

THE
Psychozoic Press
Erowid Editions

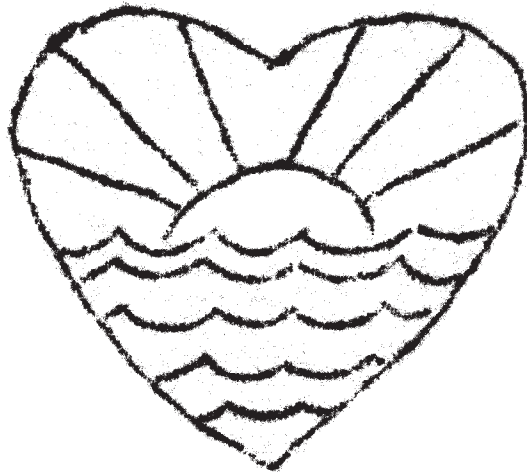
The *Psychozoic Press* was a subscription-based quarterly “informational advisory and communication exchange paper” on psychedelics, edited by Elvin D. Smith. Ten issues were produced between fall 1982 and summer 1985. In issue #9, which came out in autumn of 1984, Thomas Lyttle—a regular contributor to the publication—came on board as a second editor. Following issue #10, the editors continued publishing under the new name, *Psychedelic Monographs and Essays (PM&E)*. Originally envisioned as a bi-annual publication, six issues of *PM&E* were released between 1985 and 1993, with Lyttle taking the editorial lead, and Smith providing assistance until his death in 1988. Lyttle remained active in the psychedelic community until his death in 2008.

The *Psychozoic Press* was banged out on a typewriter during a time before computer-based desktop publishing was commonplace. Presumably each issue had a modest production run; responding to a request for back issues from Oscar Janiger that appeared in the final issue, the editors mentioned that many of the original issues of the *Psychozoic Press* were out of print, noting that “good clean xerox copies might be provided to the truly interested.” Unfortunately, Erowid has never borne witness to any “good clean” photocopies of this publication. Instead, there has been limited distribution in the years since then of horribly muddy photocopies, in some cases with sections of the text cut off entirely.

In order to preserve and disseminate this interesting window into psychedelic culture of the early 1980s, Erowid is creating newly typeset digital copies of the *Psychozoic Press*. Whenever possible, illustrations presented in the issues will be scanned from original copies of the publication. All contact addresses and advertisements contained in these issues should be considered out-of-date. Although Erowid strives to remain true to the original content, minor edits—corrections of typos and misspellings, in addition to formatting improvements—have been made. Not all information contained within these issues is factually correct, and content corrections have largely not been attempted; these texts should be supplemented with readings from contemporary sources of information on psychoactives.

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Winter, 1982 • Issue No. 2



An informational advisory and communication exchange paper on psychedelics.

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Psilocybian*: A Historical Review

IN THE HIGHLANDS of central Guatemala were found numerous carvings of stone; short, totem-like figures which all had a unique aspect in common. Each had been carved with a distinct umbrella-shaped cap over the figure's top. The overall appearance is that of a mushroom. The age of these mushroom stones has been variously estimated at 300–1000 B.C. by R. G. Wasson and other authors. It is commonly believed that these carvings were made by the Mayans in honor of their mushroom gods.

In any case, the use of magic mushrooms was well established by the time the Spanish conquistadores arrived. Several ancient writings of priests and doctors describe the natives' use of mushrooms during the 16th century. Magic mushrooms were used during the coronation of the Aztec high ruler, Montezuma. There were some rather bloody religious ceremonies carried out, much to the disgust of the Spaniards observing such rites.

Fernando Hernandez, a Spanish physician, described three types of mushrooms being worshiped by the natives, and made some distinction between the various effects of each of them. But the Spanish generally held the mushroom visions to be a sort of consorting with demons and satanic powers. Hernandez wrote that "they intoxicate like wine and provoke to lust...". The conquering Spaniards tried to abolish the use of the mushrooms, punishing and exiling those natives who used them. In view of such oppressive domination, the mushroom cults were eventually driven underground.

And they remained underground for centuries. Then in 1915, William Safford tried to identify the *teonácatl* of the Aztecs, but was not

successful in finding the magic mushrooms, or any who would admit knowledge concerning them. His conclusion, which was generally assumed as correct by the academic community for the next thirty years or so, was that the mushrooms referred to by the ancient Spanish writings were not mushrooms at all, but instead, dried peyote which the Spanish had mistaken for mushrooms.

In 1940, a Harvard botanist, Richard Schultes, published a paper in an anthropology journal** in which he identified the *teonácatl* used by the Aztecs as a species of mushroom belonging to the genus *Panaeolus* which was based on his study of mushrooms in Mazatec country. Natives also supplied him with information on the hallucinogenic properties of two other genera, *Psilocybe* and *Stropharia*.

In 1953, R. Gordon Wasson, a New York banker, and his wife, who had been doing research on mushrooms for several years, learned of Schultes' writings and the mushroom stones. They then decided to go to Oaxaca to search for the magic mushrooms themselves. By 1955, the Wassons had not only found the magic mushrooms, but had actually partaken in a ceremony under the direction of a Mazatec *curandera* (folk healer) named María Sabina.

Roger Heim, a French mycologist, identified the mushrooms Wasson had eaten as *Psilocybe mexicana*. Heim came personally to Mexico the next year and identified over a dozen species belonging to genera *Psilocybe*, *Conocybe*, and *Stropharia*. Heim gave some of his laboratory cultures to Albert Hofmann, who in 1958 extracted two psychoactive principles from them and named these psilocybin and psilocin in respect to the genus *Psilocybe*.

*"Psilocybian" is a recently coined word referring to any mushroom which contains psilocybin and/or psilocin.

** *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 42.

R. Gordon Wasson, by now a well-recognized ethnomycologist, suggested that perhaps the magic mushrooms were responsible for early man's formulation of the concept of deity. Such a hypothesis does have some logical appeal, since primitive man could not help noticing the small, suddenly appearing mushroom, which stands out conspicuously from the other types of vegetation. Such a plant would inevitably be tried as a food source.

In 1960, Timothy Leary ate some magic mushrooms while vacationing in Mexico. Later, he wrote that the experience was "...the deepest religious experience of my life...I came back a changed man."

This motivated Leary to attempt to use the mushroom experience for social benefit. He, along with Richard Alpert and others, experimented with a group of prisoners in which psilocybin was administered in conjunction with psychiatric therapy.* The psilocybin group had less recurrent arrests and parole violations than did the control group, but this piece of research was not widely accepted among the scientific community. The main criticism was that the test group had special status in prison, and had received assistance in finding housing and employment that was not given to the control group.**

Toward the end of the '60s, the demand for psilocybin began to increase, since the chromosome scare made a lot of psychedelic users paranoid about the safety of LSD. Many fast-buck dealers of the late '60s and early '70s cut LSD with PCP, belladonna, or tranquilizers, then passed it off as "organic psilocybin", since they were finding a decline in the demand for LSD, and a lot of people thought that psilocybin was a "safe" psychedelic.

Meanwhile, a few knowledgeable mycologists were digging into the university texts on growing mushrooms, and by 1975, procedures for cultivating magic mushrooms were refined and magic mushrooms began to appear on the market. *Stropharia cubensis* is one of the most easily cultivated varieties of magic mushrooms; before long, commercial entrepreneurs took advantage of the situation that psilocybin's spores and mycelial cultures are apparently not covered by law, while the mushrooms are. Advertisements appeared in *High Times* and underground newspapers for mushroom kits, spores, and instruction texts. The *cubensis* mushroom is commonly seen on the black market these days, and its use is spreading rapidly.

One of the earliest texts on mushroom cultivation was written by O. T. Owsen and O. N. Oeric. Straightforward and simply written, this book is probably largely responsible for the availability of genuine magic mushrooms on the market today.

Owsen and Oeric advanced the novel suggestion that the mushroom spores came from extraterrestrial sources. Such an idea is probably unprovable but possible, since the mushrooms reproduce very differently from other members of the plant kingdom, and the spores could conceivably survive the cold vacuum of interstellar space. But most other families of mushrooms also reproduce similarly, so the argument would be equally valid for them also. If mushroom spores did come from space, the initial event must have occurred millions of years ago to produce the proliferation of the numerous genera in the evolutionary tree we see today. Nevertheless, it is a thought-provoking concept.

The achievement of a transcendent experience with psychedelic mushrooms is focused upon quite vividly in their introduction:

*Timothy Leary, et al. "A New Behavior Change Program Using Psilocybin." *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice*, Vol. 2, 1965.

**Sidney Cohen. *The Beyond Within: The LSD Story*. Atheneum, New York, 1972.

The urge toward the transcendent—and the dynamic tension that exists between the drive to transcend and the mundane necessities which impose themselves on the primary fact of biological being—is in a sense what all history, all religion, art, philosophy, discovery, and science—in short, all of human thought and civilization—is about. The urge to reach beyond the known to what is unknown and unplumbed is irredeemably woven into the fabric of human history. It is this urge which built the pyramids, Stonehenge, and the Gothic cathedrals. ...

Today, we stand...at the edge of history, ready to accelerate our human experience out into the vast chasm of night which engulfs our planet, the lessons of our historical career still echoing down the corridors of time. We are about to embark on the greatest adventure we have ever known, one that will change our very notion of what it is to be human; yet we should not forget that between ourselves as we ascend the ramp of the starship and our mushroom munching ancestor gazing into his Paleolithic fire lie only seconds of cosmic time.*

It is more than coincidence that humanity is on the threshold of both outer space exploration and inner mind discovery. The externally objective is a manifestation of the internally subjective. If we are to physically transcend the boundaries of our planet, we should be prepared for such experiences by being familiar with transcending the cerebral boundaries of inner consciousness. And if psychedelics prove to be significant in bringing about such awareness, the contributions of workers like Oss and Oeric, Leary, R. G. Wasson, Hofmann, and Schultes will take their places in the historical annals of the future for centuries to come.

Meanwhile, back on earth and reality, magic mushrooms are now known to grow throughout much of the United States and southern Canada. Due to their increasing popularity, a number of excellent mushroom field guides and culturing books have appeared on the market since 1975. A brief bibliography of some of these is listed below.

Adam Gottlieb. *The Psilocybin Producer's Guide*. Kistone Press, 1976; available from 20th Century Alchemist, Manhattan Beach, California. Discusses large quantity mycelial culturing, but not producing mushrooms.

Bob Harris. *Growing Wild Mushrooms*. Wingbow Press, Berkeley, California, 1976. The author describes sterile culture techniques and compost growing. Inadequate as a field guide.

Richard and Karen Haard. *Poisonous and Hallucinogenic Mushrooms*. Cloudburst Press, Seattle, Washington, 1975. A field guide to most of the psilocybian in the U.S. and how to differentiate them from poisonous species. Illustrations and color photographs.

Gary Menser. *Hallucinogenic and Poisonous Mushroom Field Guide*. And/Or Press, Berkeley, California, 1977. No photos, but illustrations are far superior to other texts.

O. T. Oss and O. N. Oeric. *Psilocybin: Magic Mushroom Grower's Guide*. And/Or Press, Berkeley, California, 1976. Step-by-step photography accompanies text for sterile culturing and growing on rye grain. Beautiful color photographs.

Paul Stamets. *Psilocybe Mushrooms and Their Allies*. Homestead Book Co., Seattle, 1978. The most comprehensive survey of the *Psilocybe* genus and others. Excellent illustrations and photos. Electron micrographs accompany an in-depth explanation of the mushroom life cycle.

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TRANSCENDENTAL TRIVIA

No one can do everything;
Everyone can do something.

Use what you know to know when you don't know. You'll not be held responsible for not attempting what you can't achieve.

Speak Little;
Say Much.

How Much Should I Use?

This question is difficult to answer, since no one answer can be considered equally applicable to all users. Even for an individual, the appropriate amount to use varies considerably from time to time. In considering the *set* and *setting*, four elements can be defined which are useful in enabling the user to decide the correct dosage in preparation for the psychedelic voyage: *SETTING*, which is a single element itself, and *SET*, which can be considered as being comprised of three important sub-elements—personal objectives, prior experience, and the unique range of the drug in question. One can be able to more intelligently make the proper decision if he has some perspective on these elements, for they are all closely linked with the potential effects of psychedelics.

SETTING. Timothy Leary was, in the opinion of this writer, a blundering intellectual with regard to many statements he made about LSD in the '60s, but he did correctly stress the importance of setting when one is preparing for a trip. The importance of setting applies to all psychedelics, not just to LSD, as those with experience in other psychedelics can attest. Setting is the environmental exo-self circumstances and existing situation in which one takes psychedelics. It is unique for yourself (no one else can see

from your eyes, hear from your ears, etc.), but it is very similar for others immediately around you. One should carefully consider setting when preparing for a trip, as psychedelics have a (sometimes notorious) reputation for amplifying sensory input to the brain.

A most crucial aspect of setting is that the user should be free from all types of extraordinary interference for several hours. Don't take psychedelics if you expect your Uncle Jake, his wife, seven kids, and three dogs to arrive later the same day. Don't take them if you have important appointments, work obligations, or other people counting on you for some demanding action. Plan your trip so that you will be uninterrupted for the duration of it. Finally, having taken these simple precautions, always keep in mind that you should not take so much psychedelic that you cannot deal with minor alterations in the setting if they should arise. You should be able to open the door for an Avon salesperson or answer the telephone and carry on normally with out them becoming alarmed or yourself loading up on paranoid anxiety. Avoid tripping in a place where there are a lot of strangers around or an atmosphere of excitement. Such settings can often lead to unanticipated developments, a bum trip, or at best, a session wasted with extraneous interference.

Perhaps the most commonly used type of setting these days is that of natural enhancement, often in a recreational context. The user takes psychedelics in his home or back yard, or perhaps in a favorite picnic area with one or two close friends. Such a setting is best utilized with low dosages so that the individual can still maintain a fairly high degree of communication with the external world. People who use such settings often report being able to perceive the life essence of plants, see the harmony of the natural world, or, in the house, feel fortunately endowed with the privilege of seeing such grandiose visions in their own home. Such a setting seldom works well with large doses, but smaller doses can add immeasurably to one's insight into the basic

aspects of his life and the lives of those about him. It is the natural enhancement type of setting which is most appropriate for those who are still learning about the psychedelic experience, and the most likely to be a positive trip, assuming the dose is not excessive.

One type of setting which is becoming more popular among experienced users these days is that of sensory reduction. The basic idea is that by reducing the sensory input to the brain, it is thereby possible to become more aware of the subtle spiritual phenomena which are so often manifested by psychedelics. John Lilly did some experiments with psychedelics in a sensory deprivation tank and made some very vivid and interesting statements about his observations.* Most of us though cannot afford such elaborate and expensive equipment with which to manipulate the setting, so we have to settle for using the elements available to us at the time. Simply lying on a comfortable couch or bed in a quiet room in the dark frees the brain from having to process a lot of sensory information, which it would if one was listening to the radio in the same room during the day, for example. Some people have utilized sleep masks and earplugs to block out extraneous input, or even stared into a clear sky. Such techniques can bring out more clearly the subtle activities and variations in states of consciousness, which would otherwise be masked by the multitude of environmental input elements.

The trip which is enhanced by sensory reduction can often be more meaningful than if the same amount of the drug were taken in more ordinary circumstances. But it can also be more terrifying; the amplification effect can as well be negative or self-analytical as ecstatic and beautiful. It is definitely not an experiment for those who are still learning about psychedelics, or for those who are at all uncertain about their ability to flow with and control their trip.

Although most of the early researchers accepted the general consensus that users of psychedelics are in a more hazardous position if they take psychedelics alone and without a guide, there are those who insist that such a guide—to prevent the tripper from harming himself or doing something irrational—is pointless for them. Such well-experienced users sometimes prefer to take their trips alone, to be free from interaction with and interruption from all outside sources so as to maintain an unbroken continuum with the mental and spiritual flow of the trip. These people have typically had extensive experience with psychedelics: good trips, bad trips, and very likely a few O.D. situations, too. They will not become upset if the travels of their mind take them into the burning torments of hell or into the ecstatic lucidity of galactic consciousness.

An appropriate analogy comparing recreationalists and advanced users is that of driver's permits and licenses. Without the permit stage in which a driver is required to spend a year or two with a licensed driver at his side (the guide), there would be a lot more accidents (bad trips) than otherwise. On the other hand, if one decides that learning to drive is advantageous, he must realize that he should be able to do his driving whether he has a guide or not—but not too soon.

To be sure, though, the recreational psychedelic user will probably never want to delve into such higher states of consciousness; he may be entirely satisfied with a small amount of psychedelic once or twice a year, and those who do have experience with higher states and sensory reduction should not be too enthusiastic about trying to push others into a time-space they might not even be interested in. To each his own, but be respectful of one another. Don't project your personal conceptions, attitudes, and preferences into others to the extent that you want to tell them, "What you really need is...".

**The Scientist: A Novel Autobiography* by John Lilly. Lippincott Publishing Co., Philadelphia, 1978.

Different personalities of people have their own individual preferences for different settings. Some like tripping in the mountains or desert, some like tripping with their spouse or loved one in the late evening with mellow music, still others like to put themselves into a setting conducive to meditation and introspection. But in any setting, one of the most important elements to consider is the degree of interaction with other people. Even those who utilize sensory reduction techniques enjoy having someone with whom they can share their state of mind during the waning hours of the trip. And a bummer is twice a bummer when one needs someone to talk to and there is no one there. It is far preferable during a trip to have one or two people with whom you can communicate intimately—who know your state of mind, both stoned and also straight—than to be at a concert or party where there are a lot of people around but the communication is very superficial. A good communicative structure, framed in the proper time-space, has a melody of its own—a spiritual harmony as delicate, powerful, and beautiful, as a fine symphony.

OBJECTIVE. One's objective in taking psychedelics should also be considered as a functional variable in deciding dosage. Is the objective recreational, for personal analysis, spiritual insight, or are you interested in a profound cosmic revelation? Native Central and South American Indians also often apply the psychedelic experience for purposes of divination, finding lost articles, or determining the cause behind an illness. However, these latter objectives are infused with sorcery, magic, and superstition; they are deeply grounded in cultural and ethnological traits and are not likely to be easily assimilated by average users in America.

With a recreational objective it is best to hold to the more minimal doses. Embarking on a trip with a recreational disposition with higher doses may lead the tripper into feeling that he doesn't have nearly the degree of control over the trip he would like to have. Such low-

dosage recreational use will give the user a bearing on whether he wants (or is able) to pursue his exploration into the more complex realms of the experience. If one is not comfortable with small recreational doses, it would be advisable to abandon the use of psychedelics all together rather than try for the dissolution of ego, out-of-body experiences, and other phenomena normally accessible to users of higher doses.

Medium or optimum doses are used by the more experienced tripper and can result in great personal insight, perceiving oneself as being at one with, or as a continuum of, the universe, the world, or humanity. Realizations of out-of-body experiences, clairvoyance, and telepathy may be gained, not only related to one's own psycho-constituency, but also to social groups, races, even humanity as a whole. Animals, plants, material chemical and molecular forces can be explored if one is so inclined to such interests. The list is as long and varied in subject matter as is the mental makeup of those who take psychedelics.

At such an intermediate level of dosage it becomes necessary to know how to override personal emotions, preferences, and impulses. One young lady in this state, who did not have awareness of these necessary elements of control, ran nude through Sunday morning service to the altar, calling on God to become her eternal lover. Similarly, this is the level of usage at which many users decided to become "missionary" proponents of LSD in the '60s and '70s. Others committed crimes, convinced their actions were in the best interest of humanity. Still others were certain that faith in their actions was enough to make them happen; attempted flying, stopping traffic, or commanding a dead plant to life, are some examples. These people tended to get into trouble with straight society; undoubtedly they had not completed adequate groundwork with lower doses to learn the degree of self-control necessary for such intermediate doses.

The middle level can also be very frightening, or even bring the tripper to the hospital in an anxiety reaction when the trip turns into something very much different from what he expected. This is what alarmed the medical people, and they were very influential in bringing the hazardous aspects of psychedelic use to the attention of legislators. But those who do go to the hospital rather than out in the street are at least on the right track in that they are aware that their actions shouldn't disrupt others. In such cases the user probably has some conception of the potential value of the experience, but has made the transition to intermediate dosage too quickly to be really aware of what to expect. Such a dose for LSD is in the 150–200 microgram range and is what most people prefer once they have passed through an appropriate number of experiences in the recreational range.

The profound level encountered by well-experienced users of higher doses invariably is described as “cosmic consciousness”, “oneness with the universe”, “transcendental”, and with similar terms. To be sure, a transcendent experience can be achieved with doses of LSD at 150–200 mcg, but the perception of such a state usually occurs at the peak of the experience and the tripper soon drops below it to more reality-like levels of consciousness.

Such high levels of use above 200 mcg are also the most frequent cause of freak-outs (as distinguished from bad trips), again by those not adequately prepared. This is unfortunate, for those who do freak out will probably be thoroughly convinced they should never try psychedelics again. Yet those who, by good luck or skill, acquired the ability to enter the higher states and still maintain control of their psyche have been able to realize tremendous benefits and insights, which can be applied in their lives long after the experience is over.

These people are few in number, and it is just as well that this is so. We certainly don't need a world full of psychedelic priests any more than we need the Midas touch. As psychedelics are to the individual's life, so are the lives of individual users to society as a whole. Psychedelics will never come to be used by any more than a small fraction of the whole population; any one user will have no more than a small fraction of his life occupied with the psychedelic experience.

Yet the psychedelic experience does have influence far beyond just the individuals who use them, and far beyond the sensory alterations which are experienced during the trip. The user's attitude and/or behavior toward others may be modified, which can be beneficial (or detrimental, in the case of misuse) in adjusting himself to society. Creative people have had much influence on the others about them as a result of their experience with psychedelics.* All in all, those who do use psychedelics should be able to apply the experience constructively, not only in their personal view of the world, but also in a way which others can recognize as being a better approach (or at least a reasonable approach) to existing reality situations. It makes little difference whether we can get others initiated into the psychedelic experience, but it is important to recognize our obligation of making the world a better place, and showing others that they can do the same.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE with psychedelics is another element of set which has bearing on how much a person should use. Those who have had many years' experience, and have known the range of trips from the very enlightening to the horribly frightening, probably already know pretty well what they are capable of taking, and therefore have much more option in deciding how much they want to use at a given time and setting. Those who are not so extensively experienced,

*See *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* by Tom Wolfe. Also, Ken Kesey wrote much of his novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* as a result of, and during, his experiences with LSD.

or who take psychedelics only infrequently, may still be apprehensive about the outcome of a trip when they do take some. It is good to be so, for psychedelics are so powerfully influential on the mind that it is better to be frugally cautious than foolishly reckless. Do not assume that if you had a good time on one hit of LSD that the next trip will be the same. And the worst blunder of all is: if one hit is good, two ought to be great. The latter attitude often leads to the emergency room rather than nirvana.

The variability of street drugs is particularly hazardous for the novice, though experienced users tend to eventually locate reliable sources and exclude fly-by-night dealers. Often a novice will observe the good times of a more experienced user and assume he should be able to have the same kind of trip if he goes out and buys the same item on the street. Not necessarily so, for an experienced user has undoubtedly learned to recognize (and discriminate against) adulterants and poor quality. If a beginner goes out on the street to buy a hit of mescaline which happens to be loaded with PCP or belladonna, for example, he may think that mescaline is a lousy trip when in fact the experience is so badly clouded with adulterants that it bears little resemblance to the real thing. A valid alternative would be to send a sample to an analysis lab, but this is rather expensive for those who are buying only small quantities. If one can't afford lab analysis, the next best alternative is to stick to the legal hallucinogens for the basic experiences in psychedelics.

Those who are beginners should first determine if they have a hypersensitivity to the drug they want to try. Probably about ten to fifteen per-

cent of all who use psychedelics are hypersensitive to some degree, and one should not assume that just because a friend ate five grams of magic mushrooms, or seven peyote buttons, and had a nice time that he should take the same amount. First try a very minimal dose, perhaps one-fourth or one-third of a regular dose, which is below the threshold of getting off for the average person. If you do get off when others have had to take a lot more, then it's very likely you are hypersensitive to psychedelics and should gauge your future use accordingly. If you didn't get off, then you are of average sensitivity, but wait five to seven days before trying a regular dose, as the body builds up a tolerance factor against too frequent a use of psychedelics.* If you don't wait that "clearing period," you may find yourself trying a high dose and getting off only moderately; if you then try that same dose three months later, it could prove to be a little more than you expected.

Do not consider yourself experienced with psychedelics unless you have had some rough times. Try to talk to people who have had more experience than you and ask them what bad trips they have had. Those who have never had a bum trip, or who have had only three or four trips should still proceed cautiously, especially when changing from one type of psychedelic to another.

RANGE. The range of each type of psychedelic drug is another aspect which should be considered when preparing for a trip. Range is defined in this context as a three-part ratio; minimum to optimum to maximum, expressed numerically as multiples of the minimum dose. Obviously, if the dose is too small, the effect will be

*Most of the published literature states that only a three-day period is necessary to eliminate the tolerance factor, but this is a generalization. Fractional tolerance can develop even though a week has elapsed between trips. For example, a 300-mcg trip on LSD may have the intensity of only 250 mcg if it is repeated a week later. But fractional tolerance is not likely to show up so much with the hypersensitivity experiment, so five to seven days should be an adequate waiting period with such a small dose.

negligible; if it is too large, the trip will be so overwhelming that it will cause anxiety or be frightening. Even though the concept of range holds for all drugs, there is surprisingly little discussion about range as such in the published literature on psychedelics.

In talking to experienced users about the quantity they prefer, distinct patterns emerge, though most users are quick to point out the significance of setting, objectives, and prior experience, as we mentioned earlier. But the concept of range is also important in deciding dosage because it is applicable to any objective and setting. The idea of range is also useful to relate the experiential intensity of different types of psychedelic experiences to each other, such as psilocybin and mescaline, for example.

The minimum dose is the smallest quantity which produces a transitory psychedelic effect on consciousness. Experienced users say that the minimum dose for LSD is about 50 mcg, the optimum is about 200 mcg, and the maximum is about 350 mcg. (Higher doses are not uncommon, but these are usually associated with a tolerance factor, taken inadvertently, or only rarely used by the exceptionally experienced.) For average circumstances then, this three-part ratio is

$$50 : 200 : 350,$$

which means that the range for LSD is

$$1 : 4 : 7.$$

Users should bear in mind that ranges vary considerably for different types of psychedelics. Magic mushroom eaters commonly report a minimum dose of about two and one-half, optimum at about five, and maximum at about seven or seven and one-half grams of aged and dried *P. cubensis*. Thus,

$$2\frac{1}{2} : 5 : 7\frac{1}{2}$$

corresponds to a range of

$$1 : 2 : 3.$$

Therefore LSD, which has a factor of seven between minimum and maximum doses, could be considered a broad-range psychedelic, while mushrooms, having only a factor of three, would be called a narrow-range psychedelic.

Therefore, in passing information to one another about dosage, it is useful to give two bits of information: the minimum dose and the range. The user can then decide in advance the intensity of experience he wishes to have by choosing a dose on either side of the optimum factor, and avoiding going beyond the maximum factor.

For example, in the previous illustration comparing LSD and magic mushrooms, one who has experience with both may tell his friend, who has never tried the shrooms but is familiar with LSD that, "For magic mushrooms, the minimum dose is 2 1/2 grams and the range is 1 : 2 : 3." His friend, not having taken the shrooms before, but still wanting to get a good perspective on their effect may choose as his initial dose a conservative quantity of, say, 3 1/2 grams. This is less than the optimum but more than the minimum. He also knows that 5 grams would be roughly equal in intensity to 200 mcg of LSD and that 7 1/2 grams would correspond to 350 mcg of LSD. On the other hand, if he has some degree of hypersensitivity to psychedelics, he could still make appropriate adjustments in choosing a dose, since he would know his own range and minimum dose for LSD is lower than average.

Finally, in discussing the range for various psychedelics, one should keep in mind that the age and conditions under which the material is stored often have influence on the potency, and therefore on the range as expressed in terms of dosage. Psychedelics in general have a composition of rather complex and fragile molecules (mescaline excepted), and exposure to heat, light, and humidity tend to break them down into more stable, but less psychoactive fractions. LSD stored at room temperature will decline in potency less than a fourth during the first year.

Psilocybe cubensis, though claimed by some to retain their potency for years, will lose about one-half to two-thirds of their potency after a year. Morning glory seeds and Hawaiian baby woodrose seeds will reduce by about a third during a year.*

Use fresh materials whenever possible; if this is not possible, experimental increases in dosage should not be attempted more often than once a week.

To briefly recapitulate, the question of how much one should use is contingent on each user's evaluation of these aspects:

1. Setting
2. Objectives
3. Prior experience
4. Range

The latter three of these are what could be considered collectively as set, but set is such a complex element of the psychedelic experience that we have treated some of its principle elements individually to give a better insight into factors which influence the decision on how much to use. The material presented here is very basic; there are many other ways of developing a discussion on set and setting with other contexts in mind. But how much to use is probably the single most important and easily controllable aspect to consider when one is preparing for a meaningful excursion into the inner time-space of the mind.

On page 12 are listed some minimum doses and ranges for some of the major psychedelics. The optimum and maximum doses can be deter-

mined from the range as explained above, but we have included all three figures in this table to illustrate how the concept of range relates to them. Keep in mind that these are general averages and do not take into account factors such as hypersensitivity, tolerance, and differences in body weight. The table is based on dosages for a person of average weight, 140 to 160 pounds.

Onset, peak, and end times for the various experiences are also given; these tend to be variable depending on the initial quantity ingested and amount of food in the digestive system. In reality, there is no exact end point as such for a psychedelic experience; one tends to phase out of the experience by alternating reality perceptions with psychic effects in increasing frequency but decreasing intensity until finally the trip "ends" when the difference between psychic effects and ordinary consciousness becomes so small and frequent as to be interchangeable with each other.

MEASURING. Accurate measurement is prerequisite to a serious study of psychedelics. Mescaline and psilocybin are the most frequently adulterated and totally misrepresented black-market psychedelics, and these hazards augment the argument against street drugs. With the legals, however, you know what you have, and you can measure the dose yourself instead of depending on some lab freak.

The best method of measuring is the laboratory balance with at least a $1/10$ -gram accuracy. Ohaus sells a number of models, and they are also available from scientific supply companies such as Edmund and Merrill. But a good balance is about a hundred dollars or more, which

*Information on potency reduction in the published literature is very scanty. The factors of reduction stated here are based on evidence this author has collected over the years from knowledgeable users and should not be construed as scientifically accurate. Much research is needed in this area, and information on potency reduction for other psychedelics would be welcome contributions from any readers who are knowledgeable.

in these recessionary times may be out of reach for many people.

There is a poor man's alternative: the gelatin capsule. Empty caps can usually be purchased at a pharmacy or head shop. When filling them, try to stuff them as tightly as practical, since the uniform size of the caps will correspond to a uniform weight of material.

Even without caps, it is still possible to get a fairly accurate measurement by using any small container which contains only a fraction (about $\frac{1}{10}$ or less) of the total dose. Smaller is better, but more time consuming. One could simply drill a small hole in a block of aluminum, count how many times it is filled to make a dose, and then use this as a reference for future measurements. Small variations in filling will average out; even so, it is better to begin with minimal doses.

Psychedelics such as dried mushrooms, ground morning glory seeds, and Hawaiian baby wood-rose seeds, are easily stuffed into caps. Peyote and San Pedro cacti should be weighed, since

these vary a great deal in size, depending on the age of the plant. If possible try to select specimens of about the same size. Another alternative would be to cut the prepared cacti into pieces small enough to press compactly into a small measuring container such as a quarter-cup measuring cup.

Whatever method of measuring is used, it is important to use it consistently the same way each time, and to keep a record of the method used and how much was consumed. Then if you want to modify the dose later, you will have a fairly uniform reference from which to make the change. It's also useful to have a consistent method of measuring when referring your experiences to someone else, should they want to try the same material.

Such crude, simple methods of measuring should not be the cause of a person feeling his records about the trip are meaningless or invalid. As long as a record is kept, the quantities can be checked on a lab balance within a fair degree of accuracy any time later. Do your best with the resources you have; you'll probably find that it turns out to be more accurate than you thought.

| NAME | MIN. | OPT. | MAX. | RANGE | ONSET (hours) | PEAK (hours) | END (hours) |
|-----------|------|------|------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| HBW seeds | 4 | 8 | 16 | 1 : 2 : 4 | $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 5-6 |
| MG seeds | 100 | 300 | 450 | 1 : 3 : 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ | $\frac{3}{4}$ -3 | 4-5 | 6-10 |
| LSD mcg | 50 | 200 | 350 | 1 : 4 : 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ | $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ | 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ | 5-12 |
| PS units | 12 | 25 | 50 | 1 : 2 : 4 | $\frac{1}{3}$ -1 | 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 3-6 |
| PC grams | 2.5 | 5 | 7.5 | 1 : 2 : 3 | $\frac{1}{3}$ -1 | 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 3-6 |
| PEY units | 2 | 4 | 6 | 1 : 2 : 3 | 1-1 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -3 | 5-8 |
| SP inches | 3 | 6 | 9 | 1 : 2 : 3 | 1-1 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -3 | 5-8 |

KEY TO PSYCHEDELICS TABLE

| | |
|------|---|
| HBW: | Hawaiian Baby Woodrose <i>Argyreia nervosa</i> |
| MG: | Morning Glory <i>Ipomoea violacea</i> |
| LSD: | Lysergic Acid Diethylamide |
| PC: | Magic Mushrooms <i>Psilocybe cubensis</i> |
| PS: | Liberty Caps <i>Psilocybe semilanceata</i> |
| PEY: | Peyote <i>Lophophora williamsii</i> |
| SP: | San Pedro <i>Trichocereus pachanoi</i> |

When Nothing is Better Than Something

Having discussed some of the elements one should consider in deciding how much is an appropriate dose, we should not lose sight of the fact that there are situations in which it is better to leave psychedelics alone altogether. These are negative set situations, i.e., contraindicative to psychedelic use, and tend to lead to complications and personal problems in the event they are used anyway.

The *cop-out* set. Psychedelics should never be used in lieu of carrying out one's obligations. A college student, being unprepared for the exam, decides to go to the beach and take psychedelics, putting off the exam for the next day. Or a job seeker who doubts if he can get the job anyway, takes a small hit at his friend's house instead of going down for the interview. Chances are they will feel badly about it later, and be even less well prepared to take care of their obligations than they were in the beginning. Feelings of guilt and despondency can arise when one is coming down from the trip in such a set when they realize they are still faced with the same obligations as before the trip.

The *abuse* set. Perhaps the user could not score any coke or grass or whatever, but he did happen to run into some psychedelics. He thinks, "Well, any high is better than none." Even if he has had prior experience with psychedelics, such a set is a bit reckless and therefore more hazardous. One should always try to realize some value from the experience, even those who use it in a recreational context. But getting high for its own sake is a type of psychological addiction.

A variation on the abuse set is using psychedelics in combination with other drugs. The use of alcohol or valium prior to taking psychedelics, for example, can so affect one's judgment that he may not be nearly as prepared for the trip as he thought he was when the downer starts to wear off and the psychedelic effect is still going strong. The effects of psychedelics may be dulled, leading to inadvertent overdosing in some later trip, or so over-amplified as to trigger a paranoid psychosis reaction. (Speed and LSD are a bad combination in the latter respect.) A possible exception to this might be marijuana in moderation, as users often say it helps them relax during the final phases of the trip if one is feeling some mental tension. On the whole though, the uncontaminated experience is far superior to any "combination" effect one could achieve by adding secondary drugs, not to mention the hazard of improperly prepared or adulterated street drugs.

Finally, the *ill-temperament* set is another one not likely to lead to a meaningful experience, and in fact, some of these have been quite disastrous, impulsing the user to acts of violence, aggression, or crime. It is not wise to take psychedelics during times of emotional flare-ups or stress, whether it results from a domestic situation, anger at your job, or the establishment in general.

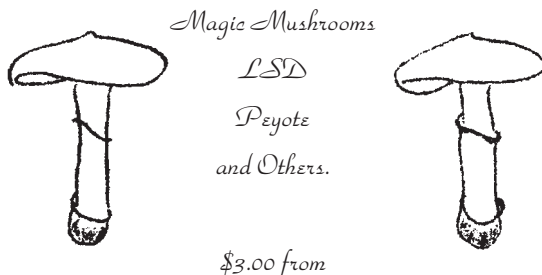
Likewise, if one is down on himself, feeling the blues, guilty over past mistakes or whatever, don't think a psychedelic will remove these feelings—it can have the opposite effect. There are

cases on record of people committing suicide or self-mutilation during an apparently inescapable “loop of depression” trip. These are relatively few in number, yet they are the ones most often brought to the attention of medical people and others who are socially influential.

These three negative sets, the copout, the abuse, the ill-temperament, are all situations in which psychedelics are taken more or less impulsively—a very risky way to deal with such powerful mind-altering drugs. To use psychedelics constructively, one should be in the opposite states of mind. Be at harmony with yourself; be satisfied with your best efforts and achievements even though you know you’re not perfect, and you will not be likely to use psychedelics as a copout. Be at peace with yourself and your family, your friends and people in the street, and you will not have to worry about the aggression–depression reaction. And last, be satisfied with your state of mind whether you are on psychedelics or not; if you can do this you will not be likely to get on the abuse binge. •

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Nothing is better
than health,
wealth,
and happiness,

but

I'll settle for mashed potatoes.
That's even better than nothing.

TRANSCENDENTAL TRIVIA

There is no one so wealthy
as a satisfied pauper.



Have you ever lost your lot;
Hit the bottom of the pot?
Only to find
You had more than you thought?



Who Seeks the Way, Finds it.
Finds the Way, Knows

A Conversation with Jim Weaver, Congressman

It was a beautiful sunny day for a Labor Day picnic, especially one sponsored by AFL-CIO and IWA 3-261 at which all the beer, food, and soft drinks were free. Who is Jim Weaver? He is a congressman from a small but important area of Oregon, the fourth congressional district, which has the largest shipping port on the coast of Oregon. A well-known democrat, Jim Weaver has a firmly established sympathy for labor unions and for the workingman in general. He has several times been recommended by our local at election times because of his support of various labor-concerned issues.

In an interview with a KCBY-TV reporter (which was televised later the same day), Mr. Weaver spoke out loud and clear against Reagan's Militarism, specifically criticizing an escalating military budget being financed by monies which could be better used in programs for developing the housing industry and jobs for the unemployed. Jim Weaver seems to have a good measure of empathy for humanistic values and an unselfish interest in making things better for his fellow man. In my opinion, he's one of our better legislators.

I did not know Mr. Weaver was going to be at the picnic, and I hadn't planned an interview as such with him. When I saw him there, however, I couldn't resist taking advantage of the opportunity to make a communication with a politically influential person, though I neither expected, nor asked for any special favors. It was a brief communicational venture, nothing more. No matter how differing our views, no matter what sectors of society we come from, communication is precursory to any significant and purposeful changes. Mr. Weaver didn't know me, but he was willing to listen for a few minutes, and to respond to the best of his ability.

I introduced myself as editor of the *Psychozoic Press*, and briefly explained the function of the paper as "...an informational and communica-

tion exchange paper. Would you care to comment briefly on the state or federal legislation against psychedelics?"

Jim seemed unsure of what types of psychedelics I was talking about. "Psychedelics? Do you mean like pot or..."

"I'm referring to those considered stronger than marijuana, such as LSD, mescaline, magic mushrooms, and such. Magic mushrooms grow here in Oregon, you know."

"I've heard about magic mushrooms growing around here, but to be truthful with you, I don't really know that much about psychedelics," he replied. "This is the only drug I know about," he added, lifting his beer glass a little.

"Yes, I understand," I answered. "Well, are you aware that after the LSD scare of the '60s and '70s, that legislation has even prohibited research by universities and such?"

Jim was thoughtful for a few moments. I had the feeling I had made a good point about an area of legislation with which he was not too familiar, or one to which he hadn't given much thought. He spoke a little more carefully this time. "It doesn't seem like we should have absolute restrictions against research by scientists and people like that who are qualified to do it. But I don't think we should have an unconditional legalization of psychedelics..."

By this time other people were approaching him (there were several thousand people there), and I could see that my turn talking to him was about over. "Well, I'm sure psychedelics would not be appropriate for everybody, but then neither is any other drug," I said.

At this point we were interrupted by others who wanted to talk with him. He mentioned that it had been interesting talking to me, and wished me good luck with the paper.

The brevity and spontaneity of the little dialog I had with him naturally precluded any in-depth discussion on psychedelics. Furthermore, it is only normal that a person in his position would have to be a bit conservative and cautious in making remarks about such a controversial subject. Nevertheless, he did accept my questions seriously, and he seemed genuinely sincere in his responses. I was particularly impressed with his positive attitude toward having qualified research done on psychedelics, though we should recognize that the federal government is not soon likely to rescind its position, especially not under the budget chopping ax of Reaganomics.

There are a lot of people, of all political parties, who are opposed to the use of psychedelics, and they far outnumber those who are in favor, even if we include those who only favor research. Grinspoon and Bakalar* cite a recent study which indicates that a growing number

of psychologists and social scientists would like to see research programs on psychedelics reinstated. If there is to be any significant change in laws regarding psychedelics, it will certainly be first preceded by research programs. And Reagan will not be in office indefinitely; he may not even be in office as long as Jim Weaver.

Mr. Weaver is very popular for his strong opposition to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and this is important to those who are knowledgeable in the psychedelic experience. After all, the experience speaks strongly about the sanctity of life, and many of those who study psychedelics seriously are becoming increasingly involved in anti-nuclear efforts, especially those directed against military applications. It gives me reassurance to know that there are political workers who are "on our side," and in this light, the question of whether some individual uses psychedelics or not becomes irrelevant. •

*L. Grinspoon and J. Bakalar, *Psychedelic Drugs Reconsidered*. Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1981.



TRANSCENDENTAL TRIVIA

Be Here Now
Before
Going There Then.

— Alpert & Smith

An Interview with Jerome Beck

Jerry Beck is an information specialist at the University of Oregon's Drug Information Center. He has worked at the Center about six years, and chances are, any drug you can name, Jerry knows something about it. He is also a co-author with Dale Gorden of a very well-written article, "Psilocybian Mushrooms," which appeared earlier this year in the *Pharm-Chem Newsletter*. That Jerry would do some writing on psilocybins is not surprising, since they commonly appear in the fall around that area, and they are one of the psychedelics most commonly inquired about at the Information Center. Jerry is also an instructor in the health department at the University.

I recently interviewed Jerry on several aspects of psychedelics. It would have been easy to get much more detailed information and spend more time exploring avenues of interacting thought and opinion, but I wanted to cover as wide a range of material as practical for our readers, without becoming too superficial. I would have liked to have spent a couple more hours on the interview, but that would have made the written transcript far too long. For what it is, read and enjoy.

PP: One theory about the action of psychedelics such as LSD and psilocybin is that they interfere with the neurotransmitter serotonin, which affects the brain's processing of sensory information in such a way that much of the input data which is ordinarily screened out is instead transmitted to conscious awareness. Do you think there would be any foundation in the argument that the illusions generated from psychedelic use are not illusions at all, but instead a sort of hyper-reality experienced only when the screening mechanism is inhibited?

Beck: Yes, I think there is a real good argument for that. That's a real point of controversy among people—whether what individuals experience with psilocybin or other hallucinogens has significance or not.

PP: Significance in relation to reality, in other words.

Beck: Yes, I would think so. It's definitely something that could be significant. It's something that...

PP: Would be significant but unprovable either way? It would be a topic for a lot of discussion, I suppose.

Beck: Yes. There is no way to prove it either way, and in that sense it's going to be an argument for many years to come as it has been for many years in the past. There's probably been the same basic argument for a long time between people saying that it's illusions and hallucinations and others saying, "Well, this has some basis in reality." Or... O.K., there's two basic arguments on the reality aspect:

- 1) This experience can help me with my everyday reality. Or, even more radical,
- 2) This experience shows me other realities, which some people say are just as valid.

PP: Yes, that latter statement reminds me of Castaneda's writings a little bit.

Beck: Exactly. And it's been discussed with non-drug states of consciousness as well. The whole concept of altered states of consciousness implies that there are realities other than our everyday common reality. Dreams, for instance, are another reality, and also guided meditation.

PP: Well, do you think that psychedelics have potential for making people more creative, or that creativity could only be brought about if it was latent in the person to begin with?

Beck: Books have been written on that, and it's still up in the air; it's still a controversial subject. There are definitely two factions on that issue. It appears to generate some creativity, or at least some new thought. Whether it actually comes off as a process of people producing

better artworks, or whatever, is hard to say. But internally it does seem to induce some creativity within the mind.

PP: Have you heard of those mushroom stones that have been found in Guatemala? Could those be considered a form of creative art that stemmed directly from the use of a hallucinogenic substance?

Beck: Certainly it appears from what we know of that culture that the mushrooms were extremely valued among those people, but whether they did those works under the influence of the mushrooms or not is hard to say. The fact is that hallucinogens have been highly prized among many people throughout history and have no doubt had cultural influences. Probably significant happenings within cultures and changes could be traced to the use of hallucinogens.

PP: How about the phenomenon of synesthesia then? Seeing music, for example; could that bring users to develop more musical awareness?

Beck: I wouldn't think so. *Appreciation* maybe. But once again this gets back to the creativity issue. If anything, hallucinogens may help people appreciate creativity, intuitiveness, and the arts more, though I don't think they actually increase people's abilities or their talents. But as far as increasing appreciation in those areas, that's definitely a possibility.

PP: How about legislation? How effective do you think legislation is in maintaining control of psychedelics?

Beck: Very poor. Like most drugs, the fact that they are illegal does not seem to deter many users, and this bears out in surveys as well. Usually when people choose *not* to do a drug, it is not because of the legal ramifications; it's most likely because they are worried about health consequences, or because they do not really enjoy the drug's effect.

PP: How about the illicit producers? Are they inhibited a bit by stringent legislation?

Beck: They're inhibited, but not greatly. We're seeing a definite increase in the cultivation of the *Psilocybe* mushroom all over the country, so that any area of the United States has access to mushrooms, not just areas like our own where they grow naturally. There's also an increased awareness among people of natural hallucinogens. Once again, people are discovering that hallucinogenic mushrooms do not grow only in the southeast United States or in western Oregon, but they are being found more and more frequently in other areas such as Michigan, New England; in fact, most areas of the U.S., except perhaps the extreme deserts, may have some form of mushroom.

PP: If we wanted to get a classification system so we could talk about different types of users, how would we break a group down?

Beck: I think it comes back to why people use hallucinogens. There is a certain percentage of recreational users; they treat LSD or psilocybin like they treat marijuana or alcohol—something to get high on. And then there are groups of people who are going to use them for ritualistic purposes. I think that's probably the two major groups, but I really couldn't give you percentages.

At one extreme, people are using these drugs recreationally. This worries me a lot because these people are using very powerful drugs such as psilocybin or LSD in situations like parties and rock concerts, and this is where we usually see negative experiences resulting in people who are using the drugs in environments where they are trying to get high and experience altered states of consciousness similar to marijuana, and these drugs are dramatically different and much more powerful.

At the other extreme, there are people who use them for ritualistic purposes. The best example

of these people is usually within the native populations. Populations like, for instance, the Native American Church, with their use of peyote. Now there is a dramatic example of using a drug for ritualistic purposes by having a well-defined procedure behind it. And by doing that, they have very few negative experiences. Also it's been shown to be very positive in general for their society in problems, say, with alcoholism, that have come up with other tribes. This does not happen with the Native American Church.

PP: Yes, I've heard about that. In other words, there are a few people who are actually using them for a beneficial purpose, and there's another group that is using them more or less recklessly.

Beck: Yes. And then of course the great majority are in between. Most people we see right here use them somewhat ritualistically, somewhat for partying.

But there are two extremes here and oftentimes, especially with kids, it really concerns me because a lot of them are using psychedelics for recreational purposes and for partying, and they get surprised, and I think that's where often a lot of negative experiences come about. They are surprised how powerful the drug is. They weren't really in to looking into their consciousness, their mind, which is something these drugs make someone inevitably do.

PP: In other words they were just using them more or less for an escape from ordinary reality?

Beck: Hallucinogenic drugs are rarely an escape. A person is confronted with a lot of very intense experiences and they almost have to reflect on those. It's hard to avoid, so I would say the hallucinogens are not conducive to escaping.

PP: I'd like to collect some information on the potency reduction of different types of psychedelics which are stored for periods of time.

Beck: Oh, you mean like when they are dried or something?

PP: O.K., say the mushrooms have been dried for some time, or a person has some LSD that has been lying around for a year or two. What degree of potency reduction will be brought about as a function of time?

Beck: Well, that's a good question and it hasn't been adequately answered. With LSD, if it is exposed to sunlight the potency decreases dramatically. If it's kept in a cool, dark place, the potency decreases, but probably very slowly; taken out a year or two later it will probably have almost full potency. With mushrooms, it's hard to say, once again; but if they are kept out of sunlight and dried well, most of them retain quite a bit of their potency. It appears that after drying, some mushrooms retain their potency more than others. The mushrooms that contain a greater amount or almost all psilocybin retain their potency better than mushrooms that have large amounts of psilocin.

A good example are the liberty caps, *Psilocybe semilanceata*. These tend to retain their potency very well when dried, they don't hardly lose any potency, whereas the *Psilocybe baeocystis*, which does not have that much psilocybin but has large amounts of psilocin and baeocystin, tends to lose a lot of its potency when dried. But once again there's really not that much good information here. We have to rely on people's reports about it.

PP: One of the psychedelics with which John Lilly experimented was referred to as "K" in his autobiography, later identified as ketamine. Can you tell us a little bit about ketamine?

Beck: All right. Ketamine isn't seen too much on the street. It's still used by doctors for anesthesia. It is an anesthetic and it is related somewhat to PCP, phencyclidine. However, from case reports it tends to be much easier to handle; that's why they still use it occasionally. It is interesting that doctors use it more often than not for children.

It is a very safe anesthetic, so they like to use it. But the problems are the same as PCP. Sometimes people come out of anesthesia having a very negative time and scary side effects, whereas children who come out of anesthesia come out feeling like they've been in a nice dream. That's kind of an interesting contrast.

They still use ketamine, whereas PCP they certainly don't. It also tends to be much easier to handle than PCP. It is considered more positive than PCP. But both are what you would consider dissociative anesthetics. People who experience ketamine many times report out-of-body experiences. I think that's what Lilly was talking about quite a bit too.

PP: How about PharmChem Labs? Do they do quantitative analysis?

Beck: They *can* do a quantitative analysis, but if it's a controlled substance, the person has to get approval from the Drug Enforcement Administration. So very rarely do they do that.

When they do quantitative analysis, it most often is when a drug is out on the street and it's determined that it could be dangerous. When it's determined that the drug has a very high percentage of heroin, for instance, which could surprise people on the street, or if the drug has dangerous chemical like strychnine—then they'll do a quantitative to make sure. But otherwise, no, they'll just do a qualitative.

PP: The reason I was asking was, there's been writings about other members of the cactus family—such as *Ariocarpus*, *Mammillaria*, *Azteckium*, and others—as being psychoactive, but I haven't been able to find much information regarding their psychoactive materials or their concentrations.

Beck: We do have some information here at the Center about that. It's mostly mescaline, which has been found in about five or ten other species of cacti; but the amount of mescaline is in much lower concentration than in peyote. The only one that appears to contain a significant amount is the San Pedro cactus. •

TRANSCENDENTAL TRIVIA

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| If | Then |
| What you see | What you think |
| Is what you get, | Is what you are. |

Hawaiian Baby Woodrose Seeds

Originally this member of the Convolvulacea family came from India, but now it is common to much of the area of Southeast Asia, and is domesticated in the Hawaiian Islands. Sometimes referred to as the peyote of Asia, it is often consumed by the lower classes of people in those areas as a recreational high. So far, I have encountered no reports of historical use of the *Argyreia nervosa* seeds in spiritual or religious ceremonies, though the Church of the Tree of Life (San Francisco) has declared them a sacramental substance.

Normally the dried seedpods are used as decorative floral arrangements; they are quite attractive and remain well-preserved without care. The small brown pods of less-than-an-inch in diameter usually contain four large fuzz-coated seeds, though some of the pods are occasionally empty, or contain only two or three seeds. A related type of woodrose, *Merremia tuberosa* (also called *A. tuberosa*), is very similar, though the concentration of psychoactive principles is somewhat lower.

The white layer of fuzz is a survival mechanism evolved by the plant to aid in water retention during germination. Several years ago, it was thought that this layer of fuzz contained strychnine-like alkaloids, but recent investigations

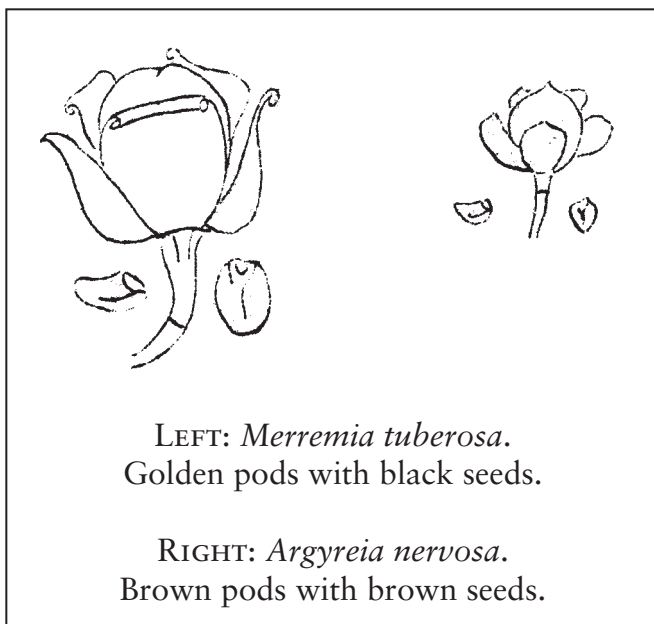
have shown it to be no more toxic than the rest of the seed. Whether the coating is removed or not will make no difference in the psychedelic effect of them.

Eating the seeds should be done on an empty stomach and is usually followed by a period of nausea and loss of appetite. The nausea associated with ingestion of the seeds is of such intensity that they are not generally favored as a hallucinogen. Some claim to reduce the nausea by taking travel sickness pills such as dramamine, but I can't vouch for their effectiveness. Vomiting is common, but not inevitable. Even if vomiting does occur, it will not lessen the psychedelic effect, since by that time the psychoactive principles (lysergic acid amide and its isomer) have already been absorbed into the bloodstream.* If vomiting is induced, it will make the remainder of the trip much more pleasant.

It would be appropriate to interject a comment on the aspect of nausea here, for *Argyreia nervosa* is one of the more intense plants in this respect. Although nausea may seem undesirable, we should realize that it is an effective inhibitor against misuse. Those who eat the seeds to have "something to get loaded on" are not likely to want to repeat the experience. No one is going to use these seeds chronically for their psychedelic effect unless they are serious about desiring a meaningful higher vision, in which case the nausea will not seem nearly as objectionable as it would otherwise.

The seeds are fairly large, weighing about $\frac{1}{10}$ gram each. Doses of four to ten seeds are common; on a weight-to-weight basis, this makes them about ten times more potent than morning glory seeds and the most potent of the commonly used natural psychedelics.

*This is in contrast to morning glory seeds. If vomiting is induced within two hours after ingestion of MG seeds, the trip will be aborted.



The effect is somewhat similar to LSD but without so much intricate detail. It is more similar to LSD than are morning glory seeds, which also contain lysergic acid amide and iso-lysergic acid amide. Wave-form translation of material reality may be achieved with doses of fourteen seeds or so, but the resolution, the clarity of such visions, is less than with LSD. Tripping in the darkness or with eyes closed makes the effect more apparent. The slight difference in the effect of those two kinds of seeds is probably due to differences in the ratio of concentration of the active principles.

The seeds must be chewed or ground before eating as they are quite hard and will not be absorbed into the system if they are simply swallowed. One may wish to soften the ground seeds by first soaking them in water for ten minutes, then eating them with a little honey. If the taste is too unpleasant, they can be taken in gelatin capsules.

I once had some seeds which were over two years old; these required a larger dose to achieve the same effect. Seventeen of the seeds produced an effect about the same as ten seeds when they were first fresh. Thus, there's an estimated potency reduction of about $\frac{1}{3}$ per year.

People with liver ailments should avoid the use of lysergic acid compounds, as some researchers have found that such substances are acted upon by liver enzymes before they can be excreted from the body. Also, they should not be taken during pregnancy. With regard to any special medical situations, it is always wise to consult your doctor before taking any drug. Large doses can be rather unpleasant and should be avoided, though I know of no case of anyone dying from the use of these seeds.

One should also be aware that it is unlawful to possess lysergic acid or the associated compounds. Possession of the seeds is legal, but grinding them and storing them in capsules would make them illegal.

The plant is rather difficult to grow, requiring loose, rich soil in a warm, shady location.* It is a perennial vine and produces flowers and seedpods in the summer. The flowers are small orange trumpets, modeled after the morning glory. The "petals" surrounding the dried seedpods are not true petals, but a calyx. I have not had much success getting a plant to flower here in Oregon, though it should do well in the sun belt of the southern states. •

*Those interested in growing instructions for *A. nervosa* and other hallucinogens should see *Growing the Hallucinogens* by Hudson Grubber, 20th Century Alchemist, Manhattan Beach, CA.

TRANSCENDENTAL TRIVIA

For he who has faith
No explanation is necessary.

For he who doubts
No explanation is possible.

— Jim Parker

