

Open Letter to the Worldwide Community

Members of the LGBTQIA+ community and others have brought to my attention that several of my published writings discuss homosexuality as a psychological disorder. My early writings were crafted in the context of my psychoanalytic training and were written in a time when many if not most cultures criminalized same-gender behaviors, with incarceration a real threat to those who acted on their natural attractions. I was seeking to understand this aspect of humanity from a deeper perspective than mere criminalization.

Although I neglected to publicly correct these statements until now, I want to be very clear that I have long considered same gender attraction a healthy expression of human sexuality. I am hopeful that those who have worked with me over the years have experienced my openness and love for all people, with unwavering respect for individual sexual orientations and expressions. If these writings caused confusion or pain to readers, I am left with deep regret and I apologize with a full heart. These passages have been removed from recent republication of my books and have not been included in my encyclopedia, *Way of the Psychonaut*.

Concern has also been expressed regarding my discussion of common fears reported by people approaching work with psychedelics, which included the fear of becoming homosexual. From our present vantage point, it seems obvious that such fears arose from introjected social proscriptions and repressions. However, the fact remains that this fear was reported to me often enough that I took notice and included it in my writings on LSD work. I did nothing to elicit a statement of this fear and was honestly, at first, surprised that this would be expressed.

My response at the time included providing assurance that nonordinary state experiences tended to strengthen the sense of one's own sexual identity rather than cause a homosexual transformation. Within the context of the times, I stand by this response as generally helpful in easing trepidation about entering into a session. This was not an attempt on my part to discourage discovery of one's authentic sexuality, but my assurance that psychedelics do not change one's authentic nature. Today, an entirely different response would likely be appropriate, although it seems unlikely that this fear would be as commonly reported now as it was at the time of my early research.

My last comment involves the recommended "best practice" for a sitting dyad for psychedelic sessions to include a man and a woman. Historically, this practice arose in part to affirm the need for inclusion of women in sitting dyads. Psychiatric and even personal growth practices were dominated by men in earlier years. I would hope, in contemporary times, that practitioners and researchers would seek guidance from individual participants as to their choice of sitters with respect to gender and gender identification. This does not seem a difficult endeavor. I would be interested in research and the development of practice attending to this issue.

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January 2025