

# What YOU can do to help end psychedelic prohibition

By Mark Haden

In order to end psychedelic prohibition, five things need to occur:

- Reformers need to organize.
- Information about the failures of prohibition of psychedelics (eg MDMA deaths from adulterants or contaminants) and potential benefits of psychedelics needs to be shared widely
- Research showing the benefits of psychedelics needs to be published and disseminated.
- Discussions need to happen among family, friends, colleagues and the general public.
- Politicians and other leaders need to be persuaded that it is in their best interest to talk about ending prohibition of psychedelics.

A major venue for change will be in the media. Journalists, reporters and bloggers need to be engaged in the process wherever possible.

## **Get organized**

- Join with others. Examples are: drug policy reform groups, psychedelic activist groups and psychedelic research groups. Meet regularly, support each other, plan and implement strategies.
- Contribute money, resources and time to existing groups.
- Go to conferences (psychedelic, drug policy, addictions treatment, health care to share ideas and meet people).
- Organize fund-raising events to support research, which is very expensive.

## **Share Information**

- Educate yourself. Explore the internet, read quality books, find and understand the scientific research. Discuss set, setting and safety issues.
- Share the best of the above with family, friends and community.
- Learn the language of change. Learn about the use of psychedelics for the treatment of PTSD, end-of-life anxiety, addictions, depression, cluster headaches, spirituality, cognitive enhancement, etc. Learn about the improved mental and social health of people who use psychedelics.
- Talk about the need to regulate and control all currently illegal drugs based on human rights and public health principles and the need to “protect our children against drug prohibition”.
- Find good books and recommend them to your local community or university/college library.
- Give research information on the failures of psychedelic prohibition and the potential benefits of psychedelics to university and high school students and encourage them to write papers on this topic.
- Join email list-serves and/or follow bloggers/tweeters where you get regular information about what is happening.
- Make distribution lists, and then tweet, facebook, email and spam others with the information.
- Start a web site where you share information.

- Start a student club to educate campus communities about psychedelics
- Develop an information brochure and hand this out widely.
- Come out of the closet and challenge the stigma– start losing the fear of talking about (and eventually proudly own) your personal experiences with psychedelics.

### **Promoting Discussion**

- Hold events which support open public discussions – invite speakers to share their ideas. Invite the media to attend and participate where possible.
- Ask health officials / managers why they are not speaking out about the need to explore the health and treatment benefits of psychedelics. Show them that the research shows benefit for circumspect psychedelic use and remind them that they say they are evidence based.
- Be honest with your children. Teach them about both the harms and benefits from different psychoactive substances (not lumping the illegal ones together as just “drugs”), and the harms from drug prohibition.
- Buy or make bumper stickers, T shirts, mugs, stickers with catchy slogans and use them everywhere.
- Stage visually dramatic events, take lots of pictures, send to the media and post on the web.
- Call in to radio talk shows and be prepared to discuss both the research and your own positive experiences.

### **Influencing politicians and leaders**

- Talk to the leaders. Find people who play a leadership role in a variety of communities (e.g. faith communities, civil rights groups, health groups, citizen action groups, parent groups, union leaders, aboriginal groups, etc) and share the research with them and ask them to help.
- Write a letter to a politician - “yes” this makes a difference.
- Set up a table in a public place where you have a variety of text / sentences / Q&A’s on small sheets of paper exploring a range of reasons to end psychedelic prohibition. Ask people who walk by to write a letter, either in their own words or using the supplied text supporting the cause. Keep and copy the letters and meet with politicians and the media and give them the letters. Save the copies and repeat.
- Write letters to the media.
- When you see an article in the news about psychedelics, PTSD, cluster headaches, addiction treatment, etc find the article online and contribute a thoughtful, well written response in the comments section (and include html links to sites like MAPS/MAPS Canada). Assume politicians are reading what you say and present yourself as a concerned member of mainstream society who wants to improve health and social services.
- Organize peaceful public demonstrations or go to existing protests. Take professional looking banners, signs to be waved, brochures and bullhorn (with new batteries). Memorize catchy chants.
- Vote for politicians who support freedom / liberty and against politicians who promote fear of others.

*Be prepared to be persistent as lots of polite repetition is required.*