

Participant Information Sheet

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

University Research Ethics Committee Reference Number: **25/PSY/049**

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 meet the criteria of being 18 years or older and have experience with processing at least one psychedelic and other exceptional experience.

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

- 18 years or older and
- Have had at least one psychedelic and other exceptional experience and are willing to share information about this experience and
- Do not have a current diagnosis of psychosis

You should NOT take part if you

- 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 re-trigger 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 questionnaire by pressing the 'Exit' button, closing your browser, or closing the app.

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

Submitting the questionnaire implies your consent to take part in this project and that you meet the inclusion criteria and not meet exclusion criteria.

The questionnaire will be conducted online (using your phone, tablet, laptop or PC) and includes questions about your psychedelic or other exceptional experiences, changes to your wellbeing and/or prosocial behaviour following the experience(s), and factors that may have affected those outcomes. The questionnaire should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. The topic might be considered sensitive because it could involve discussion of illegal substances, experiences outside of normal life, and effects on your mental health. With this in mind, please consider your privacy when completing the questionnaire so that nobody can oversee your answers. You may also withdraw from the questionnaire by pressing the 'Exit' button, closing your browser, or closing the app.

Once you have submitted the questionnaire you will have the option of completing a separate form which will ask you to provide your contact details if you are interested in being interviewed about the project topic. More information about the interviews will be provided in a separate participant information sheet. If more people are interested in being interviewed than is required, participants for the interview will be selected to ensure a range of experience types are represented in the data. Your contact details will be stored separately from the questionnaire data to maintain anonymity.

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

Participation in the study could possibly result in

- a) disclosure of ingestion of an illegal substance: the questionnaire is anonymous and the researcher is not required to and will not share with anyone else (including law enforcement) that participants report having ingested an illegal substance, and/or
- b) disclosure of personal information about your experience: privacy and confidentiality measures are in place for the storage of all data related to the study, and/or
- c) disclosure or triggering of emotional upset: resources will be shared with participants who may wish to seek support following the questionnaire.

Please inform the investigators if you are adversely affected by taking part in the study. Questions included in this project require you to reflect on your wellbeing. If you are adversely affected by your experience or by taking part in the study, please note that there are several sources of advice or help which are free and readily available to you and which may provide useful. Specifically, these include:

1. Fireside Project: <https://firesideproject.org/>
2. Wildflower Alliance: <https://wildfloweralliance.org/>
3. Spiritual Crisis Network: <https://spiritualcrisisnetwork.uk/>
4. Spiritual Emergence Network: <https://www.spiritualemergencenetwork.org/>
5. MIND: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
6. 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. On the day, if you become upset or distressed, you can refuse to answer questions or stop the questionnaire at any time.

6. Are there any benefits in taking part?

The 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.

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

Taking part in this project will not involve the collection/use of personal data by the investigator, unless you choose to provide contact details for possible participation in further research. We will keep all information about you safe and secure. You have the right to ask us to access, remove, change or delete data we hold about you for the purposes of the study. You can also object to our processing of your data. 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.

8. 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.

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.

9. 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

Jisc Online Surveys 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. Please see their privacy notice here <https://onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/privacy/>.

10. Who has reviewed this project?

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

11. 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

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

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

13. 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 student

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

Please consider retaining a copy of this information sheet for your future reference. However, it may not be in your best interest to keep a copy of this information sheet or 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.