# Evaluating the LP

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So far in this lesson booklet we have looked at how the LP facilitates reconnection with The Fabric of Consciousness. This is all fine as far as it goes, but a question that will arises at some point is “does it work?” Does the LP do what it claims to do? That is, does it facilitate reconnection with The Fabric of Consciousness? It is a good question and one that you should ask not only of this path, but of other paths as well. As noted in *Rocket Scientists’ Guide to Spiritual Discernment*,[[1]](#footnote-1) we have been satisfied with confusing, substandard, politically enmeshed, and economically corrupted spiritual systems. It is time to put our collective foot down. We need to draw the proverbial line in the sand and we need to demand a higher standard of spiritual education and training. Part of that demand for a higher standard is of course, proof that things work. Many pathways claim to provide a way toward higher consciousness, but are these paths efficacious? In other words, do they deliver?

## Personal/Experiential

There are basically two ways for you to determine whether a spiritual education system offers you a path toward reconnection, one being a **personal/experiential** one and the other being a more **empirical, scientific** one. As far as the personal/experiential one goes, this comes in the form of an evaluation and assessment of our own personal progress. *In order to answer the question of whether the spiritual training system works, you walk the path and pay close attention to the impact it has on you and your life*. Here, you basically ask the question, “does the advice, guidance, and training provided *make a difference,”* To answer the question, you are going to look for several basic outcomes as evidence:

1. significant behavioral change
2. significant change in values
3. significant improvements in health and well being
4. significant expansion of intelligence, awareness, and insight.
5. significant increases in identity, presence, and empowerment
6. Actual mystical/connection experiences.

Let us look at each of the briefly in turn, starting with the notion of understanding, awareness, and intelligence.

### Behavioral Change

### Value Change

### Health and Well Being

, and even solving deep existential crises.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Another thing you should expect from the Lightning Path, and in fact any authentic spirituality that leads to authentic spiritual connection, is increased health, empowerment, and presence. Some of this increase will flow as a consequence of greater understanding and enlightenment. For example, once you realize your body is a temple for consciousness, you will naturally want to take better care of it by eating better, exercising more often, and getting better sleep. However, some of the increased health and empowerment will come from an increased awareness of the power of consciousness, and an increased control over the physical unit you will achieve as consciousness descends into the vessel. Higher consciousness is fully aware that it has a lot of power over the physical universe and the physical body. This power, it should be said, extends far beyond the impotent, watered down, and fully corrupted presentation provided by the Law of Attraction gurus. The power that consciousness has over the physical unit is profound and as you connect with consciousness, you will feel more of that power and see more of its impact on your own health, well-being, and life circumstances. This impact should be visible in the short term (i.e. a few weeks, or months) and in the longer view. Of course, there are limits even for pure consciousness. Physical matter is dense and manifestation remains slow and you may have a backlog of emotional, psychological, and/or physical healing that you need to accomplish. This may make your initial progress slower than you might expect. Nevertheless, following an authentic spiritual path should lead to noticeable improvements in health, well-being, and empowerment as consciousness trickles (or perhaps gushes) in to the vessel.

### Intelligence, Awareness, and Insight

As for increased understanding and evidence of enlightenment, the bottom line is that any authentic path of spirituality should make a real and observable difference in your understanding and awareness. Following the LP, indeed following any authentic spiritual path, *should lead you to be aware of more, and to understand things much better*. Increased understanding and awareness applies to understanding and awareness of spiritual concepts and ideas, but it also applies to expanding understanding and awareness of yourself and the world around you. Following an authentic path leads to a general increase in understanding, enlightenment, and general intelligence.

This increased understanding and awareness comes from two related aspects of an authentic spirituality. One the one hand, any authentic path should present concepts and ideas in a clear, logical, consistent, and open fashion and this presentation should make logical, intuitive, and even scientific sense. You should not have to engage in deep intellectual struggle, nor stretch too far the limits of sense and sensibility, in order to simply understand what is being said. You may have to open your mind a bit, and there is no helping the stubborn skeptic who resists, but beyond that concepts and ideas should be clear, precise, grounded and sensible. If the spirituality works, if it is authentic, it shouldn’t be confusing. You should make observable progress in understanding and enlightenment and this should apply both inside and outside traditional dogmatic boundaries. For example, if you are a Christian, then following an authentic spiritual path should lead you to understand Christianity better. At the same time, and if you are a religious uncommitted seeker, an authentic path should lead to greater understanding of spiritual concepts and ideas.

Increased understanding, awareness, and intelligence comes from another angle as well. Connecting with The Fabric, however nascent and tentative that connection might be, leads to insight, awareness, and understanding. To be perfectly frank, connecting with consciousness connects you, even if tentatively and temporarily, with a vast intelligence, what Albert Einstein called, and what I can confirm as, “such an intelligence that any human logic falters in comparison.”[[3]](#footnote-3) The Fabric of Consciousness is a vast powerhouse of pure reason, pure intellect, pure emotion, and pure awareness.[[4]](#footnote-4) When you connect with that higher consciousness, with your higher consciousness, you connect help but draw insight, wisdom, and expanded understanding down into your physical unit. This has an impact even if you only get a glimpse, but the impact is more dramatic the more consistent and persistent your connections are. Therefore, you can find evidence that the Lightning Path (or any spiritual pathway for that matter) is working if you notice yourself getting smarter about things, even if only temporarily. On the other hand, if you find the opposite, if you find confusion, disorientating, and darkness, you’re probably not walking an authentic pathway.

### identity, presence, and empowerment

A third thing you should be looking for as you follow an authentic spiritual pathway is presence and identity. Connecting with your own higher consciousness essentially means drawing down your own personal identity into your bodily consciousness or bodily ego. As consciousness descends, you should, in essence, become more of who you truly are. It is basically like waking up in the morning. When you sleep, you are a shadow of who you really are, but when you awaken, you gradually draw consciousness into the body so that you can go out and face your day. It is the same with this process. Initially, you are an unconscious shadow of who you really are. However, as you walk an authentic spiritual pathway, you reconnect with your own awesome divinity. As you reconnect with your awesome divinity you gradually become more of who you really are. Of course, beyond some basic statements about the nature of consciousness,[[5]](#footnote-5) I cannot tell you who you really are. You will find that out for yourself as you progress through this process. But, whomever you are, I can tell you this, you are fantastic. It can be no other way. You are a spark in the glorious Fabric of Consciousness and you are divine by design, so embrace that with pride and joy. You can think of it in terms of a halo glow around your body if you like. The more you connect, the more you draw down consciousness, the more the light from your own divinity (your own identity) will come shining clearly through. There is no better way to put this. If you are walking an authentic spiritual pathway, you should see evidence of this glow.

### Mystical Connection Experiences

Finally, the fourth thing you should be looking for to decide whether the LP or any other path works is authentic mystical/religious experience. Following an authentic spiritual path should lead you, in the final analysis, to some form of spiritual connection with consciousness, Since mystical experience comes in a wide variety of forms, it is difficult to specify in advance what this might look like for you, but some general statements can be made. Mystical experience can come in the form of a suddenly greater awareness and understanding, or even rapid and massive visionary enlightenment. Mystical experience can also come in the form of powerful emotional experiences of love, ecstasy, joy, happiness, inner peace, contentment, and connection (even identification) with divinity. There can even be powerful physical sensations, experiences of “light,” and feelings of energy running through your body. There is a wide variety of possible experiences and if you are following an authentic spiritual path, you should experience at least some of these things not too long after starting. Authentic spiritual training leads, necessarily, to authentic mystical experience.

I should note here that mystical connection experiences are not always dramatic and intense. Mystical experiences certainly can be dramatic, extraordinary, even earth shaking, but they can also be loving, gentle, and subtle. Put in the metaphor of the Water Glass, when consciousness fills a vessel, the water can be poured quickly, or it can trickle in. It should be noted that in healthy environments a gradual expansion of consciousness into the vessel is an ideal way of proceeding. More dramatic mystical experiences, while titillating and dramatic, only occur in the dramatic fashion they do because the physical unit is disconnected to begin with. Mystical experience represent dramatic and spontaneous reconnections, but these are ultimately pathologies. Ideally our socialization process should teach children to gradually expand and connect with consciousness in a way that makes the actual experiences simple part of growing up. In this way children develop insight, wisdom, and deep spiritual wisdom in a fluid, gentle, and natural way. I say this for two reasons. One the one hand, if you don’t have dramatic mystical awakenings, don’t fret too much. As long as there is a gradual and gentle expansion of consciousness into the body, an expansion that should be evinced by increases in wisdom, intelligence, understanding, and insight, you are walking an authentic path. On the other hand, if you do have dramatic awakenings, understand that because of their nature they often require grounding and processing. They are not normal or even healthy occurrences. They are in fact symptoms of the body’s shuddering reconnection attempts. I have to say, I prefer a gentle and subtle increase of consciousness simply because the transformations these gentle increases encourage are easier to manage. Dramatic mystical experience can sometimes cause more problems than they solve, especially when the physical unit is damaged by experiences of toxic socialization.

NOTE may be sudden and transformative, what some have called quantum change[[6]](#footnote-6) discuss in Dangerous memories or subtle and gradual.

James obviously wasCorrespondence concerning this article should be addressed to: William R. Miller, Department of Psychology, fascinated by such discontinuous transformations, differentiating them from what he called

the “volitional” or “educational variety” of change—our usual process of gradual successive approximations in small steps.[[7]](#footnote-7)



Before moving on to a brief discussion of what an empirical/scientific approach to evaluating spiritual systems looks like, there are a couple of final things that I would like to say about the experiential approach. One, it is important to understand that there are currently political, economic, and even spiritual limits on life improvements. Following an authentic spiritual path will lead you to marked improvements in emotional, psychological, and spiritual health, but these improvements may (and will) bring you smack against a social, political, environmental, and even economic wall. The truth is, we live in an economic system that is designed to enrich the few and impoverish the many.[[8]](#footnote-8) We also live on a planet that is increasingly damaged by the activities of industrial Capitalism, as evinced by increasing incidences of catastrophic weather, and increasing social and political chaos. Whether you are a native African living in Soweto, a white miner living in Kentucky, a child laborer building iPhones in a Chinese Apple factory, or a victim of violent tornadoes and flash flooding, the political, social, environmental, and economic conditions around you conspire to constrain your advancement. The truth is, under current conditions we are placed in a social, political, environmental, and economic “box” that inevitably constrains us. And this box exists for all, whether we are rich or poor, black or white, or anything in between. This doesn’t mean there is no hope. As people awaken, make connections to higher consciousness, and activate, things will get better on a global scale in the next twenty years or so. As things improve the box will slowly disintegrate and you (and we all) will gradually come to express/manifest our full identity and potential. In the meantime, it looks like things are going to get worse before they get better. As a result, you may struggle to work simply keep afloat. If this is the case, all I can say to you is don’t be discouraged. Keep moving forward, embrace the positive changes that due occur as evidence and motivation for continued forward movement, and try not to be broken by the chaos and negativity that increasingly surrounds you.

The other thing I want to say about this experiential approach is that it is a subjective approach. It relies on your own personal experience and your own personal assessment of that experience. I feel I have to point out here that this is not a bad thing. If you have been trained in a university, if you are a trained scholar, you may have been taught to believe that personal/anecdotal experience is not a valid way to assess truth and reality. Our personal experiences, scientists say, don’t qualify as solid evidence because there is too much opportunity for personal interest and bias to enter the equation. Therefore, we are taught we should not rely on personal experience to assess the value of things; and that’s fair, to a point. To a certain extent, bias and personal interest do factor in. Remaining objective about evidence is a constant struggle, especially when we are looking at things in of our own lives; but this struggle to remain grounded and objective is a struggle everywhere. It doesn’t matter whether you are a man in a coal mine or a scientist at an “elite” institution—bias, self-interest, and personal delusion is always a problem. Just ask the editor of any medical journal how hard it is to keep pharmaceutical corporations out of the scientific literature and they’ll tell you, it is a struggle.[[9]](#footnote-9) But medical journals don’t stop research just because they have to be on guard for financial interest and corporate interference and bias. They continue, but remain vigilant. This is the same approach we should take with personal experience. In the initially/sometimes subtle[[10]](#footnote-10) realms of conscious/mystical/religious experience, it can be easy to fool ourselves, make mistakes, or allow bias to creep in. We can fool ourselves into thinking that we are making progress, fool ourselves into thinking that we understand the truth, fool ourselves about the power of attraction, fool ourselves about the power of “now,” and even fool ourselves that we are fully enlightened. We see it all the time. **Humans have a remarkable capacity for self-deception** and until we achieve a greater connection with The Fabric, we have to be on guard against this capacity. But once again, just because we have to be vigilant doesn’t mean we have to throw in the towel and take an uncritical and uninformed stance. Evaluating a spiritual pathway based on our own experience is a valid way to evaluate the path. Despite what the advertisers assume, we are not stupid idiots. We don’t need a doctor to tell us when we feel good or bad and we don’t need an expert to point out when things are improving or nor. We know because we can see, feel, and apprehend for ourselves. Just pay close attention to the changes or lack of them and be vigilant against self-deception and self-delusion and you’ll do just fine.

## Empirical/Scientific

As noted above, the second way we evaluate the LP is a more objective and scientific way. Here we conduct empirical research and look for scientific evidence that the Path leads towards connection. Note, there is not much conceptual difference between this objective method and the more subjective one outlined above. We basically look for the same things as noted earlier.

1. significant improvements in health and well being
2. significant expansion of intelligence, awareness, and insight.
3. significant change in values
4. significant increases in identity, presence, and empowerment
5. significant behavioural change
6. Actual mystical/connection experiences.

In the case of the objective/scientific approach, we would look for these things with standard medical, psychological, and sociological methods. Blood tests, standardized psychological questionnaires, experiments, open ended interviews, ethnographic forms of research, and even anecdotal case studies provide us with the evidence we need to verify the Path.

Interestingly, suggesting that we evaluate a spiritual path using scientific methods is not as strange as it might at first sound. A lot of empirical work has already been done. Abraham Maslow researched peak experiences, kind of moderate low level connection experiences. Far more interesting and prolific research in area of entheogen research. That is, psychedelic drugs like LSD, MDMA, Ketamine, Psilocybin, DMT have been used in therapeutic and laboratory environments seen (at least since the 1950s[[11]](#footnote-11)) to induce mystical experience[[12]](#footnote-12) (or in LP terms connection). especially at higher doses.[[13]](#footnote-13) [[14]](#footnote-14) This has given scientists a bright window through which to examine and understand mystical experience.

Opbjection may be raised by some, drug experience not mystical experience.e artificial, etc. in fact, ever since psychedelic drugs burst on scene, students of religion dismiss religious/mystical significance of psychedelics, argue little mystical relevant.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Early researching suggesting entheogens can trigger peak experiences ([Klavetter and Mogar](#_ENREF_83)) and transcendental ([Mogar](#_ENREF_114)) experience (get and read MOGAR)

In fact however may be just the opposite. Mystical experienced occasioned by use of “connecting chemical” may be the root. How claim. For one, entheogen prevelant

If we discount the wine used in Christian communion services, the instances closest to us in time and space are the peyote of The Native American [Indian] Church and Mexico's 2000-year-old "sacred mushrooms," the latter rendered in Aztec as "God's Flesh"-striking parallel to "the body of our Lord" in the Christian eucharist. Beyond these neighboring in- stances lie the soma of the Hindus, the haoma and hemp of the Zoroastrians, the Dionysus of the Greeks who "everywhere . . . taught men the culture of the vine and the mysteries of his worship and everywhere [was] accepted as a god," 2 the benzoin of South- east Asia, Zen's tea whose fifth cup purifies and whose sixth "calls to the realm of the immortals," 3 the pituri of the Australian aborigines, and probably the mystic kykeon that was eaten and drunk at the climactic close of the sixth day of the Eleusinian mysteries. [[16]](#footnote-16)

Can be no doubt that **connecting devices** linked with religion. As Huston notes, might actually have been source drugs do not merely duplicate or simulate, but actually shame theology[[17]](#footnote-17) not all drug experienes mystical, but some are. Comes down to set and setting. “given the right set and setting, the drugs can induce religious experiences indistinguishable from experiences that occur spontaneously.” [[18]](#footnote-18) And can do so reliably.

“one-fourth to one-third of the general population will have religious experiences if they take the drugs under naturalistic conditions, meaning by this conditions in which the researcher supports the subject but does not try to influence the direction his experience will take. Among subjects who have strong religious inclinations to begin with, the proportion of those having religious experiences jumps to three-fourths. If they take the drugs in settings that are religious too, the ration soars to nine in ten.“ [[19]](#footnote-19)

How do se know. Smith says because people who have them tell us.

“When the current philosophical authority on mystical experience, W.T. Stace, was asked whether the drug experience is similar to the mystical experience, he answers ‘It’s not a matter of tis being *similar* to mystical experience; it *is* mystical experience.” [[20]](#footnote-20)

Should note not just druggies some spiritual teachers. One researcher reports intereving four spiritual teachers, all of whom supported use of drugs[[21]](#footnote-21)

One rabbi “[[22]](#footnote-22)At the end, the rabbi beckoned me to come up onto the stage. He took me into a fire exit staircase, out of earshot of his entourage, and told me that he could not afford to undermine his project by publicly supporting the use of illegal drugs, but that he had my book (which he praised.) He believed that MDMA and other psychedelics could be used to immense benefit, not only for personal awareness, but also for the sake of Gaia or the cosmic wellbeing of the planet. He implied that the MDMA experience was of the same quality and potential value as other mystical experiences, and suggested that priests should take the drug themselves, both in order to understand young people, and to see the validity of spiritual experiences produced by drugs. He referred to Abraham Maslow's conclusion concerning 'peak experiences': that taking drugs is like reaching the top of a mountain by cable car instead of the toil of climbing - it can be seen as cheating, but it gets you to the same place. He ended by giving me a big hug and encouraging me in my work.”

“I have found properly conducted psychedelic experiences to be the most powerful aid in rapidly resolving the obstacles that separate us from full realization.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

Don’t want to get into long winded. Smith’s article great. Assume it is. And if it is, then “The ability to occasion such experiences prospectively will allow rigorous scientific investigations of their causes and consequences”[[24]](#footnote-24) assume it does what do we find. Find that mystical experiences do in fact lead to improvements in some, and sometimes all, of the indices noted above. research conducted on impact of mystical experience/connection fits easily in to the six point evaluative framework provided. Second reason to highlight how might approach evaluating spiritual pathways or religion as authentic. We’l see, when establish these evaluating religion,k, pathway, maybe not clearer, but at lesast conceptually defined.

Note. Much research in 50s 60s, decline. Picking up speed, scientific studies conducted, still a need to supplement with anecdotal. Not a problem for two reson. Anecdotal evidence still evidence. May suffer from problems but…

Second reasons, often a lot of anecodotal evidence available.

It bears repeating that this agent has been used therapeutically and continuously for 4000 years or more, and was pre-eminent, or nearly so in migraine treatment for eight decades among American and European physicians… During that previous era, there were no controlled studies, nor were any needed for this agent. Doctors as prominent as Queen Victoria's personal physician, J. Russell Reynolds, Sir William Gowers, and Sir William Osler, the father of modern medicine, preferred Cannabis for migraine patients because it worked effectively and safely.

Same with other substances. Entheogens used for millennia. [[25]](#footnote-25)

### Health and Well Being

First one we look at health and well being. In general, connection to Fabric of Consciousness owever it is achieved greater mental and physical healt.[[26]](#footnote-26)

#### Psychological Health

Early studies reported “impressive improvement rates” when using LSD and other psychedelics to facilitate therapy, regardless of therapeutic orientatin (Freudian, Jungian, Behaviourist, etc.) and from multiple countries (India, Canada, Germany, England, Australia, etc. [[27]](#footnote-27) definitely some serious methodological problems of much early research, [[28]](#footnote-28)but highly promising.

Self acceptance. For example gay an reports LSD connection experience that led to self acceptance “Though I didn't have language to express it then, what I was in fact seeing was the divine nature of my own soul. As long as I live I will never forget the "talk" the universe had with me during an experience in a public park with peyote. It was all about self-acceptance and going with the flow of things. Such deep cosmic truth had never before been encoded on a discarded gum wrapper. Wow!”[[29]](#footnote-29)

PSILOCYBIN Also research indicates mystical as induced by psilocybin ingestin leads to greater openeness (i.e. aesthetic appreciation and Sensitivity), stronger imaginantion, and even even broad-minded tolerance of others’ viewpoints and values) [[30]](#footnote-30) interesting changes stuck. “in participants who met criteria for having had a complete mystical experience during their psilocybin session, Openness remained significantly higher than baseline more than 1 year after the session. This is the first study to demonstrate changes in personality in healthy adults after an experimentally manipulated discrete event.” [[31]](#footnote-31)

**Psilocybin** For example one studies finds moderate doses of psilocybin, presumably leading to mysical connection, has significant salutatory impact on alcohol dependence, with no side effects![[32]](#footnote-32) Similar study finds mystical experience facilitated by psilocybin therapy effectgive in treatement of tobacco addiction, [[33]](#footnote-33) [[34]](#footnote-34) recalcitrant OCD, [[35]](#footnote-35) [[36]](#footnote-36) depression[[37]](#footnote-37). LSD similar.

LSD useful to treat more serious neurosis including OCD, psychopath, those with chronic stress psychosis and other forms of mental illness, including those caused by childhood sexual assault! helping patients relieve and release early memories sometimes through abreaxis [[38]](#footnote-38)

LSD, DMT, and other “classic” psychedelics associated with “significantly reduced odds of past month psychological distress…past year suicidal thinking, past year suicidal planning, and past year suicide attempt.”[[39]](#footnote-39)

**LSD** Early researchers with LSD and alchoholism in 50s and 60s found high success rate. up to 50% success rate. Pioneer So successful that LSD therapy for alchoholism actually endorced by Alchoholics Anonymous[[40]](#footnote-40) even Bill Wilson partaking in LSD session[[41]](#footnote-41), though notably many relapsed do to lack of follow-up counselling. [[42]](#footnote-42) excellent overview of early research, theory, issues, and problems prvoded by Mangini[[43]](#footnote-43)

LSD Decrese in psychological defensiveness. “Before my LSD session I was afraid of people and secretly felt very inferior. I could be hurt easily and usually reacted…with anger….Now I can hurt no one. I learned in my LSD session that we are all One, that no one is of either more or less basic worth than me, and that to hurt someone else is to hurt oneself, ultimately. I have not lost my temper once, nor been afraid since my session three weeks ago.” [[44]](#footnote-44)

**LSD** also useful for treating number of different neurotic disorders, authors note that psychedelic therapy has “superior therapeutic impact…over conventional treatment procedures” on certain neurotic disorders, including “depression, obsessive-compulsive syndrome, social introversion, manifest anxiety, and.. ego-strength” [[45]](#footnote-45)

LSD treatment of children one author writing in sixties reviews several pioneering studies that returned remarkable results when LSD given to children. “To most pediatricians d-lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) probably represents a drug that has through newspaper and magazine articles become the drug most dangerous to the youth of the nation. A review of the medical use of LSD in children throws an entirely different light on the subject. It will appear from the following brief review that LSD offers new hope in the psychotherapy of children, especially to autistic and schizophrenic children “ [[46]](#footnote-46)

Finally, suggestive early study suggest LSD may be an effective treatment for peadophilia [[47]](#footnote-47)

On the fringes, anecdotal used to treat personality disorder,[[48]](#footnote-48) schizophrenia [[49]](#footnote-49), PTSD[[50]](#footnote-50)

#### Physical Health

Roberts argues for the need to investigate a possible connection between entheogen generated mystical experiences and the enhancement of the immune system. [[51]](#footnote-51) calls it the “emxis hypothesis” (Entheogen-induced Mystical eXperiences Influence the Immune System). **Suggests** strengthens immune, may even lead to spontaneous remssion. [[52]](#footnote-52)

“the Emxis hypothesis is based on the following observations: the immune system is boosted by a number of emotionally positive events in people's daily lives; these events are weaker forms of similar experiences that occur during mystical states; and under the right psychological state and physical location – known in the literature as "set and setting" – entheogens induce mystical states.”

Works through system (as measured with salivary IgA) through stress reducation and positive emotions feelings. Note below, a lot of positive changes can occur. Also note immune system supported by “social support”. Suggests that “for people who have had mystical experiences, the feelings of unity, belonging in the universe, and ‘coming to one’s ultimate home’ provide feelings of extreme support, even cosmic support. For people who have experienced these states, cosmic belonging may substitute – more than substitute – for ordinary, interpersonal social support.” [[53]](#footnote-53) His suggestins tentative, but given wealth of research on impact emotions have in immune function,[[54]](#footnote-54) seems like reasonable asertation.

One physician writes of personal expeiences with Ayahuasca as potential tool in fight against cancer[[55]](#footnote-55)

One anecdotal self-healing report by Steven Rooke says cured 30 year bout of rheumatoid arthritis after three MDMA sessions[[56]](#footnote-56)

### Intelligence, Awareness, and Insight.

Generally conceived of as consciousness altering properties of mystical experiences. More radical to think of expansion of awareness, insight, intelligence

In series of medical interviews, CHapkis noted Increased introspection use of cannabis mild connection “It was probably helpful in letting me just dwell longer in my mind on that particular topic and try to get to the bottom of things that had been brought up in one conversation or another. I think I was able to look at my life a little differently as a result”[[57]](#footnote-57)

Interview of 22 individuals who used LSD 19 reponsded “Out of the 22 interviewed, 19 respondedthat the experience allowed them to broaden and deepen their self-understanding. A majority of respondents (90%)also stated that the experience allowed them to betterunderstand people with mental illness.” [[58]](#footnote-58)

On the anectodal

MDMA used to treat PTSD[[59]](#footnote-59) “As the session continued and the medicine took effect, I felt that I had greater access to painful memories, with out the customary obstacles of fear, panic, guilt, anger, or grief. There was a sense of calm–a peace within. There was a heightened sense of readiness to face difficult situations I’ve had in life without the usual reactions, thus creating an opportunity for *insight, clarity, and new perspective*” [[60]](#footnote-60)

Lots of anecdotal evidence expanding awareness, insight. Expanding awareness of social programming[[61]](#footnote-61)

Even useful for computer programming Dennis Wier reports a time when he used LSD to gain insight and advanced his understanding of complex computer progjext he was working on.[[62]](#footnote-62)

**Enhancing creativity and broeadening insight etc. in two days**

**Broden consciousness**

Heightened sensitivity[[63]](#footnote-63)

“Thus, the researchers suggest that psychedelics may in fact "broaden consciousness" by making remote mental associations more available. However, this involves a trade-off. Although remote mental associations are more available, subjects are less able to focus, which slows their reaction times.”[[64]](#footnote-64)

LSD and alchoholism "a particularly vivid and intense awareness of personality problems" which seemed to make the alcoholic more

ame­nable to psychotherapy (Smith 1958) [[65]](#footnote-65)

Allow to make connections

**Give access to higher realms**

Alex Grey visionary artists suggest “by giving artists a meaningful experience and access to deeper and higher aspects of their soul, they are given a subject worth making art about.”[[66]](#footnote-66)

 Spitzer M, Braun U, Maier S, Hermle L, Maher BA (1993a); Indirect semantic priming in schizophrenic patients. Schizoph Res 11:71-80.

 Spitzer M, Braun U, Hermle L, Maier S (1993b); Associative semantic network dysfunction in thought-disordered schizophrenic patients: Direct evidence from indirect semantic priming. Biol Psychiatry 34:864-877.

 Spitzer M, Thimm M, Hermle L, Holzmann P, Kovar KA, Heimann H, Gouzoulis-Mayfrank E, Kischka U, Schneider F (1996); Increased activation of indirect semantic associations under psilocybin. Biol Psychiatry 39:1055-1057.

### Value Change

Dangerous Memories article

Development of ecological perspective

Mystical connection experiences induced by LSD, ketamine, psilocybin shift in values towards higher ecological consciousness[[67]](#footnote-67) connectnio induced by Salvia Divinorum [[68]](#footnote-68) more openeness and acceptance of other viewpoints[[69]](#footnote-69)

In early experiments hallucinogens administered in positive and supportive conditions led to lasting beneficial changes in personality, values, attitudes and even behaviour.[[70]](#footnote-70)

**LSD** “‘Spontaneity” and ‘Self Regard’ consistently show greater increments after both forms of psychedelic therapy, and “self-actualized values” are more frequently increased after high-dose LSD therapy. Psychedelic therapy, especially when employing high-dose LSD administration, appears to be preferable over conventional treatment methods for elicting ‘healthy’ behaviour.” [[71]](#footnote-71)

“shifts from interests in income and fringe benefits to interest in work itself and lessened need for status and recognition…”[[72]](#footnote-72)

LSD move towards less violent. Realize oneness (see earlier quote) [[73]](#footnote-73)

### Identity, Purpose, and Empowerment

Exampes of mystical experience leading to identity, purpose, empowerment.

Rick Doblin, founder of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS) had several LSD experiments, vision, lead to his life’s mission to revive psychedelic research.[[74]](#footnote-74) Mission undertaken in context of global salvation, expansion of consciousness, ability of psychedelics to “catalyze profound spiritual/mystical unitive states of consciousness that mitigated against scapegoating and dehumanization.” [[75]](#footnote-75)

On the fringes

I let go of existence and my sense of “self.” I was saved. To experience God I had to let go of every notion of who I was, and who I wanted to be–a challenging experience at any age. I felt the radiant glow of not just a being outside of myself, but of a being that coexisted inside of me, that was a part of me just as much as I was a part of it. The universe detonated magnificent fireworks inside this perception, one after the other, causing body spasms. Stripped of thoughts, conditioning, and my ways–I was naked. I was a raw consciousness, taking in more information than I could process. It was within this setting God became demystified. The noises intensified into one resounding voice, I could now hear a chorus of words. A mantra had entered my mind–I am every thing that ever is, was, and shall be. Every thing and everyone are a part of me. I felt in that timeless moment nothing but absolute truth.[[76]](#footnote-76)

Also research indicates mystical as induced by psilocybin ingestin leads to greater openeness (i.e. aesthetic appreciation and Sensitivity), stronger imaginantion, and even even broad-minded tolerance of others’ viewpoints and values) [[77]](#footnote-77) interesting changes stuck. “in participants who met criteria for having had a complete mystical experience during their psilocybin session, Openness remained significantly higher than baseline more than 1 year after the session. This is the first study to demonstrate changes in personality in healthy adults after an experimentally manipulated discrete event.” [[78]](#footnote-78)

LSD self-acceptane and ego-strength[[79]](#footnote-79) as measured by the MMPI

This fusion of the individual mind with a greater intelligence is often experienced as an inspiration that lifts the individual above the immediate concerns of ordinary existence. Integrity of purpose becomes more important than life itself. Thus, Socrates asserted that death and martyrdom are not a bad thing. When Joan temporarily recanted her mission, her voices urged her to recant her recantation. Earthly affairs and life itself were important, but they were trumped by higher values, meaning, and purpose, as revealed by the greater intelligence.[[80]](#footnote-80)

**Purpose and meaning** “These changes indicate that after KPT patients were better able to grasp the meaning of their lives, their life purposes and perspectives. Life became more interesting, emotionally saturated and filled with meaning for them after KPT. They felt better able to live in accordance with their concept of the meaning of life and life purposes”[[81]](#footnote-81)

**Empowerment “**hus, the results of this study and our previous studies of underlying psychological mechanisms of KPT show that the patients grew more self-confident, more sure in their abilities and their futures, less anxious and neurotic, more balanced, emotionally open and self-sufficient, and more responsible for their life and future. We observed a transformation of patients' emotional attitudes, a decrease in the level of anxiety and internal tension, discomfort, and emotional isolation, along with an improvement of self-assessment and the appearance of a tendency to overcome the passive aspects of their personalities. We observed a certain positive transformation of the patients' system of life values and meaning and even some world view (spirituality) changes**”** [[82]](#footnote-82)

### Behavioral change

Entheogen behaviour can lead to dramatic behavioural change. Potential for dramatic behavoural change as result of drug induced mystical experience recognized early. Timothy Leary and colleagues attempted a behavioural change program in U.S. prison system in homes lead to rehabilitation lower stark rates of recidivis.[[83]](#footnote-83) Similarily ([Savage et al.](#_ENREF_138)) found significant change ni behaviour improvement in personal heigein, improved marital relationship, improved family relationshps, [[84]](#footnote-84)

Indeed was a goal of ealy psychotherapy, literally induce religious experiences to facilitate dramatic behavioural change [[85]](#footnote-85)

Behavioural change related to changes in values, mental health, insight. Revelatory shifts leading to radical behaviour change. Note Sosteric Dangerous Memories

Significant and powerful. One case study, man with phobias, anxieties, fear, sleep issues, disassociation… “ After a couple of months of this he moved out of his parents' home to his own apartment and started to do volunteer work in a library. His mother contacted me, updating me on his new life and his father called me on two occasions, saying that one LSD treatment had produced more results than the previous fifteen years of psychotherapy” [[86]](#footnote-86)

Also “…profound changes occurred in his behavior following these experiences; be became a functional human being after fifteen years of extreme dysfunctional behavior - this was a remarkable phenomenon.”[[87]](#footnote-87)

### Actual mystical/connection experiences.

“2 months, the volunteers rated the psilocybin experience as having substantial personal meaning and

spiritual significance and attributed to the experience sustained positive changes in attitudes and behavior consistent with changes rated by community observers” [[88]](#footnote-88). This joy/intense happiness, higher feelings of peace and harmony [[89]](#footnote-89)

Recent research in neurospcyhology also examining from empirical perspective. [[90]](#footnote-90)

See also <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3277566/pdf/pnas.201119598.pdf>

Scholars developoing questionairres to measure/identify mysical experience since Based on stace [[91]](#footnote-91)first operationized mystical experience.

Growing Tip Statistics ([Maslow "Toward a Humanistic Biology" 248](#_ENREF_103))

**Survey Instruments**

Hood’s mysticism survey.

Hood’s REEM scale ([Hood Jr](#_ENREF_68)) . cull fifteen descriptions of mystical experiences from james, use a five point scale to indicate degree to which

Decades ago Ralph Hood constructed and validated the now famous Hood’s Mysticism Scale ([Ralph W. Hood](#_ENREF_71)). Hood’s scale contains 32 questions in eight categories of mysticism. The scale is based on what Hood himself describes ([30](#_ENREF_71)) as the “excellent conceptual work” of ([Stace](#_ENREF_177)). According to Hood, he constructed the scale in order retain “face validity” with Stace’s conceptualizations. The final scale had four questions each for eight categories of mystical experience. Two questions expressed a positive statement concerning reported mystical experiences, and two expressed a negative statement. As researchers have noted, the scale has “respectable internal consistency, and reasonable construct validity.” ([Caird 122](#_ENREF_22))

The scale has been a boon to researchers in the psychology of religion because it has allowed researchers to operationalize the mystic’s experience. Subsequent to its construction the scale has been used to measure mystical experience in specialized populations ([Chen, Hood, et al.](#_ENREF_25); [Chen, Qi, et al.](#_ENREF_26)), amongst Jews ([Lazar and Kravetz](#_ENREF_88)), Muslims ([Hood Jr et al.](#_ENREF_69)), and amongst those having entheogen induced mystical experience ([Maclean et al.](#_ENREF_93); [Lyvers and Meester](#_ENREF_91); [Martin](#_ENREF_96); [Lorencova](#_ENREF_89); [Pahnke](#_ENREF_123)). It has been used to examine transcendence ([Akyalcin, Greenway and Milne](#_ENREF_2)), as a foil against which to conceptualize and discuss mystical experiences ([Forman "What Does Mysticism Have to Teach Us About Consciousness?"](#_ENREF_52); [Forman *Mysticism, Mind, Consciousness*](#_ENREF_51)), and as a doorway to the study of subjective well-being ([Schwenka](#_ENREF_139)). There has also been a considerable amount of statistical refinement and theorization concerning the nature of the underlying mystical experience. ([Reinert and Stifler](#_ENREF_134); [Caird](#_ENREF_22); [Hood Jr et al.](#_ENREF_69); [R.W. Hood](#_ENREF_70)). As Hood notes, use of this scale “in a programmatic line of research [has] yielded a growing body of evidence that [has] sustained Stace’s interpretative position” ([Hood Jr et al. 692](#_ENREF_69)). [Mercer and Durham](#_ENREF_111) note that it is the most widely used instrument out there. While other instruments are available ([Piedmont](#_ENREF_129); [Reed](#_ENREF_133); [Akyalcin, Greenway and Milne](#_ENREF_2); [CLONINGER](#_ENREF_28)), none of these is designed to measure mystical experience per se. The Hood scale remains the only scale devoted to mystical experience.

Recent work continued, with attempts to validate smaller, more efficient instruments MEQ 30. [[92]](#footnote-92) emphasize mystical sensations, positive mood, transcendence of space-time, innefability.

reesearh is focusing on some elements of the typology of positive outcome identified above. In particular health and healing, and mystical experience.

KEY methods used in entheogen research used general research on mystical experience. Meditation, visualization, practices of the LP.

**Problems**

**Not everyone improves, though majority do [[93]](#footnote-93)**

Not always permanent. Some consolidate and move forward. “…nature, magnitude, and stability of changes following psychedelic experience were related to personality variables, severity of illness and modal defense patterns.” [[94]](#footnote-94) environment, archetypes in mind also important

tterns

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Byond sope of this work to discuss more. Will say though that if going to move forward need a more open dialog. Need more open and equitable exchange between mystics and scientists. Maybe even need scientists to have mystical experiences.

Over the centuries, mystics have said the same thing over and over again which is, if you want to understand the mystics’ wisdom, you need to have the mystics’ experience. I would have to agree. I have read academics as they spoke of the oneness, transcendence, and luminosity of mystical experience and it has been clear to me that sometimes they don’t have a clue what they were talking about. Not that they haven’t contributed to the literature with their work, but their understanding is caricatured cardboard and this reflects in and limits their work. This may have been fine in the past, but if we are to move forward through the global crises we now face, we will need a deeper and more nuanced approach and this approach can only be accomplished by a scholarly mystic or a mystic’s scholarship. It is not without precedent. Meister Eckhart was such a fellow and some contemporary scholars clearly know what it is they are talking about. The problem is that even contemporary scholars who have had authentic experiences have not been forthright, open, or courageous in their approach. If we are to make forward progress, scholars interested in mystical experience must pursue mystical experience and scholars who have had mystical experiences must express this experience to the world in a personal and professional manner (though not necessarily in the same venue). As scholars themselves have pointed out, scholars have a role to play in leading the public forward.[[95]](#footnote-95)I would like to say that at this particular historical juncture, we need scholars to lead; otherwise, “the train” will wreck and a lot of people are going to suffer as a result.[[96]](#footnote-96)



Condlusion. Mystical experience transformative. Whether drug induced or sponatenous, major change. Does this mean all we have to do is drop acid be transported to kingdom of high consciousness. NO. interference, archetypes, corruptions. Filtered through ego, interfered with ideology (tarot). Drug experiences lead to personal transformation, but limited etc. see this clearly

“…I’ve come to understand, quite before my acquaintance with ayahuasca, but that's how I’ve come to understand human illness and dysfunction. Which is to say that illness and dysfunction represent the products or the consequences of a lifelong interaction with our environment, particularly our psychological and social environment, and that they represent a deep disconnection from our true selves.”[[97]](#footnote-97)

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