

Is psychedelic-assisted group therapy the wave of the future?

Researchers are beginning to investigate psychedelic-assisted group therapy as a way to let patients connect more deeply, exploring the inner depths of their thoughts together, and to broaden access to [the potential medical benefits of psychedelics](#), including an increased ability to “reset” the brain.

Though group therapy has incorporated different psychotherapeutic approaches over the years and went virtual during the pandemic, the basic tenets—adults gathering to talk and weather shared struggles, among them addiction and depression—have remained largely unchanged.

Some researchers say that by sharing [potentially life-altering psychedelic experiences](#) together, people could strengthen social connections and boost their sense of belonging, helping disenfranchised people reconnect with society. The shared experiences could also amplify accountability between members of the group. In a social context, being part of a group, being selfless and helping others triggers the reward centers of the brain, research shows.

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“The idea is you unlock people’s capacity to dive deeper into the emotional experience,” says Dr. Melyn Leszcz, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Toronto and president of the American Group Psychotherapy Association, who has reviewed the limited reports on psychedelics but doesn’t consider himself an advocate yet. “The psychedelic drugs seem to turbocharge what existential confrontation would do for many people.”

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