

Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy Quick Reference

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Substances & Mechanisms			
Substance	Mechanism	Duration	Primary Use
MDMA	Serotonin/oxytocin release	4-6 hrs	PTSD (FDA breakthrough)
Psilocybin	5-HT2A agonist, DMN disruption	4-6 hrs	Depression, end-of-life
Ketamine	NMDA antagonist, glutamate	45-90 min	Depression, suicidality
LSD	5-HT2A agonist	8-12 hrs	Research settings

Three-Phase Treatment Model		
Phase	Focus	Sessions
Preparation	Build alliance, set intentions, psychoeducation	2-3 sessions
Medicine Session	Supported experience with substance	1 session (6-8 hrs)
Integration	Process insights, apply to daily life	3+ sessions

Set & Setting	
Set (Mindset): - Intentions clarified - Expectations managed - Trust in process - Willingness to surrender - Psychological readiness	**Setting (Environment):** - Safe, comfortable space - Eyeshades, music playlist - Trained therapist(s) present - Minimal interruptions - Emergency protocols in place

Session Language	
Preparation: - "What are your intentions for this experience?" - "What might you be afraid of encountering?" - "Trust the medicine and your inner healer"	**Integration:** - "What was most significant for you?" - "What insights are you taking away?" - "How might this change how you live?" - "What support do you need going forward?"
During Medicine Session: - "You're safe. I'm here with you" - "Go toward what's arising" - "Let whatever needs to happen, happen"	

Key Concepts	
Concept	Description
Inner Healing Intelligence	Trust the psyche's innate wisdom to heal
Default Mode Network	Psychedelics reduce DMN activity, enabling new perspectives
Neuroplasticity	Enhanced brain flexibility during and after sessions
Mystical Experience	Often correlates with therapeutic outcomes

Contraindications	
Psychiatric: - Personal/family history of psychosis - Bipolar I disorder - Active suicidality (varies by substance) - Severe personality disorders	**Medical:** - Cardiovascular conditions (MDMA) - Uncontrolled hypertension - Pregnancy - Certain medications (MAOIs, SSRIs)

Key Principle: Psychedelics are catalysts, not cures. The therapeutic relationship, preparation, and integration are essential. The medicine opens a window; therapy helps make lasting change.
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