

The 2012 Problem



Article by Ralph Miller

In the September 2006 issue of Rolling Stone Magazine there is a very interesting article on Daniel Pinchbeck, author of *Breaking Open the Head: A Psychedelic Journey into the Heart of Contemporary Shamanism*, and his use of the Ayahuasca medicine. I wanted to let you know of this interesting article and reference a few quotations from it in this article.

Humanity exists in a relationship with the plant kingdom. Some plants give us nourishment for our bodies. Some plants have medicinal properties and can help to heal illnesses and injuries to our bodies. And still other plants can offer nourishment to our souls. Indigenous cultures that use these plants consider them to be 'teacher plants' because they transmit a wisdom that is outside of everyday human consciousness.

Ayahuasca is a teacher plant that has been in use by Amazonian cultures for thousands of years. It has only been in the last few decades that an awareness of it has emerged for people from modern western cultures. Many, like Pinchbeck, feel it is a bridge for humanity from a collective forgetfulness back to a human harmony with nature. If we can actually remember who we are and our connection to nature, it will create a quantum evolution in our consciousness.

"The thought came to me that human consciousness is like a flower that blossoms from the earth," writes Pinchbeck. "The stem and the roots are invisible cords, etheric filaments that lead back to a greater, extradimensional being. Our separation from that larger being was only a temporary illusion. The universe was, we would know if we could perceive its workings, purposeful and good."

Reference from article by Vanessa Grigoriadis, Rolling Stone Magazine entitled, Daniel Pinchbeck and the New Psychedelic Elite (quoting Pinchbeck)

What have we forgotten and why are we disconnected? Our collective reality ... our worldview ... has evolved over hundreds of generations from an intimate connection to nature, into a modern disconnect from anything outside of us. We have collectively exerted unbelievable control over our reality. We consider ourselves to be the masters of the planet. We are plugged into a self-created matrix of control that has us sprinting through our agenda filled lives, with little thought to the destructive footprints we leave behind.

Collectively we feel the crisis. We know that humanity is in the midst of irreconcilable religious and political struggles. We know that we are exhausting the natural resources of the planet. Even the announcement of another regional skirmish or war doesn't even cause us to raise an eyebrow anymore.

We look for answers. We hope for some kind of rescue. We know that great change is inevitable ... but we don't know how it's going to happen. I think on some level many of us believe that something really big is coming ... but it doesn't feel like another re-shuffling of the deck. It will be different. It's going to be a quantum change in who we are ... in how we think.

Many spiritual seekers are keenly interested in the Mayan calendar. Allegedly, the Mayan calendar has continued for millennia and on December 21, 2012 the calendar ends. Because there are no days beyond December 21st in the Mayan calendar, many think that on that day time will end. Others think that it is a prediction of some kind of catastrophic event on the earth itself.

In the article in Rolling Stone Magazine, Pinchbeck is ardently cautioning humanity of the impending deadline imposed by the Mayan calendar.

I haven't finished my 'to do' list for December 21, 2012 yet ... but if you think about it, the day is soon coming when we will all be doing exactly that. On December 31, 1999 we were all worried because Microsoft didn't program computers for more than 1999 years and that planet earth was like a car speeding down the road with its wheels about to fall off. People everywhere were storing food and water and making plans for the impending catastrophe.

2012 will be reminiscent of 1999 because we will all again be faced with deciding on plan A, B or C. Plan A: Going ahead with your scheduled podiatrist appointment at 2pm. Plan B: Cancelling the entire day's schedule, and finding the nearest Buddhist temple so that you can hopefully 'Om' yourself into the next planetary dimension. And my personal favorite, Plan C: Visit the establishment of a bar owner who hasn't followed plan B.

The concept of 'the end of the Mayan calendar - 2012' has in itself an imbedded idea that is connected to our consciousness around any future event. It's the same as remembering your husband's birthday. It's six years down the road ... you can put it on the calendar. What if the whole 2012 thing ... the whole 'end of time' thing ... is actually about that exactly. Maybe it's about the end of time! What I mean is that our time-consciousness is going to shift dramatically. We have a fairly rigid concept of what the past is; of what the future is. We consider present events to have a causal effect on future events. The past is gone ... and the future is coming. That's the way it feels ... so that's the way we've always thought about it. That's our collective time-consciousness.

Perhaps 2012 is not about what is 'going to happen' at the end of time ... but it's ABOUT the end of time.

Our time-consciousness is part of an illusionary structure that has shaped our consensual reality ... the reality we all consent to.

The concept of time has certain imbedded structures that permeate our lives from birth to death. The calendar breaks the year up into 12 months. Birthdays, holidays, Mondays, Fridays, Tuesday's family agenda, the meeting you have at 2pm on Wednesday the 5th, and for the love of god don't forget your anniversary on the 10th! It's important to know what day it is ... the calendar keeps us on schedule. You wouldn't want to show up for work at 8am on a Sunday morning if the company you work for is closed on Sundays.

Showing up for work on time requires more than a calendar. If your boss asks you what time you will be in to work, it doesn't quite cut it if you answer him, "I'll be there Tuesday." So in order to further control and manage our lives, we have clocks that tell us what the time of day is. Depending on how you look at it, the clock measures 24 hours or 1,440 minutes or 86,400 seconds for every day of our lives.

The clock gives us lots of useful information. For example, when you finish a simple call on your cell phone, a mountain of information on the call you just made is stored on your cell phone. If you're particularly detail oriented, you can find out that the call started at 2:14pm and lasted for

73 seconds, bringing your total minute usage to 728 minutes 47 seconds for the month. And by the way, you owe us \$213.11 ... your payment is due on the 5th. "If you need more information please press #49."

We live according to the structures of time, but we really have little understanding of what it actually is. Is it just there? Can you change it? If I get rid of my wristwatch, will my life change? Most of us would say, "Why ask any questions about it? You can't change it. It just IS."

The evolution of our current concept of time has been a very recent development in the course of human history. Our cultures are based on a calendar that is actually only several hundred years old. The Gregorian calendar decreed by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 was adopted in most European countries in 1700's and in some countries in as late as the 1900's. It was a modification of the Julian calendar which was used in Rome since before the time of Christ, with most of the months named after Roman emperors or gods.

Before Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar in 45 B.C., the Roman calendar was a disaster where priests were exploiting it for political reasons by inserting days to keep favored politicians in office. The year was known as the "Year of Confusion," as Julius had added 80 days totaling 445 days for the year. In honor of his hard work, he had the month of July named after him. A few decades later, Emperor Augustus got August as his namesake, for correcting a slight problem where for a fourteen year period they were having a leap-year every three years instead of every four.

By the way, Pope Gregory knocked out 10 days in the transition to the Gregorian calendar, so technically October 5-14, 1582 never existed.

The arrival of the Gregorian calendar in the sixteenth century was a time of great change in human consciousness.

The sixteenth century closed out a 1,000 year period of time referred to as the Dark Ages. The Dark Ages are almost impossible for us in the 21st century to even conceive of. William Manchester, in his book titled *A World Lit Only By Fire*, propels the reader into the strange world of the medieval mind.

It is so difficult to imagine a time when few people had proper names or traveled any distance from the place where they were born. It was an age when the vast majority of people had no exposure to the written word. It was a world where religious authority dominated temporal authority and all of humankind. It was a 1,000 year period where there were almost no new inventions or innovations. Almost completely absent of any individual ego, for example, generations of stone masons would work on the completion of a cathedral that was commissioned by a pope that died hundreds of years before its completion.

"Each of the great soaring medieval cathedrals, our most treasured legacy from that age, required three or four centuries to complete. Canterbury was twenty-three generations in the making; Chartres, a former Druidic center, eighteen generations. Noblemen had surnames, but fewer than one percent [of people] were wellborn. Because most peasants lived and died without leaving their birthplace, there was seldom need for any [name beyond a first name]."

Reference from, A World Lit Only By Fire by William Manchester

As we know it, there was almost no concept of time.

"In the medieval mind there was also no awareness of time, which is even more difficult to grasp. Inhabitants of the twentieth century are instinctively aware of past, present, and future."

"Medieval men were rarely aware of what century they were living in. Life then revolved around the passing of the seasons and such cyclical events as religious holidays, harvest time, and local fetes. In all Christendom there was no such thing as a watch, a clock, or, apart from a copy of the Easter tables in the nearest church or monastery, anything resembling a calendar. Generations succeeded one another in a meaningless, timeless blur."

Reference from, A World Lit Only By Fire by William Manchester

For eons before Gregory, Julius and Augustus imposed their control on our concepts of time, humans were intimately connected to the natural rhythms and cycles of the planet and the natural world. Even today, shamanic and indigenous cultures are still connected to the life cycles of earth. They derive their 'calendar' from the earth, the moon and nature. Their concept of time is borne out of their spiritual, psychic connections to nature. They naturally determine ideal times to plant crops, celebrate solstice and other seasonal events and record their history around a lunar and 'earth cycle' calendar. Their memories and thinking patterns are linked to this natural cycle of the earth.

There is a forgotten inner landscape wherein we can perceive our connection to everything. We are irrevocably connected to the natural world. Ayahuasca represents a completely unique opportunity for humans. It is an eons-old sacred teacher that can reconnect us to our humanity and all of nature.

"If the leading edge of psychedelic exploration in the Nineties was characterized by ravers taking synthetic research chemicals, this decade has been about the spread of the Ayahuasca religion. At the same time, because it's an ancient jungle brew, Ayahuasca ties us to so much we have lost -- it gives one a sense of being part of something that is rooted in nature, which is such a source of longing and anxiety right now."

Reference from article by Vanessa Grigoriadis, Rolling Stone Magazine entitled, Daniel Pinchbeck and the New Psychedelic Elite (quoting Erik Davis, author of The Visionary State: A Journey Through California's Spiritual Landscape)

I am not suggesting that knowing the time of day or what day it is, is not relevant to who we are as human beings living in the 21st century, but I am suggesting that we should objectify it ... we should look at it for what it is, so that its power over us becomes much less. By objectifying it ... you create a separation between your consciousness and the concept you are observing. You realize the concept is not you ... it is separate from you. There is space between you and the idea. It is there and it is OK that it is there, but you don't feel its power because you see what it is. There is distance between you and it.

When is December 21, 2012 coming? We would have to do some work to really pin it down, based on our sloppy use of the 'calendar' over the centuries. Perhaps it is a continuum that is happening now. Perhaps it has happened and will happen at the same time. The sixteenth century was a renaissance in human time-consciousness that shifted the planet out of a 1,000 years of darkness.

There is another renaissance of consciousness that is happening now. It is the end of time as we know it.

I never liked the idea of mountains coming down on my head or the earth's crust racing by my front door.

The real evolution of human consciousness ... the real 'end of time' ... is not about waiting for a date six years from now. It is a re-connection to yourself and this blessed living planet that we inhabit. That reconnection will bring an end to time as we have known, and will usher in an extraordinary evolution of consciousness. It will forever change who we are as human beings.

"We will then be released from the occult power of the Gregorian calendar, which is keeping us out of synchronicity with our psychic powers. We will receive the powers of telepathy and get to speak to our alien neighbors, not necessarily by mounting spaceships but through psychic evolution."

Reference from article by Vanessa Grigoriadis, Rolling Stone Magazine entitled, Daniel Pinchbeck and the New Psychedelic Elite

When you first notice the arrival of the red-breast robins in the springtime, you are reminded that they arrive in the spring of every year. Watching the bird, you see her pulling a juicy worm out of your front lawn. You marvel at nature ... you loose yourself in an eternity contained in a mere moment. You are free.

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Note: Initially I only wanted to pass along a quick personal note and a link to this interesting article. The more I thought about it ... well ... it turned into a little more than that. Sorry about that. I hope you enjoyed some of my thoughts. If you would like to read the Rolling Stone article please click on the link below.

[Daniel Pinchbeck and the New Psychedelic Elite](#)



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