

## **LSD And Riding the Wave**

**Long before the infamous mind-altering pill ever came anywhere near my stompin grounds in east central Iowa, I was already transfixed by the stories, the rumors, and the hype. There was Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters in the Bay area hosting Electric Acid Kool Aid Tests. Mind blowing anarchistic affairs that included an eclectic mix of street hippies, academics, old beatniks, and even the notorious Oakland Chapter of the Hell's angels with live music provided by the Grateful Dead**

**On the east coast there were Dr Timothy Leary and Dr Richard Alpert (soon to be known as Ram Das), former professors and early pioneers in the field of studying the use of psychedelics, in a clinical setting, to cure and improve human mental health conditions. They focused on "set and setting", controlling and muting the external stimuli while providing an assigned guide to the subject who had ingested a carefully measured dose and was then monitored like a lab rat throughout the trip. I was definitely in the Kesey camp. But I had to wait years before I was able to actually gain access and take my first trip.**

**As in many of my life experiences, timing was critical. From my point of view, in the middle to late 60's "tripping" was for**

exploration and growth. Later on, most young people viewed LSD and Magic Mushrooms as a “party drugs”. But every single trip I ever took, I started the journey looking to learn and grow. And every single time I came away with a strong tutorial that I could and did apply to my everyday life going forward. My trips ranged from spending the experience in a secluded sylvan glen watching the leaves, the sun, and embracing trees that seemed to me, at the time, like sentient beings. Then later getting down on my hands and knees, carefully moving around the ground cover and observing a whole universe of bugs, plants, and mulch that I normally walked right over and never paid any attention to.

My trips ranged from feeling the joy of being at one with mother nature to terrifying. Such as the night before my induction draft physical, when I briefly left my body while driving my VW bug down the street with a copious quantity of acid stashed under the back seat. I had never heard of such an experience and believed that I had lost my mind and was never going to be sane again. Fourteen hours later I passed the draft physical with flying colors, while still in the waning stages of my trip.

It was different every time and that was part of the attraction. I get my kicks now heading out into some large waves on my puny body board, sans psychedelics. Much like “tripping” I

never know if I will get the ride of my life or be pounded into the ground and receive a life rending experience. At first, like the initial psychedelic wave, the first literal wave comes on, and my body feels a rush of adrenaline, part fear and part exhilaration. Then when the big one hits, I position myself the best I can and hang on for dear life. To me, the two experiences have strong parallels. I have never tried tripping *while* body-boarding, but who knows what the future may bring.

I haven't done acid in a couple of decades. I would never encourage anyone to do it unless they had already expressed sincere interest. But if they were set on trying it, I would share my experiences and try to steer them toward the learning and growth approach, preferably in a secluded natural setting with a like-minded friend or two.