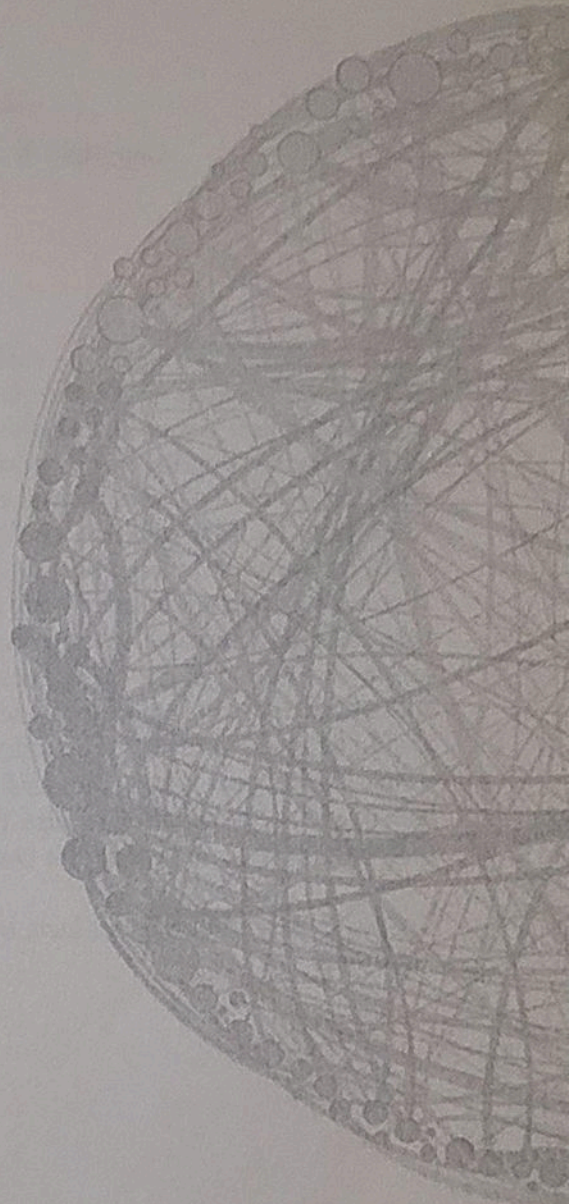


How to CHANGE Your Mind

Michael Pollan

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the institute began offering the nation's first certificate program in psychedelic therapy.

As part of his degree program, Andrei had to undergo psychotherapy and found his way to a Native American "doing medicine work" in the Four Corners as well as the Bay Area. "Whoopee!" he recalled thinking. "Because of my LSD experience, I knew it was viable." Medicine work became his vocation.

"I help people find out who they are so they can live their lives fully. I used to work with whoever came to me, but some were too fucked up. If you're on the edge of psychosis, this work can push you over. You need a strong ego in order to let go of it and then be able to spring back to your boundaries." He mentioned he'd once been sued by a troubled client who blamed him for a subsequent breakdown. "So I decided, I don't work with crazies anymore. And as soon as I made this statement to the universe, they stopped coming." These days he works with a lot of young people in the tech world. "I'm the dangerous virus of Silicon Valley. They come to me wondering, 'What am I doing here, chasing the golden carrot in the golden cage?' Many of them go on to do something more meaningful with their lives. [The experience] opens them up to the spiritual reality."

It's hard to say exactly what put me off working with Andrei, but oddly enough it was less the New Agey spiritualism than his nonchalance about a process I still found exotic and scary. "I don't play the psychotherapy game," he told me, as blasé as a guy behind a deli counter wrapping and slicing a sandwich. "None of that blank screen. In mainstream psychology, you don't hug. I hug. I touch them. I give advice. I have people come stay with us in the forest." He works with clients not here in the office but in a rural location deep in the woods of the Olympic Peninsula. "Those are all big no-no's." He shrugged as if to say, so what?