

Psychedelic Harm Reduction



zendoproject.org

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. Our mission is to provide a supportive space to help guests obtain some benefit from difficult psychedelic experiences, reduce the number of psychedelic drug-related arrests and hospitalizations, and train volunteers to provide compassionate care. The four basic principles of Psychedelic Harm Reduction are:

- Create a safe space
- Talk through, not down
- Sitting, not guiding
- Difficult is not the same as bad

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 462 guests and volunteers have donated 6,248 hours of their time. Zendo coordinators also offer in-person and remote trainings to groups and individuals who seek to learn more about psychedelic harm reduction.

- **Envision 2014:** 45 guests, 24 volunteers
- **Bicycle Day 2014:** 10 guests, 13 volunteers
- **AfrikaBurn 2014:** 50 guests, 30 volunteers
- **Lightning in a Bottle 2014:** 61 guests, 30 volunteers

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.

Burning Man 2014

This year the Zendo will be hosted in FauxMirage, and the art car Rainbow Bridge will again shuttle guests and volunteers between the Zendo and the Full Circle Tea House. Volunteers will offer onsite support and will also roam the playa to help event attendees in the field who are in need of support.

Many of our volunteers are medical and mental health professionals who are interested in receiving training to be involved in a MAPS-sponsored Phase 3 MDMA/ PTSD clinical trial.

Support the Zendo Project by making a donation today. maps.org/donate.

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



Harm Reduction volunteers at Envision 2014 (above); Zendo Project/Harm Reduction Coordinator Linnae Ponté at AfrikaBurn 2014 (right).