



HYPERSPATIAL MAPS

MDMA HEALS RELATIONSHIP DIVIDE

PSYCHONAUT: Male, age 40, ~200 lbs. **MATERIALS:** dried San Pedro powder in four packed 000 gel caps, onset 30–45 minutes; also MDMA at 110–125 mg, onset 30–45 minutes, declining after four hours. 1:00 pm starting time, with no food ingested that day.

BACKGROUND: When I began my long-term relationship with my partner “Z” a few years ago, it was with the intention to explore ourselves and our relationship using medicines as tools for insight and transformation. Shortly after moving in together though, an unplanned pregnancy set a number of obstacles in our course. First—and certainly foremost for her—was my reticence to have a child. Although I had finally allowed for the possibility, I thought that a couple years would allow us to be where we needed to be in our careers and our relationship to handle it. It seems, however, that you can never really be prepared to have a child. Clear about her own intention, Z gave me an unspoken ultimatum: I could be in or out of the relationship, which now held double for our child. Having a bit more karmic awareness than I did in my youth, and wanting to hold onto this relationship, I signed on. But I felt that Z always held my original reticence against me, no matter what I did to earn her respect or parent our son responsibly.

Over the 1,000 days since then, she has not wanted to partake in the medicine, as she is nursing. I have respected that, although I’ve gotten some fantastic work done on my own. My ventures into journey-space are always accompanied by some resentment from her for the time I “abandon” her with our son “G” to get my work done. While it’s clear to me that I’m making great personal changes, the stress of dealing with the boy for a week alone seems to make these changes invisible to her; and when I invite her to join me there, I’ve been met with the “parent’s mother’s responsibility” diatribe. This has been an added strain for me, as one of the things we shared at the outset of our relationship was an interest in and enjoyment of the medicines and internal work, and I miss that. It’s been clear to me for some time that MDMA would be the only way to step out from our defended spaces and

discuss the issues that were dragging us down, as my truths would be perceived as hurtful, and cause her to recoil more. I knew we couldn’t afford that, since we were already in a place I was dreading.

No one in my peer group wants to think they’ll keep their dissatisfactory relationship going for the “sake of the children,” but even as egomaniacal as I am, I *love* that boy more than myself, and couldn’t imagine losing him. I’ve mowed through dozens of women at this point, and been crushed by a few too. So I can see the loss of a partner in a clear, calculated, go-on-with-your-life kind of way. But lose my child? No. Particularly not if there was work for me to undertake. It was apparent to me that Z and I were both in love with him, and that our relationship had become a dual orbital: an intersecting VENN diagram with G in the middle, which didn’t really serve us (or me, at least) anymore. The question was how to resolve this situation.

I set out one Saturday to convince Z of the importance of doing a session together. She countered by asking whether there was some problem that demanded it *right now*. I had to admit there was, and we sat down and started talking about it. This was the last thing I wanted, because I could feel our defenses coming up and the difficulty of staying calm increasing. I was also very aware of G’s behavior, as he danced around and between us, buried himself on us, and used every preverbal method he could to deflect the tension that was rising. In no way do I want to make him the responsible party for our relationship issues, and after pointing this out to Z, she relented.

INTENTION: After hours of discussion about where to go (which felt like an interminable onset), we finally drove into town and parked at a park where we could leave the car and walk around town easily. We consumed our cactus—a very small amount—as a grounding layer, as I have found that a subthreshold dose adds a certain steadiness to my state. We sat in the car while G napped, and we began our ceremony, calling the directions and spirit forces to our aid. After half an hour, when the cactus was beginning to work, we ingested our MDMA, with the expressed intention of resolving and recommitting our relationship.





THE DAY: 45 minutes later the effects had set in and G woke up, so we began walking. It was a particularly beautiful day and we covered quite a bit of ground, talking over all our points, which were easy to remember and to phrase in exacting yet sensitive terms. We spent time looking at the flowers and trees, animals and insects, architecture and people, being subtly reminded that we had called the aid of all things in our ceremony. Amidst intensive discussion, it was also easy to focus on G's questions, to stop, look, and listen to the world around us, and to consider his experience. Taking G to the playground (where we seemed to magnetically attract other people's children as well) was delightful, and a tremendous reminder of how joyful it can be to parent. After about five hours and some decline in effect, we drove to the water and watched an amazing sunset. We've always been committed to our own psychological upkeep, as well as relational dialogue, but we had definitely each mapped private territories in the last few years. Among the things that we discussed, observed in ourselves, and (hopefully) resolved, without anger, judgment, reaction, or fear:

- The fact that we ourselves never had time to establish our *own* relationship or determine its course, and that our primary relationships were now with G and not each other.
- That I had accepted being a father, but always rather at Z's expense. I wordlessly indicated to her when things were difficult that the decision to have a child was essentially hers, and attempting to make her see how much I sacrificed to have a child with her, made things more difficult at times.
- That I was still attempting to hold onto my prior life, rather than fully commit to who I must become.
- That Z had closed herself off from me in self-defense to my original negativity around having a child, and defaulted to that position in our relationship.
- That my agreement to enter into a monogamous relationship with her at the outset had now been placed in a lifelong context, without examination or negotiation.
- That I'd become more driven in my work worlds, leaving little time that I wasn't thinking about or available to work.
- That Z and I now referred to each other as "mommy" and "daddy" rather than by our names, and we had come to talk mostly from a side-by-side position, avoiding eye contact, safe from the intrusion of exposing ourselves.
- That we hadn't come to a clear definition of our roles in parenting, and constructing time schedules that respected all of our relationships and values. We also hadn't acknowledged or investigated who we were to *each other* in a long time.
- That we were both harboring pain and resentment, and had been thinking about our options should we have to leave the relationship and go it alone.
- That our sex life had become detached at best.

Fortunately, we have been pretty responsible parents, and it was also easy to remember as we looked upon our son how much we respected each other's ways of being with him and commitment to loving him. At one point Z pointed out to me that she really *does* enjoy being with me, too, when I'm present. My recent work overload and upgraded responsibility as family provider had definitely lessened our time together. I had to agree, with a similar inflection, as to her presence with me. Looking at the issue of how we divide time (or don't) was critical to really seeing each other, and seeing how we're committed to the relationship from our own scale of values. At the end of the day as sun set, we smoked a little *Cannabis*. While we were watching the play of light on the clouds and water, G took both of our hands and, having only possibly learned to speak these words in the week prior, said: "I love you."

It was a heart-meltingly deep reminder of who I am now, and my need to stay focused—not on all the things I think I have to do to keep it together for my family, but simply on *being* with them. The medicines are a tremendous reminder of my own spirit connection. I asked the setting sun to grant me the things I need from my work, so that I could focus more on my family. And I must say, the spirit has been provident. I've started carving out time each week specifically for Z and myself to hang out, which has been a great thing. I also seem to have a lessened sense of aggravation with any bumpy patches. Despite my fighting against the calendar for a lifetime, I'm using it and making it work for me, fairly painlessly. (Perhaps my neurons have been trimmed.)

I give MDMA the highest recommendation for any couple needing to resolve relationship issues, and specifically for parents, who by the very nature of parenting can become separated from each other by the third party love relationship they are having with their child. Of course, dosage, set, setting, and intention make all the difference. — NOIA, CA

