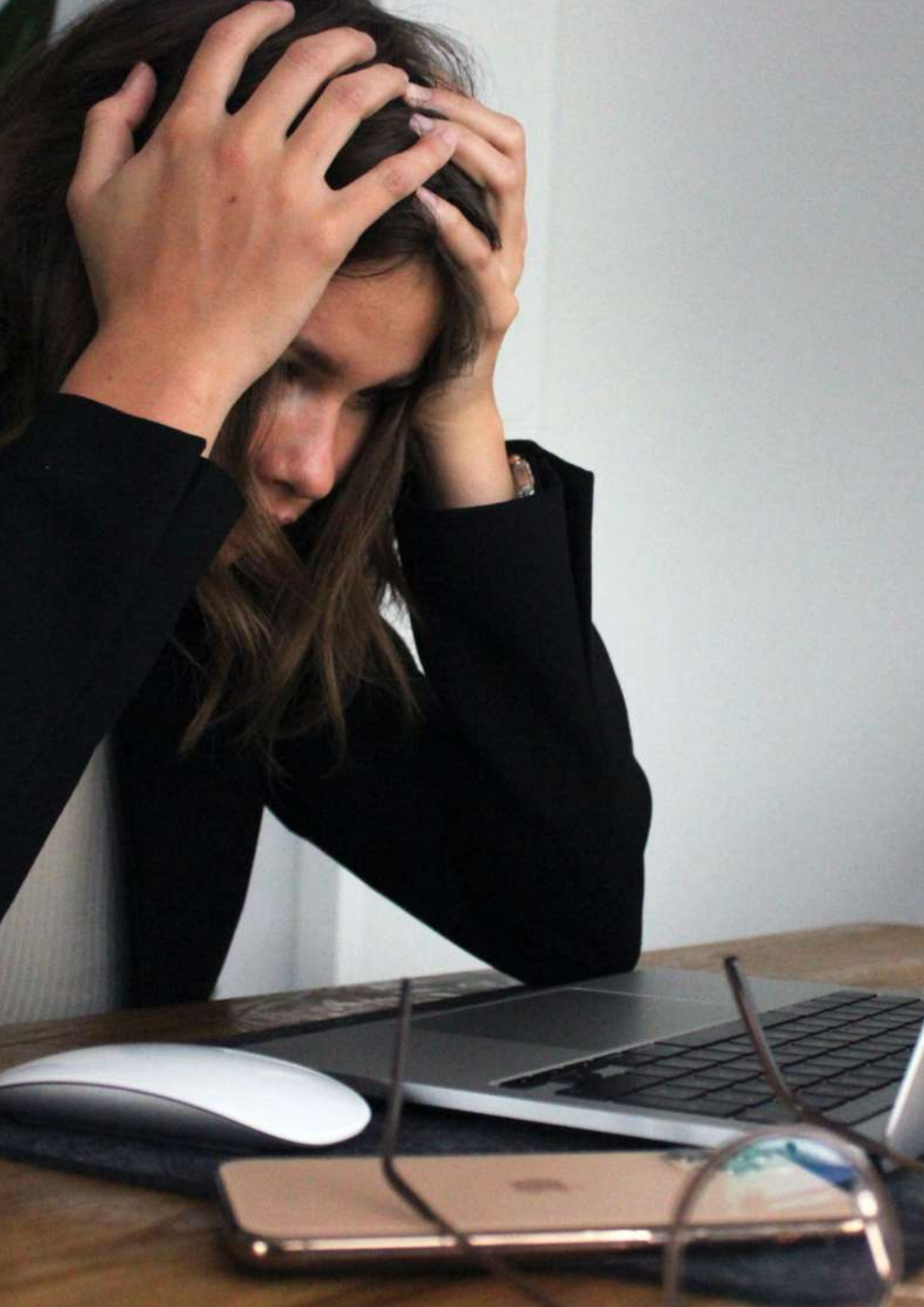
Photo front page Yana Hurskaya, Unsplash

Photo page 4 Elisa Ventur, Unsplash

Photo page 7 Olimpo Ávila Salazar on Unsplash

Rest of the photo's: Essential.blue

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.



Why too much stress is not good for you

Too much stress can exhaust you and make you ill, both mentally and physically.

If you have long-term stress, you may be at risk of*:

- Depression and anxiety disorders
- Cardiovascular disease
- Obesity and other eating disorders
- Menstrual problems
- Loss of sexual desire
- Skin problems, such as acne, psoriasis and eczema, and hair loss
- Gastrointestinal problems

Persistent stress negatively affects your life in all respects

In the Netherlands, the CBS (Statistics Netherlands) reports at the end of 2021* that young people are experiencing increasing levels of stress. Young people are unhappier during the corona crisis, but they also experience more stress because of performance pressure. Because of school or study, a too busy life and worries about their future.

Adults also experience a lot of stress. A 2018 study by the Mental health foundation in the UK* showed that 74% of people felt so stressed in the previous year that they could no longer cope or cope with it.

It is important that causes of ongoing stress are resolved. And that you see a doctor in time if you experience prolonged stress.

In this e-book I talk about how lavender can help with stress because of its calming effect. But please understand that this will not solve the problems of prolonged stress. At best, it can help you besides solving the causes of stress.

*** Footnotes:**

https://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/stress-symptoms-effects_of-stress-on-the-body

<https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/longread/rapportages/2021/welzijn-en-stress-bij-jongeren-in-coronatijd/3-stress>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-stress>



Why lavender is soothing

The healing effect of lavender has been known for a long time. In the tomb of Tutankhamen (1340 to 1322 B.C.) in Egypt, balms have been found with something resembling lavender.

I think we all know that lavender is soothing. When I work in my lavender field or distil lavender oil, I notice it.

Yet it wasn't until 2018 that it was scientifically proven how it works at the University of Kagoshima, Japan.*

It's not the intake of Linalool, a main component of true lavender, *lavandula angustifolia*, but the smell.

That's why I feel so good when I'm harvesting lavender from my lavender garden or when I'm lavender garden or distilling lavender oil. 😊

Numerous studies have since confirmed the powerful relaxing effects of linalool.

The great thing about lavender is that it continues to give off its scent for a very long time after it is dried. For two years and more, I have found out from my own experience.

When you squeeze lavender, the scent is released again, even years later. Linalool is also abundant in true *angustifolia* lavender oil.

Note: most dried lavender and lavender oil is made from lavandin, this hybrid lavender species contains much less linalool and is less calming.

** The smell of lavender is relaxing, science confirms*

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/10/181023085648.htm>

How can lavender help?

So it is the smell of the lavender that is soothing. Below, I give 9 ideas on how to use lavender against stress and tension.

I then elaborate on them one by one on the following pages.

1. Take a bath or footbath with lavender bath salts.
2. Shower with lavender soap before bedtime and use a lavender body scrub now and again.
3. Evaporate essential lavender oil in a diffuser.
4. Drizzle essential lavender oil on your pillow before bed.
5. Put an eye pillow or eye mask filled with lavender on your eyes and take a powernap. Or put a lavender pillow next to you when sleeping.
6. Squeeze a stress ball filled with lavender.
7. Give yourself or someone else a massage with lavender oil.
8. Put lavender bags between your clothes.
9. Put dried lavender flowers in your house.



Epsom Salt
(magnesium sulfate)
with lavender
& flower

1/2-1 cup in water
(foot) bath

1. Lavender bath salts

What could be more relaxing than a hot bath? A hot bath with lavender scent. A foot bath also helps.

The disadvantage of buying bath salts is that you often do not know what is in them. If lavender is mentioned, you often don't know whether it is calming lavender or not.

Luckily, you can also make lavender bath salts yourself very easily.

Epsom bath salts with lavender are not only good for relaxing in the bath, but also good for you for another reason. Epsom salt contains magnesium, an important mineral for your health.

Ingredients:

- Epsom salt
- Drops of essential lavender oil
- Clean and dry bottles or jars

How to make it?

Making lavender bath salts is very simple.

1. Fill a large bowl with Epsom bath salts and add drops of essential lavender oil.
2. Stir well and leave the salt and oil to stand for at least a day without a lid.
3. Add more drops of lavender oil, depending on your taste.
4. Stir again and leave to stand.
5. After a few days, the salt should be dry enough to put in jars or bottles.

You can also add dried lavender flowers to the bath salts.



2. Showering with lavender soap or a lavender body scrub

You can buy lavender soap. Just make sure it contains real angustifolia lavender.

I make my own soap with up to 3% essential Angustifolia lavender oil.

You can read how to make lavender soap in my blog.

<https://essential.blue/2019/10/18/making-your-own-lavender-soap-with-olive-oil/>

Making your own lavender body scrub is very easy. It only takes 15 minutes.

Ingredients:

- 60 grams of coconut oil
- 30 grams of Epsom bath salts
- 5 grams of dried lavender angustifolia
- 4 drops essential oil lavender

How do you make it?

1. Grind the dried lavender with a blender. This alone is extremely soothing. Your whole house will be enveloped in lavender scents. ☺
2. Then finely chop the Epsom salts with the mixer too.
3. Mix the Epsom salt and the lavender and mix again.
4. Stir the salt with the lavender into the coconut oil. Mix well, if necessary with the mixer.
5. Add a few drops of essential lavender oil.

Note: Do not use a mixer that you also use for your food and clean everything thoroughly after use. Epsom salts are not for ingestion, but they can be safely absorbed through the skin.

Apply the body scrub generously to your wet skin and massage it in gently. Then take a nice shower. Store the DIY body scrub in a sealed jar in the fridge.

The body scrub will keep for about a month in the fridge.



3. Evaporating essential lavender oil in a diffuser

With a diffuser, you can bring the scent of lavender wherever you want.

Simply add water to the diffuser according to the instructions, drizzle lavender essential oil angustifolia into the water and turn on the appliance. It couldn't be easier.

I use the diffuser very often at home.

Do not over-dose the oil. A few drops are often enough. And clean the device very regularly.

4. Lavender oil on your pillow before going to sleep

Again a few drops of essential lavender oil, with a great result.

Put a few drops on your pillow before going to bed. Try first to make sure the fabric does not discolour.



essential blue

5. An eye pillow or eye mask filled with lavender

An eye pillow is well-known in yoga, but less so outside it. That is a pity because everyone with stress can benefit greatly from it.

A lavender eye pillow helps you relax so well because it rests on your eyes and close to your nose. Just there where you need the scent of soothing lavender.

A good eye pillow loosely rests on your eyes, is generously sized, completely obfuscates and gives a slight pressure to your eyes. If you work a lot with computers, the light pressure on your eyes from an eye cushion is an ideal way to relax your eyes.

Use an eye mask for power naps or to fall asleep at night

A short siesta or power nap helps to relax after or during a busy day. The ideal short power nap lasts about 10 to 20 minutes.

Doing the powernap a lavender eye pillow will help you relax even more.

Fill an ordinary cushion with lavender

When sleeping or resting, an ordinary pillow filled with lavender is also a good idea.

An eye pillow is filled with lavender and a slightly heavier material such as linseed. An ordinary pillow filled only with lavender close to your nose also works very well.

Remember to replace the lavender after a year or two. And give the pillow a good squeeze every now and then to release the lavender scent again.



6. Stress ball made of wool and lavender

Squeezing a stress ball helps when you are tense. Filled with lavender, a stress ball becomes extra anti-stress. A stress ball not only reduces your stress level, but also lowers your blood pressure and increases your positivity.

The nice thing is that you can use this stress ball at your desk to reduce tension. Children can also benefit from it, when they need something to hold in their hands.

Stress balls are usually made of plastic, which is a shame. The stress balls I make (see photo on previous page) are made of natural dyed sheep wool. That feels much better in your hand than plastic.

And the beauty of it is that when it is thrown away later on, or when it accidentally ends up in nature, it composts completely. This is different from a plastic ball that never decays.

Why is this stress ball so good against stress?

Repeatedly squeezing the ball can help release tension and relieve stress. This lavender stress ball also diffuses the soothing scent of lavender. The scent of lavender will continue to be released when you squeeze the stress ball for at least 2 years and probably longer.

By the way, a stress ball is not only good against stress.

According to Brownhill surgery Hospital in Hampshire UK*, squeezing a stress ball also helps with arthritis pain, improves emotional stability, reduces anxiety and stress, lowers blood pressure and improves concentration and creativity. It also strengthens the muscles, gives more positive energy and improves sleep.

That actually sounds too good to be true: such a small ball with such a good result. But it is important that you do it often. So put the ball where you need it. And squeeze it!

* <https://www.brownhillsurgery.co.uk/the-health-benefits-of-stress-balls/>



7. Massage with lavender oil

A massage helps you relax. A massage with lavender oil helps even more. Also pamper your feet once in a while.

You can make lavender oil yourself by soaking lavender in oil. It is very simple. And so you know exactly which lavender is in it.

You can use this oil as massage oil, but also as hair conditioner. Apply the oil occasionally to your dry hair. Let it soak in well and wash it afterwards.

How to make it?

1. Fill a jar (with lid) almost to the brim with good quality dried Lavender *Angustifolia*. Remember to clean and dry the jar thoroughly.
2. Then add as much olive oil as will fit into the jar. Close the lid and that's it, really.
3. Shake every day. After about 4 days or a week, the smell of olive oil will be replaced by the smell of lavender.
4. After 7 days or more, pass the contents of the jar through the sieve. Pour the oil through cheesecloth or another clean cloth if you want it fully filtered.

Which base oil do you choose?

I choose Extra Virgin Olive Oil, simply because I am a fan of it, it comes from my region and it is always in the kitchen. And olive oil has a longer shelf life than, for example, the more neutral almond oil.

Olive oil has a long shelf life, but only if you process it hygienically.

Essential oils are also dissolved in a base oil (carrier oil) to be applied to the skin.



8. Put lavender bags between your clothes

How nice it is to take off your blouse in the morning, when the lavender smell meets you?

Lavender has long been placed between linen and sewn into sacks. This is because it smells good and helps against clothes moths.

If you choose sachets with *lavandula angustifolia* and squeeze them every now and then, it also helps to start the day relaxed. :-)

9. Put a bunch of dried lavender in the house instead of ordinary cut flowers

And finally, a tip that I like the best. Replace the cut flowers in the house with a bouquet of dried lavender *angustifolia*.

This is not only beautiful and better for the environment, but also helps you to relax.

Put the flowers where you often sit, touch them every now and then and smell the soothing *lavandula angustifolia*.



About me & Essential.blue

At 1200 meters in the mountains in Spain, I started a sustainable lavender farm in 2019. Because lavender is good for biodiversity and for us.

A bouquets of dried lavender replaces a lot of fresh bunches of flowers grown with pesticides. **The oil and individual dried flowers** of lavender are excellent for making your own care products and the 'real' *lavandula angustifolia* is also soothing.

Apart from lavender, I have also recently started working with **sheep's wool**. Lovely, soft and warm wool from the sheep here in the mountains. This wool is often thrown away. Sheep are needed more than ever to prevent fires.

Inspired by the nature around me, I try to inspire you.

I blog about sustainable products and often these are products you can make yourself, as there are a few in this e-book.

My dried *lavandula angustifolia* is often sold out. Most of the lavender on offer elsewhere is the *lavandin*, which is not soothing. That happens because its yield is higher. From about August each year, the new stock arrives in my shop.

Harvesting the lavender is labour intensive. But you can imagine now that it is the best time of the year for me. 😊

Do you have any questions? Feel free to ask them by mail or comment on my blogs.

Have fun, good luck and see you!



Mariette, owner Essential.blue



Care for yourself & for nature

Essential.blue

www.essential.blue