

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 156: Natural Ways to Improve Skin With
Andy Hnilo of Alitura Naturals

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This podcast is brought to you by Four Sigmatic. My kitchen is always stocked with their coffee mushroom blends, their Matcha mix, and their straight mushroom drinks. Four Sigmatic has figured out how to get the benefits of mushrooms like chaga, lions mane, cordyceps and reishi into delicious instant drinks. My current favorite is their adaptogen coffee blend that has torsi and astragalus. But I love all of their products. They have options with or without caffeine so if you're not a caffeine person you can find products that you will love. And I find that even their coffee blends that do contain caffeine have less than a normal cup of coffee. But don't let this fool you. I have found that I get so much more focus and mental clarity from these mushroom blends than I do from regular coffee, and without the jitters. The addition of the mushrooms, which are considered nootropics, meaning that they are good for the brain makes these super food blends more effective and much healthier than just regular old coffee. I love them with a dash of macadamia milk personally. I also love that many of their drink mixes are instant and packaged into individual servings so they are perfect for travel or on the go. If you're listening to this, then you can get a special offer just for listeners of this podcast by going to wellnessmama.com/go/four-sigmatic.

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Katie: Hello and welcome to the Healthy Moms Podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com and you're gonna love today's episode because I'm here with Andy Hnilo who developed a skin care brand that I have been loving recently. It's called Alitura Naturals and basically we're gonna talk about his story, but he had a near-death experience that led him to create this amazing company. And I don't want to spoil his story but, Andy, welcome and thanks for being here.

Andy: Katie, thank you so much for having me. It's an honor, big fan.

Katie: Thank you, likewise. And I'd love if you could start there because I kind of feel like I can't leave it hanging there. Tell us your story because it's truly an amazing story. I've heard it from you but I'd love to hear it...if you could explain it to everybody.

Andy: Sure. No, thank you for asking. March 20 of 2011, I was hit by a westbound heading vehicle that hit me into the eastbound lane here in Los Angeles, California. I lost consciousness. I woke up in an ICU bed here at Cedar Sinai Hospital with a compound fracture at my jaw which means it was...you know, the bone is sticking through the bottom of my chin and I had seven broken ribs, a collapsed lung and just woke up in an absolute daze, not knowing what happened, where I was. And, luckily, I quickly found out the severity of, you know, what had happened. And I just, you know, I just...I took it upon myself as soon as I went home just to research ingredients, extracts, oils, butters, clays, you name it. I mean, I just didn't want to use anything that...my surgeons, bless their heart, they put me back together and, you know, I had a titanium plate inserted up top and then one on the bottom of my...the left side of my face, and I'm very grateful for that. But I just didn't want to use the serums and the creams that they were recommending that I use to counteract the scarring and the abrasions that I had from the accident.

So I pretty much just, you know, used myself as my biggest science experiment. I didn't want to go outside. My jaw was wired shut. My teeth were nubs. My front three teeth from point of impact were completely gone and I just...I was very depleted of vital nutrition that I needed to rebuild my system from the inside out. But also, topically, I began experimenting with things like colostrum, Manuka honey, different extracts, oils, and came up with this concoction out of a little small single bedroom apartment in North Hollywood, California. And it's pretty crazy how it's turned into full online now which we now have 14 products. But it was just...you know, I used it myself just as a...like I said, it's a little beta tester for these creams and these potions, so to speak, that I was making just to help regenerate my skin not only from the inside out, from the smoothies that I was making but also the Alitura clay mask which is pretty much my original signature product, that has now led to Alitura Naturals being where it is which was its pretty crazy.

Katie: It's amazing, and I feel like it's also important to highlight, because having heard your story myself, that you are also a former model and a high level athlete. So it's not like you are just...like, you actually had a reason for wanting to make sure that you didn't have scarring because you made a living partially from your appearance, is that right If I'm remembering the story correctly?

Andy: That's correct. Yeah, I was a working model and actor up until then and that definitely put that on hold for quite a while. I was told that I'd never work again and I understood that. I mean, I was really banged up from head to toe. But I kind of used it as, you know, a driving force to get back in better health, physical and mental shape that I was before the accident. That was my goal. I actually had a job booked for Macy's up in San Francisco which I never told my agent about the accident in San Francisco. And so I pretty much made that my goal to make that job for Macy's and...which was right around...I think it was about seven or eight weeks after the accident and I figured, you know, if I wasn't ready I'd call them that Monday and go, "Hey, look. I can't make it," and they would replace me but...because the job is on a Saturday.

But what I did was...I mean, luckily, I got my wires taken out that Thursday. I got my teeth cleaned and repaired that Friday and then was able to make the job that Saturday. But...and, I swear, it's because I just stayed on top of this routine of really, you know, reconditioning my skin and feeding that freshly exfoliated areas really rich, nutrient-dense ingredients, but just from an absolute holistic cream beauty standpoint of just staying away from toxic chemicals and staying away from harsh preservatives and things that don't serve the skin, right? I mean, things like, you know, artificial fragrances and alcohol, like, really intense toxic ingredients that, you know, provide no benefit, fragrances... I mean, I could go on and on and on about the diluted toxic ingredient decks of, you know, all natural skin care products these days. And so I just, you know, kind of just made my own.

Katie: That's awesome and I'm right there with you. I think a lot of times people still turn to the like really toxic skin care stuff because I think that's the only thing that's gonna work and there certainly I think can be the reputation that maybe the natural stuff doesn't work as well. But having met you in person, I...like, you don't look like you have any scarring whatsoever. It's amazing. So I'm curious, first of all, how long did your full recovery take? And also I think this gives a lot of hope to people who maybe just have like acne scars or something much less that they're trying to heal, but how long did that recovery process take for you from...until you felt like your skin was more normal again?

Andy: Well, I actually...so I stayed on top of that routine of doing the mask every other day and then feeding it, which is now my night cream but I was also making this little paste in my...and just out of a cast iron pan of just... So that little routine... Before I do that, three or four, sometimes five times a week for about a year, but

a year to the day, March 20, 2012, I actually shot for Entertainment Weekly. So I was back in the industry. It made me feel good but... I mean, technically, I was back pretty quickly because I was saying...you know, I was really implementing the importance of nutrition and skin care in my recovery. But, you know, things that people don't see like my...you know, I severed a nerve on the left side of my face which holds all communication from the brain to the facial muscles and tissues and receptors all around that area. So I was still going through that. It's still...it's kind of like I have a little Novocain on my lip.

It's still numb. It's a little fuzzy in some areas but, basically, what I'm saying is I'm still going through a little, you know, a little bit of a recovery in that area. But I'm very grateful. Don't get me wrong. I mean, I didn't have any damage to my knees or elbows so I was able to walk and eventually able to run and workout and get a lot of circulation flowing from head to toe. And that made me feel good, and just being able to exercise and just kind of get those little victories of, "Hey, look, you know..." And also, you know, "Hey look, I'm alive," but also, I mean, that perspective really drove me through. I mean, people don't survive accidents like that and I'm very lucky to be here. But it's been a battle but I...just staying on top, of just gratitude and, you know, perspective have been the main keys for my recovery for sure.

Katie: I think that's a huge point for sure. And I'd love if you could take us through some of the ingredients because I've used the mask and it's amazing but it has quite a few of them. So how did you start combining all of those particular ingredients and what kind of led to that combination that now exist?

Andy: Sure. So what I never divulged to my friends in the industry is I was doing a clay mask before the accident just to help, you know, refresh my appearance before photo shoots, auditions, casting, things like that. And, you know, if I could control my appearance before going into those, I would do it, you know, because you do everything you can to stand out and I wanted to, like, create as much circulation to the surface of the skin and blood flow and a nice, brightened, radiant appearance. So I was doing that before. But then after the...so I probably had the rhassoul, kaolin, and I think it was bentonite, and kelp powder mask before the accident. But then after the accident, I mean, that research into certain ingredients and growth factor-rich ingredients like the first six-hour milk, grass-fed colostrum that I use, it's incredible to hit that area with those IGF-1 growth factors internally and externally. I mean, so that was one that I had to have.

I found freshwater pearl powder that the Geishas have been using for centuries to create a very smooth, even skin tone. So, you know, things like eradicating sunspots and just mitigating acne scars, it's amazing for that and has a very high calcium content but has a mild bleaching effect to it as well. So that was on there. I knew I had to have that. American ginseng is another one that I was just playing around with internally...well, I've been taking internally but I found through an herbalist that I met with, George from Jing Herbs. I'm not sure if you're familiar with Jing Herbs?

Katie: Yeah, I am. I've heard of them.

Andy: So he was really helpful in my recovery because my jaw was wired shut so I had to, you know...I took this morning tonic that really helped build my system from an Ayurveda standpoint from reducing inflammation and really building my blood and circulating that blood. But I felt that...he told me that the people that handled ginseng, just for some reason, their hands weren't wrinkling. And so I just began to experiment with that on its own. So what I would do is I would isolate each ingredient, which is now...now it's nine ingredients. There's illite, rhassoul, kaolin, bentonite, ascorbic acid, which is a very high potency form of Vitamin C, the freshwater pearl powder, American ginseng, organic kelp powder, and, of course, the grass-fed

colostrum.

I mean, this...the thing is, I would experiment with several...not several, I mean, dozens of different ingredients and a lot of things didn't work. There were...but it would just became my little creative outlet. I mean, I would study spa treatments. I would source the ingredients. I would have conversations over the phone with people. You know, it's just when you become obsessed with your recovery and you're certainly passionate about finding...you know, purely out of necessity, just finding the best ingredients for yourself, I mean, you go to no length...I mean, every lengths, excuse me, possible to just researching and sourcing ingredients which I would mix together in a bowl.

I would eyeball it first and then when it started to kind of...when the word started to spread throughout, you know, the Los Angeles area through friends of mine in the industry who saw me in the ICU and were completely blown away just within a matter of weeks with my appearance where the swelling have gone down significantly, the abrasions were gone and the scarring had been significantly reduced through, I believe, just hitting my skin from the inside out and then it just... And then I had to fine-tune it. I would beta test by going around the Los Angeles area, testing on friends. And I never had an intention to start a business. I just...it was my little creative outlet. I wanted to just hear what people thought and if people thought that it was effective as I did. And the word began to spread and people became addicted to this mask.

I mean, I didn't even have a website. I wasn't charging people. It was just purely for the love and it just...it was like creating a meal for people or creating...painting a picture which is a purely...created for that. And then I realized, you know, through fine tuning and taking out a little bit of the kelp powder that, you know...because it's earthy when combined with the little apple cider vinegar. But I knew I had something. People needed... I mean, and so I was just driving around with a little backpack, a wooden bowl and some essential oils and some apple cider vinegar and I was making this mask for about a year-and-a-half.

And then a friend of mine who owns a med spa in San Diego took my mask on as the mineral-dense, nutrient-rich clay mask. It still didn't have a name but that was a victory in itself and from that point on, I knew I had something. And, ultimately, Dave Asprey partnered up with me and took my product on as his first Bulletproof approved skin care treatment and that really took us to another level because, you know, his reach is just incredible. So, it's been great. Just with that intention to just pure food-grade, nutrient-dense ingredients, I mean, you really want to treat your skin like another mouth. It just made sense to me at the time and it still, you know, to this day, holds true. And that's how we formulate our products and that's how we build our brand with that intention. That's what Alitura mean. It's Latin for "feeding and nourishing" and I really feel like that's what we have to do and where we're lacking, you know, a lot of skin care products these days.

Katie: I absolutely agree, and I love like...I feel like you've solved a lot of the skin care problems because I've made a lot of my own skin care products for a long time and vitamin C is a tricky one because if it gets wet or if it's like in a solution like that, it tends to lose its effectiveness very quickly. So by keeping it in a powder until someone mixes it up, I feel like that's a brilliant way that they're still getting the benefits of Vitamin C. It's not oxidizing too quickly then.

Andy: Exactly. No, that's a really good point. And I wanted to keep it in powder form for that reason. I didn't want to preserve it with anything harsh that was gonna dilute the actual concentration of the form. And also, it gives the customer to kind of enjoy the, you know, spa experience and customize it to their own skin needs, whether its spot treating it with something, say, tea tree oil for maybe a little acne or a pimple blemish. Also

conditioning and a little aroma therapy that you get from things like lemon grass and sweet orange oil. Clary sage has been great, sea buckthorn. I mean, it's just great. I mean, so that's the thing though. It's keeping that potency of the formula intact.

Katie: And I usually use just lavender. I'm pretty boring, I guess, but one trick I found I keep a glass bowl and a natural brush, a natural bristle brush, in my bathroom so I can just mix up the mask and then like brush it on. I just feel like it goes on easier that way. So that's a trick with many mask, that I always tell people just keep a brush, like a paint brush almost, to put it on.

Andy: Right. That's a great idea. Have you ever used a derma roller?

Katie: I have. I actually got one from you and I love it. It's amazing. But, can you explain what it is and what it does?

Andy: Nice. Okay. See, it's become, you know, a really hot item right now because microneedling is so expensive and you can get, you know, arguably similar results just out of the comfort of your own home. I mean, we use a really pristine titanium needles. We use a 600-needle head where if you're just 0.25 millimeters, 0.50 millimeters, now we have a 100-millimeter roller where it's just kind of like...we use this example of aerating your lung, right? And so if you're just opening up that surface of the dermis and you're able to escort the nutrients and the really rich ingredients of whatever you put on it afterwards and really increase absorption pass that dermal layer, and a lot of people don't realize that you're maximizing the benefits of, say, the clay mask or the serum or the night cream whereas you're really getting past that initial dermal layer and drastically, you know, increasing the performance of the mask.

And so, if you...I mean, I'm sure you can attest to that. It's...if you can apply less pressure, test it out on your arm before. I mean, it's really not 0.25 but it's a beginner stage. And my mom tried it out for the first time recently and she was a little intimidated by it, but she was blown away by the results after. I mean, the mask or the derma roller mask serum night cream treatment is something I get excited about, I mean, because it's just undeniably effective and I just know the results every single time. It's extremely consistent and effective.

Katie: I want to get into some of the other products but, first, I want to go a little deeper because, like I said, I think skin care is probably one of the harder ones to switch to natural living for people just because there's the perception that maybe it doesn't work as well but also there's a lot of really good marketing that goes behind I think a lot of skin care products. But having done research on it myself, I know that a lot of the ingredients are not only...not as effective but they're also really harmful. So I'd love if you could kind of detail some of the things, the problems with traditional skin care that exists right now and some things people may want to be wary off if they're still using that kind of skin care.

Andy: Right. I mean, so if you go into Whole Foods, sometimes people think that, "Oh, it's in Whole Foods. It's great and it's all natural." It says it's all natural but you read on the ingredient decks and you find sodium lauryl sulfate and you find certain harsh preservatives like potassium sorbate, sodium benzoate, phenoxyethanol, the PEGs, stearates, parabens, several different forms of alcohol which is extremely drying to the dermis. I mean, all of the...and then the fragrances, the fillers, you're diluting the ingredient decks because of these big corporate needs to just, you know, reach certain margins. We don't have those so we're able to design our products based on that and just based on...you know, just really attention...or focusing our attention to bringing the most nutrient-rich ingredients that we can.

So, I mean, I would...you know, there's a very good app called "Think Dirty." And so they can scan ingredient decks and they figure out...I think they have a rating system where you're able to pinpoint certain ingredients that are questionable. And there are government recognized carcinogens in all-natural products that we're using these days. Now, whether its laundry detergent, whether it's household cleaners and then...I mean, deodorants, skin care, body wash, hair care, I mean, these are things that dry out and don't...dry out hair follicles and really... I mean, it's something like that you're massaging into your scalp and that close to your brain, that's scary stuff. And so what our mission is is just to clean out the ingredient decks in every new product that we make.

And because if it doesn't serve, you can get such a beautiful scent just from sandalwood, vanilla. I mean, you name it. Like you said, lavender is beautiful as well. But I just...you know, there are very harsh carcinogenic ingredients in those... When it says "natural fragrance" or "natural fragrance oils," you get in there and you get the certificate of authenticity and you get into the COAs and the different breakdown, what's in that fragrant oil, you're gonna be scared of, you know, the harsh parabens that are located in there in common fragrances and in makeup that a lot of women wear. And so that's something that we really want to make it our mission to, "Hey, guys, look at this. This doesn't serve you. This is actually very counterproductive to your health. And your skin being the largest organ, it's going to be absorbed into your bloodstream like in seconds." And that's scary if you're putting on a deodorant that close to, you know, your breast. I mean, that's...right there, they've derived a lot of breast cancer to the, you know, the application of very toxic deodorant. Have you heard of that?

Katie: Yeah, I have. The research is pretty scary for sure and I think people don't realize that just because even if it says organic, they still can actually put quite a bit of stuff in it that you wouldn't...if you were just looking at I think it was organic or that would fit in organic product. And then, like, labels like "all natural" don't actually mean anything. They can put essentially anything and something and label it "natural."

Andy: Yes. And another big one is natural flavors. I mean, you see that everywhere. That's a government approved term that...I mean, you can use that in place of monosodium glutamate which is an ingredient that crosses the blood-brain barrier that tells your system that you want more. You know, have you heard that? I meant, that's' located in so many protein bars. I've seen it in different, you know, post-workout drinks, pre-workout drinks. I've seen it more and more common in ingredient decks. So I highly recommend the listeners out there to be wary of that ingredient as well because natural flavors is definitely not what it appears to be and what it sounds like.

Katie: I will echo that for sure. So the mask was the first one, but now I've tried several of your products. So what are the other ones you have? Because you have I think like serums and night creams and all kinds of stuff now. What led to the development of all of those?

Andy: So it was just listening to the customer. They all wanted to know what to follow up the mask with. And, you know, I've always been fascinated with bee products. They're so molecularly complex and scientists are finding out more and more about the effects of bee products, not only from a healing standpoint. I mean, after my accident, I would apply high grade Manuka honey to my scarring area and make a paste out of colostrum, believe it or not, deer placenta and Manuka honey. And I'd apply it after my mask. And it was something I would feel activity in that particular area where I don't know the left side of my face. And, really, I feel like it accelerated the healing of that scar in that area. And so hitting that with really good active, live bee

products and sourcing those I knew had to be a base for, I mean, for that moisturizer that I'm speaking off.

And so I went and I found a really nice...I mean, probably I tried four or five different manufacturers and formulators and I just didn't like the story behind the products that they were using. They said they had honey and sure they had Manuka honey and it was good but I just...I didn't like the story behind it. I wanted something unique. I wanted...I really found my dream scenario where, you know, just beautiful family-owned business out of Haleiwa, Hawaii which is a little small part of north shore O'ahu. And they have these...I've been there and I actually...you know, I put on the bee suit and I heard the story of what they feed their bees and they...not only this wilelaili flower out in Hawaii. I hope I pronounced that right. But they also feed them, like they feed off the mangos and avocados and almonds and like really nice berries that grow wild in the area. And it produces just an amazing, live, natural product that has not been sitting on, you know, manufacturer shelves for years.

I mean, bee products are so amazing for just an antibacterial aspect internally, externally. I've just been fascinated with it. That's why I knew I had to have that as my base for my moisturizer. We started combining that with things like sea buckthorn oil, German blue chamomile for our healing aspect, adding a little royal jelly in there, sandalwood, of course, carrot seed, calendula, and just, you know... It took 22 tweaks to get but we bottled it in a nice glass which protects it from the harsh artificial light that, you know...say, if it's on a store shelf where it just can't taint my bioactive ingredients. So it's extremely complex and dense but the activity of it is undeniable and it's just... So that was the moisturizer and then it took a while to create but just listening to what customers wanted and that was our follow-up product to the mask. And then we came out with the night cream which I don't know if you've tried that.

Katie: I don't know if I've tried the night cream. I think I tried the moisturizer.

Andy: The night cream is great. Well, it's thicker, you know. And the most important time to really hydrate and recondition the skin is when you sleep. And so we wanted something that is gonna be there so often. You know, I applied night creams that just absorb and they're gone and I wake up and I'm...I don't know. It's almost like I did a little disservice to my skin. But with my night cream, we added two different plant-derived stem cells, Edelweiss and Gardenia, and a combination of just a really dense-base of colostrum, KFactor 16, Manuka honey, and then in a nice essential oil-base to condition and hydrate the skin and stimulate collagen production and the most important time to do so when there are more position for that length of time.

And it's there when you...I mean, it took a while to get the consistency perfectly down but we really got it to where it's dense and thick and it performs all night. And so we went from the mask, the moisturizer to the night cream, and then into...just with the same idea. I build these from scratch. I don't work with predetermined ingredient decks. I don't work with labs. I come up with a non-negotiable list just based that it's so fun for me. I mean, I love formulating products. That's what I'm put on this earth to do. I mean, it's...I'm actually kind of grateful for that accident to happen because it brought me right into my purpose of where I am supposed to be.

So it's a lot of fun for me just creating these and just... I do take, you know...I listen to customer feedback. I definitely go out and I see what other brands are doing. I've picked up a lot of good tips but I've also kind of, you know, tinker in a way at it and providing my own little twist to certain things where I've never seen pearl powder used topically until I created it and then, you know, with the mask and then things like the colostrum, Manuka honey, ginseng, and then the plant-derived stem cells where the plants are...plants are truly

fascinating where they repair themselves on their own.

You know, if you look at things like aloe vera, it just grows so wild and lush and in pretty much every environment. And that's...I mean, aloe is something that is extremely healing for, you know....you see...you hear it so commonly used for sunburns and things like that. But it's also amazing for hair care, skin care as well. I use it internally in my smoothies for just cleaning out my system and helping with digestion. And the polysaccharide content really helps with that and it just helps with gut health as well. And I think, you know, food and skin care go hand and hand and you really have to treat both as a...it's just going hand in hand with just optimal health. I mean, with the ingredient decks that are so common these days with, you know, just toxins and preservatives and with the whole idea of making shelf life the most important thing because it's got to be sitting on the shelves in manufacturers and distribution centers and I just...performance centers and things like that.

I want to eat nice, fresh food, right? And so I don't want to, you know...I wouldn't eat anything that was heavily preserved or I try to stay away from things that are canned because of that reason. I think skin care should be the same way.

Katie: For sure. And I think that's a perfect segue because it sounds like as much of your recovery was internal versus external, and it sounds like you have probably also done a ton of research into supporting the skin from the inside out, so I'd love if we could segue into that. What are the things that are part of your daily routine as far as nourishing your skin from the inside?

Andy: Absolutely. So what I do is I start off every morning with a nice...I call it just my tonic, right? So it's just a...you know, really mineralize the system, reset my adrenals in the morning, the most important time to do so, just by mineralizing and clearing out that inflammation through things...like bone broth has been great. I add schizandra, turmeric extract, little black pepper for absorption, a lot of Chinese herbs. I'm a big fan of schizandra, he shou wu. Let's see, spirulina has been great, gynostemma, chaga. I do a combination of adaptogenic and ayurvedic herbs with... I add amino acids in there to really help circulate those really dense herbs throughout the system. I usually put on a mask and then I hang upside down from my inversion table to really increase the blood flow from head to toe. And so that gets a lot of those...that nourishing to my brain and to my head and really kind of just oxygenates my blood and gets that circulation going. And it gets me clicking on all cylinders early in the morning. And I do intermittent fasting.

And so when I was...when my jaw was wired shut, in order to get optimal, you know, nutrition in the system by doing that, I just...I would add things like I would blend up... I mean, this is something I wouldn't recommend but I needed to get proper nutrition and I was blending, you know, bison liver, egg yolks, colostrum, and a bone broth base, things...you know, as I said, the deer placenta which is... I know it may sound gross to some people but it's something... Many animals eat their own placenta for that reason. I mean, it's a very...such a nutrient...it's like a...it's nature's multivitamin, essentially. So I just...I mean, at that point, Katie, I just needed...you know, I would try anything. I was losing weight. I was gaunt. I was just down and out but I rebuilt my system from the inside out. I mean, I would say internally was just as beneficial for my skin as what I was putting on top of it at a cellular level just to build those skin cells and accelerate that cell turnover and ultimately get me back on my feet as quick as possible.

Katie: I think it's easy to not pay attention to how much...what goes...internal effects to your skin. Like, I used to have horrible acne when I was younger and I did everything topically to try to fix it. And it wasn't until I, like,

cleaned up my diet and minimized the dairy and everything that it magically went away by itself. And I think we forget, like, how big of a connection there is.

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Katie: And I will also say...so I will admit that I have eaten my own placenta after giving birth. In fact, my friend Heather from MommyPotamus, I'm gonna bust her out, she made me a smoothie with raw placenta after my last baby. But I'm really curious, how did you get deer placenta? That's an unusual one.

Andy: Yes, it is. So Ron Teeguarden...so Dragon Herbs, are you familiar with them?

Katie: No, I don't think so.

Andy: Okay. So Ron Teeguarden has....he has a shop in Santa Monica and he has another one here in Los Angeles on Robertson. I met with the people there. I met with George from Jing Herbs and I would just go to the Erewhon Tonic Bar and just soak up all of this information from this really very knowledgeable herbalist and nutritionist. And I just would tinker away and kind of try it out on myself and find out what worked. And a lot of things didn't work, believe me, but what did, I still do to this day. But the deer placenta was definitely raising some eyebrows but I swear it helped build my system from the inside out. That's amazing that you did it and I definitely know Heather, she's awesome. I met her at the Bulletproof Conference I think this past year, 2017. She's awesome. So you ate your own, huh?

Katie: I did. It's not one of those things I admit very often but I figured it fit here. Like...because I had encapsulated it before but just looking at the research, it actually is more potent obviously raw, like most foods. And, so I figured it was worth a try. I'll try eating almost anything once.

Andy: And it's just...you know, there are so many just amazing nutrient-dense ingredients that are beneficial internally and externally. It's just...that's...the fun part for me is finding out which ones work and, usually, for both synergistically. And then just some...it's like, ingredients and sometimes they work together and benefit when combined. You know, they maximize the potential when combined. So, it's a pretty fascinating process for me and I love just kind of geeking out on ingredients and sourcing certain things. I mean, we work with different people out. I mean, I've...a couple of my ingredients, the andiroba, Pircashi, acai butter which I had never seen. I found out of the rainforest. I mean, it was just the...it's...the sourcing of these ingredients is something that...that's something I take very seriously, just meticulously finding things that other companies haven't found yet or just refuse to use because of high cost.

I mean, we don't have a big overhead of other brands so we're able to create what we want every single time. And I love doing that and that's what we're gonna continue to do.

Katie: Well, I'd love to get into a little specific on your recommendations for a couple of different type of skin scenarios because the ones I often get the emails about are people who either have wrinkles or dry skin and trying to look younger. And then I also get emails from people who are still struggling with the oily acne type skin or have acne skin scars. So could you like give some of your tips for both of those skin scenarios, both internal and external?

Andy: Sure. So I would... You know, with oily skin types I would look back to the diet. Things like...let's see. I mean, when you...it depends on what products they're using. I'd have to look and see if...because sometimes your body will produce excess oil in response to a really drying product. So if they're using something where it is really...you know, you're looking at alcohol on one of their first three ingredients. You know, usually a lot of these products are just, you know... It's caprylic. I don't know if it's caprylic acid or if...SD Ibupropryl alcohol, but one of the...usually, it's in the top three ingredients which means it's heavily concentrated in that alcohol base so that is drying and if it's all right.

So I would look in something a little less harsh, a little less drying for that as a moisturizer, as a cleanser. You're looking at a lot of these cleansers that have sodium lauryl sulfate which is extremely drying to the dermis, and then it just causes your body to produce excess oil which is just really extending the problem and increasing that issue in the first place. So I would look at products, if you have dry skin, I would try to remove the foaming cleansers. I would look at something maybe a little bit creamy or a little bit less drying like a milk cleanser. They're really good...like a good gel cleanser. We make one. I like Evan Healy's cleansing milk as well. Obviously, I'm a little biased toward mine but, I mean, that is something that is really important in, you know, reducing some of that that drying effect, the alcohol and sodium lauryl sulfate. The second one I would say... With acne you're referring to?

Katie: Yeah, like with acne or acne scars. I hear people from both of those scenarios.

Andy: Sure. So that's a tough one. One of my assistants used to take Acnetane. Same thing. If you, you know...with that and these really harsh drying ingredients that... What they do is they just dry out the infection. When you have a, say, a blemish, a pimple or an infection, the whole idea that they just...they kill everything in the system and then you're just...it's just a constant battle to stay above water, killing everything on the dermal layer of your skin but then hydrating it with something that really is toxic as well.

So I would do something where you clean up your diet, so that would be removing I would say grains, dairy, sugar, focus on more of an all-natural, plant-derived, really good meats, really good fats, increasing...so things like avocado, grass-fed butter if you do dairy, if not, coconut is great as well. Ghee. I mean, I love ghee, but just really getting good fats into the system to kind of mitigate some of the oiliness and the need for your body to produce that excess oil which kind of could build up and build up the actual pore size and combine with a little bit of, you know, dirt and pollution that we absorb through environments on our daily activities, that can enlarge and eventually turn into a blackhead and eventually turn into a blemish that just really is a nonstop problem.

And I think that by doing the mask, you're pulling out those impurities to the surface. You're pulling out, say... I mean, we have people that, you know, it's gonna be a little bit of a detox period, right. So you're pulling out all of those, you know...the years of toxins and, say, if you're not eating the...well, if you're going through certain stressors and, you know, personal stressors as well, that can be very damaging to the skin and increasing at a hormonal level. But I would say pulling all of that and then just getting on the holistic skin care routine then also cleaning up diet, it's just as important to pull that. And it's hard to predict but doing your best to just mitigate all of those areas, stressors, environmental pollutants, diet. And then the products that you're using, I really feel like that can counteract those scenarios.

But just spot treating certain areas with acne, tea tree oil has been effective. It is very harsh, so the spot treating is great but I would use, with the carrier oil, say, sea buckthorn oil has been very good for that. But also an organic olive oil as well is something that can be helpful as a carrier oil to bring the tea tree properties as an antibacterial to that acne surface in addition to that.

Katie: That make sense, and I think you're so right that the key really is like addressing the diet and the internal as well. And you mentioned intermittent fasting. So I'd love if you could actually, like, touch on that a little bit and touch on any other parts of your daily routine that you feel also, or just contribute to overall well-being and wellness as far as...even or...and just skin health as well. But that's one of my pet topics right now too, so I'd love if we could touch on that.

Andy: Sure. So it's just...I'm all about routine. You know, I wake up. I have a conversation with someone I love. It's usually my mom and so that sets tone mentally for the day. I mean, after the morning tonic I usually have a mask on. I have a foot reflexology board which really opens up the... There are so many different receptors on the bottom of our feet which just open up that area. I mean, so from hanging upside down to an inversion table to stepping on the foot reflexology board, having a mask on, just feeling good, it's just, you know... I usually set my intentions for the day. I have a little silence and solitude to myself where I'll just get my mind right. It's my little meditation where I just, you know, get on top of the routine that you stay consistent with. You're able to pretty much predict how you're gonna feel and going into your day. So staying on top of that, I will...you know, I combine it with a little Bulletproof coffee after everything is done with one morning tonic and my mask is all washed off.

But I usually don't eat until 2:00 p.m. And so, say, if I have dinner at 8:00 p.m. the night before, I'm working on a 16...no, 18-hour fast. Sixteen, eighteen-hour fast is my sweet spot. Now it works for some people. I don't know how it's worked for you. I mean, that's where I operate best but sometimes, you know, you have to listen to your body where if you need to mineralize, you need... You know, I really feel like good saturated fats are essential for optimal, you know, cognitive function. You know, we have to be on point all day with certain phone calls and podcast and just being, you know...running a business. You have to be clicking on all cylinders.

But so staying really satiated with good baths, minerals, and really nature-intense herbs and super foods like spirulina, like the schisandra and the gynostemma and the he shou wu and the amino acid blends that I do.

You know, Himalayan salt has been also very good. I mean, it's pretty much just the full spectrum of mineral right there in its own right. So that's what I do until about 2:00 p.m. And then I have a really dense meal of...say, it's usually sweet potato, broccoli. I love beets. I love grass-fed lamb, grass-fed butter. I mean, these are staples that I...you know, I mix and match throughout the day. But those are my usual go-to, staying with really good plants. Say, arugula is another big one, beet greens. I would recommend that you don't toss the greens. Those are actually extremely nutrient-dense as well, just sautéing those up in grass-fed butters, say, cayenne, a little garlic. It tastes great. And, you know, just get it in a little steamer there. You could steam that up while you're cooking your lamb or whatever it is. And then just keeping the systems satiated with the vital nutrients and minerals that you need to perform throughout the day.

But fats have been huge, staying hydrated, Gerolsteiner water, really good mineral water, just with, you know, an attention to staying away from chemicals and harsh toxins that we absorb. I live out in Los Angeles where there's harsh environmental pollutants around me daily, so I need to make sure that I'm constantly staying on top of my detox protocol. Infrared saunas have been huge, exercise. But being able to get blood flow from head to toe daily now, I mean, not like a full killer workout. I want to do something like... Joe Rogan made a really good point. If you wanna do something that... I mean, exercise is essential. Exercise daily is essential for just, you know, keeping that circulation going and keeping that movement going, really raising endorphins from the inside. Getting that dopamine flow from exercises is vital for not only physical health but mental health as well.

Katie: I agree. So I'd love to actually ask you a question that you probably haven't been asked very much before. But you mentioned talking to your mom every day. So I have a personal question, if you don't mind me asking it, which is, first of all, for all the moms listening, what are some of the things that you think your mom did that helped you still have such a great relationship with her as an adult? Because that's certainly something I thought off. You know, I want to make sure I have good relationships with my kids even when they're grown.

And the second part of that question would be also, were there things that your parents or your mom did when you were growing up that you feel like helped you to become an effective entrepreneur? Because that's also a big focus for us in how we're raising our kids. So I'm curious if anything from your life stands out?

Andy: That's a great question and it is sort of an asset, thank you. Yes, she's just been an extreme...both my parents have been extremely supportive of my just athletic career which has led into where I am right now and just even, you know... I picked the two hardest things, baseball and then the entertainment industry to start off our career. But they were, you know, supporting of that and I'm very appreciative of that. I would say the biggest thing, and I actually just thought about this recently, is having a list of chores on the weekend. You know, you got to get this, you know...just being...you have to put in the work and stay in... You know, then you can get a...whether it's allowance. You have to earn your, you know...you have to do your job on the weekend whether it's chores around the house or, you know, cleaning up the backyard, cleaning up after my dog, cleaning my room, certain chores around the house that I needed to do in order to get an allowance.

That hasn't left me I think that sense of putting in work and building that work ethic and, you now, building that diligent work ethic from an early age. I mean, I think we started more like five or six and, you know, we

resented it at the time but that discipline though has not left, so that is huge. I would say get your kids active. And the importance of earning money at an early age has been huge. You know, that led right into my first job at Baskin' Robbins, the ice cream shop, and I just...you had to have a job. I had to have a job. I had to earn money. If I wanted to go do something, I had to earn it. I had to go get a job and work for it, which, you know, that completely makes sense to me now. At the time, I couldn't figure it out but I'm so glad they enforced that and that's good. So that's one thing.

Now, and then also just hearing her voice I mean, it's calming. I mean, that's my mother right there and it's something that...it completely sets the tone. It's something...it's absolutely part of my routine and whether it's her, my sisters, just family and love, compassion, connecting, community. It's everything and part of living a healthy lifestyle. They say...I just met with them doing a Human...I did a piece for the Human Longevity Project which is a documentary that should be out here I think in May or June by a gentleman named Jason Prall. And he would go and visit these areas where centenarians are plentiful, like all around the planet, and he would talk to them. They needed...collectively, they all agree, what they found that every needed a sense of purpose. They needed to stay active. And they needed community. So they needed some type of connection, and I love to have that. You know, I live alone and I don't have a wife yet. I don't have a family right now.

So, I mean, I have to rely on my blood and my friends to kind of, you know, keep my mind right. And I can't just do it on my own and I think it's very important to build that nice inner core of just, you know, building myself as a person, so having that combined with staying active and definitely having a sense of purpose which is, in my case, my bringing health and wellbeing and just helping others, just being completely here, you know, for service and to serve others. I mean, I'm lucky to be alive and that's something that drives me daily. But just getting that connection, that community, talking to someone that you love is so important daily and that's just what I do. That's what I've done for a while with my family and that's extraordinarily important. Does that answer your question? Sorry, I kind of rambled there.

Katie: Yeah, it does and I love that. I think that's a part that gets forgotten too much in modern society is the importance of community and, in fact, we've had to work very hard to build one for our family with other likeminded families and being close to people just because I think if you look at the data, I mean, it really is staggering. That is the single largest reducer of all cause of mortality and the single largest factor in extending longevity. This is not like something that's statistically insignificant. It's drastically significant. So I feel like you're so right. That should probably be of much bigger priority for all of us is nurturing like real life community, not just Facebook but like real life community.

Andy: And I need to do a better job with that. I mean, I don't know...I'm sure you can relate at the beginning stages as an entrepreneur, you just go, go, go. I mean, I don't stop because... I mean, I really love what I do. So, I mean, I just kind of...sometimes I get huddled up here just focused on work, work, work because it is my life. And I love what I do but it's so important though that. I mean, it's just a buzz. It's a feeling of connecting with someone else and sitting across with someone and sharing a meal or sharing a story. That's something that you can't get alone. And it's vital for just optimal...just health and wellbeing but just also getting your mind right and for happiness and just... That's something that I needed when...in my recovery, because I was down and out and a little dark period in myself, and just staying connected with others, just being extremely appreciative of those relationships has increased over time. And that's something that I just can't go without.

Katie: Awesome. And I have to ask you now, since you mentioned baseball, I didn't know that was what your athletic career was and I always say like I'm a baseball fan and a blogger in that order. I'm a huge Cincinnati

Reds fan but I'm curious, who do you play for or when did you play baseball?

Andy: Nice. Okay. Well, baseball is my life, 22 years. I got a baseball scholarship to UC Berkeley. I...yes, started out 14, 15 years old. I was a little gangly freshman and I just grew into my body. And I loved watching players. Like I tried to emulate Alex Rodriguez, Vladimir Guerrero, you know. It's just staying with that whole idea of one day maybe being a major baseball player but that just...it takes an immense amount of talent, immense amount of work. But that's something that's really helped me in my...you know, as an entrepreneur as well.

But, I mean, I played at UC Berkeley. I was an outfielder. I finished up as a two-way player as an outfielder and a pitcher, graduated from Saint Mary's College. We played in the West Coast Conference. I still have a number of friends still playing. We actually demo products at Spring training facilities that we're gonna be out...I think we may go to Florida this year too but we mostly stay in Arizona just for convenience. But I haven't hit the major league teams out in Florida yet and I still have some friend playing. So maybe I'll go check them out and demo in Florida as well because it's important. You know, when you're out in the outfield, when you're getting all that sun beaming down on your skin, I mean, a lot of guys...which is really cool because they're so used to supplement, clothing companies, suit companies, shoes, you name it, coming in Spring training and selling them, you know, on supplement and stuff. And I just go out there.

I want to really hit home on the importance of proper skin care and proper supplementation and proper nutrition where if you're out and just constantly traveling, can you imagine being in two cities or three cities a week for the course of a year? So it's really... It's been good. Just kind of giving back because, you know, whether guys wanna admit it or not, just looking good, feeling good on camera and just feeling your best going in everyday, it's something that they do value. And it's a lot of fun for me just kind of staying connected in the game and working with players that I used to watch on TV. So that's pretty fun.

Katie: That's awesome and it's true. They play a rough schedule, I think like a 162 games a year which is insane. So that's awesome that you're working with the baseball players, too. And I'm gonna have links to everything, all your products, in the show notes at wellnessmama.fm. But before we wrap up, can you tell people where they can find you in the online world?

Andy: Absolutely. So I want to offer you and your following a discount, we're just gonna do...it's called "wellness," is that okay?

Katie: Yeah. It's perfect.

Andy: Yes. So, we call it "wellness", 20% of the entire store. Our website is alituranaturals.com. That's A-L-I-T-U-R-A N-A-T-U-R-A-L-S.com and it's all me. If you have any questions, I'm happy to answer them. I love talking health, wellness, nutrition, and skin care. But I'm also on social media at [@alituranaturals](https://www.facebook.com/alituranaturals) on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. And, I mean, this is what I eat, breathe and sleep. And I'm curious, what made you become a Red's fan? Because you're... Are you from Ohio?

Katie: No, but I've learned when you marry a man, you marry his sports. I actually grew up as an Astros fan. My uncle is still their statistician. So baseball is in my blood. I went to more games before I was born than probably most people do in their life. But when we got married for the sake of marital unity, I became a Red's fan. So the Astros are still my secondary team but we're big Cincinnati fans.

Andy: Very cool. Well, the Astros had a heck of a year last year and I think they're gonna repeat this year. So it should be interesting but baseball is one of those things, you have to stay, keep the highs low and the lows high, so to speak. It's a very long season and just staying on top of that discipline, that rigorous schedule. It's tough but it builds resilience, right?

Katie: Yeah, exactly. I can only imagine, but probably a great training for a life of an entrepreneur. Thank you so much for your time today. This has been so fun. I'm so glad we got to chat. And you left your contact info, Alitura Naturals, and people can use that discount code and ask you questions which is super generous. So thank you so much for being here.

Andy: No. Katie, it was really an honor to be on this. This is something... I shot it out, let's see, about six months ago just like, you know... You write down the people, the podcast that you would love to work with and kind of be on. And I'm telling you the truth, you were number one so it's just pretty cool to be doing this. So thank you for having me on, I appreciate it.

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

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