

YOUR SAY

Plants that heal



Eve FISHER

IT was a case of blink and you missed it.

There was no mainstream media cover and no fanfare, yet a global movement celebrated a monumental day and those who noticed are likely forever changed.

Thank You Plant Medicine Day on February 20 was more than a day of celebration. It was a "coming out", if you will, by people all over the world who had experienced the life-changing benefits of natural psychedelic plant medicines.

More countries than not have restrictions on psychedelic plant and fungi medicine such as mescaline, psilocybin, DMT and ayahuasca. Even cannabis is a potent and powerful psychedelic but sadly its habitual use as a recreational drug has stopped users being able to tap into its medicinal powers — although medical marijuana laws means that is changing.

In Australia it is illegal to possess most psychedelic plant medicines even though they can be found in nature. There is also currently a push to restrict some non-psychedelic plant medicines, such as kambo, a traditional frog venom used as a detoxification therapy.

People who use psychedelic plant medicine for addictions, health problems and mental trauma

do so at the risk of prosecution. There is also the risk of stigmatisation by a community kept so in the dark by the wonders of this medicine that people assume if you break a drug law you must be a junkie.

It's funny when you think about the damage legally obtainable drugs can do to the human body and brain. Prescription opioids, anti-psych meds and all manner of other drugs from Big Pharma's cabinet can have a horrendous impact.

But this is not a time to gripe. It's a time for celebration. A time for hope.

Just a quick scan of the story headlines on the Thank You Plant Medicine website says plenty:

FATHER overcomes 20-year heroin addiction with psychedelic medicines;

HOW ayahuasca freed me from sexual abuse trauma;

WHEELCHAIR-BOUND woman recovers from fibromyalgia after ayahuasca;

THERAPIST ends her cycle of depression through plant medicines;

MAN regains his lost sense of smell using psilocybin mushrooms.

No doubt there would be many more stories if people didn't live in fear of legal and social persecution.

I'm lucky to be a dear friend of Paul Philippe, who used Thank You Plant Medicine Day as a vehicle to purge himself of his childhood trauma

by revealing how his work with mushrooms had allowed him to accept and recover from systemic childhood abuse.

Mushrooms have long been known to have the power to change a person's thought and behavioural patterns, particularly when consumed with the idea of using the substance as a therapeutic aid.

Psilocybin has been known to relieve cluster migraines among other physical ailments and there are trials in Australia for the use of psilocybin to help reduce mental anguish for terminally ill patients.

For most people though, it's personal growth and acceptance that come to the fore.

In his piece for the website Paul detailed his physical abuse at the hands of his mother, who herself had endured relentless childhood physical and sexual abuse.

"My mother undertook what I later called 'programming sessions', starting when I was very

young. I would be forced to sit on the floor in a room for hours. During this time, she would walk around me saying things about me, which I was forced to repeat," Paul wrote.

"Everyone hates you and you should be dead", she'd say. Then, I would be punched in the head or kicked. I would repeat 'Everyone hates me and I should be dead'. Punched or kicked again."

Paul first tried to kill himself when he was seven. Suicidal thoughts would remain with him until his 30s. He was an alcoholic and still repeating his mother's mantras in the mirror each day.

Although the now 43-year-old quit drinking six years ago, he was still battling his demons. Therapy barely scratched the surface.

Paul discovered the power of psilocybin three years ago. And such was the power of the emotional breakthroughs that his life completely changed.

"As I have moved forward on my journey of healing the results from psilocybin continue to blow my expectations out of the water. My capacity for truly compassionate, respectful and patient self-love is a gift," Paul wrote.

Deepening problems within society and ever-growing problems within ourselves show now is the time to start opening our minds to the solutions offered through nature.

Thank you plant medicine for those you have helped.

Lifeline: 13 11 14



ADDY READERS HAVE THEIR SAY - LETTERS AND TEXTS

FAST TRAIN FUNDING WILL ALWAYS BE CHALLENGING

ANOTHER round of civic leaders pushing their political electoral power to lobby for a fast train to Melbourne.

The reality is there is never enough money to meet all needs, and funding ours will mean numerous others with greater needs miss out.

For years we suffered from only having an hourly service and the line realignment has meant a threefold increase, albeit at the cost of overcrowding closer to Melbourne.

However, rapid increase of services along the Werribee section will alleviate those problems.

David Anderson, Geelong West

COUNCIL FLUSH WITH CASH TO WASTE OVER 20 YEARS

WOW. Council has, after 20 years, decided to erect street-level toilets.

Back in 2000 I called for the underground toilets to be filled in and replaced at street level, but a city spokesman said it would

cost \$300,000 (GA, 16/5/2000). Council went ahead and spent \$130,000 on works, including sensitively styled roofing.

This roof looked good on the drawing, but on a rainy day wind would blow the rain on to the stairway and rampways, making it very dangerous.

The new toilet will now cost \$460,000.

For the past 20 years labour costs for vandalism, graffiti and cleaning have cost \$110,000.

Council could have built in 2000, a saving of \$160,000 on unit, works of \$130,000 not carried out, plus \$110,000 vandalism etc. Therefore ratepayers' money of \$400,000 has been flushed down the toilet.

Ian J Stacey, Leopold

AGED FACILITIES NEED TO LOOK AT WEEKEND VISITS

IN Geelong so far, we have escaped the coronavirus. It is disturbing to see in Sydney it has infiltrated a school and a couple of aged homes.

The result at the aged home has been deaths.

I now live in a large aged home, so I am interested in what precautions this home has taken. It appears that during the week people coming in and out have to sign a book with date and time. But to my horror I see that at weekends there is no staff to oversee this practice.

I have been told other aged care homes do not have weekend staff on duty to make sure people sign a book so anyone can visit with no restrictions whatever.

When I asked why, I was told it all got down to money for wages on the weekend.

I think this is appalling and a dangerous practice. It's time this was corrected in all aged care homes.

Bob Thompson, Ocean Grove

LETTER RIGHT TO CALL FOR MORE COMPASSION

I REALLY appreciate Denis Ryan's concern for others when he writes about problems associated with

panic-buying in supermarkets (Letters, GA, 9/3). His special concern for the poor and frail is moving and important.

Those living on low incomes in our society simply can't afford to stockpile everyday necessities and can be in serious trouble when items they need to purchase on a daily or weekly basis are not available on supermarket shelves.

Denis is absolutely right when he asks us to look after one another, also when shopping.

It was extremely encouraging to read about his thoughtfulness for others.

Robert Van Zetten, Highton

PATIENCE NEEDED IN BOOKING IN FOR FLU JAB

IN response to "Worried Seniors" of Drysdale (Text Talk, GA, 7/3), I'm a medical receptionist and my clinic does not know when the flu shots will become available, so please be patient.

Name withheld

Geelong Advertiser EDITORIAL

Get tough on drivers under the influence

LAST year's surge in Victorian road deaths was a wake-up call to us all.

Some 266 Victorians died on our roads last year — a 25 per cent increase on the previous year — more than half of them on rural and regional roads.

The Transport Accident Commission has been earnestly seeking answers for the rise, including hosting a series of regional road safety forums and launching a statewide survey last year, while the Victorian parliament is in the middle of a special inquiry into the issue.

Magistrates have long lamented the fact that drivers found with drugs in their system do not face the same sentencing consequences as drink-driving offences, and former policeman-turned-politician Stuart Grimley believes parliament should be on the front foot in righting the legislative disparity.

It seems like a no-brainer.

If a driver injures someone while driving impaired — be it through driving under the influence of drugs, alcohol or even mobile phone distraction — the effect is the same.

Why should the punishment be different according to the cause of the impairment?

If we want to address the road toll, nothing reasonable should be off the table.

The ability to jail drug-drivers seems an obvious start.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1818 - Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* is published.

1843 - Tin discovered near Beechworth, Victoria.

1845 - Maoris rise up against British rule in New Zealand.

1995 - Melinda Gainsford becomes the first Australian to win a world sprint title in more than 30 years, in the world indoor 200m.

2004 - A series of bombs on four commuter trains in Madrid kill 199 people and wound more than 1400.

2018 - China says any trade war with the US will only bring disaster to the world economy, after US President Donald Trump announced heavy tariffs on steel and aluminium.

ADDY ONLINE POLL

Yesterday's question: Do you plan to buy a football club membership this year?

YES 23% NO 77%

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