



A Psychedelic Journeyer's

# FIELD GUIDE

By David Prestidge

[www.emberintegration.com](http://www.emberintegration.com)



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# PREPARING FOR A PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOM JOURNEY

Embarking on a psychedelic mushroom journey can be a profound and transformative experience. However, it's crucial to remember that natural psychedelic substances, such as psilocybin, are potent and should be approached with utmost care and respect. Thoughtful preparation and a clear intention can significantly enhance the experience and help ensure your safety.

Whether you're drawn to psilocybin mushrooms for their potential to reveal personal insights, facilitate emotional healing, or expand your consciousness, understanding the risks and dangers associated with their use is essential. This guide aims to provide you with valuable information to help you determine if a psychedelic experience aligns with your personal goals, guide you through the preparation process, and assist you in determining the appropriate dosage for a safe and meaningful journey.

If you want one-on-one help preparing for or integrating a journey experience, I provide a complimentary 30-minute exploratory call and comprehensive journey preparation and integration packages. Visit [www.emberintegration.com](http://www.emberintegration.com) to learn more.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I SHOULD DO THIS?

The decision to embark on a psychedelic mushroom journey is deeply personal. It's crucial to honestly assess your mental, emotional, and physical well-being before making such a decision. While psilocybin has demonstrated potential in treating depression, PTSD, and anxiety, it's important to recognize that it's not a universal solution. Before proceeding, consider the following factors to determine if this experience aligns with your needs and circumstances.

### **Assess Your Mental Health**

Psychedelics can amplify emotions and bring unresolved issues to the surface. If you're struggling with severe mental health issues like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder,

psilocybin may not be advisable. *You should consult with a mental health professional familiar with psychedelic-assisted therapy if you have concerns.*

## **Prescribed SSRIs? Know the Risks**

SSRIs, commonly prescribed for depression and anxiety, work by increasing serotonin levels in the brain. Psilocybin mushrooms also affect serotonin receptors, and their interaction with SSRIs can be complex. Here's what to consider if you're taking SSRIs and considering a psilocybin experience:

- **Reduced Effectiveness:** *SSRIs can lessen the effects of psilocybin.* Since both SSRIs and psilocybin influence the serotonin system in the brain, SSRIs reduce the psychoactive effects of psilocybin, leading to a less intense experience.
- **Serotonin Syndrome Risk:** In rare instances, combining psychedelics with SSRIs can result in **serotonin syndrome**, a potentially life-threatening condition characterized by an excessive accumulation of serotonin in the brain. **Symptoms may include confusion, muscle rigidity, tremors, and, in severe cases, seizures.** Although uncommon, this risk underscores the importance of consulting a healthcare provider before embarking on such a journey, especially if you're currently taking SSRIs.
- **Risk of Emotional Blunting:** People taking SSRIs often experience a side effect of "emotional blunting," where emotional responses feel diminished. This can make processing insights from a journey experience challenging and may hinder the therapeutic potential of the journey.
- **Consult Your Physician:** If you are currently on SSRIs, it is strongly recommended to discuss any interest in a psilocybin journey with a healthcare professional, preferably one knowledgeable about psychedelics. Together, you can evaluate potential risks and determine the safest approach for your situation.

## **Assess Your Physical Health**

While psychedelics primarily affect mental and emotional states, they also impact the body. **Psilocybin mushrooms can affect heart rate, blood pressure, and sensory perception,** which can pose risks for those with certain medical conditions. Consider the following



aspects of physical health before your journey: **Evaluate Your Cardiovascular Health:** Psychedelics can elevate heart rate and blood pressure, so it's crucial to be mindful of any existing heart conditions you may have. If you have any pre-existing cardiac-related medical conditions, it's advisable to consult a healthcare provider before embarking on a journey.

- **Assess Respiratory and Metabolic Conditions:** Conditions like asthma or diabetes require careful management, and **altered states can impact regular breathing patterns and one's sense of time, posing a risk for health issues that require careful management.** Discuss any concerns with a healthcare professional.
- **Check for Known Allergies:** While rare, some individuals may be allergic to mushrooms. If you've never used psilocybin before, start with a small amount under supervision to test for reactions.
- **Be Aware of Medication Interactions:** Medications affecting the central nervous system (like antidepressants and blood pressure meds) can interact with psychedelics. Review any current medications with your doctor before proceeding.

## **Reflect on Your Readiness for Change**

A psychedelic experience can lead to profound insights that challenge your current beliefs. Before embarking on such a journey, consider whether you're prepared to integrate potential new revelations into your life.

## **Assess Your Support Network**

Embarking on a psychedelic journey can be an intense experience, making a solid support network invaluable both before and after the journey.

This network may include trusted friends, a therapist, or someone experienced in psychedelic preparation and integration. Supportive individuals can help provide perspective, assist with emotional processing, and offer guidance as you make sense of the insights gained from your experience. Here are some ways to build and rely on your support network.

- **Identify Key People in Your Life:** Reach out to those who offer genuine support and a non-judgmental presence. These individuals may include close friends or

family members who understand your reasons for the journey and can provide empathy and a listening ear afterward.

- **Consider a Therapist or Integration Specialist:** A therapist experienced in psychedelic integration can help you process emotions and incorporate insights into daily life.
- **Talk with someone with journey experience:** Connect with someone knowledgeable about psychedelic journeys for valuable insights on preparation and integration.



# HOW DO I PREPARE FOR A JOURNEY?

Once you've assessed your mental, physical, and emotional readiness for a journey, take some time to plan it thoughtfully. While there are no strict rules, I suggest setting a date two weeks in advance to plan out and reflect on your intentional journey.

Here are a few steps to help you mentally, emotionally, and physically prepare.

## **Prepare a Journey Intention**

A clear intention set a few weeks before your journey can anchor your journey, especially during challenging moments. Take some time to reflect on why you're considering this experience. Are you seeking healing, personal growth, or simply curiosity? As your journey date approaches, write down, think about, and meditate on what you hope to learn, heal, or understand from the experience.

I offer a complimentary 20-minute call consultation to help you explore your motivations and clarify your purpose for the journey. To book your free consultation, visit [www.emberintegration.com](http://www.emberintegration.com)

## **Don't Make Any Big Life Changes for at Least 3 Months**

After your journey, you might feel the urge to make substantial changes in your life. People often seek change after journey experiences, especially in areas like health, careers, or relationships.

Before making any significant life changes, commit to waiting until you've had enough time to fully process your experiences and gain some emotional distance from the feelings they may evoke.

## **Plan a Comfortable Environment**

Choose a clean, safe, private setting where you feel comfortable and secure. You'll want to avoid interruptions, loud noises, and distractions. Let your loved ones and professional colleagues know you'll be offline and unavailable.

Many people find soft lighting and calming music enhance the experience, but simplicity is key. Surround your journey space with comforting and familiar items.

If you'll be journeying from home, clean any space you might potentially occupy during your experience. You'll thank me later.

## **Plan and Prepare Your Meals in Advance**

Some people fast before a journey, but feel free to have a light and nutritious meal 3-4 hours before your experience. A full stomach can diminish the overall effect. Avoid heavy or greasy foods, as they can cause digestive discomfort.

**Hydration is essential**, so drink adequate water beforehand (but avoid overhydrating to prevent frequent bathroom trips). Ensure easy access to a bathroom, and consider having a supportive sitter, family member, or friend to help if needed, especially if mobility feels challenging at any point in your journey.

During a psilocybin journey, many people experience diminished appetite, so you're unlikely to feel hungry. However, it's wise to have light snacks available—such as fruit, nuts, or herbal/ginger tea—should you want something gentle and nourishing.

Finally, if journeying alone, prepare a comforting meal in advance that's easy to heat up after you've returned from your experience. You'll likely be hungry but tired. If someone is with you, have them prepare a light meal for you.

## **Food and Drinks to Avoid in the Hours Before Your Experience**

Avoid alcohol the night before (and, ideally, refrain from alcohol consumption one to two weeks before a journey). Alcohol can disrupt sleep quality, affect your mood, and heighten anxiety, which can negatively impact your experience and may interfere with the effects of psilocybin, potentially reducing its clarity and impact.

### **Have a Journal or Notebook on Hand**

A notebook helps record key insights during and after a journey. You may have flashes of inspiration or vivid memories; capturing these can enhance your integration process. Alternatively, if you have a guide or sitter, ask them to act as your scribe.

## **Practice Mindfulness and Breathing Exercises Beforehand**

Meditation, deep breathing exercises, or other mindfulness practices, even for just 10 minutes daily in the weeks leading up to your experience, can help you enter a calm state before embarking on your journey. These practices can make navigating intense emotions or insights easier during your experience.

## **Choose a Few Grounding Totems**

Bringing meaningful totems on your journey can be incredibly grounding and supportive. These objects, such as photographs of loved ones, favorite blankets, or items of clothing with special significance, can serve as gentle anchors, reminding you of safety, love, and familiarity.

Here's how to select and use totems for your journey:

- **Choose Personal Items with Emotional Significance:** Think of objects that bring you peace or joy, representing safety, stability, or cherished memories. This could include a photo of a loved one, a pet, or a place where you feel happy and at home.
- **Wear loose, comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely and fully relax.** Many people find that temperature sensitivity can fluctuate during the experience, so dressing in light, breathable layers is ideal. Avoid restrictive clothing or anything that might distract you—this is your time to feel at ease and focus on the journey without any physical discomfort.

- **Bring Comfort Items for Physical Grounding:** A favorite blanket, scarf, or item of clothing can help you feel physically connected and cozy, allowing you to return to a sense of familiarity if you start feeling untethered. The tactile experience of these items can be soothing and grounding during moments of emotional intensity.

## **Leave the Driving to Someone Else**

If you're not journeying at home, plan to have someone transport you when you've returned from your journey. Even though the primary effects of psilocybin wear off within six to eight hours, the mind and body may still feel unsettled for some time afterward. It's best to arrange for a trusted friend, family member, or rideshare to transport you.

## **Allow Time After the Experience to Reflect and Recover**

Avoid scheduling work or significant commitments the day after your psychedelic experience. Although the effects of psilocybin typically dissipate within six to eight hours, the journey can be physically and emotionally taxing, leaving travelers in a reflective or sensitive state.

Allow yourself time to rest, process, and integrate the insights gained during a journey. Ideally, give yourself a day or two for quiet reflection, journaling, or simply allowing your mind and body to recover fully. This extra time can enhance your integration, helping you ground your experience and connect with new perspectives.

## **Consider Having a Trusted Guide or Sitter Join You**

A sober, supportive person you trust nearby can make a significant difference, especially if it's your first experience. This individual, sometimes known as a "trip sitter," can help ground you if the journey becomes intense. Ideally, they should be someone you trust completely.

# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOM JOURNEY

## How Long Will the Experience Last?

The length of a psilocybin journey can vary depending on dosage, individual physiology, and the type of mushrooms consumed. Generally, expect the experience to last 6 to 7 hours, with aftereffects lasting several additional hours.

Allocate at least 8 hours for the journey. You'll likely be hungry and mentally tired after your experience. Have a light, comforting meal prepared beforehand, and then plan on getting some rest or a good night's sleep once the experience is over.

Understanding what to expect from a psilocybin experience can help you feel more secure and open during the journey. Here are the typical phases you might encounter:

### 1. Onset Phase (15–60 Minutes)

After ingestion, you may feel the initial effects within 15 to 60 minutes, depending on factors like dosage and dosage preparation, body weight, and whether you've eaten recently. Physically, you may notice sensations like warmth or tingling. Emotionally, you might feel excitement or anxiety as your body begins to respond to the psilocybin.

### 2. Peak Phase (1–3 Hours)

The peak is when the effects are most intense. Deep introspection, visual distortions, and altered perceptions characterize the peak phase. Colors may seem brighter, objects appear fluid, and auditory sensations may feel heightened. This phase can be euphoric, spiritual, or even challenging, especially if unresolved emotions surface.

### 3. Plateau Phase (3–5 Hours)

During the plateau, the effects begin to stabilize. You may feel more grounded but still connected to insights or visions. This is often when people experience feelings of unity or interconnectedness, which can be profoundly healing.

## 4. Come-Down Phase (5–7 Hours)

The effects gradually diminish, and many people describe a feeling of emotional openness or introspective calm. This is an ideal time to reflect, journal, or discuss your experience with a trusted guide.

### Challenging Experiences and How to Flow Through Them

A psilocybin journey can lead to a vast array of experiences that may feel abnormal or even surreal, especially for those new to altered states. Every journey is unique, and it's natural to encounter thoughts, sensations, and emotions that feel unusual or intense.

The best way to navigate these experiences is to stay present, remind yourself that everything you're feeling is normal, and know that this experience will eventually end.

Journeymen commonly report a range of psychological responses, including:

- **Initial Panic or Mild Anxiety:** Feeling nervous at the beginning of a journey is common as you enter uncharted mental territory.
- **Heightened Senses and Mixing of Perceptions:** Colors may seem more vibrant, sounds richer, and sometimes, senses may seem to “blend” together (like hearing colors or seeing sounds).
- **Distortion of Time:** Time may feel like it's speeding up, slowing down, or even stopping altogether.
- **The Feeling of Living in Another Reality:** Some people feel they've entered a different dimension or alternate reality.
- **Shifted Sense of Self:** Journeymen may experience being in a different body, inhabiting a different gender, or even becoming something entirely different, such as a tree, an animal, or a microorganism.
- **Reliving Memories:** It's possible to vividly re-experience significant life events, including past traumas, which can bring insight and healing.
- **Encounters with Entities, Guides, or Ancestors:** Many people report “meeting” figures that seem wise or otherworldly, who may feel like guides or spirits.

It's also common to have thoughts that feel unsettling or overwhelming during a journey. The most frequently reported fears include thoughts like "I am going crazy," "I'm losing my mind," or "This will never end." These fears are normal and part of the process—they are simply reflections of how unusual the experience can feel.

**The key is to embrace the experience rather than resist it.** Remember that what you're experiencing is temporary and often essential to your journey. Whatever you encounter—whether intense emotions, unfamiliar sensations, or seemingly otherworldly experiences—trust that it's all part of the process. Embrace these moments, knowing that they'll eventually pass, and fully immerse yourself in the journey with curiosity and self-compassion.



# HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

If you're embarking on a psychedelic mushroom journey, dosage plays a pivotal role in shaping your experience. While it's beneficial to have knowledge about the mushroom's strain, it's far more crucial to have access to a reliable scale.

Assuming you have dried mushrooms (which we'll assume for this guide), they belong to the genus *Psilocybe* and the species *Psilocybe cubensis*. Popular strains of *Psilocybe cubensis* include Golden Teachers, B+, and Penis Envy. Generally, Golden Teachers and B+ have mild psilocin and psilocybin content, while Penis Envy can be potent.

Most of the strains available fall into the mild to **moderate** category. Here are some of the more popular cubensis strains, but please note that these are general guidelines. Just as Golden Retrievers are generally known for their gentle temperaments, this doesn't always hold true. If you're concerned about the potency, feel free to inquire with the person who provided you with the mushrooms.

Strain	Relative Potency	Popularity
Golden Teacher	Mild to Moderate	Forgiving nature, reliable growth.
B+ (B Plus)	Mild to Moderate	High yields, beginner-friendly.
Penis Envy	High	Favored for potency, harder to cultivate.
Amazonian (Amazonian Cubensis)	Moderate	Rapid growth, reliable yield.
Albino A+ (AA+)	Moderate to High	Unique aesthetic, rare pigmentation.
Cambodian	Mild to Moderate	Fast colonizer, easy to grow.
Ecuadorian	Moderate	Thrives in high-altitude conditions.
Mazatapec	Mild to Moderate	Cultural significance, ceremonially used.
Thai (Koh Samui)	Moderate	Hardy nature, quick growth.
Treasure Coast	Moderate	Visually stimulating journey.

Dosage amounts vary based on sensitivity to psilocybin and individual goals; the following guidelines can offer a general starting point. **Always begin with a lower dose if you're inexperienced** or uncertain about how your body may respond.

The dosing guidelines below assume you're using a moderate potency strain of dried *psilocybe cubensis* mushrooms that have been powdered with a bladed coffee grinder or mortar and pestle.

## **1. Microdose (0.1–0.3 grams)**

A microdose provides subtle effects and is often used for creativity, mood enhancement, or mild introspection without intense hallucinations. This dose is usually sub-perceptual, meaning you might not feel “high.”

## **2. Low Dose (0.5–1 gram)**

A low dose introduces mild visual effects. You may feel more connected to your thoughts and environment, making this dose suitable for gentle exploration.

## **3. Moderate Dose (1–2.5 grams)**

At this level, you’ll experience more noticeable shifts in perception, emotional openness, and possibly mild hallucinations. This dose is typical for personal introspection and exploring moderate themes.

## **4. High Dose (3–5 grams)**

A high dose brings intense visuals, powerful emotional and spiritual insights, and a profound departure from ordinary reality. This dose should be approached cautiously and is best experienced with a trusted guide or in a ceremonial setting.

# WHAT ARE COMMON CHALLENGES AND HOW CAN I MANAGE THEM?

It's common for psychedelic journeys to bring up challenging emotions or insights. Below are some approaches to managing these situations effectively.

## 1. Breathwork

Focusing on your breath can be incredibly grounding during moments of intensity. Slow, deep breathing can help you stay connected to your body and find calm.

## 2. Acceptance and Letting Go

Resist the urge to control every sensation or thought. Allow yourself to flow with the experience, letting go of any need to “fix” or “escape” uncomfortable feelings. Trust that these emotions are surfacing for a reason.

## 3. Anchor to Your Intention

Return to the intention you made before starting your journey. This intention can be a grounding anchor if you feel adrift or encounter challenging emotions. Remember why you undertook this journey and what you hope to learn.

To stay centered, consider creating a shortened version of your intention—a simple phrase or “mantra” that you can repeat during intense moments. This can help you reconnect with your journey's purpose when things are overwhelming.

For example, if your original intention was, “I wish to understand and heal old wounds so I can embrace a more compassionate relationship with myself and others,” you might distill that intention into a mantra, such as “I am open to healing and growth,” to repeat during your journey.

## **4. Physical Comfort**

Small acts like adjusting your position, stretching, or holding a comforting object (like a blanket) can offer stability. If you have a trusted guide or tripsitter, you can ask them to support you in these adjustments. Find what works for you and prioritize your comfort.

# POST-JOURNEY INTEGRATION: REFLECTING ON THE EXPERIENCE

After a journey, I encourage clients to integrate their experience into the hours, days, and weeks following their journey. It's a fundamental aspect of any psychedelic experience. But what does "integration" mean?

## **Intentional Integration: Why is it Essential?**

Integration is the process of allowing the profound insights, emotions, and realizations gained from a psychedelic experience to become enduring and meaningful aspects of one's life.

A psychedelic experience can be intense and transformative, but these profound insights may dissipate without proper integration. Integration involves introspection, understanding the messages conveyed by the experience, and adjusting your daily life accordingly.

Integration bridges the gap between the revelations gained during the journey and the actionable steps required to apply them. This process enables the experience to influence your self-perception, relationships with others, and interactions with the world with greater clarity and purpose.

Here are some practical ways to integrate your psychedelic journey.

## **Journaling**

After your journey, write down any lingering emotions, symbols, or insights. Revisit your intention and consider how the journey addressed or illuminated it. Journaling helps solidify these insights and make them actionable in your life.

## **Slowly Incorporate Insights into Daily Life**

Consider practical ways to apply your newfound understanding. This might mean setting new personal goals, building healthier habits, or letting go of old patterns. Integrating these insights can bring lasting value to the experience.

## Seek Support or Guidance

Many individuals find it beneficial to confide in a therapist, guide, or trusted friend about their experiences. Sharing insights with others can enhance their understanding and facilitate the exploration of unresolved emotions.

I provide support to help you deepen and integrate your experiences. I can assist you in setting achievable goals and creating a personalized action plan that aligns your journey's purpose with your daily life. To schedule a complimentary consultation to explore an intentional integration path, visit [emberintegration.com](https://emberintegration.com)

## FINAL THOUGHTS

A psychedelic mushroom journey can catalyze personal growth and healing. By preparing mindfully, setting a clear intention, and embracing the integration process, you can create a meaningful experience that fosters lasting change.

Remember, the journey doesn't end when the effects wear off; it continues as you integrate these insights into how you live, relate, and grow. Embrace this process with patience, curiosity, and self-compassion.

