

The Young Living / doTerra Decision

Jen Rollins, Whole Living Co-op

(the following is a summary of my personal findings during my comparison and exploration of MLM opportunities of both companies and is intended only to benefit others in their pursuit of knowledge of these companies. These are my opinions and personal experiences and are not to be interpreted as official opinions of doTerra, Young Living, or any of their affiliates.)

My name is Jen Rollins and I am privileged to coordinate a whole foods co-op based in Arlington, Texas. My family has been on a journey of modifying our health and nutrition from the conventional American diet of processed foods and pharmaceuticals for the last 10 years. I love to share the information I have discovered with others so it (hopefully) doesn't take them as long as it did me to discover this information so they can make an informed decision for what is most beneficial for themselves and their family based on their needs and goals. Although we had been transitioning to a more natural lifestyle and utilizing local farmers and producers, we were rather late in discovering the amazing benefits of high quality, therapeutic grade essential oils. I had many friends that gladly shared their opinions on what oils to use for this or that, and I had been invited to a few classes on how to use essential oils, but had never been able to coordinate my schedule with their availability until late November 2012. It was then that my friend invited me to her house to attend an essential oils class.

I was excited to learn about the oils and experience them. The first oil I tried was lavender, which was a big step for me since all lavender-scented things made me feel ill and have a horrible migraine. When I smelled this lavender I was amazed at how sweet it smelled and how it didn't give me an instant headache. I gladly passed bottle after little brown bottle, dropping and applying oils as instructed by the leader of the class. At the end, I was sold and was excited to start using these oils on a daily basis. I ordered my starter kit, took my book home to start reading, and felt that the final piece to my family's holistic health puzzle was in place.

Over the next three months I discovered that there is a lot of controversy over the big essential oil companies. Although IPC's were respectful of the other companies (at least in my personal circles) there were definitely a lot of passionate opinions on quality, purity, compensation, and ethics of the leading essential oils distributors. I had people hang up on me because I mentioned a certain company's name, and had others make a disgusted face at me when I mentioned which oils I used. I decided I had better learn more about this issue so that I understood not only what everyone was so worked up about, but where I would stand on an issue that I had unwittingly stumbled into the night I ordered my first bottles of oils.

So, what's the big deal? Aren't all oils created equal?

Well, the short answer is no. I found through classes, research, and use of the oils that many of the reactions I had previously to essential oils purchased from health food stores or vitamin shops were actually sensitivities to probable contaminants that were concentrated during the distilling process. I also found out that there is a big difference in the sources of materials from which oils are extracted and what you don't know can hurt you. Companies don't have to tell you if they use chemicals or ultra high temperature to extract oils from organic material. They also don't have to tell you if they spray their fields or use synthetic fertilizers or soil amendments to grow their crops, or even where they come from. I knew I was committed to purchasing oils from a company that was willing to tell me where they are getting their crops from and making sure that I was truly investing in safe and beneficial oils. This brought me to two companies: doTerra and Young Living.

Without going into all the drama, Young Living is the more established of the two companies, in business for over 20 years with domestic and international farms and partnerships with other countries for research and harvesting. The six owners of doTerra were employees of Young Living in some capacity and left YL to found their own essential oils company. Each company accuses the other of miscellaneous professional misdeeds, and as with any relationship gone bad the waters are so muddy there will probably never be a clear answer as to who did what. Once I became aware of the controversy, I did a general inquiry and decided that both companies had a high quality product (probably the highest quality products out there) and if a person chose to invest in either company they would have a high quality, pure oil with great health and healing benefits. However, as I used the oils more and listened closely to what I was hearing in classes and through leaders, questions were raised in my mind about if the sales pitches made sense.

I found a blog by a natural mom who had the same misgivings and spent over a year researching the topic of essential oils. She not only tried the big two, but also several smaller essential oil companies. Her article (found [here](#)) and the other six articles attached to it helped me understand the difference in oils and extraction processes, and although it answered a lot of my questions, it raised more based on what I had been told by not only my direct upline, but also with high level team leaders. I attended conference calls, consulted with customer service, and even spoke with representatives from the other essential oils company, and I found answers I was confident with. Ultimately, it was the misinformation and lack of knowledge of consultants and leaders in doTerra that led me to my decision to leave their company and purchase Young Living essential oils exclusively for my family and my co-op.

Just the facts. Ma'am. just the facts...

Okay, the fact is, if you're reading this you probably are aware of the conflict what I just told you is probably nothing new. You have probably seen or been informed of some of the hotly debated issues and, like me, have questions that need to be answered so you can make the best decision for yourself, your family, your business, or your future. So, here are the questions I had, and the answers (or lack thereof) I found:

Q: Aren't YL and DT oils the same? (a rose by any other name...)

A: Not really. If you have ever sat through a doTerra "class" or spoken with a rep, you have probably had the experience of having a bottle of doTerra Lavender or Peppermint essential oil given to you to smell while they point out how much stronger the aroma is than YL and make some comment about how smelling is believing or if they smell stronger they must be stronger. Sounds logical, right? Well, for those coffee drinkers out there, let me give you an example: blonde coffee beans are so lightly roasted they don't even really smell like coffee but boy do they give you a jolt of caffeine! Dark roast beans have been roasted the longest and have a strong, smoky smell and taste, but they actually have the least amount of caffeine in them. Why? Because the longer and hotter they are cooked, the more caffeine is removed. So, just because something smells stronger doesn't mean it is stronger.

The reason some of doTerra's oils have a stronger, sweeter smell than other brands of oils is because they are complete distillations. I had two separate customer service reps with doTerra confirm that Peppermint and Lavender are complete distillations. I have been told that other oils such as orange and lemon are as well. I have tried to confirm this with doTerra, and although I am still a current IPC in good standing with doTerra and have requested this information in writing three times they have not responded. I also called Young Living to find out if their oils were complete distillations and was informed that their individual oils are first distillations and 100% pure with no additives or dilutions. I personally did a side-by-side direct comparison of doTerra and

Young Living essential oils and was very puzzled at my findings. I found four essential oils from doTerra that had a "sweeter", stronger smell. I knew that the oils were essentially the same and should be the same strength since they are 100% pure with no additives or carrier oils and not diluted in any way or had anything added to them to make the smell stronger or more fragrant. The four oils were Lavender, Peppermint, Lemon and Wild Orange (lavender and peppermint smelled "candy-like" while lemon and orange smelled like fruit juice, not rind). All the other doTerra single oils, in my opinion, had an "off" smell that I didn't notice as much until I compared them directly with Young Living's oils. The YL oils I smelled had a more pure, clean and plant-like smell. The doTerra blends had a distinct pungent smell to them that I never noticed in any of the Young Living blends (and I compared about 30 of them). And these were my personal oils that were only two months old and had been kept in my home at a constant 72 degrees so I knew they were good oils. Also, my mother and grandmother are very sensitive to smells and were unable to use several of the doTerra oils because they were too strong-smelling. They have both used the Young Living oils and found them not only tolerable but pleasant and are very happy using them. I personally grew concerned when I started getting a headache from using the doTerra Lavender and have had no such reaction from the Young Living Lavender, so that was a huge selling point for me.

It really puzzled me how those particular four oils were so different, especially when those four oils are ones heavily promoted at every doTerra class and presentation I have attended. It became clear that doTerra developed these oils somehow to naturally have a particularly stronger aroma than their Young Living counterparts and I wanted to know how they did it. I finally found information that discussed 1st, 2nd, 3rd and even 4th distillations of certain oils and the resulting change in aroma when those distillations were blended. In particular, peppermint develops a less plant-y smell and a more candy-like aroma when it is more distilled or when the multiple distillations are blended. Similarly, lavender develops a candy-like sweetness when distilled longer and blended. I was concerned as to how many of their oils doTerra was selling that were complete distillations. I know we live in a society that puts perfumes and smells in everything so doTerra may be trying to appeal to a market that craves strong smells, but at what price? Complete distillations are a blend of first, second, and sometimes third and fourth distillations, with each subsequent distillation requiring higher temperatures and pressure to extract the oils. This process can and often does damage the components of the oil. Again with a coffee analogy, the first distillation is like the first part of a brewing of coffee- strong and dark. However, as the grounds brew longer there is less coffee and more water that comes out, so the last part of the brew is quite weak. The final pot of coffee is a blend of the strong and the weak, which is inherently less potent than the first part of the brew.

There is such a difference in the phases of distillation that the oil cost changes based on the distillation. For example, the ultra pure and 1st distillation of oils is the most expensive, the 2nd distillation costs less, and if a plant can still produce oils for a 3rd or 4th distillation the resulting oils are so inferior they are sold cheaply and often used as fragrances only due to their inferior quality. I experienced this difference when I tried YL Peppermint oil for the first time. doTerra's Peppermint smells like an actual peppermint candy- very sweet and strong. The YL oil smells more like a peppermint plant in my opinion. I was used to putting a drop of Peppermint on my hand and licking it to ingest it and although it is strong it is not overbearing, so I opened up my new YL Peppermint and did the same with it. The YL oil was much, much stronger than the doTerra oil I had been using- so much so that it nearly took my breath away! I totally understood that although the oil may smell stronger it definitely doesn't prove anything about the strength of the actual oil- the milder smelling YL oil was way more potent than the doTerra one!

Q: doTerra emphasizes quality and testing and claims that they are the only ones that do GC/MS testing (gas chromatograph and mass spectrometry) to verify their purity. Is that true?

A: Young Living does the following tests on every incoming batch of their oils: gas chromatography, GC/MS, heavy metals analysis, Microbial, Flash Point, Optical Rotation, Refractive Index, and Specific Gravity. Oils that exhibit even the slightest hint of possible tampering or adulteration- even if provided from a trusted supplier-are sent to outside laboratories for even more in-depth dissection using techniques such as carbon isotope analysis. (cited: Essential Oils: Finding Answers) Furthermore, Young Living regulates quality throughout the process with their Seed to Seal policy, whereas doTerra has working relationships with outsourced farms but is not involved with regulation or testing of the life cycle of the plant or the history of the land they grow on like Young Living.

Q: Is there any validity to the lawsuit?

A: Basically the courts are allowing the lawsuit to progress so they are seeing enough evidence that it merits further deliberation. Personally, I am not sure how much of the infractions will be legally enforceable but I personally spoke with two different Young Living reps at different times, and they both informed me they were contacted by an owner or executive of doTerra and asked to move their team from YL to doTerra. Whether or not there are legal consequences for their actions, in my opinion that is not the way to do business.

As far as copying blends, well that one is pretty easy to investigate for yourself. For example, Young Living created the Raindrop technique and uses an oil blend called Aroma Siez. doTerra has the Aromatouch technique and uses a blend called AromaTouch which is an exact copy of Aroma Siez with Grapefruit essential oil added in. A second oil used in the original Raindrop technique is Young Living's Valor blend, which has spruce, rosewood, blue tansy and frankincense in a carrier oil. doTerra's technique uses their Balance blend which is spruce, rosewood, frankincense, and blue tansy in a carrier oil. Notice any similarities? Several other oil blends are similar but the citrus component has been swapped, like in Thieves you have lemon and in On Guard you have wild orange but the other four oils are exactly the same. You can compare many other blends by viewing the blends on each company's website or the books Modern Essentials for doTerra and Essential Oils Pocket Reference for Young Living. There is a great chart on doTerra's resource site that compares the oils, although I have found some oils are not accurately compared- you can view it [here](#).

Q: Aren't the blends the same and don't they cost about the same?

A: Well, this one has a two part answer. Yes a lot of the blends are similar because the owners of doTerra worked in key leadership roles with Young Living before starting their own company. That is where a part of the Young Living lawsuit comes from: whether doTerra is benefiting from proprietary knowledge of oils and blends. Although many blend recipes are known and fairly easy to duplicate, there is still a basic understanding that doTerra has copied a lot of what Young Living developed. When I compared the ingredients of oil blends that were intended to treat similar conditions, I found consistently that the doTerra blends used less expensive oils rather than the more expensive oils. For example, one blend swaps Melissa for Oregano and another swaps Rose for Rosemary. However, the blends are similar price even though the Young Living blends have more expensive and potent oils in their blends. Also, when you take into consideration the fact that Young Living is using 1st distillations and doTerra utilizes some complete distillations that further illustrates the greater value in the Young Living oils. This makes me wonder where the extra money is going in doTerra...

Q: What about the compensation plan? doTerra has way more high level leaders and they make more money quicker, right?

A: No, not really. This one got me at first until I realized that doTerra's monetary levels for achieving a new rank are lower than Young Living, and once you make a rank you never go down in title (although you're not paid on a title but on actual volume). doTerra reps are also strongly encouraged to grow their teams deep, not wide like YL. Therefore it appears you have more volume than you actually do, and since you can advance to a title quicker and never lose that title you could have 1,000 high rank consultants that aren't even working the business or getting paid since you get paid commission on your sales, not your title. Also, many leaders in doTerra advise their teams to move members around to develop deep legs on their teams, which often results in new consultants being placed under people they don't even know. This happened to me personally and was very frustrating in my efforts to develop a business.

Also, Young Living pays their reps more for longer in many areas. For example, doTerra pays a quick start bonus of 20% for each new enrollee's purchases for 60 days, however Young Living pays 25% on all purchases for 90 days. I also didn't like the fact that I had multiple upper level leaders in doTerra state how much better it is to be in doTerra because they have a lot more executive consultants, therefore being easier to advance. However, the executive level in doTerra is actually equal to the Senior Star level in Young Living, and the Executive level in Young Living is a higher level of compensation and overall volume per consultant. I felt this was very misleading and deceptive on the part of doTerra representatives.

Q: doTerra has a great variety of oils just like Young Living, right?

A: Young Living has many more individual oils and oil blends than doTerra does. They also address the aromatherapy side of essential oils, as well as the use of oils for emotional healing and therapy. This is something doTerra does not address. Also, Young Living is actively seeking out new oils and developing them for the market, whereas doTerra is simply choosing the easier or more common oils to promote. Young Living also has unique products such as NingXia Red and Frankincense and Myrrh resins and a resin burner that are not offered by doTerra. Young Living also offers a great variety of oils and items in a wide range of prices which makes it possible for many people to be able to purchase oils and items from Young Living on their individual budget. They have multiple diffusers in all price ranges and designs whereas doTerra only has two. Also, Young Living has multiple strains of oils- they have two different Frankincense oils, three Eucalyptus oils, and multiple oils that doTerra does not offer at all.

Q: doTerra has a lot of training materials and presentations that I can use as an IPC, and Young Living doesn't have as much. Isn't it harder to teach a class without all of that?

A: I have found multiple errors and "truth stretching" in the doTerra presentations I have seen. I wouldn't use them because of it while I was with doTerra. For example, the doTerra presentations I have seen cite the cancer study by Dr. HK Lin using Frankincense essential oil successfully against bladder cancer while promoting their Frankincense. However they don't inform you that the particular form of Frankincense that was found successful in the study is boswellia sacra which is where Young Living gets their Sacred Frankincense (one of the YL Frankincense variants). You can hear him state specifically the Sacred Frankincense he was using in [this YouTube video](#). It is also confirmed in [this article](#). Boswellia carteri, the other YL Frankincense oil, was also cited in [this article](#) as being effective against cancer. However, doTerra only offers boswellia frereana. To me that is deceptive and misleading. I was also told directly and adamantly by a high ranking executive within doTerra that they only use first distillations and "there is no such thing as a complete distillation or second or third distillation". However, I have confirmed this with customer service reps as well as multiple sources online that not only are there complete distillations but also that doTerra sell oils that are complete distillations.

Q: doTerra oils are a higher quality of oil since they are CPTG, a new rating of essential oils, right?

A: CPTG is a brandmark (slogan) created by doTerra and is not an official classification. As a matter of fact, Young Living oils are now being covered by some health insurance companies as medicinal supplements. Because the insurance company found a difference in the oils they only cover Young Living oils- doTerra oils are not covered.

The fact is it's really hard to reinvent the wheel. You can't patent essential oils, which is what drives the pharmaceutical companies crazy, and that has led to a lot of similarities between these two companies. Unfortunately the way each company negotiates their business operations is a grey area that can only be regulated by ethics and morals. I have seen firsthand how representatives and leaders from both companies conduct themselves and I am confident in my decision to support and represent Young Living oils. I feel that for me to invest my time, effort, and reputation in a company I need to be confident that they are operating in a way that I can support, as well as making sure I am utilizing and offering the highest quality product at the highest potency for the cost. In all these areas I feel confident that Young Living is that company for me, my family, and my business. I am also proud to support a company that is leading new research and development of essential oils and EO based products, which has a leader who continues to pursue new leads and opportunities to develop beneficial and safe essential oils. You will have to decide for yourself which company you can support with your resources, and I hope that the information I have to offer will help you in that decision. Either way, a safe therapeutic grade essential oil from either company is much better than its' pharmaceutical alternatives so no matter what I hope more people will discover the blessing of essential oils and focus on growing knowledge of their benefits and uses rather than which company you buy from.

Resources

Whole New Mom blog: which essential oils are best? <http://wholenewmom.com/what-to-buy/best-essential-oils-company-young-living-review-doterra-review/>

(please read all seven articles on the wholenewmom.com site related to this topic, they are very informative and educating)

Essential Oils: Finding Answers <http://www.modernalternativehealth.com/2012/10/24/essential-oils-finding-answers-part-2/>

doTerra/Young Living blends comparison chart <http://www.everythingessential.me/Hints/BlendsCompared.html>

Can Frankincense Help Cancer? <http://ologsinquito.hubpages.com/hub/Can-Frankincense-Help-Cancer>

Dr. Lin Frankincense interview (YouTube) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=897_84HJ4d4

Essential Oil Quality <http://www.aromatherapy-school.com/aromatherapy-schools/aromatherapy-articles/aromatherapy-essential-oil-quality.html>

Frankincense Oil Kills Bladder Cancer Cells http://www.naturalnews.com/025892_cancer_francincense_oil.html#ixzz1noJIgfAU