

ADVICE FOR THOSE WISHING TO BECOME "INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTORS":

I have not written anything on this issue for a long time because I thought my articles on Young Living covered it. However, due to an increase in the number of people asking me about companies promoting distributorships - particularly in the USA - I have decided to try and help with a bit of advice.

General issues with how these multi level companies work:

They have fancy web sites, they may have experts in marketing, they have doctors and scientists as advisors, and various other supposed experts to make themselves look trustworthy.

Beware of essential oils and health products companies that have **marketing experts** on their board. The fact that their primary experience is in marketing should sound alarm bells. It can indicate a company whose primary objective is sales at any cost. That is not a good ethical position in alternative health care.

Beware of those companies who make a lot about their connections with **marketing consultancies**. You have to ask "are they just in it for the money, or do they really want to help peoples health"? I know what I think!!

Beware of people on these boards **who claim to be doctors**, they may be, but they may also be people who have purchased a naturopath or other online certificate. In addition, the fact someone is a medical doctor does not mean they know anything about essential oils. Some of the "doctors" who popped up on the old newsgroups were clearly brainwashed by the marketing hype of their instructors. They are also paid to validate products.

Beware of certain **supposed scientific advisors**. Some of these people have published research of no relevance to aromatherapy which is then twisted by the company to suit their marketing strategy. Also, as long as the cash is flowing, some of them do not care about ethics.

These companies often operate via their distributors giving very convincing presentations. In many cases they ensnare people into cult-like ways of thinking. Their sales people rarely have any training in medical matters and their only training is lousy in-company courses.

Do not be misled into the belief that getting on the essential oils bandwagon is a good thing. That was something to do years ago. Here in the UK many aromatherapy suppliers have gone bust or packed up. In the USA things are also now not so good. So use essential oils by all means, but buy them from people who know what they are talking about.

How the franchises work:

As a distributor you are advised to build a team on which you get paid bonuses. This is multi level marketing (pyramid selling) at its worst. **That long lived scam has over the years left thousands badly out of pocket and ruined many families, yet people still fall for it.**

As a distributor you are paid a commission on sales made via your recruits. Sounds fine in practice, but read the small print carefully, and look at the options for not paying you.

Some companies offer you to be an **Independent Product Consultant** for a small fee. In such cases you are expected to advise people on the use of essential oils, and other products, yet you may have no sound training to be able to give health advice. If you do this you are on your own if someone decides to sue you for causing damage to their health due to incorrect advice. **The company will not stand behind you because they will claim you are not their employee but are "independent"**.

Beware of facebook and similar blog sites. These can be set up by anyone and made to look very convincing. They are now being exploited by con artists to sell products at inflated prices. They are also used to give health advice by people who have no training in what they advise, or are used by well meaning people who have picked up incorrect information from numerous sources. I have been horrified at some of the information sent to me.

Some of the lies used to snare you:

Frankincense oil can cure cancers. This is probably the worst kind of health scam out there. The marketers who make such claims should be in jail for health fraud.

1a. The tests conducted on this oil have mainly been done in lab conditions, such results cannot then be assumed to be replicated in humans via consumption of the oil as advocated by the marketing scammers. There are thousands of pieces of research on various extracts from plants which have indicated anti cancer activity, but few have been validated with human trials.

1b. When the research is investigated, it is often found that testing has been on an individual chemical extracted from the oil such as boswellic acid. It may also be that the crude gum has been tested with an entirely different range of phytochemicals compared to the distilled oil. **These results are then twisted by the marketing scammers into the whole oil is what has been tested.**

2. With Frankincense, as someone who has gathered huge volumes of research on this oil, there are several issues which you need to consider.

2a. The biggest issue is that as Frankincense trees still grow wild, thus there is little consistency between the chemical profiles of their oils. The resins are gathered by tribes people and sold to traders at the main ports. These resins are then mixed together for resale to the West. Boswellia frereana is a generic name for the oils sold by the marketing scammers. Yet it is impossible to produce an essential oil just from that variety because the trees differ widely and giving them exact botanical names is almost impossible.

2b. The fact that a particular sample of the oil has proven anti cancer properties invitro cannot then be taken to mean that all samples will have the same activity.

2c. Another issue is traditional use, in some parts of Arabia the gum was chewed as a reputed cure for mouth and stomach cancer. However, that would be gums extracted from trees in the local area, trees a few miles away may not have any such properties.

Summary on Frankincense: Beware of all claims you will see over this and other oils being proven to have anti cancer activity. If someone has cancer and normal medical treatments are failing they will be desperate to try anything. It is that awful situation that the quack medicine marketing people will play on. **Regretfully it seems Americans are still vulnerable to the quack medicine scams while other countries have clamped down on them.** Such claims in the UK and EU are illegal and probably are in the USA.

Most of these distributor operations make the claim that all their oils are "Pure Therapeutic Grade". This claim is false, there is no such distinction within the International essential oil trade. A distilled essential oil is either genuine or not. **This therapeutic grade concept is just a marketing scam.**

Many of the multi level web sites say: "The Egyptians were some of the first people to use aromatic essential oils extensively". That term should sound the alarm bells over the depth of knowledge of the people running the business as it is not correct. The Ancient Egyptians used crude aromatic extracts, not distilled oils, but these marketing people twist this to fool you by saying "aromatic essential oils".

Another incorrect statement you will see is "the powerful healing properties of essential oils were rediscovered in 1937 by a French chemist Rene-Maurice Gattefosse". **Not true**, essential oils were listed in the Pharmacopoeias of the UK and USA in the preceding Century. What the chemist Gattefosse did was to increase our knowledge of the properties of essential oils.

Beware of pseudo science pushed by these companies. For example, they make a lot about the 'antioxidant' properties of certain essential oils. They then give you references to validate their claims. Upon checking, you will find the research often has no relevance to the way they use the essential oil in their products. They also try to give the impression that the research is 'new'. In reality the properties observed by a new piece of research have often been known about for many years and reported on by other scientists. The other thing you will often find is that the researchers have **not used the essential oil at all**, but often one of the main constituent chemicals. Any results are inevitably suspect when relating it back to the use of a whole essential oil containing numerous other constituents.

The Antioxidant properties of essential oils they are currently making this their marketing strategy. They then include these oils in their products. They do not tell you how much is required to have any effect. They do not tell you that the best form of natural antioxidants is in your daily food and drink. Most fruits and vegetables contain anti oxidants. So why pay the inflated price for these products when you would do better buying a bunch of red grapes or a carton of red grape juice, or eating a carrot, or having a cup of tea?

On some of the companies blog sites you will find recommended ways of using essential oils for health. The commonest blunder is advising they are added to water. The fundamental blunder indicating their lack of knowledge is that **water and oil do not mix**. If you add an essential oil to water it will lay on the surface, that is exactly the way the oils are extracted via distillation in the first place. If you add an oil to water and it does mix then the oil has probably been modified in some way.

Citrus oils: are claimed to be Anti-fungal among many other claims. Well consider this, if you leave an orange exposed to the air for a week or so, does fungus start growing on it? Citrus fruits go rotten the same as all fruits, yet these marketers mislead you into thinking the peel oils are so special. When citrus oils are tested in the lab using freshly extracted oils they may well display an anti fungal action. However, when those same oils are a few weeks old they will do nothing.

Aromatherapy Jewellery: On one blog I was horrified to see someone advising putting essential oils onto clay pendants. If that is in constant direct contact with the skin the chances of a skin reaction are very high. Despite this high risk there were no warnings.

Lastly, do not invest anything in these schemes. Chances are very high you will not get enough customers and will end up seriously out of pocket.

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