

Change Your Perception of the World and You Will Change Your Life

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

[LSD] is “one of the two or three most important things I’ve done in my life” – Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs once faulted Bill Gates for not taking LSD when younger:

He’d be a broader guy if he had dropped acid once or gone off to an ashram when he was younger. Bill is basically unimaginative and has never invented anything, which is why I think he’s more comfortable now in philanthropy than technology. He just shamelessly ripped off other people’s ideas.

Little did he know that Bill Gates has also taken LSD. Here is a transcript of a 1994 interview Gates did with *Playboy*:

Playboy: Ever take LSD?

Gates: My errant youth ended a long time ago.

Playboy: What does that mean?

Gates: That means there were things I did under the age of 25 that I ended up not doing subsequently.

Playboy: One LSD story involved you staring at a table and thinking the corner was going to plunge into your eye.

Gates: [smiles]

Playboy: Ah, a glimmer of recognition.

Gates: That was on the other side of that boundary. The young mind can deal with certain kinds of gooping around that I don’t think at this age I could.

Over the past several months, a woman who works in my building has been experimenting with powerful hallucinogenics and sharing her experiences with me: Ayahuasca, LSD and DMT.* She seems to be enjoying herself a great deal and learning a lot about herself.

She has been thrust out of her body into outer space, met aliens and has been teleported to heaven to visit her dead sister while under the influence of these drugs. Recently, she has been encountering [mechanical elves](#) who have welcomed her warmly while they go about their business.

This woman is quite intelligent, received an academic scholarship to Boston College, and has had a pretty solid career. Her experiences with these drugs prompted me to reading more about them and studying what was going on. After all, wouldn’t we all like to meet some aliens under relaxed conditions?

Apparently, all over Los Angeles there are various events each weekend where people go to someone’s home and take (or smoke) these hallucinogenic substances. Sometimes there are Shamans from places like Peru who administer drugs like Ayahuasca. The drugs are generally taken with others in ceremonial conditions. From what I understand, most of the people participating in these hallucinogenic rituals are not people who are completely tuned out of life. Many are successful doctors, computer programmers, inventors and others who are looking to get in touch with the nature of reality.

During the time I was reading up and studying these substances, I was out to dinner with my wife and some of her friends. The husband of one of her friends apparently owns a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in Malibu. As I related my fascination with various hallucinogenic substances, to my astonishment, he told me that he has been using hallucinogenics to treat many addicts to help them get off drugs and alcohol.

“It is the only way people can get in touch with themselves and really understand what is holding them back in the first place,” he told me. He also said something else that I found quite interesting:

“Many of these plants have a spirit. When you take them, they are sharing their spirit with you.”

Dr. Rick Strassman is a medical doctor who has studied one of these hallucinogenics, DMT, extensively and received DEA/FDA approval to study DMT. After independently administering DMT to numerous individuals, he was astonished at the regularity and consistency of the experiences that people had encountering entities while under the influence of DMT--such as autonomous elves.

Because of the consistency of these experiences, he was convinced that there was not a psychological explanation for these experiences. In fact, he believed that the elves, jaguars and other entities that people were seeing were part of reality itself. The drugs were allowing people to experience a reality that is there in front of all of us, but that we simply cannot see with our minds unless under the influence of these substances.

Before the microscope came along, people could not see what was going on at a microscopic level. With the aid of the microscope, an entire world opened up. There are many who believe that drugs like DMT are something that opens up a reality that is invisible without the aid of the drugs.

For example, the world a dog lives in is far different than our own. They can smell millions of things we cannot smell and hear far, far more than we can. They have the ability to perceive much more of the world around them than we do. It is certainly possible that there is a reality around us we may not understand.

A few months ago, I met with a designer I know. We began talking about hallucinogenics, and he informed me that, like the woman in my building, he had used DMT and Ayahuasca a great deal. He told me about the elves he encountered, as well

as meeting aliens.

This particular designer is not some off-the-wall sort of guy. Relatively conservative, he works for a large branding/advertising company where he spends his day pitching large accounts like Ford Motor Company and Proctor & Gamble.

A few weeks ago, I was talking to a father of one of my daughter's friends in the park. He was once a fairly well-known actor who has appeared in various feature films. He told me he had smoked DMT a few years ago and also encountered these elves.

"Why would you be interested in that stuff?" I asked him.

"All of the most successful people in Hollywood want to understand what is going on," he told me. I assumed he was referring to "what is going on with reality".

Due to the persistence of these accounts, I began reading everything I could about these substances and learned that many experiences are startlingly similar – wherever people are in the world. My belief is that these drugs must be opening up something that defies our understanding of reality. In short, the consistency of these experiences makes the case that there is a powerful alternate reality that may exist around us that we cannot perceive.

Something that I encountered a lot in my reading was so incredible I still have a difficult time understanding it. Many people would take Ayahuasca in a place such as Peru. During the "vision stage" of their experience with the drug, a man might be "transported" to the apartment of his wife back in a place such as New York City. It might be January, and he might have a vision that the wife's window was open, that they were reading an old collection of F. Scott Fitzgerald stories picked up at a bookstore, and that a television was on in the background playing the movie *Platoon*. In the vision, the wife might be wearing a blue scarf she bought on the street that day.

Following the vision, the husband might call the wife and ask her what she had done the night previously. She would relate something to the effect of:

I stopped by a used bookstore in Greenwich Village and picked up an old F. Scott Fitzgerald collection of short stories and then went home. There was a guy outside our apartment selling scarves off the street and I bought a blue scarf from him. I put a casserole from a few nights ago in the oven and took a bath. I lost track of time and it burned and so I had to open the windows, and it got cold, so I put on the scarf. I was watching the movie *Platoon* for a while but could not get into it, so I started reading the stories.

The first time I read an account like this I sort of "shrugged it off"; however, I read so many accounts like this that it seemed there was enough consistency that there must be more going on than I can understand. What this said to me is that our understanding of "reality" may only be partial.

Recently, I was reading about John ("Jack") Whiteside Parsons, a rocket engineer affiliated with CalTech and one of the founders of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Parsons was the inventor of the first composite solid-propellant rocket. Parsons died in an explosion in his home laboratory at the age of 37.

Parsons was an ardent follower of Aleister Crowley, an occultist. It has been speculated that Parsons blew himself up while trying to summon a small man with magical powers. In the book *The Occult Explosion*, Rene Druks writes:

I have every reason to believe that Jack Parsons was working on some very strange experiments, trying to create what the old alchemists called a homunculus, a tiny artificial man with magic powers. I think that's what he was working on when the accident happened.

What is so interesting to me is why such an incredible scientific mind, who has left such an imprint on the world and did so much to advance science, would be so attracted to black magic and the occult. One writer wrote:

By applying to occultism the scientific acumen so intrinsic to his professional research, he anticipated the ontological implications of current quantum physics concerning the nature of reality. *Magick, Gnosticism and the Witchcraft*. Ed. Fra. H.H.D. (South Stukely, Quebec: 93 Publishing, 1979)

It is very plausible that Parsons was interested in the occult because he was interested—from a scientific standpoint—in the nature of reality.

One of my favorite Einstein quotes is: "Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one." Einstein believed that our rational mind and common sense were not capable of understanding the nature of reality. Einstein's theory of relativity, for example, was an entirely new way of looking at the universe.

Some of the greatest minds have also used drugs to question reality. For example,

Francis Crick, who discovered the double helix, gave credit to LSD for him making this discovery.

Richard Feynman, a Noble Prize-winning physicist who made many breakthroughs in quantum mechanics, electrodynamics, superfluidity and particle physics, was known to use drugs

Kary Mullis, a Noble-Prize winning chemist who discovered a method to make millions of identical copies of DNA called the polymerase chain reactions (PCR). A year after winning the Noble Prize, he stated that his LSD binges were more important to his accomplishments than any courses he ever took. He told the British Broadcasting Corporation: "What if I had not taken LSD ever; would I have still invented PCR? I don't know. I doubt it. I seriously doubt it."

Adolf Hitler was even interested in hallucinogenics:

Earnest Pretzsche, a book dealer, introduced Hitler to a psychedelic drug containing mescaline and peyote. This produced clairvoyant visions that made Hitler believe he had opened the door to the reigns of supernatural powers, powers he could use for his own purposes. Wes Penre, "Hitler and the Secret Societies—the Occult Life of Adolf Hitler," @Illuminati News, <http://www.illuminati-news.com/hitler-occult.htm> (accessed August 16, 2006).

A major key to success is the ability to perceive the world differently – and see what others do not see. The most successful people in the world are arguably able to succeed because a major part of what motivates them is seeing something that others do not.

Most of the world's major religions were founded by people who saw God, or something others did not. They were able to get in touch with a consciousness, presence, or even spiritual being that others could not see. They then shared their vision with the world. The encounters and experiences exceed all reason.

The founding of the most successful businesses is also based largely on a perception that others do not see. Businesses that do something better and differently typically grow and become very successful. It is this ability to see things differently that makes them so successful.

While I am not advocating the use of hallucinogenics or the occult, it is my belief that great success comes from looking at the world differently—and seeing what others do not see. The most successful people generally get that way because they are able to perceive something that others do not. In fact, I believe that many people become successful because they are specifically motivated to find new ways of seeing things and the world – even if it means using drugs.

While human progress is driven by the ability of certain people to see new things, applying a different way of looking at the world is something that can dramatically change your life as well.

If you want to get fit, perceive the world as if you would if you were training for the Olympics.

If you want to advance in your career, perceive the world like you would if you were the most motivated person in the world at what you do.

Most people can benefit from dramatically altering their perception. If you do this, you can do anything you want.

- How do you think someone who becomes the President of United States perceives the world?
- How do you think someone who becomes a billionaire perceives the world?
- How do you think the happiest person you know perceives the world?

They probably perceive the world in a way that is much different than the way you do.

People who are extremely unsuccessful and unhappy also perceive the world differently than you do. In fact, it is this negative perception that actually serves to hold them back. What is part of your perception that has changed your life?

Several months ago I started thinking about the rise of companies like Facebook and LinkedIn and reading various books about connection. I looked around me and saw my family and how we are all connected. I saw how much people seem to enjoy being connected on sites like Facebook and sharing information with each other. I started seeing people cheering sports teams on as a sign of connection. I saw people at parties and community events as a sign of connection. For the first time in my life, it hit me that the most important thing to most people is connection. Everyone deep down yearns for connection with other people. It is this connection that makes life meaningful.

Because of this insight, I started looking at my job differently. I saw what I do as someone in the job placement industry as a person who provides a connection. I saw the people inside of the company I work in as wanting connection.

I am not sure why, but seeing this was completely transformative for me. I realized that my life goal was to provide connection to other people, and I committed to it. Having spent the majority of my career as an attorney, and in very competitive environments, I had always perceived the world as quite competitive. Once I saw the world this way, I was almost transformed and much more at peace with the world and the people in it. After decades on this earth, I started making friends with a greater variety of people and enjoying life more.

While my “breakthrough” may not have been significant, it was a major shift in perception that changed my life.

Change your perception of the world and you will change your life.

*Here is some brief information about these drugs:

Ayahuasca is made out of the Banisteriopsis caapi vine and is a psychedelic brew. It contains MAO-inhibiting beta-carbolines. It crosses the blood-brain barrier and activates receptor sites in the brain.

LSD (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide) is a semisynthetic psychedelic drug that is part of the ergoline family. It can alter one's sense of time, thinking processes, and can cause various types of hallucinations.

N,N-Dimethyltryptamine (DMT or N,N-DMT) is a psychedelic compound of the tryptamine family. Since DMT resembles the basic structure of neurotransmitters, when ingested, DMT is able to cross the human blood-brain-barrier, allowing it to act as a powerful hallucinogenic drug that dramatically affects human consciousness.

<https://www.harrisonbarnes.com/>