


of the method. Fortunately, the entire program was not rigorously analytical since on the middle day, we scheduled a Holotropic Breathwork session to give the group an experience of a non-ordinary state of consciousness and to provide experiential, emotional release.

Overall, the effort to teach made it even clearer that we ourselves have a lot to learn. Nevertheless, creating our first formal educational program for teaching the principles and practices of psychedelic psychotherapy, specifically MDMA-assisted psychotherapy for PTSD, was a milestone that took over two decades to attain and signifies a maturing movement.

I am excited to announce that on August 11, we received accreditation to provide continuing medical education credits at our conference in April 2010—a conference that will undoubtedly mark another milestone in our educational path.

In order for MAPS to continue to expand our research and educational activities, we need your support. Come join with us as we move beyond the renaissance, to the deeper integrations ahead.

 Rick Doblin, PhD, MAPS President  
rdoblin@maps.org

### **MAPS Conference: Psychedelic Science in the 21st Century**

From April 15 to April 18, 2010, MAPS will be hosting “Psychedelic Science in the Twenty-First Century,” an international psychedelic conference in the San Francisco Bay Area. We will have continuing medical education (CME) credits available for psychiatrists, other physicians, psychologists, social workers and nurses. The conference will also be open to the general public. There will be two tracks of presentations at the conference: the CME track will have leading researchers presenting their evidence-based findings from numerous studies that have recently, or are currently, taking place around the world, while the second track will have psychologists, artists, and other culturally intriguing presenters from the psychedelic community. There will be a special banquet on Saturday evening to honor the lifetime achievements of psychedelic luminaries Alexander “Sasha” and Ann Shulgin.

Confirmed speakers include: Stanislav Grof, MD; Alexander “Sasha” Shulgin MD; Ann Shulgin; Alex and Allyson Grey; Andrew Weil, MD; Michael Mithoefer, MD; Ann Mithoefer, BSN; Charles Grob, MD; Alicia Danforth, PhD candidate; David Nichols, PhD; Franz Vollenweider, MD; Torsten Passie, MD, PhD; Matt Baggott, PhD candidate; Jose Carlos Bouso, PhD candidate; Peter Gasser, MD; Julie Holland, MD; Sergio Marchevsky, MD; Francisco Moreno, MD; Peter Oehen, MD; Jordi Riba, MD; Michele Weitz, BA; John Harrison, PsyD candidate; Jeffery Kamlet, MD; Clare Wilkins; June May Ruse, PhD; Ingrid Pacey, MD; Rick Doblin, PhD; Valerie Mojeiko; Amanda Feilding; Ben Sessa, MD; Caroline “Mountain Girl” Garcia; and others.

Taking place at a lovely Holiday Inn (formerly a Hilton) near San Jose International Airport, the conference will start with a reception on Thursday evening and will have three days of programming through Sunday afternoon. The hotel was chosen for its reasonable prices and close proximity to the airport and public transit. Registration information will be available soon. To be placed on a registration list, please send an email to: [conference2010@maps.org](mailto:conference2010@maps.org).

This will be a remarkable event that will be even more remarkable if you join us!

### **Therapist Training Protocol Leads to Positive Teleconference with FDA**

On June 22, 2009, MAPS submitted a protocol to FDA requesting permission to administer a single MDMA-assisted psychotherapy session to therapists as part of their training to conduct MAPS’ MDMA/PTSD research. On July 23, Rick Doblin, PhD, Michael Mithoefer, MD, and MAPS Clinical Program Manager Amy Emerson had a productive and positive teleconference with six members of FDA’s Division of Psychiatry Products. The FDA officials made a series of suggestions about how, from their perspective, we could improve the protocol. They suggested that we write the protocol so that it would more closely resemble a Phase I safety study in normal (healthy) volunteers. The revised protocol will include more measures of the psychological effects of MDMA on healthy participants. We plan to submit the revised protocol in mid-August and should learn by mid-September if it’s approved.

We learned that we could provide much in the way of educational experiences during our recent therapist training seminar that took place in Austria, with therapists from seven different countries. Nevertheless, we also believe it will benefit therapists who will be administering MDMA to patients to achieve a personal or subjective understanding of MDMA’s effects when administered within a therapeutic setting. The only way such an MDMA experience can be legally provided to therapists is through an FDA protocol designed to gather safety information on the effects of MDMA. The protocol requires potential participants to have first successfully completed a non-drug therapist training program where they will watch video tapes and review our treatment manual. We believe this protocol will significantly enhance our ability to train therapists to work more effectively on our MDMA/PTSD studies.

While many people may doubt the feasibility of asking the FDA to approve the administration of a Schedule I drug to therapists in order to better understand the effects of that drug, we have thus far been greatly encouraged by FDA’s suggestions and handling of this project. The FDA has so far shown us that developing MDMA into a prescription medicine is a matter of science, not of politics. As