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CURRENT VIEWS OF PSYCHEDELICS AND THEIR CONNECTION TO WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

This article provides an overview of the current views on psychedelics and explores their connection to well-being based on scientific research and anecdotal evidence. The article begins by examining the historical context of psychedelics. It then delves into the subsequent prohibition and resurgence of scientific interest in psychedelics, highlighting key studies that have shaped our understanding of their effects. The discussion then shifts to contemporary research on psychedelics, particularly focusing on their therapeutic potential in treating mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. Studies utilizing psychedelics have shown promising results in facilitating transformative experiences and catalyzing lasting psychological benefits. Moreover, the article examines the neurobiological mechanisms underlying the effects of psychedelics, shedding light on how they modulate brain activity and alter perception. In addition to clinical applications, the article explores the growing interest in the potential of psychedelics to enhance well-being in healthy individuals. Anecdotal reports and preliminary research suggest that these substances may induce positive changes in personality traits, attitudes, and behaviors, leading to increased life satisfaction and a greater sense of connectedness with oneself, others, and the natural world. Lastly, the article discusses the public perception of psychedelic substances, the challenges, and the future directions in psychedelic research, including the need for rigorous clinical trials, the development of safe and responsible guidelines for their use, and the exploration of novel therapeutic approaches that integrate psychedelic experiences into psychotherapy.

KEYWORDS: *psychedelics, neuroplasticity, mental health, well-being, substance use, neuropsychopharmacology, therapeutic applications*

Psychedelics, a class of substances known for their profound effects on perception, cognition, and emotions, have gained increasing attention in recent years due to their potential therapeutic applications and their association with enhanced well-being. Throughout history, natural psychedelics derived from plants, like psilocybin (found in certain species of mushrooms), have been utilized for medicinal purposes. Following the publication of the initial report on lysergic acid diethylamide

(LSD) in the English language in 1950, psychedelics briefly became intertwined with the fields of psychology and psychiatry [Carhart-Harris RL, Goodwin GM, 2017]. They were particularly explored as adjuncts to psychotherapy for addressing mood disorders and alcohol addiction, showing promising therapeutic potential. However, the progress of psychedelic research was curtailed in the mid-1960s due to restrictive legislation, effectively terminating most major research programs

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