

Overview:

MDMA falls under the category of entactogens/empathogens, as it has the capacity to heighten feelings of empathy, compassion, affection, intimacy, and emotional vulnerability. While not classified as a typical psychedelic, MDMA induces significant shifts in emotional and cognitive patterns.

The effects of MDMA can include feelings of:

Empathy

Self-awareness

Deep self-compassion

Sensory pleasure

More energy

Less anxiety

Ability to open up about emotions

Difference in how time and space are perceived

Additionally, the use of MDMA can empower us to freely express thoughts and feelings that we may typically avoid out of fear or embarrassment. MDMA brilliantly works in the brain to temporarily disable the amygdala (the fear center), which lowers our natural defenses, allowing us to comfortably interact with topics that would otherwise be challenging. In this openhearted, compassionate state, we find the ability to understand and express our feelings and experiences. We find as well, most amazingly, ready access to healing and potentially life-changing insights.

Brain Stuff:

The pharmacologic effects of MDMA involve the release of neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine, with a subsequent increased secretion of several hormones such as

oxytocin, prolactin, cortisol, and vasopressin. But these chemical factors do not fully explain the sense of empathy towards self and openness to engage in self-reflection that occurs while under the influence of MDMA. *That* is what's been called PFM—Pure F***ing Magic!

The interplay of these neurotransmitters and hormones is a kind of symphony. More on the chemical players:

Serotonin - helps regulate mood, is often called the body's natural "feel-good" chemical because it makes us feel happy and calm

Vasopressin - regulator of social behavior and emotion, particularly fear, aggression, and anxiety; associated with physical and emotional mobilization - has a deep interchange with the other neurotransmitters in love and attraction

Dopamine - responsible for allowing you to feel pleasure, satisfaction and motivation. serves as a reinforcement for remembering and repeating pleasurable experiences - teaching your brain to remember the experience

Norepinephrine - a surge of norepinephrine can cause feelings of happiness and euphoria; Increases alertness, arousal and attention

Oxytocin - regulates our emotional responses and pro-social behaviors, including trust, empathy, gazing, positive memories, processing of bonding cues, and positive communication

Cortisol - causes an increase in your heart rate and blood pressure

Prolactin - regulates anxiety and depressive-like behaviors, it boosts immunity, combats stress, and shields the brain

"People taking MDMA report feelings of energy, well-being, empathy, transcendence, and sensory pleasure, and these are optimal conditions for engaging in processing of difficult or traumatic material." - Rachel Yehuda, PhD -

Why Use An MDMA Guide?

MDMA has the potential to open the possibility of profoundly deep healing experiences. A guide makes room and holds the space for the healing process to take place, and provides gentle therapeutic prompts, which can yield startlingly effective results while on the medicine. A guide also helps you integrate the insights from the journey(s) with skillful presence and coaching tools, both during and after the MDMA journey(s).

The Process:

Each journey involves three sessions.

1st - This is a one-hour intake / discovery call. We meet to see if we are good fit, check for contraindications (like certain medications and health conditions), and go over what brings you to this work.

2nd - The MDMA healing journey, 4-5 hours.

3rd - About a week after the journey we will have a one-hour integration call. This is to discuss insights gained, and strategies for deepening their effectiveness, through applying them in practical ways going forward.

Why Do This Work On Zoom?

MDMA guided sessions are perfectly suited for Zoom. This format lets you to remain in your own place of comfort and safety, which allows an even deeper level of relaxation into the process. And unlike other types of medicine journeys, the MDMA brain state creates no hallucinations

and fewer variables generally. It also lends itself perfectly to sustained focus.

What Is A Guided Journey Like?

Every experience of MDMA is unique. MDMA is a prosocial medicine that lends itself to a very emergent process. However, each person will come to this journey with an intention, which is clarified in the intake session. The themes of inquiry and exploration during the journey will be held in place by the intention. As your guide, I help to hold that intentional container. What that could look like in practice is offering suggestions for inquiries or therapeutic techniques at appropriate times, to encourage exploration and insight. There may also be times when I offer body-based suggestions, such as to move, breathe, or drink water.

What's the Dose?

In clinical MDMA assisted sessions participants ingest 125mg of MDMA followed by an optional booster dose of 60mg. This would be taken about 1.5 hours after the initial dose, to intensify the experience if needed, or to extend the therapeutic window if desired.

Is MDMA Safe For Everyone?

MDMA has been shown to be quite safe for most people. However, if you are using SSRIs, are pregnant, are hyperthyroid, have heart disease or high blood pressure or epilepsy, or you suffer from (or have a family history of) bipolar disorder or schizophrenia, you should not use MDMA.

Always seek a medical professional to get screened for physical and mental health conditions or other issues for any concerns. Please note, I am not a medical professional.

Are There Side Effects?

While using MDMA, typical side effects can include involuntary jaw clenching, nausea, racing heart and hot flashes or chills. After effects

can include feeling down for a day or two. Certain supplements can help.

Timeline of Effects:

The effects will usually be felt within 30-45 minutes after taking MDMA, and can last up to 8 hours in the system. The medicine is felt strongest in the first few hours, which is why guided sessions last between 4-5 hours.

Do You Provide the Medicine?

No, you will need to acquire your own medicine and decide the dose that feels appropriate for you. I can, however, connect you with trusted sources.

MDMA is an illegal substance and therefore what you may acquire elsewhere should be tested for purity. MDMA is also known as Ecstasy, XTC or Molly. The crystal form of MDMA, as opposed to a tablet, is less likely to be cut with impurities. You can purchase purity kits online (see resources section).

Are You a Medical Professional?

I am not a medical professional. This material is not intended as a replacement or substitute for any legal or medical advice. Always consult a medical professional about your health needs.

Practical Tidbits

I will ask for the name and contact info of someone who could come to your aid in the unlikely event of an emergency.

You'll need steady, reliable internet connection, a computer or device that can connect to Zoom, a power cable, a full water bottle, and comfortable, safe, private surroundings.

Don't eat for 2 or 3 hours before your journey.

Wear comfortable clothing, in layers in case you begin to feel warm.

Turn off all notifications on phones/personal devices. Consider a sign on your door to not be disturbed (leave packages with a neighbor, etc).

Don't reach out to anyone or start any important conversations while on the medicine, and for a few days or even a week following. Wait until the experience has fully settled.

Have a light nutritious meal already prepared for when you start to come down and may begin to feel hungry. Food that is juicy or high in water content will be most palatable. Avoid dry or crunchy foods.

Plan on not leaving your home or chosen location until the following day.

Resources

Articles:

About MDMA

<https://www.psychedelics.com/guides/mdma-love-drug/>

The Science of MDMA & Its Therapeutic Uses: Benefits & Risks <https://youtu.be/slUCmZJDXrk>

Reducing side-effects:

<https://psychedellic.support/resources/supplements-to-reduce-side-effects-mdma/>

Test kits and other safety info:

<https://dancesafe.org/>

In the news:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/12/12/mdma-therapy-fda-maps/>

<https://www.leafie.co.uk/news/mdma-assisted-therapy-effective-in-reducing-the-symptoms-of-ptsd/>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/06/29/mdma-drug-therapy-ptsd-ecstasy-australia/>

Books:

Ecstasy as Medicine by Jonathan Robinson

How to Change Your Mind by Michael Pollan