

Károli University, Institute of Psychology

# ERP-BPS2636 Psychedelic Psychotherapy

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# Psychedelic Psychotherapy presentations (12 x 1.5 h)

- [01] Sep 16 Introduction and Overview
- [02] Sep 23 Altered State Assisted Therapies
- [03] Sep 30 The Broader Context of Psychedelics
- [04] Oct 07 Psychedelics: Substance Information
- [05] Oct 14 **Psychology of Psychedelic Experience****
- [06] Oct 21 Psychedelics: Research, Experiments, Healing
- [07] Nov 04 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Theory
- [08] Nov 11 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice I
- [09] Nov 18 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice II
- [10] Nov 25 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice III
- [11] Dec 02 Psychedelic Experience Integration
- [12] Dec 09 Summary and Outlook

# Course Topics

- altered states of consciousness; psychedelics
- **transpersonal psychology; trauma processing and regression**
- psychedelic research, experiments and healing
- psychometric measuring; addictions and dependence; assisted psychotherapies; ethics
- **psychedelic and psycholytic therapies; therapist training; therapy protocols**
- MDMA, psilocybin, ketamine, LSD, ibogaine, ayahuasca
- **psychedelic experience integration**

# [01] Introduction and Overview

Sep 16

**Introduction of the course.**  
**Topics and approaches.**  
**Course requirements.**  
**Practical issues.**

# **[02] Altered State Assisted Therapies**

Sep 23

**Altered states of consciousness (ASC): definitions and phenomena.**

**Spontaneous, pathological and induced states.**

**Physiological, pharmacological and psychological inductions.**

**Altering subsystems of consciousness.**

**Therapeutic applications of ASC.**

# [03] The Broader Context of Psychedelics

Sep 30

**Hallucinations: definitions and phenomena.**

**Hallucinogens: dissociative, deliriant, psychedelic.**

**Other related substances.**

**Purposes of substance use.**

**The drug instrumentalisation hypothesis.**

**Psychonaut subculture.**

**Biohacking.**

# [04] Psychedelics: Substance Information

Oct 07

History, physiology, psychology and phenomenology of psychedelics and related substances:

ayahuasca

cannabis

DMT

ibogaine

ketamine

LSD

MDMA

muscimol

psilocybin

salvinorin A

LSA

mescaline

# **[05] Psychology of Psychedelic Experience**

**Oct 14**

**Psychoeducation.**

**Theories and models.**

**Set and setting.**

**Intention and integration.**

**Deconditioning agents.**

**Transpersonality and spirituality.**

**Entheogens.**

**Trauma processing and regression.**

**Stanislav Grof and the perinatal matrix.**

**Metaphysical considerations.**



# Psychoeducation

## Substance use

- **knowledge (info and disinfo)**
- **attitudes (ideology, culture, subculture)**
- **observations (others' behaviours)**
- **own experience (with other substances)**

## Introspection!

## Harm reduction

## World view

# Theories and models

## **Maslow (1943) Theory of human motivation**

- satisfying basic needs (unsatisfied will surface!)

## **Merleau-Ponty (1945) Phénoménologie de la perception**

- lived body as medium (phenomenological psychology)

## **Antonovsky (1961) Salutogenesis model**

- > preserving of (mental) health vs. treating of illness

## **Frankl (1963) Search for ultimate meaning**

- orientation toward / giving "meaning", (posterior) explanation

## **Engel (1977) Biopsychosocial model of health**

- a person's biological, psychological and soci(et)al factors

## **Yalom (1980) Existential psychotherapy**

- death, freedom, isolation, meaninglessness as life problems

## **Bishop (2009) Biopsychosociospiritual medicine**

- meta-level identificatio facilitated by transpersonal experience

## **Müller & Schumann (2011) Drugs as instruments**

- learning of an intended behaviour by a psychoactive substance

# Heuristic ASC-model

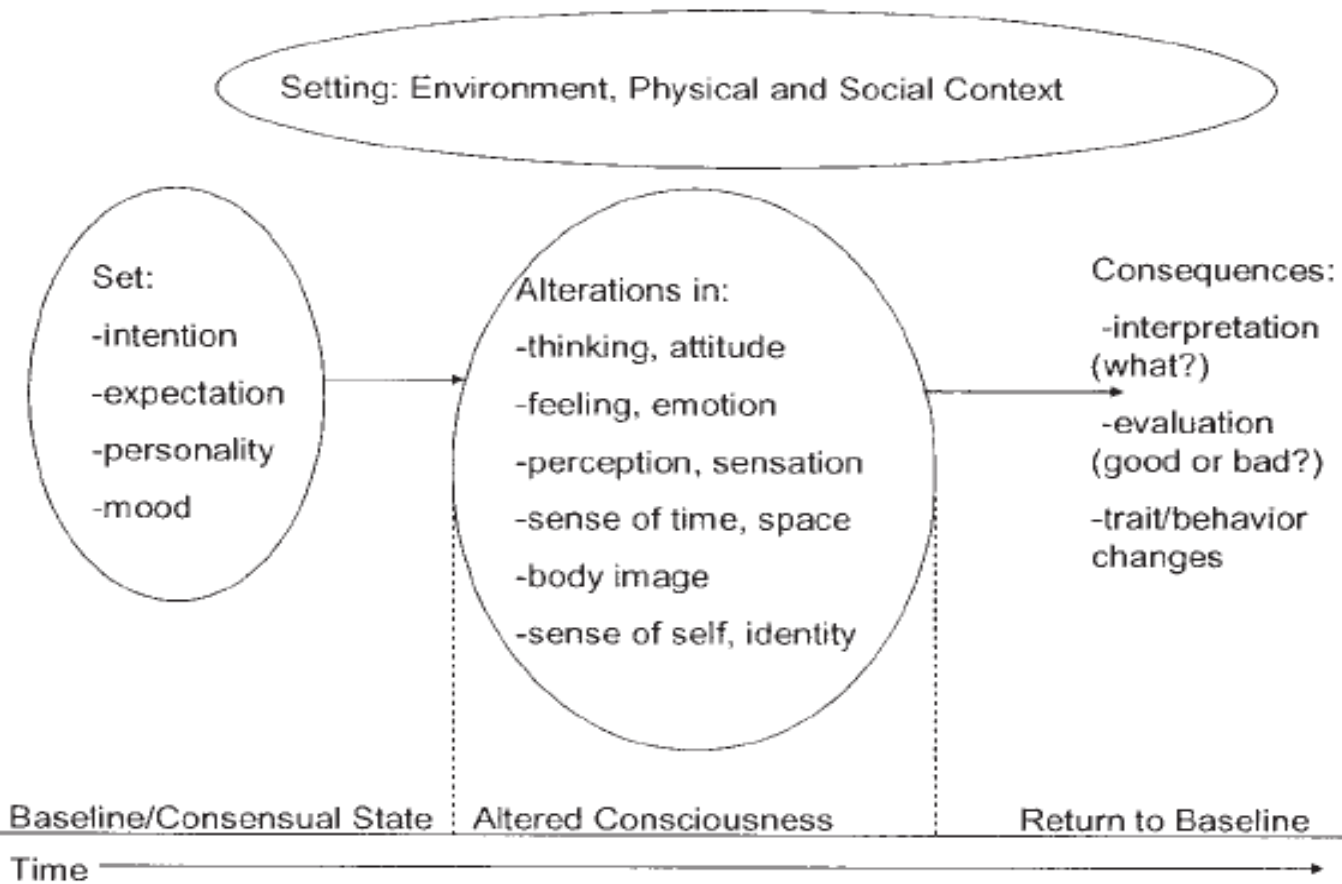


Figure 2.1. General Heuristic Model of Altered States of Consciousness

# Set and setting

*" In the triad: drug, set and setting, the one that is least important, or most dispensable, is drug."*

**(Rick Strassman, DMT researcher)**

- **extrapharmacological/nonpharmacological factors**
- **Set: personality, expectations, preparations, intention (goal, purpose)**
- **Setting: physical, social, cultural environment**
- **significant differences between same-dose same-substance experiences**
- **basis of placebo and "contact high" effects?**

*Zinberg (1984) Drug, set, and setting - the basis for controlled intoxicant use*

*Hartogsohn (2017) Constructing drug effects: A history of set and setting*

# Intention and integration

## Intention (prior)

- **concept system!**
- **pre-defined / pre-declared expectations**
- **helps at obstructions, gives direction**
- **self-programming of the unconscious mind**

## Integration (posterior)

- **framing, re-interpretation, giving meaning, utilisation**
- **expressing, writing down, sharing, talking about - external helper**
- **"bad" experience may be transformed to "useful" experience!**

# Deconditioning agents

- "psychointegrator" - "deconditioning agent" (different set and setting)
- deconditioning: extinction of old habits and imprinted behavioural patterns
- can be risky when done improperly!
- opens up reintegration possibilities in a proper setting
- rites-of-passage ceremonies in native cultures: symbolic death and rebirth
- transformation of personality
- change of values within a relatively short timeframe
- takes years (or not possible) in Western education and psychotherapy

# Transpersonality and spirituality

- upper levels in Maslow's hierarchy of needs
- religion vs. spirituality
- concept of a bigger unit
- transpersonal psychology can handle altered states of consciousness
- direction: upwards / inwards

**Christianity:**

“The kingdom of God is within you.”

**Islam:**

“He who knows himself, knows Allah.”

**Judaism:**

“[He is in everything and everything is within him.]”

**Confucianism:**

“[If you know your own nature well, you know Heaven.]”

**Lao Ce:**

“[In the depth of your soul you will find the One.]”

**Buddhism:**

“[Look into yourself, you are Buddha!]”

# Transcendental / spiritual experiences

- directly experiencing mystical phenomena
- transcendent quality, incomprehensibility, ineffability
- transformation of world view
- elevated view of values
- need for an explanative belief system
- processing of religious-mystical experiences
- creating of a congregation
- spiritual development:
  - experiencing transcendence
  - direct religious experiences
  - altered states of consciousness as instruments
  - progressing on the spiritual path

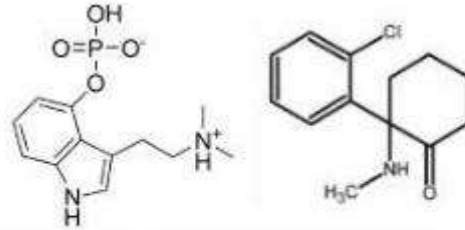
*Ruck, Bigwood, Staples, Ott, & Wasson (1979) Entheogens*

*Schultes & Hofmann (1979) Plants of the Gods: Origins of Hallucinogenic Use*



# Mystical experiences

Relative relationship of mystical experience to treatment outcome



| Paper                     | Substance  | Treatment                                   | Outcome measure        | Mystical exp. correlation size |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bogunschutz et al., 2015  | psilocybin | <b>Alcohol</b> dependence                   | heavy drinking days %  | -.85                           |
| Garcia-Romeu et al., 2014 | psilocybin | <b>Tobacco</b> addiction                    | Change in craving      | -.65                           |
| Rothberg et al. 2020      | ketamine   | <b>Alcohol</b> dependence                   | heavy drinking days %  | -.62                           |
| Griffiths et al., 2016    | psilocybin | End of life <b>depression &amp; anxiety</b> | Anxiety (@ 5 weeks)    | -.59                           |
| Ross et al., 2016         | psilocybin | End of life <b>depression &amp; anxiety</b> | Depression (@ 6 weeks) | -.49                           |
| Ross et al., 2016         | psilocybin | End of life <b>depression &amp; anxiety</b> | Anxiety (@ 6 weeks)    | -.42                           |
| Davis et al., 2020        | psilocybin | <b>Major Depressive Disorder</b>            | Depression (@ 4 weeks) | -.41                           |
| Griffiths et al., 2016    | psilocybin | End of life <b>depression &amp; anxiety</b> | Depression (@ 5 weeks) | -.36                           |



# Entheogens

*en* [εν] „inside”, *theo* [θεος] „god, -ly”, *-gen* [γενος] „create”

- ritual-ceremonial psychoactive substances (sacraments)
- archeological findings, cultural anthropological and ethnobotanical evidences, historical documentations:
  - hindu Vedas: *soma*
  - Meso-American cultures: psilocybe mushrooms
  - ancient Greek Eleusinian mysteries: *kykeon*
  - Siberian shaman: fly agaric

# Trauma processing and regression

**Traumas 1.: ("others did to me")**

**mother/father/sibling/child/relative/friend/partner/acquaintance/etc:**

**died / absent / killed / committed suicide / left / sexually abused / physically abused / misused / ignored / neglected / battered / wounded / terrorised mentally / was unjust / exploited / cheated / stole / got sick / committed to mental institute / convicted to prison / caused an accident / was alcoholic / was addict / was mistreated / outcasted / discredited / etc.**

**Traumas 2.: ("I did to others")**

**Traumas 3.: ("I did to myself")**

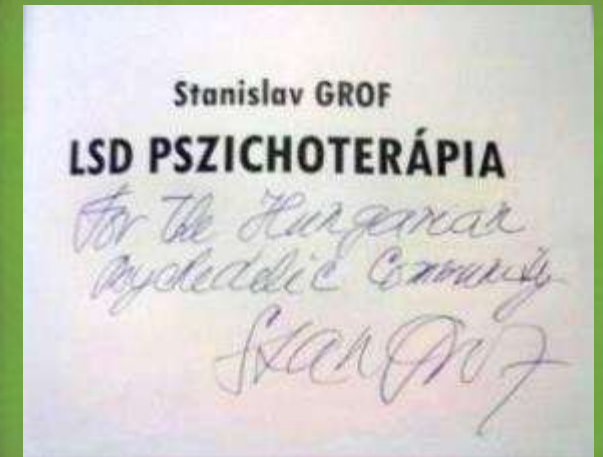
**Traumas 4.: (others did to others)**

**Regression: at what age had I the best time of my life? (time machine question)**

# Stanislav Grof and the perinatal matrix



- Stanislav Grof (1931-) Czech/American psychiatrist
- LSD-experiments / holotropic breathwork / transpersonal psychology
- perinatal = around birth (before - after)
- traumatic experience patterns related to birth
- basic perinatal matrices (BPM I-IV):
- **unity, disharmony, cooperation, separation [mother]**
  - connected psychopathologic syndromes
  - related activities in Freudian erogenous zones
  - relevant memories from after-birth life
  - phenomenology of LSD sessions



# Metaphysical considerations

- **metaphysical = beyond physical (perceptual) "reality"**
- **sources of 'gnosis':**
  - **perception (naïve reality) -> materialism**
  - **deduction/logic/analogies (intellectual)**
  - **faith / transferred knowledge (from authentic source)**
  - **lived experience / subjective experience**
- **client's own model of explanation?**
- **(psychedelic experience can transform it)**

**Thank you for your attention!**



*Next lecture:*

**[06] Psychedelics: Research, Experiments, Healing**

**Oct 21 Thursday 10:45**