



# An Introduction to Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy

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# Takeaways from today:



Goals of KAP



Identify basic components of KAP including:



Preparation for KAP sessions, administration,  
and integration sessions for KAP



Ethics related to KAP

# Land and cultural acknowledgment

NORTHERN PAIUTE

WASHOE

WESTERN SHOSHONE

SOUTHERN PAIUTE

“

Psychedelic-assisted therapy often succeeds ... not through cure, but rather by changing the suffering experienced by the patient who is ill. Suffering is reduced and healing occurs in a sacred relationship ... where the patient is supported by a caring, empathic relationship.

”

Penn AD, et al. Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy Practices and Human Caring Science: Toward a Care-Informed Model of Treatment. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*. April 23, 2021.

# General Qualities of Psychedelics

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*sacredness*: a sense that what is encountered is holy or sacred;

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*noetic quality*: the experience takes on sense of larger meaning and a sense of encountering ultimate reality that is more real than usual everyday reality;

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*deeply felt positive mood*: joy, ecstasy, blessedness, peace, tenderness, gentleness, tranquility, awe;

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*ineffability*: the experience is difficult to put into words;

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*paradoxicality*: to explain the experience, one seems to have to describe the co-existence of mutually exclusive states or concepts;

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*transcendence of time and space*: Introvertive mystical experiences may have a non-spatial and non-temporal aspect, such that the traditional notions of time and space have no meaning.

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Fredrick Barret and Roland Griffiths, 2019

Michael Pollan, 2018

# Goals of KAP

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CONNECTEDNESS TO SELF

CONNECTEDNESS TO OTHERS

CONNECTEDNESS TO THE WORLD

Watts et al, 2016, Journal of Humanistic Psychology

## Why Pair Ketamine with Psychotherapy?

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Both ketamine and the major psychedelics decrease the default mode network, which is our closest neural equivalent to the ego

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Major reduction of negative thoughts and patterns

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Increased insights

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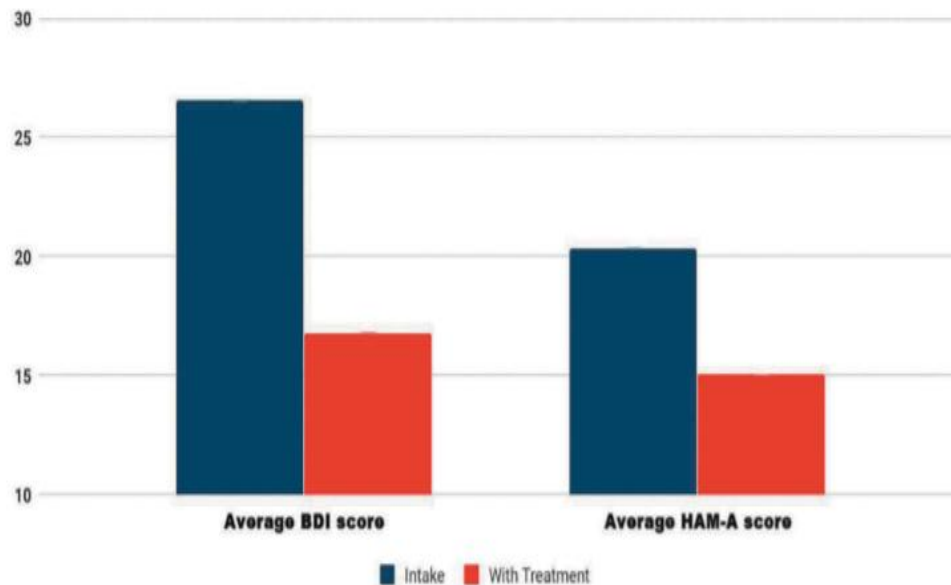
Improved mood and functioning

Kolp, et al, 2014

# Ketamine treatment with KAP

## KAP Significantly Decreases Depression and Anxiety

\*\*Clinically significant decrease in both HAM-A and BDI after treatment ( $p < 0.0001$ )\*\*



Average BDI and HAM-A scores at baseline compared with follow-up reveal a statistically significant decrease in anxiety and depression with treatment. Intake BDI scores on average fell in the range of moderate depression (20–28) and decreased an average of 11.24 points to mild depression range. Intake HAM-A scores fell in the moderate anxiety category and decreased on average 5.5 points to the mild anxiety category

Dore, et al, 2019



# Preparation Sessions for KAP

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Initial meeting with a trained clinician for a thorough review including past and current symptoms, treatment attempts, and relevant life history.

Appropriate diagnoses include: MDD, Anxiety, SUD, PTSD, OCD

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Second and potentially a third session review goals for treatment and set intentions for upcoming ketamine experience.

Set and Setting for the journey

Kolp, et al, 2014

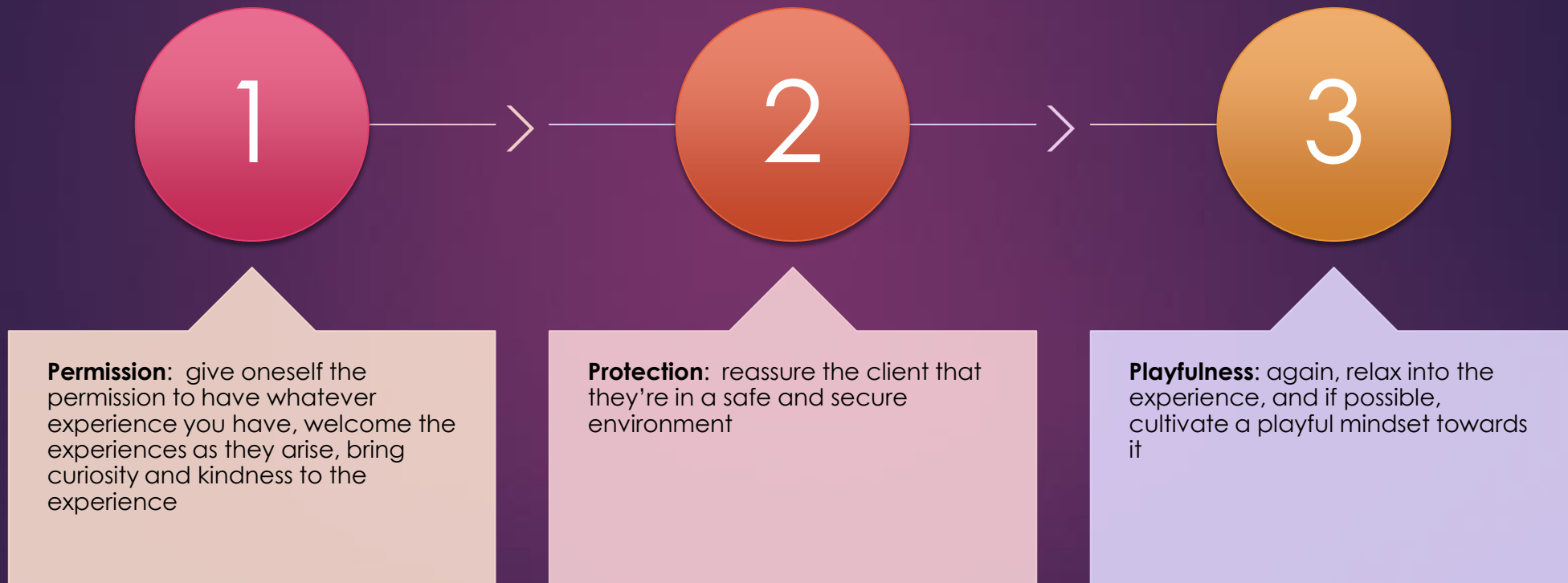
# KAP during ketamine administration

- Sessions can last from 1-3 hours including integration or a follow-up
- Therapist role is to provide warmth and safety
- Client may have on eye shades and headphones while sitting or lying comfortably
- Stance is non-directive and supportive
- Therapist is as available or not available as the client needs while under the influence of ketamine

Carhart-Harris et al. 2018, Brown and Elliott 2016, Dore et al, 2019

# KAP: Therapist role during ketamine administration

## Flight Instructions from Polaris Insight Center, 2021



Trance State – SL with dose ranges 25–400 mg varying with individual—slower onset 8–20 min

Promotes communication, access to difficult states of mind with less fear of those encounters, and a relief from obsessive and depressive concerns. Conscious awareness and an ability to communicate with attending therapists and involved relatives is maintained throughout the experience, often with a reduction in direct verbal output. Integrate a sense of newness and healing, this occurring as the main experience diminishes.

Transformational State – IM with dose ranges of 25–130 mg varying with the individual—fast onset 2–4 min, patients with less sensitivity may receive higher doses

Reduction of body and sensory awareness of an ego reductive, spiritual and liberatory nature—from our usual sense of our constitution. While the full out-of-body experience is primarily reached with an IM injection, it may also be accessed with the sublingual lozenge, depending on individual sensitivity and dose. With diminution of tactile and visual sensation, and alteration of auditory receptivity, the internal visual realm is activated. Verbal, intellectual description is limited.

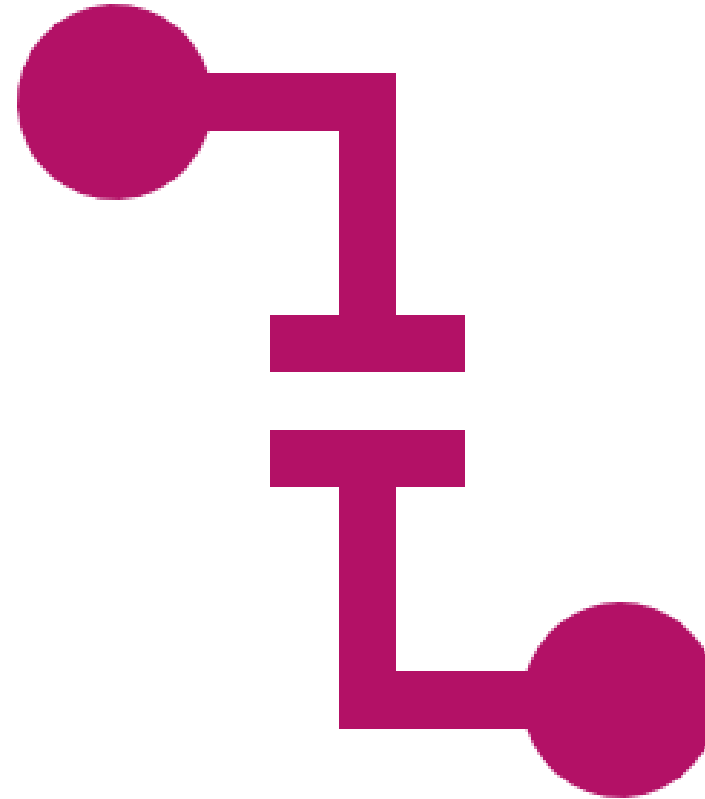
# The KAP Administration: trance and transformation

Dore, et al, 2019

# Integration

- ▶ Remembering and processing the experience
- ▶ Decreased ego defense=deeper vulnerability, analysis, self-discovery
- ▶ Anchoring the experience

Dore, et al, 2019





An altered  
state is a  
vulnerable  
state

# Ethical Considerations

“Inner healing intelligence” refers to the knowledge and power within oneself to move towards wholeness and wellbeing. *Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS) 2021*

Cultural appropriation

Access to care

KAP is a rigorous, intense therapy for clinician and client

Ketamine will not provide the same results for everyone

Dore, et al, 2019

Ethics  
continued...therapeutic  
modalities

- ▶ Empirically supported trauma informed practices such as Cognitive Processing Therapy and Prolonged Exposure Therapy
- ▶ Internal Family Systems Therapy
- ▶ Attachment Theory
- ▶ Holotropic Breathwork
- ▶ General clinical comfort with severe symptoms and complex case presentations
- ▶ Kolp, 2013



# Contraindications for KAP

In terms of psychological risk, ketamine has been shown to worsen certain psychotic symptoms in people who suffer from schizophrenia or psychosis. It may also worsen underlying psychological problems in people with severe personality disorders, rigid personality structures, and dissociative disorders.

Brown and Elliott 2016, Kolp, 2013

# Training Resources

California Institute for Integral Studies: <https://www.ciis.edu>

Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies: <https://maps.org>

Polaris Insight Center: [www.polarisinsight.com](http://www.polarisinsight.com)

Salt City Psychedelic Research and Training: <https://www.scptr.org>

Sana Symposium: <https://www.sanasymposium.com>

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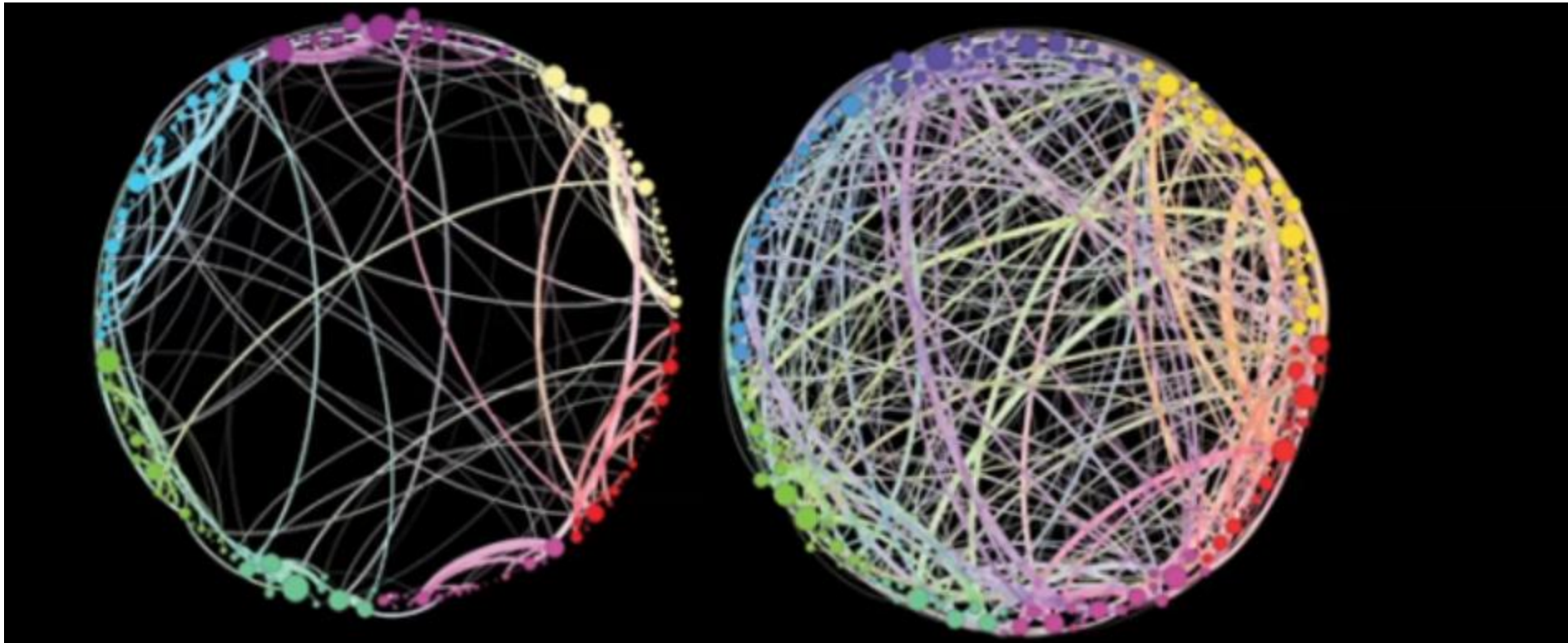
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# Appreciations and General Gushing



Questions? Thank you!