

**THE CONTAINER IS
THE CATALYST:
HOW TO WORK
WITH PSYCHEDELICS
INTENTIONALLY**

GUIDE

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The Container is the Catalyst: How to Work with Psychedelics Intentionally

This guide is for anyone who knows psychedelic medicines are not magic bullets but catalysts for healing and growth when taken under the right conditions [1].

Catalysts, because they offer the most powerful teaching: a felt experience. The right conditions, because insight only lands when we feel safe and open [2]. Together, these create transformation—where readiness meets experience. These conditions extend beyond the day of the journey. With your guide, you co-create a container for transformation. This includes preparation, your relationship with the guide, integration tools, and more [3]. Whether microdosing or macrodosing, the key factor is the quality of your container. That is what allows the medicine to work by removing barriers to a healthier relationship with yourself, others, and the world [4].

Why this guide?

When people research a psychedelic retreat or a one to one journey, they often receive information about logistics, safety, or the promised effects of the medicine—but not about the deeper preparation and integration that truly determine the impact [6].

I wanted to fill that gap by offering you a framework that helps you apply the relational, holistic, and intentional aspects of psychedelic work.

Who this guide is for

This guide is written for those interested in either microdosing or high dose journeys (or both). Microdosing is the practice of regularly taking very small (5–10% of a ceremonial dose) amounts of a psychedelic substance over a certain time period (1–2 months), with the intention to improve one's quality of life [6]. In this manner, microdosing can have just as much impact as a higher dose journey—greater emotional balance, enhanced creativity, and improved self-awareness [7]. It is an accessible option with sustainable results that is safe and beneficial for the majority of people [8].

How to Co-Create Your Optimal Container for Psychedelic Medicine Work

Many treat psychedelics like ordinary medication: take the right dose at the right time, then wait. But if we stop approaching them like Western medicine and open to their complex ways of catalyzing healing and teaching, only then can we experience their magic.

Psychedelics are intelligent. Mushrooms, for example, have existed for around a billion years (humans only 300,000) [9]. They are our ancestors and teachers, carrying evolutionary wisdom that supports human healing when we engage consciously [10].

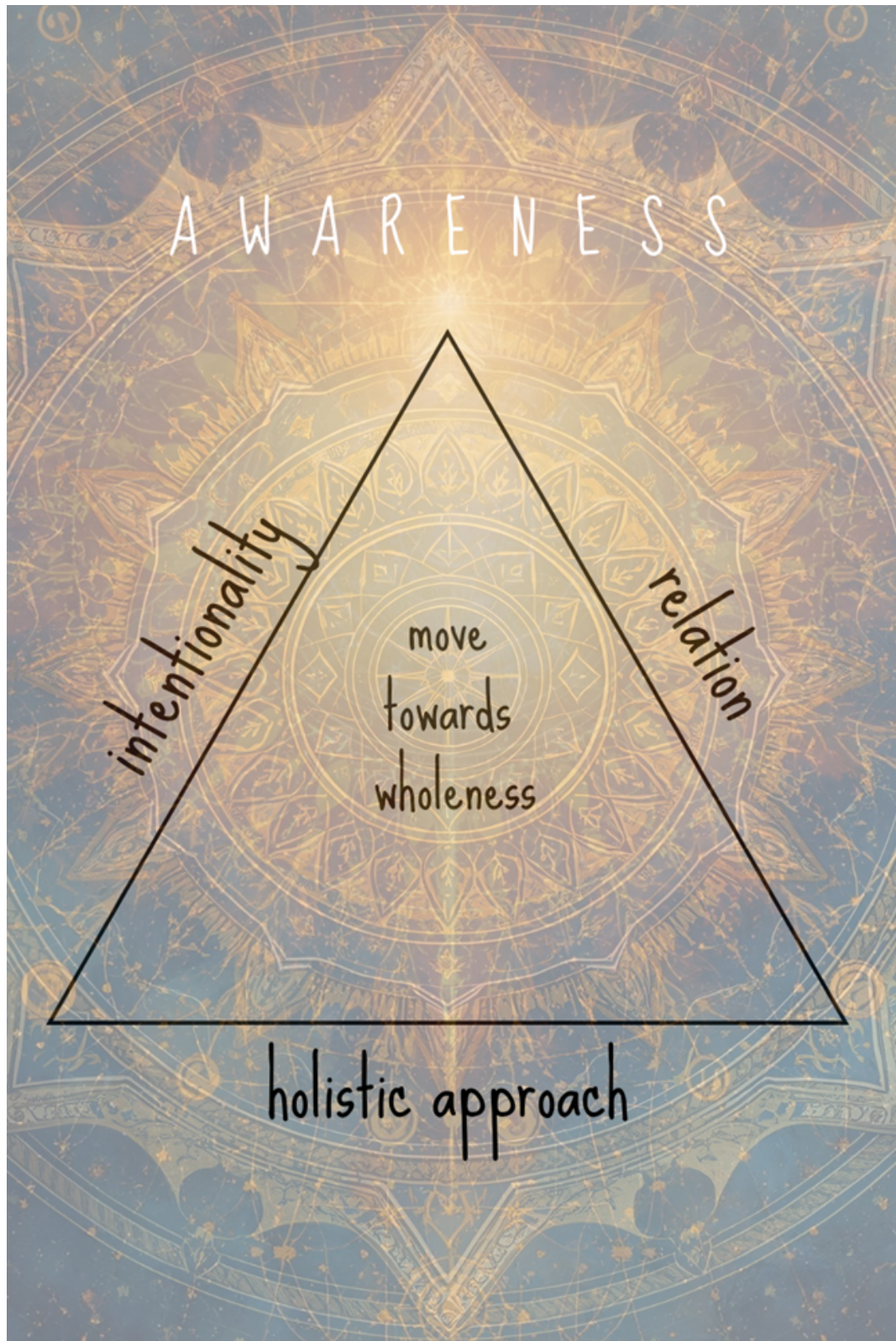
Nature teaches one lesson: move towards wholeness. Look at your body for instance: under the right conditions, cuts heal, bones knit, blood replenishes, even shock resolves. The body is always self-correcting, though conditions are not always right—cold, stress, loneliness, or lack of nourishment can slow the process. Trees let go of their leaves in autumn, which is not a lack of wholeness but part of their seasonal cycle and integrated part of the ecosystem: they become nourishment for the soil and home to small creatures that live on the ground. Wholeness means honouring our natural cycles, we too can feel when it's time to drop what no longer serves us, when to be still and reflect, when to grow new leaves, and when to blossom. [11]

Psychedelics help us move towards wholeness physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. They direct attention to what must be felt, seen, understood, processed, or released [12].

We are experiential learners: we learn best through felt experience. Psychedelics are powerful because they engage body, mind, and spirit in ways traditional learning cannot.

They may use all channels: body and senses, mind, emotions, energy, dreams, and soul [13]. Yet in school we are trained mainly to see, listen, and read. No wonder many expect visions or a guiding voice. But focusing too narrowly risks missing other, sometimes more valuable, lessons [14].

Building your container starts well before drinking mushroom tea or taking a capsule, chocolate, or gummy. It requires layers of awareness. Before diving into practical guidance, pause to reflect on how to optimise your learning container using the principles of intentionality, relation and a holistic approach.



RELATION

Taking psychedelics is a relational practice. Humans are wired to connect daily and more deeply through ritual and ceremony. We thrive in trusted, compassionate relationships. Whether in ceremony or microdosing alone, we also deepen our relationship with ourselves, those around us, and the medicine.

Ask yourself:

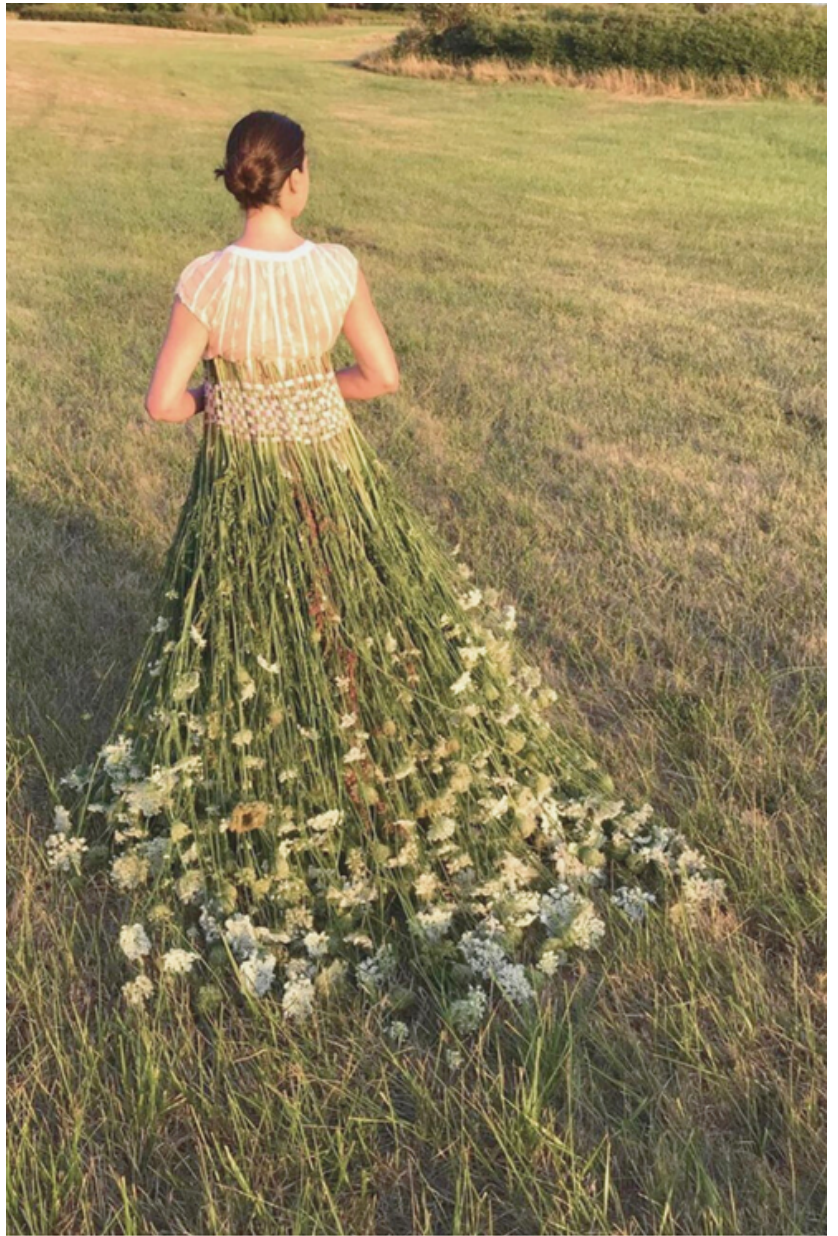
- How do I relate to myself? What's the tone and wording of my inner dialogue? What are my gifts and struggles? How does past conditioning shape me?
- What do I expect from my relationship with the medicine? Can I be open to its unique way of working with me? Can I trust the process? How do I cultivate more trust—through information, reassurance, or letting scepticism rest?
- Is my guide professional, trauma-sensitive, and compassionate? Do I feel emotionally safe with them? A trauma-informed guide creates space where journeyers feel respected, boundaries are clear, benefits not exaggerated, and the guide leads without being put on a pedestal. They should offer preparation, after-care, and integration support, ideally with relevant experience for your needs.
- Who is in my community? Who can I turn to after a journey? Which relationships nourish me and which drain me? How do I engage with nature? Am I comfortable asking for and offering support, and with setting boundaries?
- Can I recognise that my healing connects to the collective, by increasing relational awareness and connection? [15]



HOLISTIC APPROACH

A holistic approach—in life and in psychedelic work—means recognising all aspects of our being:

- Past, present, future
- Body, mind, spirit
- Emotions, surface and hidden
- Stories, old feelings, events to process
- Clarity and confusion
- Energy and fatigue
- Presence and distraction
- Connection and isolation
- Joy and sorrow
- Light and shadow
- Personal and collective
- You as you, and you as everything [16]



Key questions:

- Can I surrender to the process and resist the urge to analyse in the moment?
- Can I remain open to all forms of experience, pleasant and unpleasant?
- Am I willing to learn, even when expected experiences don't arise?
- What do I need to learn about the nervous system to understand my stress/fear responses and energy levels?
- How can I cultivate more somatic awareness?
- Am I comfortable feeling and naming negative emotions, instead of pushing them away?
- Can I accept that ceremony may mirror daily life—what I crave or resist outside may show up within?
- How can I cultivate awareness: responding to life instead of reacting?
- Do I have contemplative or spiritual practices? What is my view on consciousness? [17]

In my early psychedelic experiences, I lacked a holistic approach and wasted opportunities (and medicine!) to learn from these experiences. Over the years, through therapy, yoga, singing, coaching, and microdosing, I learned to move beyond rational thinking and connect with my felt sense, and became aware of which emotions I was having, and how my body reacted to my states of mind and emotion. Through this self-awareness, I began to live with a fuller spectrum of experience.

How did this change my journeys? Every overlooked aspect suddenly mattered: how my body contracted or opened, how a childhood memory moved me to tears, how asking for help shifted the process. These added far more meaning than any visual fireworks ever could.

INTENTIONALITY

The final pillar is intentionality—how we shape our personal learning container before and after ceremony so that all we learn from the medicine journey is applicable to our life journey? [18]

Some say: “the medicine starts working long before the day of the ceremony”, in other words: the container opens when you decide to undergo this experience. Change begins with an idea, a decision. Keep a journal and take notice of synchronicities, intuitive nudges, or events guiding you towards meaningful steps in your process.

The container extends beyond the ceremony. Afterwards, developments may arise—clarity, new people, opportunities, insights. Some may seem minor but can redirect the course of your life. Ask: what insights did I gain? How will I remember and embody them? What actions move me further towards wholeness? Am I willing to pause often and ask: what have I become aware of?

Setting an intention before your journey or microdosing trajectory is highly recommended, it supercharges your learning process. [19]. It gives clarity and direction to your experience: where do you want to go, Rome or Paris? In other words: what do you really want, and what do you not want? Growth is not about achievement but becoming.

Ask: If everything works out, who will I be? How will I feel? Each part of the experience—positive or negative—can be a signpost guiding you towards who you want to be and how you want to feel. [20]

Intention gives agency: the medicine works with you, not for you. When a door opens, will you walk through? If struggling, ask: what support do I need? How would I like to receive it?

Intentionality—living with intention—also helps create and shape vision. We can set intentions daily, weekly, monthly (moon cycles), for projects or relationships. Each time we do, we clarify what truly matters to us and reinforce awareness.



FINAL THOUGHTS

We need to stop treating psychedelics like Western medicine—obsessing over dose, timing, or potency. Whether microdosing or sitting in ceremony, even at doses that don't feel psychedelic, their healing potential is present [21].

The true magic is not (just) in the mushroom, it's in your awareness. [22]

Slow down.

Get curious.

Use all the senses.

Notice, share and reflect upon what normally goes unnoticed: physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. This will allow you to stay present with yourself and everything that shows up in this process—and to learn from it all.

And remember, you won't have to do this alone. Those who walk this path benefit from connecting with others who are on a similar journey, as well as with other beings in their community (hello pets and neighbourhood trees!), and usually a skilled psychedelic guide or therapist. [23]

HOW I CAN SUPPORT YOU

If you're feeling called to explore unresolved questions or challenges that are alive for you right now—through psychedelic medicine or trauma recovery coaching, I am here. I offer the supportive container and professional guidance that allows you to lean in and go deep.

- **Microdosing Guidance** (backed by science)
- **1:1 Truffle Journeys** (legal in the Netherlands)
- **Psilocybin Retreats** (group retreat of 3 or 5-days)
- **Trauma Recovery Coaching** (individual, personalised sessions)

With 20+ years of personal experience, and almost 10 years of study and professional experience in the field, my approach is backed by science, founded on evidence-based therapeutic principles and personalized to your needs and intentions.

→ **Learn more about my offerings and start your journey.**

Or,

→ **Book a 15-min connection call**

With compassion,

Jakobien

Footnote Reference List

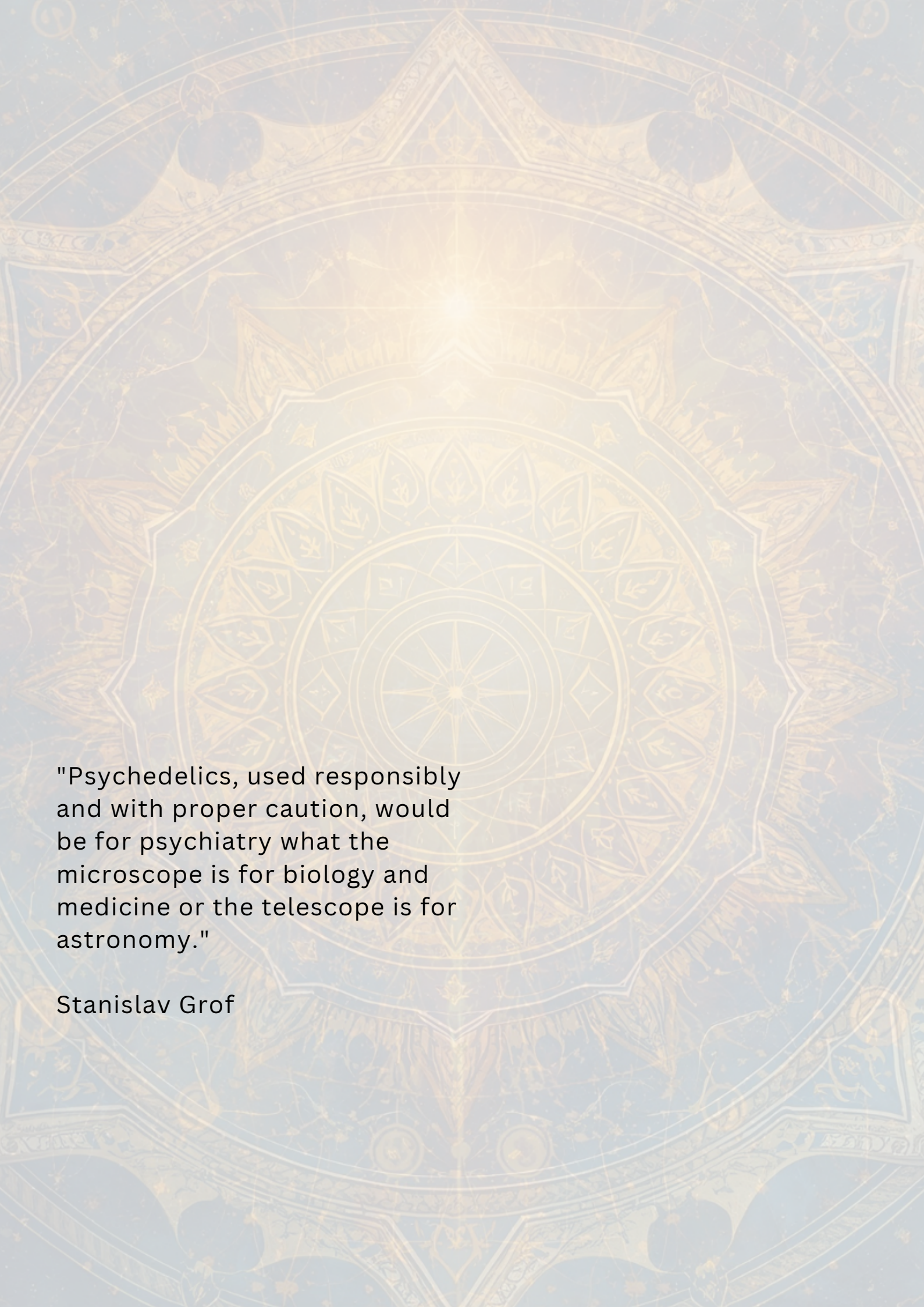
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"Psychedelics, used responsibly and with proper caution, would be for psychiatry what the microscope is for biology and medicine or the telescope is for astronomy."

Stanislav Grof