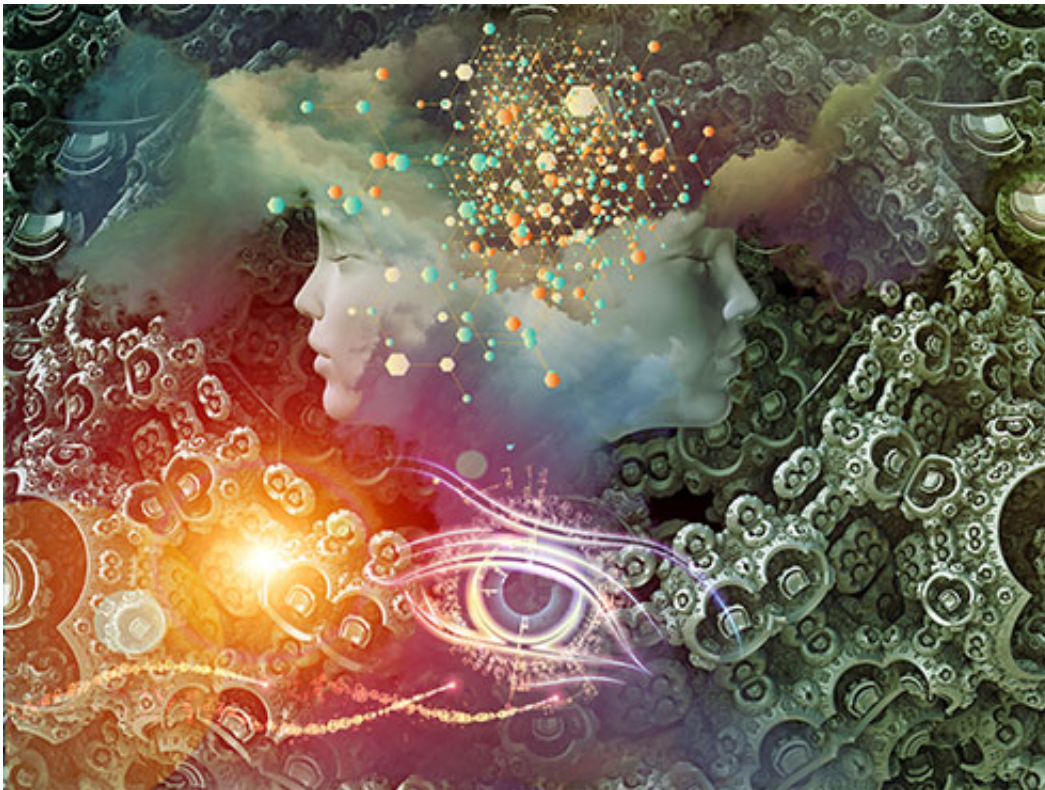


Hallucinogens use could protect against intimate partner violence

February 8 2016, by Alicia Rohan



Evidence in a study led by researchers at the University of British Columbia along with University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health Associate Professor Peter S. Hendricks, Ph.D., suggests hallucinogens such as psilocybin or LSD may have therapeutic potential for reducing intimate partner violence, or IPV.

Hendricks says the identification of risk and protective factors for IPV is an important goal for [public health](#) research.

"A body of evidence suggests that substances such as psilocybin may have a range of clinical indications," he said. "Although we're attempting to better understand how or why these substances may be beneficial, one explanation is that they can transform people's lives by providing profoundly meaningful spiritual experiences that highlight what matters most. Often, people are struck by the realization that behaving with compassion and kindness toward others is high on the list of what matters."

The study looked at 302 men ages 17-40 in the criminal justice system. Of the 56 percent of participants who reported using hallucinogens, only 27 percent were arrested for later IPV as opposed to 42 percent of the group who reported no hallucinogen use being arrested for IPV within seven years.

From the 1950s through the early 1970s, thousands of studies reported on the medical use of hallucinogens, mostly LSD. Due to the classification of the most prominent hallucinogens as Schedule I controlled substances in 1970, research on health benefits was suspended, causing many of these studies to be forgotten. However, research with hallucinogens has experienced a rebirth.

"Recent studies have shown that [psilocybin](#) and related compounds could revolutionize the mental [health](#) field," Hendricks said. "However, additional research is needed. This study suggests that [hallucinogens](#) could be a useful avenue for reducing IPV, meaning this topic deserves further attention."

Provided by University of Alabama at Birmingham

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