



Medicine Stories Podcast

Episode 53 with Kami McBride

Healing Herbal Oils: How to Make and Use them

August 5, 2019

[0:00:00]

(Excerpt from today's show by Kami McBride)

The beauty of the herbal oiling that I've found with my students and clients over the last 30 years is that it not only does all this healing, but it provides this other piece that we need to know about herbalism, and that's knowing about our body.

[0:00:19]

(Intro Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

Amber: Hello friends! And welcome to the Medicine Stories podcast, where we are remembering what it is to be human upon the earth.

This is Episode 53, and I'm your host, Amber Magnolia Hill. Today I'm sharing my third interview with my teacher, Kami McBride.

Her last two interviews have been so wildly popular and well-received. Her first was [Episode 20: Herbalism, Menstruation, and Innate Knowing](#), and then [Episode 39: Kitchen Herbalism- The Body Remembers](#).

We haven't talked about oils on the podcast yet, which is CRAZY because Kami taught me how to make herbal infused oils. They've been a HUGE, huge part of my life and have improved it vastly on so many levels. And Kami's the master! So I'm just so happy to finally have her on to talk about this. I did talk about them in Episode 23: The Profound Medicine of Herbal Body Oils, but we just get so much deeper into it today with Kami.

So, as she says in this episode, "Every woman throughout time has taken some kind of plant and some kind of fat, put it together and used it as some kind of medicine." I love that, and the way that I see it is herbal body oils are the One Remedy to Rule Them All. It's just the best intro into herbalism if you're new to it. I can't imagine a life without having many herbal body oils on my shelf, and I get asked about how to make them and how to use them ALL THE TIME, and I'm so happy that my wonderful teacher, Kami, teaches this online now so I have a place to send people.

This is how you make them. This is how you use them and learn from, again, truly, like, the master and an innovator in this form of herbal medicine-making.

So, quick listener shout-out: this is from Kelly Ireland, written in the Medicine Stories Facebook Group. She said, “Just popping in to say THANK YOU for pointing me (us) in the direction of Kami McBride. She rocks and has given me the confidence I needed to get on with making the oils I want.”

So this early August time of year is when Kami releases her amazing free videos online, Healing Herbal Oils Workshop. It’s a series of three videos, and when you sign up to access them, you will learn how to make fresh plant-infused herbal body oil, and how to make dried plant-infused herbal body oil. So the link to that is going to be in the show notes. They’re only available for like a couple weeks, so hopefully, if you’re into it, you’re listening right when this episode comes out because this is what people ask all the time:

- How do I know to make fresh or dried?
- And then, how DO I make fresh or dried?
- And what’s the process with dried for extracting the most potent medicine?
- And with fresh, how am I preventing spoilage with all the little nuances, various things that can go wrong when you’re working with a fresh plant in oil?

It’s almost like a chemistry experiment if you don’t know what you’re doing, and what you’re looking for, and how to prevent that spoilage, which Kami taught me years ago, which people are posting about in the Medicine Stories Facebook Group all the time, and which you will learn how to do if you watch these videos, so you’ll be super stoked on that. Again, the link is in the show notes. It’s so worth your time!

So the free videos are, you know, in a sort of welcome to Kami’s full-on, fabulous, handcrafted, healing herbal oils online course, which has completely changed my life and changed my oil-making in the last few years. I absolutely love it. So you want to sign up for the free videos and get all that value and wisdom that people are constantly looking for and asking me for and posting about in my Facebook group. And then, if you want to and you’re able to take it to the next level and dive so much deeper into the online course (which you don’t have to do if you just sign up for those free videos), but if you do, you will receive my herbal body oiling e-book from four years ago and that I just updated, called *Herbal Body Oiling: Ancient Sacrament, Modern Necessity*. So this is only if you sign up via my link because, of course, I’m an affiliate for this course. I’m singing the praises of herbal body oils all the time, year-round for ten years now. I’ve been making them myself for thirteen years? Something like that. If you sign up using my link, which is the one you’ll find in the show notes, then you’ll get my e-book which is, oh, I don’t even know how many pages it is now, 45? Even longer, I think since I just updated it. And what is included in this e-book is a little introduction to welcome you home to yourself and this remembrance of really deep profound sacred self-care, beyond just “#selfcare.”

I talk about what others have to say after using herbal body oils, just like, some testimonials and wise words from other humans who are remembering this ancient technique.

- Writing about what our ancestors knew about using fat on the body

- Telling a little bit of my story and how this overwhelmed mama with a highly sensitive nervous system found her medicine.
- And then we get deep into the functioning of the nervous system and how fats and oils when applied to the skin benefit, nourish the nerves
- And then we talk about the lymphatic and immune systems
- How to use herbal body oils
- How to make fresh plant-infused herbal body oils - so that's really what I have most experience in. It's only been in the last couple years through Kami that I've learned more about the dried plant method. So this is just, like, my step-by-step method for using fresh plant oils.
- A partial list of healing herbs and their medicinal actions
- A little bit about different carrier oils
- And then it conclusions some action steps, like, first steps for it from here
- Some resources, notes and suggested reading

And then I have two bonuses: the first is called "What is the difference between herbal body oils, essential oils, and flower essences?" So it's really just breaking down some often-confused categories of herbal medicine for people who are new to the plant path. And then the second bonus is all about oil pulling, which I love doing so much. Really haven't done much since my youngest was born three years ago 'cause as if I have 20 minutes in the morning to myself to not be engaging and talking while I have oil in my mouth, but I love oil pulling, and I can't wait to get back into it.

[0:08:18]

Amber: So let me read just one thing from this e-book. This is "Commonly Reported Effects of Consistent Herbal Body Oiling"

So this is what I hear from my customers all the time. This is what I experience. This is what I've learned from Kami and other teachers and just talking to other herbalists who are using body oils in their daily life:

- Relaxed muscles
- Better sleep
- Increased immunity
- Softer, healthier skin
- Calmer nerves
- Better movement and less stiffness in the joints
- Pain relief
- Increased warmth and circulation
- Clearer thinking
- Feeling more centered
- Increased energy and stamina
- And deeper self-knowledge and greater self-love

I know that last one sounds like a tall order, but you will hear Kami and I talk about that very thing in this interview and how we've both found that to be such an amazing outcome of using herbal body oils and getting to know the terrain of our own bodies on a deeper level.

So yeah, know that we're not talking about essential oils here. And that bonus to my e-books breaks down the difference, but just to make that clear at the beginning, we are talking about whole plant-infused oils.

[0:09:43]

Amber: So before we get into it, I'm happy to announce that our St. John's Wort Herbal Body Oil is finally back in stock. We sold out early this year, back in the spring. We made a lot more this year. We searched high and far in the Sierra for beautiful happy stands of joyful, yellow St. John's Wort flowers, just dripping with the hypericin. The hypericin is the medicinal constituent of St. John's Wort that you can see come out in the oil when you infused it. And it's what gives it that deep, deep red color. That's how you know your St. John's Wort oil is super potent and going to be so effective for so many things. I'm not even gonna talk about it because Kami and I talked about it when we recorded this interview a few weeks ago.

But listen until the very end of the episode and I will give you a ten percent off coupon code if you would like to score some St. John's Wort oil for yourself and experience the magic (*Amber laughs*), the medicine, the pain relief, the relaxation, the help with insomnia that St. John's Wort so effortlessly imparts when we use it. I can't imagine going a day of my life without St. John's Wort Oil, truly. And it's just a really good feeling to have it back in stock because so many people have been waiting for it because it makes their lives better every day in so many ways.

So just briefly in the episode, Kami mentions Dr. Ladd and I realize some people surely will not know who he is. I only do because, well, I'm an herbalist. He's a well-known Ayurvedic physician and teacher who Kami studied with. Dr. Vasant Ladd, and I'll put a link in the show notes, of course.

And I want to let you know that we ended up recording the beginning and the ending of this episode on two different days a couple weeks apart because of some sound issues. So there's a little bit of repeat, like, not much at all, just a couple seconds worth, but maybe enough to make you go, "Wait, she just said that. Why'd she say it again?" but that's why - because we recorded them a couple weeks apart. And then there's a little bit of glitchy sounds at the end. It's not too bad, but just so you know. Just so you know. My audio guy is amazing, and he'll probably make it sound a lot better to you than it does to me at this moment.

[0:12:20]

Amber: So alright.

That was a good intro. I think I said everything I needed to say. Listen to the end to get a 10% coupon code that's going to expire August 19, 2019, for the St. John's Wort Oil. And check out the link in the show notes to receive these three free videos, and like, they're long. It's very valuable and full of content that you will want to dip back in, and it will be yours forever!

And then, yes. Oh, you guys are gonna love it. I'm so excited to hear the feedback from this one because I know how much herbal body oiling changes people's lives, and I know how many questions folks have because I get them all the time, and that can seem like a confusing and overwhelming area of herbal medicine (and it really isn't), and Kami is just the perfect guide to bring all of us into this deeply profound and healing medicine.

Alright, let's listen to the interview with my beautiful, wonderful, wise teacher, Kami McBride.
(*Transitional Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux*)

[0:13:36]

Amber: Hi Kami! Welcome back to Medicine Stories!

Kami: Oh Amber, so glad to be here! Thank you for having me.

Amber: Yes, anytime, all the time. I invited you on today to talk about our shared, favorite herbal application which is body oils.

Kami: Whoo-hoo!

Amber: Yeah! Yeah, I oiled up a little bit before we got on the call today. So you taught me, and how to make, and, really, how to use whole plant infused body oils twelve years ago, and it immediately, truly, like, immediately, dramatically changed my life.

And so now I'm curious, who introduced you to this, and how did it affect your life?

Kami: Oh gosh, well, the thing is -- well, first was Rosemary, Rosemary Gladstar, back in 1986? (*Kami laughs*) And then I learned a lot more, also, from Michael Moore -- and the thing is I was going, I was going to herb school and massage school at exactly the same time. And so I'd go to massage school, and we'd slather this totally toxic petroleum stuff that was like an oil that you could feel for days on your skin. And then I'd go to herb class, and Rosemary would say, "Well, don't put on your skin if you can't eat it." (*Kami laughs*) And so it was just this, like, okaaaay, uhh... I'm going to work on my herbal stuff right away because I don't want to use that all the petroleum stuff that people were using in the 1980s in all the massage schools.

And so I started making herbal oils right away. There wasn't a lot of mentoring and so I made every mistake possible more than once, multiple times. (*Kami laughs*) And I, you know, I was really, I didn't, I was terrified of using something on somebody that wasn't good for them or that might not be good for them, or that they would have a reaction to, so I got really into it. I really watched my oils... it just became an obsession for me to make really shelf-stable oils that didn't go bad because I had so many oils that went bad in the beginning. And also my clients, they just loved it and so they asked for more. I got really into making all sorts of oils and blends. It's just been amazing. I love these oils, the herbals oils so much. I've seen them have such an incredible impact on people.

Amber: Yeah, so could you feel the difference right away between your herbal oils and the petroleum-based oils that you were using? Like, did they feel different on your body?

Kami: Yeah, well, first of all, they smelled incredible. (*Kami laughs*) The herbal oils were just a whole other class of aroma, right? And pleasure, just like, (*Kami inhales*) WOW!

I'd bring them and people would be like, "What **IS** this?!" And yeah, definitely how you could feel it. Because the petroleum would clog up your skin, and they're like slicky, you know? And yeah. I got rid of that right away.

Amber: Yeah.

(both laugh)

Kami: But I was raised using all of that, you know? I love oils and lotions since I was a young girl. I used to buy lotions and just use the chemical stuff all the way long. And so when the herbal stuff came along, I was just so, I was just **SO** happy.

[0:16:59]

Amber: And it's like so truly hydrating and nourishing, compared to the things you could buy at the store.

Kami: Yeah, it's true. It really goes into your skin and moisturizes, and it feeds. It feeds your body instead of clogging it up.

Amber: Mmm. That's a good way to put it.

And then, I'm sure, you were using the herbal oils to support your own body as you had this decades-long massage practice, which can be really hard on people's bodies.

Kami: That is so true. So I got trained in a lot of different modalities (*Kami clears throat*), including deep tissue. And over the years I saw a lot of people doing deep tissue just kind of fall off the cliff; they just couldn't do it anymore, you know?

And I, I mean, I did a lot of bodywork, and I really feel like having those oils and using those oils, that the oils were healing me at the same time. And I have a lot of students that are massage therapists that say the same thing; that it's the oils that have kept them healthy.

Amber: Mhmm. Yep. I believe it.

[0:18:05]

Amber: What herbs do you tend to go to over and over again to use in your oils?

Kami: I love calendula, and I love St. John's Wort. I love mugwort, lavender, arnica - those are really, really big go-to's.

Amber: Yeah. Yeah, the St. John's Wort, for me, is such a big one. And you know what I'm remembering right now, you teaching me that adding mugwort to a blend, it helps bring the medicine deeper into the body. And I always think of that, like, mugwort is a deepening herb.

Kami: Right! And it's kind of, like, a driver. It's a carrier. It helps to penetrate. And as a carrier herb, you can add a little bit of that herb to your formulas, and it will help to deliver whatever herb you're using, whatever herbal oil you're using.

Amber: And it will add it's amazing scent medicine as well.

[0:19:01]

Amber: So let's talk a little bit more about St. John's Wort Oil. I feel like this is, you know, just the master, the **master** herb for using topically and helping with so, so many things!

What do you see it being used for? What do you see it being useful for?

Kami: Oh my gosh. That oil... bruises, burns, cuts, growing pains, inflamed skin, muscle pain, nerve pain, neck tension, scars, scrapes (*Kami laughs*), sciatica, smashed fingers -- oh my gosh. I had someone arrive at my house one time with a friend, and she smashed her finger in the car, which (*Kami laughs*), it was just like, oh gosh, yeah. And so we just soaked in St. John's Wort oil and it's amazing. It just turned the whole thing around.

And burns, you know, first and second degree burns, it's just the most incredible. And it's also just a great massage oil, right? To relax your muscles, and antispasmodic, calm things down. It's such an incredible oil. And it's... yeah, it's one of those ones that if you really need it -- like, if you get a burn or, really, have a bad strain -- you need quite a bit of it, right? I think it's like, we look up echinacea tinctures as a household name, and elderberry syrup as a household name, but I feel like the herbal infused oils aren't there yet, because when you do really need them, you need a lot.

And so I think people don't understand how much they can be used for because they, you know, they've got a two-ounce bottle, you just don't have enough. And so this is one of those herbal medicines that you really do want to learn how to make yourself.

Amber: Right, because you're naming, like, over time, you don't need to use the two ounces all at once, but if you're gonna really be, like, trying to treat something over the long term, then you do need a whole quart or gallon or even more of this oil in your life. And it's expensive to buy it from people, but it's not expensive at all to make it yourself. And it's really easy, and so we're gonna get into that a little later in this conversation.

So, St. John's Wort has this affinity for the nerves, right? That's why it's great for sciatica. But really, **all** herbal body oils have an affinity for the nervous system because the fat of the oils goes right into the nerves and nourishes and soothes them. That's what makes herbal body oiling so affective for people; for pain, for insomnia, for anxiety, tension, like, everything that everyone is dealing with in the modern world.

Kami: Mhmm. Yeah, it's true. We don't think of it, but we really impact our nervous system when we oil. And it's really a big part of, you know, it makes us feel good, but where we have direct access to the nerves.

And the thing is, the nerves, if the skin is dry, so if you're slightly dehydrated now, then the skin is dry, then the nerves are dry. The nerves are below the skin. And when the nerves are a little bit dehydrated, the synapses - they don't communicate; they don't function as well; we start getting a little bit more irritated. That's why, you know, a lot of times people in the summer and in the fall, people will talk about how they get more anxious and more irritated; it's because of that dehydration and the accumulation of the weather starts to affect the nerves. So staying moisturized through the skin helps you stay calm and more grounded.

And I know for myself, when I don't oil for a while -- like when I travel I'm not as good at doing it -- I start to, I really notice that I become a little bit more judgemental (*Kami laughs*), and irritable, and it's like, oh my nerves are not... my nerves, I need to oil.

I remember one time, many years ago, being in class with Dr. Ladd. And one of the students, she came to class. She came late, and she had been in a car accident. And you could just see she was disheveled. She was, you know, she was **there**, but she was not there. She had just been hit, right? And so Dr. Ladd said, "It's time to dip her in oil." (*Kami laughs*) "It's time to just take her and dip her in oil."

And, you know, I just had this image of this BIG vat of oil (*Kami laughs*) and so... but he said, "We get her on the table; we warm up the oil; we warm her up, and we get as much oil on her as her body will absorb right now. And then, you know, twice a day you oil as much as the body will absorb at a time."

And that oiling helps to calm and ground. Your nervous system, when you get ungrounded, when the agitation and the irritation takes over, and you're irritated, agitated, anxious, that's -- in Ayurveda -- that's Vata. That's the air taking over. And so the antidote to air is earth and water and oil, right? And so the oil is very unctuous and **grounding** and it really takes the air and calms it down. When I say air, I mean the anxiety or the irritation.

And so, oil is the antidote to nervousness. You know? We don't think of that. We think, "Oh, I'm anxious. I need to meditate." or whatever. Yeah, that's all really good, but oiling is seriously as good as meditating. It really helps to settle the nervous system and bring it back to a parasympathetic state.

[0:25:05]

Amber: Or we also think, "Oh, I need to take something." It could be, like, a pharmaceutical, or even smoking weed, or just, like, a lemon balm tincture. But really, instead of taking something, we could just be putting something on our skin.

Kami: Yeah, Yes. The thing is we're affecting the blood, we're affecting the nerves, we're affecting the lymph, so it's a self-care, touching your body and putting these oils on your body, it grounds the nervous system. It also really nourishes the lymph system because if your skin is dry, your lymph system is dry, is dehydrated. And your lymph system carries your immune system.

So this is just a whole other way of thinking about our herbal infused oils: that it's not only our nervous system really supports our nerves, and our mood, but also, the skin is an immunologic organ. There are billions of immune cells in the skin. I mean, the skin is **packed** with immune cells. So that like, when you get a cut or scrape, the immunity is there to just fight it off, right? So your skin, you know, you get a cut and your immune system is boom. It's right there.

So when we support the skin this way, we're also supporting the immune system, right? So it's cold and flu prevention. It's immune support. That's kind of something most people don't think of, that if we can just -- if that's just one thing that people can take from this - that keeping your skin moisturized supports your immunity.

Amber: Yeah, it's like in my e-book on herbal body oiling, I have this line that the nervous system is your body's interface with the rest of the world. And that's true, but hearing you talk about the immune system, it's like, well, actually, so is the immune system. You know? The immune system is what differentiates self from other.

So in this, like, very real way body oiling supports two of the most important systems that keep us feeling good and actually being healthy.

[0:27:17]

Kami: When you start doing it, when you start oiling, as you know, I know you know, on a regular basis and then you don't do it for awhile, you notice. If you never do it, it's kind of, like, you don't notice. But once you start it, once you put that little habit in that it doesn't have to be -- I mean, sure, it's great if you've got an hour or whatever -- but it could be three minutes a day, you know? It can be five minutes before you go to bed, and you can just do your feet, right? So it doesn't have to be huge, but if you get it in place, you will notice.

If I could just go out, and I haven't taken care of my skin, it's like, oh yeah. Yeah. There's going to be more stress involved. *(Kami laughs)*

Amber: Yeah, for sure. Well, I notice, for me, when I oil, especially in the morning, and then I go out about my day, I feel like I have this sort of etheric shield up around me, where the sensory stimuli and things coming at me that would normally stress me out, just kind of get, like, stopped and diluted before they really hit me and send me into an anxiety or stress spiral. So now whenever I have a big day coming up, especially if I'm going to be out most of the time because even just running errands, like, can be pretty taxing on my nervous system, I just oil first. And it makes ALL the difference in the world.

Kami: Yeah. That's so beautiful how you said that, Amber. That's beautiful, like, you just feel like you wrap yourself and protect yourself and are just more protected when you go out in the world... that's yes. Yeah, it's a really simple thing that people can do that hasn't really made it into the culture. So I'm all about that!

(Kami laughs)

Amber: Yes. you are. We've talked about that.

Kami: Just the oiling, it takes -- it affects so many pieces.

Amber: Yeah, for...

(Amber pauses as audio starts cutting out Kami in the background)

Sorry, you're cutting out a little bit. Are you hearing me?

Kami: Yeah I can hear you.

Amber: Okay, good. I'm hearing you, too.

[0:29:26]

Amber: And for the whole family, too, like, for parents or anyone with children in your lives, it's amazing how effective this can be. Because kids get spun out all the time; that's kind of their nature, and especially in this culture, you know, if they're not eating the best food, or have a lot of media exposure, or it's really overwhelming at school for them, just a little body oil. It's **amazing** how much it can ground them, and calm them down.

Kami: Yeah, I mean, what I love is that this is such a safe, I mean, herbs are safe in general, but this is such a great home remedy 'cause your kids can slop around in it, literally. If you teach them this really simple thing, they pick it up right away. They love playing with the oils. (*Kami laughs*) They love getting a big jar of salve and using the whole thing! (*Kami laughs*)

Yeah, and one of the things that I am really loving right now that -- I teach a lot of different body care applications in my course, Handcrafted Healing: Herbal Oils -- but I just wanted to talk about earlobe oiling. Oh my gosh. (*Kami laughs*) So, Amber, I know you do oiling, but oiling your earlobes... Dr. Ladd used to teach us to hold our earlobes and because all of the nerves -- it's like your feet, right? -- All the nerve endings in your ears, and so if you just take your herbal oil, your St. John's Wort oil, your calendula oil, or your chamomile infused oil, and you just rub it into your earlobes and your ears, it is so grounding and so calming.

And so if your kids don't want to do their whole body or whatever you can teach them just to oil their ears and their earlobes. (*Kami laughs*)

[0:31:15]

Amber: That makes so much sense to me because holding the pressure points on the earlobes and, actually, all around the ears was taught to me by a truly wise and potent healer I met, a Polynesian man who was just steeped in the medicine ways of his ancestors, who I met in high school. So that was one of his hacks when I was -- for me -- when I was really going through a lot of anxiety and a lot of anxiety attacks and a ton of stress during my college years was, like, "Pay attention to the ears and squeeze all around them."

So that makes so much sense about the earlobe oiling, and you mentioned that to me recently. And then two nights ago, I spent the night in a hotel room in San Francisco. And I always have a hard time sleeping the first away from home. And even though we had the white noise machine, I had my heating pad and just had everything (my eye mask) to have the optimal sleep, I just laid in bed. And finally, at 3AM, I was like, "Oh! I have an oil with me."

So I got out of bed, and I oiled the soles of my feet and my ears, and got back in bed and fell right asleep.

Kami: Oh. Of course! Ugh. That's good. Yeah, it puts you to sleep!

Amber: It puts you to sleep.

Kami: I do the same thing: if I wake up in the night, and I'm like, ugh. I oil my feet. I put my socks on and it puts me to sleep.

Amber: Yeah, and I think that's a really important thing to touch on here. We did talk about the nervous system and anxiety and things that everyone is going through but related to all that is sleep. And so many people are dealing with sleep issues. And I have heard from dozens of customers who have bought body oil from me, and, especially St. John's Wort oil (although, really, any body oil will work) say that if they just oil before bed, it makes all the difference in the quality of sleep they get that night.

[0:33:05]

Kami: I know. Such a simple thing, right? Such a simple thing.

Amber: Yeah, and, you know, we know that many, many traditional peoples throughout the world, really, when they slaughtered an animal, and they took the organs and the parts they were going to use for food, then they would render the fat, and they would use it on their bodies. They knew. Of course, they knew.

Kami: I mean, this is as simple as any person in the world, taking whatever herb, whatever fat they have access to, and putting it on their body. Just that intuitive knowing that the fat is so good for us, you know?

The other thing that I just really love about the herbal oils and the body oiling is -- I know a lot of people listening are all into learning home herbalism, are all into healing and building their home herbalism skills -- and the thing is that herbalism, it's not just about learning about the herbs; the thing is, it's about learning, it's about **developing** body literacy.

So it's a pretty big thing to learn about the herbs, the earth, and your body, right? And so, it's, like, it's hard to learn herbs until you wait 'til you're sick, and you have, like, "Oh I need this herb." But how do you know how much to take?

And there's actually nobody that can tell you how much herbs to take and how long to take. I mean, even our medical doctors, when they prescribe medicine, it's... they're using statistics to tell you how much and how long to take it. They don't even really know. And a lot of them don't agree, right?

And so, body literacy is a huge part of being able to implement home herbalism: listening to your body, understanding, tracking. It's kind of like, you hear the birds every day, but you can hear them your entire life, but you don't know what they're saying unless you really put some effort into it. Same thing with your body.

Your body is talking to you every day, but we really weren't raised listening to it. It's, like, just like birdsong. And so the beauty of the herbal oiling that I've found with my students in clients in the last 30 years, is that it not only does all this healing, but it provides this **other** piece that we need to know about herbalism, and that's knowing about our body, and creating the space to track it and listen to it. And so you have this incredible herbal remedy that also guides you into your body and into being able to hear and listen and track your body. It helps you develop deep listening to your body, and you don't even really know it's happening, but over time that's what it does.

[0:35:58]

Amber: Well, I am not at all surprised to hear you say that because I have found the exact same thing to be true.

At some point, years into my herbal body oiling practice, I realized I know myself SO much better now than I did just a few years ago. I write about that in my e-book, too, is getting to know the terrain of your own body. And how many cultural messages do we get taking us away, taking our focus away from ourselves, and telling us to hate ourselves and hate our physical bodies? You know?

So the more that I've oiled, just the more self-love comes so easily and so naturally; the more quickly I'm able to determine if something weird is going on with my body, or something is out of place, unusual. And through the act of getting to know the terrain of my body, physically, on that deep level, I've just gotten to know myself more deeply on a spiritual, mental, emotional, soul level, because of the stillness that it brings when you nourish the nervous system like that.

Kami: Yeah, that's beautifully said. It's, you know, they give you that direct experience. It's not just herbal medicine, it's that direct experience with your body and listening to your body. I love that part of it.

I know. I don't know. I wasn't raised with a single message. I mean, I was taught to brush my teeth and comb my hair. (*Kami laughs*) "Make sure your hair is combed! Don't go outside without your hair combed!" (*Amber laughs*) That's the extent of my self-care lessons, right? And so it was about, you know, the weather or the traffic or getting whatever. There was not a single message and just as I -- it's been a lifelong work to do that, to learn to listen to my body. And I know we all have to learn to do that. And there **still** is not body literacy, you know, being taught in our schools, and hardly anywhere in the culture. So how are the young people in your life going to learn that? That's the question: what do we bring into our homes that teaches them that.

Amber: Right, because now it's not just the weather and the traffic reports vying for their attention, (*Kami laughs*), it's, you know, the pings going off on their cell phone in their pocket every three seconds!

Kami: (*Kami laughs*) It's true. It's a lot more complicated!

[0:38:26]

Amber: Yeah. So I love that you really focus on this. And we talked about this the first time you were on the show, too, is embedding self-care into the home culture. And body oiling is such a good way to do this and it makes me think about how, like, I read you say you have oils, like, EVERYWHERE in your house and even in your car?

Kami: I do. I have oil in my car for when we get stuck, and I'll just oil my hands or the back of my neck, you know? But we have oil in our living room, too, because when we're sitting, we have, like, family check-ins in the evening.

My son's a teenager now, so it's not like we're hanging out. We're "checking in." (*Kami laughs*) We're going over the schedule. So it's like, the oils are in there, so we'll just be like, "Ahh, well there's your feet. Okay..." and it's just there, right? And then I have a lot of oils next to my bed because that's where it all really happens. Right before I go to bed is when I do most of my oiling.

And then I have flannel sheets that I cut up and put it on the bed so it doesn't get all over the place and, yeah, you just want these little reminders around the house. They're your oils. They're your little workhorses that you can have everywhere to help you. Little allies. Little bottles of allies all over the place.

Amber: Yep. I keep some in my workspace that I'm in right now, and then next to the bathtub; I'm a frequent bath taker, and I add a little bit of oil to almost everyone. And then I'm thinking about keeping them in your purse, when you're going places, of course. I would NEVER travel without a

bottle. Never. I mean, 'cause when you're traveling - you're either sitting in a car or sitting on an airplane. Both of those things longterm (or even short term for flying) really do a number on my body.

[0:40:25]

Amber: But having one in your purse or on the go, I'm remembering this story that I heard you tell once about your Great Aunt Jackie.

Kami: Ohhh. Yeah! Yes. I love that story! Thank you for remembering that story; stories are so good to keep them alive.

So, I have a great aunt that was just a huge influence in my life. She was -- really loved the earth and she lived on a lake her whole life and she helped take care of that lake and helped protect that lake. And so one day I went and visited her; she lived about two hours from me. And one day my husband I, we stopped by to see her, and we came in, and she was just laying on the couch. She looked like she was dying. She had a cold, and she was just laying there, you know?

And we came in, and I could tell she was dehydrated, and her body was cold, and her skin was so dry. And of course, I had oil in the car (*Kami laughs*). And so we made her some tea, and we made her some soup, and I started oiling her hands, and she was like, "What are you... what are you doing?" (*Kami laughs*) And then eventually I got up her arms and her feet, and I just started oiling. I oiled her. And it was like watching someone come back from the dead, you know? She just... she started, she smiled, and she cracked a couple of jokes, and you could just tell that the hydration and her skin, just moisturizing her skin, it just made her feel so much better. It was such a simple thing that we could do. I love thinking of her just, you know, she cracked a smile while I was rubbing her feet, you know? (*Kami laughs*)

Amber: That brings me back to what we were talking about earlier, too, about just getting to know the body and how when you get into herbalism you realize not only are you learning about plants, but you're learning about the human body.

And how many people would not ever notice the dryness of another person's skin? Like, you noticed that her skin was dry because you're a healer, and because you loved her and cared about her, that was something you were able to tune into and then have this really simple remedy for that could make her feel so much better in that time of need.

Kami: Right, and that's something that we can all just start to -- that's a simple thing that we can all take away from our conversation today is that you just start to notice the skin of everybody around you. So, whenever anybody that I know comes up to me, like, I notice what's happening with their skin immediately, unconsciously. You know? Just intuitively.

And so it's just something that you become aware of, like the signs of dehydration. A lot of times we know the signs of, like, chapped lips, but to just become, have the skin be one of the things we track for when somebody around us says, "Oh, I'm not feeling that great." then "Oh, well, let's look at your skin."

Amber: Yeah. Yeah, I love that.

The people I know who have been deeply trained in Ayurveda and Chinese Medicine and other forms, systems of healing like that, they... yeah, they just assess people immediately when they walk up. Like, "Oh did you notice this, this, and that, and that about her?" I'm like, WOW that's so amazing that most of us just aren't looking for, yeah, signs of health in other people's faces, teeth, skin, countenance, the way that people who have been trained to do that, do. And I think it's really neat.

[0:43:46]

Amber: So let's talk about how to make them.

Okay, so you -- I feel like you really pioneered this. I mean, you learned things from Rosemary, from Michael Moore -- but you've just spent decades in the kitchen working on your oils, and having a lot of failure that you've learned from, and developing techniques that you've shared with people. I just get questions from people **all the time** about making herbal oils, and it's somewhat more complicated than other forms of herbal medicine.

So I'm gonna start out with a question that someone wrote to me to ask you which was:

Is it like tincturing, but with oil instead of booze?

Kami: Is it like tincturing... wait, say it again.

Amber: Yeah, to make an herbal oil, is it like making a tincture, but you merely substitute oil for the alcohol?

Kami: No, it's not at all.

Alcohol's really easy because alcohol just kills all bacteria. Oil harbors bacteria and, especially, I've seen fresh plant oils, I've seen so many, especially calendula oils that are just not shelf-stable, and borderline -- I was somewhere just recently, and somebody showed me their calendula oil, and I just said, "Oh my gosh, I'm sorry. But let's look at these signs, right? Just smell it."

And so it's not -- the oil has many more steps and you have to pay attention. You know, you can make a tincture and put it in the back of the cabinet and leave it for a year. (*Kami laughs*) It's most likely still going to be okay because of the alcohol. So, no, the oils, learning to make shelf-stable and potent oils there are a lot of different steps to it.

So, no, it's not the same.

Amber: It's not the same. It takes more attention and more time, but it's totally worth it.

So the second big question I get -- and this related because spoilage is the big issue that people are looking at here -- and related to that is:

How do you know which herbs to use fresh and which herbs to use dry?

Kami: Okay, that's a great question. I get that question all the time, too.

So, first of all, that is a question that you can only learn herb-by-herb. You have to learn that herb-by-herb. There's no blanket... I think I've put together the largest resource on herbal oils that's out there right now. And you just have to learn herb by herb, and that's all there is to it.

Then there are many other things, like, what time of the year. If you harvest later in the summer when there's less water in the environment, then there's less water in the plant, you can get away with making a fresh oil, fresh plant oil. Whereas in the spring, it's still too watery, right? And then there are some plants that just have too much water and not enough antimicrobial properties, then you -- it's gotta be a dried plant oil. So there's a lot of different -- there's-- it's like, the time of year, the nature of the plant... Yeah, there's a lot of different considerations.

Amber: There are. And I think this is something you do get into plant by plant in your course.

Kami: Oh yes, absolutely.

Amber: So this is something you HAVE figured out (*Amber laughs*), trial by trial.

Kami: Oh my gosh. Uhh yeah. (*both laugh*)

The worst thing is like, you make an oil, like, it's so beautiful. And then you make a product out of it, right? You make a salve or a lotion or something, and then you give to someone, but you're not... hmmm I think this is gonna last.

Amber: Right, so even if it doesn't mold as it's being made or immediately, if -- there's still a chance that it will spoil really quickly once it's out there.

Kami: Right, and then people start wanting to know what preservatives. And it's like, well, okay. Before we start wondering what all the preservatives we need, let's go back and make our oil in the BEST way possible so it, in itself, has a shelf life; a stable-shelf life, instead of going, "Well, you know, I'll just do it and whatever" or "I'm not really sure, but let's just go for the preservatives." And it's like, I don't use, I actually don't use any preservatives in my oils.

Amber: Yeah, me neither.

[0:48:10]

Amber: So you do have this incredible dried plant method that you teach, that, you know, it's not going to spoil. And then there's plants, such as St. John's Wort, that really need to be used fresh. If you make a fresh plant St. John's Wort oil and then next to it you put a dried plant St. John's Wort oil (as a friend of mine did once and posted on Instagram), you'll see that the fresh plant is this deep red color. It has the medicine in it. It extracted the hypericin.

And then the dried plant one is this dull yellowish-orange thing. So that being one that really should be used fresh for optimal potency and medicine.

What can people do to prevent spoilage when they're making fresh plant oils?

Kami: Yeah so that's...Yeah, first of all, you have to start with a really good carrier oil. Make sure that you know your source of the carrier oil that you use and that it's not old, right? And develop your nose

So I have people do this experiment of "Oils Gone Bad," and just leave some oil out, like an ounce. It's easy to know when an oil IS bad. It's like, "OH." But you also want to develop your nose for when your oil is **GOING** bad. There are subtle aromas as something's going bad. And you want to develop your nose for that? What does it smell like when it's very first starting to turn, right?

And then the other thing is you want to avoid fluctuating temperature and exposure to light, exposure to oxygen, and moisture. So, all of those things: how you store it, where you store, how you use it -- you don't double-dip, you don't put your fingers in the oil -- all of those things contribute to the shelf-life of the oil.

But really, it's starting with a good carrier oil, knowing your plant, and making, using the method that's the best method for that plant -- unless you just leave your oil out in the sun -- that's your best bet for making a good oil.

Amber: What do you mean "unless you just leave it out in the sun?"

Kami: Yeah, so if you make your oil and then just give it total exposure, like leave the top off, leave it in the sun, and just let it oxidize -- the light and the oxygen, and the moisture, those will turn your oils really quickly.

So like, you leave the top off outside or something. (*Kami laughs*)

[0:50:56]

Amber: Okay, so what you just went over, you have an acronym for that.

Kami: Yeah, it's called FLAHM. So:

- Fluctuating temperature
- Light
- Air
- Heat
- Moisture

FLAHM. You do not want to FLAHM your oils. (*both laugh*) It's really simple, but you've got to put it all together, right?

Amber: Yes, so I'm thinking about that acronym right now, and for me, it's pretty easy to take care of most of those; I don't put it in the light, easy stuff.

But the air is what comes up for me, mostly, (or used to) with molding. I haven't had an oil mold in years and years, because I do what you taught me: which is I constantly check them. Like, every single day I check them.

But what can happen with the fresh plants -- and, again, you taught me exactly how to take care of this so we do it -- but they rise. The oil rises up over time and then spills out (even if you've got your lid on really tight) and then it kind of recedes and goes back down again and leaves air in there, even if you poured the oil to the very, very, very top when you screwed your lid on.

So we just have to be constantly checking, and we put a plate, or we put, like, a pot, the things you put under potted plants in your house, we buy those, like, plastic-y things to put underneath our jars now. And the oil spills over, and then that creates like a little bubble pocket of air, and that can cause molding. So every single day we check, we stir, and we top the oil off.

Kami: Good! Yep, that's good.

Amber: And so it is somewhat -- I mean, I don't want to say labor-intensive; it's not that hard (*Amber laughs*), but it definitely takes attention and time. And usually, after the first couple weeks that whole cycle stops and it settles in a way. But I'm just hearing people all the time, and they post in my Medicine Stories Facebook Group, "It molded! It went bad!" And that's the air, mostly, that I'm seeing come up for people.

Kami: Right, because the plant pops up into the air, and that's where the air, and the water, and the oil meet. And you'll see the mold on the top. And THAT is also why I love the dried plant method because you don't have to worry about that. (*Kami laughs*)

[0:53:22]

Amber: But then you also have this brilliant thing that Michael Moore taught you, that adding just a little bit of alcohol, just a little bit of vodka when you're doing -- you do this for the dried method, but for fresh plant method as well. And we started doing that recently, and it makes a HUGE difference in how active, bubbly our fresh plant oils are.

Kami: Yeah. Yep, that's... I know we were just talking about that. I'm so glad that that helps you.

Amber: Yeah, it just adds that extra layer of preservation, and then also helps to bring out more of the medicine of the plant.

Kami: Yeah, absolutely.

Amber: Yeah, so, another question that people ask us a lot that I know you have a good perspective on is "solar infusions." It's really popular, especially with St. John's Wort oil, to put it out in the sun. And there's a lot of controversy around it. Like, I, for one, don't do that because light, that's the L in FLAHM, light can break down oils.

So what have you seen around this?

Kami: Okay, so this is such a good question! So, you know, with my course I've had I think about 1200 people go through my oils course now. And so I have heard, I think I've heard every question possible. And this question is one that people argue over. (*Kami laughs*) And so I have heard every, like, the gamut of like, "No! You never put your oils in the sun!" Of course, right? The light, right? And then I have people who are like, "Well, it doesn't work unless you put it in the sun. I've been making my oil in the sun for 30 years, and it works just fine and it lasts forever."

And so I think this thing of, like, there's one way to make it is it's not true. And what I notice when I kind of just put all that argument (because it did turn into an argument for some people), I notice that people that live in Arizona and Texas and in hot places, they don't use the sun, but the medicine makers in the more damp and, like, the Pacific Northwest, they do solar infusions. And they swear by them. And so, a lot of it has to do with how you were taught, your experience and where you live, the climate.

There's so much -- you know, we're looking for the one way to make herbal medicine -- but there's so much that goes into it. We have to think about our climate. The climate of our kitchen, and the climate of where we live plays a huge role in how we make our medicines.

Amber: I love that. I love that, you know, it's not just "This is the right way." It's one or the other. And I felt that way, like, NO! Why would you ever do that?! (*Amber laughs*)

Kami: Oh I know, I watch people argue over it. And after you have, like, 200 people talking about it, it's like, okay. I need to figure out what's the thread here. What's really happening? And so, that's what I came up with.

And then I loved watching there was a video where Rosemary Gladstar was saying, "We always put the lid on our herbal tea." And then Phil is like, "We NEVER put the lid on our tea. Take the lid off!" And so then I'm like, okay, that's it right there.

Amber: Yeah, and I think that is really something good for people new to herbalism to understand is that -- I always say -- herbalism is vast. And one of the ways it's vast is that there's really, like, almost no actual right way to do anything, and everyone has their own ideas about how to do it. Traditional peoples have done it differently in different places around the world forever. And it's just almost personal preference, experimentations, seeing what works for you.

We're so like, in the culture of the expert, we're so caught up in "but what's the right way to do it? Am I doing it wrong? Am I messing it up? Am I showing how inexperienced I am?" When, herbalism, it's just like, fun and experimental and a way to learn and keep deepening, again, with the plants and with your own body and knowledge.

Kami: Right. I think that's part of, also, like, I encourage people to slow down and go deeper with fewer plants and fewer preparations. Like, getting into the oils. The amazing thing about the oils is that they cover self-care, first aid, they have so many applications that you can just settle into one thing and not have to know it all.

Trying to know it all -- we're trying to download thousands of years of knowledge in a short amount of time because of our cultural disruption, and people are just like, "Ugh. I gotta learn it!" We're trying to learn what took generations to learn in the past. And it's creating anxiety. And so, for, like you're talking about, to just slow down or realize how vast it is and to keep it enjoyable and not try to learn it all.

Amber: Yeah, and when you do start to feel anxious about it, just go oil your earlobes.

(*Kami laughs*)

Kami: Exactly!

[0:58:44]

Amber: Okay so if you're going to be making an oil blend, say, two or three oils, do you put all three of those herbs in your jar, or do you make three separate jars, and then blend after they've steeped and been strained?

Kami: Okay, great. Good. This is a good question.

Again, it's interesting: I've had about 1200 people go through my Handcrafted Healing Herbal Oils course so I feel like I've answered every possible question that there ever is in the world.

Amber: Yep. I bet!

Kami: So it's the most concentrated source of information on herbal oils, and **this** is a really common question. And so I've thought about it a lot. And so, there's a couple layers to it. And one, for me, when you're first learning, I recommend that you do your oils separately. You make your calendula oil. You make your chamomile oil, right? You make everything separately. Because that's how you're going to learn about that oil. And that's how you're going to know, "Wow. I really like it for this. I don't like it for that." Using what we call "simpling" individually, okay? And so then as you know the oil, and you get to know your oils, and you get to know your oils individually, then you start blending.

I actually had somebody contact me recently, she said, "Ugh. I made this oil, and I had five herbs in it, and my skin broke out! What do you think it was?" Well, there's no way for us to know; you had five things in there. You've gotta, like, try each one of those first and see if they're all good for you, and **then** see, you know? Because once they're all mixed together, there's no way for us to know which one made the formula go bad, or which one people reacted to.

So, especially when you're first beginning, I recommend for the learning process to do things individually. However, sometimes people are just inspired. It's like, they get an inspiration to mix this that and the other thing together and just come up with the most beautiful, incredible blend that you've ever seen in your life!

So I don't want to discourage that, either. But so, you see, again, there's a recommendation for the learning process. And also it's like cooking. You know? A little bit of this, a little bit of that, let yourself, let your SOUL just fly with it.

Amber: Yes. And I will say, too, on the side of steeping them separately, which is what I do, then you can retain some to experiment with other things, as well. Whereas if you put them all into the same jar from the get-go, you can't separate them out later and be like, "Oh, well, what would it be like if I mixed this one with that one and then this one with that one" and you know? It's like having more ingredients to play with later.

Kami: Absolutely. Instead of having the curry all made up, 30 ingredients all separated, so that, you know I like more cumin in mine.

[1:01:43]

Amber: What about oiling the face? People are terrified to oil their face.

Kami: Yeah. You know, so this is something, again, that I really didn't know the answer to. And it's something that my answer is something that I've just observed for, you know, well over a thousand people over my 30 something years. And what I've seen is the gamut, right? Just the total gamut of "this oil does good with me", "this oil doesn't do good with me." And also, it changes. It changes depending on the time of the year, depending on the time in your life, but the thing is is that if you, it's something that I recommend trying.

And just using something like a jojoba oil or a sesame oil, and what you do is you just put like a few drops of oil in your hand and you mix it together and you can just put the oil on your skin, or you can mix it with a little water. I mean, that's what a lotion is. Lotion is just water and oil emulsified with a preservative. And so, you can just make that lotion right there in your hand with the oil and the water, and put that on your skin and see how that is for you.

Because so much of the cleansers they strip our skin. You know how your skin feels all tight? Like, I don't use any soap on my skin, ever, at all. I just use oil. I use oil to clean my skin, and it really -- one of the other things you can do is you can put those few drops of oil and then just get a warm washcloth and then have that washcloth sit on your face and just lightly wash it off. And just try it for a week and see how it is for you.

Amber: Yeah. I've been using oil on my face for years and years and years. And, I've said this before, but I get complimented on my skin ALL the time. And I just use a little spray, like, a mist, and then my oil. Yes, my skin will oily for about 10 minutes afterward. And so I just make sure I do it in enough time before I'm going to leave the house, you know?

A lot of people are afraid that they're just going to look oily all day, or that it's going to make their skin oilier. And in my experience, and what I've heard from other people's, is that really just not the case.

Kami: Right. Yeah.

[1:04:16]

Amber: So, tell, if you have anything else that you feel called to say, then please go ahead and do so, but I want you to please tell us more about your course that is completely changed my life, changed my approach to oil-making and has been such a joy, because, I mean, I was lucky. I got to take the class with you in person. I got to learn this from you in real life in the kitchen, and not everyone has that access. And so, being able to watch you do it on video is absolutely the next best thing, and is so much better than trying to understand a complex, multi-step process like this by reading something.

Kami: Right, so you can come into the kitchen with me on video. I'm there. (*Kami laughs*)

You can prop me up in your kitchen and I'll walk you through step-by-step. It's really, again, it's -- this handcrafted healing herbal oils -- I did this because I was just seeing way too many products that just were not shelf-stable. That's one of the main reasons. There were just too many not shelf-stable products out there. And the other thing is is that just the incredible obsession with the

essential oils. It's like, we can get back to, I mean, every woman throughout time has taken some kind of plant and some kind of fat, put it together and used it as medicine. (*Kami laughs*) Right? In a really inexpensive way, and that's what this is about.

And the thing is is that as herbalism explodes and becomes and is just becoming so much more of what's happening out there, I'm seeing so many products, but I'm not really seeing people nail their oils, their herbal oils. There's too many experiments. There's too many kind of "oils gone bad." And also, it's not really taking off. You know, it's like St. John's Wort Tincture, Echinacea Tincture are household names, but our infused herbal oils are not.

And I think the reason is is that in order for the oils to really work for you, to be really able to use them, you actually need a lot, right? One ounce is not going to cut it if you've got some nerve pain. And you've got a sprain, four, two ounces is not going to cut it. And I think part of the reason why people don't really know how powerful the oils are is because they haven't worked with enough.

Amber: Right, and you don't mean you're going to use that two ounces in one sitting. You mean, like, over the course of weeks or months you really want a consistent supply.

Kami: Right. Yeah, you want a consistent supply. And also, if you hurt yourself, and you have a contusion, you're gonna be applying it four or five times a day. Or if you have a burn and you need to use St. John's Wort, you're going to be applying -- you just need more. In order for you to have enough in order for it to work, you need to be making it yourself.

Amber: Right. Because it's expensive! You know? Like, I sell a four-ounce oil for \$42 dollars, and that's what most people are selling them for, and I could not run my business doing it for less. I've really calculated this whole cost of good-sold-thing out, and that's it. You can make SO much more for yourself for so much cheaper than you're gonna buy it from me.

Kami: Yeah, but it's so, it's really good that you're there. You're an incredible resource for your community; for people to learn about it and when they need it they can get it.

Amber: Yeah, I kind of think of it like an introduction, you know?

Kami: (*Kami laughs*) Right. But if you really have some nerve pain, let's say you've got sciatica, or you smash your finger, contusion, bruise, and automobile accident, all of those things, you need much more. And so I think that's why the infused herbal oils are not really like this household herbal remedy because people haven't really been able to afford to learn about them and understand JUST how powerful they are because you need a bigger quantity. And so, when you learn to make them yourself, shelf-stable, really, the most effective way, the most potent way to make oils, they become -- they're the **foundation** of my home apothecary. They're what I reach to first. They're what I call "the least amount of effort for maximum return home remedy" because you can make it once and have it all year long or half the year. And they cover pleasure, just, like, for massage oils, and just for enjoyment, self-care, but also, there's first aid uses, right? And there's also illness prevention. It just covers, the oils covers so many more bases than so many other herbal remedies.

And so if you're just starting out, it's a great place to start because you cover so many bases.

[1:09:11]

Amber: And it's also a fairly safe place to start. I mean, herbal medicine is very, very safe in general, but I feel like for people who are just a little nervous about toxicity issues, "am I gonna take too much of this tincture?" or whatever, herbal body oiling is really safe.

Kami: Yeah, I mean your kids can slop around in it. *(Kami laughs)*

Your kids can slop around in it. You can slop around in it, and it's got so many, there's so many uses. And so I feel like it's a really great place to start, and if you're, if somebody's already making oils, I can, I'm pretty sure I can help you make more potent oils.

Amber: Oh yeah. Oh, you can! *(Amber laughs)*

Kami: And what it takes to take an oil to the next level of potency, and also what it takes to take it to the next level of shelf-stability, which is really one of the biggest issues.

Amber: Right. I mean, I've been making these oils for 11-12 years before I took your course. Even though I had originally learned it from you, there's some more refined techniques in your online course, and it completely -- like I've already said -- changed our oil-making game.

So we're coming to the end of our time, but you get more into the shelf-life and preservation in your course and different characteristics of different carrier oils, which is also a question I get a lot. So those are in your course.

And tell us the structure of the course. There's three lessons? is that right?

Kami: Yeah, well, there are more than three lessons. But what we do is first we learn how to make the oils. So I guide you through just all the different steps of how do you make them, what to consider, everything you need to know about making your oils. And we do that with several plants so that you really know how to make different oils, and then how to transpose what you learn onto using for other oils.

And then we talk about knowing your oils. It's like relief, restore, and prevent. So you can start, you can use your oils for headaches, irritated skin, sleeplessness. You can use it for bumps, and bruises and trauma. Or you can use it for rejuvenation. There's so many different ways of using your oils, but you really want to know and understand what they're good for. And, like, when do you use arnica? When do you use calendula? And all that kind of like distinctions.

And then there's applications; all the different, you know, scalp oiling, ear oiling, nasal oiling, foot oiling, oil compresses, warm compresses. There's a lot of different ways to apply your oils. Okay? And then we go through self-care oil therapy and how you really do that and what that looks like; whether it be just like five minutes or if you have once a week or once a month for a more in-depth therapy.

It's very extensive. I just, every question everybody's had I really try to get to the bottom of it, and so I've got all kind of cheat sheets, like, how to compare the different alcohols, how to compare the different carrier oils, where do you get all the resources, right? And then I have a Q&A archive that's just over the top. *(both laugh)*

And then also what other oils can you make besides what we cover in class, which herbs are best made fresh or dry, and so it really is the most extensive resource. If you're really wanting to take your home apothecary to the next level, or begin your home apothecary, or if you have any, if somebody has any kind of herbal practice or massage or healing practice, and you're not really using your herbal oils, there's just so much there.

[1:13:10]

Amber: Yeah, and I want to make very clear, too, that you have a video on making fresh plant-infused oils and a video on making dried plant-infused oils, where you just go into every possible detail and troubleshooting with both of those methods on video.

Kami: You can put me on pause.

Amber: Yeah. (*Amber laughs*) And then, of course, there's the downloadable PDF resources, too, so you can have that next to you when you're actually in the kitchen. And just that guide on which herbs you have found to be most effective or easiest, dried versus fresh, I feel like is one of the most valuable pieces of paper in my home. (*Amber laughs*) I love it. I'm so grateful.

Like you said, no one was teaching this or really knew it on the level that you now know it because of your decades of experimenting and learning on your own. This is really hard-won wisdom, and I'm so, so, grateful that you are sharing it with people.

Kami: Yeah, and I'm kind of on a mission. Again, I'm looking out and going, God, the oils really need to become front and center, like, so many other of the herbal. I mean, you can, the first aid alone: acne, bruises, burns, cuts, eczema, growing pains, scars, sprains, strains...

Amber: Diaper rash.

Kami: You know? Yeah, it's incredible what you can do with just one. One of the big issues people are talking about is staying organized, getting overwhelmed, having too much stuff in their kitchen, it's like this is one remedy.

Amber: Right. For me, with plantain and chickweed salve has saved my family so many times with just rashes and cuts and scrapes and diaper rash of both of my girls anytime they had diaper rash, that salve. Boom. Gone.

Kami: Yeah, and just, yeah. When you make your own you just save so money. I mean, you just kind of eliminate pretty much all the other products you buy from the store, you know?

Amber: Yep.

Kami: I mean, I don't buy anything at the store, really.

Amber: Yeah, totally. I use so few products on my body, like, shampoo, and then the face things I talked about earlier. And then herbal oil-based deodorant.

Kami: And also another really great bonus in this course is I have a “Favorite Herbal Oil Blends.” So all the blends, like the bedtime oil blend, the muscle ease oil, the headache oil, bruises... I have a lot of blends that are time-tested that really, people have gotten a lot of benefit from over time.

Amber: Amazing. And you are the recipe master! (*Kami laughs*)

Okay, Kami, thank you. Thank you for talking to me today, and thank you for **profoundly** changing my life by introducing me to the concept of herbal body oiling.

Kami: Oh, Amber, I love you so much! I love everything you do, and just, thank you so much for everything.

Amber: Well, yeah, it’s because of you, so (*Amber laughs*). So back at you!

And did you listen to the interview with Rosemary, yet, that you mentioned earlier? We talk about -- I realized as I was talking to her, like, you know, my herbal lineage is me, Kami McBride, Rosemary Gladstar, and then going back to her ancestors, and her teachers. And so, I just really need to honor you as a teacher in my lineage.

Kami: Oh thank you, Amber. So grateful. So grateful!

Amber: Thank you, Kami.

(Exit Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[1:16:52]

Amber: Wow, you’re probably feeling excited and maybe a little overwhelmed with all that information, but man, just go oil yourself and let it all integrate and infuse into your being and you’ll feel so chilled out and happy to have the information. Thank you so much, Kami.

And so, the coupon code that you will use at MythicMedicine.love, of course, is where the shop lives. The coupon code to get 10% off the St. John’s Wort oils which were just made and which are the deepest, most beautiful, red color is [SUNSHINE10](#).

St. John’s Wort is sometimes called “sunshine in a bottle” because it just fully captures the solar energy and the, like, bright medicine of the sunshine at the summer solstice when the plant blooms. And so, that is the coupon code. It will be available there until August 19th.

I almost never put things for sale in the shop. I don’t even remember the last time I did it, so I’m giving this to you as a, like, intro into herbal body oils. If you’ve never used them before, then you can score one at a discount, and really start to have that sensory experience of what it’s like to use them. But, of course, if you’ve been using them for years, you can still use the coupon code.

And thanks so much for listening. And be sure to click the link in the show notes if you haven’t yet and watch these videos, start to get a feel for how you’re going to make your own in the future, hopefully, the near future.

And here's a little idea, tip: if by the time you're ready to make your own, things aren't quite blooming or they're not as at their peak as you'd want them to be (which, hopefully, should be still at this time of year, but some things will definitely already be passed), you can always make an evergreen oil. I always say this, you can always make an evergreen oil.

Pine needle oil is, just, swoon-beyond: the way it smells, the way it feels on the body, antimicrobial, super relaxing, great for joints, joint pain (or any evergreen you have around you). We're lucky enough to have redwood and we put that into our Ancestral Communion oil alongside mugwort, cedar oil, fir, I mean, just any evergreen because you can make it year round, right? Because they are **ever**-green.

Thank you so much for listening. SUNSHINE10. MythicMedicine.love and happy, happy oiling!

[1:19:45]

Amber: Thank you for taking these Medicine Stories in. I hope they inspire you to keep walking the mythic path of your own unfolding self. I love sharing information and will always put any relevant links in the show notes. You can find past episodes, my blog, handmade herbal medicines, and a lot more at MythicMedicine.love. We've got reishi, lion's mane, elderberry, mugwort, yarrow, redwood, body oils, an amazing sleep medicine, heart medicine, earth essences, so much more. More than I can list there. MythicMedicine.love.

While you're there, check out my quiz "[Which Healing Herb is your Spirit Medicine?](#)" It's a fun and lighthearted, but the results are really in-depth and designed to bring you into closer alignment with the medicine you are in need of and the medicine that you already carry that you can bring to others.

If you love this show, please consider supporting my work at Patreon.com/MedicineStories. It is so worth your while. There are dozens and dozens of killer rewards there, and I've been told by many folks that it's the best Patreon out there. We've got e-books, downloadable PDF's, bonus interviews, guided meditations, giveaways, resource guides, links to online learning, and behind-the-scenes stuff and just so much more. The best of it is available at the two-dollar a month level. Thank you.

And please subscribe in whatever app you use, just click that little subscribe button and review on iTunes. It's so helpful, and if you do that you just might be featured in a listener spotlight in the future.

The music that opens and closes the show is Mariee Sioux. It's from her beautiful song "Wild Eyes." Thank you, Mariee.

And thanks to you all. I look forward to next time!