

DEVINE

MARCH 2026



**PSYCHEDELICS in
RECOVERY™**



The power of psychedelics: an alternative approach to recovery

Written by James S.

I would like to ask the Scottish government a question – but I’m asking for a friend, of course. This friend has been experimenting with psychedelics and studying religious plant use in all faiths. Unfortunately, historic records are hard to come by – we burned our witches, and the Romans drove our traditional practices of worship with plants underground. The only places that my friend can draw on for inspiration are other cultures that have preserved methods of connecting with the divine through plants.

In this country, the law is clear about this form of spirituality – it’s illegal. But my friend identifies with a “remembering” form of neo- shamanism, so why is he not extended the protection of Scotland’s Hate Crime Act? His religious identity is persecuted by the state rather than being protected.

My friend views plants with reverence, treating them as a sacrament. Ceremony and ritual are methods used to hold these beautiful plants within a spiritual context. What threat does he pose to society by worshiping nature, or occasionally eating some mushrooms foraged locally to then pray, sing, dance, chant and cry?

This approach is in stark contrast to Scotland’s more common drink and drugs “sesh” culture: a culture that is often an escape into a spectacle of excess. Joining in with a sesh can lead to unmindful choices, often adding to the emotional baggage that we already carry. Plant medicine ceremonies encourage the opposite – unpacking your baggage, inviting those brave enough to be like the bison who charges headfirst into the storm, knowing that it will be first out the other side.

The prevalent culture of the sesh has left my friend with a graveyard full of amazing friends gone too soon. Like in the movie Scarface, illusion interacts with our need to get smashed to escape the stark realities around us. Sadly, that illusion is often shattered by addiction and even violent state control.

Because of my friend’s experience, I want to make a case for reclaiming nature’s medicine as something we do to enrich community, rather than staying with the status quo, which perpetuates Hunger Games-like narratives for the proceeds of crime. All that achieves is dirtier drugs, more death, violence and corruption, and more non-violent offenders filling our already overflowing prison system.

Further, we currently have a system of individualised medicine managing the alienation of individualism. Causation and feeling the pain behind suffering has been lost to underfunding, replaced by CBT, RBT and other acronym therapies and medication. Alternatives to 10-minute appointments to discuss how the sedatives are sedating are needed. For my friend, a part of that solution is plant medicine in community. Dr Anna Ross, lecturer at Edinburgh University and co-founder of the Scottish Psychedelic Research Group, has put forward a vision to that end.

“I would like to see a network of churches and community centres right across Scotland offering ceremony using the liberty cap mushroom,” she says. “This form of collective healing could help restore interconnectedness to our communities and nature.”

One of the oldest treatment methods for substance addiction is the 12-step programme of Alcoholics Anonymous. This model was founded by Bill Wilson and Dr Bob Smith, but a little-known fact is that Wilson used belladonna treatment to get sober – a treatment made from the belladonna or deadly nightshade flower. The plant contains the psychoactive alkaloids atropine and scopolamine.

This plant medicine facilitated Wilson’s spiritual experience, enabling him to create Alcoholics Anonymous. When Wilson hit troubles in his recovery, falling into depression, he was in communication with the writer Aldous Huxley, who in turn suggested LSD. Wilson found the LSD experience incredibly helpful and suggested integrating LSD into the 12-step programme. His suggestion was shot down on the grounds that it would be admitting that the programme doesn’t work entirely by itself.

This fork in the road has recently been revisited with the creation of the Psychedelics in Recovery (PIR) network. My friend attended Cocaine Anonymous in the past only to leave feeling dejected by the view that abstinence is the only path to progression. PIR helped him to heal that hurt and make peace with a programme that has had a massively positive impact on his life.

It also offers much needed peer support for those in recovery according to Kevin Franciotti, co-founder and Board President of PIR. “Psychedelics in Recovery offers a vital bridge for people who are working to maintain or deepen their sobriety while exploring these powerful tools in a mindful, ethical, and spiritually grounded way,” he says.

For those who aren’t in recovery from addiction, there are also in-person groups supporting psychedelic integration in both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

My friend and I weren’t always friends. If I’m honest, we spent over a decade trying to kill each other. Now, when we pass each other in a window or a mirror, we meet each other with a look of acceptance that recognises the pain of the struggle to be here today, sometimes even with a smile. We thank plant medicine every day for its part in allowing us to be able to feel that smile.



Step 3:

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of a Higher Power of our own understanding.

Written by Douglas N.

Daring to Let Go

Faith may begin where grasping ends.

We may not lack willpower. We may have plenty. What we may lack is rest. And guidance. And the ability to stop treating fear like a manager.

Perhaps we work harder. Push. Tighten. Plan. Perform. Try to control what we can't and call it "discipline," or "being responsible," or "just getting through."

But if we're honest, our will may not be leading. Our will may be getting hijacked.



Surrender — A New Meaning

Surrender doesn't have to mean collapse. Nor disappearance. Nor letting life run us over. It may be as simple as a decision to stop pretending we're qualified to run the whole universe from inside our heads.

It can look like loosening the fist. Unclenching the jaw. Letting "we have to" become "we can choose."

Surrender isn't always weakness. It might just be strength that no longer needs to dominate.

Letting Go – Alignment of Will

Step Three does not ask us to kill the will. It offers to reassign it.

Willpower can be a beautiful tool, until fear grabs the steering wheel and calls it leadership.

Hijacked willpower can say things like:

- Make it stop.
- Make them change.
- Make us feel okay right now.
- Force certainty out of uncertainty.
- Grip harder until life cooperates.

On the other hand, reclaimed willpower can say:

- Align.
- Tell the truth.
- Do the next right thing.
- Release the outcome.
- Ask for help.
- Stay in relationship with something bigger than panic.

This is not passive. This is willpower, used by something wiser than survival.



From Self-Will to Spiritual Alignment

A lot of what looks like selfishness may be fear wearing confidence.

A lot of what looks like control may be trying to stay ahead of pain.

A lot of what looks like “I’ve got this” may really mean “I can’t risk needing anyone.”

Step Three can be the moment we stop worshipping our own nervous systems. Not because our instincts are evil, but because they may not be the same thing as truth. Not because we’re broken, but because we may be tired of being our only plan.

**So we can practice a new posture:
We can act, and not demand.**

A Dynamic Balance

Here's a middle path:

Own the action. Surrender the outcome.

Some days, "own the action" can mean:

- make the amends call
- tell the truth
- get to the meeting
- eat, sleep, hydrate
- ask for support
- do the thing we're avoiding

Some days, "surrender the outcome" can mean:

- stop rehearsing the conversation
- stop checking the phone
- stop trying to win the moment
- stop trying to guarantee we won't feel pain
- stop bargaining with reality

And the balance is alive. It changes hour to hour. Because recovery is not a pose. It's a practice.

Where do I need to surrender?
Where do I need to take responsibility?



A Simple Practice

When the hijack is happening—the urgency, the tightness, the tunnel vision—we can try to pause. Breathe like we're returning to our own bodies. Name what's happening without shaming it:

- Fear may be trying to drive.
- Control may be trying to help.
- Urgency may be trying to protect us.

A Simple Practise (Continued)

Then we can choose a new assignment for our will:

- Release the need to control.
- Ask to be guided.
- Commit to the next right action.
- Let the rest be the rest.



Prayer

Great Mystery,

I release my need to control.
May I be led by something deeper than instinct or fear—
aligned with a presence wiser than my wounded will.
May I know I need not walk alone.
May I act not just for relief, but in service of healing.
May I be shaped in integrity by compassion.
May I be used for good.
May I be free.



The Rhythm – An Ongoing Decision

Step Three can be where we stop circling and start moving—not because we're certain, but because we are willing.

Some days surrender may feel like relief. Some days it may feel like death. And each time we choose it, we can remember:

**We are not alone.
We are not in charge of everything.
And we do not have to be.**



GSR REPORT

GSR Report

At the February PIR GSR Meeting, we opened with Tradition 2, reflecting on the principle that loving-kindness — expressed through our collective group conscience — is the guiding authority in our fellowship. The meeting included thoughtful conversations about service, unity, and how we continue strengthening connection across our meetings.

GSRs heard updates from service committees and explored ways to deepen fellowship communication, including discussion of the Traveling GSR Proposal, which has now been sent back to meetings for discussion and a group conscience vote.

GSRs were also asked to gather interest and programming ideas for the upcoming PIR Convention, and to share the link to Aidan's research study with their meetings so members who are interested can learn more.

Additionally, Erin B shared about safety awareness and optional chair training, and GSRs were invited to gauge whether their meetings have interest in additional safety guidance or resources.

As always, the GSR process serves as a living bridge — carrying the voice of our meetings to the fellowship and bringing the fellowship's conversations back to the Subcommittee — all in the spirit of unity, recovery, and service.

[Click Here to Read the GSR Meeting Minutes](#)



PR COMMITTEE REPORT

PR Committee

The PR committee has been working on selecting new speakers for the podcast and will start the recording of a new batch of episodes for season 1 of its podcast:

Integration Radio. We are also getting ready to help the Convention committee with its communication efforts.

[Click Here to Visit the Integration Radio](#)

[Click Here to Read the PR Meeting Minutes](#)

Open Service Positions

Please email newsletter@psychedelicsinrecovery.org if you would like to either volunteer for one of these positions or you desire technical training.

Position	Group / Committee	Job Description	Date and Time
Digital Artist	PR Committee	Create digital media content for PIR across multiple platforms including podcasts, website, newsletter, and literature	Ongoing
Copy Editor	PR Committee – Newsletter	Edit member and committee contributions to De Vine; Conduct interviews; Assist with artwork and content choices	Ongoing
Readers	12-Step Committee	Read content, provide direct feedback, and attend 12-step Book Committee Meetings	Ongoing – See below for dates, times, and contact information
Business Meeting Leader	Tuesday Groovy	Aid GSR with organizing and conducting business meeting	Tuesdays 1400 PT; 2200 UTC
Co-Chair	Wednesday Step Study	Assist chair	Tuesdays 1400 PT; 2200 UTC
Speakers Needed	Sunday Detach with Love	Speak at meeting	Sunday 0800 PT; 1600 UTC
Chairperson	London In-Person	Lead meeting	Friday 1700 PT; Saturday 0100 UTC

Open Service Positions

Please email newsletter@psychedelicsinrecovery.org if you would like to either volunteer for one of these positions or you desire technical training.

Position	Group / Committee	Job Description	Date and Time
Chairperson	Friday Night Topic	Lead meeting	Friday 1700 PT; Saturday 0100 UTC
Co-Host	Friday Night Topic	Assist chair	Friday 1700 PT; Saturday 0100 UTC
GSR	Friday Night Topic	Attend area and report to group	Friday 1700 PT; Saturday 0100 UTC
Chairperson	Monday Meditation	Lead meeting	0400 PT; 1200 UTC
Chairperson	Monday Entheon	Lead meeting	1700 PT; Tuesday 0100 UTC
GSR	Monday Entheon	Attend area and report to group	Friday 1700 PT; Saturday 0100 UTC
GSR	Thursday OG	Attend area and report to group	Thursday 1630 PT; 0030 UTC
GSR	Saturday Men	Attend area and report to group	Saturday 1400 PT; 2200 UTC
Tech Co-Host	Sunday Big Book	Assist chair with readings and monitor chats	Sunday 1700 PT; Sunday 0100 UTC



Readers Needed:

If you are willing to read and offer feedback, we'd love your input.

Please e-mail twelvesteps@psychedelicsinrecovery.org and we'll send one step at a time for review.

There are currently two meetings reading these steps.

Tuesdays at 1pm PST Meeting ID: 835 3934 1211

Passcode: 805679

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](#)

Wednesdays 4pm PST Meeting ID: 836 9993 6187

Password: 900897

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](#)

New In-Person Meetings

Two new in-person meetings were launched in late February, both based in Scotland.

There are now established in-person fellowships in both Glasgow and Edinburgh. The Glasgow meeting, held at 6:00 pm UK time, is offered in a hybrid format, making it accessible to participants worldwide.


PSYCHEDELICS in RECOVERY

Join us in a new approach to recovery

Psychedelics in Recovery is a 12 step fellowship of people from all 12-step programs and other paths of recovery who share their experience, strength and hope with each other.


Fridays 18:30 -19:30
@ The Salisbury Centre
2 Salisbury Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5AB



Free to Attend, Learn More:
www.psychedelicsinrecovery.org

PIR[®]
GLASGOW
Psychedelics in Recovery
HYBRID MEETING

 **Fridays**

 **6:00pm - 7:30pm GMT**
(Doors open 5:45pm)

 **In Person: 2/1, 30 Bell St**
Glasgow G1 1LG

 **Also on Zoom (Hybrid Meeting)**
Join online from anywhere

A 12-Step Fellowship
Integrating Psychedelics & Recovery
psychedelicsinrecovery.org