

Title of Project: Mapping Transformation: A mixed-methods investigation into the process of transmuting and integrating psychedelic and other exceptional experiences

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the project is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether you wish to take part.

1. Why is the project being conducted?

This research contributes to the completion of a PhD in Applied Transpersonal Psychology.

Existing research demonstrates that people process psychedelic and other exceptional experiences in different ways and that these experiences may result in positive or challenging feelings that can affect wellbeing and prosocial behaviour. This project aims to identify various pathways experiencers take through the process of making sense of exceptional experiences, including psychedelic, near-death, out-of-body, kundalini activation/awakening, spontaneous spiritual awakening, UFO/alien and other similar experiences. In addition, the project will explore factors that help or hinder processing and factors that affect wellbeing and prosocial behaviour outcomes.

2. Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been identified as a potential participant because you either

- a) completed the project questionnaire and indicated your willingness to take part in future research or
- b) have been identified as an expert practitioner or researcher in this area of study

You should only take part if the following conditions apply to you:

- Are aged 18 years or older and
- Have had at least one psychedelic and/or other exceptional experience and are willing to share information about this experience or have conducted support/research related to psychedelic and/or other exceptional experience

You should NOT take part if you

- Have any conflicts of interest or
- Have a current diagnosis of psychosis or
- Are concerned about effects on your wellbeing as result of participating in the study. This is because disclosing details of your experience may retrigger challenging feelings.

3. Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether to take part. You can ask questions about the project before deciding. You can stop being part of the project at any time, without giving a reason. You may withdraw from the project by contacting the Principal Investigator, Joelle Adams at J.J.Adams@2023.ljmu.ac.uk or one of the project supervisors listed below. You may also withdraw from the interview at any time by not attending the interview, refusing to answer any or all interview questions, asking for the interview to stop, or simply leaving the interview.

4. What will happen to me if I take part?

We will ask you to indicate your consent and we will provide an e-signed copy of this Participant Information Sheet. Please consider retaining a copy of the record of consent for your future reference. However, it may not be in your best interest to keep a copy of the record of consent. If you think this may be the case, please discuss with the investigator alternative mechanisms to allow you to access at any time this information sheet and your record of consent. Your consent will be audio and video recorded separately from the interview recording.

The interview will take place using Microsoft Teams and should take approximately 30 minutes. The interview will discuss your or others' exceptional experiences, with a focus on how these experiences are processed, what helps or hinders, and any outcomes related to wellbeing and prosocial behaviour.

The topic might be considered sensitive because the interview may discuss ingestion of an illegal substance, disclose information related to wellbeing, and/or trigger an emotional response. Note that researchers are not legally required to report any reported use of an illegal substance. You will be able to take breaks or leave the interview at any time and precautions will be taken to keep your information and data private and confidential.

Please remember, you have the right to decline to answer any questions you do not want to and you can also ask to pause or stop the interview at any time, and we can reschedule if needed. Please consider your privacy when being interviewed so that nobody can overhear your answers. During the interview we will ensure privacy is maintained by conducting the interview in a private location.

5. Will I be photographed or video/audio recorded and how will the recorded media be used?

Yes. The interview will be video and audio recorded on Microsoft Teams.

You should be comfortable with the recording process and you are free to stop the video portion of the recording at any time whilst continuing to take part in the project; however, audio recording is essential for project participation to ensure accuracy and enable analysis of the data. You are free to stop the audio recording at any time, but will not be able to take part in the project if you do so.

The audio and/or video recordings of your interview made during this project will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made of the audio or video recordings.

6. Are there any possible disadvantages or risks in taking part?

Taking part in the project is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages or discomfort. The potential psychological harm or distress will be the same as any experienced in everyday life. However, some questions included in this project require you to reflect on your wellbeing and may include the following:

- a) Disclosure of illegal activity (e.g. ingesting an illegal substance): the interview is confidential and the interviewer is not required to and will not share with anyone else (including law enforcement) participant reports of illegal substance use.
- b) Disclosure of an experience that may cause embarrassment: privacy and confidentiality measures are in place (e.g. storage of recordings, timeline for deleting recordings, etc.).
- c) Disclosure or triggering of emotional upset. Note that there are several organisations that can help if you experience emotional upset as a result of your exceptional experience or taking part in this study:
 - Fireside Project: <https://firesideproject.org/>
 - Wildflower Alliance: <https://wildfloweralliance.org/>
 - Spiritual Crisis Network: <https://spiritualcrisisnetwork.uk/>
 - Spiritual Emergence Network: <https://www.spiritualemergencenetwork.org/>

- MIND: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- Your general or primary care practitioner

You should not take part in the project if you think the topic of conversation will be upsetting or distressing to you. If you become upset or distressed during the interview, you can refuse to answer questions or ask to pause or stop the interview at any time. If taking part in this project leaves you feeling upset or distressed, please tell the investigator and contact one of the organisations listed above for help and advice.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

The research literature shows that disclosure of exceptional experiences can be psychologically beneficial for experiencers (Palmer and Braud, 2002; Sagher, Butzer, and Wahbeh, 2019); however, this study is not designed to offer support or to act as a therapeutic container. As such, no therapeutic or other benefits are expected.

8. What personal data will be collected and what will happen to this?

The information you give us, or that we collect from you, from which you can be identified (e.g. from identifiers such as your name, date of birth, audio recording etc.), is known as **personal data**. Taking part in this project will involve the collection/use of your personal data. We will keep all information about you safe and secure. The investigator and supervisors will have access to some or all of your personal data. You can object to our processing of your data and you have the right to ask us to access, remove, change or delete data we hold about you for the purposes of the study. We might not always be able to do this if it means we cannot use your data to do the project. If so, we will tell you why we cannot do this. The personal data collected will include:

- A record of consent (which will include your name)
- Project data. We will use a code/pseudonym so that you cannot be directly identified from the data. The personal data collected/used will include more sensitive categories of personal data (special category personal data) such as your race; ethnic origin; religion; and health)
- Identifiable project data will be stored securely for the duration of the project – unless there is no need for the data to be identifiable, at which point it will be made anonymous. Other data (including consent forms) or project data that needs to be identifiable, will be stored securely at LJMU for up to 5 years after publication or public release of the work.

We will not attempt to capture the IP address or any other information that is not voluntarily provided. Data may be stored on backups or server logs beyond the timeframe of this project.

Limits to confidentiality

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

9. Will the project be published? Could I be identified from any publications or other outputs?

The findings from the project will be written up in a thesis, academic publications, conference presentations, and possibly in a book. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the project; we would like your permission to use direct quotations but without identifying you in any outputs. You should not take part if the potential to be indirectly identifiable in outputs is not acceptable to you. The investigator will work with the participant in an attempt to minimise and manage the potential for indirect identification of participants and will seek explicit consent from you ahead of any publication if the investigators think there is the potential for you to be indirectly identifiable. However, you should not take part if the potential to be indirectly identifiable in outputs is not acceptable to you.

A copy of my thesis will be deposited online in the LJMU archive where it will be publicly available to facilitate its use in future research.

10. Data Protection

Liverpool John Moores University is the data controller with respect to your personal data and as such will determine how your personal data is used in the project. The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the project outlined above. Research/evaluation is a task that is performed in the public interest. Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from the LJMU [Privacy Notice for Research Participants](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/legal/privacy-notice-and-cookies/external-stakeholders-privacy-policy/research-participants-privacy-notice) (<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/legal/privacy-notice-and-cookies/external-stakeholders-privacy-policy/research-participants-privacy-notice>). The LJMU Data Protection Officer can be contacted via email: DPO@ljmu.ac.uk

The online platforms may collect personal data (e.g. via the IP address, backups of project data). This makes them a data controller with respect to personal data and, as such, will determine how personal data is used.

Project data may be transferred to, and stored at, a destination outside the UK for research related purposes. Identifiable data will be removed whenever possible and any data transfer will be done securely and with a similar level of data protection as required under UK law. Please see data protection information here:

- a) Acuity Online Scheduling, for the purposes of scheduling the interview. Data will be deleted following the interview date. Data protection information is available here: <https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/360000851908-GDPR-and-Squarespace>
- b) Microsoft Teams, for the purpose of audio/video recording the interview. Data will be deleted WHEN. Data protection information is available here: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/privacy/privacystatement>
- c) Microsoft Outlook, for the purpose of communicating about the study. Data protection information is available here: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/privacy/privacystatement>

11. Who has reviewed this project?

This Project has received a favourable ethics opinion from an LJMU Research Ethics Committee. Research Ethics Committee Reference Number: *UREC 25/PSY/049*

12. Who do I contact if I have a concern about the project or I wish to complain?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please contact my PhD supervisor Dr. Martha Lomeli Rodriguez at M.E.LomeliRodriguez@ljmu.ac.uk and we will do our best to answer your query. You should expect a reply within 10 working days. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee at Liverpool John Moores University who will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible:

Chair, Liverpool John Moores University Research Ethics Committee

Email: FullReviewUREC@ljmu.ac.uk; Tel: 0151 231 2121; Research Innovation Services, Liverpool John Moores University, Exchange Station, Liverpool L2 2QP

13. Payments, reimbursements of expenses or any other benefit or incentive for taking part

There will be no payment, benefit, or incentive for taking part in this project.

14. Further information and Contact details

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

Principal Investigator: Joelle Adams, PhD Candidate

LJMU Email address: J.J.Adams@2023.ljmu.ac.uk

LJMU School/Faculty: School of Psychology

LJMU Central telephone number: 0151 231 2121

Project Supervisor: Dr. Martha Lomeli Rodriguez

LJMU Email address: M.E.LomeliRodriguez@ljmu.ac.uk

LJMU School/Faculty: School of Psychology

Supervisor: Dr. Pascal Michael

Alef Trust Email: pascal.michael@aleftrust.org

Supervisor: Dr. David Luke

Alef Trust Email: david.luke@aleftrust.org

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