

Dear Rick,

My family has a high incidence of cancer. In fact, almost every member that has died, died of cancer. The youngest so far has been my first cousin who died of cancer at about age 50. My father died after 6 months of terrible illness when I was 16; I stayed home from school a half day every day to take care of him and give him his morphine shots. My mother and her family died from various forms of cancer at home. I consider myself an expert on terminally ill cancer patients after holding the hands of many people dying from this painful crippling disease at home for six months at a time.

The medications for pain seem to have remained the same for the past twenty years. Radiation seems to cause as much pain as it does relieve. Codeine, Percocet, and other pain-relieving pills help until the final stages, then morphine shots seem to be the final solace to a dying human.

I had the fortune of knowing and assisting a very close friend dying of cancer who was open to non-traditional approaches. She first tried pot but did not like it because she had never smoked it or anything else before and she was afraid of what other people would think. I had some organic mescaline [from peyote cactus] that a friend had given me and offered it to her. She said she was in terrible pain and the Percocet pills were not helping. So we took some together, a small amount to be careful. The effects were astounding as she relaxed and became a little euphoric and forgot about the pain. This we continued once daily or every few days when she complained of pain. I continued this until she died four months later and everyone around said it was remarkable that this person took so few painkillers. The amount I used was barely 1/10 to 1/4 of what a teenager would take before going to a rock and roll concert. The amount of standard pain pill requests were 1/10 of normal and hardly any morphine was used at the end.

I know this can be blown out of proportion as most drug use is. But the fact is, it was better than any traditional cancer death that I have seen. I have

seen several traditional treatments since this person's death, which is why I am writing this letter. To this day, nobody else knows anything other than this person had a very relaxed and peaceful death.

I remember an old leather-bound American home medicine book from 1850 that we had around the house when I was growing up. At least 10 remedies from pain relief to treatments for madness and cancer included marijuana. It is well known that the Incas, Aztecs, and Mayans made extensive use of marijuana, coca leaves, peyote, mushrooms, and countless other naturally occurring drugs. Why are we trying so hard to destroy the knowledge of these drugs that were revered by these ancient civilizations? This can only hurt our society by reducing our data base of information to draw from. Is it possible that the terminally ill patients in these ancient cultures received better treatment and better drugs than we are giving our terminally ill today?

It is nice to have a forum where positive experience with drugs can be recorded. The government is effectively blockading the media. Keep up the good work, MAPS.

Best wishes,

An Interested Party

Dear Mr. Doblin,

May 6 was the 50th anniversary of the genesis of Aldous Huxley's *"The Doors of Perception."* I have naturally been pondering that May morning in Hollywood. Fifty years is a long time in a human lifetime, but in this history of human experience it is quite brief, and in terms of human evolution it is miniscule. It is fortunate that, at least so far, psychedelics have not had much military appeal, in spite of a brief period during which the war men of several nations hoped to misuse them. The automobile, the aeroplane, nuclear energy and much else owe their rapid evolution to their potential for harm, and that evolution was enormously expensive both in lives and treasure. Nearly all the early aviators died in the first few decades of flight. It was World War I that made the rise of the automo-

bile and the plane possible.

I am glad that in spite of the sluggish and often timid way in which the establishment has approached or failed to approach psychedelics that there are still many who believe, as I do, that they have much to contribute to our well being and survival, as they and the experiences associated with them have done in the past. As Aldous Huxley, Albert Hofmann, and many others have stated repeatedly, these are instruments, sharp instruments, which we have to study so that we can use them for the benefit of all of us.

As it is easy to see, all human artifacts are in much the same category. They can help or harm us depending whether we use or misuse them. In earlier human societies hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of years went by, in the course of which we learnt the social skills necessary to prevent new discoveries from becoming lethal for the discoverers and their descendents. In the last few hundred years, the tempo of discovery has become much quicker and has outstripped our ability to evolve socially and psychologically and especially spiritually to accommodate ourselves to our own inventions. So far our performance looks as if we are bent more on suicide than allowing ourselves to lead a better life and develop what Julian Huxley called "the fulfillment society" and what John Winthrop, possibly prematurely, urged upon his fellow colonists in the Arbella, before they reached Massachusetts Bay, that they would be a "city upon a hill." He told them in his sermon, at sea in 1630, that the "eyes of the world are upon us." Of course they weren't in 1630. The 'world' had no interest in John Winthrop and his little band of Pilgrims. So all good wishes to you and yours,  
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