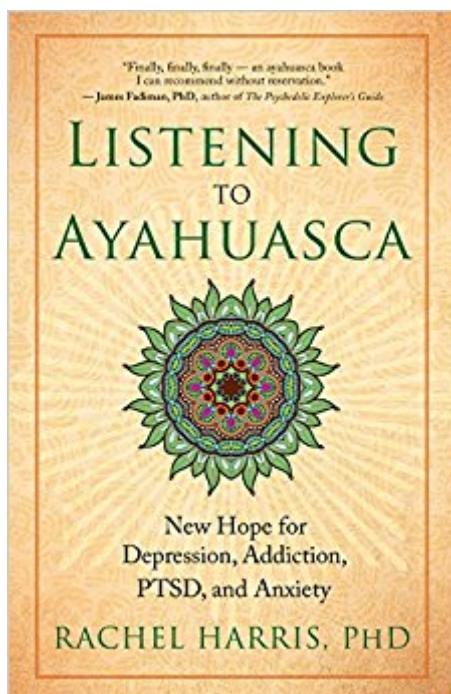


The book was found

Listening To Ayahuasca: New Hope For Depression, Addiction, PTSD, And Anxiety



Synopsis

Used for thousands of years by indigenous tribes of the rain forest, the mystical brew ayahuasca is now becoming increasingly popular in the West. Psychologist Rachel Harris here shares her own healing experiences and draws on her original research (the largest study of ayahuasca use in North America) into the powerful medicine's effects on depression, addiction, PTSD, and anxiety. In this wide-ranging and personal exploration, Harris details ayahuasca's risks and benefits, helping readers clarify their intentions and giving psychotherapists a template for transformative care and healing.

Book Information

Paperback: 376 pages

Publisher: New World Library (March 15, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1608684024

ISBN-13: 978-1608684021

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.9 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #116,079 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #128 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Addiction & Recovery > Drug Dependency #139 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Post-traumatic Stress Disorder #143 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Depression

Customer Reviews

An excellent book on the therapeutic potential of ayahuasca; clearly written and well researched, it is an important addition to the literature on the subject. • Jeremy Narby, PhD, author of *The Cosmic Serpent: DNA and the Origins of Knowledge* "Finally, finally • an ayahuasca book I can recommend without reservation. Rachel Harris focuses not on the journey (giant snakes, dismemberment, insights, purging, etc.) but on what eventually matters far more: the ongoing and robust aftereffects in people's lives. Harris is a skilled psychotherapist and a serious ayahuasca user, and her credibility in both worlds makes her own story, interwoven with those of the many people she interviewed, informative and discerning. • James Fadiman, PhD, microdose researcher and author of *The Psychedelic Explorer's Guide: Safe, Therapeutic, and Sacred Journeys* "A

fascinating and provocative compilation of riveting testimonies of individuals who experienced miraculous healing by drinking the psychedelic medicine ayahuasca. Inspired by her own amazing transformation, Harris was driven to research ayahuasca and document her findings. Readers will be inspired by the numerous accounts of how ayahuasca succeeded where Western medicine has failed many of the ailing people described here. . . . Though research on ayahuasca is still slim, the numerous life-changing revelations that Harris’ contributors describe will be illuminating for those curious about this mystical medicine.

• Publishers Weekly “Anyone considering visiting Grandmother Ayahuasca for the first time needs to read this book before making a decision. Harris is not an advocate, and her book is not a polemic; however, it seems clear that this plant medicine has the power to transform some people’s lives in ways that seem to be filled with the magic and mystery so sadly missing from our overly civilized world.”

• Stanley Krippner, PhD, Alan Watts Professor of Psychology at Saybrook University, coauthor of *Personal Mythology*, and coeditor of *Varieties of Anomalous Experience* “Rachel Harris has produced a uniquely brave study of ayahuasca use and users, through the experiences of others and, most significantly, her own explorations. She never dodges the big questions (Who or what is the guiding intelligence experienced?) or comes up with static answers. Instead, she moves through the mysterious process of self-encounter, sharing a string of hard-won insights into how ayahuasca can work its magic to relieve human suffering.”

• Diana Slattery, PhD, founding board member of Women’s Visionary Congress and author of *Xenolinguistics: Psychedelics, Language, and the Evolution of Consciousness* “In Harris we have a guide we can trust: someone who for years has actively immersed herself in a wide variety of ritual ayahuasca contexts; who has thought long and hard about the shadow side of taking ayahuasca; and who does not let the all-too-human aspects of the ayahuasca experience undermine her willingness to underscore the potentially life-changing therapeutic potential of this powerful substance. With humor, care, and (it must be said) wisdom, Harris invites us to join her as she walks, eyes wide open, into the enchanted and wondrously thought-provoking world of Grandmother Ayahuasca.”

• G. William Barnard, professor of religious studies at Southern Methodist University and author of *Exploring Unseen Worlds: William James and the Philosophy of Mysticism* “If you are interested in any aspect of psychedelics, I emphatically recommend *Listening to Ayahuasca*. Writing with a long history both as a participant in healing ceremonies and as a very skilled therapist, Harris shows a deep awareness of this long-revered plant medicine’s potential in helping patients not only heal difficult psychological problems but also, with proper guidance, integrate the experience into fuller

emotional and spiritual dimensions. • George Douvris, author of *Crossing Karma Zones* “Rachel Harris delivers a refreshingly honest, balanced account of the complex literature concerning ayahuasca, discussing potential risks alongside purported benefits and allowing room for the sometimes extraordinary and mysterious experiences reported by initiates. At once accessible and well informed, this work represents a much-needed guidepost for health professionals who may encounter ayahuasca users in their practice, as well as for spiritual seekers with an interest in entheogens.” • Albert Garcia-Romeu, PhD, Behavioral Pharmacology Research Unit, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine “Rachel Harris brings . . . the perspective of an astute observer, the rigor of a scientist, the compassion of a therapist, and the insight that only a participant can offer. Anyone contemplating an ayahuasca experience, or who counsels such a person, would be well advised to first consult this profound and important book.” • Philip Goldberg, author of *American Veda: From Emerson and the Beatles to Yoga and Meditation — How Indian Spirituality Changed the West* “. . . in Listening to Ayahuasca I felt that we have at last a publication that reveals the essence of the plant. We also have a publication that carries the core spirit of Grandmother Ayahuasca in a wonderfully warm and uplifting way.” • Spirituality Today “Impressively informative, exceptionally well organized and presented, Listening to Ayahuasca is very highly recommended . . .” • Midwest Book Review

Psychologist Rachel Harris, PhD, has been in private practice for thirty-five years. She has received a National Institutes of Health New Investigator Award, published more than forty scientific studies in peer-reviewed journals, and worked as a psychological consultant to Fortune 500 companies. She lives on an island off the coast of Maine and in the San Francisco Bay Area.

This book is unique because the author wears so many hats- therapist, participant in ceremonies, skeptic of spirits, friend, convert and cautioner. I deeply enjoyed reading it- she's transparent throughout about her own blindspots and imperfections. She asks a lot of the questions I have wanted to ask of shamans- so that made this read doubly satisfying.

Regardless of whether you are already listening to Ayahuasca, have plans to tune in, or are simply interested in an alternative medicine that is cloaked in mysticism, you will find this book captivating. Dr. Harris presents the results of her groundbreaking study in a manner equally accessible to academicians and the lay person. But this book is much more than the presentation of unusual

research findings. Beautifully written, it is a story of people wanting, and frequently finding, their way to a better life. It is the spiritual journey of a woman whose honesty, caring and intelligence shines through every page.

In this wonderful and engaging book, Rachel Harris leads the reader on a fascinating journey about ayahuasca. I loved the conversational tone, the personal insights, and the wealth of material not available anywhere else. As a psychologist, a researcher, and thoughtful participant-observer, Harris writes about what she calls the full awareness of magical realism in the ayahuasca experience. This book is a must-have for adventurers interested in ayahuasca and for people interested in the helpful psychological reach of shamanic and herbal remedies.

There's isn't anything that I did not appreciate about this book. It's as if you are having a conversation with Dr. Harris as she explains and teaches you what she has discovered over the years of her research (and personal experiences). It was a fast read, even with all my highlighting and notes. I highly recommend this book for anyone who is...well, if you are reading this review you must have a slight interest, get the book, you will not regret it.

Rachel Harris has researched the day-to-day long-term effects of using this plant medicine, and the stories she shares help you understand why folks keep going back to this plant medicine. Because it works! Of course, it works best when combined with a conscious program of therapy and self reflection. There is hope, joy and laughter in this book. Thank you, Dr. Harris, for the first real documentation of the potential restorative power of this plant teacher!

Initially, this book was recommended by a friend ... so as someone who has been experimenting with "the medicine," I ordered it from . Ten days later, another copy came to me in the mail from the publisher with a press kit to promote the idea of me having Dr. Harris as a guest on my Pathways Radio program and podcast. This was too much of a synchronicity, so I immediately asked my producer to book the interview and began reading the book. Far from just another reading assignment to prepare for an interview program, I was taken in by the readability of the book, considering the author's formidable credentials as a scientist. I became fascinated by the author's unique research study, which revealed healing effects that Ayahuasca would produce over time, long after the cathartic ceremony itself. And many of the author's psychotherapy clients described the internal experiences I had been noticing in myself during the 6 month period

when I had tried it a few times. IÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã ¢ve read a few books on Ayahuasca, but this one was not only academically interesting, it deepened the impacts of my own personal experience. The book strikes an eloquent balance between the scientific and the personal, including the author's own experiences, which were graciously but non-pretentiously shared. I highly recommend this book (as well as my Pathways interview -- free download).--PauloP.S. I have since bought another five copies of the book for friends and a counselor! :-)

My introduction to Ayahuasca came from Andrew Weil. It was around 1971. We were attending the Council Grove Conference on Consciousness. Andrew was a freshly minted M.D. During a break he was telling a group of us how he was on his way to Brazil to investigate a native hallucigen, Ayahuasca. He said it was reported to induce telepathy among the group of folks partaking. The telepathy part spoke to me and captured my imagination. It wasn't to be but for several decades later that I got to experience it myself. Somewhat like the Peyote church, the Daime church has received an OK to hold its services in the USA. It's hard to get an entry but well worth it. For me and my wife, it began with a special training workshop, a weekend getting to know the plant teacher. After that, montly meetings, or "works," where the purpose was to raise the light for healing. To me, that structure was the most revealing about where we've come in these past few decades. You are aware, of course, that we are no longer dealing with "psychedelics," but now with "plant teachers." The thrill has passed and the work and revision of consciousness has arrived. Listening to Ayahuasca is a great example of the new paradigm: solid research, transpersonal perspective, applications to therapy, probing the mystery of consciousness, and granting consciousness to non-human beings. The author, Rachel Harris, does a fantastic job of sharing with us the contemporary realities, from both an objective scientific point of view as well as a poetic, mystical point of view. The book is a good example, I believe, of the imprint of the "feminine" upon scientific consciousness and writing. She blends her personal reactions with her statistics. She sets up wise boundaries for objectivity and finds time to transcend those boundaries for expanded consciousness and wisdom. Her book is a model for study in terms of the new style of science--conducting and reporting. One of the interesting things about her narrative is that she reports on both her "conversion," and her remaing "skepticism." What she continues to struggle with is the idea that the spirit beings with whom she communicated were more than the product of her imagination. In spite of her ability to describe the intellectual tradition that now supports their reality in a new ontological space, she finds herself personally, inside her subjectivity, still trying to "grok" it. She reports that the most surprising thing from her research is how more than 80% of the partakers developed a

personal relationship with the spirit of the Ayahuasca brew, known as Grandmother Ayahuasca. Fascinating! Plant teachers unite! We really need your help, over and over again, we are slow learners! Help! Help! Where will you live if we destroy your home?

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