

Proposed Curriculum Recommendations for Approving Psilocybin Facilitator Training Programs in Oregon

Oregon Psilocybin Advisory Board, Training Committee

Programs shall provide students with an overview of historical and current views and practices involving the role of fungi and plant medicines in various wisdom traditions, including indigenous and shamanic traditions, and in identifying the key differences and shared principles across cultures in relation to plant medicine use.

Programs shall train students in the ethical dimensions around working across diverse social locations and cultures, while highlighting the potential for psilocybin services to address and redress inequities and stigma resulting from the current structure of health care systems and delivery of healthcare services, particularly in relation to BIPOC community members and persons who, through identity, experience, or geography, have lacked meaningful access to behavioral health and wellness care.

Programs shall train students in pharmacology related to psilocybin, supporting students to understand:

- Pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of psilocybin
- How various medications and supplements, including MAO inhibitors and SSRI's, can interact with psilocybin
- The metabolism of psilocybin and psilocybin products

Programs shall train students in basic neuroscience relating to psilocybin, supporting students to understand:

- The concept of neuroplasticity and neurogenesis
- The primary effects of psilocybin on the brain, including connectivity in and between areas in the brain, such as effects on the Default Mode Network
- Current theories on mechanisms of action of psilocybin

Programs shall train students in key areas of research, including, but not limited to:

- Depression and Treatment Resistant Depression
- Substance Use Concerns
- End of Life / Palliative / Existential Distress
- Anxiety
- Trauma
- Spirituality
- Enhancements relating to measures of wellness, such as well-being, pro-social behavior, creativity, eco-mindedness, openness, and connectedness
- Emerging research in the field

Programs shall train students on the Oregon Psilocybin Services Act and related laws, regulations, and professional standards as they pertain to the rights and ongoing professional obligations of licensed Facilitators.

Programs shall train students to develop an awareness of personal motives for doing this work, with an understanding of problematic motives.

Programs shall train students in ethical issues related to psilocybin facilitation, following Oregon's Facilitator Code of Ethics.

Programs shall train students to demonstrate an awareness of ethical considerations relating to equity and reciprocity, including an understanding of what cultural appropriation means and its impact in people's lives.

Programs shall train students in how to prepare clients for psilocybin use in a manner that ensures informed consent, safety planning, and promotes an understanding of the boundaries between the facilitator and the client.

Programs shall train students to recognize their scope of practice, how to relate scope of practice to a Client Information Form, how to identify clients in need of referral to specialized treatment services, and how to provide such referrals in a timely manner.

Programs shall train students to have the capacity to evaluate a standardized Client Information Form to help determine whether and under what circumstances a client is an appropriate candidate for psilocybin services, what should be included in safety planning, and whether a client's needs fall under a facilitator's scope of practice.

Programs shall train students to have the capacity to conduct an intake interview for the purpose of establishing a trusting alliance with a client and evaluating a client's readiness for psilocybin services.

Programs shall train students to determine a client's goodness of fit with a facilitator, based on information on a standardized Client Information Form, a facilitator's scope of practice, the strength of the alliance between the client and facilitator, and a facilitator and client's assessment of the appropriateness of psilocybin services for the client at the current time.

Programs shall train students to understand various dosing strategies and considerations, taking into account:

- Experiential differences relating to differing dosages
- Physiological considerations in relation to dosage
- Delivery mechanisms of psilocybin
- Use of secondary doses

Programs shall train students in the foundations of traumatic stress (individual and systemic), including how it's stored in the body, how it can manifest during the psilocybin experience, and what to do in these circumstances. Programming will help students to:

- Understand that trauma is embedded in the body
- Identify repressed trauma rising to the surface of consciousness during a psilocybin experience
- Identify intergenerational trauma and traumatic stress resulting from systemic oppression
- Create safety for trauma resolution

- Understand the risks associated with re-traumatization resulting from the psilocybin experience
- Use self-regulatory skills in response to a client's trauma reaction

Programs shall train students in skills needed to serve as an empathic presence for clients, including an ability to sustain a nondirective facilitation approach and a nonjudgmental and accepting disposition, to suspend attention evenly over the course of a session, to communicate clearly and compassionately, to respond to distress with calmness, and to monitor interpersonal boundaries.

Nondirective Facilitation: An approach to facilitation in which the facilitator maintains a consistent, warm, and affirming disposition with a client, while avoiding giving the client direct advice or directly interpreting a client's statements or behaviors. The goal of nondirective facilitation is for clients to discover things about themselves for themselves with minimal guidance from a facilitator. Pace and direction is controlled by the client. An exception would be when safety is at stake, at which point it may be incumbent on a facilitator to become directive in the service of safety.

Programs shall train students to identify and facilitate a variety of subjective psilocybin experiences, including experiences relating to bodily sensations, cognitive processes, emotional states, spiritual and mystical states, and traumatic memories.

Programs shall train students to demonstrate skills necessary to safely and effectively facilitate non-ordinary states of consciousness during a personal process of transformation, including, but not limited to:

- Reflective listening
- Discerning when to intervene and when to step back during a client's experience
- Resisting the urge to impose meaning upon a client's experience
- Ethically navigating power differentials between facilitator and client
- Demonstrating a capacity to create a safe container for difficult or intense thoughts, emotions, and experiences
- Understanding when and how a client may need additional support or a higher level of care

Programs shall train students to develop an understanding of the optimal use of environmental components within a psilocybin administration session, including, but not limited to, space, lights, smells, decor, comfort, access to bathroom, and minimization of outside-session distractions.

Programs shall train students in a trauma-informed manner on how to safely manage and reduce potential harms related to difficult or adverse behavioral or medical responses that may arise as a result of psilocybin ingestion.

Adverse Behavioral Response means behavior engaged in by a client during an administration or integration session that endangers the safety of the client, the Facilitator, or others whom the client encounters or may reasonably encounter.

Adverse Medical Response means a physiological reaction of a client during an administration session the continuation of which could lead to medical harm.

Programs shall train students to develop characteristics and skills related to effectively working with challenging behaviors during session, such as:

- Calmness
- Empathic presence and nonjudgmental listening
- Non-directive communication skills
- Knowing when and how to be directive in support of safety
- Recognizing signs of medical distress and knowing when and how to seek support if there are safety concerns beyond the facilitator's scope of practice

Programs shall train students to demonstrate an understanding of skills, processes, and criteria involved in completing a psilocybin administration session, including an ability to discern when and how to initiate and document completion of the administration session, and how to facilitate this transition with a client.

Programs shall train students on proper integration tools, techniques, and resources available to help clients process their psilocybin experiences.

Programs shall train students to articulate the goals of an integration session, including, but not limited to:

- Exploration of negative feelings from psilocybin session
- Facilitation of positive internal and external changes
- Enhancement of existing supportive relationships
- Maintenance of trust and positive connection between client and facilitator

Programs shall train students to use open-ended questions that support effective integration, including those relating to:

- Memories from the psilocybin experience
- Positive and challenging aspects of the psilocybin experience
- Role of previously identified intention during the experience
- How the experience might affect a client's relationships
- How the client can incorporate new insights and breakthroughs into daily life

Programs shall train students to demonstrate skills required to facilitate an effective and safe psilocybin group session, including, but not limited to:

- Screening a participant for compatibility with group format
- Facilitating group rapport
- Establishing a sense of safety within the group
- Discussing group agreements, including confidentiality, boundaries, ethics, and communication rules
- Facilitating group cohesion, belonging, and safety
- Identifying when an individual within a group requires one-to-one support, removal from a group, or additional intervention