



KETAMINE JOURNEY FLIGHT INSTRUCTIONS

with Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP) Guidance

Who this guide is for

This guide is for all ketamine patients: solo or independent journeys, hybrid care, IV treatment, IM treatment, and Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP). KAP-specific details are clearly marked so patients can understand how guided therapeutic work differs from a solo journey.

1. WELCOME: THE MEDICINE IS A TOOL, NOT THE WHOLE TREATMENT

Ketamine can support perspective, emotional flexibility, reconnection, and relief from symptoms. The journey itself can be powerful, but the most lasting change usually comes from preparation, a safe setting, thoughtful aftercare, and integration.

At Renew Wellness, we want every patient to understand both options: some people choose solo or more independent journeys, and some choose Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy. Both can be meaningful. KAP adds structured therapeutic support before, during, and after the medicine experience.

2. ON ARRIVAL: INTENTION SETTING

- Check in on the iPad when you arrive.
- The front desk team will provide a half-page intention setter.
- This worksheet helps activate your prefrontal cortex - the thinking and reflective part of the brain - and helps prime your mind for a more intentional experience.
- It also gives the team a quick window into how you are arriving that day so we can better support a meaningful journey.

Intention examples

"Help me understand what my anxiety is protecting me from."

"Help me reconnect with myself."

"Show me what I need to see."

"Help me feel compassion for the part of me that is struggling."

Your intention does not need to be perfect. Curiosity is often more useful than expectation.

3. PREPARING FOR YOUR JOURNEY

Body preparation

- Fast 2-4 hours before treatment. Small sips of water are okay up to 2 hours before treatment if needed.
- Bring a healthy, simple snack for after the journey. Eating afterward can help you feel grounded again.
- Hydrate well and eat nourishing food in the days before and after your journey.
- Plan to take the rest of the treatment day off from work, responsibilities, and high-stress activities whenever possible.
- Make sure you have support and encouragement available at home after treatment.

Substances and medication considerations

To receive the fullest benefit, avoid the following on the same day as treatment unless your prescriber has given different instructions:

- Benzodiazepines
- Alcohol
- Cannabis
- Opioids
- NSAIDs
- Stimulants
- Sedatives
- Muscle relaxers

Medication safety

Do not abruptly stop prescribed medications without discussing it with your provider. If you are unsure what to take or hold, ask the clinical team before your treatment day.

What to bring

- Comfortable clothing and layers
- Water bottle
- Journal or notebook
- Eye mask
- Favorite soft blanket
- Comfort object to hold, such as a squishy, stuffed animal, stone, crystal, or other grounding item
- Light snack for after treatment

4. DURING THE JOURNEY

Every ketamine experience is different. Some people experience deep insight, emotional release, visual imagery, spiritual connection, creativity, rest, or a feeling of distance from painful patterns. Others have a quieter experience. All of these can be valid.

- Use curiosity instead of judgment.
- Allow feelings, images, or thoughts to arise without needing to analyze everything immediately.
- If difficult material appears, try asking: "What is this trying to show me?" or "What does this part of me need?"
- You do not need to tell the full story of trauma in order to heal. Choice and agency matter.
- The goal is not to force an outcome. The goal is to stay open, safe, and supported.

5. AFTER JOURNEY CARE

Please do not rush back to reality. Your nervous system, emotions, and thoughts may continue processing after the medicine wears off.

- We recommend staying at least 30 minutes after the session for gentle re-entry.
- Use the Integration Lounge for journaling, brain dumping words/thoughts/emotions, tea, water, coffee, coloring, snack, and quiet grounding.
- We will release you to a responsible party once you feel back to baseline.
- We recommend 15-30 minutes of relaxation before a loved one comes in to see you or pick you up.
- Avoid stressful environments after treatment whenever possible.
- Plan for a restful day and prioritize sleep.

Transportation safety

No one may drive on ketamine treatment days. This is not safe and is not permitted. We recommend avoiding ride-share services. If ride-share is your only option, you must stay longer in the Integration Lounge to ensure you are completely back to baseline, typically 30-45 minutes post-treatment.

6. INTEGRATION: WHERE LASTING CHANGE HAPPENS

Integration is the intentional process of discovering, thinking, feeling, talking about, and weaving your ketamine journeys into your life.

Integration is not simply remembering what happened. It is looking at insights from the journey and applying them back into daily thoughts, actions, relationships, routines, boundaries, and choices.

Many patients realize they have gotten away from enjoyable or meaningful parts of life: music, nature, art, sports, exercise, reading, yoga, meditation, community, spirituality, or trying something new.

Integration helps translate those realizations into small actions.

- Ideally, schedule one integration session with us in person or by telehealth once a month for 45 minutes or shortly after a solo journey or KAP.

- Journal and track home integration so you have something concrete to discuss. Check out our “Enjoy Your Journey Guidebook” for a lot of great integration material.
- Be thoughtful about the environment you return to after your journey. Returning to a stressful or unsafe environment can make integration harder.
- If you do not have a safe place to recover, re-process, or integrate, please tell us so we can support you.
- Take a mental health day when possible.
- Prioritize sleep, routine, and recovery. Mental health is much harder without adequate rest.
- Doing "the work" is amplified when safety is cultivated and time is given for preparation and reflection.

Integration can happen through many channels

Verbal / reflective	Body-based	Creative / relational
Journaling, therapy, talking with a trusted person, mood tracking	Walking, yoga, somatic practices, breathwork, massage, movement, dance	Art, music, nature, community, support groups, spiritual practice

You do not need to write down trauma details
 Journaling can be short: words, phrases, images, body sensations, or themes. You do not need to write detailed trauma stories. Reflect on barriers, patterns, needs, and compassionate next steps.

7. HEALING HAPPENS THROUGH CONNECTION

Ketamine treatments and psychedelic-assisted work are often about reconnecting: connection with self, connection with others, connection with community, connection with meaning, and connection with the body.

- Who has been good for you in the past?
- Who gets you?
- Who is your tribe?
- Which relationships feel loving, supportive, honest, and safe?
- What activities make you feel more like yourself?

This may be a powerful time to reconnect with trusted family members, friends, neighbors, people with common interests, support groups, or community spaces. If connection feels difficult or blocked, please let us know so we can help you brainstorm ways to feel less alone.

8. SOLO JOURNEYS VS KAP

Solo or independent journey	Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP)
More inward, self-directed experience	Adds therapeutic relationship and structured support

May work well for patients who feel prepared and resourced	Can be especially helpful for trauma, complex emotions, avoidance, or difficulty making meaning
Integration relies more heavily on journaling, support system, and outside therapy	Integration is woven into the treatment process with provider support
Often feels more private and autonomous	Often feels more relational, witnessed, and co-regulated
Still requires preparation, safety, and aftercare	Requires preparation, safety, aftercare, and a clear ending/transition plan

There is no single "right" way to do ketamine treatment. Some patients benefit from independent journeys, some benefit from KAP, and some move between both approaches over time. The best approach is the one that supports safe, sustainable growth.

9. KAP AT RENEW WELLNESS

Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy combines the medicine experience with therapeutic preparation, presence, reflection, and integration. The goal is to help patients explore themselves with safety rather than escape themselves.

- Community patients typically receive IM ketamine.
- Veterans typically receive IV ketamine.
- Your provider is present for the final 45-60 minutes of the appointment for therapeutic processing and integration work.
- The early portion of the experience may be more inward, with headphones, music, eye mask, and solo journey work.
- The later portion focuses on reflection, meaning-making, nervous-system regulation, journey notes, and integration homework.

Preparation before KAP

- One 45-minute preparation session is recommended before the first KAP session, ideally shortly before the first KAP or the same day if necessary.
- The blue ketamine guide book is provided on intake and should be read before treatment.
- Complete the "What to Expect" worksheet and bring it to all KAP sessions with your journal.
- Read the full KAP packet before your first KAP session.
- We recommend using a folder or journal to keep your packet, worksheets, mood tracking, and journey notes together.

What may happen during preparation

- Your history and concerns are reviewed by the provider.
- You and your provider establish a calm place or grounding strategy.
- Your provider discusses therapeutic style, preferences, boundaries, supports, and goals.
- The KAP packet is reviewed and KAP appointments are scheduled.

10. KAP TREATMENT COURSE AND CLEAR ENDING PLAN

Renew Wellness KAP roadmap

Core KAP course: 8 sessions

Reassess progress, integration, support, and goals

Possible extension: up to 4 additional sessions if clinically needed

Maximum total: 12 KAP sessions

Transition: ongoing therapy, community support, somatic work, self-care practices, and independent integration

KAP is not intended to continue forever. A clear ending helps patients build independence, deepen integration, and carry the therapeutic relationship and skills forward into daily life.

- Most patients begin with a structured course of 8 KAP sessions.
- After 8 sessions, we reassess symptoms, goals, integration, readiness, support system, and next steps.
- If clinically appropriate, up to 4 additional KAP sessions may be considered.
- The maximum KAP course is 12 sessions.
- The goal is to transition from guided medicine work into sustainable long-term supports.

Recommended frequency

- KAP sessions are typically scheduled weekly or every 2 weeks.
- Monthly integration appointments are recommended during the treatment course.
- Maintenance guided journeys, when appropriate, may be discussed separately and are not the same as ongoing indefinite KAP.
- We recommend establishing a long-term therapist during the first few weeks of ketamine induction and KAP when appropriate. Options may include somatic therapy, EMDR/trauma therapy, Somatic Experiencing, DBT, IFS/parts work, or other trauma-informed approaches.
- For veterans, the goal may include transition to group therapy or trauma therapy through the VA when appropriate.

11. BOSTON TRAUMA CONFERENCE PEARLS WOVEN INTO OUR KAP MODEL

Conference pearl	How it applies to ketamine and KAP
The medicine alone is not the treatment.	Preparation, skilled facilitation, safety, and integration shape whether the experience becomes useful and lasting.
Safety must be felt in the body, not just understood intellectually.	We focus on grounding, pacing, voice tone, choice, and co-regulation, not just education.
Regulation comes before insight.	If a patient is flooded, ashamed, shut down, or dissociated, the first goal is stabilization rather than interpretation.

Choice restores agency.	Trauma often involves loss of control. KAP should repeatedly offer choice around pace, language, disclosure, eye mask, music, silence, and what is processed.
Do not force the trauma story.	Patients do not ever need to tell details of what happened in order to heal. Resourcing and agency come first. Everything is a choice and we work on building safety back in the body.
The therapist nervous system matters.	Provider presence, posture, pacing, tone, and agenda can either support safety or create pressure.
The neuroplastic window needs direction.	Integration soon after treatment helps shape new patterns while the brain is more flexible.
Healing is embodied and relational.	Body-based practices, relationships, community, creativity, movement, and rhythm all support recovery.

12. PRO TIPS FOR LONG-TERM HEALING

- The ketamine journey may be powerful, but the "magic" often happens afterward as you integrate insights into life.
- Make time for the process to unfold naturally. This is not a race. Slow down and try to notice your breath, your body and how you are responding to things. This mind-body connection is key to long term healing.
- Capture the journey in a way that resonates: journaling, notes on your phone, voice memos, art, music, movement, or talking with a trusted therapist or friend.
- Mood monitoring through the link we send each week is important. It helps identify patterns, life events, improvements, downturns, and external factors affecting mood. The program is Patient Pulse Tracker
- Use the tools within Patient Pulse Tracker to track life events. This helps differentiate organic depression patterns from external stressors.
- If verbal expression is hard, try painting, breathwork, sound healing, massage, drawing, movement, dance, yoga, or somatic practices.
- Mindfulness practices can decrease anxiety and uncomfortable somatic experiences related to trauma. Start small and choose practices that resonate.
- Nutrition and lifestyle changes work best when they are small, measurable, and sustainable. Build one new habit at a time.

Important reminder

Ketamine is a very effective tool, but it is just that - a tool. It works best alongside adequate sleep, nutrition, micronutrients, physical health changes, self-care practices, stress management, appropriate medications, and removal of medications that may no longer be needed when clinically appropriate.

13. HANDOUTS AND WORKSHEETS

- KAP worksheet provided at intake or preparation. Complete what you can and bring it to each treatment.
- Think of the worksheets as brain primers, not homework you have to do perfectly.
- Important Berkeley Foundation handouts may include: Sitting with Discomfort, Tracking the Unfolding Process, and Community Resourcing.

14. BOOKS AND RESOURCES

Recommended books

- Renew Wellness “Enjoy Your Journey” Guidebook
- The Post-Traumatic Growth Workbook - Dr. Arielle Schwartz
- Ketamine Guide - Berkeley Jones (blue book provided on intake)
- Ketamine Journeys - Berkeley Jones, for journaling

- The Body Keeps the Score - Dr. Bessel van der Kolk
- The Myth of Normal - Dr. Gabor Mate
- Is Fred in the Refrigerator? - Shala Nicely, for OCD
- The Monkey Is the Messenger - parts work and meditation techniques for distracting negative thoughts
- No Bad Parts - Dr. Richard Schwartz, IFS/parts work
- Getting It Done When You Are Depressed - Julie Fast

Online resources and apps

- Depression and bipolar: juliefast.com
- OCD: shalanicely.com
- PTSD app: PTSD Coach
- Polyvagal theory and trauma yoga: Dr. Arielle Schwartz videos
- Insomnia: Sleepio app; ask us for a sleep hygiene handout
- Sensate vagus nerve stimulation device: renewwellnessaz.com/sensate
- YouTube: Nature relaxation videos
- YouTube: trauma-informed yoga, somatic yoga, Kundalini yoga for PTSD, or Brett Larkin yoga practices
- Online integration group: livingrefuge.org integration group, donation based

- Online integration groups: tamintegration.com psychedelic integration circles, including weekly men's, women's, art, and donation-based groups
- Instagram: Dr. Gabor Mate

15. QUICK PRE-FLIGHT AND POST-FLIGHT CHECKLIST

Before treatment	After treatment
Fast 2-4 hours; hydrate; bring journal, eye mask, snack, and comfort item	Do not drive; rest; hydrate; eat something nourishing; avoid overstimulation
Complete intention setter; arrive with curiosity instead of pressure	Use the Integration Lounge; brain dump words, images, feelings, or body sensations
Plan a calm schedule and a safe recovery environment	Sleep, track mood, and choose one small integration action
Ask questions about medications or substances before treatment day	Reach out for support if you feel unsettled, overwhelmed, or unsure what you need

16. FINAL SAFETY AND SUPPORT REMINDER

This handout is for educational purposes only and does not replace individualized medical advice. Follow your specific treatment plan from your Renew Wellness provider.

Please tell us if you have barriers to transportation, safe recovery space, sleep, support, nutrition, therapy access, or integration. We want to help you feel prepared, supported, and connected.

Renew Wellness philosophy

Healing happens through connection: connection to yourself, connection to others, connection to your body, connection to community, and connection to the life you are creating.