

PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF MUSHROOMS CURING OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

R.S., 21 year-old student at the University of Toronto (to contact author, e-mail info@maps.org)

In 1996, at the age of fifteen, I was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). My parents had brought me to the doctor because I was having muscle twitches as well as recurrent disturbing thoughts. I couldn't seem to stop thinking about various ways to harm myself or others, yet I knew that these images in my mind were not truly me. The doctor explained to me what OCD was, and gave me some Prozac. The Prozac was effective for about two years, at which point it stopped working, and I was given a variety of other anti-depressants, as I had developed depression as well. Every medication I tried would work for a while and then lose its effectiveness, and by the end of 2000, I was taking no less than four medications at once.

Needless to say, I was not happy with this, and I felt that my doctor was making me into a pill junkie. I also began to experience side effects, including an inability to ejaculate. In early 2001, I stopped all medications, and sure enough, the depression and OCD returned full force. After a few months, I gave the medicine another try, but the side effects were even worse this time and I quickly stopped it. I decided that I would simply have to learn how to live with my disorder.

In October, 2001, a friend of mine came into possession of a large quantity of "Magic Mushrooms" (I assume they were *Psilocybe Cubensis*, but I can't be sure). For about 6-8 consecutive weeks, my friends and I tripped every Friday night. My usual dose was between 2 and 3.5g of dried mushrooms. I had used mushrooms once or twice before, but this was my first time using them regularly, at high doses.

My first few trips were absolutely amazing. Dazzling colors, and a general sense of happiness, with no significant hangover in the morning. By my second month of weekly tripping,

the mushrooms began to lose their magic. The visuals were not as intense, and I began to feel increasingly burnt out after the effects wore off. So, I figured that I had done too much of a good thing, and stopped using mushrooms around the beginning of December. It was in early November, after I had tripped on four consecutive Fridays, that I noticed that despite being stressed from school and a bit depressed due to a break up (factors that in the past had triggered my obsessive thoughts), I was not experiencing any symptoms of OCD. I did not attribute this to the use of mushrooms, and I was intrigued as to why my disorder had vanished.

Since then, my symptoms of OCD have not returned. I still experience short episodes of depression, but they are very mild and without the agitation that used to accompany them in the past. I told my doctor that my symptoms of OCD had gone away, despite being off all medications, and he didn't know what to make of that. I also told him about my use of mushrooms, and he simply called me an 'idiot' (this was the word he used) and told me that I was going to destroy my brain one of these days.

I did not make the possible connection between using mushrooms and the remission of the OCD until I visited the MAPS site last week and read about the study that was going on. That is when it all clicked in my brain, and I realized that I had inadvertently cured myself. ■

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