

Medical Cannabis: The Therapeutic Solution?

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When did you last journey to the center of your mind? Ever? Never? Today the use of psychedelic drugs is helping healthcare patient individuals through (clinical involvement) to relieve themselves of various challenges: depression, addiction (alcoholism, heroin, cocaine, smoking), schizophrenia and anxiety in dementia and terminal cancer. Is this true? YES!

Healing with hallucinogens has already begun. Surprised? Investigations with controlled clinical studies into the value of medical therapeutical benefits from true "tripping" psychedelics (cannabis and derivatives, LSD, psilocybin, mescaline and ayahuasca) began with earnest in 2010. Studies were instituted to evaluate the way in which these drugs could alter the present circumstance for patients.

For patients in these clinical studies the main adjustment through therapy is the establishment of a being here environment which eliminates the being before of past issues or being ahead regarding the future which may impact their individual lives. Medical cannabis and psychedelic drugs can experience ego dissolution (ego death), a loss of the separate self and an enhanced feeling of connectedness with the outside world. Recent neuroimaging studies have revealed that the intensity of this experience correlates with changes in brain activity as part of a default mode (DMN) salience system in the brain that is more active at rest than during tasks. It is thought that this system is involved in, among other things processing information related to the self. The brain/mind during psychedelic states is in a different state of consciousness and this is reflected in how the brain behaves.

Dementia, including other depressive states, is an example for targeted therapy. Healthcare practitioners know that paranoia can strike deep. Into any life it can creep and often started when one is afraid or confused. Psychedelic drugs disrupt established networks in the brain, potentially allowing new neurotransmitter paths or connections to form in the brain. During medical clinical sessions using these psychedelic drugs, under the medical practitioner guidance, a major discrete event often occurs that adjusts alteration in neurology and perception that allows psychological dysregulation to go forward to which people attribute positive changes than endure into the future!

Neuroimaging technologies such as fMRI or functional magnetic resonance imaging is being used to scan the brains of healthy individuals while being treated with psychedelics like cannabis. This technique can measure reduced cerebral blood flow (a measure of neural activity or transmission). MEG (magnetoencephalography) detects tiny magnetic fields generated by the electrical activity in the brain during the clinical session. These techniques reveal correlation between decreased connectivity in DMN (default mode network) within the brain subsequent ratings or expressions of ego dissolution or ego death.

Most classic psychedelic drugs, including medical cannabis, activate serotonin 2A (5-HT_{2A}) receptors, which play a key role in the drug effect. Recent work has revealed that this type of drug can also promote neuroplasticity (the ability to form new neuronal connections in the brain) and reduce inflammation through the entire body. If neuro-inflammation is causing depression the use of the use of a DOI (serotonin a receptor agonist) can cause the body to promote the transcription of pro-inflammatory agents or cytokines) to reduce the inflammation. With the awareness that inflammation is involved in neurodegenerative dementia diseases like Alzheimer's, and attenuation of the neuro-inflammation is affected, studies have shown that the progression of the disease can be slowed.

Today through studies at leading worldwide psychiatric research centers, the utility of medicinal cannabis and other psychedelic drugs can lead to therapeutic benefit. For many individuals involved in these controlled clinical studies the therapeutic advances they experience are similar to being in paradise with salvation...even though the disease challenge is always near.

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