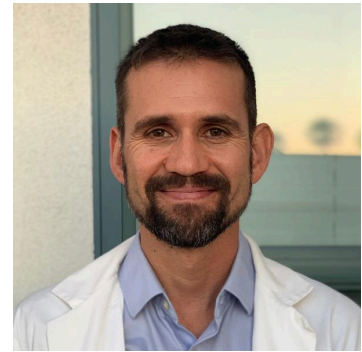


Dr. Martín Polanco, Founder, The Mission Within (Center), and Mission Within Foundation

Leading Ibogaine & 5-MeO-DMT Doctor Globally | Unmatched Experience, 25 Years Treating 5,000 People with PTSD, Addiction, mTBI, Depression & More



Dr. Martín Polanco is the most experienced physician in North America working with ibogaine & 5-MeO-DMT. He developed pioneering clinical programs serving veterans and first responders facing complex, treatment-resistant conditions such as mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI), Post-Traumatic Stress, depression & addiction.

Dr. Polanco is a prominent character in Lucy Walker's forthcoming film, “Of Night and Light: The Story of Iboga and Ibogaine.” However, at the forefront for decades, he shaped treatment protocols centering on the use of ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT—two of the most powerful psychedelic medicines—to address the legacy of trauma with compassion, scientific rigor, and lasting results.

His work led the body of psychedelic research focused on the outcome and phenomenological studies of Ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT. Dr. Polanco was among the first to pioneer a new paradigm in psychedelic care — integrating clinical safety, therapeutic preparation, and integration into a structured treatment model. **For 25 years, he has helped treat thousands and establish the framework now used in psychedelic therapy across North America.**

For veterans, operated by veterans, The Mission Within has now treated over 1,300 and collaborated with leading researchers from **Yale, Harvard, and University of Texas at Austin’s Dell Medical School** to study outcomes related to PTSD, mTBI, and alcohol use disorder.

Prior, Dr. Polanco founded Crossroads Treatment Center, the first medically supervised clinic in North America to offer ibogaine therapy for addiction and co-occurring mental health conditions. Since 2015, Dr. Polanco has recognized the unique neurorestorative potential of ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT—treating veterans directly, then SEAL and Special Operations Forces veterans—years before policy momentum or philanthropic capital caught up to the need.

Dr. Polanco co-authored multiple peer-reviewed studies presented at the World Economic Forum, the Department of Defense, NICoE, Stanford Design School, and other institutions. His work has been widely recognized for advancing not only access, but accountability and integrity.

While his clinical achievements are substantial, Dr. Polanco’s commitment to healing is personal. Sparked by a near-death experience at age 17, a motorcycle accident led him to reevaluate his purpose and dedicate his life to alleviating suffering.

Years later, witnessing a close family member recover from addiction through ibogaine — administered in an unsafe, unsupervised setting — compelled him to create a safer, more ethical model of care. He witnessed the systemic neglect of those with mental health and substance use disorders, cementing his resolve to build alternatives rooted in justice, dignity and depth. Despite Ibogaine’s surrounding stigma, he remained steadfast as he saw its power to heal the brain.

His mission is to make these therapies legally and safely accessible to all, while continuing to produce data that validates their efficacy and informs policy change. He remains committed to delivering care that is not only effective, but responsible—integrating neuroscience, trauma-informed care, and cultural sensitivity, with the end goal being the legalization of psychedelic medicines.

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Select Articles, Podcasts & Videos with Dr. Martín Polanco

[The New York Times](#) - Seeking Relief From Brain Injury, Some Veterans Turn to Psychedelics

[The New York Times](#) - What to Know About Ibogaine

[The Economist](#) - Mexico has become a testing ground for psychedelic therapies

[The Tim Ferriss Show](#) - Are Psychedelic Drugs the Next Medical Breakthrough?

[SXSW](#) - The Future of PTSD Treatment: With or Without MDMA

[US News & World Report](#) - Texas Invests \$50M in Psychedelic Drug Research to Treat Addiction

[The New York Times](#) - “I Want to Reset My Brain”: Female Veterans Turn to Psychedelic Therapy

[Third Wave](#) - From Shadow to Transcendence: The Healing Power of Ibogaine and 5-MeO

[Team Never Quit](#) - Dr. Martin Polanco and Marine Ryan Roberts: A Discussion on the Clinical Psychedelic Retreat Being Used to Treat Veterans and their Family Members

[Modern Wisdom](#) - How Does Psychedelic Treatment work for PTSD?

Peer-reviewed Academic Papers (in NIH Government/Pubmed database) published from The Mission Within Program and Crossroads Treatment Center Data and Patients

The Mission Within

- (1) Armstrong, S. B., Xin, Y., Sepeda, N. D., Polanco, M., Averill, L. A., & Davis, A. K. (2024). Prospective associations of psychedelic treatment for co-occurring alcohol misuse and posttraumatic stress symptoms among United States Special Operations Forces Veterans. *Military Psychology: The Official Journal of the Division of Military Psychology, American Psychological Association*, 36(2), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08995605.2022.2156200>
- (2) Ragnhildstveit, A., Khan, R., Seli, P., Barsuglia, J., et al.(2023). 5-MeO-DMT for post-traumatic stress disorder: a real-world longitudinal case study. *Front. Psychiatry, Sec. Psychopharmacology Vol 14*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2023.1271152/full>
- (3) Davis, A. K., Xin, Y., Sepeda, N., & Averill, L. A. (2023). Open-label study of consecutive ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT assisted-therapy for trauma-exposed male Special Operations Forces Veterans: prospective data from a clinical program in Mexico. *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00952990.2023.2220874>
- (4) Xin, Y., Armstrong, S. B., Averill, L. A., Sepeda, N., & Davis, A. K. (2023). Predictors of psychedelic treatment outcomes among special operations forces veterans. *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/CNS0000374>
- (5) Mangini, P., Averill, L. A., & Davis, A. K. (2021). Psychedelic treatment for co-occurring alcohol misuse and post-traumatic stress symptoms among United States Special Operations Forces Veterans. *Journal of Psychedelic Studies*, 5(3), 149–155. <https://doi.org/10.1556/2054.2021.00176>
- (6) Davis, A. K., Averill, L. A., Sepeda, N. D., Barsuglia, J. P., Amoroso, T., (2020) Psychedelic treatment for trauma-related psychological and cognitive impairment among US Special Operations Forces veterans. *Chronic Stress*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2470547020939564>
- (7) Barsuglia, J. P., Polanco, M., Palmer, R., Malcolm, B. J., Kelmendi, B., & Calvey, T. (2018). A case report SPECT study and theoretical rationale for the sequential administration of ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT in the treatment of alcohol use disorder. *Progress in Brain Research*. <http://doi.org/10.1016/bs.pbr.2018.08.002>

- (8) Barsuglia, J., Davis, A. K., Palmer, R., Lancelotta, R., Windham-Herman, A.-M., Peterson, K., ... Griffiths, R. R. (2018). Intensity of Mystical Experiences Occasioned by 5-MeO-DMT and Comparison With a Prior Psilocybin Study. *Frontiers in Psychology*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02459>

Crossroads Treatment Center

- (9) Davis, A. K., Renn, E., Windham-Herman, A.-M., Polanco, M., & Barsuglia, J. P. (2018). A Mixed-Method Analysis of Persisting Effects Associated with Positive Outcomes Following Ibogaine Detoxification. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 1–11. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02791072.2018.1487607>
- (10) Camlin, T. J., Eulert, D., Horvath, A. T., Bucky, S. F., Barsuglia, J. P., & Polanco, M. (2018). A phenomenological investigation into the lived experience of ibogaine and its potential to treat opioid use disorders. *Journal of Psychedelic Studies*. <http://doi.org/10.1556/2054.2018.004>
- (11) Malcolm, B. J., Polanco, M., & Barsuglia, J. P. (2018). Changes in Withdrawal and Craving Scores in Participants Undergoing Opioid Detoxification Utilizing Ibogaine. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 1–10. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02791072.2018.1447175>

Conference Abstracts

- 1) Barsuglia, J. P., Polanco, M., Palmer, R., Malcolm, B., Kelmendi, B., Calvey, T. (2019) A case report SPECT study and theoretical rationale for the sequential administration of ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT in the treatment of alcohol use disorder. Poster at Society of Neuroscientists of Africa (SONA) Conference, Lagos, Nigeria
- 2) Calvey, T., Woolf, J., Polanco, M., Palmer, R., Malcolm, B., Kelmendi, B., Dickens, C., Barsuglia, J. P. (2019) Combination Psychedelic Therapy to Treat Substance Use Disorders: Insights from Human and Rodent Studies. Poster at The 19th Congress of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists, London, United Kingdom
- 3) Calvey, T., Woolf, J., Polanco, M., Palmer, R., Malcolm, B., Kelmendi, B., Dickens, C., Barsuglia, J. P. (2019). Oral Presentation: Combination Psychedelic Therapy to Treat Substance Use Disorders: Insights from Human and Rodent Studies. *Biological Psychiatry*, Cape Town, South Africa
- 4) Barsuglia, J. P., Polanco, M., Palmer, R., Malcolm, B., Kelmendi, B., & Calvey, T. (2019). A case report SPECT study and rationale for the sequential administration of ibogaine and 5-MeO-DMT in a veteran with alcohol use disorder. Poster session presented at the Special Operations Medical Association Scientific Assembly (SOMSA). Charlotte, NC.
- 5) Barsuglia, J. P., Davis, A.K., Palmer, R., Lancelotta, R., Windham-Herman, M., Peterson, K., Polanco, M., Grant, R. M., Griffiths, R. (2017). Characterization of mystical experiences occasioned by 5-MeO-DMT-containing toad venom and comparison with prior psilocybin studies. Poster presentation at the 3rd International Psychedelic Science Conference, Oakland, CA.
- 6) Davis, A. K., Barsuglia, J. P., Polanco, M., Lynch, M., Windham-Herman, M. (2017). Subjective effectiveness of ibogaine treatment for problematic opioid consumption: Short and long-term outcomes and current psychological functioning. Poster presentation at the 3rd International Psychedelic Science Conference, Oakland, CA.
- 7) Malcolm, B., Windham-Herman, M., Lynch, M., Davis, A. K., Polanco, M., Villavicencio, G. G., Barsuglia, J. P., (2017). Changes in withdrawal and craving scores in subjects undergoing opioid detoxification utilizing Ibogaine. Poster presentation at the 3rd International Psychedelic Science Conference, Oakland, CA.