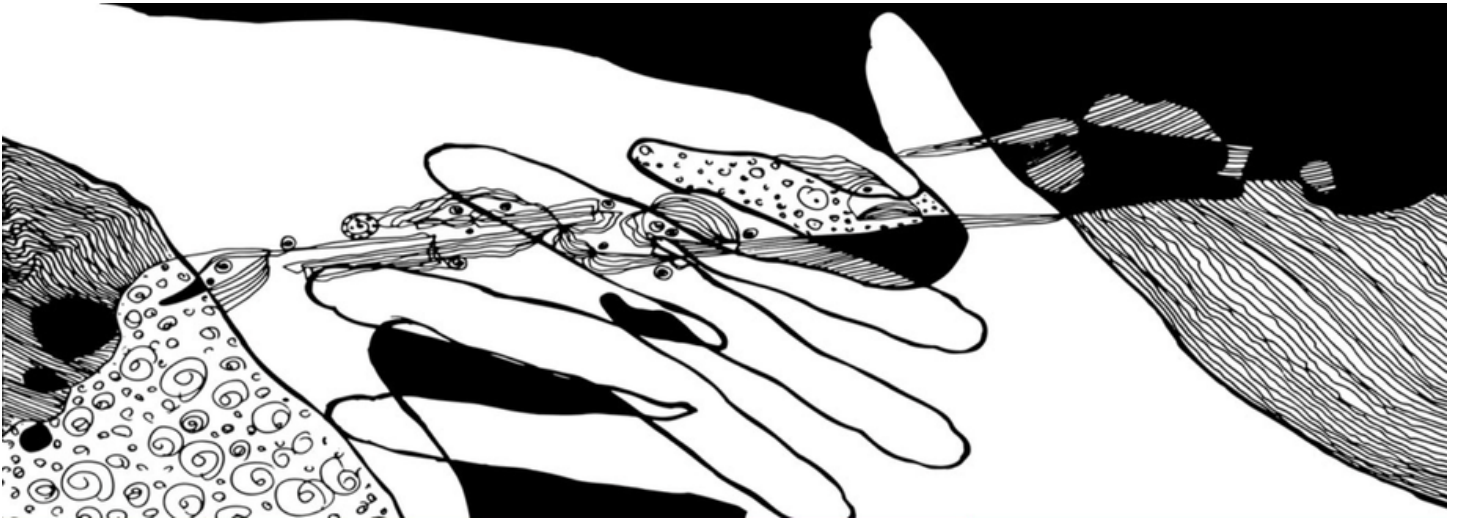


CARDEA

Why Our Communitas Groups Might be a Good Choice for You

At Cardea, we provide both individual and group ketamine therapies, offering our guests two important choices. Here, we clarify why we believe you should consider group work, and how our group methods aim for important experiences we feel can be vital for a person's recovery, transformation or increased expansiveness.



The Neglected Issue of Social Buffers

You've likely heard about two epidemics in the U.S., both described in the media as life-threatening and growing. The first is the "loneliness epidemic." With the stress generated by loneliness tying with cigarettes and cholesterol as a cause for cardiac arrest, and loneliness causing often pathological levels of psychological suffering, the concern is clearly warranted. The second is the behavioral health crisis, and the problem of access to treatment. As policy makers scramble to find ways to address both problems, their plans go in opposite directions: social isolation is addressed by creating opportunities for more community contact, while treatment access typically focuses on the individual, often provided in ways that sequester them from their communities.

We suffer in this country from a divide between ideas about psychological suffering and its relationship to our social experiences. This divide doesn't just affect those suffering most psychologically, but anyone seeking to improve their psychological or spiritual well-being. Just think about all the wellness and self-help books out there, and how little they focus on the effects of social experiences on our psyches and you'll get the point.

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At the front of our heads is the neocortex, the largest one relative to our body size in the animal kingdom. While the neocortex is the site of most of our psychological suffering, it is also built for social interactions. That makes our brains basically social organs. So the split in our culture between psychological suffering and our social environment is not only a kind of fallacy but an unhealthy way to approach human beings' more difficult experiences. It's also often a poor way to address our less difficult ones, such as breaking out of numbing routines, becoming more expansive and open to life, and getting more creative.

We know from decades of scientific research in social psychology that people quickly see challenges as threatening if they do not have the right "social resources" around them. Think of walking in a t-shirt and shorts up a hill in the sun. It's not easy walking up that hill, but you have the right resources to do it—you're well-hydrated, just had a good meal, and are physically fit. All of a sudden a snowstorm hits. Now it's a different story, since lacking warm pants and a jacket, you no longer have the right resources. Now you no longer feel challenged -- but threatened. Social resources are like those pants and jackets. Often called "social buffers," they buffer us from stress by enabling us to perceive challenges as challenges and leaving threats to those rarer occasions when no matter our resources, we're in danger.

Research on social buffers tells us that our struggles and resistance to making positive changes in our lives are powerfully influenced by our sense of social connection, since we need social buffers to ward off painful psychological experiences, face the challenge of looking at our problems, or simply venturing into the unknown of some new goal or greater awakening. Today we live in a world in which social buffers are no longer a given in our daily lives. That means that the idea of a "mental health crisis" may be off the mark, since what we're often struggling with are vulnerabilities in ourselves that become unbearable due to the thinning of the social fabric.

So what does this have to do with you, and the offering of groups at Cardea? We believe our groups may help you engage with the medicine in a more fruitful way than if you experience them alone. We think that being engaged in a group experience offers a momentary social buffer, allowing you to perceive your challenges as challenges – not threats -- and offering you greater room for contemplation.

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Did we invent the idea that there is therapeutic efficacy in taking medicine in a group? Actually, the latest invention in psychedelics isn't group experiences, but just the opposite: individual treatment; a result of the fallacy that psychological complaints are always best addressed as the result of personal problems experienced in isolation. Until today, psychedelics were always practiced within group rituals, including the rituals of traditional practices and the rituals of the dance floor. It's a very modern thing to take them out of the group and place them solely within the bounds of personal therapy, or as something someone does completely in isolation at a ketamine clinic. At Cardea, we think there is a lot of promise in the group experience, since psychedelics can help assist in the profoundly beautiful connecting art of a person's preexisting personal therapy, and we think the solitary experience is an absolute dead end. From a tribe surrounding a person who is suffering and performing a rich and connecting ritual, to the cold white offices of a ketamine clinic, alone with an IV in your arm: this current mode is a radical departure from where we were and from what can potentially transform us.

Communitas Groups

There's living in a community and there is the experience of being in a community, the latter called "communitas" by anthropologists. Well-versed in the anthropology of rituals, we've done a lot of thinking and practicing at Cardea on how to rapidly induce a sense of communitas among you, our guests, in order to help you best psychologically and spiritually metabolize the medicines, and we don't believe it is achieved with a lot of talking with strangers (the latter for the marvelous world of group therapy). Instead, we've developed a secular ritual based on group art-making and dialogue that we believe quickly creates a sense of interconnectedness. If you receive our group treatment, you'll be invited to participate in this ritual before a group ketamine session, and will be able to express your intentions for the sessions in a poetic manner. The group ketamine session is then facilitated by one of our expert sound practitioners, offering you the rare opportunity to receive live vibrational care during your journey. In addition to these significant benefits, group ketamine care at Cardea is much more affordable than it is elsewhere.

Package Offerings

1 Session - \$350

3 Session - \$800

6 Session - \$1,500

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