

## Forbidden Knowledge... and Ancient Secrets

by David Jay Brown



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**NATURALLY**, my experiences with sex and psychedelics got me interested in Tantra, the ancient Indian system of sexual yoga. Over the years, I have become fairly well-acquainted with basic Tantric practices, and have gotten to know a number of people in the Tantric community. This sensual and spiritual community incorporates consciousness-raising sexuality into their daily religious practice. From spending time with these people I learned that it is not uncommon for practitioners of Tantra to incorporate psychedelic plants, such as *Cannabis* or psilocybian mushrooms, into their sacred rituals.

Although the ritualistic mixing of sex and psychedelics is ancient—and openly discussed in the writings of iconoclastic philosophers like Aleister Crowley and Robert Anton Wilson—the psychopharmacological techniques for activating higher states of sexual consciousness remain unknown by most people, and they are often kept secret from early initiates of Tantra. Techniques for enhancing sexual rituals with sacred plants are rarely mentioned in popular books on Tantra or in Tantra workshops.

This important omission is deliberate. It's due to the fact that it requires a good bit of training to handle the enormous amount of energy that a Tantric-psychedelic session can generate. Tantric sex can be quite intense on its own, and that may be more than enough for most people who are interested in exploring Tantra. Not everyone can handle shivering in ecstasy for hours while their partner's face is melting.

The omission of psychedelics is also largely due to the fact that most people in the Tantric community are aware that the idea

of a sexually-based spirituality is controversial enough for most people. Mixing sex and religion elicits strong taboos in many people. Making it widely known that some of those same people who are mixing sex and religion are also using "Schedule I drugs" may not be the wisest way to gain societal acceptance during a time in history when sacred plants are regarded as forbidden fruit by the Puritanical overlords of society. So their secrecy is understandable.

However, since it can be emotionally risky to mix sex and psychedelics if one isn't properly prepared, perhaps a more open discussion of these experiences would be beneficial. Since nothing is going to stop people from mixing sex with just about every substance imaginable, and since the emotional consequences of these experiences can be so extreme, openly sharing our experiences with one another is probably a good idea.

This is one of the reasons that Annie Sprinkle [also in this *Bulletin*, see page 9] and I are currently working on a book about sex and drugs, with an emphasis on psychedelics. We are collecting anecdotes for the book, and are eager to receive submissions. Please send us any interesting experiences that you have had combining sex with a psychoactive drug, regardless of whether it was positive or negative. Be sure to include written permission to quote from your experience in our book, and let us know whether or not you wish to remain anonymous. •

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