

Psychedelic Harm Reduction



The Zendo Project

THIS YEAR, MILLIONS OF PEOPLE will use psychedelics outside of supervised medical contexts. It is not uncommon for psychedelic users to have difficult psychedelic experiences, such as due to taking too much or being in a challenging environment or emotional state. As part of our broader mission to educate the public honestly about the risks and benefits of psychedelic drugs, and to minimize the harms associated with their non-medical use, we started the Zendo Project.

The Zendo Project is an onsite harm reduction service providing tranquil space, water, and compassionate care for individuals having difficult psychedelic experiences. The mission of the Zendo Project is to provide a supportive space for guests undergoing difficult psychedelic experiences or other psychological challenges to:

- *Transform difficult experiences into opportunities for learning and personal growth*
- *Reduce the number of psychiatric hospitalizations and arrests*
- *Create an environment where volunteers can work alongside one another to improve their harm reduction skills and receive training and feedback*
- *Demonstrate that safe, productive psychedelic experiences are possible without the need for law enforcement-based prohibitionist policies.*

MAPS' harm reduction program has expanded since its reestablishment in 2012, and now has a presence at five major events: Burning Man (Black Rock City, Nevada), Envision (Costa Rica), AfrikaBurn (South Africa), Bicycle Day (San Francisco, CA), and Lightning in a Bottle (Bradley, CA). Trained volunteers offer compassionate support to individuals having a difficult psychedelic experience, in order to reduce the number of drug-related hospitalizations and arrests. Since 2012, we have assisted over 700 guests and trained 500 volunteers. Zendo coordinators also offer in-person and remote trainings to groups and individuals who seek to learn more about psychedelic harm reduction.



Zendo Build volunteers helped to construct a new cardboard Zendo structure, funded by a successful crowdfunding campaign, during the summer of 2015.



As we build deeper relationships with various festival organizers, our model has become an integral part of these five events. Each year we continue to work more closely alongside medical staff and are seeing more cooperation with law enforcement and security.

Zendo Project Report: Crowdfunding Campaign Raises \$69,406 to Expand Festival Services

From June 23 through July 24, 2015, 437 individual donors in 32 countries gave \$69,406 to expand the Zendo Project's psychedelic harm reduction services at festivals and events worldwide. The contributions we received will help us to (1) design and build a brand new Zendo structure from recycled cardboard, (2) train more volunteers, and (3) bring the Zendo Project to more events worldwide. The Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign far exceeded our \$50,000 goal, and included an anonymous \$10,000 matching gift, a \$10,000 gift from Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, a \$10,000 gift from Britt Selvitelle, and

a \$10,000 gift from another anonymous donor (some of these gifts were not processed through Indiegogo and therefore do not appear in the campaign total). The Zendo Project received significant news coverage in Fest300, Festival Insights, Care2, Playboy, and other media. The campaign also helped expand public education about psychedelic harm reduction, with over 22,000 campaign page visits, 2,600 referrals, and 70% new donors. Additionally, on July 15, we hosted a reddit "Ask Me Anything" session, generating over 88 comments and responses.

Support the Zendo Project by signing up for our newsletter (maps.org/zendo) and making a donation today (maps.org/donate).

The Zendo Project is sponsored by the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS). The original Zendo structure was donated by Vanja Palmers as a gift to celebrate MAPS' 20th anniversary in 2006.

4 Principles of Psychedelic Harm Reduction



Safe space

If someone is having a challenging experience try to move them into a comfortable, warm, and calm environment.



Sitting, not guiding

Be a calm meditative presence of acceptance, compassion, and caring. Promote feelings of trust and security. Let the person's unfolding experience be the guide.





Talk through, not down

Without distracting from the experience, help the person connect with what they are feeling.



Difficult is not bad

Challenging experiences can wind up being our most valuable, and may lead to learning and growth.