

What to Expect: Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP)

KAP sessions are scheduled for 2-3 hours. The first 30 minutes of the KAP session is focused on intention setting and developing a comfortable and relaxed arrangement of the therapy office. Clients are encouraged to dress comfortably, bring a water bottle, and also bring any items that might establish a sense of comfort during the experience. This could include a specific blanket or pillow, items for an altar (gemstones, pictures), incense, or specific relics connected to one's intention.

Once the set and setting are established, the clinician will begin the music and clients may self-administer their medication. Ketamine lozenges are dissolved under the tongue and then swished around the mouth for a minimum of ten minutes without swallowing. At ten minutes, the medication is swallowed and clients are invited to put on their eye shades and lay down.

Clinicians will not recommend dosing or administer the medication. Clients are expected to follow dosing instructions given from their prescribing doctor. Failure to comply with dosing instructions may result in termination of services and communication with prescribing physician around non-compliance.

During the experience, clients are encouraged to journey inward and trust their inner healing intelligence. This simply means that the content that arises should always take precedence and be trusted as a part of the healing process. Music will play throughout the session. The clinician will be available and may check-in at times to remind client of their intention and to allow space for sharing. Clients are not required to speak or engage with the therapist during the peak of the experience but are invited to do so if support is desired.

The peak of the journey may last 30 minutes to an hour and a half, at which point clients may feel the sensation of returning to ordinary mind. Clients are encouraged to remove their eye shades at this time and begin integrating the experience. The moments of returning to ordinary consciousness may prove highly valuable for journaling, sharing, or creating art to capture the experience. The clinician may be more active at this time to support the process.

Clients may continue to feel some impact from the medication for up to a couple hours following the experience (dizziness, lightheadedness, dream-like sensations). Clients are asked to remain in the office until the impact of the medicine is minimal. Clients must have a scheduled pick-up from a trusted family member or friend to ensure safety in returning home. Clients are encouraged to remain in a contemplative space for the remainder of the day, taking time to integrate the experience.

Ketamine may continue to have an impact on mood and behavior for the days following the experience. Clients are encouraged to continue to process the experience and schedule integration sessions as needed. Clients are encouraged to use the KAP sessions as a marker to begin making small but significant changes in self-care practices such as diet, meditation, exercise, and community engagement. These may increase the benefit of the KAP sessions.