

THREE WAYS KETAMINE CAN HELP

Ketamine is currently legal and available for use as an off-label medication for mental health and mood disorders. It provides three distinct vehicles for possible transformation, each uniquely potent in its own right. These can work separately and in tandem with each other.

The Molecule/Medicine

When administered with a specific protocol, commonly two times a week, for three to four weeks, followed by two to three sessions every two to three to six months, the medicine itself can help alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety. This is particularly promising for people with chronic mood disorders that have never been significantly helped by other anti-depressant or anti-anxiety medication.

While expected it will prove to be quite significant for managing mood disorders in lots of individuals, the current FDA trials are specific to treatment-resistant depression. These studies were done on dosages ranging from 0.5 to 2 mg per kilogram of body weight and were typically given via an IV. Many therapists work with lower dosed oral ketamine and notice benefit as well, even dosages that do not induce a psychedelic state.

The Psychedelic Experience

Another way ketamine can be helpful with a wide range of issues is making use of the psychedelic experience to help with pieces of therapy work. The medicine provides semi-lucid contact with unconscious material. Whatever therapy themes you are working on, places you feel stuck or confused, questions you have for your unconscious, the psychedelic experience can help access your internal healer, your wiser self.

Some people have what they describe as mystical or spiritual experiences that offer them a radically different perspective on themselves, others, and life itself. Many of us have very narrow world/ self/ other views that do much to filter our experience. Psychedelic experiences can often open a totally new understanding.

To make good use of this component, it is best practice to be in an active therapy process or some other structured self-improvement/healing activity. The most fruitful medicine journeys are curated through pre-medicine session intention setting. While the medicine can make a lot happen in the

mind/body/experience, we aren't really seeking a random experience, but rather one directed specifically toward our healing. During the medicine session, you have novel neural pathways providing new, original thoughts not burdened by default-mode processing of material. These are opportunities to unravel old, ongoing conundrums. The other reason working with ketamine as a tool for healing is best done in the container of psychotherapy is that the ultimate value of a medicine journey is the successful integration of the material/ insight/ experience into our daily lives. This process can take time and effort.

Neuroplasticity

The third way ketamine can be helpful is in the days following a session. For three to four days after each medicine session, your mind has greater neuroplasticity. What this means is it is easier for new synaptic connections to occur, and less likely that your thoughts/ feelings/ behaviors will be forced into the same well-worn grooves in your mind. Without breaking new trails through the freshly fallen snow, however, the old trails will still be the ones that get used by habit and reflex.

During the days following treatments, it is important to do lots of journaling, therapy, art, conversations with friends, meditation, walks in the woods, etc. It is also best to be mindful to start doing any new behaviors/ thoughts/ patterns right away, so they are easier to establish. This is one of the key ways ketamine can help and must be built into your plans for the days surrounding each treatment if you are to get the most out of this medicine.