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Herbal Medicine vs. Pharmaceuticals

The practice of using medicinal herbs or herbal medicine has not yet been forgotten, but there seems to be an everlasting battle for such practices to disappear for they do not grant much profit for larger pharmaceutical companies. The benefits from using herbal medicines to treat certain things like mental illnesses and even some cancers and sicknesses, are so much greater than if they were compared to that of pharmaceutical drugs and their many, many side effects. Obviously, there are certain drugs that are necessary in today's day and age as the viruses, bacteria and diseases that humans are plagued with aren't simply cured by drinking herbal tea. Even so, there are still so many other ways that many diseases and illnesses can be cured with simple remedies and herbal medicines that are much more beneficial for the human body. The lack of respect and acceptance of herbal remedies and medicines should have an equal place within the medical field and should be a legit option as medicine or treatment for everyone. Such medicines should be a first option before moving to pharmaceutical drugs and other treatments that have a chemical make-up.

Some side effects of pharmaceutical drugs can affect certain people on drastic levels, and in many cases tend to make the illness worse than it was beforehand. Mental illnesses can be treated with many different types of medicines ranging from anti-depressants, anti-anxiety medications, mood-stabilizers and antipsychotics, just to name a few categories. Some side effects that people tend to experience while taking medications for mental illnesses include

nausea, increased appetite/weight gain or decreased appetite/weight loss, constipation or diarrhea, loss of sexual desire and other sexual problems, fatigue, drowsiness, dizziness, restlessness, insomnia, dry mouth, blurred vision, headaches, joint and muscle pain/aching/weakness, skin rash, temporary hair loss, etc. The list continues with almost every possible side effect imaginable; these are just the most common side effects noted with medications concerning the listed categories above. The other, and quite possibly longer list, makes up the different types of medications a person can be opened to, and it is almost frightening, and often, most of the side effects are not proposed with them, nor do they seem to really be taken into that much consideration. Most of the time an initial medication that a person is prescribed with will be the cheapest and easiest drug to make. It's like a money game, one that is only sometimes benefitted from. Furthermore, these drugs do not usually offer a "cure" to the illness at hand, rather it is more of a temporary pause on certain feelings so that a person *might* learn to escape depressive or anxious thought patterns. Many times, there is not often an endgame for getting off the medication, so patients tend to feel obligated to take the medication for years on end, and even for their entire life.

Moreover, taking pharmaceutical drugs is obviously not the only option. The realm of psychedelics and what they can do for certain people with mental illnesses has finally made its way back to the drawing board. Psychedelics have the power to actually cure certain mental illnesses like depression and anxiety, as there have been many case studies to prove so. The psychedelic industry initially took off during the 60s and 70s which is widely known as era that birthed the hippie culture, and commonly associated with psychedelic-like aesthetics for obvious reasons. There was a much greater usage of psychedelic drugs recreationally across a large span of people almost all over the world. Psychedelic drugs were also being tested within the medical field, as possible drugs of warfare, and as well as tests that were conducted simply out of

curiosity. However, it was soon shut down, reason being still really isn't known, but it led many to believe that the psychedelic industry wasn't going to benefit the medical/pharmaceutical industry and gave too many citizens a chance to "awaken" to certain things about the corruptions within their society and within the government. In summary, the wide awakening amongst the public got too difficult to control completely, so psychedelics became illegal, advertisements for materialistic perfect family lives became more popular, food companies started putting GMOs in products, most people conformed to this new normal of societal means, and about 30 years of psychedelic knowledge that could have been reached was not in the picture, if you want to think of it that way.

What could be happening in present time, and what will hopefully happen in the near future, is the use of psilocybin or "magic mushrooms" for treatment towards certain mental illnesses or disturbances. A psilocybin therapy session would look something like this: a dimly lit room with comfortable furniture and art decorating the walls, specially designed to evoke a sense of comfort and ease. The patient would sit or lie on a couch with headphones on, listening to calming music. A couple members of a research team would also be present to help guide the course of the experience, having most of that time be in quite introspection. To an outsider's viewpoint, this would seem standard and normal considering the circumstances, but within the mind of the patient, their thoughts are powerfully activated by psilocybin. Even though this is much less potent than LSD (another type of psychedelic drug), it is very capable of altering the perception of space and time and causes feelings of euphoria, visual distortions and mystical experiences as such. The research that has been conducted on psilocybin has shown its potential to treat a wide range of psychiatric behaviors and disorders including depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder or anxiety related issues, cluster headaches, cancer-related/end-of-life psychological distress, PTSD and issues related to addiction like smoking, alcohol addiction or

cocaine. However, psilocybin mushrooms remain as a Schedule I drug and have no current accepted medical use and have a high potential for abuse, making it quite impossible that the FDA would approve it for legal use of any kind according to *Healthline*. Other drugs of this classification include marijuana, MDMA and LSD, despite the benefits that each one of these can have for certain people. Not to mention that psychoactive drugs are also not addictive by any means, they can just result in dangerous decision making if a person is irresponsible: AKA they don't do research beforehand and take the drug out of recreational purposes only. Despite the legalities and other social stigmas; scientists, doctors and researchers are still pushing for clinical trials to be FDA approved.

It seems more logical that there would be a desire to pharm things from the earth instead of factories, as humans are a combination of organic material and usually do not benefit from the consumption of chemicals in which the chemical make-up resembles almost nothing within the human body. When considering mushrooms, not just psychedelic, but mushrooms in general, and the benefits that they can have for the human body, the outcomes are almost magical. Most of the research that has been conducted with medicinal mushrooms include maitake, reishi, coriolis, shiitake, lion's mane and agaricus mushrooms. According to *ONS Voice*, the bioactive compounds that are derived from these certain mushrooms have been developed as anticancer treatments because they elicit, antitumor, immunomodulatory, antioxidant, antiviral, antibacterial, and protective effects. Studies have found that the consumption of mushrooms can also improve survival and quality of life in cancer patients, yet mushrooms are not only beneficial for cancer patients, they are also great sources of B vitamins, antioxidants and fiber for any person who takes them. Supplemental forms that these mushrooms can be found in include tablets, capsules, teas and liquid extracts. A well-known doctor, Doctor Alfredo Bowman or Dr. Sebi, a Honduran herbalist and self-proclaimed healer, was able to compile many beneficial

resources to help people learn how to transform their body in a completely natural way. His research and findings about what herbal supplements and ways of dieting that work best for certain people was truly revolutionary. It was also thought that he was able to conjure a completely natural cure for HIV and AIDS, but he did not receive the credit he deserved, rather he faced a lawsuit and had to go to court over reasons that never matched up to his case. See, his research did not benefit pharmaceutical companies because they wouldn't have been able to make any profit from his findings, so they tried to silence him and put him out of his work, which is completely unfair for so many people on so many different levels. These natural substances have the power to revolutionize the medical industry and transform the health of mass numbers of people, if only some would be more open minded.

Even though the amount of very promising research continues to pile, there is truly no realistic timeline for when, or if, psilocybin will ever be approved by the FDA. Obviously, the drug would never be legally allowed to be sold anywhere, it would most likely just be administered to specialists, as the world might change quite drastically if everyone was running around tripping on shrooms. Also, psychoactive drugs can trigger psychosis or manic episodes in people who are vulnerable to weaker mindsets as such, and they can also induce what is called a "bad trip," or just a negative experience, which can cause a person to act quite erratically. However, psilocybin therapy is not like taking shrooms at a party, it is a means to help those who need it in a very controlled environment so nothing unexpected happens. There are always risks, but there are risks with virtually any decision that is made, including those of taking prescription drugs, as mentioned previously. This is not a new scenario, just one that would open a great number of eyes to certain issues that can be easily solved if the FDA would allow it. In the growing periods that society is in right now, it seems that it would be quite impossible for this to not develop into something that can be used in a beneficial way for more people: truths are

beginning to show themselves and there is no denying that these psychoactive drugs are certainly one of them.

Of course, it makes sense to the capitalist system that the pharmaceutical companies and other medical institutions should provide much of the public with a great service: fast and easy medicine, just like everything else! But the sad truth is, that same majority barely even knows what's in the little pill more than half the time, and the same goes for packaged or boxed food items that have little to no nutritional value. However, it is quite relevant that people will need certain things if they want to survive today's world. For instance, some vaccines, penicillin, bacterial medications, and such will continue to be necessary as long as certain viruses and illnesses continue to develop, but that still doesn't leave out the cancers and many mental illnesses, along with other diseases can be simply cured with natural medicines. Maybe it would be more beneficial to consider more medical options like chiropractic practices or other research on natural medicines for the body rather than just putting complete trust into doctors who push chemicals down their patients throats and inject them into their arms. Obviously, the medical industry has progressed very far and the intelligence within the field is extraordinary, all that should be considered is this: maybe some people get to the point where they are so smart, they become dumb. They learn everything they can about the medical field and industry and then close off any other option because they think that everything within the medical industry is the only fact that there is. Honestly, this is quite a noticeable phenomenon if one considers the many other options that there are for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. But at the end of the day, each person is living their own life, not everyone has to follow the same set of routinely based subjects just to feel like they are doing the right thing and staying on top of their mind and body.

Because there are legal matters that resist the use of psilocybin or "magic mushrooms" within medical practice, and not much of the pharmaceutical companies that have been FDA

approved support many options of medicinal mushrooms, what can be done about the subject is for people to find and carry out their own medicinal practices to help with their illnesses. At first, it may seem like a difficult task, but it only takes a few google searches. For example: “What herbal remedies help with anxiety/depression/ODC/ADHD/bipolar/etc.” or “herbal medicines for a common cold/flu” honestly google can grant virtually any answer, all that is required is the boldness and integrity to do so, and the ability to determine what is a reliable source and what is fake. It is a sad truth to know that the government and medical industry do not realize the help that they can give to so many people. Nevertheless, there are some people out there and looking to help in ways that are more natural like chiropractors, kinesiologists, or herbal practitioners. Indeed, there are more than what meets the eye, they are just not largely publicized. Hopefully more people wake up to the benefits of herbal medicines and psychedelics and see that there aren't the greatest number of downsides to them. The research still has much to progress, but it is comforting to know that some people do see the corruption within the pharmaceutical industry and the normality to follow closed minded people is becoming more troubling to those who have awakened themselves to the other side of the spectrum. The only thing that is left now is patience and time, hoping that the change in climate doesn't destroy the world by the time people are finally able to get the help they need.

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