



Interview with Bob Root Keys Soap Inventor

Interviewers Note: When you just thought you have heard all the great stories of love and romance along comes one more. Bob co-authored the book "Defining Moments, A Brand New Day!" A thought provoking title by itself, it became a gateway to understanding how and why he invented a brand new soap. It was for the love of his life. He said off camera, "I just wanted to make her happy and feel good." The book ends helping us to understand their relationship and the impact of Wendy's Skin Cancer. I wanted to read what has happened since then, but no second book. Here is a glimpse of the rest of the story. It stands on its own, but read the book. Your heart will skip some beats, you will cry, you will laugh! Paula

Paula: We are here interviewing Bob Root, a co-founder of Keys Soap and the inventor of their products.

Paula: What is Keys Soap?

Bob: Keys Soaps are an expression of the love that I have for my wife Wendy. We met later in life and realized that we were lost parts of a whole being...Something beyond soul-mates. I was the CEO of a publicly traded technology company, deep in the rat race, when Wendy was diagnosed with Melanoma – an experience that was very traumatic for her and profoundly traumatic for me. Once we got through the experience of Cancer and got to the other side I asked myself, "What in the hell are you doing with your life?" I quit! I checked out of corporate America and checked into life. That was ten years ago and since then we have never been apart for more than 24 hours. In fact we wrote a book about how we met, fell in love, quit our jobs and began a new, simpler life. It is titled "Defining Moments; A Brand New Day" The title is and was appropriate. Cancer is a defining moment!

Paula: And the experience of Wendy's melanoma inspired you to create Keys Soaps?

Bob: It was the aftermath that inspired me. For years Wendy has been using some of the most exotic skin creams and sunscreen to take care of her skin. Our bathroom looked like a drugstore with all of the bottles and tubes of different things. Her skin became more and more sensitive. If she lightly scratched her neck, which is her thinking mannerism, large red

welts would popup. After showering she would slather on all of these different body lotions. It just seemed to me that what she was using just wasn't working. So, I set off to study skin and what affects it. By the time I finished, we had Keys Soaps, a line of all-natural therapeutic liquid soaps that are designed to deep clean the skin, rinse quickly and leave behind natural essential oils that sooth and heal the skin – without any of the harsh, irritating, drying chemicals found in most soaps on the market today.

Paula: I understand you are an ex-CEO from Silicon Valley. Was it your technology background that helped you create your products?

Bob: No! For years, my hobby has been Southwestern and Creole cooking. I guess you could call me a chef because I don't use recipes. I studied with master chefs in New Orleans, Phoenix and Albuquerque. I also studied about spices and Chile's with experts at California and New Mexico universities. I learned early on that there are different intensities of the same type of spice and the quality levels are all different. I also learned that the right blends create unique tastes that must be created in the right sequence, the right amounts and cooked in a particular way. Although my background is technology, Wendy was using some of the best products designed by the best scientists. I knew that wasn't working so I figured I had to take a different approach.

Paula: What triggered you to start?

Bob: Boy, this one I can nail down to the exact moment. About a year ago, on a cold dry winter day, Wendy's skin was crawling. It was dry itchy and she was beside herself. And that takes a lot! She said to me in frustration, you have the softest skin of anyone I know! That's not fair, she said! I said it is the soap I use. It has to be because I don't use anything else on my skin. For over 20 years I showered with a liquid Castile soap. I have oily skin, so I would use one of those mesh sponges and the soap everyday. I said to Wendy, try my soap for a while and see if it helps. It did, but it was very drying to her skin. Better than before, but definitely not helping. I knew that I was on the right track as a base soap concept. Clean, pure and all natural Castile was the foundation.

Paula: So the foundation of Keys Soap is Castile soap.

Bob: Not really, that was its start. Keys Soap is a mixture of the finest natural coconut, olive, jojoba and avocado oils that are cooked to form a base soap for all of our products. Castile soap is from the Castile region of Spain and is all olive oil. We are close to Castile and better because of the quality of the oils.

Paula: So we have a base liquid soap that deep cleans, rinses fast and leaves behind oils to nourish the skin. What else is in the soaps?

Bob: Well, each soap is different and contains different essential oils, extracts and herbs to create different effects. For example, Lets start with Island Rx which is the soap I developed first for Wendy.

Island Rx contains two exotic citrus essential oils. It also contains a very special variety of sage essential oil, rosemary extract and CAW Micelle. Added to it is a higher concentration

of pure avocado oil and Aloe Vera.

Windsurfer, Galleyon and Muttineer are all different ingredients that do different things for the skin.

Paula: I want to ask you about the different products and I especially want to ask you what this CAW Micelle does. But first, I need to know how you figured out what to use to develop Island Rx.

Bob: The answer is deep study of eastern, western and holistic medicines. This actually began when I was a boy. My grandmother talked about a woman named Mrs. Kesshy who lived near her. She told me of cures and potions that this woman created that fixed many ailments. Growing up with this philosophy always made me curious about how natural things work on and in the body. So when I started to study, my bias came from the holistic side of medicine. I searched for essential oils and herbs that alone had interesting properties. I then studied how they interacted and which were better and who were the quality suppliers with integrity. See it is just like making a good pot of chili. Figure out what spices you want to use, how they react on themselves and put them together in a special way. Quality is paramount!

Paula: The soaps are a lot thinner than the bath gels I am used to. Why is that?

Bob: Three reasons:

The most important reason is that the thinness of the soap makes it more effective on the skin. It permits the essential oils and extracts to do their work.

That thinness is the soaps natural state. We add no chemicals to thicken the product. Less is more and simple is better!

The thinness also makes the soap suds more. Put a few shakes on a mesh scrubby and it will foam like crazy. The mesh scrubby also helps to lightly exfoliate the skin a little bit a day. We include a mesh scrubby in our gift packs.

I guess there is a fourth reason. When you use the soaps with a mesh scrubby, they get very economical to use. A little goes a long way if you can introduce air. So a real sea sponge or a nylon mesh scrubby will save you money in the long run.

Paula: Is that why you call your products Islandceuticals?

Bob: Mostly! It is the freshness and the integrity of the products that reminded us of the way holistic practitioners from around the world shared with me their beliefs and studies. In fact, I stand on the shoulders of some of the finest holistic practitioners in the world. Not famous names, but people in villages that are on the same quest as I was on. I say it is mostly why we name our philosophy and development process Islandceuticals because there is another facet to Keys Soaps. It is also because to us, the true holistic practitioners bring to their products a very positive intention for the people that use their products. I so firmly believe this that I believe that I could give someone the exact formula and it would not be

the same as our products. I developed Island Rx out of love for Wendy and her pain. That intention is in every bottle of Rx. I know it may sound out there, but everyone at Keys Soap believes it.

Paula: Interviewing you is like running down a rabbit hole. Every time I think I am coming to the end of this interview, ten more questions pop into my head!

Paula: Back to Island Rx! What is this CAW Micelle in Island Rx?

Bob: Island Rx is an extraordinary complex product. Everything comes together in a way that cleans the skin, provides herbal medicinal properties and provides natural emollients for the skin. What I needed was a natural ingredient that had properties of a burn agent. Skin disorder and burns share many of the same symptoms. The Aloe Vera in Rx has pore sealing properties that help to retain moisture in the pores, but that is not the same. As I studied, I noticed that many northern cultures all talked about the healing properties of glacier and iceberg water. They all related to burns. In my study, I came upon an inventor who figured out that it was not the mineral properties in glacier water that made it effective in reducing burns, it was that the water had been naturally altered. The inventor created and patented CAW Micelle which stand for a Micelle that is Catalyst Altered Water. The solution is remarkable when combined with the right oils and herbs. Again like creating a great masterpiece dinner, it is the ingredients, the amount, the quality and the effect the ingredients have on each other. I really want to refer to it as Aquavit, which means water of life in Norwegian.

Paula: I think I am going to regret this, but what is a Micelle?

Bob: I will go easy on you! A micelle is formed when a variety of molecules including soaps are added to water. The molecule may be a fatty acid, a salt of a fatty acid (soap), phospholipids, or other similar molecules.

The molecule must have a strongly polar "head" and a non-polar hydrocarbon chain "tail". When this type of molecule is added to water, the non-polar tails of the molecules clump into the center of a ball like structure called a micelle, because they are hydrophobic or "water hating". The polar head of the molecule presents itself for interaction with the water molecules on the outside of the micelle.

In short, using a catalyst altered water Micelle in Keys Soaps acts as a diplomat between the oils and the shower water. This helps the herbs, oils and essential oils penetrate the skin and increase their effects.

Paula: Thanks for going lightly on me. I am not sure I understand, nor do I think I want to know more.

Bob: That's OK, I understand why and how it works!

Paula: Tell me about the other products and how they came about?

Bob: You know the story about Island Rx. Windsurfer was developed for me. Once I had developed Rx for Wendy, I started to use it myself. I loved it. We do spend a lot of time in Key West. It is one of our favorite places. It gets hot and humid there and I decided that I wanted something that would wake me up and make me feel cool when I got out of the

shower. Some of my hobbies get me hot, sticky and pretty grungy. So I search for a citrus blend that would clean and refresh. I settled on a combination of a very special orange essential oil and one from the grapefruit family. So when you shower with Windsurfer you feel cool, tingly and the smell is a rush.

Galleyon was developed overnight out of necessity. I was teaching a cooking class at a culinary institute in Connecticut. My classes are hands on. People don't watch they do! I was informed by the institute's director that we must use an anti-bacterial soap. I am such an anti chemical anti-bacterial guy that I sprang to action. I quickly developed a hand soap, just one bottle, that I could take with me. I consulted with my EO friends and we arrived at a combination of essential oils that were sufficiently anti-bacterial and were also all-natural as well as good for the skin. I did the class and right from the beginning people raved about the soap. One of the key ingredients is a special type of spearmint from northern Europe that has super anti-bacterial properties. The combination just blew people away. Luckily I remembered the formula.

Muttineer was developed for our dog, Disney. He is a Bichon Frise. Known for their skin problems, we were in the Keys and he just started scratching, biting himself and literally pulling his fur out. Wendy quickly washed him with Island Rx and he was fine. I still noticed that his skin was pink, so I researched and found an oil for the northern part of India called Neem oil. The research is still young, but the Hindu use of the product goes back hundreds of years. I mixed it in and re-blended the essential oils to help reduce his hotspots and to nourish his skin. He loves it and the smell actually relaxes him during his bath.

Paula: You talk a lot about the smells. Is that an important side of your products?

Bob: Wow! It is as important to our products as is the bouquet of a fine wine. We use the term Aroma-Therapeutic about our soaps. We are big believers in the power of aromatherapy for people and animals. Each of our soaps is architected to have specific notes that either relax, stimulate or calm. For example, I developed Rx to calm Wendy because her reaction to the itching and cracking was emotional as well as real. Windsurfer is invigorating. Some of our testimonials say things like, "it makes me smile in the morning" or "it just makes me happy." Galleyon is a creative enforcement aroma that stimulates creativity and experimentation. Used in the kitchen, it will help to inspire. Muttineer, as I said before, calms the animals and the shampooer. Our aromatherapy components are as powerful as our ingredients!

So powerful in fact that if showering with a friend, don't mix Island Rx and Windsurfer. Spontaneous human coupling will occur!

Paula: I won't touch that one!

Bob: It is true, we have documented cases!

Paula: They all do smell marvelous. The one thing that I have not asked you about is the strong all-natural position you take. What is all-natural?

Bob: That is both an easy and hard question to answer. Easy because it is a simple

philosophy of ours and hard because it is controversial. Not being one that shies away from controversy, here goes.

First, this is my opinion and not necessarily that of our company. The lawyers make me say that. Now that is out of the way!

All-natural means chemical-free. Chemical free means no SLS, no synthetic oils and no engineered essential oils or extracts. Everything comes from the earth. And what the earth grows. Even our CAW Micelle is considered by the FDA to be “just water” albeit very special water.

Now for the controversy. 95% of all the soap products out there contain SLS. All of these bath gels and even baby bath gels contain SLS. To put it in perspective, SLS is also in driveway degreasers and car soap. It is also in the anti-bacterial soaps that contain germicides as well. Studies around the world are starting to point to SLS as a major contributor to many dermatological problems. One study is working on the possibility that it causes brain disorders. I personally think that it is poisoning America through the skin.

Paula: OK! I get the picture. One last question. What is all the talk about organic versus not organic.

Bob: Organic is another way of saying chemical free. Natural products and foods that are organic are grown in a chemical and pesticide free environment. All-natural means the same to us.

Paula: Ok this is really the last question. Your products don't say organic on them. Why?

Bob: First we believe that all-natural is the same. The real reason we don't put organic on the labels is because the US Government has announced that they will no longer certify organic products. We will have to go to the EU beginning next year to certify the organic quality. We choose to not do that because we make sure that all of our products are all-natural (organic) and that nothing in the chain of our ingredients contains animal products or are they animal tested. In turn, we ask our customers to trust our diligence in the process of developing our products. So to us, all-natural is better than organic!

Paula: Thanks! It truly sounds like your products are for the mind, body and spirit!

Bob: Your welcome! And yes there is a little part of Wendy and me in every bottle!

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