

Peek.Me Natural: Three-part Solution for Health Care

Arlin Chondro 01 October 2019

Executive Summary

Founded in 2016, Peek.Me Naturals is a health care social enterprise in Indonesia. It didn't start with the founder's degree in medicine or public health, instead it began close to the founder's home from a search to provide a better remedy for her son's asthma. After finding that aromatherapy worked for her son, and also reduced her household's health care spending, Arlin wanted to share this information to raise the quality of life for other Indonesian people and the world by changing their health paradigm. This is her story.



Source: PeekMe Naturals

The Beginning

My name is Arlin Chondro. In 2014, my young son who was two and a half years old at the time, suffered from asthma attacks. As a recovered asthma sufferer myself, I

knew how bad it feels and I was determined to find a better remedy than the prescribed steroid inhalations. I started researching the usage of essential oils for therapy and read many journals and textbooks on the medical uses of aromatherapy. I found a formula that worked for my son and since then I became immersed in aromatherapy blending for family and close friends. One friend asked for a natural deodorant, another asked about his eczema, and soon after it was suggested that we set up a business to share this information with the world.

One thing led to another as they say, and in April 2016, Peek.Me Naturals was founded. We started out with 20 products for common health problems in Indonesia, including: eczema (atopic dermatitis) oil, linen spray for insomnia, spray for mosquito bites, natural solid deodorant, varicose veins ointment, and our skincare line. We also provide consultations for people who wish to ask about problems that do not yet have a remedy in our product line. We distributed our products through online platforms initially and also promote them offline at events where we can meet with customers in-person and explain the benefits of our products. I took a certification program from Aromahead Institute in California in clinical aromatherapy to serve as a basic foundation for our formulations.

The Problem in the Bigger Picture

I started Peek.Me Naturals from the desire to share safer,

better options through natural remedies -- as opposed to conservative, synthetic medicines. As we grew though, I realized that Peek.Me Naturals answered more than just the need for natural remedies. It answers a much bigger, more pervasive problem in society -- and I believe that the solution we provide is more sustainable and holistic than any other current approach.

Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Asthma is a form of allergy that attacks the respiratory system and it belongs to a group of diseases called NCDs (non-communicable diseases) -- these are diseases that are not transmitted from one person to another. (1.) The four big categories of NCDs include cardiovascular diseases (like strokes and heart attacks), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as asthma and COPD), and diabetes. In Indonesia, NCDs account for 74 percent of deaths annually. In terms of the economic burden created by NCDs, it can be described as massive, especially since a lot of Indonesians do not have the financial means to look for medical support and because NCDs tend to be chronic and long-term. Caring for NCD patients not only exerts pressure on a family's financial resources but also on their well-being. However, the good news is that behavioral factors are the biggest risks for NCD (smoking, sodium intake, alcohol, and insufficient physical activity) as well as metabolic risks (raised blood pressure, obesity, hyperglycemia), both of which are modifiable.

Mental Health Problems

Since I have a degree in psychology, I have a special concern for mental health problems and the daily stressors that might contribute to them. In Indonesia alone, upwards of 15.8 million people (15 years old and above) have depression and other socio-emotional issues. Mental health problems have a high correlation to physical ailments, especially related to cardiovascular health and the immune system.

Although more clinical approaches need to be taken for issues such as schizophrenia and personality disorders, other mental health issues can be treated and prevented using a more holistic approach. Based on research, essential oils have definite positive impacts on mental faculty and processing. One of Peek.Me Naturals' earliest products include the Bye Bye Stress inhaler, a blend specifically targeted to reduce perceived stress.

Our Three-Part Solution

The current medical approach to treating NCDs and mental health problems are curative (to cure, to help the sick recover), but in the long run this is not sustainable because treating a condition when it is already in a negative position is much more difficult than keeping a healthy condition in a positive position. The annual health care spending in Indonesia reached USD \$27.8 million in 2016. It is clear that the economic burden is felt not only

on the individual level, but on national level as well.

To reach the distant goal of reducing the NCD rate, the key lies in two words: **prevention** and **balance**. Our body has an amazing system to keep itself in balance, called homeostasis. It is a complex set of opposing mechanisms that work in sync to keep our body functioning well. It includes the immune system, nervous system, and endocrine system. However, our lifestyle can throw this system off-balance. Unhealthy eating habits and environmental and emotional stressors can contribute to tipping off our balance.

Our holistic, natural, preventive approach to health has been well-received partly because of Indonesia's own local wisdom. Traditional medicines such as *jamu* (herbal concoctions) and rubbing oils have been an indispensable part of the Indonesian culture -- everyone is familiar with them and has used them at a certain point in their lives. The resistance comes when we advocate for achieving a state of healthy well-being (not just the absence of pain or disease) because we need to address the root causes. It might be because of the reliance on drugs and medication has made people believe that relieving a symptom means that they are well. Or it might be because of a certain Indonesian mentality that prefers to stay maintain status quo without having to dig deeper and potentially uncover troublesome messes. Or it might be because in the current age and time, people are just too used to "instant" everything (instant information, instant noodles, instant

communication) -- and thus they require instant relief from a problem.

And that is why we came up with not just products, but a three-part innovative solution that includes education and partnerships.

1. Products and Services

Peek.Me Naturals' aromatherapy products and services are aimed to relieve commonly encountered daily health problems and ailments. Using 100 percent naturally sourced ingredients and taking into consideration safety and health concerns (for young children, the elderly, and pregnant/breastfeeding mothers), our products return the body to its balanced state of homeostasis.



Natural ingredients of our products

Caption: Natural ingredients of our products. Source: Peek.Me Naturals

2. Education

We realize that without raising awareness, we cannot switch people's focus to the root problem (of lifestyle and behavior) instead of the immediate problem (the ailment or disease itself). People tend to look for instant relief, while not realizing that it might not solve the root cause of a problem. We therefore incorporate education into our enterprise model: we organize seminars, talk shows, and campaigns to increase awareness about diverse health issues -- not just physical health but also mental health.

We also believe that sustainability cannot be attempted through solitary change. Whether we aim to protect nature, raise well-being, or leave a legacy, it needs to be achieved through the transmission of ideals to the next generation. And the main place it's happening is in the family, from parents to their children. Through educating our main target market and audience (women ages 25-45 who are health-conscious or with young families), we believe that the healthy lifestyle, habits, and paradigms that are instilled and nurtured in the current generation will be passed down to their children. We are educating not just our customers, but the future generation.

3. Partnerships

We realize that to grow, it is not enough to rely on our solitary effort, so we have always looked for partnerships, initiatives, and collaborations that are aligned with our vision and we work together with them for the dissemination of our ideas. Peek.Me Naturals is part of the initiating committee of INSS (Indonesia Natural Skincare Society), IAA (Indonesia Aromatherapy Association), and is a member of KOI (Komunitas Organik Indonesia). We initiated the establishment of Lingkar Hidup (Circle of Life), a community-based program focused on organizing talk shows and campaigns of holistic well-being for urban dwellers.

The main factors that differentiate us from our competitors are:

- Our holistic approach not just on physical health but also mental health;
- The focus on education to raise awareness and change paradigms; and
- Our openness to partnerships to work together for a common goal.

Market Landscape

From the start we decided to focus on our branding and communications, and also concentrate our sales and marketing efforts through online channels. We also grow through wholesale distributors all across Indonesia. Our annual revenue grew from USD \$13,800 in 2016 to USD

\$82,750 in 2017 to USD \$144,800 in 2018.



Products of PeekMe Naturals
Source: PeekMe Naturals



Products of PeekMe Naturals for different Purposes

Source: PeekMe Naturals

Peek.Me Naturals has received recognition both nationally and regionally. We won The Best Creativepreneur Indonesia in 2016 (awarded by BEKRAF, the Indonesian government authority on creative economy). In 2019, we were chosen as the Indonesian representative and grand finalist of Asia Social Innovation Award (organized by Social Ventures Hong Kong).

It might seem that everything was smooth sailing for us, but that's not the case. With the global trend of going for more natural choices, the pharmaceutical and consumer goods industry in Indonesia tried to stamp down the growth of small- to medium-sized enterprises like Peek.Me Naturals. Sometimes our trademark or copyright submissions would be denied (because a bigger company had "applied first"), sometimes entry to market would be made difficult, and sometimes takeovers were orchestrated. It would have helped if the Indonesian government had specific policies in place to regulate social enterprises and recognize us as a special economic entity to protect us from less-than-savory market practices that try to bring us down.

We are optimistic that Indonesian social enterprises have a bright future ahead, not only because of the creativity and passion that fuel us, but because of the support that the government has started to show. The existence of

incubation and accelerator programs such as Impact Hub, Instellar, ANGIN, and BEKRAF, have also helped in providing training and connecting us to a wider network of other social entrepreneurs.

A paradigm change cannot be achieved in the short-term. Our impact model might be hard to measure, but as shown by our growing business, our solution has been well-received by society. We believe, that our passion will fuel our innovation and growth. We also believe, that our model will create a lasting legacy of healthier nations.

Works Cited

1. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

Author bio



Arlin Chondro and family

Source: Arlin Chondro



Timothy, her first son has been steroid-free for 4 years now

Source: Arlin Chondro

Arlin Chondro has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of California, Berkeley. Her lifelong passion is in education and counseling. She has worked in business development and finance for different industries. Prior to founding Peek.Me Naturals she was a stay-at-home mother to two boys. Outside of work, she enjoys reading and writing, and exercising in both nature and indoors (she's a certified scuba diver and loves to hike). As part of her innovative approach to health, her firstborn son, Timothy, is steroid-free for four years now.