FOR 25 YEARS, MAPS has worked to study the healing potentials of psychedelics and marijuana. People suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxious about approaching the end of their life, or struggling with addiction often experience psychological pain that remains even after traditional psychotherapeutic and pharmacological treatment. My experience—as well as that of many doctors, psychotherapists, and hospice workers I’ve come to know over the years—tells me that lasting healing (or comfort with death) doesn’t come just in a pill. Neither does it come in wishful thinking.

From the desk of Rick Doblin, Ph.D.

That’s why the methodology that MAPS is developing for psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy addresses both the body and the mind—through the careful application of psychedelic medicines and the compassionate care of a trained team of psychotherapists. With that combination, we are succeeding in showing the world that psychedelic psychotherapy can be a powerful tool for healing and personal growth.

Just as personal healing involves the whole person, social healing involves our whole society. While our immediate goal is to heal individual patients, our research has implications far beyond the small (but no less significant) space of the psychotherapist’s office.

The scientific knowledge that MAPS has collected—both from government-funded risk studies and from our own research—has persuaded the FDA and other regulatory agencies around the world that MDMA has an acceptable risk profile that justifies administering it to human subjects in clinical research settings.

MAPS’ MDMA research was also a major factor in changing how judges enforce laws surrounding Ecstasy-related crimes. On July 15, 2011, U.S. District Judge William Pauley III sentenced a defendant charged with selling illegal Ecstasy tablets to 26 months in prison, less than half the time