

Dear MAPS

2105 Robinson Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34232
Internet: info@maps.org • www.maps.org



Dear MAPS,

I am a medical and noetic sciences researcher. One of my current projects is to do a review of alternative therapeutic approaches to schizophrenia. Having an academic background in transpersonal psychology, I am familiar with the early psychedelic studies with psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia. I hear that some work has been done with ayahuasca and it has been shown to be effective with certain psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety. I am interested in knowing if there are any studies done on the use of ayahuasca and schizophrenia. I have heard one anecdotal report from the 1996 International Transpersonal Association conference in Brazil. Do you or any of your readers know of other success stories and/or scientific research on the topic?

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Dear MAPS,

I'm a recent addition to your membership list. I just received my second *Bulletin*, and I see a disturbing trend. The first article I try to read is about MDMA research. Hmm, sounds interesting... until I run into phrases like:

"These divergent findings might be due to differences in neurotransmitter release profiles, receptor mechanisms or both." and *"measurements of prepulse inhibition (PPI) of the acoustic startle reflex, a Stroop test and psychometric rating scales were performed."*

Huh? I doubt the majority of your *Bulletin* readers have multiple Ph.D. degrees in the sciences. The article belongs in a psychiatric journal, where the authors can address their peers, but not in the *MAPS Bulletin*, unless it can be translated into English for the layperson. I request you not take scientific papers and plop them verbatim onto your pages. They're gobbledeygook to most of us. But I applaud the goals of MAPS.

D.M.

Houston, TX

Editor's Reply: D.M. makes a good point. We try to keep a balance between scientific articles and personal accounts. Each article may not appeal to each reader. Thank you for your feedback.

Dear MAPS,

Enclosed is my renewal of membership. I guess I'm just beginning to realize what an important and fantastic job you folks are doing.

I have had some very good response to my article, much more than I had realized. It has led me to some very interesting connections with people from various walks of life, all of whom are bonded by the intrigue of ayahuasca and its aura.

Because of the interest generated by the article, I'm thinking of writing a brief post script to present my concept of the way the plant has worked on me in both the physiological and spiritual areas. I want to think about it a bit more, do some additional reading, and talk to others.

Right now I'm consumed with the medical marijuana issue here in Hawai'i. Did you hear that our governor has come out in support, and will introduce legislation to that effect in the forthcoming session? Great news for us.

Aloha,

Don Topping

top@lava.net

Note: Don's personal account in the Autumn 1998 Vol.8(3) issue of MAPS, "Ayahuasca and Cancer: One Man's Experience," received a lot of attention from MAPS readers. See www.maps.org/newsletters/v8n3/08322top.html

Hello fellow mappers,

Through this list [MAPS Forum, on-line mailing list] I received word from a shamanistic seminar in the Amazonian jungle. I went there, and was a bit sceptical at first. The Holotropic Breathwork they offered along with the shamanistic seminars I thought were just a weak fad of crazy hippies, and also I was uneasy about the jungle.

It was a pleasant surprise. The competent organizers, Dr. Luis Eduardo Luna, anthropologist and author, psychologist Silvia Polivoy and holotropic therapist Ana Maria Aguirre put together a very dense program that was very effective. The participants from all walks of life and many different countries were focused into a powerful community, and a lot of real work was done. For me it was the first time in all my life that I broke through that wall I've been running against for all my life.

I can recommend it to everybody interested in shamanism, Holotropic work and personal exploration. When I saw what they provide and how they care, the price is more than reasonable. And the jungle, well I am more uneasy about the city today than the place I recognized as my lost home. In short it was a wonderful, powerful time that changed me more than I had ever hoped.

The next seminars are scheduled in summer, see www.lycaenum.org/~entheos/ or write to Silvia Polivoy at spolivoy@hotmail.com for details.

Joachim Loeblein

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Dear MAPS,

This letter is being written on the morning after my second Santo Daime experience. I am a scientifically trained and research oriented professional who has noted more than a couple of references to tumor regression (brain, liver, etc.) in the ayahuasca literature. That information is of more than casual interest to me.

In short, my 28 year old daughter has a brain tumor (Level III anaplastic astrocytoma, exterior right frontal lobe). After surgery, radiation, and a Phase I immunotherapy protocol (during which time we have done many other supplemental things to strengthen her immune system), we are in the process of considering chemotherapy upon the advice of our doctors.

While I am impressed by the anecdotal evidence concerning ayahuasca and cancer remission, my science and research training tells me that isn't enough. As you know, we're talking about a rather unusual approach, considering the current state of most people's thinking.

A further thought: The restrictions on food prior to ingesting ayahuasca are virtually identical to those concerning procarbazine, one of the three chemical substances in the PCV chemotherapy "cocktail." I find this convergence most interesting.

For professional reasons, I ask that you withhold my name at this time. Nonetheless, as a longtime MAPS supporter, I would appreciate MAPS' acting as a clearing-house for my opening a dialogue with those who may have more information on, or personal experience with, the subject of tumor regression and ayahuasca.

Thank you,

(Name Withheld by Request)

Send replies to: info@maps.org

Subject: Cancer and Ayahuasca

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**Scholarships for Entheogenic Research
Offered at the California Institute of
Integral Studies**

The California Institute of Integral Studies invites new and continuing students who wish to conduct research on entheogens to apply for the 1999-2000 Kranzke Scholarships. Four awards of \$5000 each, with an additional stipend available of \$1000 for field work, are made for students wishing to study entheogenic plants and medicines from a wide spectrum, including, but not limited to, spiritual, psychological, anthropological, shamanic, modern, ancient, religious, medicinal, healing and rehabilitative perspectives. Applications may be obtained from the Institute's Financial Aid Office by calling (415) 575-6120 or by writing to: The California Institute of Integral Studies, 1453 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Interested applicants may send an e-mail request to:

elizabethc@ciis.edu. The application deadline is June 1; awards will be made by August 1. Applications will be reviewed by a committee of faculty who will evaluate the proposals for their value and significance, appropriate and adequate research methodology, and the knowledge and experience of the applicant to conduct the research. Only current or incoming graduate students at CIIS will be eligible.

Four Kranzke scholarships have been awarded for entheogenic research for the 1998-99 academic year to graduate students at the California Institute of Integral Studies: Larry Roussel, Brad Watkins, David Stuckey, and Roger Marsden. The scholarship awards are for \$5000, with additional field research money awarded to Roussel and Marsden. East-West Psychology doctoral student Larry Roussel's research is with the ritual use of the vision plant, iboga, with the Bwiti religion in Gabon. He will compare the religious use of this plant with the ritual use of plants other syncretic religions such as the Native American Church and the Santo Daime Church of Brazil which also use plant entheogens as an integral part of their ceremonies. Bradley Watkins, a student in the Integral Counseling Psychology Program is analyzing published research studies in which psychedelics were used to treat neurosis and addiction, and will analyze the treatment procedures to discover the relationship between procedural variables and their outcomes. Clinical Psychology doctoral student David Stuckey will research the dream plant *Calea zacatechichi* and its use in the induction of lucid dreams and enhancement or alteration of the lucid dream state. The fourth scholarship recipient, Roger Marsden, is working on a dissertation for a Clinical Psychology doctorate on guided, structured group use of entheogenic substances in western non-indigenous culture. •