

## Notes

- 1) This Ayahuasca journey was completed 9mos before being diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer (both lungs, bones, lymph nodes, 30 mets in the brain).
- 2) On November 12th, 2022 I completed a psilocybin journey to help me start dealing with my cancer diagnosis. Here is a scientific study showing how psilocybin helps terminal cancer patients:  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5367557/>
- 3) There's also a 4 episode series on Netflix specifically about this:  
<https://www.netflix.com/us/title/80229847>
- 4) I will be writing about the psilocybin journey soon. I will eventually put it on my personal blog. Go here to get notified when I write/send it: [chadvanags.com](https://chadvanags.com)
- 5) You can also check out the following places I post about all of this:
  - a) Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/chadvanags/>
  - b) LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chadvanags/>
- 6) Lastly, I have left commenting on. If you have a question / thought you can either email me at [chad@chadvanags.com](mailto:chad@chadvanags.com) or just leave a comment on this doc and I'll do my best to answer it.

Without further ado, the raw, mostly unedited journal entry that describes the very fucking wild experience of a first time ayahuasca journey...

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**\*\*October 31, 2021 - 6 Hours After Completing Ayahuasca Ceremony\*\***

Wow. I don't have words to explain this. I'm just going to write out the experience as best I recall. Anyone who reads this will likely not understand whatsoever...unless they've done aya.

There is no doubt this was the wildest, most epic shit I've ever experienced.

I would also venture to say it was life-changing.

As far as I'm concerned, there is life before Aya and life after.

I.e., there is an obvious dividing line.

The biggest thing here is it wasn't about 'getting high' or getting a 'happy feeling' like most assume psychedelics are about. It was about exploring the mind, understanding what's happening, how we think, and the chance to unlock the doors to solve problems or deal with trauma.

I've realized this is just the beginning. There is a lifetime of work to do both in and outside of Ayahuasca ceremonies.

By the end of all of this, I've begun to wonder...how do I get everyone, especially those closest to me, to experience the power of this medicine.

For one, it has to feel more mainstream and less 'hippie-ish' if you will. I understood that going in, but someone like my mother might see this as weird. She's open, but my point is, people need to experience it within their comfort zones and not in a temple imho. I understand the sacredness around it, but it's about the medicine, and sometimes the rituals might prevent others from understanding the power of the medicine. Although, obviously, the rituals are a part of the process (conversation for another day).

Alright, here we go....

Night 1:

I was nervous as fuck. Scared of what I would find. Wondering what to expect. We had three options for medicine....light, moderate, deep.

I wasn't ready for deep, but also knew I wanted to get to work. Just jump off the diving board man, go!

We hop in. I slightly expect it to be like LSD with that warm fuzzy feeling (also, that shit tastes fucking gross btw)...so immediately I have expectations about what I should feel. I sit there, I lay there, I walk outside, I sit in the chair and look at the stars.

I'm still pretty coherent and it's just a sense that 'i feel different'. Not much more and I'm just like eh.

On top of that, George is over there immediately starting to experience some shit. Like breathing heavy, hitting the floor, etc.

and it was quick, too.

Like, annoyingly quick. Granted, he went deep on round one so I stayed patient thinking my time was coming.

I decided to focus on it instead of walking outside anymore. So i lay down under blankets and close my eyes trying to will it to happen. Not much going.

Eventually, I do start to see the prisms like I see with LSD and I get excited...but it's mixed with dark prisms, too.

I want the colored prisms dammit, why am I seeing dark stuff, too! ugh.

Then all of sudden it goes from color and dark prism mixes to a a fucking rapidly descending black stairway down and I'm super annoyed hahaha.

All the while, fucking George is over that just going ape shit. Like disturbing and forever (what I think ended up being hours).

The bell rings, halfway done. Still a bit annoyed, they ask if i want to refrain, maintain, or go deeper.

I don't sense I'm getting anywhere, let's go deeper.

I take it, lay down and focus.

George is still going apeshit.

I'm frustrated with him and I'm literally judging the fuck out of him.

Then something happens because. I think, 'you know, stop judging the guy, just let him be.'

...then a flash of light.

Then back to darkness.

what?

I say it again to myself. Stop judging him.

Again, flash of light, then darkness.

Every time I say 'stop judging him' the light comes.

The more I actually believe in the words 'stop judging him' the longer the light stays.

until, finally, i stop judging him.

And as I stop judging him, the dark black chain breaks off and falls away and i'm rapidly breathing very expansively, not hyperventilating, but like some just took a boulder off my chest and my lungs are bursting with air.

as i breathe deeper and deeper I start to see myself coming out of a cocoon like a butterfly and I'm beautiful butterfly haha. and I'm big and expansive and I grow and everything is releasing from me.

I feel George over there and now I'm empathizing with him. He's going through something and I can feel nothing but empathy and love for him.

....and FUCKING BOOM MOTHERFUCKER!!

the fucking door swings wide the fuck open and i'm on the craziest fucking ride of my life.

I can't even remember all of it it was so fast, but it was just everything.

I'm seeing the craziest array of visions ranging from people, to plants, to 8-bit nintendo graphics, to dark scary clouds, doors to new places...what looks like a library cataloging cabinet, the images of an angelic baby, i'm talking 1,000's of indescribable images.

The easiest way for me to explain it so far is like I was just given access to this magic castle with millions of rooms and I was sprinting from room to room, thrusting doors open and looking...like an all out sprint, just a fucking wild ride.

and mind you, it's not like a stationary castle on the ground, this is all floating and morphing shapes, very fluid shapes.

I thought I came there to 'solve specific things', but I realized that night was to explore, to find out all the crevices of my mind and being. I wasn't there to solve my problems, i was there to learn what access to the mind I did have.

...but I wasn't allowed to explore this place until I sacrificed something in exchange for the key.

And that was 'judgment'

I literally judged everyone around me about every goddam fucking thing.

My wife, my parents, my sister, my brother, my neighbors, everyone at the fucking circle...

Even Brent, when I walked in. It wasn't much at all and not malicious, but just 'mmm, this guy's got something going on'....and then Amy, 'god she's expressive, that's annoying'

fuck me.

so much judgment.

I actually see Grace Baptist Church and it's in black, but also white, meaning it had good people there, specifically bruce (and i see the scene where I called him from a party in Akron and never felt judged)...but it's mostly black and sign is hanging down like broken bc that's where it started.

As I realized this while I'm exploring the castle I'm seeing Stacie and my family and just recognizing how much I'd judged them and it's just insane. I say embarrassing or ashamed I guess.

...and then i go through pretty much each person and say something like, 'yeah, you don't agree/like this but they're doing the best they can' etc etc etc

I don't have the exact details, but i just recall seeing every minor thing that stacie did or my mom did or anyone did and just said, 'no judgment no judgment no judgment' repeatedly and finding happiness and relief as i saythat.

i mean, i just kept saying it to every vision i saw.

and each time i do that, things speed up and I become lighter and lighter and lighter and happier.

at one point I saw Mikey Minnaugh, the least judgmental person I know and i simply say, 'you can judge less, just like he does'.

I see my mom multiple times and she's elevated up...bc she deserves elevating for good work she has done as mother. and then i wish she was in there with me, holding my hand, guiding her to see all that's that's possible with aya.

I even see \*\*\*\*\* for split-second and promise to work hard on that one.

On top of that, I stop judging myself, too. I'm doing the best I can with what I have.

For the first time, I don't care about so and so or so and so haha. I'm released from worry about catching up to someone. I stop worrying about others (Kevin, Sean, Austin, others) and if i fit with them or not, in fact, i don't care if i do or not. my life and my plan are so different from theirs that it doesn't matter.

i don't judge them for what their doing and I don't judge myself for what im doing.

but, i'm totally in tune and supportive of who they are and what they want in their life without judgment and with total empathy and care for their paths .

Time slows down for the first time.

My path is my path and i'm at peace with it, regardless of where I end up...even if it means I fail trying to get UCS...even if i lose the house, etc etc etc. and i'm okay doing a job during revflow and even after revflow if it doesn't work out.

my path is my path and i'm good with it...actually, happy with it.

The more I'm seeing this and concluding that judgment needed to die, I'm just laughing and crying and saying 'this shit is so fucking wild, like so fucking wild!'

and i'm putting my hands on my face in pure joy and astonishment...and as I touch my face it feels like it's melting away like that picture...i think it's Rembrandt? i don't know but it's insanity.

things are now in hyper-speed and I'm doing a snow angel but with just my legs. like super fast. open closed open closed open closed because of how exciting and insane it is. im just so happy, the weight is gone.

something has unlocked and i've never felt more free and equipped to understand and handle something.

All of a sudden, i feel hands on my ankles and someone pressing my pressure points on the ankles and I'm slowing down. I look up and see Valerie, she's grounding me...

...and I feel incredibly safe.

I calm down and I ground.

I go back to exploring more of the castle. I open doors, peak in the closets of the mind. I've decided i'm not ready to deal with scary shit. I can't handle it.

Killing judgment was a huge effort and the chaos of the castle has worn me out. I just want to enjoy exploring and not open any dark doors that I need to go handle.

At this point I'm very well aware of what's happening around me in the room with the others while still exploring. I've decided that this will be a life-long journey of going into the castle of the mind and opening doors to confront things.

...and then i start to rest. I'm tired of sprinting around the castle.

...and then it happens. the embarrassment of the judgment overwhelms me and I'm sad and mad and upset that that's how i lived my life..

...and just like that i purge/vomit like a motherfucker.

It just keeps coming and coming. Like the judgment was being expelled from my body.

I'm puking and sweating so much and almost crying and saying 'fucking goddammit fucking goddammit' over and over...but not because i was puking, because of how much judgement i put on everyone AND myself.

While not exactly how it played out, it was like i did so much running and tasting every fucking thing I could in the castle and then realizing all the shame just was too much to handle and puked.

it was like a mother letting a child eat whatever they want and however much they want and the child happily doing so....then at the end of the day realizing how shitty that feels and puking it all up.

after about 3-5 bucket purges i lay on my stomach, head on the pillow....relief.

it's like the sin was gone.

and now i'm laying there, hearing George and saying to myself, 'im with you george, i'm with you' over and over...just empathizing with where he was at.

I just wanted to be next to him and comforting him. I stopped judging and i started loving him, realizing that 'everyone is going through something'

George unlocked it for me.

I laid there in peace, trying to grasp what just happened.

Valerie comes in to check on everyone and she gets to George and he starts apologizing, saying he shouldn't come to sharemony because of what he's done to everyone else's experience.

What he doesn't realize is that I'm sitting there smiling, knowing that he saved me and that he's the reason I'm becoming a better person.

Sasha helps me get up and walks me to lodge. I lay down.

i'm just astonished and blown away.

finally, i pass out.

we do sharemony the next day...and I don't remember most of it...other than i say, 'that was fucking wild' and then talk about how George saved me. He's touched, lot's of good things.



I leave the HOTH and go for a drive.

I've never felt at peace like that before. Just surreal. I literally drive for like 40 min and then go to J Tree and drive the park to a spot for lunch.

The entire drive, the entire time I look at anything and I'm like 'don't judge don't judge don't judge'

I go to Walmart and see the people there. They are different than me. Normally I would have judged.

Instead, I empathize and say to myself, 'everyone's going through something'

lastly, I get a text from a friend about another friend. They then ended the text convo with, 'I know that's kinda mean, but it's funny haha'

...and for the first time I don't respond.

I see the judgment permeate my life and it disappointed me to know that I would normally respond with something like, 'haha nailed it'

...and the relief knowing for the first time in my life, I didn't judge and I loved this friend even more for who he was.

We all have something going on and they don't deserve our judgment.

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Night 2:

(Jesus fucks this takes a long ass time...what's an ass-time? Haha. getting tired)

Rolling into night two I was just fucking exhausted so I told myself, 'just go easy tonight. Instead of racing through the castle and the million doors and experiences, just walk the halls and do some peaking in. familiarize yourself a bit. slow it down and start picking a few areas you'd like to tackle next time.'

on that thought, I started light dose, thinking it was just enough to get into.

nope.

laid there like i was trying to force myself to sleep. i couldn't figure out how to get into the castle.

It didn't help that I had to piss a lot and i kept going outside and sitting there and trying to get it all out and get into it.

i went back and and i felt the night was slowly slipping away. they would be calling for second dose soon and i wasn't even close to getting in the door of the castle.

I laid there, still no dice. Meanwhile, amy's having the time of her life and I'm just wishing I was in there, too.

they call second dose and i ask to go deeper. Sasha asks if i've had any experiences yet and i say no, but it's just starting....but barely.

i piss again, then lay down again and try.

I keep trying to control it all, but each time i'm 'if it's meant to happen, it's meant to happen'. i.e, trying to trick myself into.

finally, i say something like, 'well, you just can't control everything'

...and the light flickers.

i don't know why at this point, though.

Then something happens again where I say, 'can't control things'...

the light flickers, then goes off.

i don't know how many more times this happens before it dawns on me that 'control' is what the issue was.

I showed up to the door of the castle and when it was locked i was confused...I thought after the night before i had access to it...

...only to realize i was given a chance to see what was possible, but that i don't get to control how we navigate.

The medicine is in control.

Next thing you know, i realize that tonight it was about control.

the more i realize this the the more the light comes on and each time stays on longer.

as i start to realize it's control, i start to worry that the guides will shut it down before I get a chance to explore everything.

i'm dreading the 'this ends the facilitated portion of our evening'

...and each time I worry about that or think about that, it goes dark.

as soon as I say, 'you know what, you can't control that, just enjoy what you have' the lights come back on it.

for the next however long, I'm seeing all the places i'm trying to control in my life....stacie, family, work, house, business, projects, money, life, etc.

i even tried to control where the journey was heading or when i need to explore...id say 'okay, well at some point we need to spend time on this particular thing'....and each time the lights would shut off.

i was then controlling the purge. i was like 'im not going to purge' but then i start to purge...and at that point i kept saying, 'i get it i get it, i can't control the purge, but i'm asking that I escape it tonight'

the more i tried to be in control, the more often the purge urge would come, but then i'd relinquish control and it'd go away (and i never did purge)

it was like a roller rink music disco ball thing...each time i tried to control it would start to slow down. if i went to far it would shut off...

this is super meta, but it was like i controlled the lightswitch of control...i could turn control on and off haha

by the end, though, it was full steam ahead with very little shut downs if any at all...i was flying.

i was fist-pumping, saying to myself 'this is the fucking best thing ever!'...i mean i was fist-pumping laughing, just giddy that i had a another breakthrough.

i then went through the night before and tonight and was recollecting the realizations that i've had and the 'unlocks' and just absolutely enamored with the experience.

the fucking music was amazing, so beautiful, just a lovely place in music and laughter and song.

and at one point i was pointing in the air like Oprah when she was like 'you get a car and you get a car' but i was like 'and you don't control this and you don't control that' etc. i was laughing so hard.

and i also did that meme where the guy shows detergent pods fake eating them and then fake puking and laughing...finding it...(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khVrO88tlbl)

...and that was the unlock...control.

No judgment. Stop trying to control.

And that concluded the night. I laid there with my hands under my head just finishing watching the show all while the the deadly smoke of control was being wrangled back into the ground, the the genie being sucked back into the bottle.

and with that, i went to the lodge, watch the stars for a bit and went to bed

the next morning, I woke up, went out to brush my teeth, saw amy on the trampoline and...smiled.

i smiled because i appreciated her to expressive life and the joy she has.

before I wouldn't have done that.

then we get into shareamony and it's her turn and she's her expressive self. the old chad, which is still a bit present, would have said 'amy, back off the expressions, that's not necessary', but new chad beat that back and smiled, appreciating Amy for who she was and how she lives life.

i was no better than her, we're all the same humans, and we're all going through something.

they don't deserve our judgment but they do deserve our love and empathy.

and that ended the sessions...

...and i went back to Walmart to get food. i was incredibly conscious about what i was choosing, including the non-dieta stuff.

and then watch as a dad got pissed at burger king that the sauces were out. normally, i'd be angry, instead I was just sad and empathized with him...bc he's going through something.

...and now, the real work begins.