“T**h**e researchers removed the chimp that was shocked and brought a new chimp in, that had no idea of what was happening in the room, and of course, the new chimp headed directly for the bananas dangling at the top of the ladder, and all the chimps that had witnessed the initial shocking, began screaming and jumping up and down, which stopped the new chimp, who now started screaming and jumping with the other chimps. This happened over and over again until finally none of the chimps in the room had seen the original event and none knew what they were actually screaming about.”
—Excerpted from the blog “Jacobs Ladder” in thepolemicsofjack.com by Jack Cross.

So here we are, the human race: war torn, economically bankrupt, mentally ill, over-medicated, over-crowded, fast losing our natural resources and constitutional liberties. And all because we won’t climb that ladder and have forgotten why we should.
THE BIG LIE TECHNIQUE
The idea behind the Big Lie Technique is that if you repeat something often enough it becomes accepted as true. It was articulated by Adolf Hitler in his autobiography Mein Kampf.

“...in the big lie there is always a certain force of credibil-
ity; because the broad masses of a nation are always more
easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional
take than consciously or voluntarily; and thus in the
primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall
with the big lie than the small lie...For the grossly
impudent lie always leaves traces behind it, even after it
has been nailed down, a fact which is known to all expert
liars in this world and to all who conspire together in the
art of lying.”—Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, vol. I, ch. X

WHAT’S THE BIG LIE ABOUT
PSYCHEDELICS AND HOW HAS IT BEEN PERPETUATED IN OUR CULTURE?
The lie began in the Garden of Eden, with the tale of the for-
bidden fruit hanging from the Tree of Knowledge, and the con-
sequences should we eat of it. With this single twisted tale, we
 gained the iconography that has made its way into our modern
symbol for medical healing and emergency as the caduceus. The
First Law makes it dangerous for us to partake of knowledge,
makes the feminine “evil,” and accentuates the polarization of
our human psyche.

It’s no accident that the caduceus is our universal symbol
for healing and emergencies, both in the East and the West, as
it symbolizes the ultimate healing—parity between male and
female, and reversal of the mythic conditions leading to the Fall
of Man.

The Western image for healing is two snakes intertwined
around a pole, who kiss and grow wings at the top; in other
words, they ascend and unite, becoming a creature of a higher
order, from something that crawls to something that flies, from
two to one. The snakes represent the male and female, or yin and
yang, entwined like the double helix; no matter which way you
slice it, it’s in the blueprint.

In the East, the caduceus represents the life force energy
“rising” up the pole/spine of the neuron/tree to reach union in
the pineal gland. Its called “Kundalini,” or Coiled Serpent, also
known as the evolutionary energy of Man. It waits to be awak-
ened at the base of the spine, perhaps by meditation, or perhaps
by a chemical trigger. When activated, it moves up the spinal
meridians, enlightening the way.

YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS
The Big Lie about psychedelics has continued to perpetuate in
many ways through the centuries, suppressing many wisdom
paths along the way: the decimation of the Druidic cultures,
witch hunts in the Middle Ages, the demonization of the shaman by the Christian missionaries and Spanish *conquistadores*. The lie has certainly been repeated often enough.

In 1985, a group of powerful advertising agencies in the US created the Partnership for a Drug-Free America and ran a series of ad campaigns to “unsell drugs.” They targeted crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin, Ecstasy, and others. Best known among these is the “This Is Your Brain on Drugs” campaign which still reverberates today in the expression “being fried.”

No doubt well-intentioned, the Partnership for a Drug Free America lumped psychedelics with toxic and more addictive substances. For over 11 years they bombarded us with messages which, while they have not succeeded in making us drug-free, have succeeded in making us very confused about the nature of the substances we call “Psychedelics” (seeing into the soul) or, for some, “Entheogens” (generating God within).

**2,000 YEARS OF AN EMPTY CHALICE, AND WE’RE A PRISON PLANET**

When the path to Original Knowledge becomes recast as Original Sin, we have a culture that has been upside down for millennia. Long imprisoned by our ideas of what’s forbidden and what’s right and wrong, we’re stuck in context. Our relationship with our consciousness, with our spiritual nature, comes out of hearsay, books, over-translated long-dead religions, the tasteless wafer of sacraments that do not alter, empty rituals, idle worship, and questionable authorities.

Psychedelics are “mind-manifesting”: they can manifest the One Mind, or they can manifest the fragmented psyche. It all depends on the set and setting.

“Set and setting” is a term that was coined by Timothy Leary to describe the conditions which predicate a good psychedelic experience. While the set and setting can be controlled in one’s immediate physical environment for the duration of a journey, the prevalent “global” set and setting that hangs over psychedelics in general is the shadow of ignorance and fear, which can only be transformed, not controlled. The price we currently pay for altering our consciousness is loss of freedom—making criminals of those who partake in self-healing and self-knowledge, and changing the nature of the experience itself in ways that we cannot know or foresee.

Psychedelics can help reframe reality by allowing a person trapped in a horrifying experience from their past to become aware of and release the memory, to experience the Self differently. The healing is of the body, mind, and spirit. But before psychedelics can reframe the global Self, we need to reframe how psychedelics are perceived in the public mind and portrayed in the media.

**MEDIA CONDITIONS CULTURE**

Both in their structure and their content, media and the psyche are inseparable. We are influenced by the cultural milieu we live in, despite ourselves. As Marshall McLuhan famously wrote: “The medium is the message.” What he meant is that the very form of the medium changes human experience, regardless of content. McLuhan felt that the content had little effect on the message, but in my view and experience, both medium and message are important: they are the yin and yang of how media work. Both together condition culture.

Until the advent of social media, media conditioning was a one-way street, from the big TV networks of information and the press to the “public.” You needed a hefty marketing budget and expensive technical skills and equipment to broadcast anything on media. In 2013, however, the landscape is dramatically different. We have email, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, photo sharing, infographics, group text messages, image editing, mobile phone cameras, all kinds of easily accessible and mostly free ways to broadcast your message, whether you’re a corporation or an individual.

**THE COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS TO THE RESCUE**

Let’s suppose for a moment that psychedelics are, apart from being a medicine for healing PTSD, addiction, and other “conditions,” also agents of evolution, and that the lack of an ongoing relationship with mind-expanding medicines has created a species on the brink of self-annihilation. Could it then be true, that if we, as a species, improve our relationship with psychedelics, we would experience a flowering of culture, a kind of renaissance of human consciousness? Could it then be true, that if we, as a species, improve our relationship with psychedelics, we would experience a flowering of culture, a kind of renaissance of human consciousness? If this is true, then psychedelics might well be the most effective and easily accessible tinder we have for expanding our compassion, our intelligence, our creativity, our
relationship with our body, our psyche, our mind, our planet, our cosmos, and our profundity.

It seems to me that this is a job for the collective conscious. An easy way to do this is for anyone who feels so inspired to intentionally blog, post timeline messages and YouTube videos sharing and re-sharing their real, lived experience with psychedelics. New ideas take time, as well as consistency and repetition, to take hold in the collective unconscious. But the more positive messages there are out there, the more we shift cultural perception. So sign on to social media and post about what psychedelics are, how they have helped you, harm reduction tips, quotes from your favorite authors, visionary artwork that inspires you, and create your own timeline images. With the multitude of communication tools at our disposal, we can all become media wizards. What’s TRUE about psychedelics? Share it on your timeline and help regenerate culture.

Lakshmi Narayan is a graphic designer and the CEO of AwakeMedia.com, a Santa Cruz based design firm, working on projects that raise consciousness, be it political, social, environmental or spiritual. Awake Media creates brands, web sites, mobile apps, videos, print media, and events. Lakshmi can be reached at narayan@awake.net.