

A sunburst graphic with numerous thin, light gray lines radiating from a central point behind the text.

Healthy Moms Podcast

BY **Wellness Mama**[®]
simple answers for healthier families

Episode 138: How to Use Specific and Targeted
Essential Oils to Support the Brain &
Parasympathetic Nervous System

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This podcast is brought to you by Vivos. This is something we recently invested in for our entire family and we are absolutely loving it and here is why. So, data shows that the nutrition we receive in utero determines our palate development and how narrow or open our airway and jaw structure are. So a narrow mouth, jaw and airway increase the chances of needing braces, of getting sleep apnea, breathing difficulties and much more. But it was pretty much assumed that your jaw structure was set in stone once you were born or for sure after the first couple of years of life. But Vivos has found that not only is this not true, but they created a non-invasive, non-surgical, easy way of widening the maxilla, the jaw and the airway. So for our kids, this means that they get to avoid the braces that my husband and I both had and for my husband, this means his sleep apnea has disappeared and he stopped snoring, which is a bonus for me. I'll be writing more about this soon but you can check them out, in the meantime, at wellnessmama.com/go/vivos

This podcast is brought to you by Good Culture. Good Culture makes amazing cottage cheese. I know, I know, not necessarily two words you would put in the same sentence on everyday speaking. But theirs is awesome, I promise, even if you don't love cottage cheese. Because I used to not. Basically, it's naturally fermented cottage cheese so it's free of gums, fillers and nasty additives and it's packed with probiotics. And because it's made naturally it doesn't have that weird mouth feel that a lot of cottage cheese has. So, I use it all the time in cooking and smoothies as a substitute for other types of cheese, or just a meal on the go. You can find it at Whole Foods and many other grocery stores and it comes in yogurt sized cups too, and those are perfect for meals. Check them out. It's Good Culture and they are available at many grocery stores.

Katie: Hi and welcome to the "Healthy Moms" podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com, and I'm here today with someone I got to meet in person recently, and was really impressed by. Jodi Sternoff Cohen is a best-selling author, she's an award-winning journalist, and she founded a company called Vibrant Blue Oils, which is really unique. She's combined her training in nutrition and aromatherapy to create like a really unique blend of oils that have a very specific purpose. And so for her, these helped heal her anxiety, her insomnia, even autoimmunity, which is a tough one to tackle, as I know firsthand. She has a best selling book, "Healing with Essential Oils," and it's been wildly praised as one of the most well researched consumer books in years. And she basically synthesizes decades of scientific research so that you can hit the ground running, and tackle your own health issues. Jodi, thanks for being here.

Jodi: Oh my gosh, thank you for having me, and I adore what you do. I'm very aligned with your intention, and kinda helping the underdog.

Katie: Oh, thank you so much. And I think ...well, before we even get to the oils, I think it would really help people to understand your journey, because so many of us have had a health journey or struggle. And I think your story is really, really fascinating and amazing. So I'd love if you could start there.

Jodi: Oh, thank you. So it actually started with my second child. I have two children, and my first child was ridiculously easy, and I just got thought I was a great mom. And then I had second, and he was outrageously hard, and I had no idea what I was doing wrong. And I took every parenting class I could find, and nothing really seemed to help. You know, little tools, but finally one day we were out with a big group at a picnic, and my friend was commenting on how well behaved he was, and then another mom said, "Oh, does anyone want gold fish crackers?" And he ate the gold fish crackers, and then literally went kind of nuts, and started running around like a lunatic. And she said, "Oh gosh, I've never seen him transition like that. You know, my brother was on Ritalin for years, and it turned out he was just allergic to foods." And so I went to see a nutritionist, and

we changed his diet, and his entire personality changed.

And I was hooked, and I went back, and got a degree in nutrition. And was making all these changes, and really up-leveling my health, but my husband was bipolar. You know, a lot times, I think, when people self-medicate or avoid things it's because they really don't wanna feel the pain. And so they're doing things to avoid it. So he was kinda my hardest client because he really didn't...every time I kind of got him healthier he would say, "Oh, it's jarring to be this present," and he would kind of self-medicate. And he just kept getting worse, and finally needed to be hospitalized. He needed to be put into a residential treatment facility because he was really at his lowest low. And once he was gone, and it wasn't my responsibility and my job to kind of make sure he was happy and functioning everyday, my adrenals collapsed. I didn't quite realize how intense and exhausting it had been for me. And you know, it had been going on for like 10 years.

And so I had never kind of been so low functioning. I couldn't answer the phone. I could barely get out of bed. But the kids were little, and you know, when you're a mom, they come first. So I would force myself to get up and make them breakfast and get them to school. And then I would collapse, and nothing was helping me. All my tricks that normally worked weren't really sufficing. And a friend came by with essential oils and said, "These are gonna help you." And I was so catatonic she put them next to me on the coach, which was kinda good because I wasn't really getting off the coach. And when she left I just decided, well, gosh, I know how to test my adrenals, let's see if there's anything in here that's gonna help.

And I got five oils, and I was so desperate and open that I said, "Oh, maybe I can combine these," and I did. And applied them on my low back to my adrenals, and it was such a shift. It was almost...the only way I can describe it is if you've ever kinda been caught in the undertow and you are trying to swim to shore and every time you get close the wave carries you out again, and you start to get tired, and you start to worry like, "Oh my god, am I gonna die out here?" And then somehow a big wave carries you in and you just take that first breath on land and you think, "Oh my god, I'm okay again, it's me again." And it was like that. And once I realized like, wow, look at what these can do, I just made other formulas.

I'm like, all right, I know I have insomnia. I've been a lifelong yoga practitioner so I know I'm in the sympathetic state. And I just kept playing and making things up, and it didn't take long for me to start to feel like myself again. And when I did, all my friends who had kind of been witnessing this happen to me wanted to try, you know, my little formulas, and it helped them, it helped their clients, and one of them said, "You need to do something with this." So I kind of put it out there quietly. And I have a background as a journalist, so I love researching and writing, and I kept trying to figure out, why is this working? You know, how is this working? And people kept finding me, and so once my kids were old enough that, you know, I didn't need to watch their every move, I started putting energy into growing the company.

Katie: Yeah. It's such a cool story, and you mentioned being a parasympathetic or in a sympathetic state, and I think that's a great place to start with how you use the oils. So I think most people may have a passing understanding, but can you kind of explain the difference between sympathetic and parasympathetic, and kind of why we have those two states, and which one is preferable most of the time?

Jodi: Yeah, so our autonomic nervous system has two states. The parasympathetic rest and digest where the immune system turns on and we're able to digest our food and heal. And then the sympathetic state, which is necessary for survival. You know, back in the day where lions would chase us, or even in current day, modern times, when you're driving, and someone is gonna change lanes into your lane and doesn't see you and you

honk and, you know, maybe speed up to avoid a traffic accident. It's our body jumping into that emergency survival state. So our energy goes up, hormones like adrenaline and cortisol kinda flood our system, and then our blood is routed away from our mid section, our digestive organs, to our limb so that we can flee really quickly. And anything that's not critical to survival, like our immune system or inflammation, gets turned down because if you're running from a lion and you trip and your ankle starts to swell up, you might get eaten. So we need to kind of keep inflammation under control.

And so it's necessary physiological function to drop into the sympathetic state, but we're not meant to stay there. What's suppose to happen is the emergency is happening, we run really fast, we escape, we kind of collapse, and then our body drops back into that parasympathetic state where we can heal. But unfortunately in this modern life, you know, when stresses are constant, even thinking about something stressful can trigger your body into that sympathetic state because, you know, if your village burned down from a fire and you smell fire it's a good survival mechanism to anticipatory stress. But, you know, just thinking about maybe you had a past trauma. You know, I've been noticing all these "me toos" on Facebook as a result of Harvey Weinstein. That's something that just thinking about that can put your body into the sympathetic state.

So we kind of get stuck there, and when we get stuck there what happens is the immune system turns off, in effect. Like, I've a friend who is a breast cancer conqueror, and she's noticed this interesting correlation between a stress event usually happens two years before someone gets cancer. And her theory for that is that we're in this chronic stress state so our immune system is turned off for two years. And so all of the things that it should be doing start to build up, and then we suddenly have...we present with an illness like autoimmunity or cancer. It's that stress trigger that kinda sticks us in that sympathetic dominant state. And then all of the parasympathetic functions that you need aren't able to work and your body can't return to homeostasis.

Katie: Yeah, I think that's such an important point, and especially that connection of how different modern life is. Because our system was designed for a time when we were literally faced with life or death decisions. So that's how our body's meant to react. And then you factor in now he have 24-hour news with a 10:1 negative to positive ratio. And your body reacts to that in the same way because you're designed to respond to those kinds of situations in a way where your immune system's engaged like that. And so I think that's a really important point that we have to kind of be very much conscious about that in today's world, and kinda do things to actively counteract it, because we are in situations that our body sees as life or death even though we're not physically at risk, and so you have to learn how to consciously kinda counteract that. I think that's such an important point that you make.

Jodi: Thank you. And even for scary movies, I mean I can't believe...It's so funny, when I was...I'm 48. So when I was a kid, I thought "Star Wars" was terrifying. My kids don't even think that's scary, but they see these scary movies and that sets them into the sympathetic state too. So that's why I love...we have a parasympathetic oil. So what controls the on/off switch between the sympathetic fight and flight state and the parasympathetic rest and digest state is the vagus nerve. It's cranial nerve number 10. It starts at the base of the skull and winds down on both sides, actually right kinda behind the earlobe on that mastoid bone, and then goes through every organ of digestion, along with the heart and the lungs. And so it's most accessible to the skin right behind that earlobe. And you can use a combination of clove, which is highly stimulatory and has this amazing healing property, eugenol, with lime, which basically has the smallest molecules.

So what's cool to me about essential oils, it's a little bit like magic because when you combine two things, you get something totally different. You will suddenly get a highly stimulatory oil that has released small molecules

so it can pass in really quickly. And another really cool aspect about putting a stimulatory oil there, right on the vagus nerve behind the earlobe, is that that's a point of congestion in the body. Like if you think about traffic jams, you know, we live in Seattle where it's not uncommon that three of the four lanes on the freeway are under construction or closed. So there's a bottleneck there, right? So we get toxins in our brain. You know, it can be from dental amalgams or infections in the mouth. And what happens is they're trying to drain out of the brain, and they do that through the veins and the lymphatic system.

But if there's an infection, you know, like say the toxins are lingering too long...and for example, heavy metals from a amalgams, or if they got into the brain through, you know, passing the blood-brain barrier from a vaccine, it can congest right there, and it's called a toxic vagus nerve, and that does a couple things. It impedes the vagus nerve from signaling the downstream organs. For example, I often heard there was a correlation between root canals and heart attacks. So what happens with that is there is a root canal, so there is all this infection in the mouth and the gums, it's trying to drain, it kinda gets backed up and starts to infect the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve is what releases the neurotransmitter acetylcholine that tells the heart rate to slow down.

So if the vagus nerve isn't signaling appropriately, it's never telling the heart rate to slow down and you can have a heart attack. Similarly, you know, autistic children often do movements that appear to us, we don't really understand them, they're stemming, and what that is there is metal that got into their brain from vaccines and got a little stuck in the vagus nerve, and so it's not working. They're not dropping into that homeostasis state of parasympathetic state, so they're trying to move their body to manually override that state. And by putting just a little drop of oil behind the earlobe right there, it really calms them down. And that's, honestly, out of everything that...all the feedback that I've gotten from this company, this is kind of my biggest point of pride.

There are so many parents of autistic children that write me daily and just tell me how this one little shift has made their life so different. You know, the teachers are noticing, the kids notice, the kids ask for it. It's just, you know, my whole goal in life is really to help children. And so, you know, that one thing, if your children is not on the spectrum and fine, it helps too. It helps to drop into that parasympathetic state. But if they're feeling kind of dysregulated and not grounded, and you suddenly enable them to be grounded, they feel it immediately.

Katie: Yeah, this is an area I've been researching a lot lately. Just the vagus nerve in general, and how much it really affects so much of our body. And especially that whole sympathetic-parasympathetic connection because I think that's an important point that we kind of sometimes now do need to do something to our body actively to help switch into the parasympathetic state because we have so many things that are keeping us in the sympathetic state all the time. And that can be anything from environmental stressors to light pollution at night, like there's all these different ways that our body reacts. And so sometimes we need a little extra help to do that. And I like that you're started linking it to sleep, because you mentioned that you had insomnia, and I know a lot of people listening struggle with insomnia or have kids who aren't sleeping well. So can you also talk about the insomnia connection and what worked for you?

Jodi: Absolutely. So insomnia is really correlated with stress. You know, the stress hormone is cortisol and the sleep hormone is melatonin, and they have kind of inverse relationship, which make sense, right? If you're starting to fall asleep and there's a lion chasing you, your body's gonna release cortisol because it's need to stay awake. You won't live if you fall asleep in the middle of an emergency. So cortisol kind of trumps

melatonin, and so when we're lying awake at night and we're worried about something and we're thinking, the cortisol is really high and the melatonin is really low. And so we created an oil that triggers the pineal gland to naturally release melatonin. And it's a little bit...if you think of a teeter-totter, right, cortisol's high so that side is up, melatonin is low. If you, you know, gradually shift the melatonin up, it kinda forces the cortisol down and helps the body fall asleep.

And melatonin is an amazing detoxifying agent. One of the challenges, though, with the brain in general is it's really, really challenging to get the right remedy into the right area of the brain. Like, some of the practitioners who work exclusively healing autoimmunity, and Lyme, and other chronic brain-related illnesses, have told me that food doesn't really work. I mean we know that fatty acids like omega 3s work because they're fat, right? And liposomal substances, like so many people are shifting towards...Quicksilver makes these great liposomal C, liposomal glutathione. There's also liposomal melatonin. And those actually get into the brain, for two reasons. In order to get into the brain, the molecules need to be really small, and they need to be fat-soluble because the brain is fat.

So oils, because they have really small molecules, and they're fat soluble are kind of uniquely suited to heal the brain. So melatonin is big piece of it, but then the other part of it is kind of, you know, there are kind of three stress responses in the body, or three areas of the brain that are correlated with stress. There's the autonomic nervous system, which is the sympathetic-parasympathetic state. There is the limbic system, which is kind of our fear center. And then there is our endocrine system, or a part of the brain called the hypothalamus that triggers our adrenal glands to release the stress hormone cortisol. So it's a combination of kind of trying to quiet all three of those. So the melatonin, or circadian rhythm blend, that addresses the endocrine system. And then the parasympathetic blend helps to address the autonomic nervous system. And I'm actually really pleased to announce we're creating kind of a limbic reboot that helps to calm, you know, our fears, like when children have nightmares, or all of those things, that's the limbic system and the amygdala.

But one other thing that I'm really excited to share, when you're sleeping your brain actually shrinks. It's this movement of the lymphatic system combined with these brain cells called glial cells, so they call it the glymphatic system, you know, for catchy name. The brain shrinks, this fluid moves to the brain, cleans out the toxins, and then, in theory, drains the sides of the neck, assuming that the vasculature and the lymph system is working optimally. So we have a lymph blend that you can apply to the side of the neck. This one of the reasons people love frankincense, frankincense does this as well. And it just helps with the drainage while you're sleeping so that there's not a pressure build up, and this is great for anyone who has headaches, especially if you have headaches that seem more intense around a full moon because that's when the fluid in your brain, you know, is kinda moving too. So anything you can do to open up the pathways in the neck, either with the parasympathetic blend or the lymph blend can really help your sleep.

Katie: Yeah, I like how targeted you are with these, because obviously, essential oils are like pretty widely used right now. Everything from natural home recipes, to people using them in beauty recipes, and even just kind of indiscriminately use them for their scent. But I love how you're really bringing awareness to how targeted they are. I think that actually brings up an important point, which is they're super powerful. And at least my take has always been like it's probably not a great idea to like ingest large amount of essential oils or just like douse yourself in them without understanding the chemistry or working with a practitioner who does. And I love that you have been able to do the research to tie specific oils to specific parts of the body like that.

Jodi: Yeah, I mean, I kinda use the example of my 87-year-old neighbor, who I adore, got an iPhone for Christmas. And he's so cute. He uses it as phone. You know, we keep trying to teach him, like, "Tom, you can take pictures. Tom, you can use it for email. You can get directions." He's not interested. His iPhone is his phone, period, end of story. And it's not wrong, but it's just scratching the potential of what you can do. And oils are the same way, you can absolutely use them to make your room smell good, to clean your house, I mean they have so many uses. But what's interesting to me is that when you combine them, it's scratching the surface. There's so much more that you can do. You can really help to move the body back into balance so that it heals, which is what I think so many of us are doing when we give the body the right raw materials, you know, the nutrient-dense whole foods, and take out the impediments like the toxins in our environment, then it kinda goes into that space where it can actually heal itself.

Katie: Yeah, that makes sense. And so I'd love to go a little bit deeper with these blends, and like, what other kinds of use cases are you hearing from people? From my understanding, and I've try them, they are topically use, right? So these would just be in a very focused, topical manner.

Jodi: Exactly, and it's not...I mean, one of the things that I avoid in general, I really don't like fair-based marketing, and I really don't like diminishing anyone. And so I see that there are a lot of companies that are saying, "Use it internally." I am very practical. I just don't think it works, because I think that our digestive tracks are kind of so malfunctioning that between the stomach acid and being processed by the liver, I don't necessarily think that it gets to where it supposed to go in the body. And I think it's far more efficient to just smell it or topically apply it. Also, I think that it's overused.

I think that, you know, like oregano in particular, I think that if you have chronic parasites or Lyme, and you're working with a very specific practitioner, it can be a powerful tool. But if you just read online that it's good and you take it in a capsule internally, that's way too much. It's like drinking from a fire hose. You know, water is great unless you drink from a fire hose. You really need to be respectful that it's powerful medicine, and you wanna use it in an effective way. And I think it's much harder to overuse if you're just smelling it from the bottle or applying it because you're not gonna...well, most people will only take a drop or two. I don't know that you're gonna use a whole bottle on your body, you know, we kinda know better.

Katie: Yeah, exactly, and there's a good feedback mechanism there, like your skin tends to get mad if you use too much. And every aroma therapist I've ever talked to had said that with essential oil, more is not better. Actually, like there is small very small, specific doses that do great things. And especially, even just breathing them, I think in today's world it's like a lot of people don't really believe that there's a benefit just to the actual inhalation of them. But that's one of the more effective methods, just like topically, because as you mentioned, they are so small and being fat-soluble like that they're able to cross through.

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apnea has disappeared and he stopped snoring, which is a bonus for me. I'll be writing more about this soon but you can check them out, in the meantime, at wellnessmama.com/go/vivos

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Katie: So I'm curious how quickly did you in your own life kinda see a turnaround from using these oils, and how quickly are people seeing turnarounds when they use it? Because I would guess with them being able to cross through so quickly, you would actually see a pretty fast result.

Jodi: Immediate in some cases. And again, it depends. You know, like for somebody that's really healthy and feels really good, they might not notice it, but when you're kind of at rock bottom and it pulls you out, it's profound. One of the tricks that I love...One of our colleagues, Titus Chew, does a lot of research on how to use oils, kind of to stimulate different areas of the brain. So one of the things that I learned from him is that when we are in a state of anxiety it's because the right frontal part of the brain is overactive. And so in order to balance it, what you wanna do is stimulate the left frontal part.

And the easiest the way to do that is just to breathe an oil through your left nostril, like it could be as simple as lavender. And I have a child who is a perfectionist, and so homework becomes sometimes a big deal because, God forbid, they do it wrong or it's too much. So, what I've taught her to do is to just inhale...we use the adrenal blend, but lavender works as well. You know, just take a couple breaths through your left nostril of an oil, and I cannot believe it's like less than 30 seconds. Like, she just calms right down and says, "Oh, okay. I got this." So it's amazing, and that's a great one for anyone who suffers from anxiety. You can bring it in your purse. Leave it in your car, if you're in a traffic jam. It's amazing.

Katie: Yeah. And that's a huge tip, because at least there seem to be a lot of people really struggling with the anxiety side of the spectrum. I know every time I ask who people want me to interview or what they wanna talk about in the podcast, anxiety is a big topic that comes up. And certainly, this seems like an easy and safe way to at least try to address that naturally. Because I know the conventional methods are typically pharmaceuticals that can have a lot of unintended effects from what I know.

Jodi: Yeah. You know, it's funny, one of the reasons...when I was at my rock bottom after my second child was born, they put me on Lorazepam for post-partum and it made me, like, psychotic. It was so insane. I just felt crazy. And luckily, my best friend is a clinical psychiatrist and I called her in one of my psychotic moments and she's like, "Are you taking something?" And I'm like, "Yes." She goes, "You need to stop," and it turns out I'm a slow methylator. My liver is a little challenged and so I detoxify slowly. So for me, even drugs that are supposed to make me happy have kind of an adverse effect because they stay in my system for too long. So, because that wasn't an option, I really dove head-into oils, which my body loves and processes really quickly.

Katie: That makes sense. It's such a much easier alternative too. That's great that you discovered it. So, has this become just kind of a daily part of your life now? Do you use like a maintenance dose or...?

Jodi: I do.

Katie: Okay. So what do you recommend to people? Is there like a bigger dose if you're starting, or even those small doses are great even for someone's who's kind of in the acute phase?

Jodi: I wanna loop back to the way I look at oils. I try to look at the underlying conditions. So I think that there are imbalances in sleep. If you're not sleeping, that's the most important thing to fix. Stress, blood sugar, which correlates with stress, our ability to detoxify and drain, inflammation both in the gut and the brain and the body. And those are the kind foundations that I look at. And then I try to help return those to balance because then that allows us to heal. So for me, my main challenge is stress, primarily. And so, the oils that I use for that, I use parasympathetic. I do a dab behind my kids' ear before they eat any meal. And I do it throughout the day because it's a little bit like, you know, it's a nice ritual that brings me back into balance and homeostasis.

There's, you know, a lot of ways you can do it. It could be breathing. It can be gratitude practices. That's just kind of my talisman that helps me. I like to exercise in the morning so I use an adrenal blend on the low back when I wake up and it helps give me energy. But what's interesting about the adrenals...and anyone who's ever had a saliva test, what they're doing is they're kind of watching your cortisol rhythm throughout the day. And most of us kind of toggle between being hyperadrenal and producing too much cortisol and being...they call it adrenal fatigue, which I know, you know, that description has come under some fire. But basically, we're either overproducing cortisol or underproducing cortisol. And there are different herbs and supplements that you can take depending on each condition.

But many of us toggle between both, and what's nice about our adrenal blend is it just pulls you into balance. If you're making too much cortisol, it'll kind of bring it back to center. If you're making too little, it will bring it up. So, it's really nice and even and balancing, and that's what I really love about oils is that all they're trying to do is help your body return to balance. They're not recirculating neurotransmitters that maybe you don't need, you know. They're just trying to get you back into balance so that you feel good.

Katie: Yeah, exactly. And I think another tip that I always love to give moms on the cortisol thing, because I saw this in my own life drastically. Like when I was going through my thyroid recovery, they do a lot of labs pretty often to keep an eye on things and they test your cortisol relatively often as well because there is a connection there. And what I noticed, like you said, there are herbs and supplements and adaptogens that really help, but what made the biggest difference of all my blood levels, for me, was going outside in the morning in the bright sunlight and getting light exposure, which there's so much research on that as far as helping your cortisol patterns. And conversely, then also reducing my light exposure after dark.

So we kind of made this a family thing now in the morning. We make a point to go out in the bright sunlight, like not like look at the sun, but get sunlight in our eyes, on our skin to signal all those processes in the body. And then at night, after sunset, to dim the lights and just turn on the salt lamps or the orange-hued bulbs to signal the body that it actually is nighttime. And I think when you combine it with something really targeted like that it really is a powerful thing. And I can say firsthand, I saw a difference in my actual, like, blood levels that was tested and I could see the change. And so, I think, like you talk about so much, little changes can

make such a big difference, especially when you do them consistently.

Jodi: I so love that. And I have to tell you, people always ask me, "Why do essential oils work?" And I actually think it has to do a lot with the light. I think that it's the light that kind of unlocks healing potential in our food and in these plants. And one thing that I love about essential oils like, you know, for anyone who has a garden and eats the tomato straight from the vine or clips the herbs and puts it in your cooking, it tastes different. It has that kind of energy and vitality straight from the sun. And oils, you know, they basically...they're picked and then they're distilled same day. And so, it's almost like it captures that light energy, that light force. And I think that's one of the reasons that it works, our body responds to it. So I love that you do that. I think it's brilliant.

Katie: Thank you. And like I said, I love that you have researched and have tied in the really specific blends and that you use them so consciously. Because I think that is something, like you said...not, of course, to ever belittle what anyone else is doing...I think there's a lot of different uses that work really well, but I think when you can use just the right amount and not too much, I think you really do see the biggest difference. At least that's been my experience.

Jodi: And I think one of the things, like the people that find me that, you know, are really sick, they've invested a lot of time, money, and energy in things and they are at the point where they're just like, "I don't wanna do it wrong." And so, to echo your sentiments, you know, if people are do-it-yourselfers, like I applaud that. I think it's great, and if they have that confidence, they should definitely go for it. I'm just trying to help. You know, I took my kids berry picking this summer and we wound up...my whole freezer is now full of jam, which was fun but I don't know that I'll do it again. I don't need that much jam. I will go to the store and buy it. I'm not a do-it-yourself person. Although I'm tempted by your recipes because they're amazing. So I kinda jump in and then I have way more than I need. So if people wanted to do it themselves, I wanna empower them with that ability too. But if they're a little bit like me and they just want the one bottle, I got it for 'em.

Katie: Yeah. For sure. And I looked at your...because I don't even think I asked you this before. Where did the name come from, Vibrant Blue?

Jodi: So, my mom loves antique shopping, and when we were kids she decided that the best way to get us to kind of accommodate her was to have us start collecting things. So my sister picked thimbles and I always love blue bottles. There was something about the energy and the light and that cobalt color, so that's what I collected my entire childhood. And you know, I moved a lot, I went to college, then I lived in New York, in D.C., in London, and all these places and I always took my bottle collection with me. It kind of made me...I don't know. It was just like this happy thing. Every time I looked at it, I felt really positive. So when these oil showed up in my life, when my friends dropped them off, they came in blue bottles because it turns out...

We were talking about light, and there was different frequencies of light. And so blue's kind of the perfect resonance because it screens out some of the things you don't want but allows the space and room for the things that you do want. And blue has a really specific vibration where it kind of keeps everything contained in there vibrating at the perfect frequency. And so, you know, that was another thing that struck me. I was at rock bottom and I'm like, "Oh my god, they're in blue bottles." And blue bottles have always made me so happy. And so, I guess the experience that I felt right away was this is like vibrant health. This is what everyone is aspiring to, and I wanted to honor the blue packaging because it's one of my favorite colors and I've had a

lifelong love affair with blue bottles.

Katie: That's such a cool story. And if I'm remembering correctly, doesn't one of your blends also have a blue oil in it?

Jodi: Several of them do. So, blue tansy is this kind of this amazing oil that you can only...I mean you can get it other places, but the best comes from Morocco, and it's amazing. It really helps to kind of modulate the histamine response, and it does other things, and it's expensive. And so this is one of the things I've noticed was some companies that, you know, they're corporate and they have to make a lot of money, they cut corners. And so, I love it. I include it in our liver support blend and the histamine blend. My son...this is interesting, something I learned. We had a front-load washer that got super moldy and it didn't occur to me that that was problematic. So my son was having these crazy allergic reactions and histamine responses, and was so noisy that he would wake me up in the middle of the night.

And one night, I had this idea, oh, I can fix that, and I went in my office and kinda blindly made a blend and wrote it all down, and it included a lot of blue tansy, and put it on him, like the back of his neck and the back of his ears and the bottom of his feet, and his breathing calmed way down. Then I put it on me and went to sleep. And then next morning, I woke up and looked at, you know, what was in there and started researching, and it made a lot of sense. And so that's now our histamine balance blend. But then I got wise, so I took him to a practitioner who was able to assess what the problem was, and she said mold. So we got rid of the front-load washer and got a top-load, and he's gotten way better. So just for your listeners, I had no idea that front-load washers could be mold magnets. So, if you have one just be sure to leave it open and clean it regularly.

Katie: That's an important point as well. And can we go a little deeper on histamine response? Because I know that's also a common thing I'm getting questions on. It seems to be on the rise. So take us through, like biologically, what's happening when someone's having that?

Jodi: Basically, what's happening is the immune system is reacting in a number of ways. And so, it's a mucus reaction, right. It's trying to kind of mobilize and capture all of the things, and it's just the immune system really kicking in. But what happens...like mold is a great example. Apparently, 25% of the population, my son included, their immune system doesn't necessarily react that way to mold. So it's kind of always irritating the immune system and under the surface, but it's not triggering a reaction. So, it's a little bit like if you ever been in a New York subway and you're sitting down, you're good. If you have both feet grounded and your knees are bent, you're good. If suddenly there are a million people and you can't reach a bar and you don't feel that stable, you can be tipped over pretty easily.

Toxins are kind of additive and cumulative, which is one of the reasons that, you know, people tend to get sick when they get older because they kind of hit their threshold. But if, say for example with my son, we went to someone's beach house and they apparently just sprayed for rodents in the room we were staying in, so that kind of built it up, and then there was mold in our washing machine and that built it up. So suddenly, his little system is on overdrive all the time and he's having these big histamine reactions, which are trying to kind of get things out of the cells and it just put him over the edge.

Katie: That makes sense. And that's an interesting thing, too, with the front-loading washers, because I had stumbled across this as well recently. I've been doing a lot of research on healthy home things and how it seems like there are times when eco-friendly and non-toxic kind of are at odds. And so I've been trying to find,

like, the kind of things that can skirt the line because even things like...one expert I talked to said that while solar is great as far as from an environmental perspective, a lot of the inverters are very high in some harmful EMS. So it's like you have to get both sides of it, and the washing machine thing is probably something most people have never considered.

Jodi: I never consider. And I just want to answer your question a little bit more. So, histamine's are chemical neurotransmitter and it's released at the mucosal surfaces. So, it causes like the capillaries to, you know, release fluid to move it out of the system. But yeah, no, it is, and it's so stressful, especially as a parent because you think you're doing the right thing. Like, I joke I use to make homemade bread and it turned out my kid was allergic to gluten. So, was I really doing the right thing? I don't know, but you just do the best you can. And front-load washers, you just need to know to leave them open and clean them. Like, no one told me that or I missed that memo. So, as long as you're kind of on it, it shouldn't be the problem it became for us.

Katie: Yeah. That's a great tip. Yeah, just the little things again. The little things that make the big difference, it seems to be like a recurring theme. So, just give us a wrap up, kind of run through the different oils. You've mentioned, I think, all of them in passing or in explanations, but just give a recap of the oils and also where people can find you online. I know there will be links in the show notes as well.

Jodi: Okay. Great. So if you only do one oil for you and your family, our parasympathetic blend is great. It helps drop you into that rest, digest, and heal state. It's fabulous for kids so that they're actually assimilating their nutrients, especially if you spend a lot of time, money, and energy preparing their food. The circadian rhythm blend is fabulous for insomnia. It helps you fall asleep and stay asleep. Adrenal blend is really great for moms because even...you know, I try to do yoga every day and I'm still a little bit of a stress mess. So you just put it on your adrenals, on your low back, and it helps to put you into balance.

The other ones that I really love are the histamine balance. It's really great for colds and flu and seasonal allergies. And then the ones that help you detoxify are lymph blend that you can put on the side of the neck. We also have one to support the gallbladder and the liver. And then finally, for the gut, so many of our kids have challenged guts and so there's the parasympathetic, which helps with the whole motility wave, so if your kid has any constipation, that's great. And then we have one for intestinal mucosa and inflammation that you can apply over the belly button. And you can reach me @vibrantblueoils, V-I-B-R-A-N-T, blue like the color, oils, and if you have questions, feel free to email me directly. I'm Jodi, J-O-D-I, @vibrantblueoils.com.

Katie: Awesome. Well, thanks so much for being here to share your story and to share your research. Because, like I said, I think it's such an important thing and such an easy thing compared to a lot of health interventions you can do. So, thank you for your work.

Jodi: And thank you for all the great information you put out and making it look so beautiful and accessible.

Katie: Thank you. And thanks to all of you for listening. And I will see you next time on the "Healthy Moms" podcast.

If you're enjoying these interviews, would you please take two minutes to leave a rating or review on iTunes for me? Doing this helps more people to find the podcast, which means even more moms and families could benefit from the information. I really appreciate your time, and thanks as always for listening.