



## **Why Psychedelics Are Not A Shortcut To Enlightenment**

Joe Martino, April 20, 2018

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This may be controversial in some perceptions, but authentic truth is so important to me that I had to share this for deeper reflection. It's especially important in a time where psychedelic substances like mushrooms, ayahuasca, peyote and so forth are becoming quite popular. I believe we are losing sight of what they actually do and what their true purpose is to some extent.

There is no such thing as a shortcut to enlightenment. We might think that because we gain insight during an experience, that the journey is done. The reason why this is not the case is because it's what you do with that insight that makes all the difference. You will see this sentiment further explained by Graham Hancock below.

My main calling in life is to help expand consciousness and possibility. This is what I have been doing since founding CE 9 years ago and what I see myself doing until my heart makes it clear a new path is turning up. Given that, I am all for anything that helps expand consciousness. I'm not for nor against any of these

substances we call psychedelics. I am “If you are drawn to it authentically **in your heart, do it.**”

I feel it’s important to spend time getting in tune with your heart and finding out what direction it is guiding you. Unfortunately, I feel we are spending more time trying things all over the place from the space of the mind because we are afraid to quiet our minds.

With various consciousness expanding methods available to us, you may get a glimpse of what it is like beyond the mind, but if we do not **practice** being in the heart, we are not going to change from the experience and challenges we have with any of these substances, or any other methods for that matter.

For the record, I’ve not done psychedelics. I’ve not been drawn to them in my heart and so I have not done them. I’ve chosen a path to expand my consciousness through meditation, breath work and practice, and that has worked well for me. Thus, I have not needed to do psychedelics. What I mean by this will be clear as we go on. **(If you check out at this point, you will miss the important sentiment I find many people are not conscious of which makes up the wisdom of this article.)**

Finally, I’m writing this because I feel the full story is often not shared. Many people claim all the crazy experiences and benefits they had, but rarely talk about the fact nothing changed the first 3 or 5 times they did it. Also because all too often we hear ‘the coolest stories of all time without asking the big question:’

**“I was out of my body and seeing all these colors and beings and I saw the trees breathing etc etc.”**

**This sounds cool, you expanded beyond daily reality which is great. I have also seen these things. But I know that just as one can see these things through meditation, what does that do to help create a lasting change in your life and evolve beyond the struggles you experience on a daily basis?**

I’ve always been quiet about talking about the ‘fascinating’ things or beings I see etc. The reason is I find it distracts people immensely

from why they want to do something and it makes them focus on the trip itself. One can have, and I have had, a full out of body experience through 20 minutes of breath work, but is that why one would do breath work? Is that going to help us clear out the emotional challenges we face?

That's for each one of us to reflect on and decide within ourselves.

Ultimately, what is the reason we do them? To have a trip? To work through our emotional blockages?



**“Psychedelic experience is only a glimpse of genuine mystical insight, but a glimpse which can be matured and deepened by the various ways of meditation in which drugs are no longer necessary or useful. If you get the message, hang up the phone. For psychedelic drugs are simply instruments, like microscopes, telescopes, and telephones. The biologist does not sit with eye permanently glued to the microscope, he goes away and works on what he has seen.”**

~ ALAN WATTS

azquotes.com

### **An Overuse Crisis?**

I've not heard this from just myself, but from the spirit of the plants themselves and from many others who have come across the same conclusions. We are in a period where overuse of these substances is extreme. Anytime we want clarity we turn to them. Anytime we

think someone should shift their consciousness we tell them to do it. We use them 1, 3, 7 or even 10 times per year. In many cases, we are acting with these plants EXACTLY the way we do in the pharmaceutical world. We're looking for that quick fix. And we have tossed self-mastery and daily care and practice aside.

We keep saying, "but nature is here to help us!" But to that I ask us to reflect: we already know we have challenges, right? So we know we have to be active in making changes in our everyday life, right? So we need to then develop a practice and self-mastery to make that happen daily, right? So why are we viewing what nature provided as a means to justify our lack of commitment to practice and instead want a quick fix? Herbs are here on this planet to help heal our bodies if we get sick. But they aren't here so we can use them every time we get sick due to the fact we still want to smoke, drink alcohol, eat processed foods, etc. all day long. Nature is here to support us, not awaken us.

Psychedelics were used back in a time when the level of consciousness of the planet was not as high, which helped give insight to shamans so they could share it with their communities. It was meant for use in extreme cases where heavy trauma or addictions existed and people could not use other ways to work through their emotional challenges. Here in present time, we use them in a western fashion as THE GO TO for moving through all of our challenges. I'm here to remind you that you have so much power and ability as a being that in most cases, you don't need any of these things to evolve. **I'm not suggesting don't do it, I'm simply saying truly ask your heart what you want, and don't get caught up in the grand allure and peer pressure.**

I made it a point to prove to myself that it was possible to quickly and easily create noticeable shifts within people and give them a practice to continue with. I developed a 5 day challenge using concepts I've learned and developed over 8 years of practice. I've put 180,000 people through these 5 days and most people have reported very powerful emotional shifts and life changes in these 5 days alone. This is great news. But did they last? That is something that is never up to the method or the plant, but up to the person,

and this is my point. While I have heard a number of amazing stories of lasting changes from this challenge, I have no idea how many lasted for a long time. What I do know is the challenge was designed around self mastery and practice, giving us the tools to carry forth long after it was complete from within ourselves.

## **Misconceptions**

One misconception we have to begin to explore is that taking these substances don't suddenly reveal to us all the secrets of the universe. They do precisely what other altered states do – they provide insight into what the space of awareness is beyond your mind. In some cases, they also tap you into the astral field, which isn't the source of grand truth even though we sometimes see it that way.

Like masters, yogis and meditators of our past, we know we can achieve deep states of consciousness and tap into truth quite easily while sober, it just takes some time to do so. How much? Depends on what you are doing, but one can achieve a silent mind in just 20 minutes of breathing.

**Regardless, it doesn't matter whether you are a master meditator, veteran psychedelic user, a yogi master or whatever other method we may use sober or not, none of it matters if we are not actively doing what it takes to change our lives on a daily basis based on what we see during our experiences.**

People have sometimes assumed that when I share what I share about self-mastery I am stating that only psychedelic users bypass the work they need to do, but this isn't true at all. I do know some people who have chosen the psychedelic path and have made incredible changes within their first session, and I have known people who have chosen breath work paths who've done the same in the first session. I've also known people from both categories who have a great trip/experience but deal with the same challenges for many years to come because there is a lack of integration and self empowerment.

## **An Incredible Story**

Many of my friends have experienced psychedelics, and I have had the pleasure to hear so many people's stories in the 10 years that I have been in the consciousness exploration space. I have noticed a ton of common trends and specifically have seen that there is an unbalanced perspective being spread quite a bit that I feel requires some grounding.

I decided to jump on a podcast with my friend Mark DeNicola who shares a very insightful story about his journey using mushrooms and ayahuasca.

He shares his take aways from his experiences and what mama ayahuasca told him about ayahuasca use in the modern world. He also shares how you can explore if the journey is right for you.

### **Grounding The Subject**

Since about 8 years ago I have been fascinated with observing the research coming out about psilocybin and watching others as they use psychedelics for spiritual development. I can tell you, it absolutely can be an effective path. But I have found this to be few and far between and I feel I know why. It truly comes down to the fact that no method in this world suddenly gets rid of all of your challenges. It takes time and a practice to authentically make it go. The trouble is, many are not willing to do that work.

As Mark mentioned in the podcast, he would ask people thinking about it "If you knew that the ceremony would not get rid of all your challenges you have now that you want gone, and that you would have to do work after to truly clear them, would you still want to do it?"

This of course is not a deterrent, but an authentic question around what the purpose of these substances are.

I wanted to bring up some common challenges I have noticed that just don't seem to be talked about enough as many don't share the full story of their journeys. I believe this misleads people. Again, these aren't negative things, they are calls for us to take

responsibility for our evolution within and truly ask “Is what we are doing to help change our lives truly working?”

- I’ve noticed some great changes in some, but in most cases I have not observed *a lasting effect* in users, simply because there is no self work after. (I can say the same about spiritual retreats in general)
- It appears common to feel incredible 1 to 3 weeks after, but go back to the same struggles. Again, because you don’t suddenly get rid of everything during any method, I believe this is due to a lack of practice and action.
- It’s common for people to state “I puked out all my demons and challenges, and now they are gone.” But that’s not what seems to be the case as in many cases the same challenges and patterns continue on for that person long after the ceremony. More on this on the podcast!
- Many people I have seen use Ayahuasca 15 – 30 times, seem to ‘get worse’ the more they do it. This of course doesn’t happen to all. Again, I feel this comes down to lack of self work and thinking the plant will do all the work.
- I don’t mean this in a negative way, but a ‘cult like’ mentality seems to form and many users aggressively try and convince everyone in the world this is the only path to enlightenment and that it will change the world if we all do it.

Check out the podcast here for the full story, some amazing insight and how to explore whether or not your path could include a journey like this.

I share once more because so many people ask me this question, there is no right or wrong here. We don’t need to feel that if we do them or don’t do them we are somehow wrong or missing out. You’re not on a more purposeful path one way or another. If you want to find out if any experience is right for you, look in your heart, develop that relationship.

My goal is to help others be TRULY empowered. I wrote this because I’m not seeing enough of that happen within others as we give the power to things outside ourselves. This is a reminder.