



Innovations in Counseling (Part 12 Session 7)

Cultivating Awareness: Exploring Multicultural Perspectives in Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Brittany Prioleau, PhD, NCC, ACS, LPC, CIMHP

Question from Anonymous:

Regarding the “Harm to User” scale, how is harm defined and measured?

Answer from Presenter:

Harm in this context is defined as the potential of detrimental health effects caused by a drug or substance. For the study 20 drugs were scored on 16 criteria where nine of the criteria related to the harms that a drug produces in the individual and seven to the harms to others. Drugs were scored out of 100 points, and the criteria were weighted to indicate their relative importance.

More information on the scale and its use can be found within the citations below:

Grieco, S. F., Castrén, E., Knudsen, G. M., Kwan, A. C., Olson, D. E., Zuo, Y., Holmes, T. C., & Xu, X. (2022). Psychedelics and Neural Plasticity: Therapeutic Implications. *The Journal of Neuroscience*, 42(45), 8439–8449. <https://doi.org/10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1121-22.2022>

Nutt, D. J., King, L. A., & Phillips, L. D. (2010). Drug harms in the UK: a multicriteria decision analysis. *The Lancet (British Edition)*, 376(9752), 1558–1565. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(10\)61462-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(10)61462-6)

Question from M. Conrad:

What are some reasons that you think we are seeing such high dropout rates for trauma therapies in clinical trials for EMDR, TF-CBT, and exposure therapies (20-40%) but very low dropout rates for psychedelic treatments for trauma (0-10%)?

Answer from Presenter:

I believe that a variety of factors should be taken into consideration when examining dropout rates. Some include cultural background and the degree to which the treatment modality is culturally responsive to a given population. Others reasons may include the fidelity in reach the treatment is being carried out which may vary. PAT also incorporates elements beyond behaviorism which provides for a more holistic treatment approach. There could also be reasons that haven't been explored that might contribute to such low dropout rates.

Question from Anonymous:

What are some pros and cons you've seen with clients who engage in psychedelic-assisted therapy?

Answer from Presenter:

With every treatment there are potential risks that should be carefully examined before engaging with clients. Very often clients who have undergone PAT go through foundational shifts in their outlooks and worldviews that they may feel disconnected from their former lives and community. Also, PAT may not be the right approach for everyone based on a number of factors including physical health, mental state and others. I believe having strong guidelines during preparation sessions with clients could help mitigate some of these risks.

I also believe that there is a substantial amount of current research that supports the claim that this novel approach has seen some very positive outcomes in treating a variety of mental health disorders. I believe that this approach has the potential to revolutionize mental health care as we know it with proper safeguards.

Question from A. Camba:

What schools offer psychedelic psychoeducation in counselor education and supervision?

Answer from Presenter:

I am not aware of any current counselor education and supervision programs that offer PAT training. However, there are a number of schools of social work who are beginning to offer training in this field such as Columbia University. I hope that more CES programs will be able to offer training in the near future.

Training

<https://pttp.socialwork.columbia.edu/>

Question from A. Camba:

Where can we find information on getting involved with research in this area?

Answer from Presenter:

There are many training and research hubs that specialize in this area. A few organizations were listed during the presentation and I have provided other training resources below. Many of these programs have ongoing clinical trials and provide more information on how to get involved.

John Hopkins Center for Psychedelic & Consciousness Research

<https://hopkinspsychedelic.org/>

UC Berkely Center for the Science of Psychedelics

<https://psychedelics.berkeley.edu/>

Emory Center for Psychedelics and Spirituality

<https://psychedelics.emory.edu/>

Question from Anonymous:

How many doses does it take for clients to see lasting improvement, so they do not have to keep taking it?

Answer from Presenter:

This is a nuanced response as every person who undergoes PAT has their own unique experiences and journeys. Research has shown that some participants saw a reduction in symptoms after 1 dosing session while others may need 3 or more. The number of dosing sessions is typically determined by the research protocol of any given study.