

# Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out

Timothy Leary PhD

1966

Turn on! Consciousness is energy received and decoded by structure. Waves and particles.

There are as many levels of consciousness as there are levels of energy and structures for decoding.

There are as many levels of consciousness available to the human being as there are anatomical structures for decoding energy.

Consciousness is a chemical process. Learning, memory, sensation, perception—every aspect of learning are all chemical.

The language of psychology is chemical. The instruments of psychology are psycho-chemicals.

Man could not understand the external world until he deciphered the messages of different levels of biochemistry. Through understanding and control of chemicals and man-made symbols (artifacts), man deciphered and controlled the energy of seed, cell, molecule, atom.

Man cannot understand and control the internal world (consciousness) until he deciphers the different levels of body chemistry.

Education in the future will be based on the judicious use of chemicals. What books you read is an irrelevant question. What molecules do you use to turn on?

Chemicals are the language of your nervous system and sense organs.

Chemicals are the language of your cells. Chemicals are the language of your molecules.

There are five broad levels of consciousness available to man. To use your head, to “turn-on” wisely you must know how to contact and recognize these levels.

1. Sleep-stupor
2. Symbol
3. Sense
4. Cell
5. Molecule

Chemicals are the keys that unlock these five levels.

1. Sleep-stupor is caused naturally by fatigue or can be induced by narcotic drugs: opiates, barbiturates, tranquilizers, alcohol. Narcotic drugs (including alcohol) are physically toxic, addictive and eventually lethal.
2. Symbolic awareness is produced by chemicals like serotonin which “fix” consciousness. Normal awareness depends on chemicals. You are all “hooked” on symbols.

3. Sensual awareness is consciousness located in the sense organs. This state can be produced by a variety of methods: breathing exercises, visual exercises (mandalas), sound, yoga, meditation. The drugs which “turn-on” the senses are the mild psychedelics: marijuana, small doses of mescaline (100 mg) and LSD (25 gamma).
4. Cellular awareness is produced by moderate doses of psychedelic chemicals-mescaline (300–500 mg) or LSD (50–150 gamma).
5. Molecular consciousness is produced by strong doses of LSD (300–1000 gamma).

Psycho-active chemicals are instruments for changing consciousness:

1. Narcotics are like blindfolds-used to escape reality.
2. Symbols are normal vision.
3. Marijuana is like the corrective lens, sharpening and intensifying reality.
4. Mescaline (300–500 mg) is like the microscope—turning you on to cellular messages.
5. LSD (300–1000 gamma) is like the electron microscope-reducing all structure to a meaningful dance of shimmering particles and waves.

Do not turn on until you know what you are doing

Tune In! You exist in an ocean of energy undulating and pulsating in tidal waves around you. Your state of consciousness determines which levels of external energy you are aware of. If you are in a stupor, you are turned off—look at the lush, the junkie. If you are trapped at the symbolic level you tune in to the symbols around you. A dead robot world.

If you are turned on to senses, you tune in to the play of energies—light, sound, air pressure—that continually bathe your sense endings. The world is alive and pulsating.

If you are turned on to cellular energy you can tune in to the ancient play of seed energy—unlimited in unfolding manifestations.

If you are turned on to molecules you tune in to the basic energy dances. Vibrations.

Training and practice will teach you how to arrange your environment so that you are exquisitely tuned in—hooked up to the unity of energy.

Drop Out! You cannot turn-on and tune-in if you remain addicted to symbols. You must detach yourself from the pressure of insane symbols. Kick the symbol habit!

You must have a room in your house which is secluded from symbols. You must plan your life so that you gradually detach from symbols and move steadily within. Quit your job-school. Leave the city. Cut off your relationships with members of the symbol-addicted species.

Everything, every second, every person, every movement is pressing you either

- to stupor, or
- to symbol, or
- to sensual awareness, or
- to cellular enfoldment, or
- to molecular awareness.

Do not routinely and blindly expose yourself to stupor-producing, symbol-addicting environments. Drop out.

# fifth Estate

Timothy Leary PhD  
Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out  
1966

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/11-july-30-1966/turn-on-tune-in-drop-out>  
Fifth Estate #11, July 30, 1966

**[fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net)**