

**S**INCE THE SPRING OF 1996, I have been working in the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University for a year as a visiting scientist (see MAPS Newsletter, Vol. VII No. 1). During this time, I was invited to deliver two major lectures. The first lecture, "Clinical Experience and Possible Mechanisms for Ketamine Therapy of Alcoholism" was delivered at a Columbia University (New York City) Substance Abuse Seminar chaired by Dr. Herb Kleber at the New York State Psychiatric Institute on December 18th, 1996. The second lecture, "Approaches for the Treatment of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Using Ketamine Psychotherapy, Transcranial Electrostimulation and Other Methods" was delivered to scientists from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on January 8th, 1997.

The first lecture was a one hour talk focused on our ketamine studies. The second lecture at NIDA/NIAAA was a longer three-hour presentation

where I discussed broader issues of alcoholism and substance abuse therapy in Russia. In both lectures I described in detail the results of our eleven year study of ketamine therapy of alcohol dependency; its clinical efficacy and underlying psychological, biochemical and

the design of our clinical trial which was not double blind. At the time that study was conducted, in the mid-eighties, the Russian research team was not yet skilled enough to set up a double blind study with a psychedelic. Nevertheless, I hope

### **LECTURING ABOUT KETAMINE PSYCHEDELIC THERAPY IN THE UNITED STATES**

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neurophysiological mechanisms. I also mentioned our plans to do a double-blind placebo controlled randomized study of ketamine assisted therapy in heroin dependent patients. With support from MAPS, this study will begin upon my return to my research lab in St. Petersburg in April.

Both lectures raised much interest among mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, psychopharmacologists, etc.) and brought about a vivid discussion after each talk was over. It seems that I was able to answer a major portion of the critiques excluding perhaps the critique of some features of

the whole set of rigorous scientific data from our ketamine studies was impressive enough to help further the idea of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy as a promising treatment in the professional mental health community. It seems that the scientific community and public opinion in the United States is getting a bit more tolerant of the idea of research with psychedelic-assisted therapy, and I would be happy if my lectures contributed to that process. •

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In mid-March 1997, MAPS donated \$8,000 to Dr. Krupitsky

to support the first year of his study of

**ketamine-assisted psychotherapy in the treatment of heroin addicts.**

MAPS has pledged to donate an additional \$8,000 per year

for the second and third years of the study.