



# 4 Nobel Prize winners that credit taking LSD for them being so dang smart

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Legally, it has to be mentioned somewhere on this page that drugs are bad, mmmkay? Unless of course you're a brilliant mind using them for escaping restrictive social constructs to explore vast realms of undiscovered thought. Yeah, acid might have been the reason that guy Billy from high school is still in his parents' basement yelling at teenagers on Xbox right now, but for others, it was the key that unlocked a trove of personal introspection, helping to shatter breakthroughs of how everything is understood today.

## Francis Crick

As a molecular biologist, neuroscientist and biophysicist, [Francis Crick](#) is often brought up in the science vs. psychedelics circles of debate because he was part of the team that discovered the double helix thing we've all come to know and love as DNA. The story of him being high on LSD and hallucinating the structure is still hotly contested, however, even though Crick was always unrepentant in his use of mind-altering drugs for thought expansion. In 1962, he was co-awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the discovery of the DNA structure.

## Dr. Kary Banks Mullis

Following closely in Crick's exploration of genetic makeup, [Dr. Mullis](#) openly credits LSD for his invention of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) — a technique that allows for easier testing and isolation of DNA. The discovery was the impetus of his 1993 Nobel Prize for chemistry. When speaking about it during filming for *BBC's Psychedelic Science* documentary, Mullis says, "Would I have invented PCR if I hadn't taken LSD? I seriously doubt it. I could sit on a DNA molecule and watch the polymers go by. I learnt that partly on psychedelic drugs."

## Richard Feynman

The revered theoretical physicist — whose famous last words were, "I'd hate to die twice. It's so boring." — received the [Nobel Prize in Physics in 1965](#) for his work on quantum electrodynamics, the field of science that explores how light and matter interact. He was also prone to repeated experimentation with ketamine, weed and LSD. But, he was careful with it, afraid of what chemicals might do to the one reliable organ he had. He once wrote, "You see, I get such fun out of thinking that I don't want to destroy this most pleasant machine that makes life such a big kick. It's the same reason that, later on, I was reluctant to try experiments with LSD in spite of my curiosity about hallucinations."

## Bob Dylan

It's likely not as shocking to read [The Bard used psychedelics](#) as it is to know he recently won a Nobel Prize in Literature for his song lyrics spanning decades. Even though Dylan has technically denied any connection between his LSD use and artistic progression, [a bizarre interview for Playboy](#) tells a different tale. "I don't want to make this, kind of, a drug interview or anything," he said. "LSD like ... once you take LSD a few times ... I mean, LSD is a medicine. You know, you take it and you know ... you don't really have to keep taking it all the time. It's nothing like that. It's not that kind of thing, you know, whereas pot, you know, nobody's got any answers through pot."

It's not to say taking LSD will assure anyone's place in the annals of Nobel Prize royalty, but the history of it certainly opens up more questions than the world has answers for. And to think, we're just getting started.

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