

What are Entheogens?

Entheogens are naturally occurring plant-based substances or psychedelic compounds—that are used to induce altered states of consciousness for **spiritual, religious, or shamanic** purposes.

The term comes from Greek: "*entheos*" (meaning "filled with the divine") and "*gen*" (meaning "to generate" or "to come into being"), so "**entheogen**" roughly translates to "generating the divine within."

Examples of Entheogens:

- **Psilocybin mushrooms** – used in indigenous ceremonies in Mesoamerica.
- **Ayahuasca** – a brew made from Amazonian plants, containing DMT.
- **Peyote** – a cactus containing mescaline, used by Native American groups.
- **Iboga** – a root bark from Africa used in Bwiti spiritual practices.
- **DMT** – found in various plants and sometimes synthesized.

Key Characteristics:

- They alter perception, mood, and cognition.
- Used in ritualistic or sacred contexts.
- Differ from recreational drugs in intention—**entheogens are typically used for insight, healing, or connection with the divine**, rather than for pleasure.

Use in Cultures and Traditions:

Entheogens have been used for thousands of years in cultures across the globe. Shamans, medicine people, and spiritual seekers have turned to these substances to:

- Communicate with spirits or ancestors
- Receive guidance or visions
- Heal trauma or illness
- Mark rites of passage