

Lesya Liu 0:00

Hello everyone and welcome to the new episode of You Can Exhale Now podcast. Today I am hosting Antonio DeRose, who is the co-founder and COO of Green House Healthy, a health and wellness company educating about the benefits of cannabis as part of a healthy and active lifestyle. Antonio is also a certified personal trainer, sponsored trail runner, multimedia journalist and international speaker. I am really excited about this conversation today to hopefully educate people about the health benefits of cannabis, and how it can help us lead a healthier physical and mental lifestyle. Antonio, welcome to the show.

Antonio DeRose 1:39

Thanks for having me on. I appreciate it.

Lesya Liu 1:41

Thank you for coming. So why don't you tell us a little bit more about yourself and how you got into I guess cannabis business.

Antonio DeRose 1:50

So I started consuming cannabis fairly young. I was around 12 or 13 years old. And I started consuming for medicinal purposes, although I didn't realize they were medicinal purposes at the time. I also went through a period of my life where I was addicted to alcohol, opioids and other narcotics and cannabis helped me overcome those addictions. And I actually got involved in the cannabis industry. After I moved from Missouri to Colorado, my wife had epilepsy. And we moved there shortly after they legalized recreational cannabis. And we started working on an all outdoor organic 6000 plant cannabis farm. And we got inspired by a lot of the stories and the testimony that we heard from people about how cannabis had improved the quality of their life for various medical conditions. And that made us really want to get out there and combine it with our passion, which was fitness and nutrition. So we started greenhouse healthy as an educational platform. And we're to help educate people about plant medicines and how they can contribute to personal well being.

Lesya Liu 3:06

And, you know, you've mentioned so many different medical conditions. And right now there's more and more research coming out about the benefits of cannabis that, you know, it treats all kinds of conditions, disorders, diseases. But why do you think there's still so much stigma around that, you know, even in the United States, it's not legalized completely on a federal level, there's still a lot of stigma, about you know, if you're taking cannabis and you're a drug addict, and all of that stuff, what why do you think that's the case, especially considering that, you know, cannabis was around for 1000s of years, and people use old parts of the plants for all different types of reasons.

Antonio DeRose 4:02

So the stigma that's associated with it now, even though it's legal in a lot of states, is essentially from decades of misinformation and propaganda from the US government. It was targeted specifically at cannabis before cannabis was made illegal in the United States. It was actually used by doctors. There were several doctors at that time that testified in favor of the medicinal benefits of cannabis, but they shut it down and can continue to basically demonize the plant in order to discourage its use. And there was also some racial stigma that was incorporated in all of that negative propaganda that was targeted at minorities, specifically, people of color which were persecuted and There are still a lot of people that are currently in jail and in prison for doing the same thing previously that legal cannabis businesses are doing right now. So it's just a matter of time before we kind of catch up with a lot of the research and move forward with trying to de stigmatize.

Lesya Liu 5:25

And can we talk a little bit about the chemistry of cannabis because you've mentioned so many different, you know, disorders and diseases ranging from epilepsy to alcoholism. I know that cannabis is really great for anxiety and depression. How just one plant is able to do all of those things and address a variety of different symptoms and disorders.

Antonio DeRose 5:59

For sure, so the body has its own endocannabinoid system, just like it has a respiratory system just like it has a cardiovascular system or a central nervous system. We discovered the endocannabinoid system and it's how our body interacts with cannabinoids that are found in cannabis. And also we create naturally in our body. So the ones that we create naturally in our body are an amide and to ag those are actually created and activated whenever we exercise which I would love to, to explore more on but ultimately, you can get these exoticness cannabinoids like THC, CBG, CBD, CBD is going to be one of the most popular cannabinoids that you hear in the media. Because you can find it specifically in hemp, which has a looser legal structure than cannabis itself. Even though technically it's the same plant. And in that plant there are I believe it's 60 or more cannabinoids that have been discovered, and the endocannabinoid system actually has receptors, cb one receptors, and CB two receptors. And they're the ones that interact with the different cannabinoids. And it's all throughout your body. So it's in your brain. It's in your digestive system. And all throughout these different places, and its sole purpose that we found, is to create homeostasis in the body and help regulate overall well being.

Lesya Liu 7:43

That's fascinating. So basically, cannabinoids can balance out our body, our human body, whatever, doesn't seem right. And it basically, is that correct? Cool. Can you speak a little bit about the difference between medical versus recreational marijuana? You know, what's the difference in strength, or, you know, how are there any different effects on the human body? Can you speak a little bit about that?

Antonio DeRose 8:21

For sure. So there actually isn't a difference between what is regulated as medical cannabis and what is regulated as recreational cannabis, it's the same plant. certain states are going to have certain regulations or laws that restrict the percentage of cannabinoids just all varies by state right now since it's in the state's control as to whether they have a medical program, whether they have a medical and recreational program, and then what those programs entail, but ultimately, it's the same plant. On the medical side. In some states, you can get more potent edibles. And by more potent I just mean the percentages of the cannabinoids like THC, THC or CBD can be higher in some of those products. Because medicinal patients that are specifically using it for medicinal purposes. For things like cancer, they're gonna consume a large amount of cannabinoids, and that's why it's like that on the medicinal market in certain states. But if you go to Colorado, and you walk into a dispensary that's a medical dispensary and a recreational dispensary. Typically they're going to have the medicine separated from the recreational but the flower that you're purchasing, and a lot of the cannabis products that you're purchasing on either side are the exact same product.

Lesya Liu 9:50

I see. So can cannabis really cause an addiction, especially maybe a more potent ones.

Antonio DeRose 9:59

So The definition of addiction is basically naughty. When you stop using it. You're gonna have withdrawal symptoms, and you don't have withdrawal symptoms when you stop using cannabis. So scientifically, it is not addictive. But anything can be addictive to a certain extent. Take caffeine, for example, which is also a psychoactive component. It's a psychoactive ingredient just like THC is a psychoactive ingredient. People can be addicted to coffee, people can be addicted to exercise. So I believe that it just depends on each person's level of addiction patterns. But the good thing about cannabis is that it also works as an exit drug to addictions, I was addicted to opioids, and it helped me overcome that addiction, as well as other narcotics and I no longer drink and I have a history of alcoholism in my family. And it really helped me overcome that and I am no longer drinking alcohol.

Lesya Liu 11:06

That is a very powerful story. Thank you. Thank you for sharing this. I'm sure it took a lot of time and the dedication and bravery to talk about God. Thank you. So you've mentioned a lot about THC, CBD indica versus sativa. Can you explain? Can you give us like, intro explainer to what that is? And people who are maybe looking to try cannabis for themselves? You know, what are they supposed to be looking for? What is THC, CBD? When do you need either one, and so forth?

Antonio DeRose 11:52

Sure. So when it comes to strains, sativa and indica are where you're going to hear the most especially when you go into a dispensary. They use those terms in order to differentiate

between the suggested effects that you're going to feel from the plant. But ultimately, that's more of a marketing strategy than it is actually being suggested of what the plant is going to do to you. They're going to say that sativas are more uplifting and more motivating, more cerebral, and they're gonna say that indicas are more sedating, and promote sleep a little bit more. But ultimately, our endocannabinoid system is so individualized that we really can't distinguish exactly whether or not a sativa is going to have a specific effect on you versus an indica because every single person is very different.

Lesya Liu 12:57

And, you know, it looks like a lot of different people have very different reactions to cannabis, especially when they tried the first time some people report you know, just being mellow and relaxed and sleepy. Other people tend to, you know, like, laugh a lot, or, you know, be really goofy or silly. While there are other types of people who just experienced panic attacks. And it's all basically from the same plant the same use. How can you explain that? And how can you know a person before they try it, maybe they hesitate that they will have a bad experience? How can you kind of gauge what your reaction might be to cannabis.

Antonio DeRose 13:49

It's difficult to gauge off of just choosing the flower or the product of what it's going to do. And the reason why it varies so much from plant to plant and why it's different for different people is not just because of the cannabinoid content. So one thing that you're going to look at is the different cannabinoids that are in each specific flower. Even if it's a cannabis product that was derived from flowers, the cannabinoid profile is going to be different on each strain. So that means that it's going to have a certain percentage of THC, a certain percentage of CBD, THC a CBD or CBG. All these things are gonna have a different effect on your body, but it's also the terpenes which are what give the cannabis plant its smell. Each one has different terpene profiles as well as these cannabinoid profiles. So having so many different variables of how the percentages of each of these profiles are going to affect your individual makeup is very difficult to make a generalized statement about what the plant will do for you. The best way to find out is honestly, I recommend that you trust your nose when you're choosing products and don't really pay attention to the percentages and everything. Unless you're more experienced than you do understand, you know what, I'm only what limonene, which is a terpene that smells like lemon is going to do to your particular body. Or if you respond differently to CBD or THC, trust your nose knows what smells good to you. It's kind of like if you go to a farmers market and you pick out some oranges or some apples or whatever it is. And one of them in particular may stand out specifically to you, I feel like that's your body telling you that this is ripe fruit, this is something that you will benefit from doing the same thing with cannabis. So whatever smells good to me might not smell good to another person. And to me, that's the indicator of what's going to be good for me. And then another person at that particular smell isn't going to be good for them. That's kind of where to start. And then for people that are trying to consume cannabis for the first time, I recommend keeping a journal so that you understand what you're taking and what it's doing to you specifically, and always start slow. So slowly titrate up and measure the effects

of different strains of flour. Measure the effects of different products that you're consuming, whether you're choosing to do a tincture, which is typically alcohol based, or you're going to do like an oil based drops. CBD comes in oil based drops, a lot of times there's vaporizing you can vaporize actual oils, you can vaporize the flower. So there's all these different routes of administration like edibles. edibles tend to be more powerful because when your body digests them, you actually convert them from THC to delta nine hydroxy or hydroxyl 11. So hydroxyl 11 is actually more potent than THC. But some people actually lack the enzyme in the liver that converts THC to hydroxy 11. And that means they won't even feel the effects. So there's another variable about how it can affect people very differently even though it's the same plant.

Lesya Liu 17:28

Mm hmm. And that was my next question is that you know, when you go into the shop, you see edibles you see just joints, oils, you know, there's so many different ways basically right now to try cannabis and to consume cannabis. What's really the difference? Is it really a difference in potency or is it just a matter of preference? Where would you suggest people start, and so forth.

Antonio DeRose 18:01

It does boil down to a matter of preference. I personally prefer to consume flour, it's the most natural state of the plant. And when you consume flour, you get what's called the entourage effect, which is the mix of the different terpenes and the different cannabinoids as well as the different properties of plants. I recommend that people try different routes of administration or different ways to consume so try flowers and try an edible. Try a tincture. Tria, topical topicals are great ways to introduce cannabis. Because you can apply them to air they're just like creams or lotions and you can apply them to areas of your body that may be sore and benefit from the pain relieving effects and the anti inflammatory effects of the cannabinoids and you can focus on isolated areas. That's a very good way to do it. If you don't want to feel any sort of euphoria, which is what is described as the high then you're going to want to lean towards CBD. THC is the psychoactive component, one of the psychoactive components in cannabis. CBD is also psych psychoactive, but it is non impairing. So it doesn't actually come with a euphoria or high effect. So if you do want to introduce yourself slowly start with CBD first and then maybe work your way up to THC or other cannabinoids and kind of go from there.

Lesya Liu 19:38

Mm hmm. And, you know, you've mentioned that CBD has become very popular these days. And I agree that it seems you know, Everywhere you look, you hear about CBD, and I'm not sure about other states, but definitely in Colorado, you can go into any grocery store and you can find No CBD, tinctures or CBD topicals. So can you talk a little bit more about what CBD is and what it does to our body? You know, when is the appropriate use for that? And, most importantly, how do we choose the best products because I think there's this rise of popularity of CBD. There's just a lot of, you know, misinformation and false advertising flying around.

Antonio DeRose 20:30

So, CBD has been popularized because it can be grown in large quantities of hemp flour. And the hemp flour has a looser legal structure than cannabis itself. So that's one of the reasons why it's in so many products and why it's in a lot of grocery stores. I live in Missouri, which is actually a very conservative state that legalized medical cannabis in November of 2018. But they've had CBD shops for quite some time that only sells CBD products because of the looser laws around it. In 2018, WADA, the world anti doping agency, actually removed CBD from their banned substance list. Wada is the regulatory agency that oversees sports around the world. Sports don't necessarily sports leagues don't necessarily have to follow all of their rules to a tee like they don't have to choose to remove CBD from their own personalized banned substance list. But the world agency actually did remove that in 2018, which was big for the health and wellness community. And CBD stands for cannabidiol. It's just one of the many components and one of the many cannabinoids that you can find in the cannabis plant. And the reason why it's very popular, especially as an introductory to cannabis is because it doesn't have that euphoria. So you can actually benefit from the medicinal benefits without feeling any sort of impairment or euphoria. And with it being so neutral, but also having medicinal benefits that have proven to be anti inflammatory and pain relieving. It's also been proven to be neuroprotective, so it actually protects your brain cells, which is a reason why we've seen it help with different different conditions like epilepsy, for example, and other neuro diseases. When it comes to choosing the best product, I recommend doing the same thing that you do for food. Because what it really boils down to is food is medicine. Cannabis is just another thing that you can consume as medicine. So I recommend looking for something that is organic. I'm against pesticides and GMOs. So looking for organic is the first step. And looking at the company, because the company itself is going to represent itself a certain way. Pay attention to what the company is doing. Just like going to their website, going to their social media, how active they are, they educate people, and a lot of times companies will have their lab results. And they have links or numbers attached to the bottles. So if you get a cream or if you get a dropper or something like that at wherever it is that you're purchasing it, you can find the lab results of that specific product that you're consuming online and see exactly what's in that product. So transparency is going to be one of the biggest things and then you also want to look for something that is providing a full spectrum. So the difference between a full spectrum and an isolate, you're going to see CBD isolates. In a lot of products, they even have CBD water, which is a CBD isolate. Typically, the isolate is when they isolate just the one cannabinoid of CBD or THC or whatever cannabinoid it is. But with full spectrum CBD, you're actually going to get a little bit of THC. It's not very much at all, because the regulation is that it has to be under a certain percentage in order for it to pass federal regulation to be put in the market. So look for the full spectrum so that you benefit from not just CBD, but a little bit of THC as well as the other properties of plants, which aren't available in an isolate. And then making sure that it's organic and that they have transparency on their products and their lab testing.

Lesya Liu 24:54

And, you know, we've spoken a lot about different disorders And different medical conditions. But I know your company also just educates about cannabis and leading an active lifestyle

using and leveraging the power of cannabis. So what do you suggest like why people who let's say do not have a medical need for cannabis, but they're looking to improve their lifestyle improve their personal health? How can cannabis help them elevate their lifestyle? Sure.

Antonio DeRose 25:32

So ultimately, even recreational cannabis is medical cannabis. So anyone consuming cannabis, whether they're choosing to intentionally consume it for medicinal purposes are still receiving the medicinal benefit. So you might eat an orange and just think you're eating an orange, but really, you're consuming the nutrients in that orange and I feel like it could be argued as being medicinal. When you consume it for overall well being. It's just like a supplement, just like you supplement anything else in your life. I'm a vegan athlete myself. And so I do consume hemp protein as a supplement. I also consider my cannabis consumption a supplement because it's charging my endocannabinoid system. Just like I might take a tea or something that is specifically helping my respiratory system is just another supplement. And when it comes to adding it into your life, if you want to have a little more active or lead a more healthy lifestyle, there was actually a study that was released in April of 2019. by the University of Colorado Boulder, they surveyed adult cannabis consumers in California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington, and 82% reported using cannabis within one hour before or up to four hours after exercising. So what we're learning is that a lot of people are consuming it intentionally around, personal well being. I can tell you from being a trail runner, it's consumed in trail running and running in general, it really helps with pain relief, it's been popular with athletes, for decades is just that it's had to be, it's had to have been kind of hushed because of the laws and getting suspended stuff like that. But in that survey I was talking about the 82% who were using it around exercise 78% said that it helped with recovery after exercising, and 52% said it increased their motivation to exercise. So it's also being found to make people more motivated to get active which goes against the stereotype that cannabis makes you lazy which is completely false. And 67% we're using cannabis both before and after exercise. The good thing about cannabinoids and exercise I mentioned earlier about how the body produces its own cannabinoids. So inanda meid which is actually has been found to create the fork feeling known as the runner's high, which gets talked about a lot in athletics. So you go for a really long run or you really exert yourself and you have that kind of high feeling. That's actually you naturally charging your endocannabinoid system and your body is producing its own cannabinoid called an and amide. Just like the exoticness cannabinoid that comes from the cannabis plant like THC. So that's where that euphoric feeling comes from. I believe the reason why it's being combined with exercise and one of the reasons I combine it with exercise is I'm supplementing my endocannabinoid system with the cannabinoids from the plant. And I'm creating my own natural ones, by exercising, and that creates a synergistic effect on my overall well being.

Lesya Liu 29:12

That's, that's fascinating. And I also know that a lot of you know athletes or not necessarily athletes, just people leading active lifestyles also use it for pain relief, or as an anti inflammatory tool. Can you speak a little bit to that as

Antonio DeRose 29:34

well. So there have been a lot of studies that have concluded the pain relieving effects and the anti inflammatory effects of various cannabinoids CBG, which stands for cannabidiol has actually been found to be more pain relieving than THC itself. Each cannabinoid has its own medicinal benefit and each terpenes has its own medicinal benefit. And each one is going to contribute to some sort of effect, whether it's anti inflammatory or whether it's pain relieving is going to be dependent upon the profile of the plant that it comes from. That's why some are better for certain things than others. So it just kind of depends which cannabinoid you're consuming. The only bad thing about it is with the federal regulations, scientific research, there's a lot of scientific research on cannabis. But they're mostly done in studies on mice and rats, which ultimately, is not as easy to argue that it can be replicated in humans. But what we need is we need to have more double blinded studies in human trials in order to further solidify the evidence that already exists.

Lesya Liu 31:06

And I guess my last question, slash comments is that I really love your mission to educate people and get rid of stigma. And I think a lot of it comes down to just educating people on what cannabis really is and what it can do for your body and the benefits it has for your mental and physical health. So I think that's a huge part of that movement. But what would you say are other ways you know, to kind of help to move this along, to get rid of stigmas to help the right register legislation that enables older people who will truly benefit from cannabis use to just start using it or at least give it a try.

Antonio DeRose 31:59

I recommend that if people are consuming cannabis now, and they aren't sharing how it's improving their life, start sharing. changing minds all starts with one conversation. And you can change one mind at a time by just having a conversation even within your family about your cannabis consumption or your plant medicine consumption. And kind of go from there. I'm very active on social media, social media is an excellent platform for you to be able to share your own voice going on different shows and podcasts like this one. If you're able to do that, that's another way to get out there. And you don't even necessarily have to educate about the benefits as much as share your personal story and your testimony about what it does for you and why you consume it. Because there's a lot of healthy, active, successful people out there that are consuming it, and they're still in the green closet, because of the stigma surrounding it. And the more people that come out of that green closet and open up about their cannabis consumption, the more minds are going to be changed, the more laws are going to be changed. And as the laws change, we will be able to study the plant more and get the scientific evidence to back up everything that's already out there right now. And that's the ways to really get out there and also really talk about consuming hemp foods. So you can get like the CBD flour and the CBD topicals and everything like that. But hemp foods have been available in grocery stores for decades. I eat hemp protein powder. Hemp seeds are actually one of the only plants on Earth

that have an entire amino acid profile. So they've got all 20 amino acids, and they have all of the eight essential amino acids that the body needs to survive. So that's another way to get out there and kind of talk about it is eating those hemp foods and then sharing that with people as well.

Lesya Liu 34:11

That's awesome. I'm Tanya, thank you so much for this conversation. I really like the term green closet. Hopefully people will get out of their dream closet. And at least give it a try. Really, you know, decriminalize the notion of cannabis because I think it all starts as our mindset and then it bleeds into legislation. So thank you again, so much for educating us about cannabis and all its wonderful effects on the human body.

Antonio DeRose 34:44

For sure, thanks so much for having me.

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