

# Testimonial: How Psychedelics Changed My Perspective as a Police Recruit

ANONYMOUS

*The following testimonial was provided to MAPS by an anonymous supporter. The author's experience with psilocybin demonstrates how, with education and awareness, people can change their perspectives on the War on Drugs and their own role in society.*

WHEN I WAS A SOPHOMORE in high school, I was recruited by the local police department to join the student police academy. After the 12-week course, I was asked to join the police department as a cadet. I accepted the invitation and at 15 years old, I started riding along with the police while wearing a uniform and a bulletproof vest. They gave me a radio and a call sign and made me feel like I was part of the gang.

The adrenaline rush of speeding around the city with our lights flashing and sirens blaring instantly swept me up. The mix of power tripping and male dominated camaraderie was an addictive cocktail for a young teen and I became obsessed with police culture. I decided to focus on a career in law enforcement so I began to conform to the image of a perfect recruit.

Over the course of high school, I became quite unpopular with my peers who often found themselves on the other end of the police baton. But I didn't care about what my classmates thought; law enforcement culture gave me self-worth, along with an inflated ego and a strong sense of superiority.

Then I went to college where my police persona became even less popular. I struggled to find affirmation from my peers toward my projected career as a cop, and I started to have doubts

about my police path. In this new phase of indecision, my friends encouraged me to try psilocybin mushrooms. I went for it and took a heavy dose. My inflated police ego popped and four years of dark emotions started to flow out of my subconscious. I reprocessed memories of arresting non-violent drug offenders and witnessing police brutality. I realized that through my experience in the police department, I unknowingly developed strong mechanisms for emotional repression. The police had trained me to numb my heart to the heartbreak they often inflicted. Until the mushrooms, I was unable to empathize with the victims of the prison industrial complex. With these emotional floodgates open, lots of guilt started to flow. I had been getting a "power-high" at the expense of numerous non-violent victims of our broken justice system.

After lots of painful processing, I felt a euphoric enlightenment from my new reality. For the first time in my life, I was able to conceptualize my spirit. I reflected on seeing my fellow officers arrest and incarcerate people for the same substances that helped me develop my spirituality. I felt like

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two halves of me were split between a life of law enforcement and one of psychedelic introspection. Then I discovered MAPS and fell in love with their mission to mainstream psychedelics. They helped me find this middle ground of bridging the gap between these two worlds. Although I decided not to become a police officer, I still have many relationships within the police department, and I am trying to shift their perspective towards the potential for therapeutic uses of psychedelics. 🌱