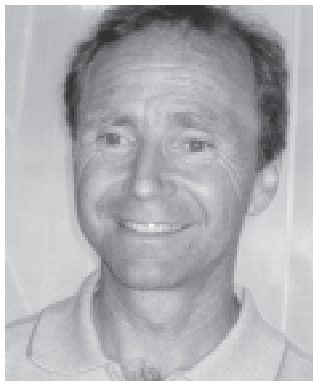


## Planning LSD Research in Switzerland



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Research from the 1950s and 60s provides encouraging evidence that the spiritual experiences and deep insights that LSD facilitates can be great help when one is confronted with one's own imminent death.

**A** FEW DAYS BEFORE the wonderful international symposium on the occasion of Albert Hofmann's 100th birthday, "LSD: Problem Child and Wonder Drug," I had the opportunity to go on a walk in the snowy Jura mountains with MAPS President Rick Doblin, Ph.D. As we walked and talked, we discussed the possibility of re-starting LSD-assisted psychotherapy research, and decided that this year is the right time.

A few months later, we are now in the protocol design stage for a double-blind placebo-controlled pilot study with 12 subjects. Along the same lines as Charles Grob's, M.D., psilocybin/cancer anxiety study and John Halpern's, M.D., MDMA/cancer anxiety study, this study will investigate LSD-assisted psychotherapy as a potential treatment for subjects who suffer from anxiety related to advanced stage cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. Research from the 1950s and 60s provides encouraging evidence that the spiritual experiences and deep insights that LSD facilitates can be great help when one is confronted with one's own imminent death. For this study, we seek to empirically examine the potential of LSD-assisted psychotherapy to relieve anxiety and improve the quality of life for these subjects. We also want to evaluate whether LSD-assisted psychotherapy is a safe and reliable treatment, so that if the results are promising, the data from this study can be used to develop LSD into a legal prescription medicine.

The tentative plan is for a double-blind, placebo-controlled pilot study, in which the experimental group of eight subjects will be administered 250mcg. LSD and the control group of four subjects will receive a low dose/placebo of 25mcg. LSD. The tentative plan is for an open-label, double-blind study, in which one control group will be administered 200mcg. LSD and the other will receive a placebo of 25mcg. LSD. The subjects will undergo two or three sessions of LSD-assisted

psychotherapy, in addition to eight conventional non-drug psychotherapy sessions for preparation and integration of the experiences. After their final follow-up evaluation, subjects who receive placebo will have the opportunity to participate in an open-label Stage 2 in which they would receive two LSD-assisted psychotherapy sessions and associated non-drug psychotherapy sessions for preparation and integration.

There has been no legal LSD psychotherapy in Switzerland in over a dozen years. Suddenly, it seems that the ice age is over, now that Peter Oehen, M.D., has received full government approval for a MAPS-sponsored study in Switzerland investigating MDMA-assisted psychotherapy as a treatment for subjects suffering from chronic posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Following the LSD symposium in Basel, the organizers of the event sent an appeal—signed by all of the speakers from the conference—to the political authorities in Europe and the US, urging them to facilitate scientific investigation into the medicinal and therapeutic potentials of LSD and other psychedelic drugs. The Secretary of the Swiss Health Department replied to this appeal by writing that the Swiss authorities will give permission for LSD research if ethical and scientific requirements are fulfilled.

MAPS has pledged to donate \$50,000 for this study, which MAPS has already raised from the sale of art and books signed by Albert Hofmann. MAPS is also in the process of seeking to raise an additional \$100,000 for this study; please contact MAPS if you are interested in donating. Rick Doblin was enthusiastic enough to state that we will have government approval for this study by Albert Hofmann's 101st birthday in January 2007. I am happy to be infected by his enthusiasm. Once approved, this study will be the first LSD psychotherapy research to take place in about 35 years!•