



*Journey Preparation Book*  
Trip Without Falling

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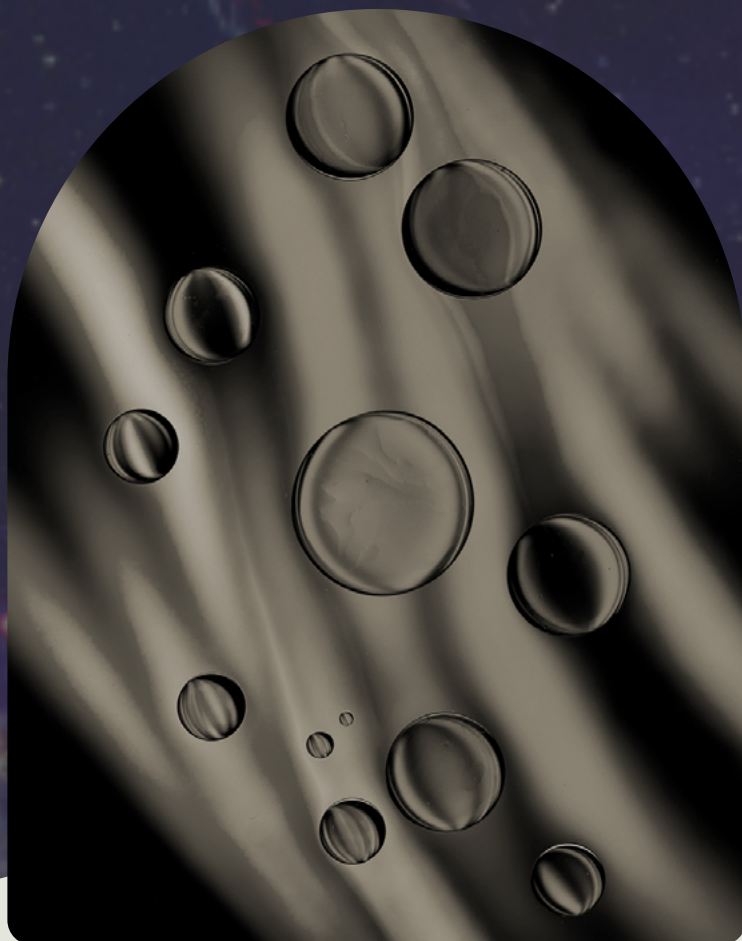
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## Our Story

Looking back to when we first started exploring psychedelics, we wanted best practices and an easy-to-follow guide but could not find one. In the spirit of reciprocity, we created these guidebooks to help people understand and reduce the risks of psilocybin, LSD and MDMA. We have pored over research, listened to podcasts, attended conferences, webinars and integration circles, and taken courses. We brought what we learned into these interactive guidebooks. We hope you enjoy them and trip without falling.

## Disclaimer

Entheo does not encourage, endorse, or promote any illegal activities or reckless drug use. Entheo bears no responsibility for anyone's decision to do so or the outcome of any psychedelic experience. Ultimately it is the user who bears full responsibility. We fully endorse harm reduction, a pragmatic, compassionate, and evidence-based approach to lessening the harms associated with drug use. This is a movement that recognizes the rights of drug users to explore non-ordinary states of consciousness as safely as possible.

All drugs carry risk and taking the right steps to educate and prepare for a psychedelic journey, does not preclude someone from a difficult experience. Use the following guidebook as a resource to navigate risk, facilitate self-discovery, optimize the experience and build an informed health decision.

# Safety Checklist

This guidebook helps you think through a possible experience with psilocybin, LSD or MDMA: your health, reasons, support and surroundings. Preparation can reduce some risks, but cannot guarantee a safe, positive or helpful outcome. When travelling to new territory, it is good to prepare. It is also reasonable to wait or decide against going.

## Pre-Flight Checklist

- I reviewed my health, medications and any need for clinical advice.
- I understand the limits of drug checking.
- I understand that potency and responses vary.
- I prepped my set, setting and intention.
- I have arranged sober support and an emergency plan.
- I know to go with the flow and when to ask for help in my journey.
- I plan to integrate insights after my journey.
- I recognize the uncertainty and unpredictability inherent to psychedelics.
- I take full responsibility for the outcome of my experience.

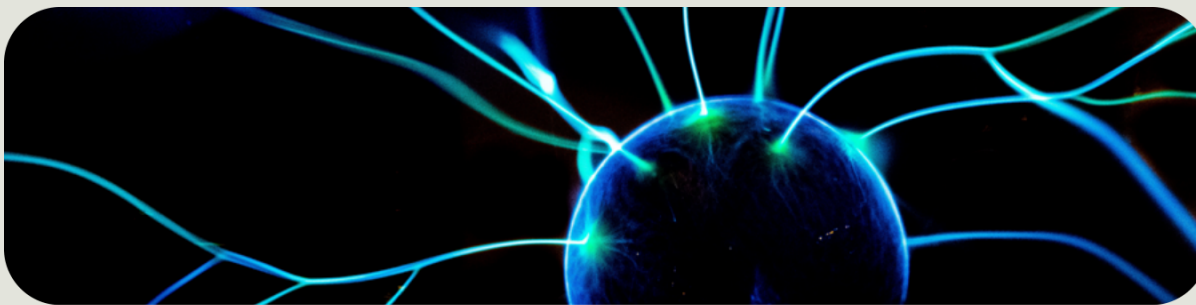
**Note:** this is an incomplete list but serves as a minimum.

If you catch yourself thinking there is a lot of information in this book, you're right, there is. At a minimum, complete the **Safety Checklist, Medical Screening and Safety Overview** sections. After, a good next step would be to review the contents page and let your curiosity guide your readings. We hope you enjoy this first step of your psychedelic journey as you embark on a journey of self-discovery and prepare yourself for the road ahead.



## *Safety Overview*

No drugs are without risk, including psychedelics. An informed decision means considering your health, medications, reasons and support alongside the possible benefits and harms. It does not mean every risk is known. Research with screened participants and close supervision cannot establish safety in a private setting. Preparation matters, but no one can predict exactly what an experience will bring. Use the medical-screening questions to identify what needs professional assessment. Waiting or deciding against an experience can be a thoughtful choice too.



As a first step to becoming more informed, slowly review the following principles of safe and responsible psychedelic use:

**one.**

Psychedelics are not for everyone. Bipolar disorder, psychosis vulnerability, significant suicidality, clinical instability, seizures and serious medical conditions need appropriate professional assessment. Medication review is part of that assessment; a checklist cannot clear you to proceed.

**two.**

**For those with mental health conditions, it would be prudent to seek professional help before taking a psychedelic.** Ask your healthcare provider's advice if psychedelics should or could be integrated into your care plan. Even in the absence of a mental health condition, it is helpful to seek psychotherapeutic support and guidance to learn about areas of your life you may be grappling with and other personalized areas you are looking to grow in.

**three.**

Medication safety. Do not abruptly stop an SSRI or another psychiatric medication to prepare for a journey. Routine tapering is not universally required. Continuing, changing or tapering is an individual decision with the prescribing clinician, considering the medication, psychedelic and your stability. Withdrawal and recurrence of the underlying condition may matter more than a reduced psychedelic effect. See the medication appendix.

**four.**

Do not increase a psychedelic dose to overcome medication-related blunting. Feeling less does not reliably mean less drug is in the body. If effects or interactions are uncertain, seek a medication review rather than experimenting. Consider your reasons, current health and available support; postponing or not proceeding are valid choices. Evidence reviewed September 27, 2026.

five. **Consider having a trip sitter with you.** Having a trusted, compatible, and sober sitter to be with you during your journey is a good way to reduce potential harms and enhance the experience. Your sitter sits beside you to provide safety, support and reassurance. Tell them what psychedelic medicine you are using and how to **trip sit**.

six. **Culture as context:** Reverence reduces risks and can help lead to positive outcomes. Keep in mind many cultures around the world use psychedelics for ceremonies and rituals, which are approached with great respect for life-enhancing purposes. Be intentional and take care prior to, during and after the journey.

seven. **Using too casually:** Being too casual or mixing alcohol, cannabis, caffeine, tobacco, stimulants or other drugs with psychedelics increases the likelihood of a difficult experience. If you are having full breakthrough experiences frequently, such as 2-4 times per month, ask yourself why you are using and consider speaking to your healthcare provider and look into support.

eight. **Beliefs and values:** Be mindful that psychedelics can lead to changes in belief systems, worldviews, personality and values. Avoid big life changes such as switching jobs, changing your education path, intervening in a relationship (unless you are at risk of harm) immediately after your journey. Take time to make sense of your experience through conversation and journaling.

nine. **Tie up loose ends:** Incomplete tasks, chores or work can make the mind wander and get one stuck in thought loops during the psychedelic experience. Take care of anything that might distract you. If you have specific anxieties, plan ahead where possible and accommodate prior to your experience. If you have a trip sitter, let them know about these.

ten. **Make a plan for difficult experiences:** Many first-time psychedelic users may be held back from having a psychedelic experience due to fear or anxiety surrounding the risk of a difficult experience otherwise known as a 'bad trip.' These experiences can occur and when supported in the right way, the experience can often be transformative and high in personal meaning. Develop a plan if things get challenging: have extra comforts on-hand such as pillows or blankets, water, another music list ready, a grounding technique or a well rehearsed mantra.

If you experience a mental health crisis after any psychedelic experience, it is important to seek professional treatment. If possible, seek out a professional who understands psychedelic experiences. Check the **MAPS** Integration List or the **Fireside Project** as a place to begin.

# Medical Screening

Before a psychedelic journey, consider the risks and whether the timing is right. A medical screen covers physical and mental health, medications and recent changes. A private setting does not remove these concerns. If life is unsettled, postponing may be wiser. This checklist starts an assessment; it does not clear you to proceed. See the medication appendix for evidence and questions for your prescriber.

As a first step, go through the medical screening checklist, consider timing and do your own research to see if psychedelics are right for you.

Use the following information as a guideline on when to avoid or when to consider taking psychedelics:

## When To Avoid Psychedelics

- You are under the age of 19.
- You are pregnant, nursing or trying to conceive.
- You have uncontrolled high blood pressure.
- You have an uncontrolled heart condition.
- You have had a recent surgery or recovering from a significant physical injury.
- You want to rebel against, escape or avoid some given situation.
- You have active or recently active suicidality.
- You have a family history of Schizophrenia.
- You have Schizophrenia or Borderline Personality Disorder.
- You have an unstable mental illness such as bipolar disorder or psychosis.
- You have an uncontrolled eating disorder.
- You have uncontrolled anger issues.
- Lithium, MAOIs or complex medication combinations need professional review. Do not stop prescribed treatment to make a journey possible.
- Medication changes have left you unwell; seek assessment.
- Review tramadol, other medicines and supplements with a clinician.
- You are going through a significant life change and have an unstable living situation.

## When To Consider Taking Psychedelics

### When You Are Curious About:

- Experiencing other states of consciousness.
- Find new avenues to Improve well-being.
- Explore purported enhancements to mental flexibility or creativity
- Improving self-acceptance
- Finding new perspectives on personal issues.
- Feeling more connected.
- Exploring your purpose or meaning at home, at work or in life.

### You Are Exploring Other Options To Manage:

- Depression and Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- End of life anxiety
- Substance abuse and addiction disorders
- Cluster headaches and chronic pain
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder

For more information on the psychological and physical risks associated with psychedelic use review you can find it [here](#). More information can be found on the [Resources](#) page.

# Psilocybin, LSD and MDMA

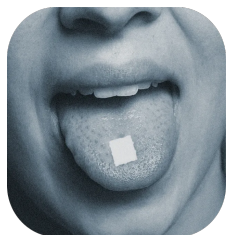
People describe a wide range of experiences. The accounts and research below may help you understand what can happen and think through your preparation.



## Psilocybin

People describe vivid colours, absorbing music, laughter, tears and changes in the sense of time. Early on, nausea or restlessness can accompany these shifts. [1, 2]

[Read the Psilocybin guide →](#)



## LSD

Participants describe changes in perception and a strong response to music. Thoughts may feel connected or repetitive. LSD generally lasts longer than psilocybin. [1, 6]

[Read the LSD guide →](#)



## MDMA

Personal accounts describe warmth and closeness; controlled studies also record positive emotional effects. Some people feel tense, anxious or emotionally exposed. [3, 4, 7]

[Read the MDMA guide →](#)

## During the experience

Ask for support if you feel overwhelmed. You can pause, change your surroundings or speak with your sitter. Give yourself time afterward to consider any memories or insights before drawing conclusions.

Evidence reviewed: September 27, 2026. Sources on the next page.

# Understanding *the differences*

How an experience feels depends on the person, the compound, their health, medications, expectations and surroundings. Personal accounts can help explain that variation.



## Potency varies

Mushrooms, tabs and pills can vary in strength. Research uses known substances with screening and monitoring, which differs from an unsupervised experience. Avoid increasing the amount to compensate for medication-related blunting. [1, 4, 5]



## Allow time for the experience

In one controlled comparison, effects averaged about six hours for psilocybin and nine to eleven for LSD, with substantial variation. MDMA commonly lasts several hours. Allow time to rest afterward and avoid driving while affected or sleep-deprived. [1, 4]



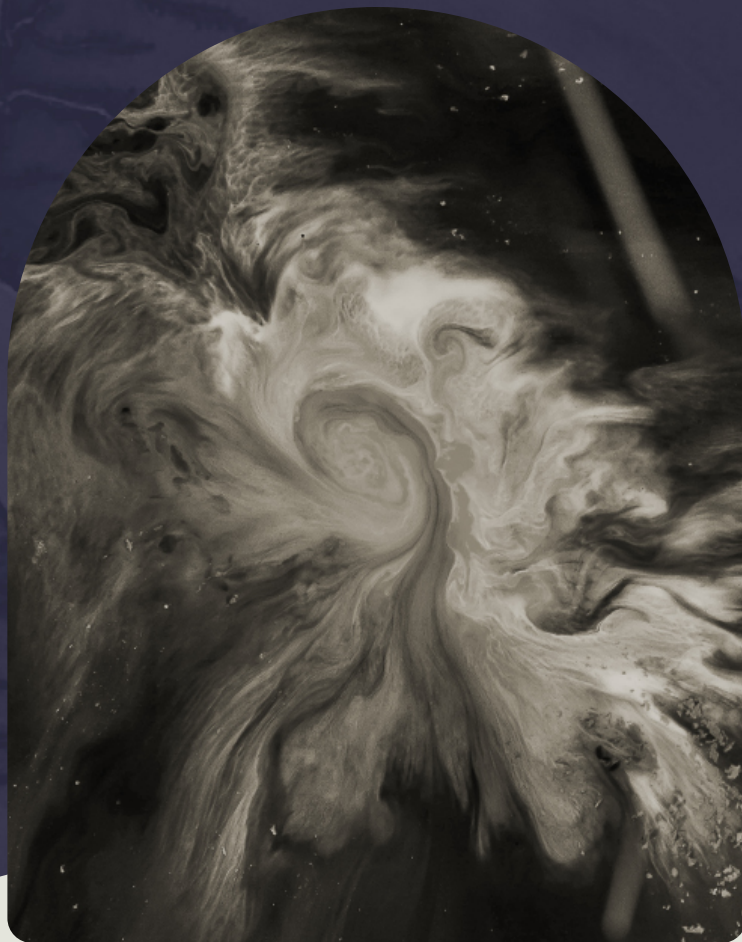
## Keep support available

People describe different responses to these compounds. Discuss what support you would find helpful and agree on boundaries beforehand. Your needs may change during the experience. [1, 3, 4]

## Sources and limits

These sources include personal accounts, participant interviews and controlled research. Each offers a different way to understand the experience and its risks.

1. Holze et al. (2022): LSD and psilocybin comparison
2. Qualitative mushroom come-up / come-down study (2025)
3. Holze et al. (2020): acute LSD and MDMA effects
4. MDMA pharmacology and health review (2025)
5. Chemical analysis of Psilocybe mushrooms (2022)
6. LSD participant interviews (2022)
7. A personal account of MDMA and connection — TIME (2023)



## Set And Setting

*“Of course, the drug dose does not produce the transcendent experience. It merely acts as a chemical key — it opens the mind, frees the nervous system of its ordinary patterns and structures. The nature of the experience depends almost entirely on set and setting. Set denotes the preparation of the individual, including his personality structure and his mood at the time. Setting is physical — the weather, the room’s atmosphere; social — feelings of persons present towards one another; and cultural — prevailing views as to what is real. It is for this reason that manuals or guide-books are necessary. Their purpose is to enable a person to understand the new realities of the expanded consciousness, to serve as road maps for new interior territories which modern science has made accessible.”*

— Timothy Leary

A historical perspective, not a complete explanation: the compound, potency, health and medications also matter. Set and setting cannot guarantee an outcome.

Set and setting are among the most influential factors you can prepare for. Psychedelics can amplify what you see, feel, think and hear. Tending to your mindset and surroundings supports both safety and a sense of safety.



The Set is your internal state: personality, preparation, intention, mood, expectations, fears and wishes. Feeling calm and relaxed may carry into the experience.

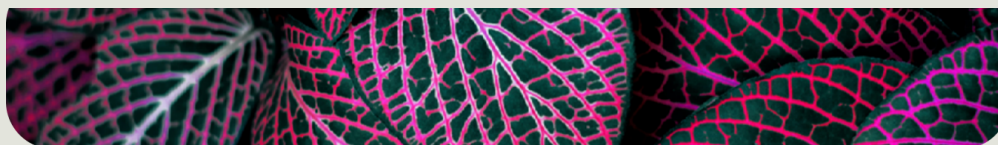


The Setting is the physical, emotional, social and cultural environment. Familiar, safe surroundings can help a journeyer feel more comfortable than an unfamiliar setting.



Music has long been thought of as an important part of the psychedelic experience. Music has been characterized in terms of supporting specific emotional experiences, such as peak or mystical experiences or emotional catharsis. Even the use of specific musical pieces or styles of music that support specific phases of experience (e.g. ‘onset of effects’, ‘peak intensity of drug action’, and ‘return to normal consciousness’) are at times integrated into an experience.

Bill Richards, a psychologist at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and the primary curator of the Hopkins psychedelics playlist thinks of music “as a nonverbal support system, sort of like the net for a trapeze artist. If all is going well, you’re not even aware that the net is there — you don’t even hear the music — but if you start getting anxious, or if you need it, it’s immediately there to provide a structure.” Music may also play a role in changing the tone of the experience. For example, if a journeyer is having a difficult experience, switching the music to another list or a nostalgic song may bring them to a better place.



# Prep The Set

Psychedelic experiences can be sensitive to mindset and surroundings. Preparation may support a sense of safety, but cannot guarantee comfort or benefit. See the Integration Book evidence review for the neuroscience and its limits.

## The Set: The Mindset And Intention Of The Journeyer

- **Set:** the personality, intentions, attitude, expectations, and overall physical and mental well-being of the journeyer.

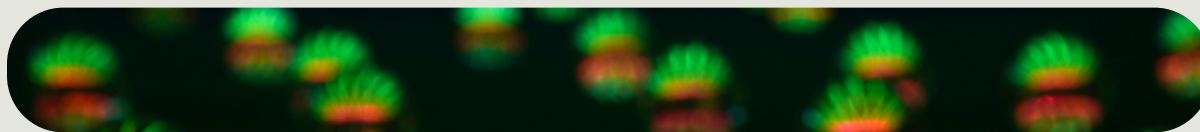
## Mindsets That Cultivate An Ideal Journey

- Growth mindset
- Flexible with thinking and reasoning
- Able to take multiple perspectives on issues
- Embrace challenges
- See mistakes or setbacks as opportunities to learn
- View effort as a path to mastery
- Open to experience, curious and adaptable
- Trusting and accepting
- Self-aware
- Physically, psychologically and emotionally stable

## Mindsets That Cultivate A Less Ideal Journey

- Fixed-mindset
- Rigid with thinking
- View issues solely through one perspective
- Avoid challenges
- Ignore mistakes
- View setbacks as failures
- View effort as a negative thing
- Pessimism
- Neuroticism
- Significant recent life changes and stressors
- Impatient, controlling, rebellious
- Moderate to high levels of hostility or anger
- Physically, psychologically and emotionally unstable

# How To Cultivate An Ideal Mindset

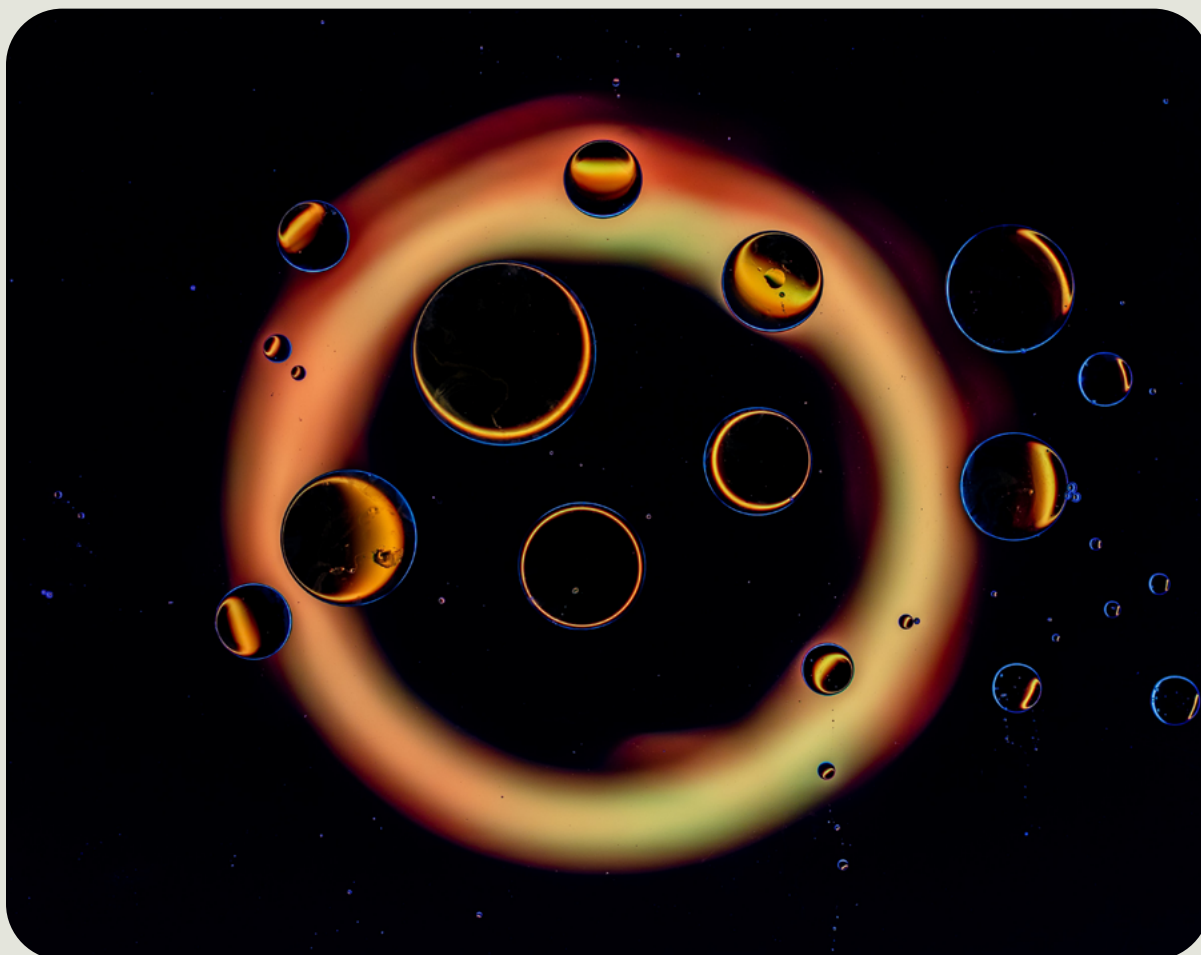


## 1 Week Prior

- **Prioritize Sleep.** Current recommendations are 7-9 hours per night.
- **Get regular exercise and mindfulness practice.**
  - └ We all require weekly, moderate to vigorous physical activity.
  - └ Exercise looks different for everyone: brisk walks, running, hiking, swimming, yoga, dancing, strength training, etc
  - └ Mindfulness makes us more present and more aware of our internal state, reactions, thoughts and emotions. This is key for the journey and the integration phase.
  - └ Both exercise and mindfulness helps regulate our emotions and mood.
- **Connect with Nature**
  - └ Settle into a setting that promotes a feeling of safety and connection.
  - └ Find your favourite spot to reflect on your intentions.
  - └ Nature has been shown to have a calming and stress-reducing effect.
- **De-Stress Where Possible.**
  - └ Engage less, if possible, with known triggers or stressors:
    - └ Work, financial, health, relational.
    - └ If possible, have 2-days that are free of obligations: one for your journey day and one for the day after.
    - └ Knowing you have free time and space around your journey without obligations can be supportive and reduce unnecessary worry.
- **Prepare And Practice Grounding Techniques:**
  - └ Grounding techniques or mantras are helpful in the presence of discomfort, fear or anxiety. A common mantra to use: trust, be open, accept, breathe
    - └ Examples: [Physiological Sigh](#), [Extended Exhale](#), [4-7-8 Breath](#)
  - └ Grounding can help the journeyer surrender to the experience, move through difficult aspects of the trip, and explore.
    - └ Practice grounding in challenging circumstances: a cold shower, strenuous exercise or when bringing to mind known stressors.
- **Consider Reducing The Use Of Other Psychoactive Substances.**
  - └ Alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, cannabis and other drugs.

- **Hydrate, eat light and healthy.**
  - └ Be mindful to drink the amount of water that you think is best for you.
  - └ For eating, a good rule of thumb: “eat food, mostly plants, not too much.”  
— Michael Pollan
- **Growth mindset**
  - └ Consider how flexible your thinking is, are you able to take multiple perspectives on issues, embrace challenges, and see mistakes or setbacks as opportunities to learn.
- **If you choose to use a sitter, connect with them and discuss the journey plan.**
  - └ Ideally, you have found your sitter 1-2 weeks in advance for adequate planning and agreements to be made.
  - └ For many, the sitter is often a trusted friend or family member.
  - └ Provide your sitter the [Sitter Guidebook](#).
  - └ Complete the Journey Plan found in the Sitter Guidebook with your trip sitter.

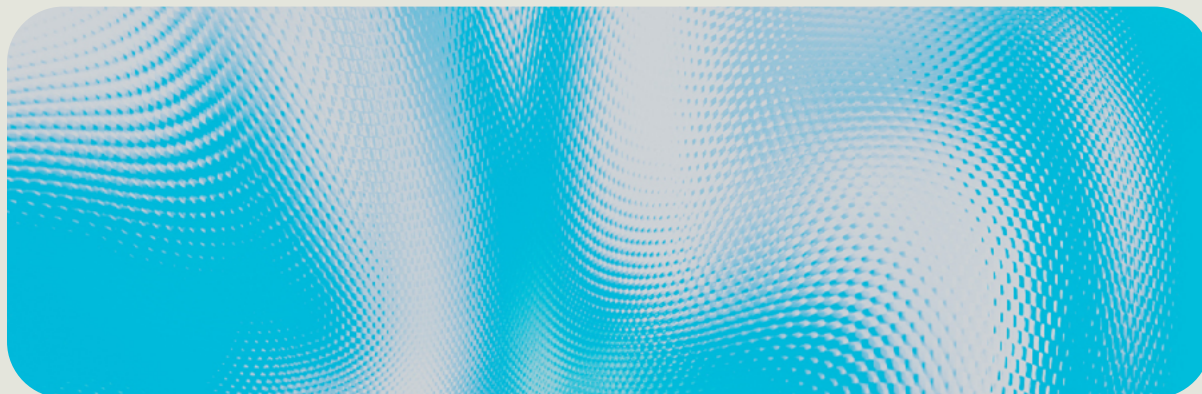
\* Take a moment to consider practices you will be intentional about incorporating into your weekly routine to arrive at your ideal mindset. Write this in a weekly planner.\*



# Set Your Intention

*“If a person knows not which port he sails, no wind is favorable.”*

— Seneca



**Intention Setting** is the practice of defining a broad purpose and what one hopes to bring about from the journey and into their life. Intentions should be personal and align with your values and what you find meaningful. The intention also helps guide trip planning, where one wants to go on the journey and can direct integration. Without intention, journeyer's may not gain or retain information that is relevant to them living a better life.

An intention is also a clear, conscious declaration of what you want to achieve or how you want to feel. However, we want to hold intentions loosely and let journey go where it goes.

## Intention Setting Questions Can Be

- General or specific.
- Thematic and explore worries, problems, curiosities, identity, etc.
- From meditation, gratitude or journaling practices.
- Co-constructed with a friend, family member or a healthcare provider.

## Here Are Some Ideas To Help Clarify Your Intention

- *“To discover, to grow, to heal, to process, to transform ...”*
- *“I want to uncover my feelings towards ...”*
- *“I want to see what there is to learn about this path ...”*
- *“I am curious about ...”*
- *“Why do I respond, react, behave like ...”*
- *“How can I approach my relationship with ...”*

## More About Intention Setting

When you set an intention, you put into thought what you hope to attract and call into your life. It may come from contentment and a sense of belonging, or from feeling out of alignment with your values and goals. Hopes and dreams are part of life, but try to stay flexible about how you reach them. Set a goal, release a specific outcome and trust in the path you are on. This is the heart of a growth mindset.

Many journeyer's bring intentions such as 'what is my purpose', 'who am I?' or 'what is the next step' in the journey. You may develop questions that are more specific and personal, including questions concerning physical illness, specific worries, problems, traumatic or conflicted experiences from the past, unsatisfactory relationships with others such as parents, spouses, children, family, and friends. It is not uncommon for individuals to spend much of their experience reflecting on and healing interpersonal relationships. If you have been engaging in psychotherapy, you may decide to bring in this content for deeper reflection in the psychedelic space. Although you may have specific content you would like to explore in your journey, be open to the idea that 'you can't always get what you want... you get what you need'.

During a psychedelic journey, reminders about our intentions can shift both our attention and mindset. In the experience, intentions have the power to re-orient the journeyer and remind them why they decided to journey in the first place. Be sure to tell your trip sitter (if you have one) about your intention so they are able to remind you if needed.

### *What Is The Intention For Your Journey?*

## Other Tools For Success:

# Mindfulness And Journaling

**Mindfulness is the open, nonjudgmental, and non-discursive attention to the contents of consciousness, whether pleasant or unpleasant.**

Mindfulness is associated with being more present and more aware of our internal state, reactions, thoughts and emotions. When we are mindful, we can become less identified with our experience and can clearly see thoughts, emotions, sounds or reactions simply as content arising then passing in our awareness.

Take a moment to practice mindfulness now using this 1-minute [guided meditation](#).

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Take time to make mindfulness part of your everyday life. It may offer support during preparation, the journey and integration. Anxiety, difficult memories or unfamiliar sensations may arise. You might notice your breath, feel your feet or name what is happening. If this makes you feel worse, stop and ask for support.

If things become frightening, ask for support. A familiar mantra, grounding or a quieter space may help. Memories and insights can feel vivid and certain without being accurate. Allow time to reflect and discuss them with someone you trust before drawing conclusions. See the Integration Book evidence review and sources.

### Try This Exercise:

To practice mindfulness during a safe and unpleasant experience, try using a cold shower. Stand in the cold shower for 1 minute and notice your resistance to wanting to feel the cold. Pay attention to details such as the location, the intensity of the resistance or uncomfortable aspects of it. Next, see if you can relax, open and surrender to the experience. 'Lean' into it and adopt a sense of curiosity and see how it changes. You can do the same exercise using a negative experience or a negative thought while seated in a comfortable position. Recognize it, allow it in, and investigate.

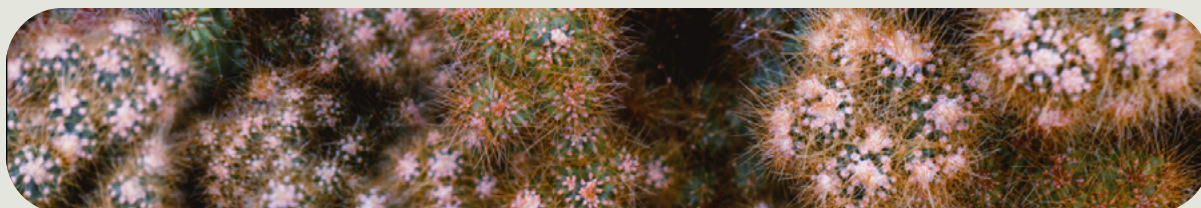
## Take Home Points

### one.

Certain aspects of the psychedelic experience can be challenging and mindfulness might help you through it.

two. Mindfulness may help with difficult feelings. It cannot guarantee relief. If distress increases, grounding and asking for support are valid responses.

three. A mindfulness practice may offer support before, during and after a journey. There is no established biological deadline for integration.



## How Could I Learn To Be Mindful Or Start A Meditation Practice?

- Start with 2 minutes per day. Just sit and notice. And every time you forget your supposed to be meditating or your lost in thought just come back to the breath. This is how we build our mindfulness muscle. Celebrate this.
- Sit comfortably and just notice the breath: the inhalation, the space between the inhalation/exhalation, and finally the exhalation. Don't control it, let it be as it is.
- As a next step, bring this into your day to day activities.
- To learn how to meditate follow the instructions at [UCLA Health](#).
- Explore key meditation instructors: Sam Harris, Tara Brach, Sharon Salzberg, Joeseeph Goldestein and Jack Kornfield.

## Can Technology Help Me? Are There Any Apps?

- There are many great apps to choose from. Whichever app you choose, consider starting with a multi-day introductory course to learn the foundations.
- Recommendations: (1) [Waking Up](#), followed by (2) [10% Happier](#), and (3) [Headspace](#).

## Journalling And Reflective Practices

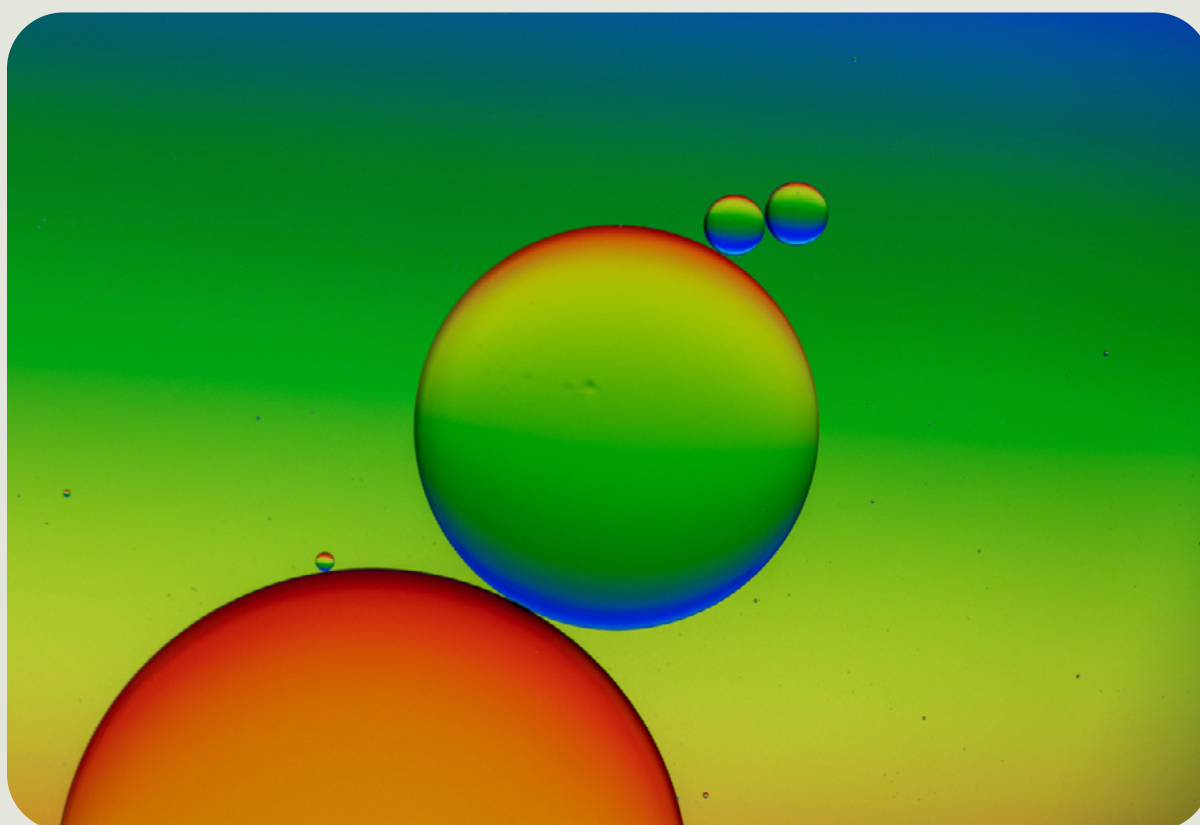
A journaling practice in the days leading up to your psychedelic journey. Write down your thoughts from the day or week, specific narratives or emotions that come to mind. Write freely without stopping and without judgment. Write 3 days per week or daily and keep it short and easy. Alternatively, consider keeping a gratitude journal and mark down 3 things you are grateful for each day. This should take less than 3 minutes to complete.

### 5 Things To Write About In A Journal

- Weekly events that have gone well or have not gone well.
- Your thoughts and feelings.
- Things you want to do or get done.
- Your goals or vision.
- What you are grateful for.

### 3 Things To Write About In A Gratitude Journal

- What have you given to or received from others that you're grateful for?
- Is there something in your home or environment you're grateful for?
- Is there a friend, family member, colleague, stranger, or someone you don't know in which you are grateful?



**When we take psychedelics, we become profoundly more sensitive to our immediate internal and external environments.** If we take care to prepare our setting, we can create safety, bringing better energy into the psychedelic experience. Here are some ideas to optimize the setting:

## Setting

### The External Conditions Of The Journey - Location, Time, Music, And Logistics

- One key to an ideal experience is to ensure the environment is both safe and the journeyer feels that sense of safety. A journeyer's sense of safety, just like thoughts, emotions, sounds and visuals, become amplified during a journey. A quiet, relaxed, and comfortable environment with a trusted sitter without distraction is ideal for self discovery.
- For a self-discovery journey, most feel safer in a controlled, indoor environment, often in the comfort of their own living room or bedroom.
- Outdoor experiences:
  - └ These may offer less sense of safety, comfort and predictability.
  - └ For some people, being outdoors provokes feelings of overwhelm and anxiety.
  - └ For others, being near a river or a tree and having a forest, landscape or mountains in view can be wonderful, expanding, and unifying.
  - └ None of these aspects of the setting are inherently good or bad. Depending on the journeyer's intention and level of experience, each could be supportive or a hindrance to the psychedelic journey. Safety includes both the reality of safety, but also the perception of safety.

## Time

Pick a day where you have ample time to prepare your body, mind, sitter, and environment.

Give yourself enough time for the entirety of the journey:

- └ Psilocybin: about six hours on average in one study; it varies.
- └ LSD: about nine to eleven hours on average; it can last longer.
- └ MDMA: about 3–6 hours of main effects.

Allow time to rest afterward. Sleep may be difficult, especially after LSD. These ranges do not predict when you will feel settled. See the compound comparison.

Do not drive or operate equipment while impaired or sleep-deprived. An elapsed number of hours does not establish fitness to return.

Ensure you have the next day after your journey clear of obligations and events.

# Prep The Setting

## Location

Find a private, familiar indoor space you feel safe and comfortable in.

Lay on a bed or couch getting cozy with pillows and blankets as needed.

Have extra pillows or blankets on hand to accommodate body temperature changes and physical comfort changes that allow you to further surrender to the experience.

Have soft lighting lights or turn them off.

Clean, declutter and organize your space.

Ensure easy access to a clean and decluttered bathroom.

If you look after children, family members or friends, have your journey in another space and arrange the appropriate care.

## Music

Charge your phone, computer and headphone(s).

└ If using your phone, set it to silence or airplane mode.

└ Commit to not calling or texting your friends or families during the journey.

Prepare your music:

└ Suggested listening:

└ [John Hopkins](#) playlist.

└ [Kelan Thomas](#) playlist.

└ Find 2-3 playlists you might want to listen to. If you have a sitter, advise them about these.

└ Create a list of nostalgic songs that resonate with you.

## Clothes And Comfort

Wear eye shades and light comfortable clothing.

Have drinking water available.

Consider preparing an altar: candles, incense, flowers, photographs, and or trinkets.

Consider preparing fruit, nuts or chocolate as a healthy snack for after the journey.

Have a pen and journal available to capture key experiences, insights and essential questions during and after your experience.

## Working With Your Trip Sitter

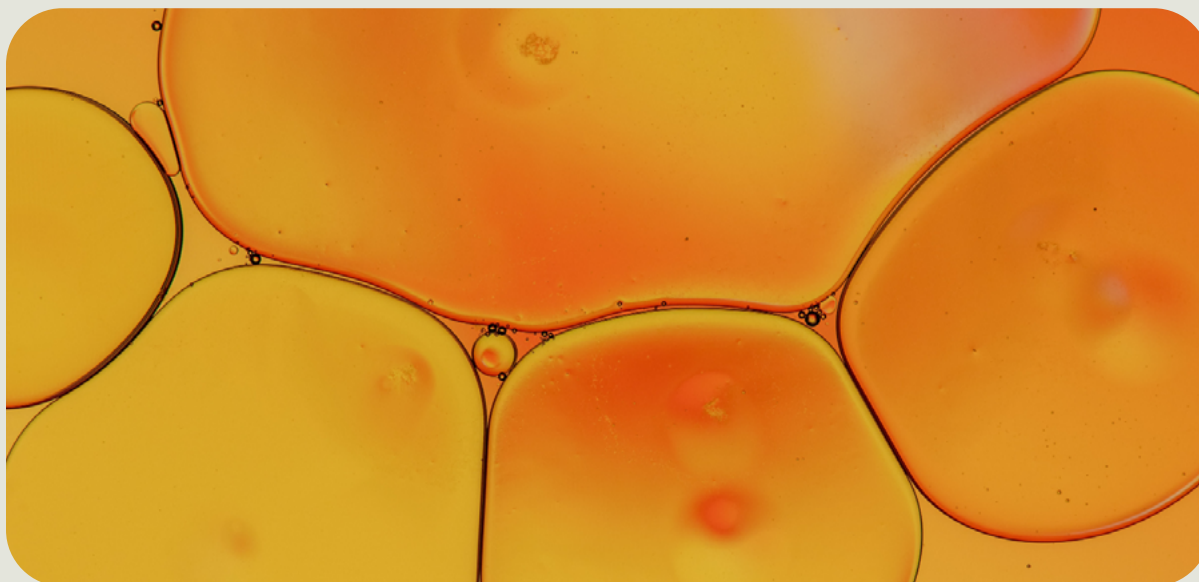
Have a supportive, compassionate, non-judgemental, and trusting sitter during your journey. This is often a friend or family member.

Share the educational resources of the psychedelic of choice and the [Sitter Guidebook](#), with your sitter.

# Consider A Trip Sitter

*“Everything that strikes his eyes and his ears. A word, a gesture, a look, a sound or the slightest noise, by demanding his attention, will confer a special character on his illusions.”*

— Jacques Joseph Moreau



**Not everyone will use a trip sitter, however, they can be incredibly supportive whether or not you have experience with psychedelics.**

A trip sitter, often a close family member or a trusted friend, plays an important role during a psychedelic experience. Their responsibility is to sit alongside the journeyer, remaining sober and engaged. They are the guardians of presence, ensuring the physical safety, and supporting the emotional comfort of the journeyer, all while honoring the boundaries set before the psychedelic experience commenced.

Their presence is also a reassuring bridge to reality. If the journey takes a challenging turn, the trip sitter is there to offer words of safety and reassurance. They provide simple comforts like extra pillows, blankets, or water, offering just enough to bring a sense of calm and stability back. Beyond these physical comforts, they play a deeper role; they might remind the journeyer of a chosen mantra, offer a reassuring hand to hold, guide them through specific parts of their experience, or help them with grounding techniques. In the rare situation of a medical emergency, they are the vital link to external assistance.

For those who choose to embark on this journey alone, it is essential to inform a reliable person about the endeavor, including the specifics of when they should check in. Once the journey concludes, it's important to connect back with this person, ensuring them of your safe return. This practice embeds a layer of safety and connection, ensuring that even in solitude, the journeyer remains tethered to a supportive and caring network.

## Checklist:

# Have I Found The Right Sitter?

You feel safe being with this person while you are in a non-ordinary state of consciousness.

You can be vulnerable around this person.

You feel safe despite knowing your ability to provide valid informed consent will be compromised.

This is someone you regard as trustworthy, empathetic, compassionate, supportive and caring.

This is someone you can discuss and agree upon the journey plan found in the Sitter Guidebook. The plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of the journeyer and sitter.

└ This outlines:

- └ What is appropriate guidance during times of anxiety or fear?
- └ What therapeutic touch (i.e. hand holding) is appropriate?
- └ What the sitter can help with (i.e provide blankets, pillows, water, adjust lighting, etc) or guide you to the restroom if needed, etc.

Your sitter can keep the experience confidential.

The sitter is physically, psychologically and emotionally stable.

### Bonus Trip Sitter Characteristics

Have experience with psychedelics.

Personally understand the potential benefits of psychedelics.

Have experience with trip sitting.

Have valid first aid training.

Are trauma-informed.

Is a registered health professional.

Have completed a recognized course or training program such as MAPS, ATMA or Therapsil.

Have read [The Manual for Psychedelic Guides](#).

Are aware of the [6 Core Competencies of a Psychedelic Therapist](#).

Once you determine who the sitter could be, ask them if they would be willing to sit for you weeks in advance of your journey. If they say yes, provide them with educational content about the psychedelic which you can find on 'Know Your Psychedelic' page along with the Sitter Guidebook. After they have completed their readings, check in with them to see if they have any questions or concerns about the process. Next, go through the journey plan found in the [Sitter Guidebook](#) and review each other's roles and responsibilities.

## Checklist:

# Commitments To The Trip Sitter

To not leave the space while in a non-ordinary state.

To not engage in risky behaviours such as driving a vehicle, cycling, climbing or sexual acts.

Provide the sitter with educational content on the psychedelic and how to trip sit.

Stick to the agreed upon journey plan during the experience.

Advise the sitter what psychedelic and dose is being used.

Disclose in advance your experience with psychedelics.

Have the psychedelics tested.

Have the set and setting prepped.

Provide a comfortable, safe and clean space for the sitter to sit and supervise in.

Tell the sitter about your intention, any specific worries you have, and your mantra.

Let your sitter know how they can assist you if you have a difficult experience during your journey.

Prepare emergency contact information of close family or friends.

Outline any relevant physical or mental health conditions you have.

To learn more about the role of a trip sitter and the journey plan, please review the [Sitter Guidebook](#).

*Notes:*

## *Final Remarks*

### **Congratulations on completing your journey through Entheo's Preparation Guidebook!**

We created this book as the guide we wish we had during our initial forays into the world of psychedelics. It is our hope that you find it not only helpful but also instrumental in setting a positive and enlightening course for your journey. For insights on making the most of your trip day, please delve into our [Journey Day Guidebook](#). If you're seeking further knowledge about psychedelics, our Entheo Resources and Blog are rich with more information.

Warm regards,

The Entheo Team



[www.entheo.org](http://www.entheo.org)

# Medication decisions

Evidence reviewed: September 27, 2026.

If medication is helping you stay well, changing it deserves careful thought. An SSRI does not automatically need to be stopped before a psychedelic experience. That does not mean every combination is safe.

## Do not abruptly stop

Do not abruptly stop an SSRI or other psychiatric medication to prepare for a journey. Any decision to continue, change or taper belongs in a discussion with the prescribing clinician, considering the medication, the substance and your current health.

Withdrawal can be severe or prolonged. It may include dizziness, nausea, sleep problems, anxiety and electric-shock sensations. Depression or anxiety can also return or worsen. These can overlap and deserve assessment. [NICE NG222 — stopping antidepressant medication](#); [Royal College of Psychiatrists — stopping antidepressants](#).

Changing an effective medication may cost more than a quieter psychedelic experience. A maintenance-antidepressant trial found more relapse after discontinuation, though it was not a psychedelic study and cannot predict an individual outcome. [Lewis et al., 2021 — ANTLEER maintenance/discontinuation trial](#).

## Never take more to push through blunting

Reduced effects do not reliably show how much drug is in the body. Some MDMA–antidepressant studies found higher exposure despite weaker subjective effects. Increasing a psychedelic dose to compensate is unsafe and unpredictable. [Farré et al., 2007 — MDMA and paroxetine trial](#); [Hysek et al., 2012 — MDMA and duloxetine trial](#).

## If you have already reduced or stopped

Contact your prescriber with what changed, when and any symptoms. Do not rush further changes or make restart decisions from this guide. Pause the psychedelic plan while symptoms and stability are assessed. Seek urgent help for suicidal thoughts, mania, psychosis or inability to stay safe. [Royal College of Psychiatrists — stopping antidepressants](#).

# The substance matters

**Psilocybin:** Small monitored SSRI studies are reassuring within their limits, with no increased serotonin-toxicity signal detected. Some participants still had psychedelic effects or improved depression. They do not establish safety for everyone or prove that continuing and stopping work equally well. [Becker et al., 2022 — psilocybin and escitalopram trial](#); [Goodwin et al., 2023 — psilocybin with a continuing SSRI](#).

**LSD:** One trial with paroxetine preserved pleasant effects but increased LSD blood exposure. It does not answer for every SSRI or establish treatment benefit in depression. [Becker et al., 2025 — LSD and paroxetine trial](#).

**MDMA:** SSRIs/SNRIs can blunt effects without lowering exposure. MAOIs are a different concern: fatal MDMA–moclobemide interactions have been reported. Do not combine MDMA with MAOIs. [Farré et al., 2007 — MDMA and paroxetine trial](#); [Pilgrim et al., 2012 — fatal MDMA–moclobemide interactions](#).

**Other substances:** Ayahuasca contains MAO inhibitors; DMT alone, 5-MeO-DMT and ayahuasca cannot share one medication rule. Evidence for mescaline combinations is sparse. Ketamine/esketamine and ibogaine have different risks. See the detailed medication review and its references; do not transfer psilocybin findings to them.

## Look beyond the antidepressant

Lithium with classic psychedelics has a concerning seizure signal from online reports; those reports do not provide an incidence rate. Avoid the combination and seek specialist assessment, rather than stopping lithium. Other mood stabilizers are not established safe substitutes. [Nayak et al., 2021 — lithium and classic psychedelic reports](#).

Review MAOIs, tricyclics, antipsychotics, benzodiazepines, stimulants and all other medicines. Include pain/cough medicines, supplements and recent changes. Do not stop a medicine or add a home rescue drug to make a journey possible. Abrupt benzodiazepine withdrawal can cause seizures. [FDA — benzodiazepine withdrawal warning](#).

## Greater caution

Bipolar disorder, psychosis vulnerability, significant suicidality, clinical instability, seizures, complex medication use and serious medical conditions require appropriate assessment. A checklist cannot clear you to proceed. [Johnson et al., 2008 — human hallucinogen safety guidelines](#); [NNDC task group, 2025 — clinical consensus statement](#).

# Questions for your prescriber

- What am I hoping will change, and what other options could help?
- How stable are my mood, sleep and circumstances? What happened during previous medication changes?
- What is known about my exact medication and the specific psychedelic—physical risks, altered effects and important unknowns?
- Would changing an effective treatment be worth the uncertain benefit? Could postponing or not proceeding be the better choice?
- Who will follow any changes, and who can I contact if I become unwell?
- If my prescriber does not work with psychedelics, could a clinical pharmacist or specialist help review the evidence?

## For journeyers and sitters

Discuss the complete medication list, recent changes and any clinician-agreed emergency plan beforehand. A sitter should not select or add medication. If urgent medical help is needed, follow emergency-service instructions and tell responders what was taken.

Confusion or agitation with overheating and marked muscle stiffness or repeated involuntary jerking needs urgent assessment. Seizures, collapse or trouble breathing are emergencies. Do not dismiss these as a difficult journey. [Medsafe, 2022 — opioids and serotonergic](#) medicines.

## Remember

Protect your stability. Review the particular combination. Do not abruptly stop medication, and never increase a psychedelic dose to overcome a muted effect.

## Read alongside

Read alongside Entheo’s medical-screening information and “Do I Need to Stop My SSRI Before Taking Psychedelics?” The Integration Book covers neuroscience and the limits of current evidence. The compound comparison links to the updated website guides.

# Sources for the review

Direct links. The studies differ in substance, medication, population and design. Small monitored trials and self-reported experiences cannot establish universal safety.

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