

# The Psychedelic Renaissance

by Anya Oleksiuk



The  
Psychedelic  
Society

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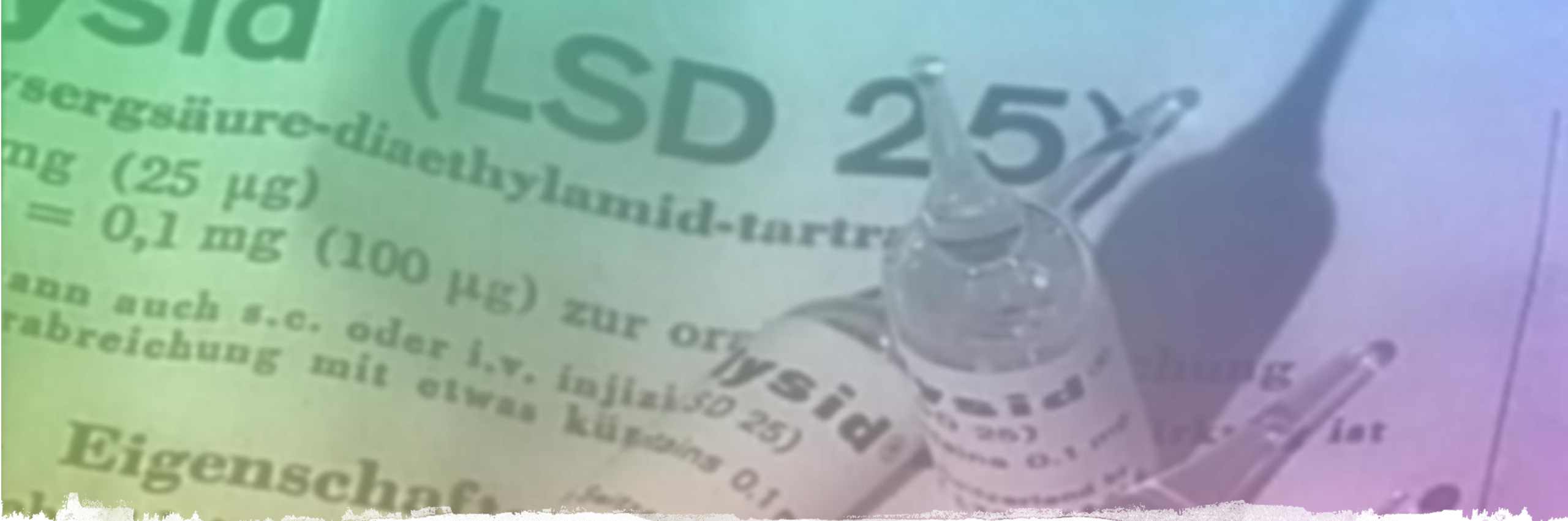
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- Psychedelics and mental health
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# About me

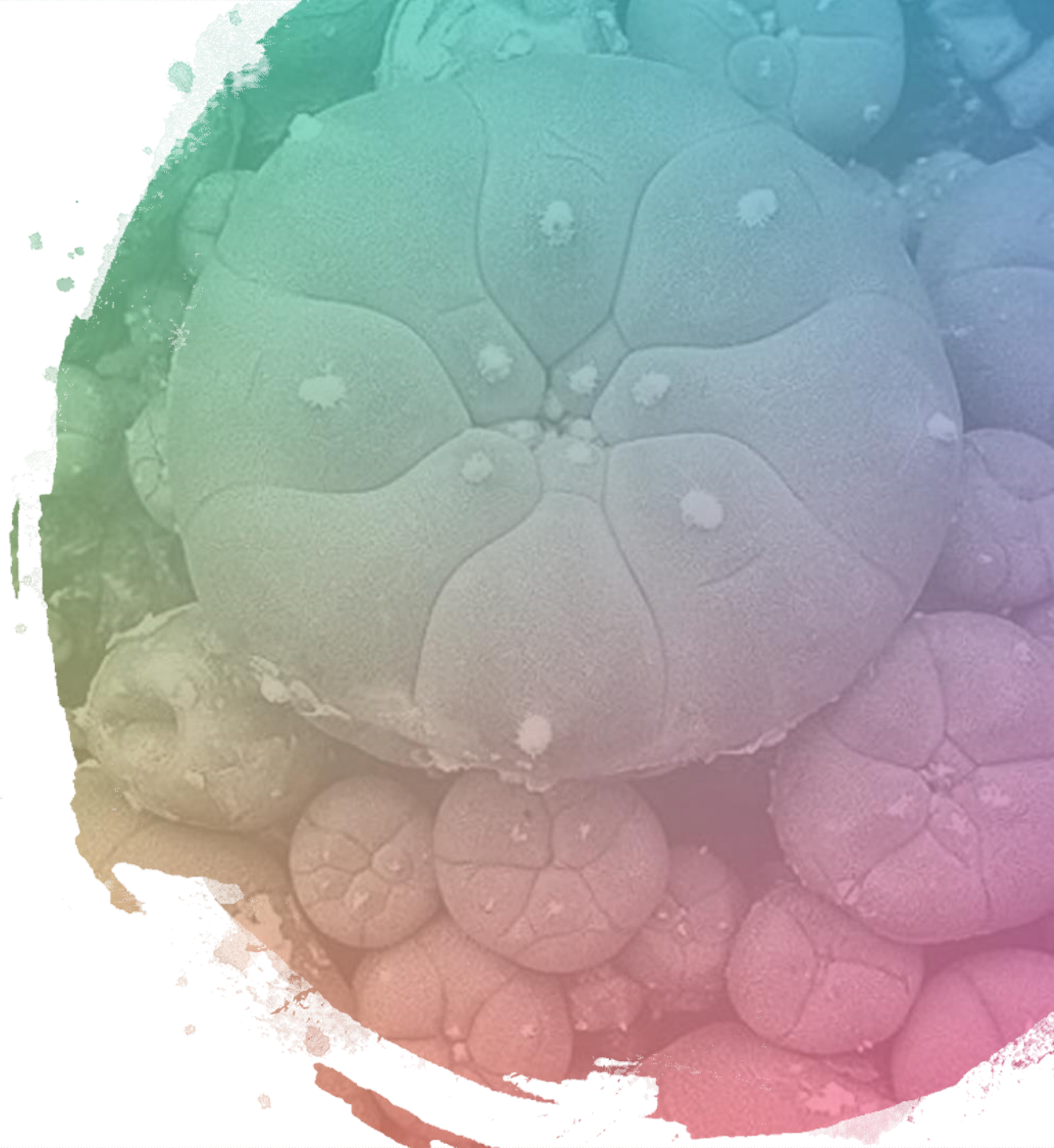
- Filmmaker and creative content producer
- Co-director of The Psychedelic Society
- Director and Producer of The Psychedelic Renaissance
- Psychedelics helped me to heal clinical depression
- My mission is to remove stigma from the psychedelic substances



## Three modern psychedelic eras

# The First Psychedelic Era 1880 - 1930

- Mescaline from peyote known for a long time
- First formal scientific report for *The British Medical Journal* by American neurologist **Silas Weir Mitchell**
- Two reports by British physician and psychologist **Henry Havelock Ellis** – *The Phenomena of Mescal Intoxication* and *Mescal: A new Artificial Paradise*
- German pharmacologist **Lewis Lewin** – first classification of various psychoactive drugs: euphorants – heroine, inebriants – alcohol and **phantastica** – later psychedelics
- German pharmacologist **Arthur Carl Wilhelm Hefner** isolated mescaline from peyote in 1892





## The Second Psychedelic Era 1938 - 1976

- 1938 - **Albert Hoffman** synthesises LSD with the main intention to obtain a respiratory and circulatory stimulant
- April 1943 - Accidental ingestion of LSD and Bicycle Day (19 April)
- 1947 – first academic description of the mental effects of LSD by **Werner Stoll**, University of Zurich
- 1952 - Dr Ronald Sandison develops research in UK – Psychotherapy program at Powick Hospital in Gloucestershire for treatment resistant patients. He introduces term '**psycholytic**' (**mind-loosening**) to describe effect of LSD
- 1950s and 1960s – Psychiatrist **Dr Humphrey Osmond** uses LSD to treat alcohol dependence – Delirium Tremens (severe dangerous psychosis) vs psychedelic experience – 50-90% abstinence
- 1953 Osmond introduced **Aldous Huxley** to psychedelics. They coined the term 'psychedelics' and in 1957 it's used publicly at a meeting of the NY Academy of Sciences
- 1953 - **Robert Gordon Wasson** and Valentina Wasson travel to Mexico and meet Maria Sabina with her magic mushrooms. In 1957 they both publish reports on their experience
- **From 1954 Stanislav Grof** starts being involved in the psychedelic research as an observer and later starts study at Hopkins University in US – prenatal and birth experiences can be re-experienced in altered states of consciousness



## The Second Psychedelic Era 1938-1976

- 1960 - **Timothy Leary** travels to Mexico to try magic mushrooms and sets up the Harvard Psilocybin Project with **Richard Alpert** – 36 inmates at the local prison – recidivism rates reduced from 60% to 20%
- 1962 – British researcher Michael Hollingshead dosed Leary with LSD (in mayo jar) – various projects to spread LSD among artists, writers etc. – gets thrown out of Harvard
- By 1965 over two million people in the States had taken LSD beyond the confines of the clinical or military environment.
- The Hippie movement was growing all over United States and reached its peak in 1967 at the first ‘Summer of Love’ when a large amount of White Lightning LSD, created by Owsley especially for this occasion, was distributed freely to the audience.
- LSD was made illegal in The US in 1966 and was blamed for the total moral collapse of the idealistic 1950’s vision of the American family and the American Dream. The Food and Drug Administration shut down all research, Sandoz stopped distributing it and psychedelic therapy was forced underground.

# The Psychedelic Renaissance

- 1976 Sasha Shulgin introduces MDMA to psychotherapist Leo Zeff but the drug is banned in 1984
- Pressure group formed to fight the ban - Rick Doblin forms MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) – toxicity tests
- 1992 – 1995 – FDA approved MAPS study of MDMA on patients with terminal cancer
- 1993 – David Nichols, George Greer, Mark Geyer, Dennis McKenna and Charles Grob founded the Heffner Institute – board of high level clinical and research scientists from around the world
- 1995 – pioneering DMT study launched the new renaissance of the psychedelic research
- 1998 – MAPS sponsored ayahuasca study led by Jordi Riba
- 2000 – Rick Doblin and Michael Mithoefer get approval for their MDMA for PTSD study





# The Psychedelic Renaissance

- 1998 – Amanda Feilding founded The Beckley Foundation that lobbies for changes to international drug laws
- 2005 Amanda Feilding teams up with prof David Nutt from Bristol University (and later Imperial College) and start a programme of the most innovative psychedelic studies – neuroimaging, therapeutic use of LSD, psilocybin, cannabis, DMT and MDMA



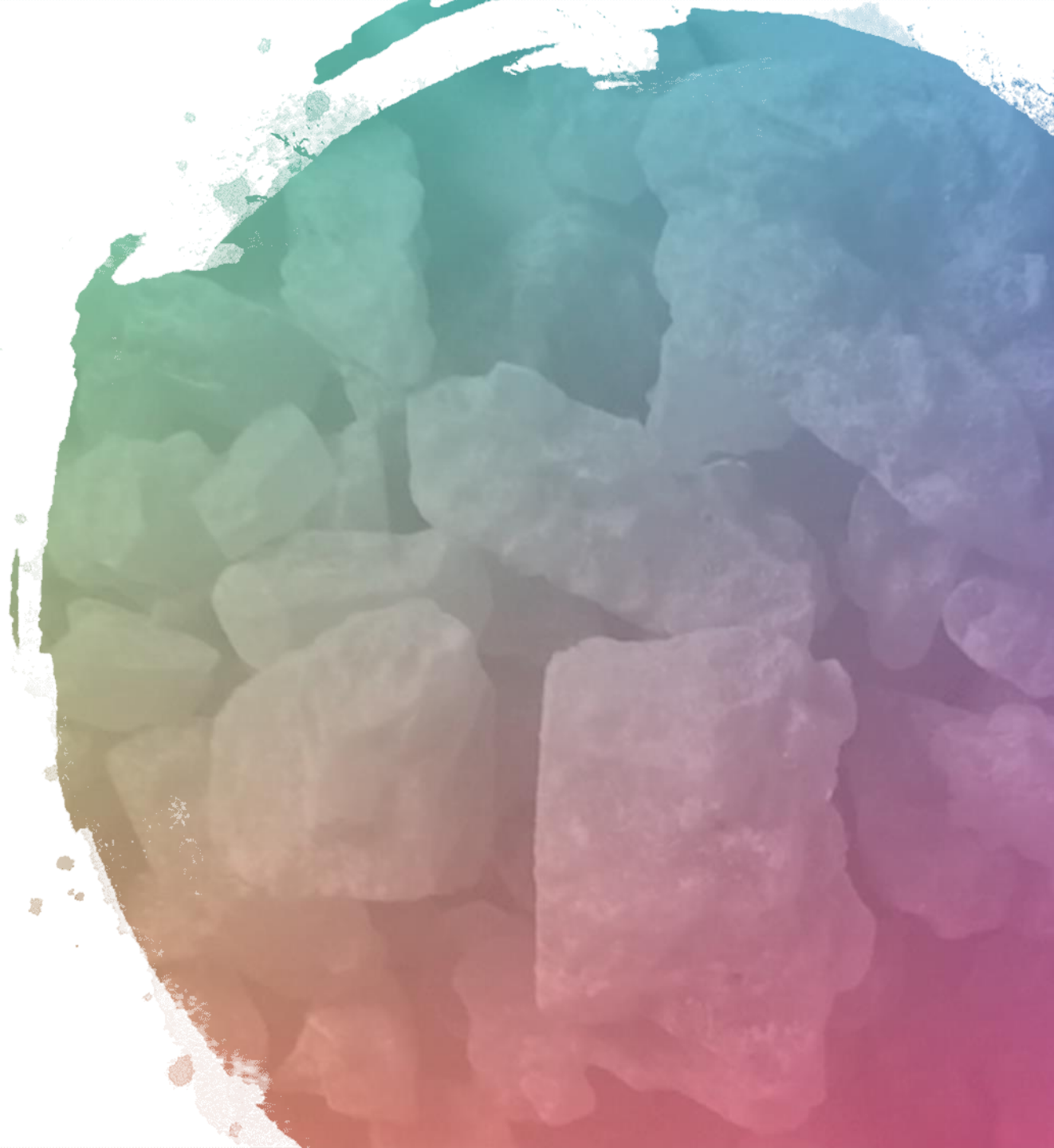
# The Psychedelic Renaissance

- 2011 – First Breaking Convention in UK
- 2014 – The psychedelic Society of UK is founded. Now over 80 societies around the world.
- 2016 – Beyond Psychedelics in Prague
- 2017, the FDA granted Breakthrough Therapy Designation to MDMA for the treatment of PTSD. This means MDMA will now be studied for PTSD in Phase 3 trials
- 2017 - Psilocybin for treatment-resistant depression: fMRI-measured brain mechanisms – Ronin Carhart-Harris
- 2017 Chris Timmermann (Imperial College) runs a study on neuropsychological actions of intravenous DMT using fMRI and EEG
- 2018 – Dr Ben Sessa (University of Bristol) starts his MDMA assisted psychotherapy for alcohol addictions



*Psychedelic therapy and  
psychedelic research is  
the **pinnacle of  
neuroscience today**"*

– Dr Ben Sessa



# The Psychedelic Renaissance is happening now

- Top neuroscience institutes around the world have psychedelic research programs currently running:
  - Oxford University
  - University College London
  - University College Los Angeles
  - Imperial College London
  - The Maudsley Hospital (King's College)
  - Johns Hopkins University
  - University of Bristol
  - University of Cardiff
  - and more.
- New generation of users come out of the “psychedelic closet”.
- Psychedelic Research has attracted many generous donations over last three years
- Psychedelics enter the mainstream



35,264 views | Nov 30, 2018, 06:32pm

## Psychedelic Retreats And The Future Of Mental Health: A Review



**Gregory Ferenstein** Contributor  
Sharing Economy  
*I write about technology, politics and personal health.*

## The extraordinary therapeutic potential of psychedelic drugs, explained

I spent months talking to psychedelic guides and researchers. Here's what I learned.

By Sean Illing | @seanilling | sean.illing@vox.com | Updated Jan 13, 2019, 8:31am EST

## Denver could become the first US city to decriminalize magic mushrooms



By Mallory Hughes and Jacqueline Howard, CNN  
Updated 2102 GMT (0502 HKT) January 9, 2019



Wed, Feb 13, 2019

### OPINION

## LSD, MUSHROOMS AND THE BRAIN: WE DISCOVERED MICRODOSING COULD BOOST CREATIVITY AND WISDOM | OPINION

ROTEM PETRANKER AND THOMAS ANDERSON

ON 11/6/18 AT 3:35 AM



# A top psychedelic scientist says 'the climate's looking good' for magic mushrooms and MDMA to turn into medicines at a gathering of the world's billionaires



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**Are Psychedelic Drugs the Next Medical Breakthrough?**

126 Comments





Quelle: Sarah Sloat  
inverse.com

13.12.2017

Billionaire Peter Thiel is Funding Psychedelics Research for a Feel-Good Reason

Peter Thiel, creator of PayPal and destroyer of Gawker, is generally not known for projects designed to help mankind. He's more of a young-blood-taking, elite shadow organization-joining, Donald Trump-supporting sort of guy. However, la...

**How to Change Your Mind**

What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence

**Michael Pollan**

Author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*



# **Psychedelics and mental health**



## Common reports

### Psychedelics...

- Bring back sense of wonder
- Bring a feeling of oneness/connectedness with the world/universe/nature/everything
- Cause ego loss – self-transcendence (the overcoming of the limits of the individual self)
- Increase openness and empathy

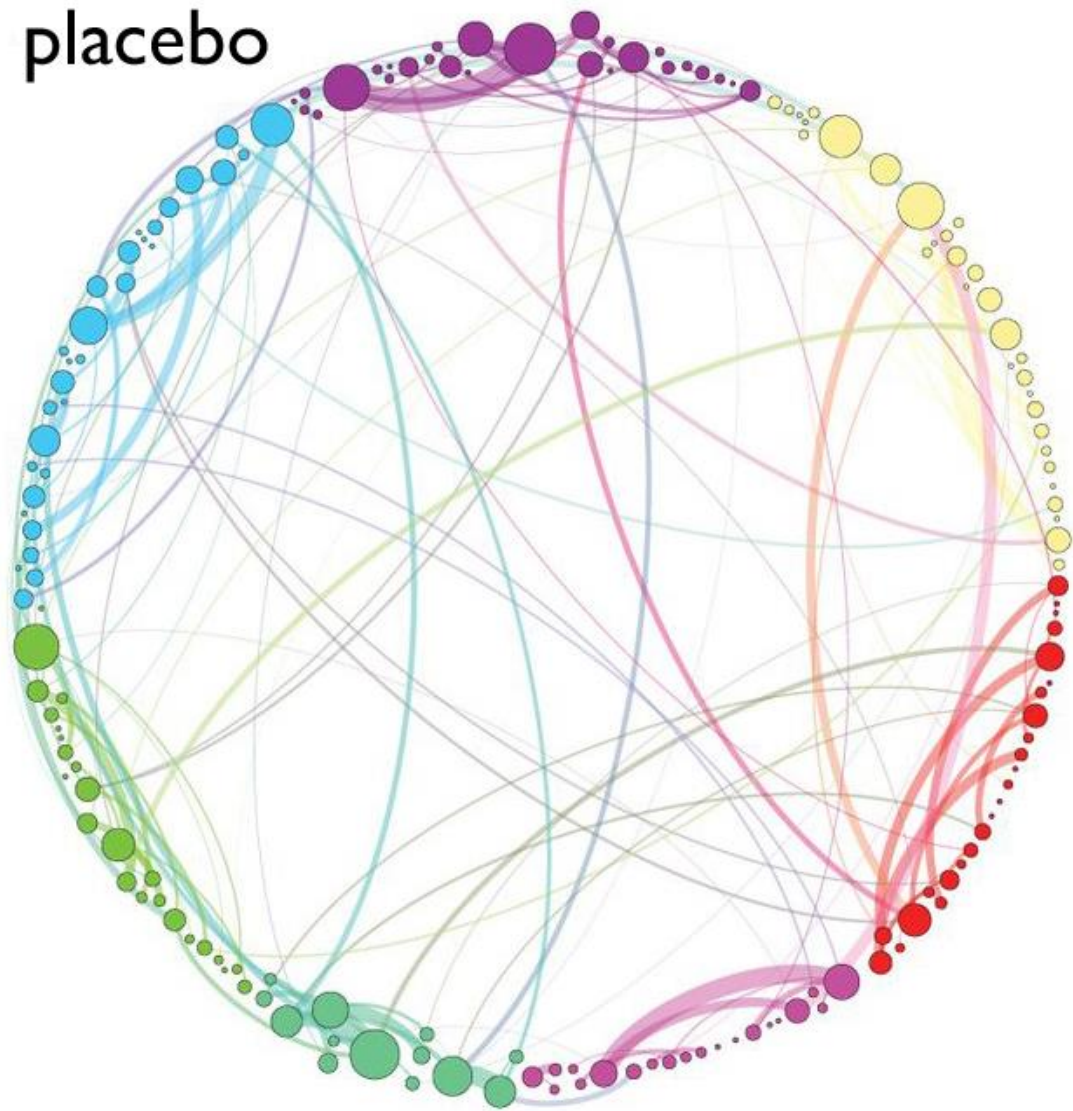


# Brain imaging

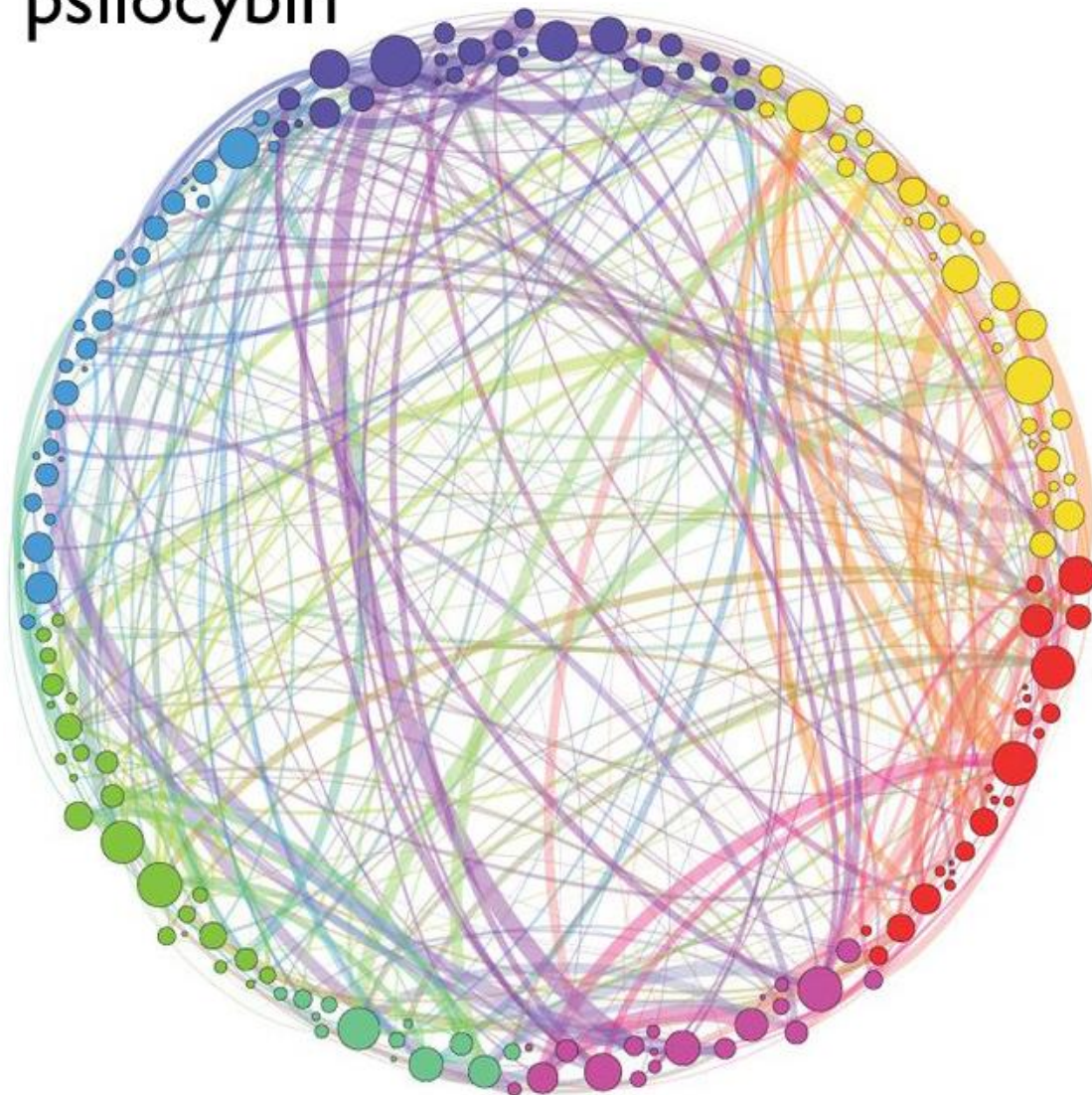
- Psychedelics 'reset' the brain networks associated with depression, effectively enabling patients to be lifted from the depressed state
- Initial disintegration of brain networks during the drug 'trip', is followed by a re-integration after people have 'come down' from a psychedelic
- Comparison of images of patients' brains before and one day after the treatment revealed changes in brain activity that were associated with marked and lasting reductions in depressive symptoms
- Patient reported benefits lasting up to five weeks after treatment



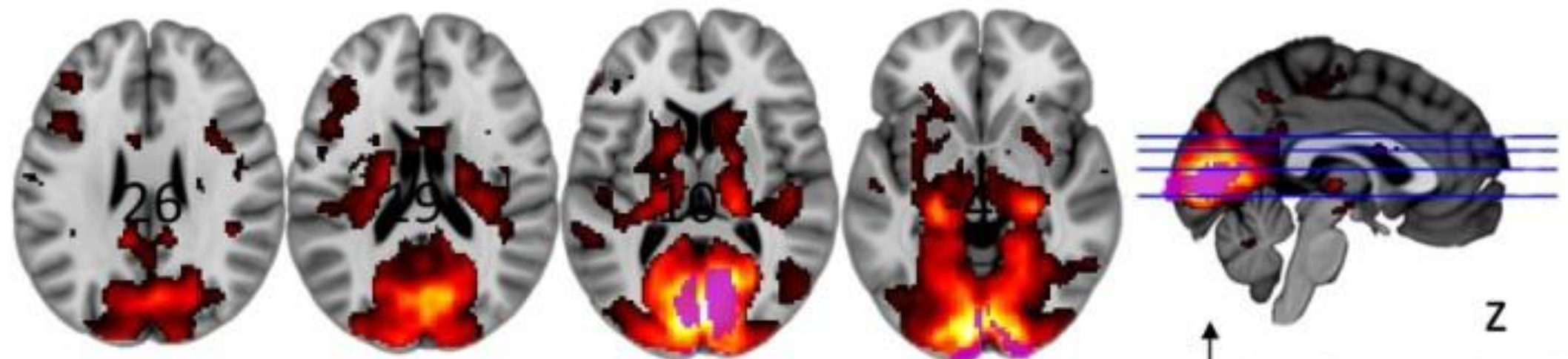
placebo



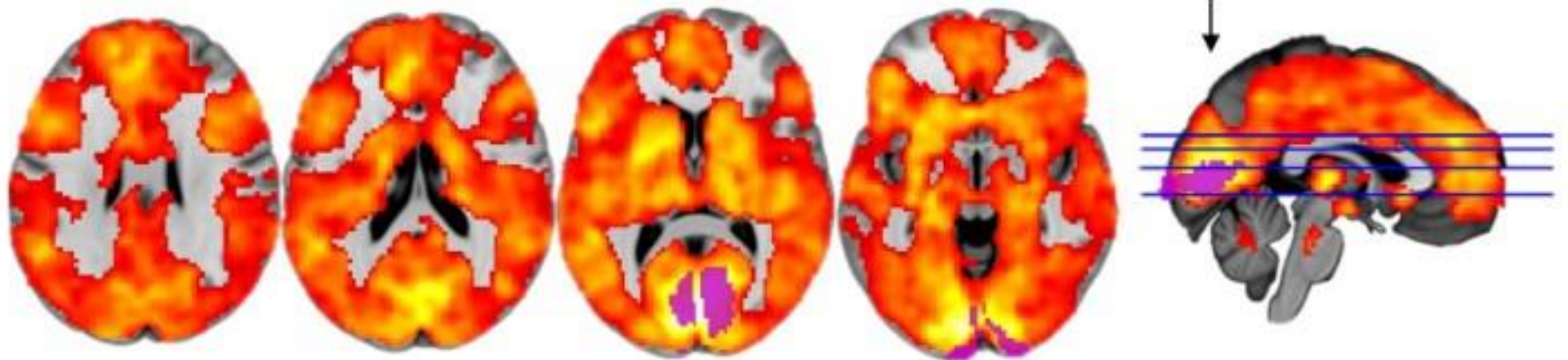
psilocybin



Placebo



LSD



*Psilocybin may be giving  
these individuals the  
temporary **'kick start'**  
they need to break out of  
their depressive states*

– Dr Robin Carhart-Harris





# Removing stigma from psychedelics



## My mission

- To develop free education content about psychedelics to give people a tool to spread the awareness further
- To raise public awareness and change misconceptions surrounding psychedelics
- To see the outdated drug laws change due to public demand
- To see legal, licensed therapeutic psychedelic retreats operating around the world

# How can you get involved?

- Sign our petition to reschedule psilocybin: [psychedelicsociety.org.uk/reschedule](https://psychedelicsociety.org.uk/reschedule)
- Consider becoming a member and actively help us to shape the *Psychedelic Society* - [psychedelicsociety.org.uk/become-a-member](https://psychedelicsociety.org.uk/become-a-member)
- Join one of our events: [psychedelicsociety.org.uk/events](https://psychedelicsociety.org.uk/events)
- Watch our teaser and support our documentary: [The Psychedelic Renaissance Documentary teaser](#)