

ALTERNATIVE THERAPY

Nonprofit advocates psychedelics as medicine

Clinical trials now underway on ecstasy-assisted psychotherapy

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One day, with a prescription, Americans might be able to "turn on" with a hallucinogenic drug in a clinic that essentially is a day spa for psychedelic treatment.

A self-described nonprofit pharmaceutical company in Santa Cruz, which is holding an open house at its Mission Street offices today, has been working toward this vision for nearly 25 years.

The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, or MAPS, works with scientists, doctors and regulators around the world to

IF YOU GO

MULTIDISCIPLINARY
 ASSOCIATION FOR
 PSYCHEDELIC STUDIES
 GARAGE SALE

WHAT: Open house and fundraiser auction. Art, books and other merchandise will be on display and for sale.
WHEN: 12-6 p.m. today
WHERE: 1215 Mission St.
INFORMATION: www.maps.org

design research seeking to establish the safety and efficacy of psychedelic-assisted therapy.

"It is a lot of effort to get such research going; you have oversight by the Food and Drug Association



Simon Haiduk's 'Autumn Dream,' a canvas print of a digital painting, will be offered for auction at the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies open house today.

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and need a Drug Enforcement Agency license, and (there's) the stigma of working with psychedelics," said Ilsa Jerome, one of the association's clinical research associates.

But these government gatekeepers have begun to listen.

"Basic and clinical research in humans has steadily increased since

the 1990s," said Franz Vollenweider, a Zurich-based scientist who has worked with MAPS. "Now, we are discovering that psychedelics might be useful in the treatment of major depression, anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder."

MAPS-supported studies seeking prescription status for MDMA,

known by its street name Ecstasy, showed both short- and long-term alleviation of post traumatic stress disorder symptoms.

Combat veterans will receive treatment in the next U.S. study of ecstasy therapy. MAPS already has begun training therapists for the large-scale clinical testing of MDMA, the next phase in the drug-development process.

Resembling a mash-up of a grass roots citizen movement, a scientific research institute, and a counterculture production company, MAPS sometimes turns to unusual methods of covering its annual budget of slightly over \$1 million — including the "psychedelic garage sale" today. The open house will feature displays of "visionary" art, books and videos on psychedelics and handmade jewelry.