

Regarding the Misuse of Ibogaine in Active Combat Scenarios; A Statement by Concerned Members of the Ibogaine Community

Recently there has been discussion about providing ibogaine to military personnel in active combat scenarios in Ukraine as a sort of battlefield stimulant to replace amphetamines. There are many members of the international ibogaine community, including traditional practitioners, clinical and medical professionals, psychologists and other concerned parties who think this is a reckless idea. We strongly urge military officials to reconsider their stance on this particular issue.

While we fully understand and respect the honorable intentions to support Ukrainians in the current conflict, we firmly believe that using ibogaine is not the most effective way to do this and in fact is counterproductive and even harmful to the interests of Ukraine and potentially very dangerous to the mental well-being of the soldiers themselves.

We believe that this is a high-risk, low-reward proposition that disregards the mental health of soldiers as well as disrespects the wishes of traditional groups, such as the Bwiti, whom hold the medicine as sacred. While we acknowledge the power of the medicine for multifaceted purposes as well as the respectable intention to support the Ukrainians, the general consensus among qualified professionals is that this is a very destructive line of thinking with the potential to severely harm not only individuals, but also the ibogaine healing movement itself. With respect, please stop now.

Mental Health Risks:

The suggestion that ibogaine would be a viable replacement for amphetamines as a stimulant on the battlefield is faulty for many reasons. Using what is widely accepted to be “*the most powerful psychedelic in the world*” in battle scenarios is absolutely irresponsible. One of the biggest risks is to mental health from being exposed to traumatic experiences while under the influence of the psychedelic which catalyzes a period of enhanced neuroplasticity in certain regions of the brain. It is widely recognized by experienced ibogaine professionals that ibogaine “opens” people's consciousness in such a way that witnessing, carrying out, or being subjected to violent acts during this time has the potential to “cut much deeper” into a person's psyche, potentially leading to treatment-resistant complex PTSD and other negative psychological consequences. Witnessing people being killed, killing other people, or sustaining severe injuries while under the influence of this psychedelic could be much more psychologically damaging than otherwise. This is incredibly irresponsible!

Other Ethical Considerations:

Iboga and its derivative ibogaine are important tools to treat drug addiction and PTSD. It does this by “resetting” certain neurotransmitter systems. In the treatment of PTSD, it is specifically the “opening up” effect mentioned earlier that allows complex traumas to be processed and released, although this is usually done in a dark room with music playing for 24-48 hours and ideally a qualified therapist or traditionally trained facilitator, as well as medical professionals, present. Ibogaine is also useful in the treatment of Parkinson's disease. This is a medicine of healing, not war. Whatever sales pitch was used that managed to convince military officials to even consider this is absolutely based on faulty, made-up reasoning and a desire for profit.

Besides the significant risks mentioned already, if militaries were to begin to use ibogaine in combat scenarios, how much of the limited supply of this West African plant would be diverted from the purposes of healing for use in war before the powers that be realized how ineffective and dangerous it is? What indication is there that this misuse of ibogaine would be limited to the Ukraine-Russia

conflict? The only silver lining is that it should quickly become obvious to any military leaders who try this how reckless it would be to feed powerful psychedelics to their men during combat but by then the damage will have been done to the soldiers themselves, to the agenda of whatever particular military actually buys into this money-making scheme, to the traditional communities of West Africa, and to the community of healers who are dedicated to working with a medicine of peace considered by many to be sacred.

Final Thoughts:

We completely respect the intention of doing everything in one's power to support Ukraine in this terrible conflict. But please, *please*, listen to us. This particular venture is misguided and counterproductive. Attempting to turn this medicine into a weapon goes against everything ibogaine stands for and it will surely backfire. No matter how it is justified at this moment in time, the destructive consequences will go beyond just this conflict, beyond just Ukraine and Russia, and it's just not worth it. Leave ibogaine out of war. If anything, psychedelics like ibogaine should be considered in envisioning alternative ways to end war and to treat post-war PTSD.

It's not too late to reconsider. The long-recognized purpose of this medicine is spiritual initiation, to treat addiction, to help people heal from the traumas of violence and war, and to treat other mental, spiritual, and physical issues. Please, for the sake of the mental health of the soldiers themselves, do what's right and find the humility to reconsider.

With deepest hope that this message will be received in the spirit it is intended,

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