The self is an illusion: A conceptual framework for psychiatry

Dr Steve Stankevicius, Psychiatry Registrar
Toowong Private Hospital, Brisbane, Australia
'I'

'Me'
THE BRAIN IS A "PREDICTION MACHINE"
THE BODILY SELF
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SELF
“I think, therefore I am” - Rene Descartes
“I think, therefore I am” - René Descartes

“I predict myself, therefore I am” - Anil Seth
Default Mode Network
PSYCHOTHERAPY
PSYCHOTHERAPY

PSYCHOTHERAPY
MEDITATION

SELF

Sights

Thoughts

Memories

Body

Feelings

Sounds
MEDITATION

SELF

Memories

Body

Feelings

Thoughts

Sounds

Sights
3 days of meditation in beginners increases functional connectivity between dorsolateral prefrontal cortex and default-mode network (Creswell, et al. 2016)
Experienced meditators show decreased default-mode activity during meditation (Brewer, et al. 2011)
Experienced meditators show decreased default-mode activity at rest

(Berkovich-Ohana, et al. 2016)
PSYCHEDELICS
PSYCHEDELICS
substantial and sustained decreased in depression and anxiety in patients with life-threatening cancer: a randomized trial (Griffiths, et al. 2016)
Neural correlates of the LSD experience revealed by multimodal imaging (Carhart-Harris, et al. 2016) and sustained decreased in depression and anxiety in patients with life-threatening cancer: a randomised double
PSYCHEDELICS

John Hopkins Psilocybin Research Project
Psychedelics not linked to mental health problems or suicidal behavior: A population study

Pål-Ørjan Johansen and Teri Suzanne Krebs

Abstract
A recent large population study of 130,000 adults in the United States failed to find evidence for a link between psychedelic use (lysergic acid diethylamide, psilocybin or mescaline) and mental health problems. Using a new data set consisting of 135,095 randomly selected United States adults, including 19,299 psychedelic users, we examine the associations between psychedelic use and mental health. After adjusting for sociodemographics, other drug use and childhood depression, we found no significant associations between lifetime use of psychedelics and increased likelihood of past year serious psychological distress, mental health treatment, suicidal thoughts, suicidal plans and suicide attempt, depression and anxiety. We failed to find evidence that psychedelic use is an independent risk factor for mental health problems. Psychedelics are not known to harm the brain or other body organs or to cause addiction or compulsive use; serious adverse events involving psychedelics are extremely rare. Overall, it is difficult to see how prohibition of psychedelics can be justified as a public health measure.

Keywords
Psychedelic, hallucinogen, epidemiology, public health, suicide