



## CHAPTER 5

January 30, 2020

Dear Washington DC Board of Elections,

My name is Daniel Carcillo, a husband and proud father of 3, a traumatic brain injury, mental health and brain health advocate, a former professional NHL hockey player, a 2 time Stanley Cup champion and founder of Chapter 5 Foundation, a charitable organization that helps athletes transition into life after the game.

As a Decriminalize Nature Nation Advisory Council Member, I am respectfully requesting your support of the initiative to Decriminalize entheogenic plants and fungi.

I am 34 years young and I have 2 horizontal tears in both of my ankles, no PCL in my right knee, an ACL reconstructive surgery on my left knee, arthritis in both knees, surgery on the left labrum of my hip, surgery to connect my abdomen back to my pelvis, arthritis in both hips, no labrum in my left shoulder, numerous tears in my neck along with arthritis in 3 discs, I've lost 3 teeth, have suffered 2 broken noses and sustained 7 documented concussions.

I am well equipped and prepared to live with all of the arthritis, broken bones, muscle tears, surgeries, dentist visits and uncomfortable pain that comes along with a life of playing professional sports. That cannot kill me. What almost killed me were the Post Concussive Symptoms derived from 7 documented concussions and thousands of sub concussive blows to the body and head, as well as the mental health complications derived from the sexual, physical, emotional and verbal abuse I was forced to deal with as a minor in junior hockey.

8 months ago I made a plan to end my own life because I thought I had exhausted all treatment options for my emotional trauma and Post Concussive Syndrome, had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in search for the right care, and began to feel as if I was a burden to those around me who were watching me suffer from daily symptoms like head pressure, impulse control issues, light sensitivity, memory loss, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

The #1 cause of death following a traumatic brain injury is suicide. My life was saved by a former teammate who introduced me to a traditional mushroom ceremony, to which the FDA has recently granted two organizations special "breakthrough designation". Clinical trials at universities like John Hopkins, NYU and The Imperial College Of London have been shown to treat anxiety, depression and addiction with alarmingly successful results.

During a traditional mushroom ceremony, I was able to get to the root cause of my emotional and physical trauma and process difficult emotions and events in hours, rather than years. The mushrooms gave me a chance to forgive myself, break destructive thought patterns, and my guide taught me how to integrate the lessons from ceremony into my everyday life. It has allowed me to make a deeper connection in my



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relationships with my wife, parents and brothers, to be a more patient, understanding, and loving father with my children, come to terms with my fear of the unknown and with death, helped me to change my self narrative from negatively motivating myself to positive reinforcement, and has given me the opportunity to realize that I am worthy of love, love myself, in turn loving everyone around me and every moment in a deeper fashion.

Since experiencing the healing power of mushrooms, I have delved into research in an effort to educate myself on the why and how these plant medicines and fungi heal the brain, body and spirit. Being a concussion/TBI and brain health advocate, as well as having a neurodegenerative disease like Alzheimer's run in my family, the anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and neurogenesis properties of these medicines is extremely exciting, especially when doctors speak about their potential to heal the brain. I plan on using my platform to get this type of information to other high level trauma communities like veterans, first responders (police officers, firefighters and paramedics), the inmate population, the traumatic brain injury community and to people suffering from mental illness and mental health complications.

Since being introduced to the plant medicine network, the universe has brought into my life other amazing people and organizations. I have since met Jesse Gould of the Heroic Hearts Project, a 501c3 that connects military veterans struggling with mental trauma to ayahuasca therapy retreats. I traveled to Peru with veterans, an executive and a former teammate to experience the healing power of Ayahuasca in early January and it further enhanced my ability to deal with my trauma, process it, and understand that I do not need to explain everything or be fearful of the unexplainable.

High level trauma communities coming together to heal as one was the most profound experience of my life. I truly believe that bringing together different communities to show collective healing can help to break down the stigmas surrounding the medicines and mental health in general.

Before sitting in a traditional mushroom ceremony, I was searching for a purpose in life. It has been a blessing to meet Carlos Plazola and Larry Norris of Decriminalize Nature. They have educated me and been by my side to provide support after bringing forth the same resolution to the city of Chicago, in an effort to reform the recidivism rate and the opiate crisis.

I have personally been through two opiate addictions (one during my career and one in transition) where I was overprescribed and undereducated. I believe if we can deal with trauma in a healthy and timely manner, we can minimize addiction issues, people can seek the help that they so desperately need without ruining their and their families' lives and without creating a massive social problem in the process.

In closing, I would just like to reiterate how blessed and thankful I am that I have found the healing powers of these plant medicines and fungi. I look forward to testifying in person, in Washington DC on Wednesday, February 5th 2020.

Now that I am no longer fearful of the unknown, I can live fully in the present moment and try my best to get this information to as many people as possible.



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In gratitude,

Daniel Carcillo

Founder, Chapter 5 Foundation