



Getting the most out of your psychedelic work involves intentionality before and after the experience. YOU are ultimately 'the medicine,' and these are simply tools to boost what's already happening somewhere deep inside.

The following questions and activities were adapted from several sources, including The Psychedelics Integration Handbook by Ryan Westrum and Jay Dufrechou (which is an excellent resource if you're looking for something thorough), Navigating Psychedelics Integration Workbook by Kyle Buller and Joe Moore (which is also good and is a much easier read), Ketamine Journeys: An Integration Journal for Your Ketamine Experiences by Jones-Berkley, and Journey Space.

A QUICK NOTE

– The more you put into this experience, the more you'll get out of it.

Clinical trials for psychedelic medicines have impressive results because they often include numerous hours of therapy and/or meditation practices before and after. Accordingly, having very little intention around this and lacking follow through with integration is far less likely to produce the kind of results you may be looking for. In my opinion, completing a full course of treatment with at least four psychedelic sessions is also more likely to generate some kind of shift than discontinuing after a single psychedelic session.

Due to my services being so specialized to meet the demand for this work in our area, I recommend all clients have a primary therapist. The techniques I offer pair very well with any ongoing work with another therapist.

I also recommend checking out this video, which thoroughly outlines the protocols for Psilocybin Assisted Psychotherapy. Engaging in some version of these practices on your own is a great way to maximize results for any kind of psychedelic work.

Hopkins Griffiths/Richards Protocol for Psilocybin with Meditation for Enduring Benefits

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNcmZDiskXg&t=1427s>

BEFORE THE JOURNEY

SET YOUR INTENTION:

– Setting your intention before the session is essential. Basically, 'What are you trying to get out of this experience?' These medicines enhance your thoughts and emotions, and when you steer them in a direction, they will often yield more constructive experiences.

If you would like individual guidance, we can discuss this in more detail.

If you would like some prompting right now, here are a few questions:

Question Set #1 (from MAPS):

- Think of an experience in your life that has not been integrated. Something that needs your attention.
- What gets in the way of you doing the work of integration for this thing?
- What would you need to understand to begin the integration?
- Is there something you will miss when it becomes integrated?
- Who will be upset or disappointed with you if you do the work? (It can even be a part of yourself)
- How will you know that you are doing the work of integration?

Question Set #2 (from Journey Space):

- Where in your life do you feel most powerful, most alive? Where do you feel energized? Drained of energy?
- Where in your life do you feel the most need for change?
- What's working for you? What's not working? What's missing? What's next?
- What are your biggest strengths and gifts?
- What energy are you working with or would you like to work with?
- Create a simple, short, concise "I am..." statement of the energy or healing you are inviting in. Ex: "I am whole." "I am love." "I am open to receiving healing."

Question Set #3 (from the documentary, "Dosed"):

- What types of answers do you want to help you move forward in life?

There is also a formula you can use (from Adele LaFrance):

1. Choose one of the following verbs: Help me with / Teach me about / Show me
2. In combination with
 - a. A difficult emotion (fear, anger, guilt, sadness, shame, joy)
 - b. OR
 - c. An essential human quality that we may have become disconnected from through challenging life experience (peace, love, compassion, connection, forgiveness, spiritually)
3. For example
 - a. Show me – my fear
 - b. Teach me about – love
 - c. Help me experience – joy

Finally, Stan Grof recommends that the intention should always center around 'Be open to what the medicine wants to teach me.' Whatever your intention, being open to whatever may happen is essential.

MEDIA DIET

Either taking a break from TV or social media, or consuming intentional media beforehand, can prime your mind for a journey. I would encourage trusting yourself about the intention of your journey and what feels appropriate to you, but here are a few things to check out.

- Fantastic Fungi
- How to Change Your Mind by Michael Pollan (Netflix documentary series & book)
- Aware: Glimpses of Consciousness
- Soul (Pixar)
- The Power of Now or A New Earth by Eckhart Tolle (book)
- Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl (book)
- Infinite Potential by Lothar Shafer (book – for people who are very pro-science and interested in quantum physics)

- Podcast on Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy – <https://open.spotify.com/episode/2EHljjk3nknuOzvjSwTJA>
- The Mind Explained – Psychedelics episode – Season 1, Episode 5 on Netflix
- Unwell – Season 1, Episode 5 on Netflix
- The Goop Lab – Season 1, Episode 1 on Netflix
- A Trip to Infinity on Netflix
- The show, Connected, on Netflix (particularly the ‘Digits’ episode)
- Gratitude Revealed
- The Tim Ferriss Podcast (Episodes with Gabor Mate and Stanislav Grof are great)
- The Entheogenic Evolution Podcast (great for 5-MeO-DMT preparation)
- ‘Mathematics is the Queen of Science’ on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mveOUoSxTo>
- A New Understanding: Science of Psilocybin (A bit older, but still solid)
- Dosed (2019 documentary about someone addicted to heroin seeking help with mushrooms and ibogaine)
- Hamilton’s Pharmacopeia (TV series – a bit better for entertainment and education than focusing on intentions)
- Additional list of documentaries: https://open-foundation.org/9-psychedelic-series/?fbclid=IwAR0DP2ReCtxANf4Xa-KeU6OZpcOupt2F9PE0QSRSKaK7IOCFX_YAe1xIEO
- A few other movies with interesting themes that might be nice to watch before a journey: Groundhog Day, Inside Out, Arrival, The Matrix, Human (multi-part documentary by Yann Arthus-Bertrand – could be heavy at parts, but also profound and rewarding), Interstellar, and Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall, and Spring (It’s on the slow side, but pretend you’re going to a film festival). If you’re a film nerd, a few others that might be interesting are The Tree of Life or A Hidden Life by Terrence Malick (to be viewed more as a poem than a narrative movie).

HIGER CONSCIOUSNESS TEACHERS

Entering into non-ordinary states can be quite disorienting and often lead to shifts in worldview, and even spirituality. You may not be interested in these things right now, but if you ever find yourself looking for additional teachers to clarify some of what you may be experiencing, these folks may be able to help.

- Eckhart Tolle (<https://tinyurl.com/EckhartTolleFacebook>)
- Ram Dass (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCiB9oMnIbl&t=2s>)
- Alan Watts (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GGefV04hOI>)
- Gangaji (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qOhl1GZc8l&t=217s>)
- Thich Nhat Hanh (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMoRtJhVoxc>)
- Pema Chodron (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eck9drOprOg&t=15173s>)
- Mooji (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdKs13kf13A>)
- Byron Katie (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzYz9CEhuXE>)
- Stanislav Grof (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mdYUmvTeig&t=3610s>)
- Buddhist philosophers
- Christian mystics
- Spiritual-oriented scientists like Lothar Shafer (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzafB6NKHis>) or Rupert Sheldrake (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKHUaNAxTg>)

JOURNAL EXERCISE – ‘DEAR PAIN’

This exercise is meant to be done at different times. For example, before each journey and after each journey, or once a day, or even once a week. You can do this at whatever interval makes sense.

- Part 1: Write a letter to your pain from yourself. You can start this with ‘Dear Pain.’
- Part 2: Write a response letter to yourself from your pain. You can start this with ‘Dear _____ (your name) _____.’
- Part 3: Write a response to your pain from yourself.
- Part 4: Write a response to yourself from your pain.
- Part 5: Keep this going for as long as you’d like.

INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK – THE HERO’S JOURNEY

The Hero's Journey is a framework that may help contextualize your own work with psychedelics. Especially as you navigate through integration process and through participating in more than a single psychedelic journey. This article explains it better than I can: <https://microdose.buzz/news/the-psychedelic-hero-s-journey-metamorphosis-in-the-natural-world/>

OTHER PREPARATIONS

These are a few other things you can do beforehand to clear the mind.

- Journal
- Meditate
- Garden
- Time in nature
- Rest and sleep
- Self care
- Set goals
- Any form of creative expression
- Massage, acupuncture, reiki, or any kind of bodywork
- Embodied movement like yoga, tai chi, or other somatic practices
- Spiritual practices
- Make a gratitude list
- Therapy
- Talk to friends/family about what you're going through so they can support you
- Spend time in a float tank (Cahaba Spa & Dermatology in Birmingham)
- 20-minute practice journey (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnz7ZT_2j4Q)
- Select a playlist on here and listen to it at home with a sleep mask on:
<https://open.spotify.com/user/7u5v7qj49c6kn4r2enuo2lb4m>
- Meditate with 'binaural beats' (search this on Youtube)
- Clean your room, car, home, office, or anywhere you spend time
- Take a walk (especially directly before the journey)
- Stretch (especially directly before the journey)
- Meditate on images from the James Webb telescope and how huge the cosmos is
- Trust yourself and do whatever feels right!

AFTER THE JOURNEY

I've included a lot of questions and ideas from different books. Feel free to skim through and pick out the bits that resonate, and disregard the rest!

JOURNAL, DIRECTLY AFTER:

****– As soon as you can afterwards, listen to the music a few times and write down everything you can remember.****

GROUNDING IDEAS, DIRECTLY AFTER (from The Psychedelics Integration Handbook):

- Walks in nature
- Hot baths
- Heavy food – or light food
- A cup of tea
- Massage
- Refraining from alcohol, cannabis, or other recreational compounds
- Drawing, painting, or any creative expression
- Moving or dancing
- Gentle music
- Touch from a loved one

- Sitting quietly and most importantly, just giving yourself space to be with what happened

24-72 HOURS AFTER:

- Remember that psychedelics allow you to more easily change your brain during and directly after the experience. Use this opportunity to be intentional about making changes you're trying to make!

WHAT EVEN IS INTEGRATION? (from The Psychedelics Integration Handbook):

- Connecting the dots between experiences that may feel isolated or disjointed
- Bringing consciousness to all that is happening to you
- Bringing all your experiences into harmony
- Moving into your life in a way that is authentic to all parts of you, even those that are not yet conscious
- Making practical changes related to the insights and observations from the journey
- Remembering that psychedelic work is a process that needs to be followed, not a single event

JOURNAL PROMPTS (from MAPS):

- What in me has been touched (what sensations, feelings, thoughts, etc.)?
- What have I discovered about therapy or about myself?
- What was hard for me and/or challenging?
- What new interests that are seeking depth and exploration have I found?
- What is it I want to take from today, and how can I apply this in my daily life?
- What homework did the medicine leave me?

QUESTIONS (from Navigating Psychedelics Integration Workbook):

- What is a message that you received during this experience? Why is this experience sticking out for you?

- Now that you have returned from your journey, how will you care for the seeds that you brought back with you? What intentions will you plant? How do you plan to create growth? And what growth or change would you like to see from this experience over the next year?

- What are the action steps you can take?

- What type of reminders can you give yourself if you start to feel like you are moving off path?

- If you have not been achieving or working toward your goals, what has been stopping you?

- How can you make some adjustments? Did you set your expectations too high? Have your priorities shifted at all or have changed direction?

- Is there an area of integration you would like to focus on? (Relationship / community, lifestyle / career, mind/body/spirit, mental / intellect, environmental, or spiritual).

QUESTIONS RELATED TO EACH DOMAIN (from Navigating Psychedelics Integration Workbook):

MENTAL AND INTELLECT

- Are there new intellectual pursuits that you may be interested in? Go back to school? Take a course? How do you mentally challenge yourself?

RELATIONSHIPS

- One of the biggest parts of integration is developing and cultivating healthy relationships that support growth. How can you work on your relationships?
- Are there ways to get involved in your community, if you are not already involved?

MIND-BODY

- This realm consists of balancing your physical health and emotional health. Are you exercising regularly? Eating healthy? What are you doing for your mental health?

ENVIRONMENTAL

- What is your physical environment like? Do you need to change scenery? Our environment can have a large impact on our health and wellness.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

- Do you have a spiritual practice? Developing a sense of spirituality can help bring meaning to life and also relate to what may have been discovered in the psychedelic space.

LIFESTYLE

- What is your work/life balance like? Are you creating enough time for fun and hobbies? In search of a new career shift?

PRACTICAL IDEAS (from Navigating Psychedelics Integration Workbook):

PHYSICAL

- Exercise daily and regularly
- Eat healthy
- Doctor checkups and visits
- Get massages
- Acupuncture
- Dance and move
- Sing
- Get outside in nature
- Make time away from telephone and technology
- Take a bath or cold shower
- Walk, run, swim, play sports, or physical hobbies
- Sexual life / needs: with your partner or with self
- Get enough sleep
- Take vacations
- Plan day trips

PSYCHOLOGICAL and MENTAL

- Exercise daily and regularly
- Personal therapy
- Read a book
- Decrease stress in your life
- Cut out toxic energy
- Make changes in your schedule or routine
- Pay attention to your inner world
- Attend to those feelings, emotions, dreams, or visions you may be experiencing
- Expand your horizons and explore something new
- Live music, workshops, sporting events, museums, nature hikes, something that you would not normally do
- Stay curious and open to your experience
- Set boundaries on different areas in your life
- Just say "no"
- Self-reflection and meditation
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Yoga

EMOTIONAL

- Spend time with friends and loved ones
- Limit time with toxic people or situations
- Reach out to someone important in your life for a talk
- Stay connected with nourishing / supporting relationships
- Affirmations, self-love, praise, and positive self-talk
- Spa night (paint nails, facial, hot bath)
- Aromatherapy
- Read favorite books

- Create space to process emotions (allow yourself to cry)
- Laugh! Or learn to laugh a little more
- Spend time with children
- Breathwork
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Allow yourself to be vulnerable and take healthy risks
- Set boundaries and limits
- Turn off the cell phone and social media
- Therapy
- Healthy food
- Comfort food
- Somatic – get in touch with your body
- Write a blog post or create an Instagram story to share a vulnerability

SPIRITUAL

- Meditation
- Self-reflection
- Astrology
- Continue to work with the plants
- Spend time with nature
- Find and connect with a spiritual mentor or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Be aware of nonmaterial aspects in your life
- Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- Ask questions and be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to you
- Pray
- Sing
- Stay open to new experiences
- Volunteer and contribute to your community
- Find a cause to back up
- Read inspirational literature
- Listen to inspirational talks and music (A few individuals in this realm are as follows: Eckhart Tolle, Ram Dass, Alan Watts, Gangaji, Pema Chodron, Thich Nhat Hanh, Stanislav Grof, as well as Buddhist philosophers, Christian Mystics, spiritual-oriented scientists like Lothar Shafer or Rupert Sheldrake, and others.)
- Aromatherapy
- Sage / smudge
- Dream work
- Trust the process

WORKPLACE and PROFESSIONAL

- Take a break during the workday (e.g., lunch)
- Connect with co-workers
- Set limits with colleagues and clients (if you can do so respectfully)
- Negotiate for your needs (pay raise, benefits, time off)
- Supervision and consultation with your employer
- Organize and prioritize your tasks / projects
- Can you say no to projects or work? (e.g. taking on new projects outside of work)
- Take advantage of time off / sick time
- Identify nourishing projects or work that are exciting, fun, and energizing
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Balance your caseload
- Arrange your workspace so it is comfortable and comforting
- Develop a peer support group
- Attend a training or workshop
- Go to a conference

- Network with others

OTHER PRACTICAL IDEAS:

- Create some way to externalize the experience enough to be able to have it reflect back to you later (for instance, artwork, writing)
- Plant the wildflower seeds you received during the journey or get an actual plant and plant it before the journey and then water it afterwards. Let it represent the growth that is occurring after your experience
- Listen to guided meditations or the journey music to get back to the experience

ART

- Collage, mandala drawing, “Child-like” coloring, play-dough or clay work, nature collage (use items you found on a nature walk), painting, photography, mask making, digital graphic art design, vision board
- Create something you can look at regularly to remind you of the journey

WRITING

- Free association, storytelling of the experience, mind mapping, journaling, research writing, poetry

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

- Nature walk, walking meditation, yoga, swimming, bodywork, drumming, playing music, bicycling, playing at a park, visiting an art museum, workout, sex, reading, researching your session, bathing / showering, float tank

RELIGIOUS or SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

- Prayer, participating in designed ritual, mudras, going to your place of worship, isolating with self, going into nature, dreamwork

INTEGRATION EXERCISE – INTEGRATION ALTAR:

- Make an ‘integration altar,’ or a special place you can go to do integration work, whatever that may mean to you. You could put out some flowers, candles, or meaningful items to liven it up.

INTEGRATION EXERCISE – MIND MAPPING (from The Psychedelics Integration Handbook):

- Mind mapping is a highly effective way of getting information in and out of your brain.
- Sit for a moment and reflect on the general theme of your psychedelic experience. This could be for 5 minutes or a couple of days. (In many situations this could be one or up to a number of themes. Our request is to attempt to integrate no more than three main themes. Examples of a theme could be ‘Drink.’)
- Start by placing the main themes in circles in the center of your paper.
- Explore for a moment, what thoughts relate to the main theme. These are your sub themes; think about them as your branches. For example, sub theme: tea, coffee, water.
- Continue writing; keep the branches short phrases or words that reflect your psychedelic experience.
- Incorporate symbols, names, and colors to your sub themes. Challenge yourself to expand even more from your subthemes. For example, detailed sub themes: white tea, cold press coffee, and sparkling flavored water.
- You are finished when you have exhausted your thoughts regarding the map.

INTEGRATION EXERCISE: EXPLORING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH DEATH/WRITING AN OBITUARY:

- Write an obituary and/or explore your relationship with death with these questions. This is designed to refocus your life and prioritize what’s important. Feel free to get creative with this! This can be a story, poem, visual work of art, or anything.
- What and/or who did you impact or change? Why?
- What character traits and values did you consistently demonstrate over your life? At your core, who were you?
- Who did you care for? How did you impact or change this person/ these people?
- What were major accomplishments in your life? Think about certain ages of your life; for example 40, 50, 60, 70?
- What did you show interest in? What were you passionate or enthusiastic about?
- What was your legacy?

ADDITIONAL INTEGRATION JOURNAL PROMPTS (from Journey Space):

- Journey date
- Note your set and setting going into the Journey.
- Make a few notes on your preparation and practices leading up to the Journey.

- How were you feeling before the Journey?
- What was your intention?
- Did it affect your experience and/or how it was addressed?
- What feelings did you experience during the Journey?
- Did you see any images during the Journey?
- Did you receive any messages or insights from the Journey?
- What was the experience in your body?
- What are you now wanting to let go of or change?
- Do you feel you have any unhealthy mental or physical attachments? Are you ready to let them go?
- Do you have any patterns or cycles in which you feel trapped?
- What are you asking for or welcoming in?
- What is your ideal vision of your future?
- What are small and attainable steps to get there?
- Does the world look different now?
- Did you experience struggle in the Journey? Where did your resistance lie?
- Did you have any realizations about your present life?
 - Your relationships?
 - Your work?
 - Your family?
 - Your body/health/diet?
- Is there someone you would like to speak to or forgive (including yourself)? For what?
- Did you have any big-picture understandings about life, yourself or the world?
- Do you have any plans for integration?
- Any notes about your setup, preparation, or ideas for next ceremony.

QUESTIONS LOOKING FORWARD (from The Psychedelics Integration Handbook):

- How do you intend to use this work in your life?
- What are some of the questions that have come up as you integrate your psychedelic experiences? For example, consider cosmological, spiritual, family of origin, or mental health issues.
- What are some characteristics that give you reassurance that your psychedelic work is benefitting you?
- What are some personal ways to integrate your psychedelic work that help you?
- What do you want to do next as it relates to the topic of psychedelics?
- Are there certain psychedelic experiences you want to have? For example, a psilocybin, LSD, or ayahuasca session performed in a traditional manner?
- How would you know that you are ready to dive in again to a psychedelic experience?

ONE FINAL NOTE ABOUT PSYCHEDELIC ENTHUSIASM:

- After a profound experience with psychedelics, you may be tempted to tell everyone in your life that they must try it for themselves. While I very much relate to this enthusiasm, everyone is on their own timeline with things like this, and it's not something that can be rushed. The best thing you can do is make and sustain positive changes within yourself. People will notice these shifts, and they'll be curious. When they ask what you've been doing, that's a great time to share what's worked for you 😊