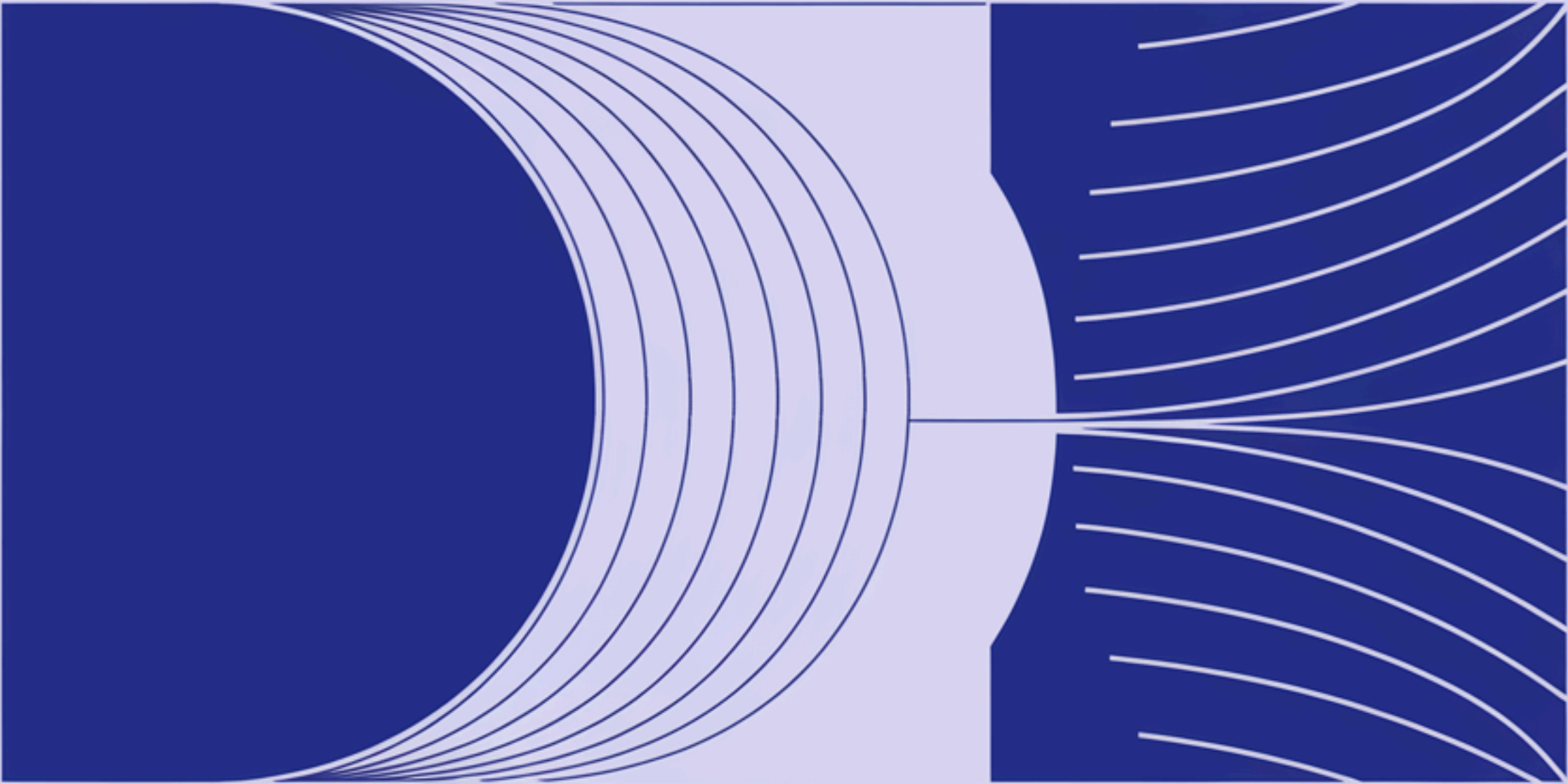


Harm Reduction in Psychedelic Therapy Training

Lessons from a Case Study on
Repeated Psilocybin Use & Adverse Effects



MAPS
CANADA 



Study Objectives.



Report prolonged adverse effect (PAES) after repeated psilocybin use

Highlight risks of unregulated psychedelic therapy training

Examine delayed psychiatric intervention and treatment

2023

Case Study

71-year-old psychologist

Joined an
unregulated
training program

Used psilocybin
as part of training

SIX MONTHS OF FREQUENT HIGH DOSE USE



Dosed up to
4 grams monthly
for 6 months



Some weekends
had two
doses



No structured
recovery
period

SYMPTOMS BEGAN TO ESCALATE



1

MILD ANXIETY

SEVERE AGITATION

2

SLEEP LOSS,
AND PARANOIA

3

PASSIVE SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

SPIRITUAL VS. MEDICAL CONFLICT



- Medical help discouraged
- "Energy healing" offered instead of psychiatric care
- Patients pressured to continue despite distress
- Leaders framed distress as "ego death"
- Fear that psychiatric care would "block healing"
- Delayed seeking help due to conflicting beliefs

What not to do in a crisis.

- ⊕ Dismissing distress
- ⊕ Framing distress as “spiritual growth”
- ⊕ Ignoring mental health signs
- ⊕ Delaying medical support



HOW TO HELP SOMEONE IN CRISIS



1

Validate
concerns

2

Recognize
medical
risks

3

Assess for
suicidal
thoughts

4

Encourage
professional
support

Lessons Learned



Medical supervision is essential
Facilitator training must be regulated
**Clinicians must be trained in
psychedelic-related adverse effects**

CITATION

Perna, J. Trop, J., Palitsk J.,
Palitsky, R., et al. (2025)

Prolonged adverse effects
from repeated psilocybin use
in an underground psychedelic
therapy training program

BMC Psychiatry, 25:184.

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