

Higher Connections: Humor and Inspiration from a Certified Public Pothead

Eric Right

Alexandra Right

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A humorous exercise in "pothead" spirituality, Eric and Alexandra Right's Higher Connections is about the ways that marijuana might improve a person's life.

Eric and Alexandra Right's spiritual memoir *Higher Connections* deals with the magic that unfolds in one's brain with the help of marijuana.

The book opens with an introduction to the Rights and their experiences with marijuana: Eric Right is the primary speaker, while Alexandra Right contributes sidebars throughout the book. The latter are often lighthearted notes ("He's not exaggerating here!"). The book reflects improvements to the couple's relationship since Right started using marijuana: when he's high, the book says, he feels more connected to his wife and others, and in ways he never felt before. Right concludes that marijuana changed his life for the better, making him more empathetic, peaceful, and communicative.

From the couple's story, the book builds toward an encouragement to others, urging them to use marijuana to forge deeper connections in their own lives. A suggested methodology is outlined: partake of the drug; keep your mind and heart open; document your resultant thoughts and feelings for later, sober evaluation. In support of this, the book includes chapters on the history and science of cannabis. However, these are too brief and bogged down by easy jokes, such as that outlandish Bible stories might reflect their authors' use of marijuana. A nod is given to the legalization and decriminalization of cannabis, but no further information is provided on this controversial issue. And the book's later chapters are a chaotic labyrinth, reflecting thoughts on spirituality, paranormal activity, and premonitions, followed by a long, unconvincing explanation of reproduction and the potential creation of the soul.

Further, the book's claims about marijuana use creating special connections prove to be flimsy. One chapter is made up of vignettes about moments when Right was high and felt deep connections to others, such as when he and his wife experienced the same feelings of annoyance at their son for being a smart aleck or of the surprise of their saying the same thing at the same time. Each incident is rated based on how cool or meaningful it was, but all represent basic human connections. An interesting theory is shared: that, for Right, marijuana opens his third eye to more emotions and connections, while his wife's third eye closes with marijuana use, allowing her anxious mind to slow down and get quiet. But this inward focus means that the book is most convincing when it concentrates on Right's examination of his own experiences, personality traits, and family connections rather than on making recommendations to others.

The book's dedication to random thoughts and observations from Right's periods of being high are amusing: it muses on why a person should plan their own funeral and includes a ranking of which decade of one's life is best to die in. The question of whether God is real is also touched upon. However, snide comments about menstruation recur, alienating the audience, as Right discusses how his wife's periods impact his life and marijuana use: "Some weeks I feel the need to consume [marijuana] more often than others—generally around the same time every month and I'll let

you guess what is going on that drives that need.”

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