

# The Frequency of Existential Meaning

Psychedelics are the easy part of altered state therapy.

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*“Psilocybin can offer a means to reconnect to our true nature—our authentic self—and thereby help find meaning in our lives.”*

— **Mary Cosimano**, psychedelic therapy facilitator

## Is Your Mind Healthy?

I've been experimenting with psilocybin. It's been many years since I chemically altered my state. Since everyone is talking about psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy, and few people are speaking with much insight, I felt I should continue exploring it directly.

The reason I say that there is little insightful conversation is because the people who are theorizing about the effects of psychedelics are not navigating altered states. Most practitioners of psychotherapy have no experience with induced states. The way you know this is by listening

to their well-organized, rational thoughts.

You cannot understand altered states using well-organized, rational thoughts. That's why they're called "altered." If they were well-organized and rational, then they would just be a different story or opinion, but altered states are far more than another point of view. From an organized point of view, these states appear psychopathic, but that only emphasizes how poorly they are understood.

Psychonauts know this, but psychonauts are not practitioners of psychotherapy and, at this rate, there is little reason for them to become such practitioners. You're no more likely to learn of altered states from a therapist than you are to learn about science from the Pope.

Psychedelic states are considered psychopathic, and this is a problem. We are told that psychopathy is a condition that you either do or don't have. People don't understand induced psychopathy—which is what you get with psychedelics.

Therapists presume they are not psychopathic and avoid inducing psychopathic states in others. This is why dream work has never gained a following in psychotherapy: dreams are another altered state that logical thinkers cannot understand.

The naive, linear thinking that asserts you either have a healthy mind or you don't, prevents a person from learning about themselves. The idea therapists are now exploring is that altered state experiences might restore your mental health.

This is not how our minds work. There is no such thing as a singular, healthy, mental state. Our mental state is a dynamic response to our physical and existential condition. Our mental health is a functioning organism whose effect depends on controlling all the individually unbalanced forces that both affect and compose it.



## Rivers of Mind and Ecology of Life

Our minds are a river that runs within the banks of our world. There are obstacles and there is turbulence, and sometimes we get turned around. The “healthy mind” is the one that flows within its banks. It has waves and turbulence, and it is not lacking in strong forces. The healthy mind does not become stagnant, flood its banks, or dry up. A healthy mind also does not flow as one uniform, laminar, Mississipean current. Turbulence is normal and can appear as psychopathic.

There are various problems of mind, and there are various effects of psychedelics. Some psychedelics create turbulence, and others create calm. This has as much to do with the state of a person’s mind as it does with the chemistry of the psychedelic. We could say the same of our lives as we experience interpersonal turbulence, but psychedelics are internal events of memory, perception, and response.

To think that an induced altered state is going to help anyone out of their particular mental state—be that flooded, parched, turbulent, or stagnant—is ignorant. It’s similar to the assumption that random tinkering with your car’s engine will improve its performance, or random behaviors will improve your marriage.

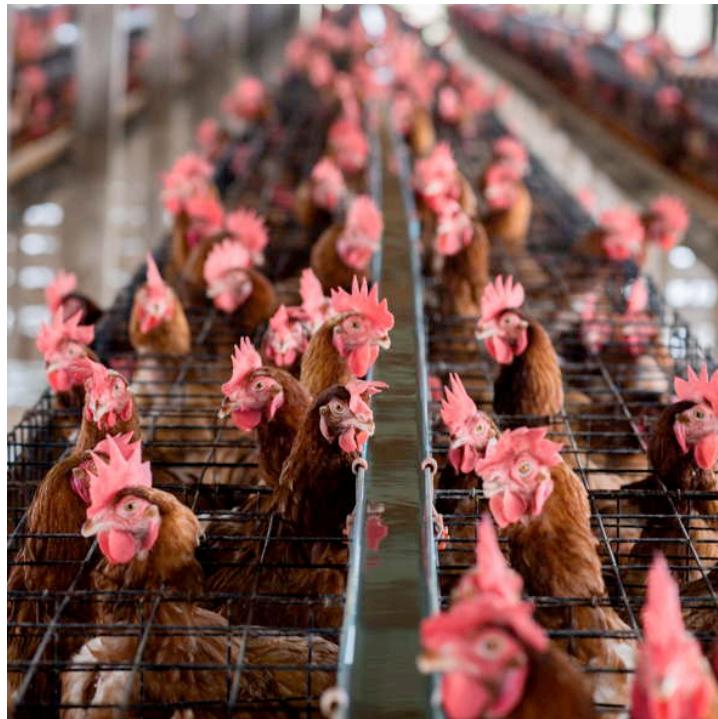
It’s ignorant to think that by controlling one’s mindset and immediate environment--the so-

called set and setting—one can shape the therapeutic experience. Certain psychedelics may affect a person's state of mind in a specific way, but to say this leads to certain results is only a conjecture. There must be a match between the influence you add, and the insights you need.

We can control the chemistry of a psychedelic, we cannot do the same for a person's state of mind. Repeating the set and setting does not return a person to their previous mental state. Simply adding a psychedelic does not resolve anxiety, depression, or trauma. Psychedelics are not antibiotics, and unbalanced mental health is not a disease.

What psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy asserts, though not clearly, is that by pigeonholing a person according to some mental health diagnosis, and then identifying some psychedelic as having a regularizing effect, we can combine the two and let the chemical straighten out the mind. Only a person with limited experience with psychedelics and altered states would make such an assertion.

What one can do, and what those who presume to learn the therapeutic use of psychedelics should do, is to explore the different, changing territories of the mind—the different properties of our rivers of thought—and how these territories are affected by induced psychopathic states. And that's why I've been experimenting with psilocybin.



## Standard Psychotherapy is Factory Farming

There is no substitute for experience. Many of the failures of psychotherapy are due to the lack of it. Freud's success stems from his introspection, and his failures from theories that he projected onto others.

Freud obscured these failures by claiming that his theories were based on observations, but his case reports were invented. He was no scientist, he was a fake. As a result, his inspirations and his follies are mixed together.

Psychology asserts that mind can be classified according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, a small book's worth of categories. Actually, those who wrote the DSM never presumed that they were categorizing the mind, they were categorizing behaviors. The DSM does not make that clear, but it's clearly stated by the authors of it.

It is typical of the shoddy science of psychotherapy that the differences between being and appearance are overlooked. Because of this confusion, tomorrow's therapists are being trained to think that psychedelics can correct pathological behaviors. There is an ecology of mind that is nourished by many factors. In this regard, today's psychotherapy is factory farming.

If you need to explore a deeper sense of yourself and the world, schedule a free discovery call and I'll send you a zoom link.

<https://www.mindstrengthbalance.com/schedule15>

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## Seven Kinds of Experience: the Chakras

The Chakra energy system broadens the notion of self, but if you only understand it intellectually, then much is lost. This system starts near your anus with the concept of elimination. The Chakras parallel your spine at locations that extend to the top of your head. The Chakras, or energy systems, pass through loci of sexuality, digestion, balance, emotion, expression, intellect, and spirit. Beneath all of these are the body's rhythms of pulse, breath, and energy flow.

The trouble with the Chakras is everything you read about them because, except for the intellect, they're not things to be intellectualized. Each has their own kind of experience, and each has their own kind of understanding. The Chakra system is a seven-faceted experience of the world. Each facet is its own experience and, when combined, they create the human experience.

*“There is too much of ‘chakra talk’ going on everywhere. Especially in the West, wherever you go, there are ‘wheel alignment centers’ where they claim to ‘align’ your seven chakras... But though everyone only talks about seven chakras, there are actually 114 chakras in the body.” — **Sadguru** (2013).*



## Experience Is Only the Beginning

Your life is a shelf of ordered knick-knacks, and psychedelics knock everything off. Your ideas are pots and casseroles, and your feelings are what's in them. It takes a long time to put your thoughts in order with your feelings, and no one likes having everything spilled out. But the truth is that you didn't do a good job, you never can the first time, and you always need to go back and change the recipe.

I spent two recent evenings with psilocybin, and I disliked both. They were both similar, and I couldn't wait for them to be over, but waiting was the only thing I could do.

My life has gotten quite organized over the last three decades, but I'm not happy with some of the structures that have emerged. In particular, I'm not happy with my two ex-partners and the families I feel they have psychically abandoned.

Both of these recent psychedelic experiences immersed me in these feelings, but not in the normal way. The normal way would be either intellectually—which means thinking about them—or emotionally—which means feeling about them. Instead, they immersed me in them physically, which made me feel sick.

In that feeling of sickness was a kind of essential sense. It was different from my intellectual sorrow and my emotional injury. It wasn't the same discomfort as an illness of the eyes, ears, nose, or throat, or the gut, or lungs. It was sort of a heart-centered sickness, but it was not the usual malaise.

This was more toxic. It felt distinctly uncomfortable in a physical sense, not an emotional sense. I dealt with it by moving the energies as I imagined them. These were energies of memory, association, implication, creation, and elimination. It was a kind of whole-body experience. It was completely off the charts as far as the DSM goes.

The result of these psychedelic experiences was the brief but simple insight that this sense of illness was a space I needed to visit more in order to learn from. I need to understand that my ex-partners exist in this space so completely that they cannot now, and maybe never could, see it as dysfunctional.

All-consuming psychic dysfunctions of this kind can lead one to become depressed and even suicidal, but those are symptoms and not causes. The cause is psychic absence, or a loss of soul. If you've never had a full soul, then it's easy to believe the world that lacks soul is real.

If you do believe this, then you'll do all kinds of damage in an attempt to survive. You'll basically turn into a kind of cannibal, feeding off of whatever strength and opportunity you find. You can become a vampire feeding off of others, or a psychopath, consuming parts of yourself.



*The Waldo Arms Hotel, Kaktovic, Alaska*

## Do What You're Not Good At

The summer never gets very warm in the Northern Arctic, and the nine-month winter never stops being cold, yet the kids I talked to on in the town of Kaktovic, on Barter Island in the Beaufort Sea, said they much prefer the winter. The winter is better because it doesn't stink.

There is no municipal plumbing in the Northern Arctic, and leeching fields don't work in the permafrost (Kanevskiy, et al., 2011). Effluent is stored in drums, which freeze in the winter and thaw in the summer. Then they are trucked away and dumped (Vialkova & Glushchenko, 2021).

*"With weather like it has, it's a good thing the Kaktovikmuit still retain their culture and traditions relating to the Inupiat Eskimos—partaking in subsistence hunting of the caribou, bowhead whales, walruses and seals to support their way of life... Their survival in a climate so severe is a testament to their knowledge and inner strength." (AlaskaWeb, 2015).*

Our psychic climate can get pretty severe. The endless series of wars and murders reflect our psychic storms. It's unclear if we ever had traditions that could handle our psychic climate, but we seem to have less now. On the other hand, crisis can be opportunity. That's normally what I see with my clients. These are people who don't accept shit as their final condition.

My psychic condition needs work on several fronts. The areas where I'm strong are not the areas that need the most work. Never accept encouragement from those who enjoy your accomplishments. When the teacher offers you a gold star, reject it.

Seen from the perspective of the Chakra system, I need to improve my elimination, digestion, and spirit. I need to extract more nutrients from my emotional experiences, purify my psychic currents, and eliminate the toxins I've ingested. The place to start is with rhythm. That's the place we always start.

That was the insight from both of these psychedelic experiences. Once I find my way to the quieter waters of my psyche, my house will reorder itself.

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