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NEWS WORLD

Canadian Senator Admits He Takes Psilocybin for Depression

Seventy-four-year-old Senator Larry Campbell's wife secretly microdosed him by spiking his coffee with psilocybin.



BY MARGUERITE ARNOLD · MAY 23, 2022



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opening speech to the Catalyst Psychedelics Summit in Kingston, Ontario. Namely, he admitted that he has been microdosing with psilocybin to help his depression.

According to Campbell, who has worked in drug reform for a long time as both the Mayor of Vancouver and a member of the Canadian Senate, he suffers from PTSD, depression, and the issues of “getting old.” However, his normal cocktail of anti-depressants was still leaving him with symptoms, making him “grumpy.”

Suddenly, during the pandemic, he noticed that his mood was steadily improving. He could not figure out the cause.

After several weeks of this, he mentioned the same to his wife.

It was then she admitted she had been spiking his coffee with microdoses of psilocybin.

The admission is particularly timely.

Right now, the Canadian government is trying to figure out how to regulate the coming wave of psychedelics, starting with psilocybin. So far, it has allowed several depression patients to use psilocybin under an experimental regime called the Special Access Program which authorizes the use of medicines currently not legal in Canada. However, before legalizing this on a larger scale, Canadian authorities want to see clinical trial evidence.

In the U.S., then-President Donald Trump signed a similar “right-to-try” piece of legislation in May 2018, allowing seriously ill patients to bypass the FDA for experimental medicines. Presumably both cannabis and psilocybin could be covered under the same.

The State of Psychedelic Drug Reform, Globally

Even as Canada considers legalizing its medical use, the issue is now **percolating in the**



Washington, D.C.

Oregon remains the only state that has decriminalized psilocybin and legalized it for medical use.

There is also a significant movement in the U.K. to legalize psilocybin for therapeutic purposes.

Canada is the first country to move forward on the discussion of potentially legitimizing the substance as a legal medical product on a federal level.

Sound familiar?

The Magic Mushroom Boom?

Psilocybin is also known as “Magic Mushrooms.” It is a naturally occurring psychedelic drug which was used traditionally by Meso-American societies for religious and spiritual purposes. It was first referred to in European medicinal literature in the London Medical and Physical Journal in 1799.

During the **1950s and '60s**, magic mushrooms were initially hailed as a wonder drug that could treat everything from addiction to anxiety. Unsurprisingly, the substance was subsequently banned in the United States, as a Schedule I drug in 1970, by the Controlled Substances Act.

Around the time that the modern campaign for medical cannabis use began to be a political force at a state level in the U.S., the campaign to at least decriminalize psilocybin also took off.

The most recent court battle, the 2015 State of New Mexico vs. David Ray Pratt, found



In 2018, the [Food and Drug Administration](#) granted psilocybin “breakthrough therapy” status for research purposes.

Psilocybin Appears to Make Brain More Adaptable

According to the admittedly small amount of research that is currently available, psilocybin makes the brain [more flexible](#). Depressed people’s brains appear to “ruminate”—or go in circles, making negative thinking an entrenched mental state. Psilocybin appears to [increase brain network integration](#), allowing people to break out of this self-defeating pattern of thoughts.

Psilocybin also works differently than regular anti-depressants. Indeed, there is emerging evidence that it could be a viable alternative to existing treatments for depression. Even more excitingly, the research available so far also seems to suggest that psilocybin’s effects last long after treatment ends—which is not the case with traditional medicines. Results of a study at [Johns Hopkins University](#) even show that psilocybin treatment for major depression lasts about a year for most patients.

As cannabis reform goes mainstream, it is inevitable that the conversation about other psychedelic drugs progresses. Psilocybin in particular has been making that journey during the same period of time, albeit at a slower pace.

Now, as cannabis reform begins to be a global reality, it is also obvious that such drugs, which also gained notoriety and were banned at about the same time as cannabis, are taking the stage.

And that is a seriously good thing. Particularly for the patients who need them.



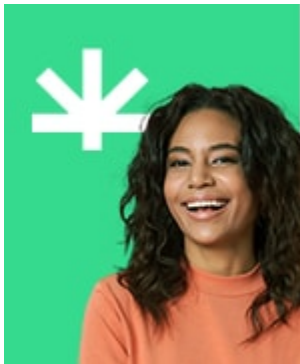
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Marguerite Arnold is a veteran cannabis industry journalist, covering the market from Germany since 2013. Her second book, *Green II: Spreading Like Kudzu*, about the inside story of the first German cannabis cultivation bid, is on sale now in English and German.



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British Columbia Plans 3-Year Decriminalization Test

Canadian officials announced on Wednesday that a plan to decriminalize small amounts of drugs in British Columbia has been approved for a three-year test period.



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North Carolina Lawmakers Advance Bill To Make Hemp Permanently Legal

Hemp and CBD's temporary legalization status in North Carolina is coming to an end, prompting the General Assembly to act.



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‘The Doctor’—A Documentary About a European Pioneer in Cannabis Legalization

A new documentary film about one of the stalwarts of the German and European cannabis legalization discussion, Doctor Franjo Grotenhermen, premieres in Amsterdam on June 3.



Virginia Lawmakers Want to Recriminalize Pot

Virginia state lawmakers have released a budget proposal that would make public possession of more than four ounces of cannabis a criminal misdemeanor offense.

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The new law allows communities in Connecticut to punish individuals with a fee of up to \$1,000 for the practice.



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Peru Issues Draft Law to Allow and Regulate Patient-Grown Medical Cannabis

The Ministry of Health is issuing a draft resolution to receive comments from both public and private entities as well as citizens in Peru for the next three months.

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