

Psychedelics and Consciousness

THE “ONE REALITY/ONE TRUTH” PERSPECTIVE was totally destroyed for me by my first psychedelic trip. I had the benefit of two experienced guides, and some really good LSD, Tim Scully’s “Orange Sunshine.”

I took the tabs at 10 in the morning, and by noon my mind had been substantially remade. It is not what happened during the trip (another story altogether) but how I understood it that was so shaking.

From what I gathered, I had been asleep for 47 years believing that the way I saw things was pretty much the way they actually were. People who disagreed with me were either poor observers, or bad at drawing conclusions. How could so many people be mistaken about so many things? I didn’t have an answer to that, but I knew that I was pretty much right.

Jeremy Tarcher



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way of thinking for me. Daily life was still chop wood/carry water, but now with a more discriminating ax and a less leaky bucket.

As LSD brought about a great cognitive shift for me, so Ecstasy opened my heart in ways that have helped me live in a less dichotomous world, more deeply connected to all beings.

If you’re lucky, these openings do not totally contract in the course of everyday life. If you have a pipe, and some smoke-able herbs, you can at least remind yourself of the reality of those deeper places, even when you don’t get the full energy of being there.

That, in brief, is my experience, but not one that I would see as being universal. As always, *caveat emptor*. •

The trip led me to a small understanding of how the mind generates its own reality and how each of those realities was a product of the mind’s endless cultural programming.

Under this new perspective, I came to understand that everything I saw and didn’t see, heard and didn’t hear—all of the inputs by which I judged reality—were in fact a product of innumerable filters and screens of whose ability to shape my world I had been almost totally unaware. I was familiar with that idea but had never so forcefully experienced it. These unseen membranes created a particular “Jeremy Tarcher Point of View.”

With the experience, everything changed. Everything became more fluid, richer in possibilities, more ambiguous, more paradoxical, more multi-dimensional and more fun. This open framework offered a better