



Episode 586: Chloe Weber on Herbalism, Chinese Medicine and Getting Back to Our Radical Roots

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Katie: Hello, and welcome to the "Wellness Mama" podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com. And this episode is all about herbalism, Chinese medicine, and getting back to our radical roots. I'm here with Chloe Weber, who is a doctor of Chinese medicine, an herbalist, an acupuncturist, and the co-founder and owner of Radical Roots, as well as the founder of the Hidden Roots Society. She is an expert in CBD, and we talk a lot about CBD and

terpenes. She's also an avid bio and neuro hacker and mom to her little son named Remy, who has a very rare genetic disorder which causes, among a lot of things, epilepsy.

And in an effort to support him, she did a really deep dive into full spectrum CBD, and the wisdom of Chinese medicine. And we talk a lot about all of those different things today, the difference in Chinese medicine compared to Western approach, why they work differently, and why they can be sometimes even more effective. The three different types of herbs in Chinese medicine, specific herbs and how to use them as a mom, how herbs work with CBD synergistically, what terpenes are, and how they help these products work better, and why the endocannabinoid system is considered our master regulator. It's a fun conversation, I know that you will enjoy. So without any wait, let's join Chloe Weber. Chloe, welcome. Thanks so much for being here today.

Chloe: Thank you. It's an honor to be here. I'm really excited.

Katie: I am excited for our conversation, and we're gonna get to go deep on a lot of topics that I am really excited to learn from you about. But first, I'd love to hear a little bit about your story, because, from my notes, you had a pretty rare condition yourself, and your son also has an extremely rare condition. And we talked briefly before we even started recording, and I think you have some really valuable perspective that moms can hear about this. So, if you don't mind, maybe walk us through a little bit of your journey, and the perspective it's given you.

Chloe: Sure. It's been a very interesting path. As you mentioned, I had a rare tropical disease when I was 15, called cutaneous leishmaniasis. I'd been lucky enough to go hiking in Costa Rica, and came back with a parasitic disease. And so that sort of primed me for the rare and unusual, and gave me some interesting life experience at a challenging time. It was a very interesting thing, having a rare disorder in New York City, as a teenager, with oozing pustules on my arm and face. But then as I grew up, I started studying ecology and evolutionary biology, because what I learned was that I was one of the first people who had been diagnosed with cutaneous leishmaniasis out of Costa Rica. So then I started looking at what we were doing to the environment, and how that was affecting diseases and disease spread throughout the world.

Flash-forward a couple years, I ultimately fell in love with Chinese medicine and acupuncture, and Chinese herbs, and started to look at Chinese herbal medicine as a way to address public health interventions. When I graduated from school with Chinese medicine, which is a really intense three-year program, I decided that I was gonna start a nonprofit herbal company, where we did custom herbal formulas, on a sliding scale. And while I was starting that company, I was pregnant. My son, Remy, was born. He was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder called STXBP1. So, it's this protein disorder. So, basically, what it does is it affects this one protein called the syntaxin-binding protein. And this protein affects how his neurons

communicate. So it affects every aspect of his day-to-day life. So he's nonverbal. He just started walking a couple years ago. He's got intractable epilepsy, Parkinsonian-like tremors, cognitive disabilities, the whole gamut.

But he's also the happiest human the world has ever seen. He's so cute. He is so much fun. But, so, once he was diagnosed, it sort of sent me on a whole different trajectory. And so I left that first business and started Radical Roots, which is the company that I have today, where we combine CBD with Chinese herbs, so that we can potentiate the formulas, and make 'em really powerful. And, you know, I'm just sort of on a mission to really help people build health through Chinese herbal medicine, as opposed to the current reactive model of medicine that we have today.

Katie: And I think that's a perfect jumping-in point. And I'm so glad you brought up acupuncture and Chinese medicine because I've done a decent amount of reading on a personal level about these, and it's not something I've gotten to talk a whole lot about on this podcast yet. And I think, to your point, it's a whole different way of thinking and working with the body than we often get in Western medicine, certainly, even Western alternative medicine. And I think it almost requires, like, a zoned-out understanding of the approach, because a lot of people, it seems like, from the outside, try to kind of just fit it into the symptom-based approach, or kind of, like, Westernize it.

So, to start broad, can you walk us through maybe some of those differences, and also kind of give us a primer on acupuncture and what's going on with acupuncture, for people who aren't familiar? I would guess most people have at least of course heard of it, but maybe don't understand exactly what's happening. And I know, I was introduced to it when I had my third, and he was breech, and I tried acupuncture to turn him, and that's when I first started really learning about it. But I would guess most people have maybe a passing understanding, but not a deep understanding. So kind of walk us through kind of the premise of acupuncture.

Chloe: Sure. Yeah. Well, so, acupuncture is one of the legs of Chinese medicine. So, there's acupuncture, there's Chinese herbal medicine, there's tui na, which is Chinese medicinal massage. Then there's Qigong and Tai Chi, and Chinese nutritional therapy. So, it's this whole beautiful system that's been developed and honed over thousands of years by millions of doctors. Acupuncture is where we use single-use needles. They're very tiny. They're about the size of a hair, so, you can fit 30 acupuncture needles in a typical hypodermic needle. So they're very, very tiny. So, we use these needles throughout the body. We'll do different points, mainly between, mainly from your elbows to your hands and your knees to your feet. But sometimes we'll use other points on your belly, or on your head or your face, or you can use it for facial acupuncture even.

But basically, what we're doing is we are looking to increase the flow of qi and blood throughout the body. So, in Chinese medicine, we sort of, we're looking at the free flow of

energy throughout the body. We're looking at the body and the mind as a dynamic system, as opposed to sort of, you know, if you have an issue, in Western medicine, you're looking at, like, a one-to-one correlation. So, if you have this one bacteria, you're gonna get an antibiotic. If you have a headache, you're gonna get an anti-inflammatory. You know, we're looking at what's causing the headache. Is the headache caused because, you know, you're eating too many sweets and your digestion is weak? Is the headache caused because you're really stressed out and that stress is causing energy to rise to your head?

So, not only do we address the symptoms that are going on, but we're using herbs and acupuncture dynamically in order to address the underlying causes of these symptoms. It's really, I mean, truly, I'm so humbled and honored to be able to practice this medicine. It blows me away every single day. But that's really it. That's the main difference, is that instead of just looking at, you know, the symptom and the relief, you know, which often causes more ailments, you know, as we all know with a lot of the Western pharmaceuticals today, a lot of those come with a lot of different side effects, which then potentiates more issues and then more band-aids. So, with Chinese medicine, we're really looking to address the symptoms, whether that's with acupuncture, whether that's with herbs, whether that's with just energy work and diet.

But we're also looking to, like, really balance the body and harmonize the body overall, so that those symptoms aren't reoccurring, and so that we're building health, as opposed to responding to disease.

Katie: I've gotten to have people on and talk about, you mentioned Tai Chi and Qigong. And that really helped me to understand more of the energetic side of the body, which I think I ignored for a long time. I went deep on the nutritional side and learning about supplements. And those were definitely impactful for me in my own health journey, but I've mentioned on here before, it wasn't until I addressed the energetic side, through working through past traumas, and through the mental health side of it, that I really actually saw the changes. And that kind of opened my eyes to this thing that you mentioned. They had figured out a long time ago, and now, in the Western world, we're so excited to be discovering... And I think it's a much more holistic approach, to your point.

I'd love to talk a little bit more about how the herbs fit into this, because you mentioned all these legs of Chinese medicine. And it seems like even with the herbs, while some of them are kind of almost, like, remedy-based, like you said, we're not targeting a symptom, we're addressing the body as a whole and figuring out where those underlying issues are coming from. But I would guess maybe a lot of people listening haven't been to a Chinese medicine practitioner. So, can you walk us through, like, how those herbs would be used, maybe what that would look like if someone came in with a specific health complaint, and/or if they just were going in for general health?

Chloe: Totally. So, herbs are really the backbone of Chinese medicine, if you go to China. I studied in Harbin in China, and it was just an incredible experience. But they work herbs into foods and into diet. And to your point, I'm very Western-minded also. And so I started out being very focused on the herbs because we can look at the Eastern energetics of it and the Western pharmacological actions of it. But then, through having my son Remy, who's so energetically sensitive, you know, as a nonverbal child, you know, like, you can just watch him when he's with practitioners or just with different people, he responds so powerfully. It started opening me up more to the energetics of everything.

But basically, with Chinese herbal medicine, we sort of have three different classes of herbs. So, some herbs are used traditionally to sort of build and foster health. So, those are sort of the tonic herbs. That's what you're gonna find mainly with my product line with Radical Roots. Those are really building health. You're addressing some of the underlying imbalances in there, and you can see, you know, we try to make the formulas as easy to take off the shelf as possible, so you can work on the things that you're going through, whether it's stress or anxiety or pain. But basically, those are the tonic herbs that are building health. Then there are herbs that are sort of more for, like, acute situations.

So, if you have a very acute cold or flu, per se, you know, it's possible that Chinese herbal medicine has been treating pathogenic factors out of China for 4,000, 5,000 years, so we might have a couple of formulas that might be beneficial for colds and flus, or any sort of acute situation. I mean, I've had food... You know, I used to take Remy to a doctor down in Ecuador. I would get food poisoning every single time, and, like, the herbs are amazing for acute situations, whether it's pain, panic attacks, you know, there are so many different things that we can use herbs for in acute situations. And then the third sort of class of herbs is sort of that in-between, if you're working with a practitioner, if you have sort of a chronic health condition, then you might wanna work with somebody more individually, and get a formula that's more tailored to you.

So if you have an autoimmune disease, I mean, it's not like something like Radical Roots' products wouldn't be helpful off the shelf, but obviously there are practitioners like myself who are trained with thousands of hours, to customize formulas specifically for you. So, to me, that's always the gold standard of Chinese medicine.

Katie: Gotcha. Are there any that you recommend that are kind of general, good-to-have-on-hand, for moms especially? Because I think a lot of people, when we're breaking that Western mindset of, you know, Tylenol for fever, or whatever the normal remedies are in Western medicine, I think even if it's the baby step in, that symptom-based approach of, like, "Oh, these are helpful to have on hand for these specific use cases," and/or, like, general supportive ones that are great for moms or kids.

Chloe: Totally. So, again, the cold and flu ones are fantastic. There's a formula called Yu Ping Feng San, which is, like, an immune-boosting formula. It's got Astragalus in it, and a couple of other herbs. I modified that slightly, and added some antiviral herbs to it, and created our formula Wind Shield. That one's only in capsules, but you could probably find Yu Ping Feng San, you know, anywhere on Amazon, in, like, a tincture for kiddos. I hope to do a kid line at some point. I'm just trying to figure out how to make it as strong and tasty as possible. But, so, Yu Ping Feng San is one that's great. Yin Qiao is pretty commonly known. It's one of the most commonly-used Chinese herbal formulas. You can actually find that at Whole Foods. So, it's Yin Qiao San, Y-I-N Q-I-A-O.

And so, that one's great if you have a, for early-stage cold, and you have a sore throat. So, we really look at the different ways that these things present. So, when we're talking about cold and flus in Chinese medicine, we really hone it into the symptoms. So, it could be the sore throat, or, like, if your cough, is your cough phlegmy? Is it not phlegmy? Is it green? Is it yellow? Like, do you have a headache also? So, we look at all of those different things, and have different formulas for that. But Yin Qiao's one that you definitely wanna have on hand. And then, in terms of, for moms, I mean, I can tell you, I started this company so that I could make Remy his formula, because seizures are the worst thing that I've ever had to experience.

But I can tell you the Revive, and the Rest + Relax, our formulas, have helped me so much gain in terms of, like, gaining back my sense of self, and, like, energy, and my ability to show up in the way that I once did before the exhaustion and the stress that is being a mom in these times. But yeah, we also have our Flow State, which is a formula that's based off of Xiao Yao San, which is another really commonly-used formula in Chinese medicine. They also call it Free and Easy Wanderer. So, that one's all about the free flow of qi throughout the blood. So you can look at it like when you get stressed, the blood sort of constrains, and then there's not a free flow of qi. So that's when you're gonna see, like, PMS symptoms, that irritability.

So this formula has traditionally been used to help support and regulate women's cycles. And we use it a lot for people who have PMS symptoms. But there's a ton of research on how this formula also helps with anxiolytic, anti-anxiety properties and neuroprotectant properties. And then what we did was we added the CBD to it also, which acts on the 5-HT1A pathway in the brain, which is the same pathway that most SSRIs are working on. It also increases neurogenesis in the hippocampus. I mean, the amount of things that CBD does is absolutely mind-blowing. But, so, we added that to that formula. So, Flow State is definitely another one that I recommend for moms to have on hand.

Katie: And let's talk more about the CBD side, because you mentioned a lot of these products stack the herbs with CBD. And I've read a little bit about terpenes, and how they can kind of influence the way CBD works in the body. I might be butchering the explanation of that. But is

that kind of what's happening in your formula, or how do they work synergistically with the CBD, and what does that, how does that differ from just the herbs alone?

Chloe: So, CBD and cannabis has been used traditionally in Chinese herbal medicine for thousands of years, which is really, really fun for us. One of the things that I see clinically is that, you know, when you're in that fight-or-flight mode, when you're in that chronically stressed mode, whether it's physiological or neurological, which most of us are under both, especially in this day and age, but if you're looking at the toxins that are in your body and your, everywhere, we're definitely under physiological stress, whether you're dealing with a chronic health condition or not. CBD helps calm the nervous system, helps reduce that inflammation, reduce that sort of fight-or-flight.

And from what I see, it helps the body take in and absorb the herbs in a more powerful way, by activating that endocannabinoid system. So, the endocannabinoid system is kind of a master regulatory system of the body. And I like to think of it as, you know, helping you stay in that Goldilocks zone. You don't wanna be hyper-firing. You don't wanna be hypo-firing. So, it's, in Chinese medicine, we bring it back to what we know as the middle way. So, it's this whole art of finding that balance, that middle way, and staying away from those extremes, which is something that I think that our society has gotten very far away from these days that I think we could learn a lot from. But it's pretty powerful how the endocannabinoid system works.

And basically, when we're under chronic stress, we use up all of our endogenous cannabinoids that we make within our body. And so, by supplementing with a high-quality, clean CBD product, then we're able to replenish the endocannabinoid stores, and help our body sort of get back to that balance. The way that they work with the herbs is really synergistic, because what we do is we look at whole-plant medicine. So, all of our Chinese herbs are put together as whole plants, you know, and we use these plants together to create dynamic formulas, as I said, so we're not only addressing the symptoms, we're addressing the underlying ailments that are going on within the body, and the underlying disharmony.

So, all the research on hemp that's been coming out has been really interesting, because they keep talking about the entourage effect, which is the idea that the whole is greater than the parts. So, as you were saying with the terpenes, the terpenes are the volatile oils of the plant, sort of the essential oils that are in hemp. So, anybody who's smelled cannabis can say that it's a very pungent smell. You can't miss it. That's the terpene profile. And each of these terpenes are essential oils that have their own magical, wonderful properties to it. So, having the terpenes as a part of your cannabis extract is really important, but then you also have the cannabinoids in there, and a ton of other phytocannabinoids. So, it's pretty fun, and then you put it together and it's magic.

Katie: Yeah. And a couple points of clarification that I think are important in the conversation, is just a little bit more understanding of the difference between cannabis with THC, and CBD-

based products from hemp, and maybe understanding the levels of each of those, of CBD and THC in each, because I think... I've heard of people being hesitant to even use CBD, because of the connection to cannabis. And I think this is an important thing to understand because it can be so helpful. And you mentioned our endogenous endocannabinoid system, and how this is, like, a very vital part of the body, but I think some people still have a little bit of hesitation around it because of that connection.

Chloe: Totally. So, any hemp product that you're gonna find on the market is gonna have less than 0.3% THC. So that's a very, very, very small amount of THC in it. To me, it's very important that we have that small amount of THC in it because it potentiates the actions of the plant as a whole. So, when we talk about the endocannabinoid system, there's two primary receptors. So, there's the CB1 receptors, which are in the brain, and then the CB2 receptors, which are found throughout the body and in the immune system. So, THC acts directly upon the CB1 receptors, which is why, if you have a significant neurological condition like epilepsy or Parkinson's, MS, or even intractable pain, you might wanna increase your THC content.

But otherwise, you just need a tiny bit of THC to really potentiate the actions of the CBD. So, CBD, instead of acting directly on the receptors, what it does is it acts sort of like an SSRI. So it makes it so that our body's endogenous cannabinoids are more available. They're not being broken down as rapidly.

I know this gets a little bit confusing, but the gist of it is that CBD is really helpful, having a little bit of THC is more beneficial, and you're not gonna get stoned from any CBD products on the market. It's really just a tiny, tiny amount. But I would say that if you do have some of those more significant neurological conditions, you may wanna look into increasing THC, just because that's gonna help with a lot of those symptoms.

Katie: And you mentioned the full spectrum, and it working better as a whole like that. Can you give a little bit more clarity around the difference between full-spectrum versus isolate? Because I've seen products with isolate forms, and why we would want more of a full-spectrum?

Chloe: Totally. So, isolates are really popular. They're really cheap. They're making a lot of pharmaceuticals off of isolates. So, there was actually a meta-analysis done a couple of years ago that I always love referencing. It compared... There's a new drug for epilepsy called Epidiolex, and it's a CBD isolate that's been turned into a pharmaceutical. So, this meta-analysis looked at the effectiveness of Epidiolex versus a complete-spectrum hemp extract. So, that has the terpenes, all the different cannabinoids, all the different phytochemicals from the plant. So, what they found in this meta-analysis was that you needed four to five times the amount of the isolate to get the same seizure threshold reduction as the full-spectrum extract. And it also showed that they had four to five times the amount of side effects from the isolate at that higher level.

So, basically, all of these different chemicals working together in the plant works more safely and more effectively than the isolate. And this is shown in, like, research when you're looking at full plant extracts versus chemical isolates for pharmaceuticals, in many different ways. There's research on the Chinese herb qinghao and malaria, which has been made into the drug Artemisinin. So, it's basically the idea, again, the entourage effect, the whole is greater than the part. And I think that we just need to remember that mother nature is much smarter than us, and that using these plants as a whole plant is always gonna be safer and more effective, or almost always. I can't think of any example where that would not be true.

Katie: Can you explain a little bit more about how the endocannabinoid system works? Because I also feel like this is one that is not as talked about, but it seems like the more we learn, the more important this is in understanding that kind of holistic view of how the body works.

Chloe: Yeah. Well, the endocannabinoid system is really fun because the more you start researching into it, it affects really every aspect of the body. And again, it's bringing in the sort of regulatory aspects, where it's decreasing pain, it's decreasing inflammation. There are receptors literally on every immune cell of our body for the endocannabinoid system. So there's very little that the endocannabinoid system is not affecting. And I would be very surprised if we don't find just more and more research coming out as we learn more and more about different receptors and about different cannabinoids.

So, in the cannabis plant, there's also, there are 113 different cannabinoids. So, we mainly talk about CBD and THC. But, you know, you're gonna be learning more about CBG and CBN, and all of these other cannabinoids that are being researched more and more now. But the main ways that I think of the endocannabinoid system working are, you can look at it in terms of immune health.

It's really fantastic for regulating immune health. There's a lot of research on it regulating cytokine storms, helping boost immune systems, and keeping colds and flus out of the system. A lot of research coming out on using CBD for autoimmune disorders, and using the endocannabinoid system for that. Actually, there's a really cool research study that showed that mice that had traumatic events, three generations lower had...the mice three generations lower had shifts in their endocannabinoid systems as well. So you can look at it as generational, you know, holding generational trauma. I mean, it's really, really fascinating. But so, immune health, gut health, I think that that's something that's really not well understood or discussed. CBD is really essential in terms of helping with gut health. It potentiates *Akkermansia muciniphila*, which is one of those hot bacterias, and I'm probably absolutely saying it wrong a thousand percent.

It helps with peristalsis. There's a lot of research on CBD when it comes to cancer, whether it's colon cancer or breast cancer. I mean, it's pretty astounding. And then, in terms of how it

helps the brain, I mean, there's just a ton of research on that. But basically, I just look at it as...I look at it as the type of plant and the type of supplement that if you have a high-quality product, that you should really just take every day. And I'm not just saying that because I own a CBD company. I genuinely feel like it's something that helps us A, sort of reconnect with nature, but also reconnect with ourselves through that, because it just affects really every aspects of our body and functioning.

Katie: Yeah. I've heard it referred to, and I think you've even said this in other interviews as kind of your body's master regulator. And one question I've heard people ask before is, you know, why do we have a need for the... Like, why do we need to supplement with these now? Is this something that we used to get and we're not getting as much now? Like, for instance, magnesium used to be much more prevalent in our food supply than it is now. Or why are we having, it seems like, an increased need to actually supplement with these kind of compounds now?

Chloe: Yeah, that's a great question. So, we used to have hemp in our diets all of the time. So, our animals used to eat hemp, and we used to eat hemp, and then it was taken out of our diet pretty dramatically, I believe in the '20s. So yes, we absolutely literally took that out of our diet completely. So that's something that we are no longer supplemented with just through our diet. Even, you know, I've heard somebody talk about, and I've talked about this in other podcasts, chickens used to be fed hemp, and when they would lay an egg, if you would cook and eat that egg, it would be, like, 500 milligrams of CBD, essentially. So, you know, we used to have hemp in our diets, and we also... So, that was taken out of our diets.

And then on top of that, basically, we have those endogenous cannabinoids, which I talked about earlier, and we make those ourselves. And when we're under increased stress, we run through those stores of endogenous cannabinoids really quickly, because you're like, "Oh, man. I'm in pain. Oh, I'm overwhelmed." You know, whatever it is. So we run through our endogenous stores of that really quickly because we are just under constant assault these days when it comes to stress. And so this way, having the additional supplement helps us keep regulating that system when we sort of run low on what we're doing because we're just burned out.

Katie: That makes sense. And also, I think it's important to understand with herbs, and probably CBD as well, I would guess, is that these are not like we're used to thinking in the pharmaceutical sense, in the Western world, where you are gonna take something and maybe necessarily feel an immediate effect. I feel like sometimes with herbs, you absolutely do, but it seems like they also have almost, like, a compounding effect over time, especially with CBD. Is that... That's my intuitive sense, having used them, but is that actually happening, that they can kind of, like, positively affect the body over time? And if so, what's that kind of average

timeline for someone to understand, if they're gonna start taking herbs, to begin to notice an effect?

Chloe: Yeah. Herbs are definitely...Well, I also think it's funny, because I have a lot of patients who will quickly hesitate to take herbs for a long time, or assume that herbs aren't working if it's been, like, a week or two that they've been on herbs. Meanwhile, people will give antidepressants or anti-anxiety meds months, and add on multiple different pharmaceuticals while they're waiting for it to work. So, you know, I think pharmaceuticals often do work in the same way. I think we just, you know, are less patient when it comes to herbs a lot of the time. Mainly because there's a lot of...there's a lack of education about it for people. But CBD is really helpful over time. As I mentioned, it increases neurogenesis in the hippocampus. It helps regulate the brain. It helps regulate the body. It builds beneficial bacteria.

So, it's really doing so many things behind the scenes, but what you're really gonna feel, what I noticed most powerfully for me, is that I feel more like myself, you know. And I think that a lot of moms can probably relate to this. You're just, like, frantic, you've got so much going on, and, like, there's just no...there's no pause. So, like, for me, CBD helps me come back to me, and gives me a little bit more space also to start continuing to incorporate little steps into my life, to be more healthy, to be more vibrant, to make more space for myself, and more patient with my child or, you know, whatever it is that we're doing. So, it allows me to show up in my best possible self at any time.

But yeah, it's not this magic cure. You're not just gonna, you know... I think a lot of people think that CBD, since there's so much hype, people have gotten to this idea that we're just gonna, like, you're gonna take it and all of your pain and all of your issues are gonna go away. You know, that's really not the case. You know, our herbs in particular, when we're adding them with Chinese herbs that are tonic herbs, they're gonna boost you up over time, and build health foundationally. But they're also gonna, you know, I also look at herbal medicine as an opportunity to give yourself the space to also continue your healing process, you know, because sometimes we just need that first step.

Katie: For sure. And you mentioned the blend of herbs that helps with PMS and female-related problems. I'm curious if there are any that you have that are specifically helpful for sleep, because this is a common complaint I hear from a lot of moms, and certainly I saw this too, is when I had my first son, it was like, I went from being a super deep sleeper to, I could hear him breathe differently three rooms away and I was awake. And even now that my kids are older, I still have that, like, hypervigilance a little bit. And I've worked really hard to get my sleep into a really good routine, but I know a lot of moms really struggle with getting enough sleep, and quality sleep. So, are there Chinese medicine solutions that help with sleep?

Chloe: Yeah. Well, I mean, I would say, just to make a pitch for Chinese medicine as a whole, as a practitioner, as a human, as somebody who very much cares, I have never seen Western

medicine do a better job of treating literally anything besides an acute situation, like a broken something, than I have seen Chinese medicine, when it's properly applied and when patients are compliant and following the practitioners. So, for any of you who are dealing with chronic stress, chronic health disorders, chronic insomnia, I would very highly, very strongly encourage you to find a practitioner of Chinese medicine, get regular acupuncture, get regular herbs.

Acupuncture can be really expensive, so you can look into community acupuncture clinics. There are a lot of people who donate treatments. There are a lot of different ways that you can make it more affordable. Herbs are a way that you can sort of extend that, but really incorporating the wisdom of Chinese medicine as a whole into your life is really something that is absolutely mind-blowing. And I think in today's society, where we're so focused on rushing and quick fixes, I think the more that we can go back to this brilliant wisdom that we've been gifted, the better we're gonna do. But when it comes to sleep, just honing it back and I'll get back, in terms of our formulas, our Rest + Relax formula is by far our best seller. We have it in an oil version, which makes it really fast-acting, so if you're the type of person that wakes up in the middle of the night, the oil is the one that I recommend. The capsules, we also have.

That one is stronger, because that one has the water solubles and the oil solubles. We have a really cool extraction technique called spagyrics, that's really unique. And we get all this minerals and salts from the plants into it. But so, the capsules are stronger, so if you have sort of, I look at it as the monkey mind insomnia, where you're going to bed and, like, you can't stop thinking about all the things that you have to do, I would get the capsules, but if you have the type of insomnia where you're waking up between 1-3am, then you might wanna try the oils, because that'll get you back to sleep faster.

Katie: Good to know. And I think you're right. It's funny to me watching the stories come out about them validating now how meditation is, actually turns out, scientifically very good for the brain, and, you know, everywhere else in the world, they've known this for a very long time. Or things like Qigong, having tried that now, it's amazing how much of a difference you feel, but also, wearing wearables all the time, I see a difference in my heart rate variability and my sleep. And it's really fun to see science and, you know, in the U.S. starting to validate these things that practitioners have known for thousands of years.

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This episode is brought to you by Wellnesse. That's wellness with an e on the end, my line of non-toxic, family focused personal care products including haircare, oral care and deodorant. At my house, kids toothbrushes and kids strawberry toothpaste are the favorites. The toothbrushes come in a 3-pack of fun colors, which makes it easy for my kids to know which brush is theirs. The strawberry toothpaste tastes great so there aren't any fights about tooth brushing, and I love that it's formulated around hydroxyapatite, a naturally occurring mineral found in tooth enamel. All of our toothpastes use only EWG verified safe ingredients, are free of toxins, and are packed with ingredients that naturally support the oral microbiome for stronger, healthier, whiter teeth naturally. Check out these and all of our products at wellnesse.com

And we've touched on the mental health side a little bit. I think this is another big pain point for a lot of moms. And certainly over the last few years seems to have intensified, with everything everybody has going on. And with the recent meta-analysis coming out, showing that maybe depression, our understanding of depression wasn't maybe holistic, and we didn't have a complete understanding of what's happening in the brain when someone's depressed, and calling into question perhaps that these drugs that many people take aren't as effective, and could be counterproductive in the long term, I would guess that Chinese medicine has a lot of suggestions and solutions when it comes to mental health, and you touched on a couple of 'em, especially for moms, but anything else under the umbrella of mental health that you would wanna talk about just from a Chinese medicine perspective?

Chloe: Yeah. Well, it really is the difference in, you know, again, sort of looking at the whole ecology of the body and the brain, looking at how our bodies are working as a whole, as opposed to, you know, here's this symptom, here's this ailment, you know. We look at the body and the brain as a whole system. They're completely interconnected. So, as we talked about, you know, we look for patterns of disharmony within the body. So, we use a lot of environmental terms in order to describe physiological actions, because, you know, this medicine was created thousands of years ago, so we didn't have microscopes and whatnot. But so we might look at, you know, different pathogenic factors that can either invade the body or come about within the body. So, you know, as I talked about with qi, that's sort of the energy of the body. That can get stagnant, and that can cause depression. Often, you're gonna see that, you know, in that sort of stress pattern.

Another form of depression that you might see, as I was mentioning, is sort of the digestive weakness. So, we call that spleen qi deficiency in Chinese medicine. If you have spleen qi deficiency, you're gonna be more prone to worrying. You're gonna have that monkey mind before bed. You might have some loose stools. You might be prone to having allergies. You know, we have different patterns of disharmony based on how your whole body is working, and all of the things that we're gonna look at and talk to you individually by. So it's really fascinating to see how Western medicine, you know, like, to see the comparison between these pharmaceuticals, that again, just address one pathway. And it's always really funny to me, because people will always ask me, like, "What pathways do these herbs work on, and what do they do?" And, like, I love nerding out on all of that, but I'm like, "It's so much more complex and beautiful than that." It's not only what pathways do each individual herb work on, but then how are these herbs working together? And this is all wisdom, again, that's been honed for thousands of years.

But yeah, I think it's important to sort of look at your body, your overall health, and get an idea of where that might be coming from. So, I think a lot of people have been sort of taught to ignore themselves, ignore their bodies, especially as moms. So the more that we can sort of check in with ourselves and be like, you know, like, how is my digestion doing? How do I feel when I eat this? How is my energy, you know? I know wearing a trackable for my sleep has made a huge difference for me. You know, I think tracking your period, looking at all of these things, and seeing where am I out of balance? What could I do? What are the little things that I can do day-to-day to try and bring myself back into harmony? I think, you know, as moms, again, we just get so overwhelmed, there's so much to do, but I think the more that we can take care of ourselves, the more that we can take care of our families, then, you know, that just has this greater impact on society at large.

Katie: Absolutely. I think that's a recurring theme, and a hard one, admittedly, for moms, but it's that whole very overused cliché of put your own mask on first. And that's such an easy thing to say and a hard thing to do, but it seems like Chinese medicine offers a whole other

array of solutions that can really help with that, and help with the mental health side and the energy side and the sleep side, and all of those then have ripple effects into the rest of our lives as well.

And I wanna circle back to something we talked about in the beginning as well, because you mentioned your son and him having special needs, and I've worked quite extensively with kids with special needs. Even in high school and college, I got to work at a camp with kids kind of with an array of different special needs, including some very, very severe ones who were completely not mobile.

And it was very formative for me. And, like, I would guess from...I would immediately see this with your son, but those were some of the most incredible people I ever met in my life. And they are just joyful, and happy and blissful, and also go through things that many of us couldn't even imagine. And I'm sure, as a mom who's living that day-to-day, you have such amazing perspective, and so I'm curious if you have any words for other moms in how we can raise our kids to be, like, helpful and kind, and inclusive and loving in a world where people have conditions that may not appear normal. And how do we interact with that in a loving way?

Chloe: Yeah. No, I love this question. Well, one, I would love for everybody to understand how much we all love our kids. So, you know, I think that often, people...I see people get nervous about asking me questions or talking to me about Remy, or asking about his differences. For me, I could talk about Rem all day long. I could not be more proud of him. I think he is just an absolute superhero, and I love talking about him.

One thing that I really wish that all moms and parents would work on for us is that, you know, we're all at the place where we're talking to our kids about genders, sex, races, all of that, like, please, please just include the conversation about ability. I think for some reason in our society, we have...it's something that we're so uncomfortable with is talking about abilities, and different abilities, and disabilities, and however you wanna put it.

And I understand that there's, you know, the conversation can be uncomfortable and difficult, but really, just talk to your kids about different abilities. It doesn't have to be complex. Most of the time when I talk to younger children about Remy, I just say, "You know, his brain works differently than yours. And so, you know, some of the things that come really easy to you are really hard for him. So he can't talk verbally, but he's got a speech device, and, like, he talks with his iPad, and he's just learning how to walk, but he's getting close." And, you know, and then I'll focus on, you know, so, "He's really different in some ways, but he also loves playing with water and bubbles, and going on the swings, and, you know. So, most of the time, it doesn't have to be that complicated of a conversation, and kids really embrace it, and are very, very sweet.

But it is really hard sometimes as a special needs mom when, you know... We're already very isolated, you know. I remember when the pandemic started, everybody was just so overwhelmed, and, like, horrified at the levels of isolation that everybody was going through. And I remember literally just checking in with myself and being like, "Huh. Literally nothing's changed in my life." Like, this is just a Tuesday. Like, there's no increase in isolation whatsoever. So, for a community that's already so isolated and so tapped out, you know, it's heartbreaking for us if we're at the playground, and your kids wanna ask a question, or wanna come over and say hi, or asking why my son's in a adaptive stroller or whatever, and you sort of pull 'em away.

Like, I would... And I can't speak for every special needs mom, obviously, but I would a thousand percent rather an uncomfortable conversation that leads to inclusion than avoiding the conversation altogether, you know? But it would be great if more people would have this conversation at home to start, and then help us as special needs parents facilitate the conversation with your kids, because a lot of times, kids come up to me and my son solo, and that can be sort of tricky because I don't know what your child understands, and I wanna, you know, help educate as best as possible, but, you know. So that's one thing that I think would be really, really helpful for our community.

Katie: Yeah. I feel like that's such valuable perspective, and it seems like kids, for the most part, they come from this place of genuine curiosity, and they have just genuine questions, and often, it seems like it's easier for them to understand some things than it is for adults, and they probably hear your explanation and go, "Oh, that's really cool. I wanna see his iPad. How does it work?" And then it becomes a bridging point for them to learn, and also for them to connect with your son, and probably beautiful learning all the way around.

Chloe: Totally. Kids are so, so wonderful. You know, but I think that they... It really does seem to be a weird thing that we as a society shun disabilities and that conversation. And it's interesting because I'm like, almost all of us will be in some way disabled at some point. Like, we need to be able to have these conversations, you know? Like, we see elderly people who are disabled. Like, we need to talk about accessibility.

And unfortunately, more and more children are, you know, having neurological differences, or however you wanna say it. You know, like, there's a massive uptick in neurodiversity, and neurological challenges and disabilities in children. So, you know, the more we can have this conversation, the more kids are gonna be accepting. But yeah, I find kids are wonderful if you talk to them about it. They really don't even ask that many questions. You just gotta, like, jump in.

But yeah, it's hard. I have a harder time when people avoid the conversation than just jumping in and talking. I mean, and now I'm at the point, I don't know if it works or not. I've just started, like, if kids are just staring at Remy, like, I'll just be like, "Do you have any questions?"

And, like, you know, and normally I feel like maybe that makes them nervous. But I'm learning also, you know? Like, I don't necessarily... I was a camp counselor and a soccer coach forever. I'm mainly with the child with special needs. I don't know the best way to approach neurotypical kids these days anymore, because I live in my bubble as well, you know? So that's why I was like, you know, the more we can facilitate it together and bridge that gap, the better it's gonna be for everybody.

Katie: Yeah. And I think a valuable even deeper life lesson for all of us is, you know, ask questions with kindness and curiosity. I think we would all get a lot farther. I actually grew up with two hearing-impaired parents. And so I got to experience some of that as a child, on the child side of it, with my parents. And I'm really grateful for that perspective and that experience. And I'm grateful that my kids now are getting to grow up and learn sign language and interact with my parents in a different way, and that they're able to have that curiosity. But I'm really glad you so eloquently explained that. Hopefully, that gives some great perspective that leads to more inclusion and great conversations. And our time has flown by. You're so easy to talk to you. A couple last questions I love to ask. The first being if there is a book or a number of books that have profoundly impacted your life, and if so, what they are and why.

Chloe: I've been very deeply moved by the Tao Te Jing, which is no great surprise, as a practitioner of Chinese medicine. I don't think many people have read the Dao. It is basically somewhat of a religious text, philosophical text, but it's a number of sort of poems and passages that sort of help teach you how to live, or guide you on your path.

And the general theme is that, you know, the universe is unfolding as it should, and that as long as you trust in that and trust in yourself, and you're a good person, and you put your heart forward, then the universe will unfold as it can. And my favorite passage is the 33rd Dao, which is knowing oneself is enlightenment. And, you know, it's really, you know, again, bringing it back to, especially as moms, like, the more that we can actually care for ourselves and take that time for ourselves, the stronger we can be, the more centered we can be in who we are, the more we're gonna pass that down to our children, the more we're gonna see those ripples affect throughout society and throughout the world. So, I always encourage everybody to read the Dao. It's really simple. It's really profound, really simple. And it just is, it's almost like CBD in some ways. It's just gonna help remind you of who you are, in a lot of ways, and bring you back to center, I feel like. So, that's what it's always done for me.

Katie: Yeah. That's a great point for moms, because it's so easy, naturally to take care of our kids, and often so hard to take care of ourselves. But if we step back and look at what's the most effective way to encourage our kids to want to do anything, it's not by telling them to do it. It's not by forcing them to do it. It's not even by encouraging them to do it. It's by us doing it, and them seeing the example of modeling it, even whether it's simple things, like if I hope

my kids wanna get into art, if I sit down and start drawing or painting, they're much more likely to come do it with me, or, I want them to be active. If I'm active, they follow that example, and same thing with taking care of ourselves. I just think that's a tough one for moms, and a great reminder from you today. And lastly, any parting advice for the listeners that could be related to one of the many things we've talked about, or entirely unrelated?

Chloe: Well, just tying it back to everything, you know, again, as moms, we just get so overwhelmed, and I think there's this, you know, we're expected to do everything, and have everything together. And, you know, a lot of times people get overwhelmed with making changes, or start to believe that they need to make these profound changes in order to make a shift. You know, what I've found as a practitioner, and as a human who has been through a lot of stuff, it's the little things. So, I always say that something is better than nothing. You know, like, take your herbs, or meditate for two minutes, or go for a little walk, you know. You know, when I'm looking at dietary shifts, often I'll tell my patients, you know, like, "All right, cool. So, like, you're not ready to cut out gluten, dairy, and sugar today. Fine. I understand. I cried when I had to cut out gluten. I get it. But, like, maybe add an apple as a snack in between your meals, so that when you get to dinner, you're eating less of the French fries," or whatever it is.

You know, like, I think that focusing on those little tiny steps are the way to, like, build sustainable health, and to make those shifts overall, as opposed to, you know, looking at this big picture of this big profound life shift that often is too much for us to really sustain. So, really, the power is in the little steps, when Remy's doctor always says, "Poco, poco." So, little by little, you know, just move imperfectly in the direction of your dreams, and things will change.

Katie: I think that's a perfect summary and a perfect place to wrap up. Chloe, thank you so much for your time and being here today. This was such a fun conversation.

Chloe: Thank you. It's been an honor. It's been a lot of fun.

Katie: And thanks to all of you, as always, for sharing your most valuable resources, your time, your energy, and your attention with us today. 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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