

Károli University, Institute of Psychology

# ERP-BPS2636 Psychedelic Psychotherapy

autumn semester 2021



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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 11 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Theory**
- [08] Nov 18 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice I
- [09] Nov 25 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice II
- [10] Dec 02 Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice III
- [11] Dec 09 Psychedelic Experience Integration
- [12] Dec 16 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.**



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

**Oct 21**

**The dawn, golden age, pause and renaissance of psychedelic research.**

**Early results.**

**Current research directions.**

**Psychometric measuring instruments.**

**Treatments of addictions and dependence.**

**Hospice use: end-life anxiety.**

# **[07] Psychedelic Assisted Psychotherapies: Theory**

**Nov 11**

**Ethical principles.**

**Psychedelic and psycholytic therapies.**

**Lay and underground therapies.**

**Therapist training process.**

**Therapy protocols: MAPS, Johns Hopkins, Kenézy hospital.**

# Ethical principles

- ...as usually in the work of psychologist/psychotherapist
- + special situation due to the client's altered state of consciousness
- sensitive, 'reprogrammable' state, (neuro)plasticity
- like hypnosis: suggestibility, susceptibility, receptivity
- access to traumatic memories may re-traumatise
- possibility to abuses (both directions!)
- protocol: more than one therapist, same sex + opposite sex
- audio recording (anonymity / data protection!)
- clientwork: based on protocol, reflections, development, supervision

# Psychedelic and psycholytic therapies

- **psychedelic: bigger dose - e.g. alcoholism (USA)**
- **psycholytic: small/medium dose - psychotherapy (Europe)**
- **optimal intensity, duration, accessibility**
- **Switzerland: president of psycholytic association - special permit whatever-with-whatever**
- **(Dr Peter Gasser)**

# Lay and underground therapies

- **non-medicalised models as alternatives**
- **e.g. ceremonies, retreats (ayahuasca, ibogaine)**
- **lay therapist: takes substance with client (main therapist 'sober')**
- **black or gray zone, uncontrollability**
- **continuum:**
  - **psychedelic psychotherapy (drug provided on-site)**
  - **client arrives in an ASC to therapy session**
  - **visiting the client who calls (already took the drug)**
  - **being a 'sitter' at the client's home or retreat (starting before intake)**
- **lower protection for the client - no professional control hierarchy**
- **unlicensed practice -> quackery/charlatanry (+ tax evasion)**
- **to increase informedness is both needed and useful!**

# *Therapist's personal experience...?*

- **increasing empathy, knowing a state of consciousness**
- **dynamics of the drug's effects**
- **quasi-obligatory professional requirement in the 'golden age'!**
- **observation of others' experiences ('contact high' / transference)**
- **increases client's trust - e.g. in drug-naïve subjects(?)**
- **(will be) part of MAPS therapist training!**

# *Indications*

- **Clinical (after other treatments):**
  - **depression: ketamine, psilocybin**
  - **PTSD: MDMA**
  - **addictions: ibogaine, psilocybin**
  - ...
- **Psychotherapy:**
  - **end-life anxiety: psilocybin, LSD**
  - **traumas: MDMA, LSD**
  - **relationship and family therapy: MDMA**
  - ...
- ...
  - ...

# *The therapeutic process*

- **ongoing therapeutic relationship/agreement (nexus, trust, paperwork)**
- **pre-screening, medical examination, exclusion, contraindications**
- **informing, education, written consent of agreement**
- **problem -> drug (and not vice versa!); non-drug alternatives**
- **secure setting (e.g. therapy clinic) - safety protocol**
- **secure set: 'optimal'/'ideal' timing, motivation, state**
- **securing drug: legal source, purity, dosing (per kg, metabolism)**
- **'allergy test' / 'adaptation dose' ?**
- **emergencies: sedation, restricting, on-site treatment, external help**
- **(therapy methods - "best practice")**



# *The mental process*

- **onset (oral: cca. 15-45 min) - change, uncertainty, bodily feelings**
- **safe environment and accepting persons**
- **acknowledging and accepting the ASC**
- **approaching the therapeutic theme**
- **self-reflection, external point-of-view, understanding others differently**
- **deconditioning, stopping usual repetitions**
- **redirecting associations, new alternatives**
- **increasing self-valuations, acceptance, forgiveness**
- **mystical/unity experience**
- **returning, ending, 'grounding'**
- **reflections, talk-through, integration, change of attitude/behaviour**

# Therapist training

- **Ongoing e.g.: CIIS, MAPS, MIND/OVID, IPI, Alef Trust**
  - **CIIS (USA): 150 hours / spring to autumn, live/online/hybrid cohort, \$9300**
  - **MAPS (USA): a few months, \$5000**
  - **MIND (DE): 2 years (integration, 'augmentation'), €15000**
  - **IPI - Integrative Psychiatry Institute (USA): 150 hours / 10 months, \$7000**
  - **Alef Trust (UK): 12 months, £3000**
- **100-150 hours, ~ <1 - 2 years**
- **(accredited) certificate, CE/CME credits**
- **Hungary: planning!**

# Requirements for starting therapist training

- **psychotherapist (HU: higher degree of education!)**
- **MD, clinical psychologist (w/o psychotherapy training)**
- **relationship/couples therapist, coach, alternative therapist (min. BA/BSc)**
- **pastor, (psychiatric)nurse, social worker, addictologist, PhD, PsyD**
  
- **abroad: special (ethnicity, LGBTQIA+, physical disabilities etc.)**
- **discount, quota etc.**

# Therapist training process

- **mainly online ("live")**
- **e.g. clinical researchers, therapists, psychedelic celebrities**
- **"pre-assembled" materials**
- **lectures, roundtables**
- **bigger group seminars**
- **smaller group sessions**
- **community fora**
- **teaching assistants**
- **optional ketamine! :D**
- **supervision**
- **+ recertification**

# *Therapist training in Hungary*

- **Psychedelic psychotherapist**
  - **Method-specific phase of accredited psychotherapist training**
- **Psychedelic therapist**
  - **MA+ professional (clinical psychologist etc.)**
- **Psychedelic co-therapist**
  - **Member of the team - possibly different/relevant background and/or BA/BSc**
- **Psychedelic experience integrator**
  - **e.g. coach**
  - **personal + "integration circles"**

# *Psychedelic therapies in Hungary*

- **within the healthcare system**
- **agreement on requirements with Ministry (personnel, venue)**
- **MD with prescription license**
- **medication importing license**
- **drug control laws! (can result in fines!)**
- **transport, storage, access, logging etc.**
- **psychedelic clinic model: licensee + co-workers/assistants**
- **ketamine -> MDMA -> psilocybin -> ...**

**need to establish: therapy association + company (clinic)**

# Therapy protocols: MAPS

## MDMA

- **clinical phase, possible to volunteer!**
- **'Orphan Drug', 'Breakthrough Therapy', 'Special Protocol Assessment'**
- **USA (Phase 3), Canada, Izrael, UK, EU (Phase 2)**
- **indication: severe PTSD (veterans, victims of sexual violence)**
- **(+ autism, end-life anxiety, eating disorders)**
- **placebo-controlled, double-blind, randomised, 'cross-over' experiment**

# Therapy protocols: Johns Hopkins

## PSILOCYBIN

- **(Johns Hopkins University, School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA)**
- **indication: smoking (nicotine) cessation**
- **weekly sessions for 3 months**
- **cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT)**
- **surveys, interviews, MRI**
- **RCT: psilocybin or nicotine**
- **2 occasions psilocybin-assisted**
- **(possible to switch from placebo to psilocybin after 3 months!)**
- **follow-up at: 3, 6, 12 months**



# Therapy protocols: Kenézy hospital

## KETAMINE

- **Debrecen, department of innovative psychiatric rehabilitation**
- **since 2015**
- **decreased depression symptoms already 4 hours after infusion**
- **but symptoms return after 7–10 days**
- **-> infusion treatment, "impulse therapy" (4-6 infusions / 2-3 weeks)**
- **diminished suicidal tendencies**
- **full healing in 7 out of 8 patients! (\*until 2017)**
- **paid by healthcare**

**Thank you for your attention!**



*Next lecture:*

**[08] Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapies: Practice I**

**MDMA**

**Nov 18 Thursday 10:45**