

MENTAL HEALTH INQUIRY - PERSONAL SUBMISSION, 29 MAY 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

I am pleased to hear that the Australian Government is undertaking an inquiry into the impact of mental health in Australia.

Over the past 12 months, I have sought to address underlying issues that have affected my wellbeing, interpersonal relationships, and importantly for the inquiry, my productivity at work.

I can certainly attest to the effect one's wellbeing can have on productivity at work, which includes being less focused, more time seeking 'escape' or doing minor tasks to pass time, taking leave, and finally, stopping work altogether.

The symptoms I've experienced include mild to moderate anxiety, 'nervous energy' and a mild depression, and I've sought help through my GP, conventional and cognitive behavioural therapy, etc. For background, I graduated from The University of Queensland in 2009 with a degree in engineering and science, and I've since worked professionally in Australia and overseas.

While I have certainly found therapy, exercise, healthy eating etc. are aids to improved wellbeing, I am surprised to see that 'alternative' aids to improved well being, while showing so much promise, are still overlooked and disregarded on the grounds that they are, at least in part for circumstantial and historical reasons, illegal.

Traditional psychedelic drugs (such as psilocybin and LSD), in a therapeutic setting (i.e. under controlled and supervised conditions), offer a means, or at least an aid, by which an individual may resolve emotional and personal issues that are often at the root of our mental 'ill health'.

I know a number of people who have experienced therapeutic benefits from the controlled and careful use of psychedelics, and I too have some limited, but very positive, personal experience, which has helped me to feel generally better in the week, refocus at work, carry less 'emotional baggage' to the office on a Monday, and so in turn, be more productive.

Given the nature of these substances, their low toxicity, that they are non-addictive, and their potential for therapeutic benefit, it is surprising that they remain so under-utilised and restricted.

I only hope that, given my experience and the experience of others, and the growing awareness within the scientific community of the potential applications of psychedelics, that the Productivity Commission gives some consideration to their use and potential benefits, as an aid to improved mental health and productivity.

Name Withheld

Brisbane, Australia