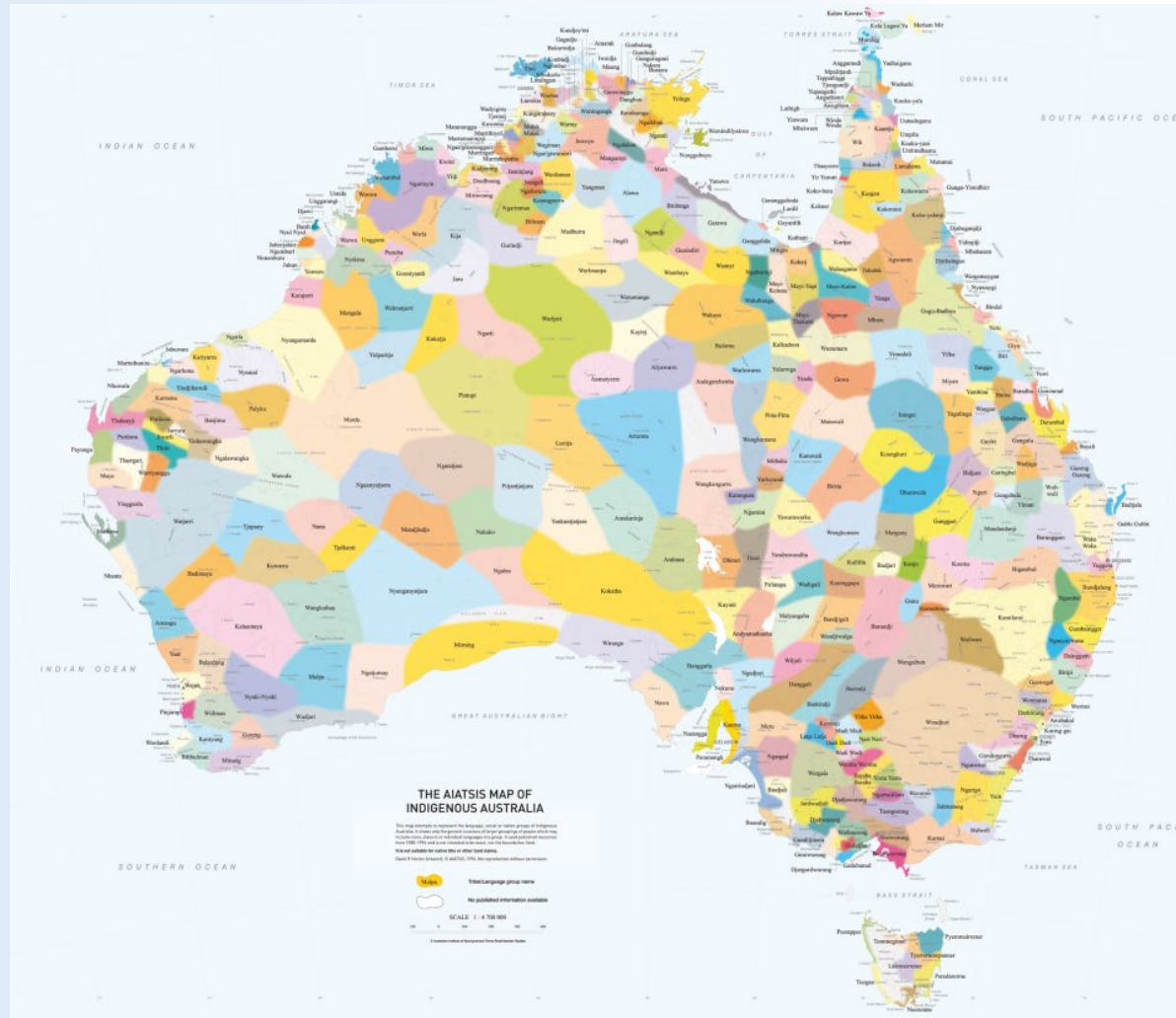


# Welcome to today's Insight / APSAD webinar.

We'll be starting a little after 10am (QLD time).

- Use the chat icon for all questions and comments – *select All panelists and attendees.*
- If you are experiencing other problems or require further technical assistance call Zoom on **1800 768 027.**
- A pdf version of today's presentation will be available soon in the chat window.
- A recording of this webinar will be available on our YouTube channel in the coming weeks.





**We acknowledge the  
Traditional Owners of the land  
on which this event takes place  
and pay respect to Elders past  
and present.**

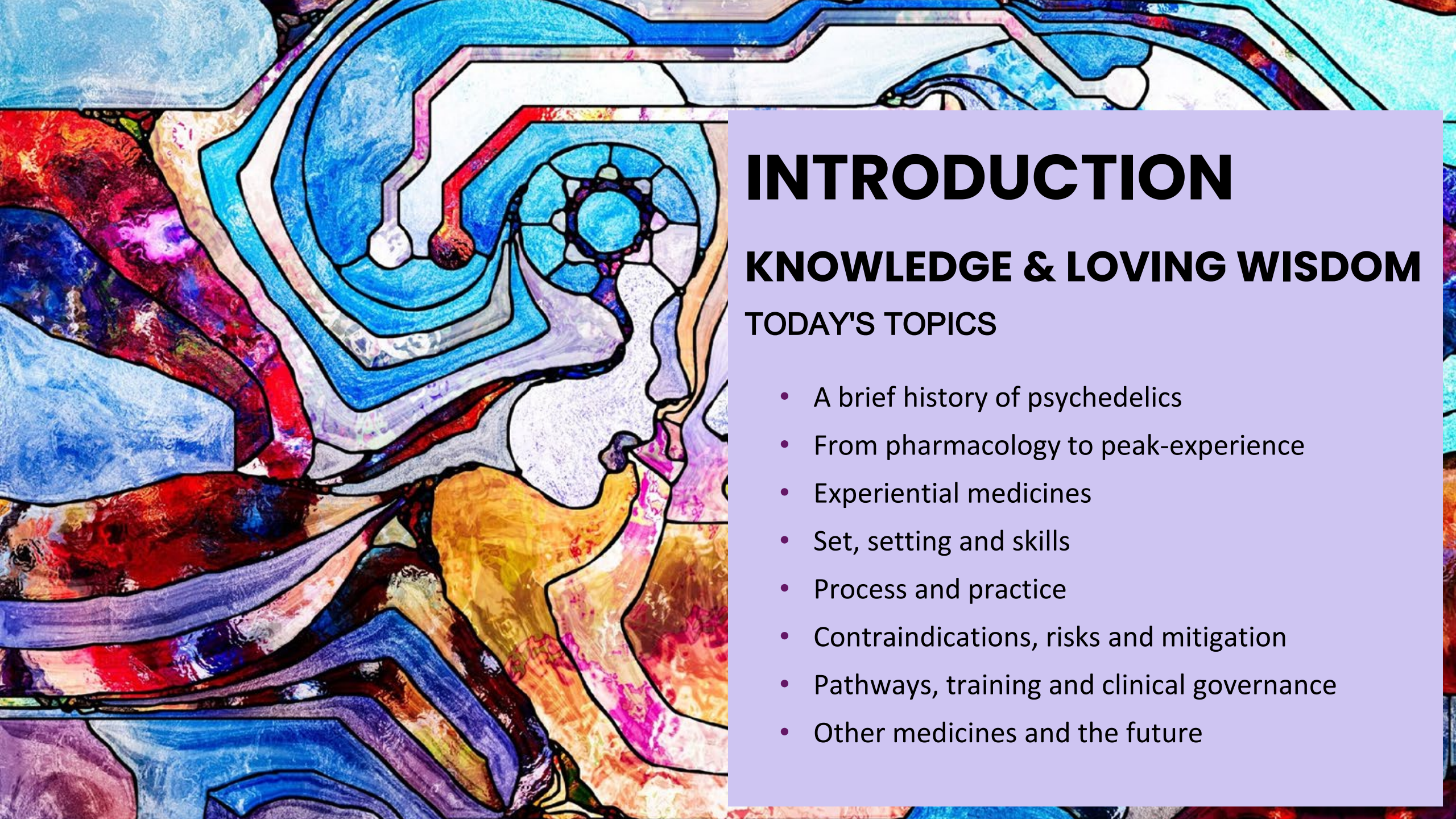
This map attempts to represent the language, social or nation groups of Aboriginal Australia. It shows only the general locations of larger groupings of people which may include clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. It used published resources from 1988-1994 and is not intended to be exact, nor the boundaries fixed. It is not suitable for native title or other land claims. David R Horton (creator), © AIATSIS, 1996. No reproduction without permission. To purchase a print version visit: [www.aiatsis.ashop.com.au/](http://www.aiatsis.ashop.com.au/)



# The Role of the Psychedelic Assisted Therapist

*By Melissa Warner*

*Secretary, Psychedelic Research in Science and Medicine (PRISM)*



# INTRODUCTION

## KNOWLEDGE & LOVING WISDOM

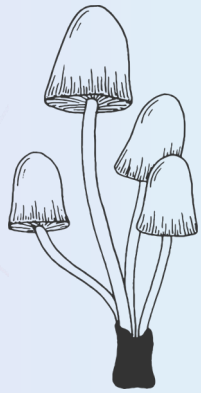
### TODAY'S TOPICS

- A brief history of psychedelics
- From pharmacology to peak-experience
- Experiential medicines
- Set, setting and skills
- Process and practice
- Contraindications, risks and mitigation
- Pathways, training and clinical governance
- Other medicines and the future

# Serotonergic Psychedelics

## BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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'The word psychedelic is comprised of two Greek words "psyche" meaning mind, and "delos" meaning manifesting or revealing.

"our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation"  
(James, p. 388).

# Varieties of Experience

## PSYCHEDELICS

- Produce changes in perception, mood and cognitive processes (trigger 'non-ordinary states').
- Chemical classification:  
**Tryptamines** and **Phenethylamines**
  - Referred to as **serotonergic psychedelics** as they are primarily mediated through the serotonergic 5-HT, primarily **5-HT2A** receptors
- Predominantly nontoxic (thus it is difficult to overdose on these compounds)

e.g. Ayahuasca (DMT), LSD, Psilocybin, 5-MeO-DMT

## ENTACTOGENS

- Characterised by a release of **dopamine** and **serotonin**
  - Produce *psychedelic-like effects*, but virtually no hallucinations
- Associated with positive mood and euphoric rush, and produce an increase in **empathy** and **benevolence**, thus also colloquially referred to as "*empathogens*"
- Structurally related to hallucinogenic phenylethylamines and stimulant amphetamines

e.g. MDMA, MDA,

**PSYCHEDELIC ENTACTOGENS:** 2C-X, Mescaline, TMA

## DISSOCIATIVES

- N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptor antagonists
- **Pleasure** and excitement at *lower* doses (e.g. euphoria) and **anesthesia** at higher doses (e.g. "k-hole")
- Sensory affect and hallucinations
  - 'a **disconnection** of the individual from their surroundings')
  - such a state of sensory deprivation can facilitate self exploration, hallucinations, and dreamlike states of mind which may resemble a psychedelic state

e.g. Ketamine, Nitrous oxide, Methoxetamine (MXE), Phencyclidine (PCP), Dextromethorphan (DXM)

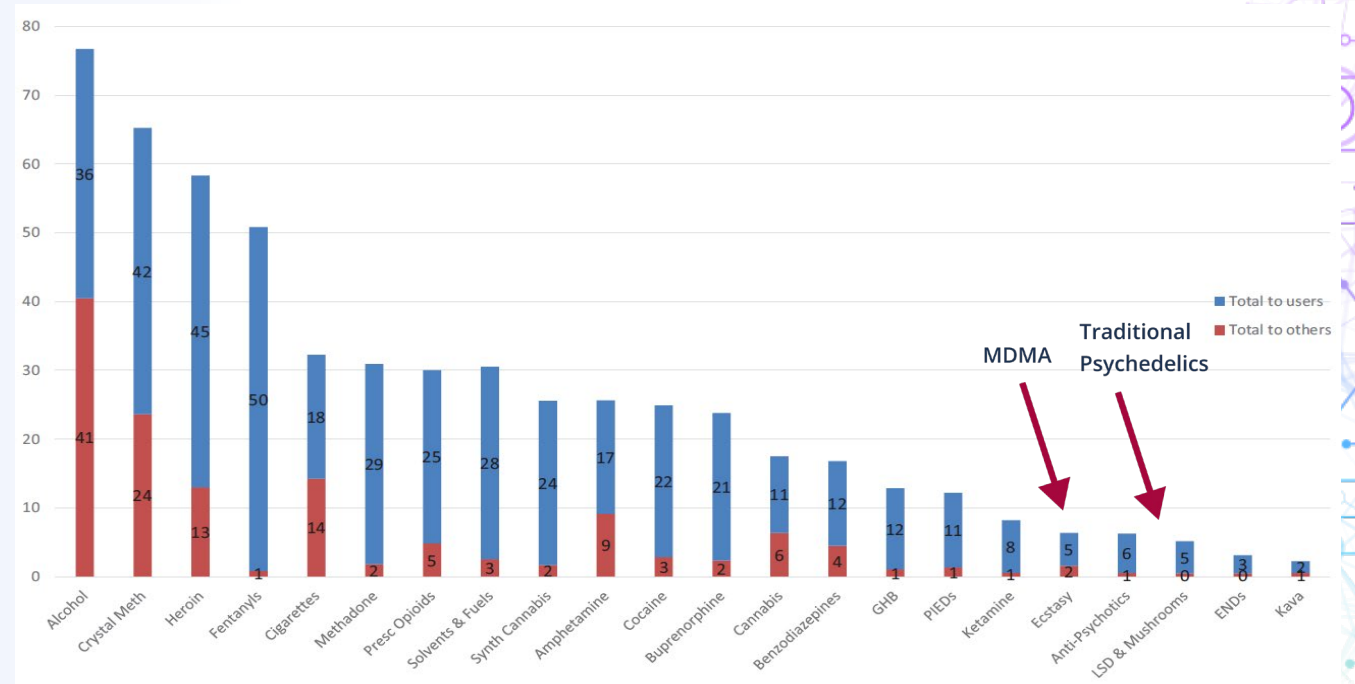
# Psychedelics

## BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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Psychedelics are known for their very low physiological toxicity, being non-addictive, and exerting profound effects on human consciousness.

Large population studies show no increase in risk for mental ill-health or addiction with lifetime use of classical psychedelics, compared with non-use.



Nutt, D and Castle, D, et al. (2019) The Australian drug harms ranking study, *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, Vol 33, Issue 7

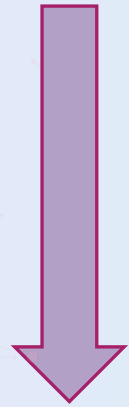
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# The Varieties of the Psychedelic Experience

HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE PSYCHEDELIC EXPERIENCE?

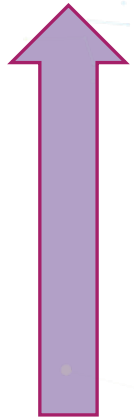
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**Top -> Down  
Approaches**



- **Experiential: Phenomenal experience and Metacognitive training**
  - **Humanistic, Philosophical & Cultural: How do we conceptualise and contextualise?**
  - Psychotherapeutic practice: What are the skills required to support?
  - Observational/Clinical study: What is the evidence?
  - Neural network dynamics: Are there phenomenological correlates to neural correlates?
  - Pharmacology and neurobiology: what is the physiology, how does this relate to other biological processes?
- 

**Bottom -> Up  
Approaches**



# Numinous States: Peak or Mystical Experiences

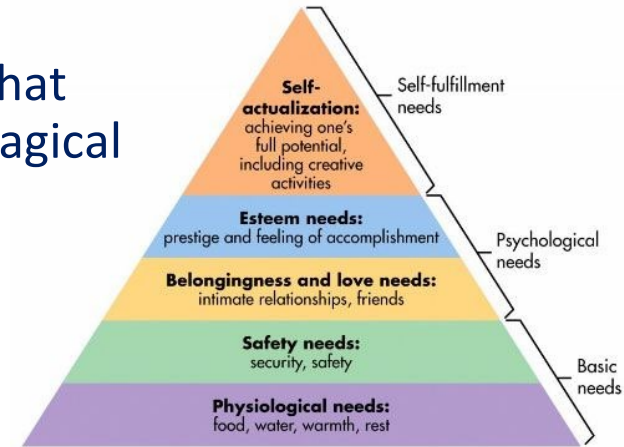
“Rare, exciting, oceanic, deeply moving, exhilarating, elevating experiences that generate an advanced form of perceiving reality, and are even mystic and magical in their effect upon the experimenter.”

Abraham Marslow

Psychedelics under the right set and setting facilitate transformative experiences

The strength of Peak Mystical Experience is positively correlated to clinical measures for the treatment of addiction, anxiety and depression

Leads to increases in the personality domain “openness to experience” of the “Big 5” correlated to the strength of the peak experience. (Griffiths et al, 2017)

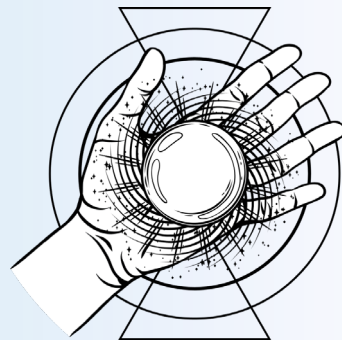


# Psychedelics

## CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

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- Indigenous cultures have been used hallucinogenic plants for healing and as a sacrament in ceremonies for more than five thousand years. Religious use has been documented in pagan, Hindu, Buddhist, Native American, and South American religions.
- A psychedelic drink “Kykeon” was consumed during the ancient Greek rite the - Eleusynian Mysteries, The mysteries were a cornerstone of ancient Greek culture and were attended by Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, and Cicero.



“Every culture has found such chemical means of transcendence, and at some point the use of such intoxicants becomes institutionalized at a magical or sacramental level. The sacramental use of psychoactive plant substances has a long history and continues to the present day in various shamanic and religious rites around the world . . . some people can reach transcendent states through meditation or similar trance-inducing techniques, or through prayer and spiritual exercises. But drugs offer a shortcut; they promise transcendence on demand.”

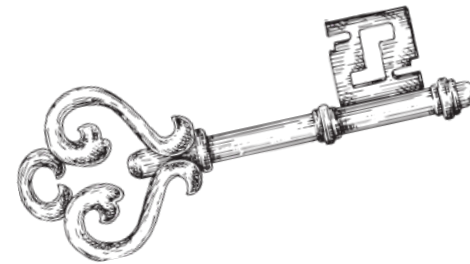
-Oliver Sacks, Hallucinations

# Transcendence on Demand

## CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

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- Many global religions, which have been founded on visionary experience have maintained centralised control to direct experience
  - Brewing or consuming Kykeon outside of the Eleusinian Mysteries in Athens was punishable by death
  - The ancient Christian rituals that may have involved entheogenic-beers were initially abolished by the protestants and were then lost through Christian practice
  - ***Psychedelics offer open source access to numinous states***
- “LSD truly was an acid, dissolving almost everything with which it came into contact, beginning with the hierarchies of the mind... and going on from there to society’s various structures of authority”
  - - Michael Pollan *How To Change Your Mind: The New Science of Psychedelics*.

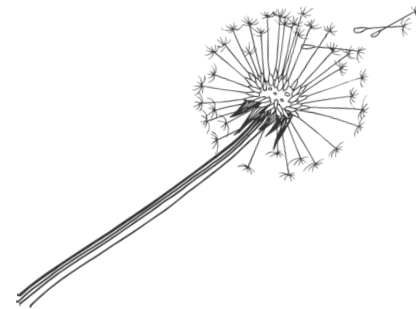


# Psychedelics

## CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

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- Since 1971 when Richard Nixon declared 'The War on Drugs' to fulfill political agendas, religious, socio-political, and cultural stigma towards psychedelics has continued to embed itself into the mindset of much of contemporary Western civilization. Despite the promising medical research occurring at the time
- Recently, things are changing in the cultural landscape with the resurgence of psychedelic research in the fields of science and medicine.



# Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy

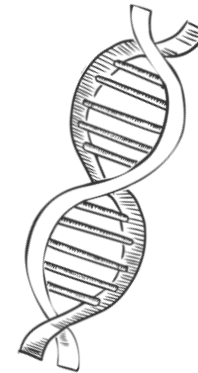
CATALYSTS TO EXPERIENCE

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Over the past decade, research into medicinal psychedelics has shown them to frequently lead to remission from several mental illnesses including anxiety, treatment-resistant depression, and addiction with a brief program [8]. Resulting in a re-emergence of **psychedelics-assisted therapies**; professionally supervised use of psilocybin, MDMA, LSD and ketamine as a part of innovative radical psychotherapy programs.

Psychedelic-assisted therapy is an ***experiential medicine***. Healing is mediated through the interaction between pharmacology, phenomenology, and the therapeutic container. The medicine acts as a catalyst to the therapeutic process



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(Carhart-Harris et al., 2016 & Schenberg, 2018)

# Psychedelic Clinical Indications Currently Studied

## PSILOCYBIN INDICATIONS

DEPRESSION	END OF LIFE ANXIETY
ADHD	ANXIETY DISORDERS
OCD	TRAUMA & PTSD
BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER	MIGRAINE



## MDMA INDICATIONS

PTSD	CONJOINT/COUPLES THERAPY
ADDICTION	AUTISM & SOCIAL ANXIETY

# Altered states to Altered Traits

## EGO DISSOLUTION

The sense of being a self or 'I' as previously known, distinct from the rest of the world, diminishes or dissolves altogether [2].

These experiences of 'oceanic boundlessness' is the sense that the boundaries between self and natural world are malleable

## AWE

The phenomena of sensing something more expansive. The experience of that which is 'vast, transcends current frames of reference, and require new schemata to accommodate what is being perceived' with identification of one as a 'small self' in relation to something larger [3].

## EMPATHY

Psychedelic-assisted therapy can facilitate experiences of empathy. People with impaired empathetic function have difficulty understanding and sharing in reciprocal social interactions, which can lead to psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression [4].

## CREATIVITY

Creativity is regarded as a dynamic and multifaceted form of cognition. Psychedelics enhance a number of the features of creative cognition [11].

Psychedelics can amplify the imagination, creating dream like visions of personal meaning, enhancing appreciation of music, art and nature [5].

## CONNECTEDNESS

Enhance feelings of connectedness with the self, others and certain elements of nature, that foster empathetic connection with the natural world [6].

The experience of "oneness" or "unity", is a sub-factor of oceanic boundlessness and the loss of self-world boundaries [7]

## NATURE RELATEDNESS

The boundaries between self and the natural world dissolve, evoking the sense of 'being one with nature' [7]. 'Biophilia', connecting with the innate human tendency to seek connections with the natural world. Leading to pro-environmental behaviour and perseverance [6]

## PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Psychedelic-assisted therapy can enhance connection, increasing concern for others, contributing to prosocial behaviours – the desire to benefit others [8]. Recent studies have found decreases in authoritarian views and greater tolerance for other perspectives [9].

## OPENNESS

Openness to experience is one of the 'Big 5' traits and is correlated to improved wellbeing. Openness describes sensitivity, imagination and fantasy, and broad-minded tolerance of others' viewpoints and values [5].

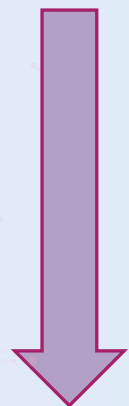
A inclination to seek out new experiences [10]

# The Varieties of the Psychedelic Experience

HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE PSYCHEDELIC EXPERIENCE?

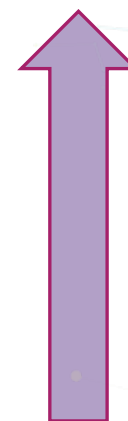
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Top -> Down  
Approaches



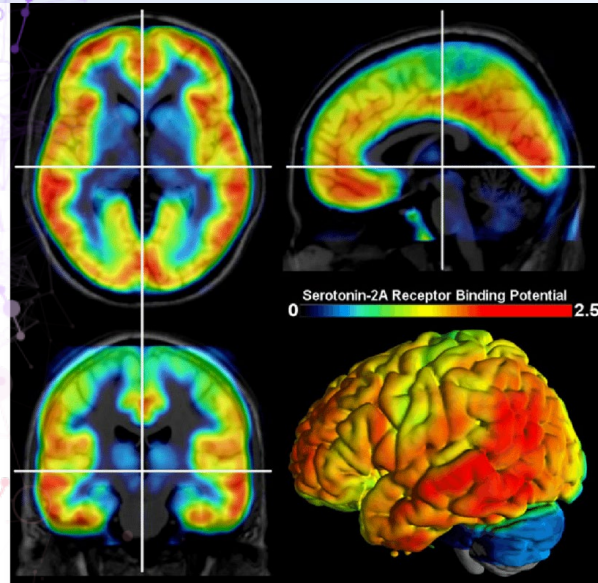
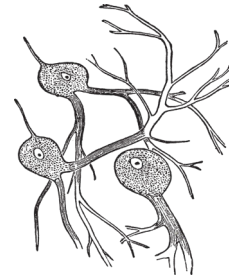
- Experiential: Phenomenal experience and Metacognitive training
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- 

Bottom -> Up  
Approaches



# Psychedelic Pharmacology

## RECEPTORS TO RECEPTIVITY



Psychedelic medicines activate the serotonin 5HT2a receptors which mediate a signaling system associated with strategy change. The 5HT2a receptor has been described as a gateway to the psychedelic experience, without the activation of the 5HT2a receptor, there is no psychedelic effect. Each classical psychedelic activates a range of receptors of the serotonin, dopamine, and other neurotransmitter systems, giving rise to their unique durations and effects.

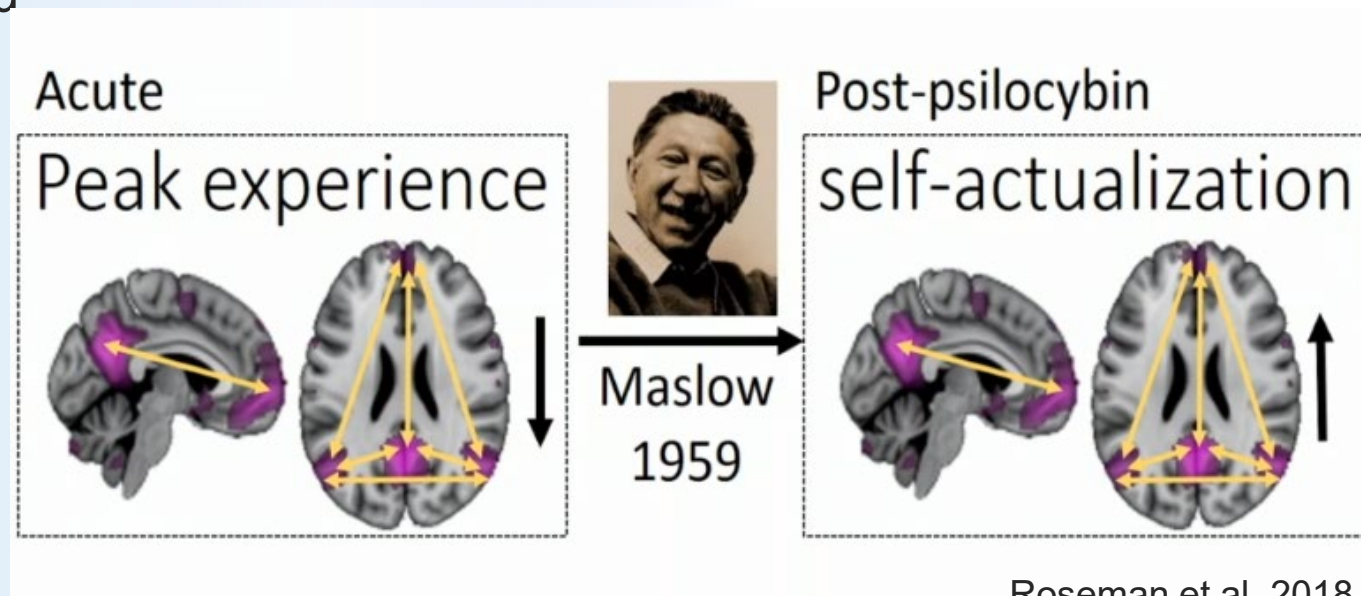
(Nichols et al, 2017)

Serotonin 5HT2a receptors increase in density under conditions of high stress, such as sleep deprivation and hypoxia (a lack of oxygen), and have been linked to an adaptive response akin to a 'healing crisis'. They are widely distributed. Particularly in higher order cortical ecent research suggests that the 5HT2a receptor aids adaptivity through enhancing sensitivity to the environment, cognitive flexibility, and pro-plasticity effects.

Carhart-Harris & Nutt 2017)

# Neural network dynamics: Are there phenomenological correlates to neural correlates?

- Carhart-Harris (2016) found that one day after acute treatment DMN integration increased



Decreased DMN integration

- Ego dissolution
- Loss of self
- Unity/connectedness

Increased DMN integration

- After glow
- Redefining the self
- Integration of experiences

**Losing yourself to find and redefine yourself?**

# Mind Manifesting Mechanisms

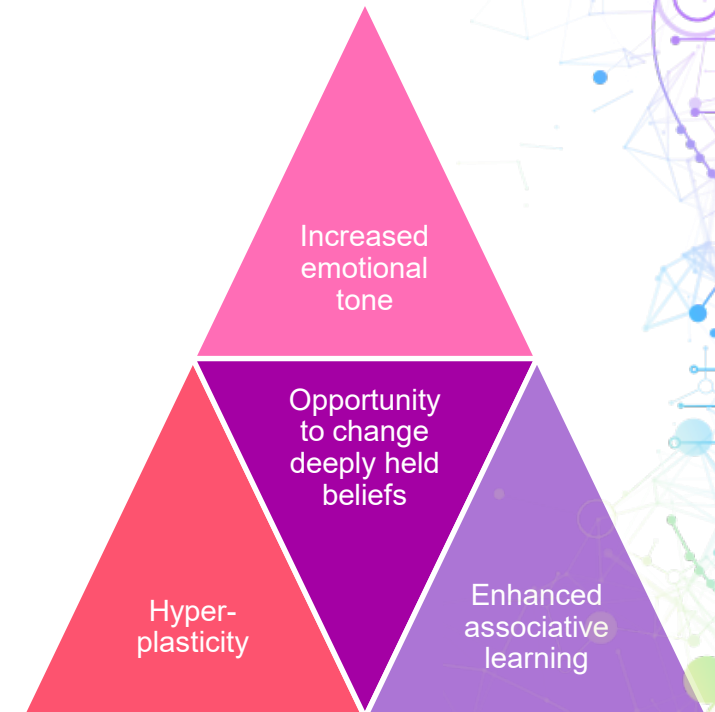
## CLASSICAL PSYCHEDELICS



Functional connectivity of 'normal brain (left) compared to brain on psilocybin (right). Please note: there are the same number of connections on each graph.

Psychedelics offer a window for context-dependant change:

- 1. Increased emotional tone**
  - access to the unconscious
- 2. Hyper-plasticity**
  - of major neural networks
  - cellular processes through BDNF
  - 'psychoplastogen'
- 3. Enhanced associative learning**
  - reduced weighting of priors
  - Eustress through activation of a pivotal mental state



# PSYCHEDELIC-ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY

## CATALYSTS TO EXPERIENCE



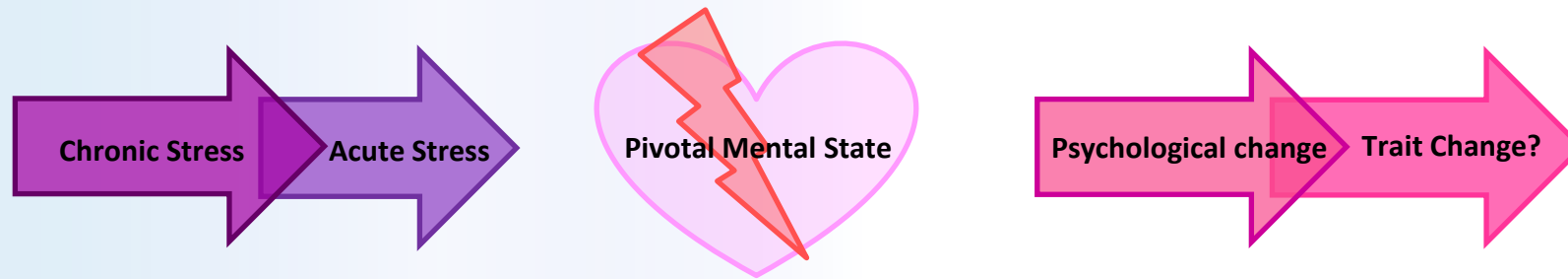
Psychedelic-assisted therapy is an **experiential medicine**. Healing is mediated through the interaction between pharmacology, phenomenology, and the therapeutic container. The medicine acts as a catalyst to the therapeutic process

“Represent a **kairos**, a turning point in the life journey where major change simply must occur because the person is unable or unwilling to continue in his or her present course. It is a point of desperation, a breaking point where ‘something has to give’ – and it does.”

Miller and C’de Baca, 2001, *Quantum Change*

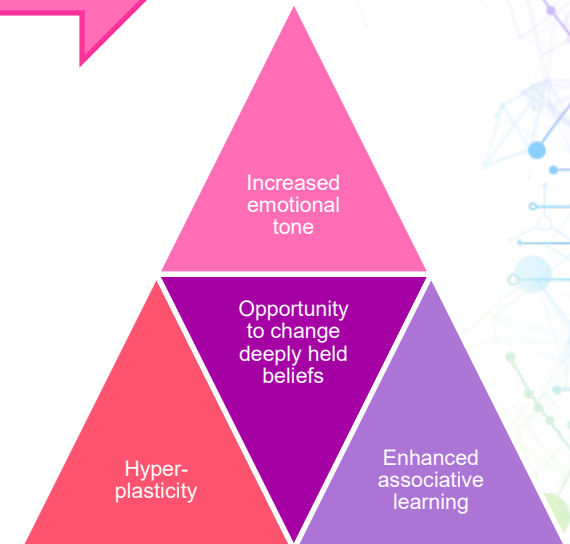
# PSYCHEDELICS: PIVOTAL MENTAL STATES

## EXPERIENCE AS A STIMULUS TO CHANGE



- Pivotal mental states are transient, intense hyper-plastic mind and brain states, with exceptional potential for mediating psychological transformation
- Serve an important evolutionary function, that is, to aid psychological transformation when actual or perceived environmental pressures demand this

- Psychedelics hi-jack a natural system which induces 'pivotal mental states'
- A “fork in the road” type experience
- Eustress: beneficial stress—
  - psychological
  - physiological
  - biochemical

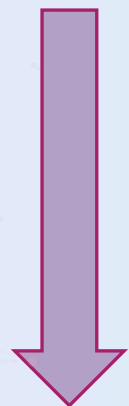


# The Varieties of the Psychedelic Experience

HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE PSYCHEDELIC EXPERIENCE?

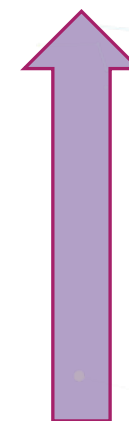
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Top -> Down  
Approaches



- Experiential: Phenomenal experience and Metacognitive training
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- 

Bottom -> Up  
Approaches



# Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy Process

## PREPARATION

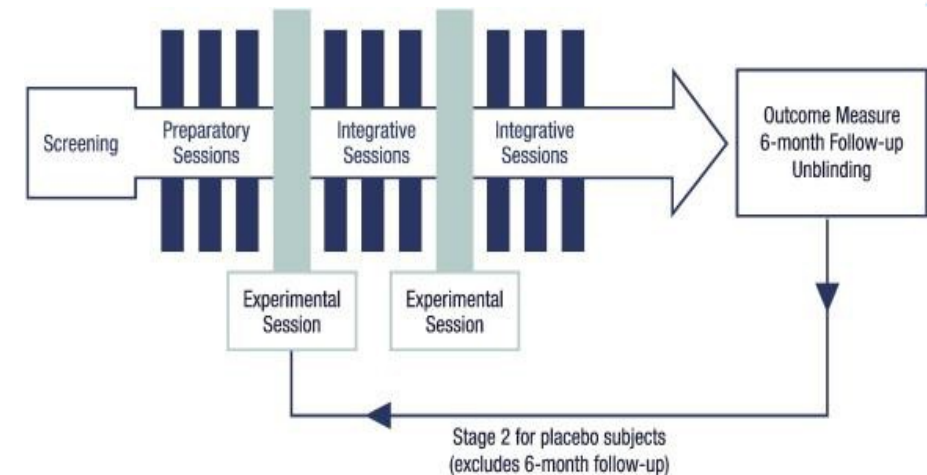
Relational and educational sessions before medicine-assisted therapy to support development of a therapeutic bond and pre-session education.

## ACUTE EXPERIENCE

Provides an opportunity for a 'deep dive' into awareness for the experiencer. Therapeutic support provided while patients are in a receptive, flexible, open state

## INTEGRATION

is a process by which therapists support patients to process and implement insights from their experiences. Patients are encouraged to pursue other opportunities to further integrate the experience into their lives



MAPS Model with two acute sessions. The range for acute sessions in research is 1-3.

# Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy

## PROMISING HORIZENS

---



- **Regulatory schemes** in the **US** (*Expanded Access*), **Australia** (*Special Access*) and **Israel** (*Compassionate Use*) **enable physicians to apply to the Regulator for approval** to treat patients suffering from treatment resistant PTSD with Medicinal-MDMA and psilocybin psychotherapy for depression outside of a clinical trial. **Switzerland** has a similar scheme allowing LSD, Psilocybin and MDMA to be used with psychotherapy.
  - The **Australian Govt** announced (March 2021) **\$AUD15m** would be put towards clinical trials using psychedelic drugs as part of global efforts to advance innovative treatments.
  - Numerous US States have decriminalised psilocybin possession recently.
  - **Oregon (USA)** became the **first state to legalise psilocybin for therapeutic use** in November 2020. They have a multi-year implementation plan which involves training of therapists and expert consultation for service provision models.
  - Real world situations are likely to differ from clinical populations where co-morbidities and dual diagnosis is common. For example, treatment pathways may be more extended. The duration of cases of remission is unknown.
-

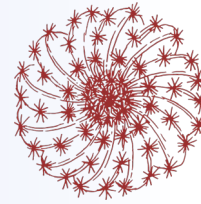
# Set, Setting & Skill



## SET

**The mindset and traits of the journeyer**

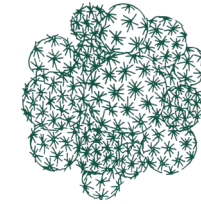
- Grounding – feeling relatively safe in the inner world, connected to body
- Surrender - not attaching to expectations —whether physical, intellectual, or spiritual
- Curiosity – openness to observing and exploring images, thought patterns, and physical sensations



## SETTING

**The environment and the 'cast' supporting the journeyer**

- Aesthetic, artful environment
- Comfortable place to lie
- Art supplies for integration
- Plants, natural view
- Relationship to and temperament of guide(s)
- Community, family, home environment



## SKILL

**The practices and mental models of the journeyer**

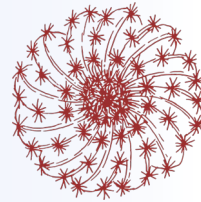
- Metacognitive skills
- Meditation and contemplative practice
- Interception and somatic awareness
- Expressive modalities
- Capacity for resilience
- Ability to self-regulate
- Skills of the guide in the above also

# Proposed Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy Roles



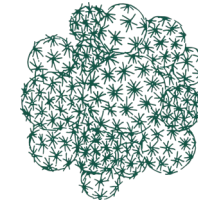
## Prescriber

- Psychiatrist
- AOD specialist doctor
- GP (with approval from one of the above)



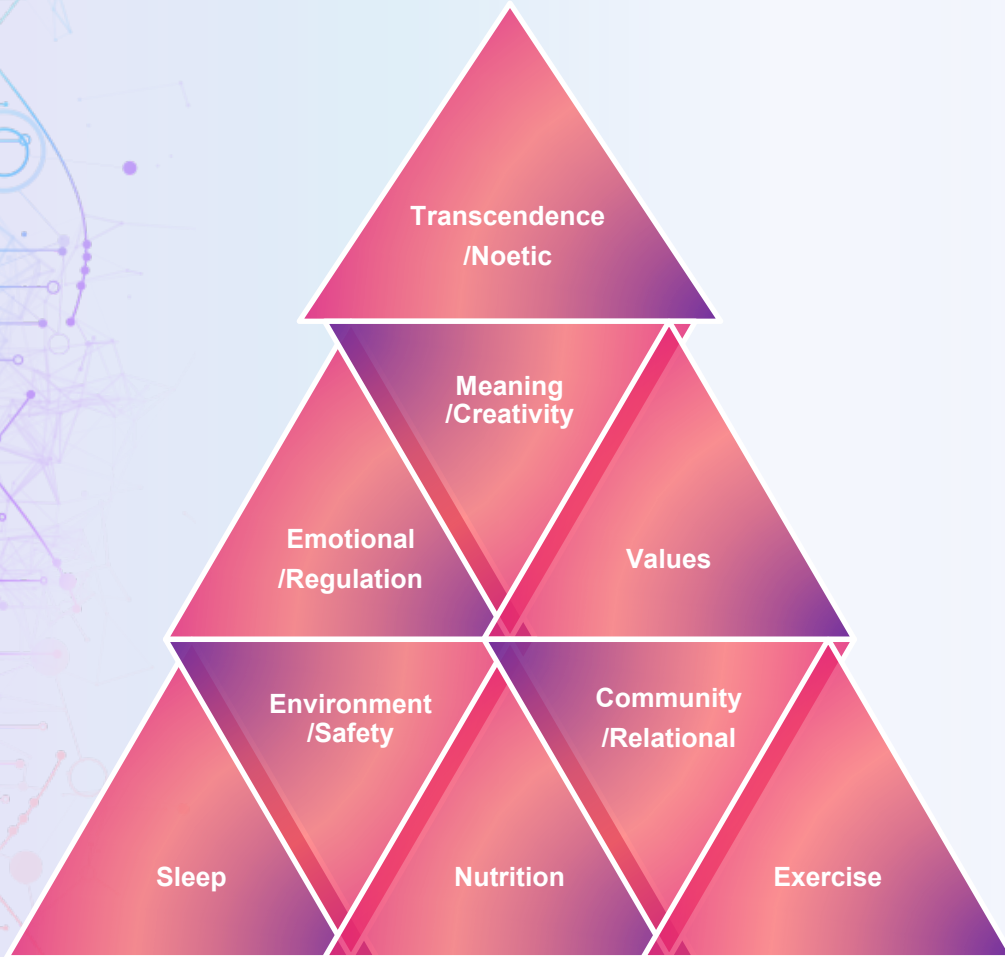
## Lead Guide

- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist – with psychotherapy experience



## Supporting Guide

- Social worker
- Psychotherapists
- Student psychologists
- Mental-health-nurses



# Biopsychosocial model of health.

We are contextual beings

Psychedelic-assisted therapy is context-dependent and in this way lends itself to the **Biopsychosocial model of health.**

The participant is viewed holistically, in clinical research, tracked holistically.

An appreciation for the reciprocal relationship between all aspects of our lives.



# Key Competencies of a Psychedelic Facilitator

## BEING A GOOD GUIDE

---

### 1. Calm, grounded, empathetic presence

- Being grounded, non-judgemental, empathetic and perceptive to facilitate the participant's journey.

### 2. Trustworthiness

- Displaying authenticity (particularly as *trust* may be a point of trauma for individual's within this therapeutic space)

### 3. Knowledge of physical and psychological effects of the medicine

- Personal experience with 'non-ordinary states'.

### 4. Philosophical and Spiritual intelligence

- Understanding that the spiritual/mystical world is different for everybody

### 5. Self-awareness and ethical integrity

- Awareness of one's intention for facilitation, and presence within the space (remove ego, and don't *intervene*)

### 6. Knowledge of complementary techniques

- e.g. Holotropic breathwork, meditation, yoga, somatic experiencing therapy

---

(Adapted from Phelps, 2017, Phelps, 2019)

# Fundamental Experiential Knowledge of Psychedelic Therapists

*Described by Bill Richards who has been practicing psychedelic therapy since 1963 in Europe and as lead therapist at John Hopkins.*

*Book: Sacred Knowledge*

## 1. **Appreciation for the Multi-Dimensional Nature of one's own Being** (and the being of others)

- Ability to shift between mode of scientist/critical observer and mode of supportive companion/poet
- Enjoyment of new perspectives on reality
- Interested and active explorer of the psyche and transcendence



(Image: MAPS)

## 2. **Flexibility in conceptual landscape and use of language**

- Words may be seen as “sounds that attempt to communicate thoughts and experiences”
- Experiencing a “past life” (dream, creative metaphor, personal myth or reality?)
- Parts of the psyche emerge, are you treating the 30-year-old or a child part?

# Fundamental Experiential Knowledge of Psychedelic Therapists

## 3. **Appreciation for the Limitations of Language**

- Diverse journeys and spiritual languages (evoke a person's own words rather than provide vocabulary) eg. unitive consciousness, God, being, non-dual awareness, Kundalini, pure awareness
- Avoidance of prejudicial words (i.e. drug experience, distortion, delusion, psychosis, hallucination, high)
- A comfort with Ineffability/Paradoxicality

## 4. **Ability to Feel a Grounded Optimism and Gratitude/Faith**

- Along the Carl Sagan mood of:  
“We're made of star stuff. We are a way for the cosmos to know itself... for small creatures such as we, the vastness is bearable only through love.”
- Cultivation of gratitude for one's “precious human life” - Buddhism



(Image: Matthew Johnson)

# Fundamental Experiential Knowledge of Psychedelic Therapists

## **5. Knowledge of the Power and Importance of Human Relationships**

-- Attunement to the Family of Earthlings

Presence not “fixing”; Genuine “liking of” or “compassion for” unique people in diverse situations during their life journeys.

- Immediacy; Focus in the Present Moment; “Being with”
- Openness to learning from the patient/subject/volunteer

## **6. Respect for the unique wisdom that emerges in individual minds in the context of interpersonal grounding.**

- Facilitating, witnessing, evoking rather than imposing, directing, interpreting

## **7. Appreciation for Human Suffering**

- Able to tolerate/accept grief, guilt, shame, fear, anger and expressions of unresolved grief
- Guilt/Regret at having “existed” when one could have “lived.”
- Appreciation for “Existential Crisis” and “Dark Night of the Soul” as integral parts of the human journey
- Gibran: “The deeper sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.”
- Steady compassion during pain (physical and psychological) - “Be with” vs. “discount” or “argue out of”
- Sensitivity to “necessary” and “unnecessary” suffering
- “polishing the diamond/cleansing/purification” vs. wallowing, clinging, complaining, fearing change & transformation

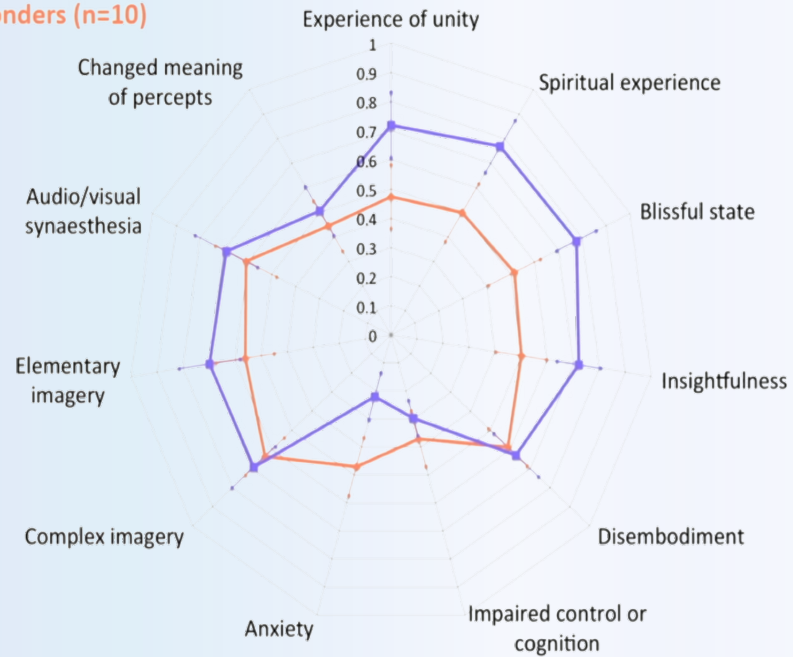
# Understanding Outcomes

## BENEFIT MAXIMISATION

- Increased anxiety during the psychedelic experience correlated to lower clinical outcomes
- The duration not the intensity of the negative affective state is related to poorer outcomes (Carhart-Harris et al 2021)

Responders (n=9)

Non-responders (n=10)



### 11 Dimensional Altered States of Consciousness scale

Responders\* vs non-responders at 5 weeks:

Response  $\geq$  50% reduction in depression symptoms

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(Carhart-Harris et al 2021)

**How do we minimise anxiety and increase flow in the psychedelic state?**

**How do we contain challenge and maximise skill?**

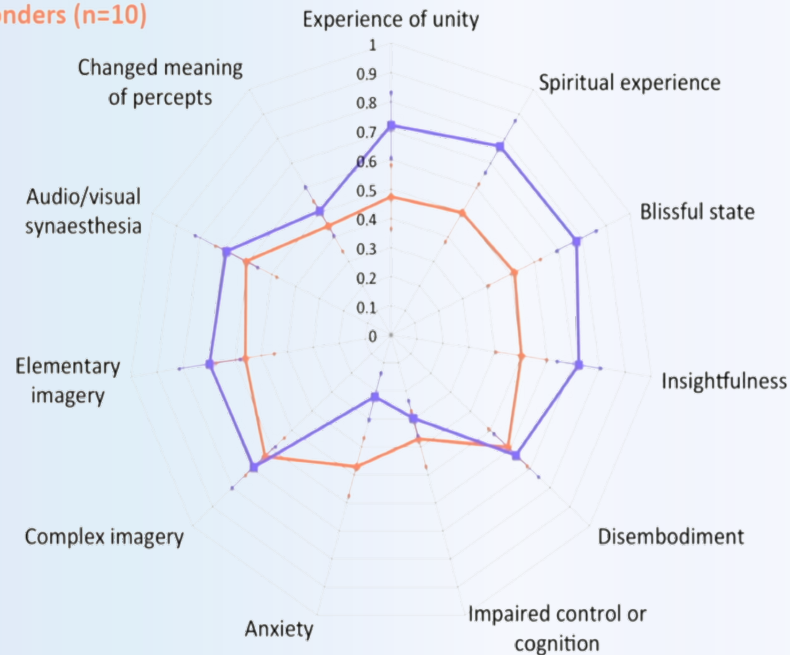
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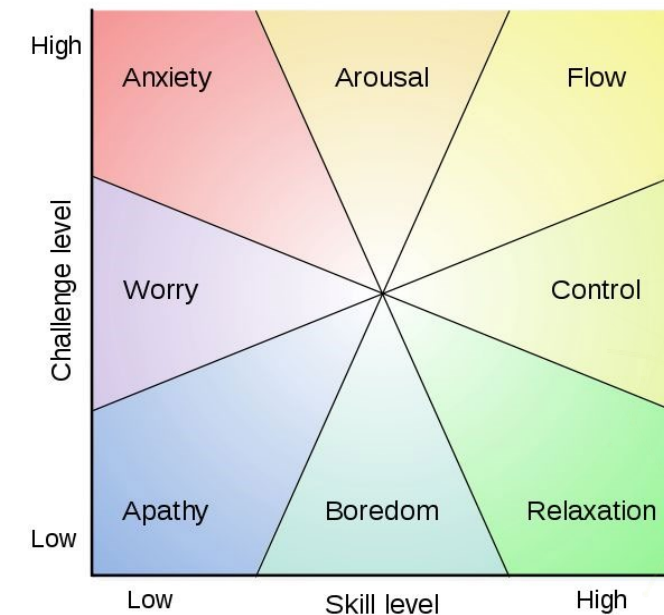
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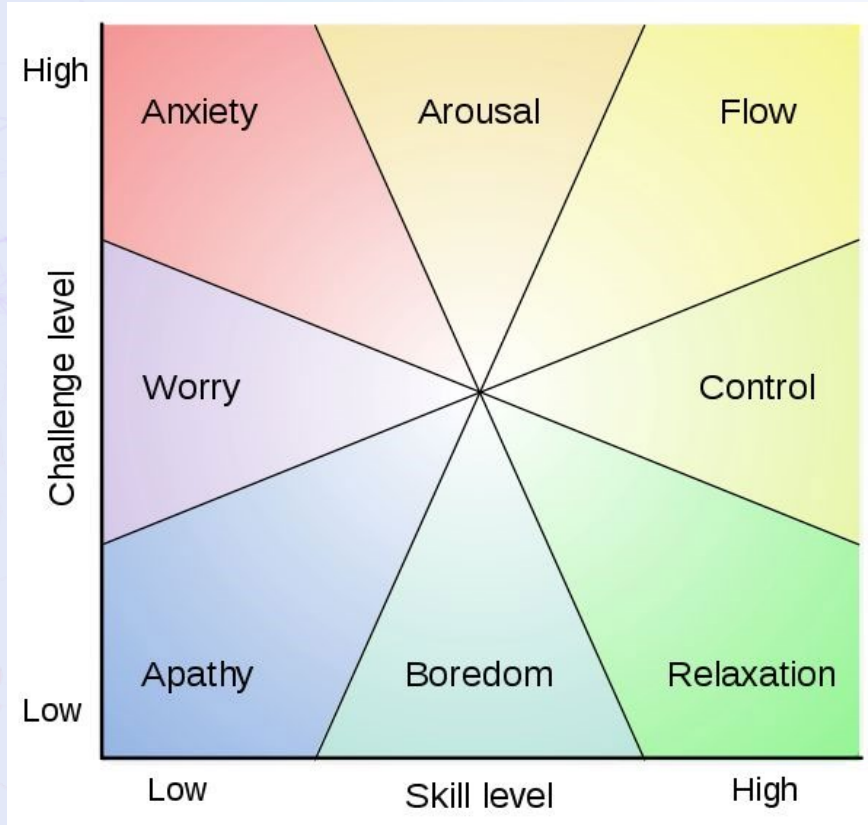
How do we minimise anxiety and increase flow in the psychedelic state?

How do we contain challenge and maximise skill?



# Psychedelics and Flow

BENEFIT MAXIMISATION & HIGHER ORGANISATION OF MIND



“The best moments usually occur when a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. Optimal experience is thus something that we make happen”  
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Flow.





# Metacognition

How do we understand and navigate our experiences?

Metacognition is described as Thinking about thinking and was introduced as a concept in by John Flavell. Flavell held that metacognition is the knowledge you have of your own cognitive processes. (Flavell, 1979)

Metacognition is considered a critical component of successful learning. It involves self-regulation and self-reflection.

# Intention Setting

## INVITATION TO EXPERIENCE

- What are the major obstacles you are facing right now?
- What would you like to welcome into your life?
- Write in terms of what you want rather than what you don't want.
- Find common themes
- Develop a short, simple and broad intentional anchor
  - “May I turn towards love”
  - “May I learn about acceptance”
  - “ Trust, let go, Open” – William Richards

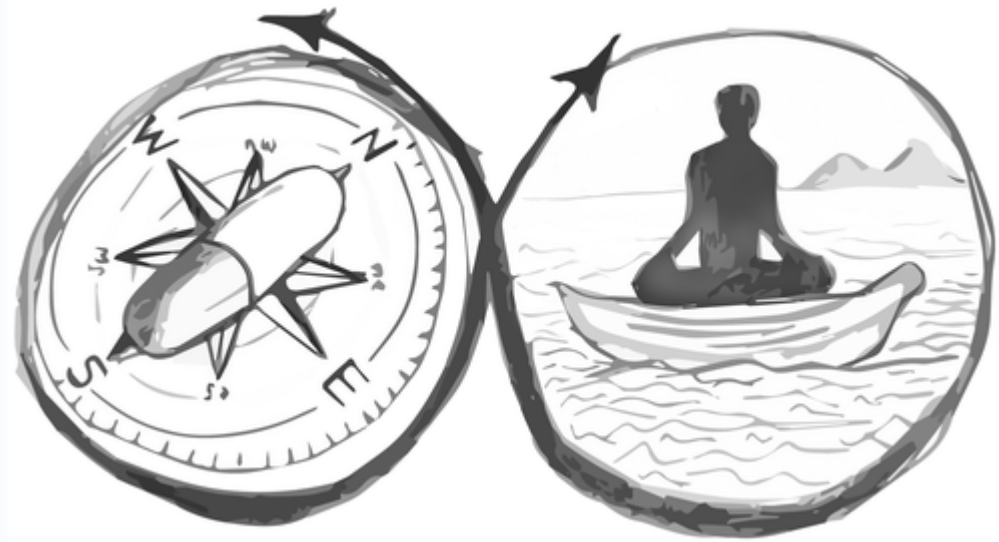


While having intentions is crucial, but aware of any expectations.

# Meditation

## THE PSYCHONAUT'S DOJO

- Psychedelics: “non-specific amplification of unconscious mental processes” - Grof
- Meditation: Entraines awareness and navigation through the contents of consciousness
- Meditation likely increases benefits and reduces adverse effects of psychedelics
- Experienced meditators experience very little anxiety (Smigielski, 2019)
- Use of guided imagery if pre-discussed such as found in the acceptance and commitment therapy model (ACT) or Guided Imagery and Music (GIM)

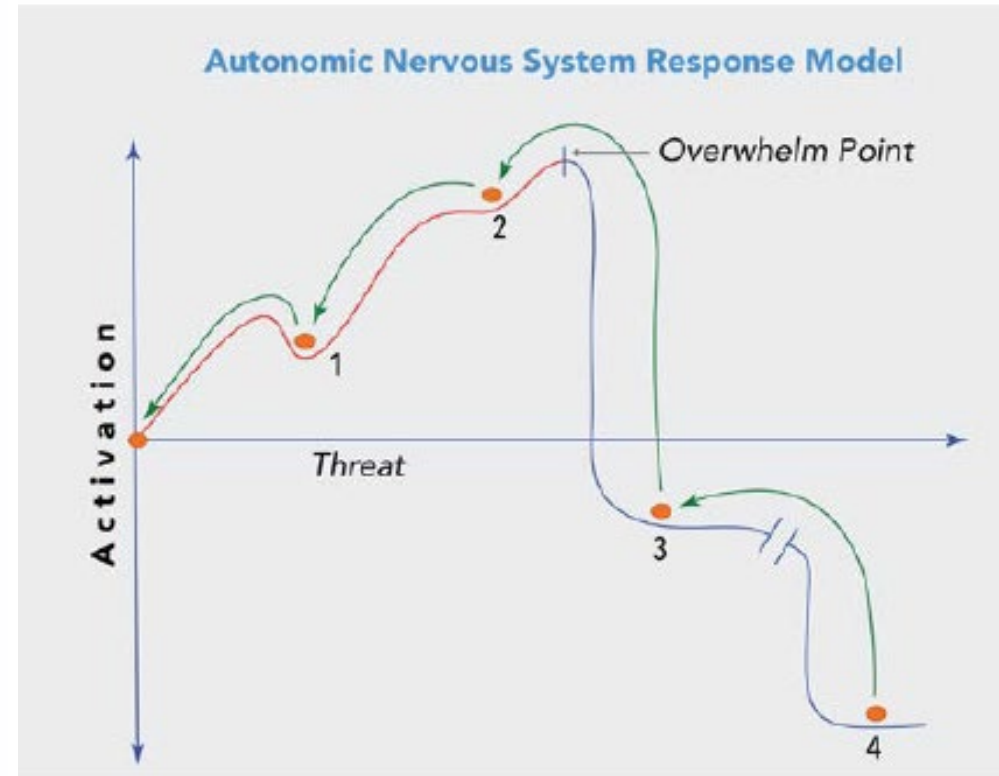


**Payne et al, 2021. Combining Psychedelic and Mindfulness Interventions: Synergies to Inform Clinical Practice. ACS Pharmacol. Transl. Sci.**

# Somatic awareness

THE PSYCHONAUT'S DOJO

- Interoception is **the perception of sensations from inside the body** and includes the perception of physical sensations related to internal organ function such as heart beat, respiration, satiety, as well as the autonomic nervous system activity related to emotions
- Supported by the therapists skilful use of smile, touch and subtle gesture to attune and support a patient out of overwhelm and into interoception
- Key part of preperation, acute experience and integration.

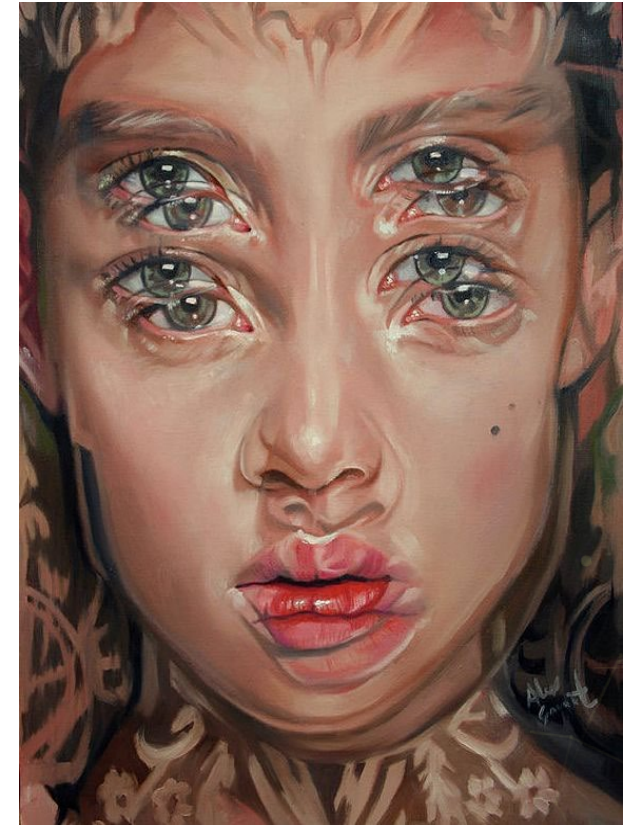


Razvi, S & Elfrink S, 2020. An Introduction to a Novel Method of Therapy: Psychedelic Somatic Interactional Psychotherapy

# Multiplicity of Mind

Cultivating inner relationality

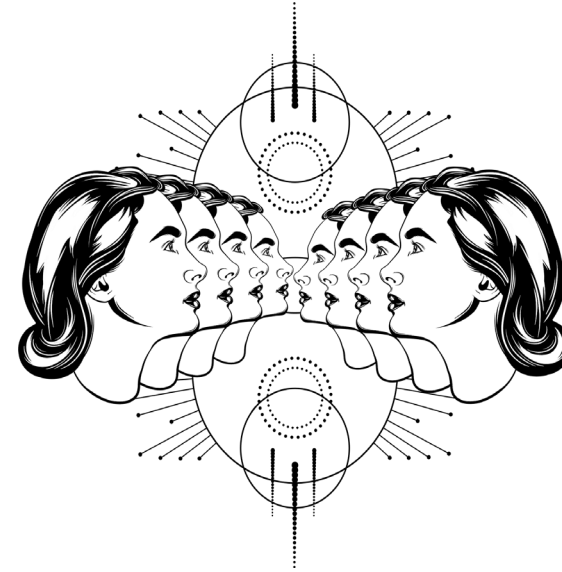
- “Great deal of everyday evidence for healthy multiplicity” and “mental health is being in the right mind at the right time”  
Dr James Fadiman - Our Symphony of Selves 2020
- Assagioli of the psychosynthesis school wrote:  
“We are not unified. We often feel we are because we do not have many bodies and many limbs, and because one hand doesn’t usually hit the other. But, metaphorically, that is exactly what does happen within us. Several subpersonalities are continually scuffling: impulses, desires, principles, aspirations are engaged in an unceasing struggle
- Internal Family Systems (IFS) is the latest evolution in parts work and places a focus on the development and recognition of “Self” – the most well, equanimous, and connected part of being



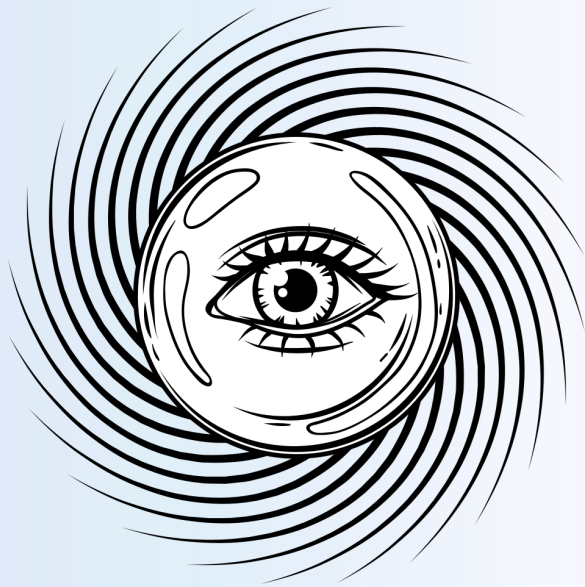
# Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy and Multiplicity

## MAPS MDMA for PTSD trials:

- 30mg dose sessions – individuals report the experience of parts under 30% of the time
- 75 and 125 mg dose sessions – individuals report the experience of parts over 75% of the time  
(Mithoefer, 2020)



- Work with metacognitive practices to enhance non-attachment and resource the observing self
- Return to presence, intention, and moment to moment sensation
- Awareness of impermanence
- Narrative and mindfulness therapy approaches can be helpful
- Somatic based approaches can be helpful when working with dissociation
- Resource the 'Self' – the most well, equanimous, and connected part of being



# Integration

## BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The etymology of the word integration comes from Latin word *integrare*, which means “make whole” or to “begin again”.

Integration also comes from the French word *intégration*, which describes the, “act of bringing together the parts of a whole”. The etymology suggests that the meaning of the word *integrate* is, “put together parts or elements and combine them into a whole”

When thinking about integrating the psychedelic experience, Integration is the ability to flow between rigidity and chaos, in the middle of these two extremes is harmony.

# Integration

## SUMMARY



Unpacking experiences that may feel disjointed and isolated, sometimes challenging



Bringing your thoughts and feelings to consciousness following a peak or mystical experience



Developing meta-cognitive skills to revisit memories, experiences in spaces of non-reactivity



Disrupting and creating communication between rigid personality structures



Supporting the integration of regular physical exercise and periods of rest



Making a plan to incorporate learnings and experiences into everyday life



Developing contemplative meditation practices



Learning strategies to re-experience transcending states



Paying attention to archetypal messages and images in one's life, connection to visionary and dream realms



Finding and practicing avenues of creative expression and Flow

# Integration

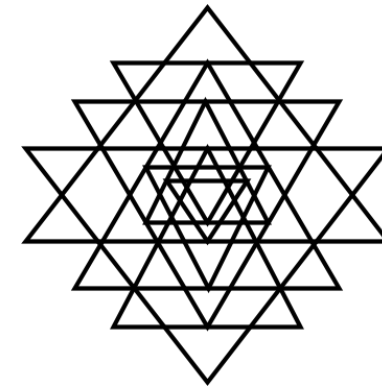
## MAKING "BAD TRIPS" GOOD

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- Somewhat counter-intuitively, psychedelics may produce frightening or “challenging” experiences, often characterized as “bad trips”.
- Adverse reactions varies between people and trips but may include anxiety, panic attacks, disturbing visions or paranoia.
- Ego-dissolution at times, can be classified as an uncomfortable experience.
- Although bad trips are unpleasant, recent studies has demonstrated that such experiences may be one of the keys to the potential profound beneficial effects of the substances.

"The counterintuitive finding that extremely difficult experiences can sometimes also be very meaningful experiences is consistent with what we see in our studies with psilocybin—that resolution of a difficult experience, sometimes described as catharsis, often results in positive personal meaning or spiritual significance,"

Roland Griffiths



# HPPD/Flashbacks & Reactivations

## A COMPARISON

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### HALLUCINOGEN PERSISTING PERCEPTION DISORDER

- “a re-experiencing of certain elements of the drug induced state after the drug’s effects have worn off and a relative period of normalcy has been experienced”
- An enduring condition in which the person endures a spontaneous recurrence of visual disturbances reminiscent of an acute hallucinogenic experience
  - e.g. various geometric shapes, disturbances of peripheral visual fields, flashes of colour and colour enhancement, and stroboscopic perception of moving objects
- HPPD is predominantly characterised as unpleasant by sufferers

(Hermle et al., 2012. Uthaug et al., 2020)

### REACTIVATIONS

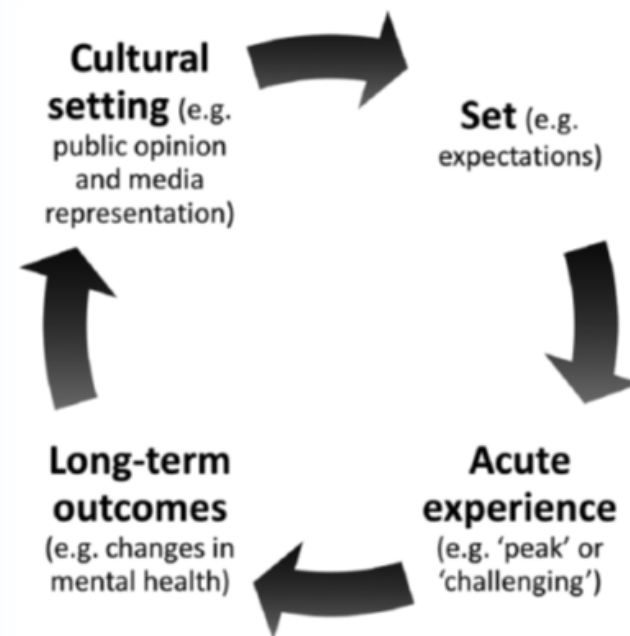
- *Reactivation* refers to a re-experiencing of drug-induced effects after a cessation of the drug’s acute effects (which can last 1-2 weeks)
- Prevalence rates of *reactivations* are as high as 72% in a subset of respondents using 5-MeO-DMT in a structured ritualized setting
  - Up to 96% of these users report their reactivation as being a positive or neutral experience (contrarily, HPPD flashbacks are characteristically unpleasant)
- Reactivation triggers: smoking marijuana, falling asleep, states of deep relaxation, dreaming, deep meditation and sensory association (sounds, smell)

(Uthaug et al., 2020)

# Psychedelics

## CULTURAL SET AND SETTING

- The cultural container contributes to the expectations and preconceptions of individuals.
- A cultural feedback loop contributes to the 'set' and thus, the nature of an acute psychedelic experience and its consequent longer-term outcomes.
- Moreover, those considering use of psychedelics without proper recognition of context should be made aware that such bad practice could feed into a negative cultural context loop that could damage the wider therapeutic agenda.



(Carhart Harris et al, 2018, J. Psychopharmacology)

# Beware of psychedelic exceptionalism

- Psychedelic exceptionalism: This is the inclination to believe that the nature of the experiences people have on psychedelics are so sacred or important that the normal rules do not apply

Psychedelic exceptionalism was one of the mistakes in the earlier era of psychedelic research in the 1960s.

(Johnson, 2020)

Psychedelic therapy is like putting a magnifying glass on many of the aspects of psychedelic psychotherapy, outside of the session too:

- The positive: the potential of transcendence as a part of life
- The negative: potential for abusing a position of expertise or authority, over-emphasising ease and benefits (hype) – they are not a panacea



# Our Psychedelic Future?



<https://hereandnowstudios.com/we-will-call-it-pala>

# An altered perspective

- “What you resist, persists – and will grow in size.”  
*Jung*
- Be evidence-informed and part of the conversation
- Psychedelics shift the conceptual context for the use of psychiatric medicines
- A move from symptom suppression to amplification or release
- From disconnection to **relationality**
- *From rumination to **responsivity***
- *From self-definition to **self-agency***
- “Living at the threshold of the unknown with the courage to move into new uncharted waters”  
Dr Dan Siegal



# Here and Now: Immediate Focus

- Continue to design and implement well-crafted research projects.
- Respectfully communicate with professional colleagues, the TGA, and the culture at large.
- Provide for the training and certification of facilitators/researchers to integrate psychedelics into our culture in safe and effective ways.
- If Phase 3 data supports it, facilitate the reclassification of psilocybin and MDMA from Schedule 9
- Ensure Medicare and insurance coverage for all persons who may benefit from interventions with psychedelics, including all socio-economic demographics
- Creation and endorsement of ethical standards and a code of practice that both non-profits and commercial enterprises aspire and adhere to.



# Organisations

## IN THE AUSTRALIAN PSYCHEDELIC SPACE



Entheogenesis Australis

(EGA, est. 2004)

- EGA is a charitable, educational organisation, providing opportunities for critical thinking and knowledge sharing on ethnobotanical plants, fungi, nature and sustainability. Through conferences and workshops, EGA aims to celebrate the culture, art, politics and community around medicine plants in the hope to better wellbeing for humankind and the planet.



Psychedelic Research  
in Science & Medicine

(PRISM, est. 2011)

- PRISM initiates, coordinates, and supports formal research into the applications of medicinal psychedelics and related technologies, providing scientific expertise for clinical trials and technological development for medicinal psychedelics and consciousness research. PRISM supports clinical research for the treatment and prevention of conditions for which current therapies provide limited relief.

- The APS hosts integration circles, book clubs, psychedelic story events and film screenings across Australia. They hope that by creating communities across Australia, they can better advocate for the decriminalisation of psychedelics and destigmatise psychedelic use.



Australian Psychedelic  
Society

(APS, est. 2016)



Mind Medicine Australia /  
MMA Psychological Services/  
Certificate in Psychedelic  
Therapies

(MMA, est. 2019)

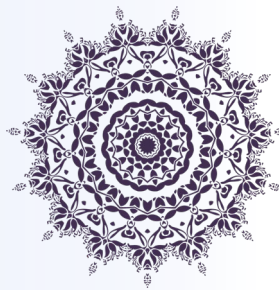
- MMA supports clinical research and working towards regulatory-approved and evidence-based psychedelic-assisted therapies, operating as a peak body. MMA also offers a safe and professional psychological service for those who want support regarding psychedelics, plant medicines, and their emotional health and wellbeing.

# Psychedelic-assisted therapy, a vision for the future

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“To conceive of a frontier is to be already beyond it”

-Heidegger



# THANK YOU!

Melissa Warner

E: [melissa@prism.org](mailto:melissa@prism.org)

(To express interest in professional development, clinical research and to join our newly forming clinical membership group, professionally volunteer, or express interest in participating in healthy human trials)

PRISM (please join our newsletter):

[www.prism.org.au](http://www.prism.org.au)

Certificate in Psychedelic Assisted Therapies (CPAT):

<https://cpat.mindmedicineaustralia.org>

Psychedelics Today training I am teaching:

<https://www.psychedeliceducationcenter.com/p/navigatingpsychedelicsfor-cliniciansandtherapists>

To join my personal newsletter:

[www.psychedelicsselfagency.com](http://www.psychedelicsselfagency.com)

# Thanks for joining us today!

Please join us next week for

‘Overview of Changes to The Salvation  
Army’s Qld-based AOD Services’  
with  
Sally-ann Upton

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