

Essential Oil Confessions from a Retired Massage Therapist

Guest: Angela England

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Dr. Zielinski: Hello, everyone. This is Dr. Eric Zielinski from DrEricZ.com. I'm a chiropractor and public health researcher who specializes in natural therapies. My passion and life's work is to help people live the abundant life, which is why I am very honored to cohost this Essential Oil Summit with my dear friends Jill Winger and Dr. Josh Axe. And there is nothing on the planet in my opinion that is more versatile for everyday use and for promoting healing in the body than essential oils.

And I am very excited about the session of the Essential Oil Revolution because I'm interviewing Angela England, founder of Untrained Housewife and cofounder of Homestead Bloggers Network. Hi, Angela!

Angela: Hi! How are you?

Dr. Zielinski: I'm doing very well. Thanks for joining the call. And for those of you listening on and seeing the title, it's a little interesting title. It's fun. I put this together just really out of respect because Angela is a master writer. And I try to be poetic. So the title is Essential Oil Confessions from a Retired Massage Therapist.

And Angela's actually the only person on the summit that is representing massage therapy. And she just brings a wealth of information. And with that, Angela, if you could just please introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about who you are.

Angela: Sure. So my name is Angela England. And I started doing massage therapy actually while I was in college. I came to massage therapy after a very

bad car accident that the orthopedic surgeon wanted to do pins in my neck. And I really wanted to find a way to avoid surgery, especially at such a young age because I could just picture myself with little ones running around and married, 20 years down the road, and battling arthritis and whatnot. And when I started researching the long-term effects of having those implants and the surgery on your back, it was really something - I wanted to avoid as a teenager.

And so I discovered chiropractic, massage therapy, and Pilates core strengthening work where I was strengthening my back naturally using my own body's muscles versus having it stabilized with pins and metal inserts and things. And the more that I learned about massage therapy, the more interested I became.

And the way that I express my interest in something is by learning absolutely everything I possibly can about it and diving in so deep into that subject, usually for a short amount of time. But what I discovered is that massage therapy really stuck with me. And it was one of those jobs that I did for well over a decade, all the way through the last years of college and actually earned my certification through the summer and then into the next year of college and began working with a chiropractor who owned a pain management clinic where we did a lot of workers comp cases and a lot of acute accidents and acute injury.

So it really came full circle for me because I was in a position where I was working with people who had injuries similar to what I had experienced. And now I was in a place of, "How can I bring them relief and how can I help them in their healing process?" And so that was really one of my favorite jobs ever. And really the only reason I gave it up is when I had my fourth baby and the cost of childcare during a massage became the more than what I was making giving the massage. So that necessitated some life changes.

But I did do massage therapy part time even after I started working from home and had children and had babies. And I worked through several pregnancies

and very much enjoyed seeing people come in very overwhelmed and in pain and often frightened and then helping them find that journey. And everyone's journey is so personal, but helping them find some relief, some answers, some healing however that was for them and to whatever level they were able to achieve that was different for different people, depending on what they were struggling with. But it was amazing to see people's experiences.

Dr. Zielinski: Well, with that, I'm curious. I'm curious to learn a couple of things from you about that. As a chiropractor, the average visit time I'll have with a patient is like, what? Five minutes. But you're with your client for up to an hour, an hour the half, maybe more. So you get a chance to really get to know them. You get to know their energy. You get to know their body in a much more intimate level than most healthcare practitioners.

I'm curious. Tell us a few things that you were shocked to learn when you were actively in practice. Was there anything life transforming?

Angela: Oh, definitely. I remember this one guy who came in. He was a cowboy, literally a cowboy. And if you picture the definition of a cowboy, that was him. He walked awkwardly because he had been breaking a horse that had bucked him against a fence and shattered his pelvis. And his method of self-care was to chew some Tylenol for a couple days so he could get back out on the ranch. Tough guy!

And he was down. And he had come in for a haircut. I was working at a hair salon. And we talked him into getting a massage because he was literally having trouble walking at this point. And my standard line is, "Undress to your level of comfort. And you can lay under this top sheet." And I have a blanket. So people are very comfortable and modest and all of that.

But his level of comfort was his blue jeans, his leather chaps, and his furs were still on. So he literally just removed his top button up shirt and left his undershirt and full everything on. And so I gave him his first massage through tough denim, not like fake denim, but tough canvas denim and leather taps.

And a lot of his healing came only after he was willing to even...To him asking for help or admitting that he was in pain or admitting that there was a restriction and range of motion...Because some of the questions that I ask are related to range of motion or inability to perform daily tasks, [he replied], "Oh, no. I can get done everything I need to get done." "Well, I'm sure that you can. But that wasn't the question."

Once he was willing to admit that there was something more that he wanted and once he was able to articulate that and be receptive to that, he really made huge improvements in his range of motion. He had a ton of restrictions, of course, from the scar tissue of that break.

And I think I tend to be the same. I tend to be kind of do it all myself. And I learned a lot from seeing his willingness to just admit that vulnerability and to be vulnerable and to tear down a little bit of that armor and that tough guy persona.

And not that I'm a cowboy with my leather boots and my furs and whatever. But I do tend to take a lot of things onto myself. And I learned from him just that sometimes you can be more vulnerable. And that's often the first step towards healing is just being willing to try something new and try something different and try something that seems unusual to you. And that was a pretty interesting experience for sure.

Dr. Zielinski: That's beautiful. Now, I have a really important question. Did you ever massage him without his boots on?

Angela: I did! We compromised on swim trunks. I asked him if he had a pair of swim trunks that he would wear when he went swimming. And so that was what he would bring for massages.

Dr. Zielinski: That is really important for all the older folks out there. I'll remind you of the Errol Flynn movie back in 1941. They died with their boots

on. General George Custer and the Battle of Little Big Horn, you died with your boots on. So for him to take off his boots, that was a sign of vulnerability.

Angela: Yes. But how often do we do the same things for ourselves emotionally or physically, being willing to seek some different answers? I think sometimes when we start asking those questions and being vulnerable, that can signal a big change for us.

Dr. Zielinski: So, to be honest here and to be true. We need to think about that. We need to think, "What are your boots? What boots do you have on that you're not willing to let go because those are your protective mechanisms?" And even your spurs. Like you're going to buck here. Like you're going to protect yourself in a massage therapy setting. So that's interesting, Angela. We got to think about that.

And I know I have my own defense mechanisms and there are areas where I'm not willing to be vulnerable. But one thing I have seen as a healthcare provider is, especially with men, it's very, very challenging. Women are much more open to being vulnerable and to let someone work with them. With men, it's hard. It's even hard to get some men in the office.

And that's one reason why as chiropractors we're trained in school when we're doing health consultations to get the family in, get the husband and the wife because if you don't get the buy-in from the couple, that's your opportunity because I can't tell you how many times I've heard a husband say, "Well, you can't go there. I'm not going to pay that money." And they just don't get it. And they'd rather just chew on aspirin and suffer through it. So take off the boots, boys, and let's get to work. It's interesting.

So let's transition a little bit about HBN, Homestead Bloggers Network. And I just really appreciate you and Erica taken the lead and putting together the presummit package. Just tell us a little bit about HBN and why y'all started it.

Angela: Well, Homestead Bloggers Network started after I wrote my first

handbook. It was called *Backyard Farming on an Acre More or Less*. And it's really dedicated to small-scale self-sufficiency, more intentional living. And when I began searching for potential reviewers for the book, I realized that it was very difficult to find some of these bloggers who were writing about this topic and sharing their wisdom in this area. There wasn't really a central gathering place for us.

And Erika had just launched Mom Prepares at the time. And so we were talking about it. Of course, she reviewed my book. And we'd been friends for years and years. And we started talking about it. She said, "Well, it wouldn't be hard to design something." And so it kind of sparked from my big idea—I'm always an idea person—and Erica's willingness to jump in and donate her technical savvy.

And between the two of us, HBN was born. And we started reaching out to some different people. It grew very quickly and has really become this amazing place of support. We get questions in there, everything from, "How do I fix the way that this plug-in... The new update messed up this plug-in on my website," to, "Oh, my gosh. Something is wrong with my chicken. What do you guys think this is?"

Which, for most of us bloggers, most of us are in the group where maybe we garden or maybe we have chickens. Or some of us are completely off grid and totally out there. And I think that weird dichotomy of back to the earth/tech savvy is kind of very unusual. And a lot of their homesteading friends don't get the whole website thing. And a lot of their website friends don't get the whole chicken thing. And so this group is the one place where both is normal. And it's a really cool support group for the bloggers.

And the Homestead Blogger's Network website, we featured a post that the bloggers write and link back to their websites and help extend their reach because so many of them have these amazing messages and this incredible information that they're trying to share. And maybe their audience isn't as big or they just don't have the time to invest in the social stuff. And so that's

where HBN can really come in and help spread the word, especially when they're starting out, and help grow their blog and grow their audience without having to do it all by yourself. It can be very lonely to be a blogger. And so having that support system can be so helpful.

Dr. Zielinski: Well, two things. Well, actually three. First and foremost, ever since I've been a member of HBN, I haven't been as involved as I'd like to because of big projects like this. But I have to tell you, early on I just fell in love with you all. There's a genuine sincerity. People are up in the middle of the night talking to each other, even people praying for one another, just personal issues, things like you said, "How do I fix this plug-in issue?" or, "What do you all think? I have a new book deal coming on."

And it's such a great environment that you'll have created. It's really a safe place to land where other networking groups I've been a part of have been very cutthroat or more business minded. This is legitimate people just want to help people. And let's help each other.

And, A, I love it. And, two, I've got to give y'all a shameless plug because for those of you out there who are bloggers, fledgling bloggers, wannabe bloggers, or seasoned bloggers, join. Take advantage of this opportunity. It can be free. And it is just a sweet deal for people just to connect and help. I know it's helped me promote my personal brand and my website.

And also, third, I just really appreciate what you'll have put together for the summit because, unfortunately, we weren't able to interview 100 people and do this. It would just go on for weeks and weeks and weeks. So we had a sweet spot. And you and Erika are on the panel. But for all the unsung heroes out there, the people that live on the land, urban homesteaders, sustainability folks, whatever, they use essential oils. And they're veritable experts at them in their own way. And I appreciate the fact that you all helped give them a voice.

Angela: Oh, it was amazing to see. When we reached out to the group about

this project, we had people who they raise livestock and they're using essential oils with their livestock. I'm like, okay, I don't know how to do that. I use essential oils with people on my job and now with my kids. But it was just so cool to see.

And then lots of the homestead bloggers, of course they make a lot of things for themselves. And they save a lot of money and have higher-quality products that way, laundry detergent, cleaning supplies and stuff like that. And so it was really neat to see everybody just pitch in and jump in, "Oh, yes. And we're going to put together a welcome packet of information for people on really how to incorporate the essential oils into more of their everyday lives." Because these people are doing it. And they are living it. And they know how to make it work. And so that's really, really cool to see that coming together.

Dr. Zielinski: I love it. It's gold. Take advantage of it, folks, if you're listening. And now I want to talk a little bit about Untrained Housewife. I just love the name of the website. I love the Renaissance woman that you talk about. Now, what is the Renaissance woman? What does that mean to you in the 21st century?

Angela: Well, I think that we have a lot of pressure on ourselves. "What are you going to be when you grow up?" And the "correct" answer, if you will—put air quotes around "correct"—is a thing. It's a one-word label. And the fact is none of us are just one thing, and especially those of us who are wives and mothers and actively involved parents. And once we begin making the transition to a healthier lifestyle for our families, we take on a host of labels.

And I think it's a mistake to feel like we have to limit ourselves. Even when I started blogging, I was doing a lot of SEO consultations and working with businesses and clients. I still do a lot of content strategy for big clients. And I love that work. And I love Untrained Housewife, too. And I love Homestead Bloggers Network, too.

And there's this push like, "What is your niche going to be? What is your

focus? What is that one thing you're going to be known for?" And I don't think that we necessarily have to do one thing. Now, for some people, that's more of their personality. And that's where they really thrive. But, for me, if I only did one thing, I would go crazy insane. I have five kids. So my life is full of many, many different things. And I love to pursue a wide variety of interests, from raising chickens to watercolor painting to...I just bought a quilt top because I'm going to teach myself how to quilt. And I didn't want to hassle with the [inaudible] part. So I'm constantly trying to learn new things. And bless my husband's heart. He really just tolerates my projects.

And Untrained Housewife really came about because my mother's generation was the generation that got away from home. And my mom was literally the one in our high school who started the petition to do away with home economics as a required elective for women. And so she was going to be the first female astronaut. She was in no way, shape, or form prepared to homeschool eight children as a stay-at-home mom.

And so I think that there's a lot of us who are trying to do more for our families. We want to be more intentional. We want to be more self-sufficient. We want to make the birthday cake for our kids. But we've never done anything but crack open the box and add a cup of water and pop that in the oven. That's the extent of our birthday cake making.

And for all of us who are in that position where we want to do more than what we were trained to do growing up, we didn't have grandparents and mothers maybe who raised eyes prepared to take on the challenges of being a mom and being a wife and being a homemaker. That word has such a horrible connotation for so many people.

But the truth is I want to be an important part in my children's lives. I want to be an important part in my husband's life, both in our family's health. And that means emotional, physical, spiritual. And I wasn't necessarily trained for that. So Untrained Housewife really came about as a collaborative effort of intentional and self-sufficient women.

And people come. They write articles. They don't have to be writers. I keep an editor on staff to take care of the stray commas or fix up the sentences. And it's really for people who have something to share. They can share their successes and their knowledge in one area. And together as a group, we're covering the broad spectrum of what it means to be a modern wife and mother in today's society without going crazy. It's kind of that Titus 2 principle of the older women teaching younger women.

But in this case, you don't have to be young or old. Whatever age you are, whatever skills or knowledge you have to share...You make your own laundry soap? Sounds amazing. She wrote two posts on Untrained Housewife on how to make liquid laundry detergent and how to make powdered laundry detergent. That's what she had to share. And that's been a blessing. That's been one of the most popular posts on the site for years and years and years and years.

And I think when we can cut back on some of the pressure to be everything and know everything and realize that, "Okay, this is what I'm good at. Someone else is good at this. I can learn from them. They can learn from me." And it goes back to that quilter circle barn-raising mentality of the community coming together to help each other. That's what the site is about. And I love seeing people recapture those. I call them the lost arts of intentional and self-sufficient living.

Dr. Zielinski: I love it. What you're doing is you are empowering people. And not only just women, but men.

Angela: Yes!

Dr. Zielinski: And that is so important. And I know, guys, you're not probably going to put Untrained Housewife on your favorite toolbar. But why not? You can learn a lot of different things. And I know for myself, when I was single before I got married, what am I going to do? Am I going to go eat out all the

time? Am I going to go sacrifice my health? No. I've got to learn to cook. I got to learn to clean.

But thankfully, though, I did have good training. My mother worked part-time pretty much her whole life and full-time at certain times. But she taught me how to cook and how to do things. And I also when I was a kid, I was watching cooking shows. And who's going to do that? And so Jeff Smith, The Frugal Gourmet, was my favorite. And that was old-school PBS.

But it is something that I resonate with, Angela, because when I travel the country, teaching people about essential oils, the theme is empowerment. And I've shared this several times during the summit. Yet, it's so important for us to realize this. A medical doctor practices medicine. A chiropractor practices chiropractic. But what I want to do is I want to help people and train you and empower you to practice essential oils.

And this is in a sense what you're doing, not necessarily only about essential oils. But you're empowering them to practice life again, how to be self-sufficient, how not to rely on the government for your health insurance or the supermarket for all of your food or you name it. And that is beyond empowering. You are now been given your life back. So this is a mission. It's a ministry. And I not only resonate with, but I applaud you for what you've done.

Angela: Well, I'll tell you essential oils has been a big part of that journey, especially for my family. And it started when I was a massage therapist. I had a client who struggled with chronic fatigue. And she had horrible muscle spasms. And so I started researching ways that she could get relief between massage appointments. She really could only afford to come every other month, which really wasn't enough. But that's what she could afford to do.

And so I began researching things that would help with these terrible muscle spasms that she would get with this chronic fatigue. And she had some other medical issues. But it really just ate up her muscles. Fibromyalgia was the

other thing that she struggled with. And she would get terrible trigger points. And they could often trigger migraines in her.

And when I started reading about the essential oils and how I could take this massage, I actually made a personalized plan for her. One of the things that I think, especially as a massage therapist, we have intake forms that we do with our clients to assess their health, history, and stuff like that to make sure that what we're doing is not contraindicated and it won't actually harm them.

And I did additional intake with her prior to giving her the essential oils because I felt it was important to make sure that there were no other contraindications. And I created a blend specifically for her that I actually originally blended in with my massage lotion because I hadn't researched oil bases and stuff like that at that time. And I wanted to give her something right away that she could take after her next appointment. And she would use that in the evenings before she would go to bed.

And what we found is that by the time she came back to me two months later, she was completely off of her prescription pain meds. She had weaned herself off. And so two months later, she still had things that she needed to take because of the chronic illnesses that she was dealing with. But within the year, her prescriptions had dropped to one fourth of what she had been taking previous.

And she worked with her doctor to do that. And as they worked together and as she made improvements in how she felt physically and emotionally, of course when you're struggling physically and you hurt all the time, that can really trigger some feelings of depression. And so she was also on a lot of antidepressants and things like that.

And as she felt better physically and emotionally, then she began being more active in her life. By the time I stopped doing massage therapy two years later, she had lost 25 pounds. She was more active than she had been in 20 years. Her medications were down to like the barest minimum of what she

absolutely needed. She was off pain meds. She was off antidepressants. She was just on what she needed for her autoimmune disorders.

And it was amazing to see her transformation looking back from where she was when she first came in just literally in tears, in so much pain, had trouble sleeping through the night because of the pain, had trouble getting up and getting around and doing things with her grandkids because of the pain. And even driving down, a two drive to see her grandkids, her other grandkids that lived out of town, was difficult for her.

And it's not that the essential oils "cured" her illnesses. But it really helped her start down a path towards better health overall. When she felt better physically, she was able to be more active. She was able to get outside more. She started walking every day. And at first, she could only walk five minutes one direction. And then she would turn around and walk five minutes back. And that's all she could do at first, which was 10 minutes more walking than she had done in the last 10 years.

And as that continued, just being outdoors, being in the sunshine, of course you know that helps with our mood and emotion, as well. She began to work with her doctor to wean off the antidepressants. She began to be more active. She began to lose weight, which made her feel better physically, which helped with the depression. And it was just this snowball cycle in reverse of what had devastated her health so many years prior.

Dr. Zielinski: That's beautiful. That's beautiful. And it all starts with a snowflake.

Angela: Yeah, it really just started by giving her enough relief that she felt hopeful again and began making those positive changes in her life.

Dr. Zielinski: I love that word. I've got to stress this for just a second here. God has been really putting in several cancer patients in our path. And we're talking everything from stage four esophageal cancer that's metastasizing to

the liver and ovaries of women, or just glioblastoma in a young boy. We're talking some serious things. And they've heard and they've seen that essential oils can help. And so we're helping them. We're consulting with them.

And one thing I share with everybody is you can never, ever give up hope. It is so critical. Just go back to Greek mythology. Hope was the last thing left in Pandora's box. And we know what the Scripture says: "This hope isn't deceptive because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." And we can't lose hope because in that is our strength to get through.

And the thing is, also, too, I want to emphasize what you shared, Angela, is essential oils don't cure anything actually. I'd like to clarify that, too. Essential oils, just like chiropractic, triggers the body to heal itself. And one thing in addition to helping organic disease like depression or anxiety or whatever it might be, we can't discount the quality of life.

And like you said, it was the improvement in her quality of life that really spurred her on to maybe even continue. Once you feel better a little bit, it gives you hope. And that makes you want to go forward and maybe get those tennis shoes on to go on that walk where the depression and the pain would have prevented you from doing that before.

Angela: Yeah. It was amazing to see the difference. And it was such a big difference just within the two-month timeframe from when I gave her the essential oil blend and when she came back for her next appointment. The fact that she had weaned off pain meds that she had literally been on for 10 years—years and years and over a decade—that alone was a huge change.

And then to see so much improvement beyond that was just miraculous. And that word sounds crazy. But I really do believe that if anyone had said to her in the midst of that despair and that bad feeling and all of that pain that she would be back to a size 8 and she would be hanging out with her grandkids at the water park or at the soccer fields and at all-day events with her

grandbabies, she would have been like, “Are you crazy?!” It would have seemed so impossible to her. And now she's healthier in her 50s and 60s than she was before that.

Dr. Zielinski: That's awesome. That's awesome. So as a massage therapist, how long did it take you to become comfortable using essential oils in your practice?

Angela: Probably about a year before I became comfortable on a regular basis. Now, with this particular gal—and I don't want to say her name just because of privacy reasons, I don't want to share anyone's name—but with this particular lady, I did a lot of very specific research *for her*. And I basically had two months because I knew she was coming back in. And she had left so despondent and so miserable. And I knew that she was really, really struggling. And she needed a change. And so I did a lot of very specific research.

And that's what I would say. When you become more comfortable with essential oils, start with one that you can be very confident and comfortable with. Some oils are more—I don't want to say benign—but they're more, what I would say, starter oils. They're easier to use. There's fewer side effects. There's fewer contraindications.

Lavender, tea tree, those are two that come immediately to mind that have a wide variety of uses that could be used on many different people with very few contraindications. Once you start, then it's just the building process. It's not like you go from nothing to everything over the course of a year. You start with one. And a month later, maybe you add another.

And I will share Evan's story—with my son. And I'll share with you how I moved to use them personally. When you research something specific... So your kid has a respiratory thing going on. And so you start researching that. And you start using those oils. And then a little bit later you have another

situation. Or maybe you struggle with migraines—that's my thing—and so you start researching oils for that situation.

And so sometimes you're led by the oils. And sometimes you're led by the circumstances in your life. I don't think anyone ever quite feels like an expert. The more I learn, the more not an expert I feel. But I think that seeing transformation so quickly, it made me very comfortable to use oils and very excited to pursue oils and to continue to use them and really dig deeper into what they had to offer and what could be done with them. And I began using them with my family.

Now, my son Evan is 10 now. But he was 4 at the time. And we had been struggling for years with respiratory problems with Evan. He was exposed to RSV at the church nursery when he was 9 months old. And he was almost hospitalized. We had to do double breathing treatments with him. We had to give up every 3 hours throughout the night and the following day. The doctor literally taught me how to listen for the wheezing sound. And if it came back, we were going to have to admit him.

It was horribly scary with a 9-month-old, 10-month-old baby to have him experiencing these respiratory issues. And it was kind of one of those things, it's like you think you're doing everything right. And you let someone hold them who should totally know better. And come to find out that their child had RSV. And they exposed your child to it. And now he's terribly sick.

And as a result of the RSV, he really suffered with respiratory problems. Kids get colds. And usually they just go away. Well, with Evan, he would get a cold and it would immediately go to his chest. And he would have this trouble breathing. And then we would have to do the breathing treatments, which I hated giving him a nebulizer because that's actually steroid medications, which suppresses the immune system.

So here he is sick. And now we're suppressing his immune system. And that never felt right to me. It always made me anxious to have to do it. And so I'm

really seeing the results in my practice made me begin to explore the possibilities in my personal life, as well. And I began working with some different oils. Ravensara was one because it's good against viruses. And eucalyptus that I Used. Radiata, which is a form that's less stimulating in children than some of the other Eucalyptus options out there.

And I really began researching what would be best for him in this situation? And started using the oils basically any time he got the tiniest sniffle, if he coughed, if he sneezed, if there was any of the other kids had a cold or any kind of congestion, man, I was slathering that boy up top to bottom. I had a blend that I would make with some oils and just have that ready to go.

And when we started that at 4, his pediatrician had told us he would probably always suffer from asthma. We would always have this issue. We would always be doing the breathing treatments with him. And we have not had to do a single breathing treatment since. Six years now he's been completely medication free. And just being able to make that difference in our family was astonishing and completely unexpected and not what we were told that was even possible.

Dr. Zielinski: Oh, yeah. RSV is no joke. For those of you who aren't familiar with it, RSV is an RNA virus that causes respiratory tract infections in kids. And it can affect upwards to 2 million kids under the age of 5, according to some of the most recent data.

And that's just the power of what your body can do really because the one thing that's really key for folks that realize it is these essential oils are antimicrobial. They actually can fight airborne pathogens, A. And, B, if they can help open up and relax the respiratory ways, that could really allow your body to really breathe better, bring healing to where it needs to bring healing. And it's just a great story of just the simple use of how a mother took control of her health and the health of her family and became empowered. And you just got a great testimony. It's awesome.

Angela: Yeah. We were cleaning out our closets last summer, kind of our spring cleaning. And we came across the breathing machine. And my husband just looked at me. And he shrugged his shoulders and he was like, "Do we even need this anymore?" And I was like, "No. Let's just donate it to the pregnancy center." So we gave it away to a charity that we support in our local community. And we just got rid of it.

And just to be able to go from the scared mother who had to get up every three hours and make sure her kid was still breathing and do these treatments all the time and the doctors saying, "He'll struggle with this forever. His lungs have been damaged and this is always going to be an issue," to being able to just smile and say, "Thank you, God. We can just get rid of this. We don't even need it in our house. We don't even need it in our lives anymore."

That was so freeing and so cool just to be able to take that step.

Dr. Zielinski: That's fantastic. Angela, we are running out of time, unfortunately. And I have two questions that I think deserve a little bit of attention. And one of them is you said it took you about a year to get comfortable with the oils when you first started your massage therapy practice. What sort of oops or mistakes did you make early on with essential oils that you would like to share with all the fledgling LMTs out there to give them a heads up?

Angela: So I would definitely say that one of the things you need to do is not have the oils going already or out or pre-blended until you've met with the client and spoken with them. I had some essential oils burning in a diffuser in the room. And I didn't turn it off. I didn't stop it between clients.

And it was a chamomile blend, like a relaxation blend. But one of the ingredients in the blend, my next client was allergic to ragweed. And chamomile is in the ragweed family. And so it didn't trigger an allergic reaction in her. But she had a reaction to it, like an emotional reaction.

And she was just like, “Oh, no. I'm going to get a headache.” And she just immediately knew that it didn't feel right to her. And when I sat down and began doing the questions, we went in the other room and began working through some of the contraindications and found out that she was very allergic to ragweed and just it made her very miserable.

And so I think when we say that essential oils affect the body, that means that they can and potentially could affect the body in a negative way, as well, depending on someone's personal history and makeup. And so we have to understand that if the essential oils work in a certain way and they affect the body in a certain way that that's usually positive. But for some people, that could actually be negative. So for her, that relaxation blend was not relaxing at all. It actually made her very nervous and frightened. And she felt very uncomfortable with it.

And so I made a note in her chart. I allowed more space for her appointments in the future so that the room would clear out. And we just made adjustments from there. But that's definitely one example of a situation where it did not have the desired effect.

Dr. Zielinski: Well, that points out a very clear indication that we need to recognize that these oils truly have an effect on the limbic system. And they can produce emotional triggers. And just like some people, let's say you get divorced on a day that you smell cinnamon during the holidays. That could trigger a reaction that could trigger anxiety, stress every time you smell cinnamon. And these things are real. Our body has an amazing memory for these types of things. So that's a good point. I actually didn't think about that. Thanks for bringing that up.

The last question is what top 3 to 5 oils should every massage therapist have on hand? What do you think?

Angela: Lavender for sure. Peppermint is really nice. And I'll tell you, I used it a lot when guys would come in or people would come in. And maybe they're

coming in after work. And so their feet are a little bit just not super awesome. And so I would use peppermint blend in my hot towels. And so I had a hot towel warmer. And I would have the peppermint in there. And I could just pull out one of those hot, damp towels with the peppermint and give their feet a little massage through the towel. And it made things very nice and fresh. It was very invigorating for them. And peppermint is a really nice oil that most people enjoy. And that's probably one that I used a lot from a strictly practical perspective.

Lavender is very soothing. We had a lot of people, weekend warriors/ranchers here. And so muscle issues were very common. And so I used a muscle blend that had things like Wintergreen and pine and some of those really good anti-inflammatory, muscle relaxing kind of oils. And that was a blend I would just make up myself.

And I always included a little bit of frankincense in it. Frankincense is great. A little goes a long way. And it really adds a lot of fullness to an oil blend, also helps the blend last a little longer if you're using lighter notes like orange or neroli where the citrus evaporates a little bit faster. And those oils won't last as long. And so in a blend, I would often mix those with the deeper oil like frankincense.

And so that blend, I know that's not one of the oils you asked for.

Dr. Zielinski: No. That's perfect. No. That's perfect. Thank you.

Angela: That was some of the oils I used in that blend. It was very uplifting and soothing anti-inflammatory. And I still use a similar blend for myself, for my migraines and muscle tension.

Dr. Zielinski: I love it. I love the practicality. And I've oftentimes thought that. I've gotten or I've received benefit from many massages in my day. And I always wonder. Smell is such a big part of it. And as a chiropractor, too, we

get up close and personal with our patients. And sometimes the practical aspect is, gosh, the smell will affect me, too.

Well, Angela, thank you so much. Folks, I want to leave you with a thought going back to the rancher who wouldn't take off his boots with the spurs on. What are your boots? Whatever it could be, it could be an emotional, spiritual, or physical impairment of any sort. Don't keep your boots on.

One lesson that I think we all need to learn from this talk is being vulnerable with a trusted healthcare provider is so key and important, having a mentor, having a friend in natural health and wellness, especially using essential oils because if we're not real with each other, we're not real with ourselves. And I just love that message. And if Angela can use massage therapy and essential oils to harden the exterior of that rancher, what can happen to you and I.

And, folks, if you have found this content helpful, remember you can take it home with you. Just click on the banner beside or below for more details. And, Angela, I want to leave you an opportunity to say goodbye. And I just want to thank you again for spending the time.

Angela: Well, I really appreciate the time. And I would encourage anyone who's interested in learning more self-sufficient living material, go to Homestead Bloggers Network. And there's a place where you can subscribe to the newsletter there. And we'll send you the best posts from all of our members each week.

Dr. Zielinski: Awesome. Thank you so much. Until we meet next time, everyone, bye-bye.