



Episode 358: A Practical Guide to CBD and
Medicinal Mushrooms
With The Rebel's Apothecary

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

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Katie: Hello, and welcome to "The Wellness Mama Podcast." I'm Katie from [wellnessmama.com](https://www.wellnessmama.com) and [wellnesse.com](https://www.wellnesse.com). That's wellness with an E on the end. And in this episode, I am touching on a couple of topics that I have been getting increasing questions on, which are the health uses of CBD and medicinal mushrooms, which are different than culinary or psychedelic mushrooms and their place in overall health, and also more nuanced things like cancer treatment and others. I'm here with Jenny Sansouci, who is the author of "The Rebels Apothecary: A Practical Guide to the Healing Magic of Cannabis, CBD, and Mushrooms." These are all topics that are increasingly prevalent in the research right now and also in mainstream consciousness, and I thought they would be important to talk about today. Jenny is a certified health coach and the creator of the blog Healthy Crush, where she's been writing since 2008. She's also a graduate from the Institute for

Integrative Nutrition and was trained by functional medicine, Dr. Frank Lippmann in New York City. And we go deep in this episode about her story, what got her into this in the first place and how she is using these pretty amazing substances in her daily life, and to help her dad with a really intensive health crisis. I think you'll really enjoy this episode.

So without further ado, let's jump in. Jenny, welcome to the podcast. Thanks for being here.

Jennie: Thank you so much for having me. I've been such a fan of your site for so many years, so this is just awesome to be connecting with you.

Katie: I am so excited for our conversation because you have written about a couple of topics that I think are increasingly important right now, and kind of hitting mainstream consciousness more and more. And I loved your book, "The Rebels Apothecary." To start off, I always love to hear people's stories, especially when someone gets such deep knowledge of a specific topic. So to start off, what led you to write this book in the first place?

Jennie: Well, it was really unexpected. I had no plan to write this book. I had no real deep interest in these topics, aside from being mildly interested in medicinal mushrooms, just because I've been interested in nutrition and wellness for so many years. I, you know, was trained as a health coach back in 2010 through the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. And I've been blogging about wellness and nutrition topics for many years. And I've always just gotten really interested in, you know, what's on the horizon, what are the new supplements and herbs and things that people are using, you know, as alternative therapies? So I was aware of medicinal mushrooms and I was starting to become very mildly aware of CBD as it was just kind of entering the scene. But I had not done a deep dive at all into these topics.

And that all changed for me in 2017. So this is the end of 2017. And again, this was right when...there was kind of starting to be whispers about CBD and people were like, "What is this? What's going on with CBD?" But nothing major. And my dad was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. And that was around Thanksgiving, the day before Thanksgiving, actually, in 2017. And in that moment... I mean, I knew nothing about pancreatic cancer at the time, but as soon as I did my first Google search on pancreatic cancer, it was dismal. What I found was not good news. And I'm sure anyone that can relate to that... I mean, no cancer is ever good news, of course, but stage 4 pancreatic cancer, in particular, is, you know, known as one that is very aggressive and very difficult to treat. And it doesn't usually have many positive outcomes. So that was a big shock and a big...it was just a life-changing moment for me and for my family.

And up until that point, I had cared about wellness mostly to about feeling good and, you know, prevention of disease and illness and having energy and getting better sleep. And I had always cared about it kind of for my own, you know, feeling optimal and helping other people to feel optimal too. But this became very serious, very fast. So it was the first time in my journey with health and wellness that I felt like, "Okay, I need to do

something. And this is like a life or death situation." And so, yeah, when he first got diagnosed after we kind of moved through the initial shock of it, I realized I needed to start to do some research.

In no way was I planning to take over his entire cancer treatment or anything like that. I knew he was going to go through the conventional cancer hospital and get chemotherapy. That was something that he definitely wanted to do. So my role became, okay, how can I support him through that? And how can I find the best things that will not only keep his immune system strong during chemotherapy, as most people know, chemo can really weaken people's immune systems. And I wanted to be able to keep him feeling good through the process and potentially help him with the cancer. I mean, I'm not a doctor. And even at this point, a few years later, I'm not claiming that we are helping with his cancer specifically, and I can't claim that. So that being said, I did want to see if there was anything out there that could potentially help.

And I knew enough people in the, you know, functional medicine doctors and nutrition experts and people that I could ask. And I started asking around, I started making phone calls. I started doing my own research and medicinal mushrooms came up from almost everybody that I spoke to. And that was not surprising to me because I knew medicinal mushrooms were helpful for the immune system. So I felt like, "Okay, medicinal mushrooms are probably something that I'm gonna look into for him."

The CBD and cannabis part of it came from a tip from one of my friends. She said, "You know what? Look up CBD and cannabis and cancer, and just see what you find." And so I took that tip and I ran with it and I looked up information about cannabis. And again, it was not a topic that I had ever really looked deep into at all, but I found a lot of, not only anecdotal stories of people using it to alleviate their chemotherapy side effects, but you know, some initial studies that were being done. And, you know, of course, there hasn't been any clinical trials on this because of the legality of cannabis, but there has been... There are scientists and researchers that have been working on, you know, studying cannabis and THC and CBD and their effects on cancer cells. And there have been people that are focusing on this, so it was promising.

And so we watched a documentary about cannabis and cancer patients, and my dad had watched it too. And I got him started on CBD oil. And we just kind of got him on a plan and cannabis and mushrooms ended up being the two things that I majorly focused on as far as trying to help him through this process. And a few years later... So now he's over two and a half years into his treatment and he has been stable and feeling really good. His scans are stable. He's been off of chemo now for the last four months because he's been doing so well. And his blood work is in the normal range. And in no way are they saying that it's cured. It's very difficult to cure this kind of cancer, not impossible but difficult.

So the fact that it's stable and dormant and there's been no, you know, activity in the tumors is really, really good news for this kind of cancer. And the best part about it is that he's just felt amazing for pretty much the whole time. He only had side effects from the chemo for the first month or two. And then as soon as we got him on the cannabis and mushroom regimen, he has had no nausea. His appetite is good. He has energy. He sleeps really well. So all the things that people complain about when they, you know, go through

chemotherapy, he's been able to avoid almost all of it. And that largely, we believe, is because of the cannabis and mushroom regimen that we've had him on.

And once we started to do that and saw some positive results from it, I started to write about it on my blog. And not only was I starting to learn about the cannabis and mushrooms for my dad, but I started to use them for myself for, you know, different things like sleep and anxiety and my own immune system then I started feeling good. And so, as I was blogging about this and sharing about it with people, because what I really wanted was for people that were Googling pancreatic cancer, like I did, I wanted them to find something positive because I could not find anything positive when I first looked. And I thought maybe someone will, you know, get this diagnosis, stumble upon this and say, "Okay, there's hope. And there's something that I can do." And I'm sure you, you know, you relate to this. Just having something at home that you can try is so empowering, especially if you're faced with something where, you know, you feel this sense of hopelessness or you feel this sense of "There's nothing I can do to, you know, to help with this."

If you have an idea, you know, of something that...a home remedy, it's very empowering. So I really wanted to give people just a starting point. And, of course, I think everybody should talk to their doctors before they try anything. But I really wanted to give people something to look into for themselves and something that has really helped in our personal story. So that was the background of it.

And then as I started blogging about it, a book agent got in touch with me and asked if I would be willing to write a book about this. And I hadn't planned it. And I, you know, I didn't say, "Okay, this is the story that's happening to me. I'm going to start writing a book." She asked me, "Would you write this book?" And I said, "How can I say no to this?" You know, if there's all these other caregivers out there, or, you know, people interested in this topic or people struggling, and I have some information that might be helpful, I'd love to be able to just hand people a book with everything in one place. So that's the gist of how it all got started.

Katie: I feel like there are so many ways we can go deep especially on the specifics of the protocols and just also the benefits of different types of mushrooms. But just to highlight something I think really important, what you said, is it's not that you were trying to use these as an alternative to conventional cancer treatments. You weren't...like your dad didn't choose not to do chemo. These are things that can be used synergistically. And I think that's really important because I think sometimes, you know, conventional medicine and alternative medicine get put at odds and they don't necessarily need to because they can actually work together really well.

And I've read a lot about how a lot of people suffer more from the side effects and the complications of chemo than from the cancer itself. And that's where a lot of the discomfort comes from. So I feel like if we can mitigate some of those symptoms, then we can help the patient feel better and also help outcomes. And that's a win-win while still working within the conventional model. And I first kind of stumbled across that idea researching fasting, which was a big part of my own recovery from Hashimoto's. It's not something I recommend across the board because I think it's probably how you would respond to, you know, questions about these. I think there's a very personalized aspect of health and these things should be done. You should

do your own research and work with professionals. But I think there's a lot of alternative things we can do that really can work to make other cancer treatments more effective and also to keep people so much more comfortable, like you said.

So I'd love to go a little deeper and know within the realm of medicinal mushrooms, can you, first of all, define what that means? Because I think people have maybe like kind of different definitions of mushrooms depending on where they're coming from. And then also talk about some of the different ones you guys tried and experimented with.

Jenny: Sure. First of all, I wanna say totally agree with everything you just said about conventional medicine and alternative medicine, and that's really been what we've experienced through this whole process. And one thing I just wanna note is that medicinal mushrooms and cannabis, in different ways, have been shown to work synergistically even with certain chemotherapy drugs, like you said, to make the outcome of all of it better and across the board. I mean, it's gonna be different, of course, with each person, with each chemo drug and with each, you know, herb or supplement that you try, but they can work synergistically. And my dad has gone through over 50 rounds of a very strong chemotherapy drug. And his doctor said that most people only can go through about 8 to 10 rounds of this before they need a break because their immune systems become so weakened and he hasn't experienced that at all. So I think that that's in part due to the medicinal mushrooms.

But just to give that definition, that's definitely one of the misconceptions people have when I start talking about medicinal mushrooms is that they think I'm talking about psychedelic mushrooms or magic mushrooms. And, you know, when I start talking about these things, they're like, "Well, am I gonna hallucinate if I take this? Like, you're talking about putting mushroom powder in your coffee. Is that gonna make me go on a trip?" and that's not the case. I do talk about psychedelic mushrooms a little bit in the book just because there's a lot of really interesting research going on with them right now. But the main medicinal mushrooms that we've tried are basically a class of mushrooms that's not the button mushrooms that you see at the grocery store and it's not the psychedelic mushrooms. But it's this other class of mushrooms that has medicinal properties and some are edible and some you need to extract into powders or tinctures, but some you can cook with.

And there are seven different mushrooms that I focus on in the book and they all, across the board, have properties that can support the immune system. So not necessarily immune stimulating, but more like immune balancing, immune modulating, to really support your immune system to be active when it needs to be active and to be, you know, less active when it needs to be less active. So they're kind of like adaptogens, you know, for the immune system in the sense that they adapt to what you need. And in addition to the immune system stuff, each one of the mushrooms has its own benefits. So across the board, all good for the immune system and then they each have their own special powers.

So the seven medicinal mushrooms that we've been focusing on with my dad's treatment and that I've written about in the book are chaga, reishi, turkey tail, shiitake, maitake, cordyceps and lion's mane. I just did that

from memory. I'm not even looking at a list. I'm like, "Please, please get all of them." But yeah, those are the seven that we focused on.

Katie: Gotcha. Okay. So let's go deeper. I'd love to know how you use them if they were all kind of in a mix or if you used specific ones for different effects. I know there's a great documentary called "Fantastic Fungi." And one of people in documentary talks about how his mom had, I believe it was stage 4 breast cancer and she used turkey tail in pretty large amounts and was able to get in remission and live for many years beyond that. And I know from being really good friends with Tero from Four Sigmatic, which is a mushroom-based company, that there are amazing benefits to so many of these. And I daily consume usually at least reishi and chaga and cordyceps and lion's mane. But I'd love to hear how you used the different ones. And also, along that same line, if all this that you learned from your dad, how you now incorporate these at different times in your daily routine.

Jenny: Yeah. So actually, first of all, "Fantastic Fungi" is an amazing film. I've watched it twice now and I've had my parents watch it recently and they loved it too. It's just so beautiful with them, just the visuals that they use. But yes, Paul Stamets. That's the guy whose mom had breast cancer and used turkey tail. And that was a big thing that got me on the turkey tail train, I guess. But turkey tail and shiitake were the two that we first started with. And when I say shiitake, there's a supplement called AHCC and it's derived from shiitake mushrooms. And this comes in capsules, the ones that my dad is taking.

And the reason that I got him on those capsules is because they're actually used in cancer hospitals in China and Japan, alongside chemotherapy treatments. There are studies that have been done on them showing that they can help keep the immune system strong during cancer treatments. So those are one of the first ones that I got him on just to keep his immune system strong. So AHCC and shiitake, I mean, is just amazing in general, and it's been shown to be antiviral and it's one of the ones that you can, of course, cook with. And he takes it in a more concentrated form, but we also try to cook with a lot of shiitake mushrooms as much as possible. Anytime that there's, you know, a savory dish that I can toss some shiitakes in, I always will.

So that's one of the first ones we got him started on. And then turkey tail was the other one. I called up... I used to work in a functional medicine doctor's office in New York city. His name's Dr. Frank Lipman. He also wrote the forward to my book. But I called his office as soon as my dad got diagnosed and there was a compounding pharmacist there. And he said, "Look into turkey tail because there have been studies with turkey tail reducing breast cancer tumors. So that's something you should look at." So of course, I watched...Paul Stamets has a video. I think it's a TED Talk where he talks about his mom using Turkey tail for breast cancer. And then there's been other studies on Turkey tail and breast cancer as well.

So we added the turkey tail in. So those were the two that we started with: the AHCC and the turkey tail. And aside from that, we started to make a daily shake. So we started to make a daily green smoothie, you know, with a bunch of greens in it. Because one of the things that I realized really early on with chemotherapy is that, you know, some people, when they get cancer, they decide to go on a really strict diet or they wanna do a

juice fast, or they go paleo or they go vegan or, you know, whatever they wanna do. And that's, I totally support that.

But what I've realized is that the person on chemo, oftentimes their appetite goes away completely, and they can't really stomach certain foods and that will lead them to just not eating at all and losing too much weight. So while I tried to do this whole dietary change with my dad at first, it became clear to me that he was losing weight so quickly that I needed to figure out, "Okay, maybe he just needs to eat whatever he can eat and then we can add in these extra nutrients for him." So people ask me all the time, "Did he go on a really strict diet?" The answer to that is no. We just added a bunch of things in, and he did quit alcohol completely and very highly reduced sugar. But aside from that, we've mostly been adding things in.

So the shake that we started to make every day was a 10 mushroom blend from Four Sigmatic. And my mom makes it now for him every day. And I just tell her to put as much in as possible. She puts like a heaping teaspoon in, but I'm always like, "If you put a little extra in, that's fine." So we use a 10 mushroom blend from Four Sigmatic, which has all of those, the seven mushrooms that I mentioned before, plus a few others. And then we put extra turkey tail into that shake. We also put extra chaga into that shake. And so yeah, he's taking a blend, the 10 blend along with extra turkey tail AHCC. Just kind of whenever we can throw in extra medicinal mushrooms, then we do that.

Katie: Awesome. And is that what you do as well? Do you incorporate all 10 of those every day as well?

Jenny: I don't incorporate all 10 everyday. What I usually do, my medicinal mushroom kind of routine, I guess, is I usually take chaga every day in a tincture. And chaga, I really love because it's a really good kind of every day, in my opinion, an everyday wellness-supporting mushroom because it's super high in antioxidants and it's also really good for the immune system. So I take either a tincture with chaga or I make chaga tea and I'll either use the packets from Four Sigmatic. Or if I have an actual chunk of chaga, I will simmer that in water, usually, you know, on the stove in a pot usually for at least about an hour. I mean, you can leave it in there for as little as 20 minutes. But, you know, if you go up to two hours or so, you can extract more of the medicine into the tea.

So I'll make chaga tea a lot. In fact, when I was writing the book, I was living on chaga tea basically because I wasn't sleeping a lot when I was on my deadlines. I was just working so many hours per day and staying up really late, trying to hit my deadlines. And I didn't want my immune system to weaken because, you know, when I lose sleep, I can feel that my immune system starts to weaken pretty quickly. So I was downing the chaga tea and I never got sick, which was surprising. But I love chaga. So I take chaga in some form every day.

And then the other mushrooms I kind of use in different situations. Lion's mane I will use if I'm gonna sit down to write, or if I know I'm about to do a podcast interview, or if I'm, you know, gonna sit down and work or answer emails, and I just wanna be super focused because lion's mane is really good for memory and cognition and the brain and nerves in general. Oh, I forgot to mention the lion's mane with my dad. Lion's

mane is another one that he takes extra every day because it's really helped with his chemotherapy-induced neuropathy. So that's something to note is that lion's mane, because it's so helpful for nerve regeneration, it can be helpful for people who experience neuropathy, which is a tingling in the fingers and toes or loss of sensation, which after my dad started taking lion's mane, about two weeks in, he could start to feel things with the tips of his fingers again, like buttons and coins and his contact lenses. So that was really amazing. So lion's mane is another one.

And then I take reishi at night, usually. When I'm kind of doing wind-down routine to get ready for bed, I'll either do a reishi tea again, either using Four Sigmatic packets or...you know, I don't usually have reishi on hand, I mean, like an actual piece of reishi, but once in a while, I can get some from an herb shop and do the tea the same way I would do chaga or I take a tincture. So I have them in various forms. And so I'd say reishi, lion's mane and chaga are the three that I... But I just did order some more cordyceps because I'm gonna start to incorporate more cordyceps into my life. And that's a really good one for, you know, energy and stamina.

Katie: I'm right there with you. And it's really exciting to see... I know there's a lot of studies coming out right now on different types...these different types of mushrooms and how they can be used. And I do the same thing. I kind of cycle the different ones that I use most days. But most mornings, I'll add lion's mane to either tea or coffee or a smoothie or something and then kind of add in chaga and cordyceps throughout the day, and then almost always wind down with reishi in some form. And it really does seem to improve my sleep. And it also gives me really vivid dreams. And there's a lot of cool research and also just theories about the neuroprotective benefits of different mushrooms, including reishi. And so I think maybe that's potentially, it's like stimulating neuropathways while you're sleeping. That's one of the theories as to why it gives vivid dreams.

And I recently found out that reishi actually grows where we live. So I've been out learning to forage for different types of mushrooms which has been really fun. But yeah, I think you're right. I love that you're bringing light to these topics because I think this is gonna be a growing area of research. And like I've talked about on the podcast before and written about, mushrooms are such a cool, really, really cool thing to use because they are so sustainable. They grow very quickly. And then they have many uses even beyond just the dietary and health uses. And we're seeing these used in environmental ways. And they think there might be ways that mushrooms can help, for example, plastics and all kinds of other uses.

So next on my list is to learn how to grow certain mushrooms at home. And I've got currently some lion's mane and gnocchi experiments growing on my kitchen counter. I love this topic. I think it's fascinating. And I love that you are shedding light on it and giving such practical explanations and advice of how we can all start incorporating these. And I'm also really confident that we're gonna continue to see data about...because of, like you mentioned, the immune supporting benefits of these, that we're gonna continue to see data about how these, over time, can work to support the immune system and probably have a protective effect.

So hopefully, even people who aren't experiencing a really big health crisis, can still benefit from these over the long-term. We just don't have that data yet, but I'm really confident it's coming. And I wanna make sure

we also reserve time to talk about the other thing you write a lot about, which is the cannabis and CBD side. So to switch gears a little bit, first break down for us the difference between strict cannabis and CBD.

Jenny: Sure. CBD is part of the cannabis plant. It's a compound within the cannabis plant. There's hundreds of compounds within the cannabis plant, which I had no idea about that before I started doing this research. But THC and CBD are the two most prevalent compounds and the two that have been studied the most so far. And the THC is the compound that people would recognize the most as the one that gets you high. So it's, you know, it's the one that's gonna be kind of the head...the one that gives you that head high and is what you think of when you think about smoking weed or anything like that. CBD is a molecule inside the cannabis plant that does not get you high. It doesn't have those psychoactive effects, but it does have a lot of therapeutic benefits and THC does as well.

So CBD is just a compound within the cannabis plant. And the reason in the book, you know, in the tagline, I say cannabis and CBD, is because I think there is some confusion on, you know, where CBD even comes from and, you know, what is its role in cannabis. And also I wanted people that were searching for CBD specifically, to be able to find the book and they might not find it if it just said cannabis. So that's where CBD comes from. It's just one of the most prevalent compounds inside that plant.

Katie: Okay, cool. Because I think like, as these things have become more well known, they kind of get lumped together. And I know a lot of people have been hesitant to try CBD because they just kind of assume it's in the same category with cannabis and it's not something they'd wanna use themselves or with their kids if they're not necessarily...if they are avoiding THC or they're not on board with that. Talk about some of the main reasons that people are using CBD for health and wellness and how you use this with your dad. Because just like with the medicinal mushrooms, we are seeing an explosion of both anecdotal and scientific evidence on these compounds. So explain kind of how you incorporated it.

Jenny: Sure. Yeah. One of the things to note right off the bat that...kind of similarly with medicinal mushrooms, when people think that they're magic mushrooms or psychedelic mushrooms. With CBD, one thing to really note is you can use CBD without any THC and you can use it without feeling any high. And there's different kinds of CBD that you can use. And, you know, one is called full spectrum. You know, if we're talking about a CBD tincture, for instance, that's kind of one of the most common ways people use it. When I say tincture, it's usually an oil-based tincture that you use under the tongue. But if you use a full-spectrum product, what that means is there's all the different compounds from the cannabis plant are in there, including a little tiny bit of THC, depending on what kind of product you get. And the compounds have been shown to work better together. So it's called the entourage effect and they can kind of boost each other up and help each other work more strongly.

So a full-spectrum product will have mostly CBD if you're getting a CBD product, but a little bit of everything else too, the other compounds inside the cannabis plant. But you can, if you really wanna avoid THC altogether, even though there have been studies showing that a little bit of THC can boost the CBD's effects,

you can avoid it altogether if you don't wanna give it to your children, or if you're in sober recovery or you just really want to avoid it, you can get either a CBD isolate or a broad spectrum CBD.

I prefer broad spectrum over isolate because broad spectrum just means it includes a bunch of other compounds within the cannabis plant that can help with that entourage effect except no THC. So that could be a place to start if you really wanna avoid THC. CBD isolates are just the CBD molecule on its own, and that can be effective for people, but it has been shown that you need to take more, you know, five times or more the amount of CBD isolate to get the effects that you would get with a full spectrum CBD, which can end up being, you know, expensive. And so if you don't have an issue with having a little bit of THC, I would personally go for full spectrum.

So that aside, to answer your actual question, my dad uses a full-spectrum CBD. He started on capsules. So I personally like the oil tincture under the tongue. That's my preferred method of using CBD, but he takes capsules just because it's easier for him. Just in his daily routine, he takes other capsules. So he likes to take the capsules. So we got him started on CBD capsules with full-spectrum CBD capsules before he got a medical marijuana card, which in certain states...it's gonna be different in every state, you know, because cannabis is still federally illegal. CBD on its own is now legal, but cannabis in general, especially with THC, and it is with more than 0.3% THC, which is a really, really small amount is federally illegal. So you need to...in every state, it's gonna be different.

So here in Massachusetts where my dad lives, he needed to get a medical card in order to get something with more THC in it. So for the chemotherapy side effects and for his cancer, the product that we really wanted was something called Rick Simpson Oil. And sometimes it has different names. Sometimes it's called full extract cannabis oil. It's inspired by a guy named Rick Simpson who according to him, used this very highly concentrated oil to cure his skin cancer. And so this oil is very, very thick and very, very highly concentrated. It could have, you know, 50 milligrams of THC or CBD, depending on what kind of product you get in a drop the size of a grain of rice. And that's a really high amount just for reference. If you're...you know, the amount of THC most people take to get high is like 5 to 10 milligrams. So 50 milligrams is really high.

So the product that he's using is this highly concentrated oil that has a one-to-one ratio, meaning equal parts CBD to THC. And most of the cannabis doctors I've spoken to with this specific type of product, they recommend the one-to-one ratio because of how these compounds can really boost each other up and amplify each other to give the most medicinal effects. So some people use a high THC one. Some people just use a really high CBD one, but he uses this one-to-one. And it's not an everyday wellness type of product. This is a medical product that really can only be found at medical dispensaries.

So he takes a little bit of this oil morning and night, and he's had to play with his dose a little bit to get it to the point where he doesn't feel that high because he doesn't wanna feel that during the day, you know, when he needs to get other things done. So he will, you know, kind of titrate the dose up little by little in order to get to the point where he still feels comfortable. And then he'll take a little bit more at night because it really helps him sleep. But the reason for the THC, especially with chemotherapy side effects, is it's really helpful for

nausea and appetite. So if those are, you know, things that people are experiencing with cancer treatment, those are things that THC can be really helpful with. Nausea, appetite, sleep and pain are things that the THC can be really good for.

Personally, I don't take products with THC. I take a full spectrum CBD product that just has a tiny bit of THC because I don't like to feel the high. So I'm very focused on, you know, getting those therapeutic benefits from the CBD without feeling the intoxicating effects. And so I'll take... And as far as what people are experiencing from CBD, I think the most common things they're using it for are probably anxiety, pain, and sleep. Those are the three ones that I hear most often and that's what I take it for.

So I'll take a full spectrum tincture that I use under the tongue mostly at night before I go to bed. And it's not a sedative. It doesn't just put you to sleep or knock you out, but it really... It can really help with, you know, anxiety and racing thoughts and feeling like you're on edge. If that's why you're having trouble sleeping, it can really help with that. And then the same with pain. If pain is keeping you awake, the CBD can help to mitigate that pain to help you fall asleep. So those are some of the ways that people are using CBD.

Katie: That makes sense. Okay. So can you explain a little bit deeper how CBD works in the body and specifically what the endocannabinoid system is and how CBD interacts with that?

Jennie: Yeah, that was one of the things that I was really, you know, fascinated to learn about when I was doing this research is that we have this system in our body, the endocannabinoid system, like you mentioned, and it works directly with cannabis molecules that interact with this system. And we have this system in our body, it wasn't designed just to be used with cannabis. We actually have our own molecules in the body, these endogenous cannabinoids, which...cannabinoids are the molecules within the cannabis plant, but we have our own. They're called endocannabinoids and our body makes them in response to stress, in response to anxiety, in response to pain. And the system is really there to keep us in balance, to keep us regulated.

You know, I mentioned the word adaptogen before when it comes to medicinal mushrooms and I really kind of consider the endocannabinoid system to be that same kind of adaptogenic system for our body that really keeps us in homeostasis. And so the way that CBD interacts with this system is that it actually doesn't...it doesn't bind to the receptors in the system directly, but what it does is it can break down the enzymes that...well, it can block the enzymes that break down our natural cannabinoids. So without being too scientific about it, we have these, you know, these molecules in our system that CBD will basically amplify and make us have higher levels of these molecules, you know, circulating throughout our system.

So if we are putting these molecules out in response to anxiety and we take CBD, then we'll have more of these anti-anxiety molecules in our system, if that makes sense. So THC is a little bit different in the sense that it binds to the receptors and it can actually mimic these molecules that we have in our body, but CBD will just kind of up-regulate that system for us.

Katie: Okay. So for understanding that, like, what are other various ways? I know I've seen the research on CBD for cancer. I know also, like you mentioned a little bit, people use this for anxiety, for mental health reasons, for sleep. What are some of the other reasons that you're seeing that people are using CBD?

Jenny: Well, I think people use it for mood. I mean, one thing that's important to know about CBD is that our endocannabinoid system, we all have a different endocannabinoid system. So I compare it to our digestive systems a lot in the sense that everybody has a different, you know, state of their digestive system. Everybody has different, you know, gut flora and bacteria that are in our guts and we all respond to different foods differently. And the endocannabinoid system is kind of like that in the sense that we all have a different...

There's a doctor that I spoke to when I was researching this book. His name is Dr. Ethan Russo and he calls it the endocannabinoid tone. So we all have our own endocannabinoid tone, which is the state of our natural endocannabinoid molecules, the state of our receptors and, you know, diet, lifestyle, genetics, all of this can affect our endocannabinoid system, which is one reason why there's not one dose, one correct CBD dose for everybody. If I, you know, I may need a little bit more than you, or, you know, someone may take 25 milligrams of CBD and it could really help them sleep. Another person could take 25 milligrams of CBD and it could wake them up a little bit more. So people do have different experiences with it because of that. So it really takes a lot of, you know, self-experimentation and starting with a low dose and just seeing how you feel and really monitoring it.

But aside from what I talked about with anxiety, pain and sleep, people are using it for, you know, focus, for mood. It even interacts with the immune system. So people are saying that it could be kind of an immune tonic, the same way that medicinal mushrooms are, although there needs to be more research with the immune system. But people use it for their skin as well to, you know, just sooth the skin. It's been shown to be helpful for acne too. So it's kind of...there's a variety of reasons that people are using it, but I think the anxiety one is probably the most prevalent.

Katie: I've definitely heard that one quite a bit. And personally, I use a topical CBD. I've been lifting weights quite a bit, and it's really helpful for muscle soreness as well.

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while supporting brain health. We could all use a little extra support right now B.LXR is your brain fuel. I also really recommend trying their propolis throat spray for immune and all over support. We use this daily as a first line of defense and also at the first sign of tickly throat or sniffles. To upgrade your medicine cabinet and save 15% on your first order, go to [beekeepersnaturals.com/wellnessmama](https://www.beekeepersnaturals.com/wellnessmama), that's to get 15% off. Meet your new medicine cabinet with Beekeeper's Naturals.

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I love that you mentioned the kind of very personalized dose response to CBD. I've noticed that with myself and my husband and with my kids as well, like obviously, them, they're smaller, they use teeny tiny doses. But even between my husband and I, he can handle much, much bigger doses. In fact, he needs much bigger doses if it's gonna help with his sleep or for him to see an effect. And whereas even just like a very small dose of a full spectrum can help me sleep or I see the effects very, very quickly. And so I think that's absolutely a really important point. But when it comes to dosing, what is a good place to start and how can people know when they've found the right dose?

Jenny: That's a great question. So if you're using a product with higher THC, and most people for general wellness stuff probably don't need to be using a product with higher THC, unless they just really enjoy how it feels. That's totally up to you. But if you're using something with higher THC, I would say start much lower than something with a low amount of THC. So one milligram of THC is a really good place to start if you're using THC because it's been shown that two milligrams of THC is kind of the threshold for the psychoactive effects of THC. So if you're very sensitive or new to cannabis or new to CBD products, make sure you're paying a lot of attention to how much THC is actually in your product. If it's gonna, you know, if it's something that you care about is monitoring that kind of intoxication level that THC can bring.

And I guess that's a good time for me to say that any product that you're using, any cannabis product that you're using, you wanna look at a lab test if you can especially like I said, especially if it's gonna be something with THC in it. Because you wanna make sure that the amount of CBD or THC that it's showing you on the

bottle matches the lab test ideally, a third party lab test done by another company, because as you know, CBD, the market is highly unregulated. So people are just putting out products that don't match what is actually on the label. And so you could be taking something with way, way less than you think of CBD or way more. So I think it's important to look at a lab test, which you can usually either find on a company's website or you can get in touch with the company directly and ask them to email you a lab test.

And most reputable companies should have that really readily available for you. So that's just something to think about. If you take a CBD product and you're like, "It didn't work," or nothing happened, or "I just, I'm not sure what's in this," look at the lab test. So that being said, if you're just taking a CBD product, a full-spectrum CBD or any other kind of CBD product, you can start low. I mean, you can start as low as like five milligrams just to see how you react. You may have no reaction to that. And it also depends on kind of the level of relief that you're looking for and the kind of relief that you're looking for. If you're using a topical, for instance, like you said, you're probably not gonna be measuring milligrams. You're probably just gonna be taking like a little bit of the topical and rubbing it on your muscles and seeing how it feels.

But you're using a tincture, which is an oil-based tincture, which is kind of the most common way, I would start with maybe five milligrams and then you wanna wait, you know, at least an hour or so before taking more. You know, it can have effects within 15 minutes or so, but, you know, you just wanna monitor how you feel and then you can kind of up it by five milligrams every couple of days until you find the dose that really works for you. And with CBD, if there's not a lot of THC in it, you don't have to be super careful with, you know, five milligrams versus 10 milligrams when you're upping the dose. It's a little bit more forgiving. But yeah, I would start small and then, you know, a general place that a lot of people start is a little higher, maybe 15 milligrams. But if you're very new to it, I would just start low and then work your way up from there.

Katie: Perfect. And I know you have a lot more detail in the book. People can learn on all of the things we've talked about today. As we get close to the end, a couple of questions that I love to ask. The first being if you had any advice that you could share with the hundreds of thousands of people who will listen to this episode, it doesn't have to be related to mushrooms and CBD, but it could be, what would it be and why?

Jennie: Well, I think overall, with all this and with my, just in general, with wellness, we've talked about this already, but I think the most important thing is to really listen to your own body and listen to your own intuition about what you should be taking. And especially with things like cannabis, you know, people do have their thoughts and ideas about it. I speak to a lot of people that are in the sober community, for instance. And if something doesn't feel right for you, just don't do it. Or if something... You know, like listen to yourself and listen to what feels best for you, because at the end of the day, people can tell you what's good for you all day long and it may not be the right thing for you.

So I just think getting really, really clear on how your body feels is really important with any herb, supplement, or wellness practice that you're doing. I really... I think it's important to keep a journal and to write down how you feel after you take certain things and just make sure whatever wellness protocol you're on is the right one

for you. And I think people really want to be told exactly what they should do with dosing and with what they should be taking, but it is super, super personal. So get to know your body and experiment.

Katie: Such important advice. And I'm so glad you brought that up. I've been guilty of that as well being in the health world for so long. And early on, when I was sick, I was finding things that were helping and I got so dogmatic about those things and would write about them thinking they could help everybody. And what I learned more and more these last few years is that this is so personalized. And I think you're right, everybody...we all have the obligation to do our own research and our own experimentation. And at the end of the day, we find our best health answers when it's very individualized and when we take ownership for that. And I love that you are giving people the tools to do that through your work, but also not being dogmatic in how. So I think that's beautiful advice. And lastly, if there is a book or a number of books that have really influenced your life, what they are and why.

Jenny: Yeah, the first... I mean the one book that really has influenced my life probably more than any other, just because of the journey that it took me on, is "The Artist's Way" by Julia Cameron. And that's a book about basically awakening your creativity. And one of the things that I always felt about myself was that I wasn't creative. And, you know, before I started writing on my blog, I would look at people who I thought were... I thought the only people who were creative were like artists and musicians and poets. And I was like, "Oh, I'm just not creative." But I read the book, "The Artist's Way," and she takes you through a series of prompts and exercises and, you know, guidance to really awaken your own creativity and to find the... Because everybody is creative, right? That's kind of the essence of human beings. We are creative beings and we can create things in so many different ways.

And when I read that book, it helped me to start writing and to start writing about wellness. And following Julia Cameron after I read "The Artist's Way" book, I wanted to go... I wanted more from her because she had really awakened something within me. And I looked her up online just to see if she was speaking in New York City. And she was speaking there at a place called the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, which is where I ended up going to get my health coach certification. But I had no idea about that school until I read "The Artist's Way," followed Julia Cameron, went to go see her speak. And then I learned about this nutrition school and I ended up enrolling. And from then...that was 10 years ago. And that really put me on a path to where I am today. So I'm just super grateful for Julia Cameron.

Katie: I will add that to the show notes along with everything we've talked about. You guys can find all of those notes at wellnessmama.fm, along with a link to Jenny's book, "The Rebel's Apothecary," which is also, I'm sure, available anywhere books are sold. Where can everyone else find you online, Jenny?

Jenny: Thank you so much. They can find me... Yeah, the book is available exactly anywhere books are sold although in this moment, a lot of bookstores are closed, so online. But you can find me. My blog is healthycrush.com, which I kind of have...it's taken a little bit of a backseat since I've been focused on book-writing, but I'm getting back into it. So that's where I've been writing for many years. And then you can find me on Instagram at Jenny Sansouci.

Katie: Perfect. Jenny, thank you so much for your time and for your work and I wish your dad continued health and recovery. And thank you for sharing your knowledge today.

Jenny: Thanks so much for having me

Katie: And thanks as always to all of you for listening and sharing one of your most valuable resources, your time with us. We're both so grateful that you did, and I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of the "Wellness Mama" podcast.

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