

## Laura Huxley's Ultimate Investment

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I met Laura Huxley two years ago while working on my documentary film, *Hofmann's Potion*. At that time, I knew more about her late husband Aldous because I had read so many of his books. I discovered Laura to be the living embodiment of the values he espoused in *Island*, his last and most idealistic novel. Since then she's become one of my most important teachers.

Laura can't understand why a person would ever set out to harm themselves or anyone else. Her vision of the world is simple and honest. Since Aldous died in 1963, Laura has spent her life working for the well being of children around the world. She has written several books and founded a non-profit organization that educates underprivileged kids: Children: Our Ultimate Investment. Her foundation has several programs; I'll mention two of them here. The first is the Caressing Room Project, wherein senior citizens are encouraged to enter hospital nurseries and simply hold tiny babies. We all need touch, and this program benefits the volunteers as well as the babies. The second program is called Teens and Toddlers. Run through high schools, it puts young people into day care centers where they are paired with needy toddlers. This is also a win-win situation. Many of the relationships formed in this program last well beyond the semester, and the teenagers come away with a better understanding of what it takes to be a parent. The following is from the Teens and Toddlers program outline:

Every night in America, 100,000 children are homeless. Every year, nearly 3 million children are reported abused and neglected. While the emergent need to help correct this situation is clear, we believe that equally urgent is our humane duty to prevent its repetition. This is the mission of Children: Our Ultimate Investment. Those abused and neglected children of the night roaming the streets, using guns and deadly drugs and making even more children, act out of the emotional framework generated in their very first moments of life. Being uncared for, they develop a disregard for life, either unaware of or unconcerned by the consequences of their behaviour... Moral insensitivity, acceptance of violence, absence of caring and ethics—these are not inevitably an aspect of those who disregard law and order: the are the tragic consequences of unconscious living. These children have been betrayed from the beginning. In a sane society, we would all be loved from before the beginning. We have the means, knowledge and will to stop these tragedies before they become the almost accepted, logical outcome of past events. These tragedies are our tragedies.

### WHAT HAS THIS GOT TO DO WITH PSYCHEDELICS?

At a recent gathering of MAPS members and friends at Laura's house in Beverly Hills, she pointed out the fundamental similarity of her work and that of MAPS. While MAPS works towards inner healing with psychedelics, Laura aims to lessen the *need* for healing later in life by providing a more nurturing world for children. Psychedelic therapy can help people to open up to their emotions and connect to others; a nourishing childhood can prevent the shutting down and closing off in the first place.

If anyone is in a position to help humanity, it is those of us who have had the psychedelic experience: we don't need to have relationships pointed out to us, since so many of us have first-hand experience of the interconnectedness of all life. If we all had access to the tools of enlightenment, we could all be free. The question is, what will we do with this freedom? Laura's work with children is one example of a positive direction that such freedom can take. •

"Never give children  
a chance of imagining  
that anything exists

in isolation.

Make it plain

from the very beginning  
that all living is relationship.

Show them relationships

in the woods,

in the fields,

in the ponds and streams,

in the village and

in the country around it.

Rub it in."

— Aldous Huxley, *Island*



Photo by Michael Hilsenrad  
from the 1991 facsimile collection of  
*The San Francisco Oracle (1966–1968)*  
from the "Variations" chapter.