

MY IBOGAIN EXPERIENCE

21st/22nd August 2003

This is an account of my experiences of the drug ibogaine. At the time I was a long-term user of methadone linctus. I found it impossible to deal with the hellish withdrawal symptoms experienced in trying to come off. I hoped that ibogaine might break my habit once and for all.

On the Thursday night I took a test dose of ibogaine hydrochloride. Edward (my guide) said it was roughly 200mg. After 35-40 mins I could feel the drug start to take effect. I looked at my hand and it seemed so primitive, perhaps Neanderthal. It felt like some form of anaesthesia and a distortion of sound and vision were noticed. What I do remember though was an intense connection to the old photographs and toys I'd brought (I'd thought a connection with my childhood would be healing). It was really a very emotional experience but I was apprehensive as regards taking the full dose the next day. I felt taking 7 or 8 times this dose could kill me but, according to my body weight, that's what it was going to take to end my methadone addiction.

My withdrawal symptoms from methadone had however temporarily abated.

So I prepared myself the next day for the experience. I was starting to get bad withdrawal from the methadone. I wore a white robe and painted myself ritualistically for the treatment. This was to be a statement of my methadone addiction; after all I'd been a 'methadone ghost' for so many years. As the face paint fell away over the next few hours the methadone addiction would also fade away (This was also a tribute to the Bwiti cult of Gabon who use the drug in spiritual ceremonies).

I took the ibogaine at 10:20am on the Friday. I took four capsules to begin with. The fifth I'd take later. After about 40 mins I felt a heavy emotional trauma come over me. I grew very apprehensive re the dose and feared that I may die. Edward reassured me. I lay down to let the ibogaine work. Light and sound were being affected. The yellow painted wall opposite me glowed with a burning intensity. I knew that this was going to be a strong experience. The noise of the underground trains became amplified into the sound of a thousand bombers flying over me. I felt the approach of something huge, something menacing perhaps. I called out Bwiti 3 times. The words appeared in my head in large green slimy letters. The first visions that I experienced when closing my eyes were yellow grids stretching into the empty darkness of space. These stellar grids then took me into another dark and ominous landscape with a particularly eerie resonance. A strange sound permeated the atmosphere...it was like a thousand million aircraft drifting overhead. The hum or resonance permeated the whole experience and I understood this to be an essential component of existence, a binding force that was always there but the ibogaine helped me recognise it. I then felt I was on board a

strange spacecraft viewing the landscape before me. Small portraits drifted by of myself as a child. They stopped when I contracted a hellish skin condition at age 17. This was where my development was seriously affected and I journeyed into heavy depression and low self-esteem. Next a figure that had haunted me for years appeared. It was the Chinese torture victim from Georges Bataille's Tears of Eros. This photograph of a young man being systematically sliced to pieces was the most disturbing image I'd ever seen. The text mentioned that a large dose of opium had been administered to the victim prior to the torture. A curiously beatified expression was on the guy's face. In my trance state the figure flew towards me in an inset box. He was glowing silver, completely transcended from the torture he was undergoing. The beauty outweighed the horror. I realised then that I too had been a torture victim. I had been torturing myself with opiate addiction.

I then experienced a complete atomic breakdown. I was viewing myself at a molecular level. The molecules of my existence had information imprinted within. The information was all to do with evolution. I experienced life in the primordial swamp, viewing ancient life forms that I had once been. A cycle of death and rebirth appeared. A lizard popped out of a hole and jumped down another. Next an animal skull popped out of the first hole went down the next and the whole cycle continued with the lizard again.

These are the key moments of the experience. There's a lot of it that I can't recall. The intensity was often overwhelming and it was impossible to take on board all of the information. Ataxia hit me heavily and I found it impossible to walk without help. Jagged lines appeared around lights and the strange resonance permeated my head for a long time after the visions ended.

I was a little sick and went to bed. I didn't feel great but it wasn't withdrawal at least. I felt I was being cured of my addiction.

It took me about 3 days to start walking properly again. I did have residual withdrawal symptoms but it was nothing I couldn't handle. I'd say it cleared 85% of the rattling. There was no way I'd feel this good if I'd tried to come straight off methadone. I didn't have much strength over the following 2 weeks but it's gradually coming back. It's now the 15th day since I used to take methadone and I feel really good. Ibogaine has ended my addiction.

Addenda: I've now gone almost 8 months without methadone and my life has completely altered. A voice spoke to me at the end of the treatment. I took it to be the God of Ibogaine. He told me I would be healed within the next few weeks and my life would change around (I had been dreadfully unhappy prior to taking the treatment). I was and I am a much happier person now. The anguish of depression has been vanquished ... I am whole again!

David Graham Scott 2003