19. Interview with Participant 19

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**Gender:** Participant (male), Interviewer (male)

**Residence at time of recording:** Participant (Canada), Interviewer (New Zealand)

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**Interviewer** 00:03

So, one final thing to jump into before we start. So, the focus of this interview is related to your psychedelic use. So, one thing to clarify is when I'm asking you about your psychedelics, which drugs that I do, want you to consider, for the just for the purpose of this interview, your psychedelic use, and which drugs that I'd like you to not consider those. So, to the degree that you can separate out those experiences in your mind if that, is it possible. I mean, it's, it's can be hard, but so the drugs that we would like you to consider when asking about your psychedelic experiences are the classic psychedelics such as psilocybin, LSD, DMT, and mescaline but also other drugs or substances such as Ayahuasca and Iboga and if you've had any of the analogues of these, so you've had 1p-LSD, or you've had some 5-MeO-DMT, or you've had some to 2C-B or something like this, you can put those in the psychedelic box in terms of like your psychedelic experiences. So, we're looking at for large part the ones that are active, if you if you're a little bit in the know with the pharmacology, the ones that activate your 5HT-2A serotonin receptors. In terms of drugs, or substances that we'd like you to, to exclude from considering psychedelics for the purposes of this interview, are cannabis, MDMA or Ecstasy, Ketamine, and salvia. So, I think those are the main four that people might sometimes put inside the experience, depending on the dosage and the particular effects the individual has. So, some people have very psychedelic effects on MDMA, for example, but not typically considered a psychedelic but ketamine and salvia could be, I mean, I've definitely, I've seen ketamine clinics advertising, you know, this is the first legal psychedelic clinic you can go. I'm like, they're not, they're dissociatives aren't they, they don't count as psychedelics but they're, they have very psychedelics like experiences, because I think.

**Participant** 02:30

I can buy nitrous in a grocery store.

**Interviewer** 02:33

Yeah. Yes, well, I would exclude as well nitrous If you can, so I've just put the four ones that I, I don't know. I'm not the most drug connoisseur, let's say. So, I haven't tried all the different ones. So, there's definitely ones that I haven't heard of nitrous is one that's recently come up, I was like, oh, okay, like the laughing gas stuff, I didn't know people were doing that.

**Participant** 02:59

Yeah, whippits.

**Interviewer** 03:03

All right. Yeah, I've heard people combining them with different drugs because it gets you, it just like enhances the peak very quickly.

**Participant** 03:04

With mushrooms they're cool. It's like a 30 second ketamine, whomp whomp whomp like that, and your kind of like uhhh.

**Interviewer** 03:24

\*laughs\* It just sounds like your spazzing out.

**Participant** 03:26

\*laughs\* Feels good, though.

**Q1. Interviewer** 03:34

Spazzing out usually does. All righty. So, to jump in, the first question is, why do you use psychedelics?

**Participant** 03:51

So that's a very broad question. I use psychedelics for a variety of reasons. Like it gives me a different way to view myself and my impact on this world and my, it increases the ability, it increases my perception. Like it increases the connections I have in my brain and I can think about everything and I can think about new ways of like doing the things and like, I feel like it's like years of spiritual work put into 12 hours. I've done lifetimes of stuff like I would, I probably wouldn't even be here. I was. I was recently in rehab like, two years ago, because I was really bad alcoholic, addicted to ecstasy and coke, it was really bad and like I was doing a lot of psychedelics though, too and I started doing mushrooms around 15 and, like, I feel like it would have been a lot worse if I hadn't been doing the psychedelics and in some way, it is kind of an escape, but it's not really an escape, because, like, I'm thinking about everything that I'm going through the whole time that I'm going through it, you know, like an escape would be like, "H", you know, you take it and you feel really good for like eight hours, it takes away all your anxieties melts everything away, you know, like, or take M.

**Interviewer** 06:24

Is "H" heroin?

**Participant** 06:25

Yeah, heroin. Like, it's not a technical escape, you know, but it feels really nice, it feels really good. You know, like, it feels amazing but it feels really, really weird at times, too, you know and there's so much to elaborate on I need to take a second to breathe.

**Interviewer** 07:05

Take your time.

**Participant** 07:20

My I feel like it's a very subjective, is vary based on the individual and like, psychedelics are obviously medicinal, but they can be used for fun, as well but I feel like the fun doses are below the ego death and above the ego death, like it's, you're kind of going to go through something, and you're going to come out better for it afterwards. Even if it may not look better, in the moment, it will be better. I feel like, like it. To summarise all of that, all of what I just said the word vomit. I feel like it enhances my connection with the creator with my creator. With the spirit that I feel inside, you know, like, it increases my spirituality and I wouldn't have I wouldn't be in the same place without it.

**Q2. Interviewer** 08:44

Cool. Well, we'll get into all of that in the following questions. Have the reasons why you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 08:59

Oh, yes. Yes. At first, I hadn't really realised the extent of what I was doing to myself and well, actually, when I first started taking mushrooms, I was, I was like, I knew I knew what it was, you know, and I knew that I was going to go through something but like I saw the shroud of darkness and like I kind of like pushed it away. I kind of I was like, I don't want to go through that right now and then, like I kept on pushing it away as I started doing more and more of it, but like my ecstasy use was getting really out of hand I was doing a lot of other drugs, right. I was escaping from the cloud of darkness that I didn't want to think about it was like this lie that I was like feeding myself and so at first it was to escape and then I realised I could mix like acid and mushrooms with ecstasy and coke and alcohol and I could get deeper and have more fun and mixed ketamine as well and you know, like, it was fucking cocktails is awesome but it did not help my, my mental states at all and but it brought me to those places to show me, you know, I wouldn't be the same person that I am today without going through that.

**Interviewer** 10:53

And so, you originally were taking them, it seems maybe more recreationally?

**Participant** 11:01

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 11:01

For the fun of it and when did that change? Like, was there a moment where you let the dark cloud in and dealt with those issues that you hadn't?

**Participant** 11:17

It's, uh, I kind of, I sobered up and then I like I most recently started doing them therapeutically and setting my intentions and yeah, yeah, like recently, like, maybe last year. Last year, I started doing them. Okay, it was recreationally than it was ritualistically. Then it was like, then it's like now like, I'm chilling. You know, I take mushrooms every like couple weeks, you know, I drop a big dose of acid in there every month or two, you know, like, like, every time I just feel like I'm sinking back into old patterns, you know, I just refresh, maybe a microdose. I do a lot of yoga and meditate too, as well. Like, I need that, you know. It can't just be the psychedelics because if it's just the psychedelics, then it can turn into like, you know, then it's abuse, it's abuse, you know, you need to be enjoying your life. I feel like you need to be living well. You know, like, you need to be doing exercise and stuff because then you're just going to feel fucking gross. While you're on it, you know? Like, damn, I just feel fucking dirty. If I haven't showered, and I'm on mushrooms, you know? Like, it's, it seriously gives me motivation to like, get up in the morning, sometimes. Not just like, I'm looking forward to this next dose. It's like, I understand what my part in the world is and I know that I need to get up and do my shit. It's not, it's never about the next dose. Sometimes.

**Interviewer** 13:32

Sometimes

**Participant** 13:33

\*laughs\*

**Interviewer** 13:50

and had had, you know, and about the psychedelics being used in a sort of therapeutical or healing or ritualistic sense while you had been using them recreationally or was that something you discovered later?

**Participant** 14:04

That's why I got into them because I realised, I started to realise that where I was going, like I was drinking every day, and I had been drinking every day for a really long time and like, I was a 12-year-old kid drinking every day you know. That's not normal. Like that started to get to me at like, yeah, I started to do a little research. I'd kind of like known and like that kind of justified my use my abuse of it though, you know. So, it can be a double-edged sword I feel. Just one second Andrew. [talking to girlfriend] What's up? Um, I don't think so. Maybe. I think this is I think this is everything. I love you too. Okay.

**Q3. Interviewer** 15:30

How did you first start using psychedelics?

**Participant** 15:36

Um, I wanted to branch out I was into pills, alcohol and weed and I had like heard about mushrooms and was like, Okay, I want to try that and like felt like I was ready, because like I'd been kind of intimidated by all the all the propaganda but, I don't know like, grew a pair and was like, [name], you got to you got to do this. You got to do this. Probably wasn't the safest environment for me to do it in. I was in in a dorm room with a, I don't know, boys prep school.

**Interviewer** 17:01

And when you're doing them just by yourself or with other people?

**Participant** 17:05

There were other people in the room yeah.

**Interviewer** 17:07

Were they also doing psychedelics?

**Participant** 17:12

Well, like they, they were experimenting as well. They weren't on. They were, I don't think, yeah, I was the only guy doing shrooms that day but like a one other guy like my close friend was like, he did them the night before and he was like, Oh, dude, you've got to do them and then like my friend was going into the city. That weekend, so he scored the shrooms and yeah, we partied. It was like the is the blue meanies. I felt like really, really heavy like body heavy. I haven't really felt like that on mushrooms ever since but something I'm really interested in is like different strains of mushrooms, you know. I've been I've been I've been stuck on this albino penis envy tangent for like, years now. Craziest mushrooms.

**Interviewer** 18:03

I heard they're quite intense.

**Participant** 18:05

Yeah, they're the best man. Once you taste the penis envy, you'll never go to another mushroom. It's like it's the best because like, seriously, what you're looking for is psilocybin and everything has different varying things of psilocybin but then again, if you want to be a connoisseur, like, you can kind of treat it as weed where there's different levels, but still, it's all just THC.

**Interviewer** 18:35

And CBD.

**Participant** 18:36

When it comes down to it my tolerance. I'm smoking weed every day and if I smoke one strain, like if I smoke White Widow, which has like 22% THC versus like a jack hair, which has like 24% I don't really feel the difference, like a jack hair is going to feel stronger. You know, and if the Sativas my heart's going to start pounding, but if it's an indica I'm going to feel relaxed, just varying levels of high but the fancy names it doesn't really mean shit. Just varying levels of the same feeling.

**Interviewer** 19:15

[Name] the I don't know it's gone a little bit muffled your sound since you moved the microphone around.

**Participant** 19:21

Oh, how's that?

**Interviewer** 19:26

Yeah, I think that's better. Yeah, I think it was maybe just like under shirt fold or something.

**Participant** 19:31

Oh, yeah It was underneath my laptop there. I didn't even I didn't notice.

**Q4. Interviewer** 19:37

All good, all good. What aspects of psychedelics do you find most meaningful or valuable?

**Participant** 20:01

How I feel afterwards?

**Interviewer** 20:08

It's more maybe more broader than that. It's, it can be afterwards it can be right now thinking back on it, it can be. So, it's, it could be like, during the experience what feels most meaning and valuable. It could be both it can be both during inside and after, really, you know, depends on how you'd like to answer this.

**Participant** 20:59

The whole experience, the whole experience is meaningful and valuable to me for different reasons and, like, without one, I wouldn't have the other.

**Interviewer** 21:30

Would you be able to break it that down, like maybe are you able to identify some of?

**Participant** 21:35

Like it's, it's like a machine and like, without the one screw, the whole machine won't work. So, it's like, I'm living a psychedelic life as in like, this is in my daily lifestyle. Without the LSD, I put on my tongue, I wouldn't be doing this one thing but without this action, I wouldn't be doing this action. It's all like a big computer and that is the most meaningful and valuable thing. It gives me purpose as a human being. Just like, going about my day to day life, knowing that I am a part of this big turning, machine living breathing. Like anything I do, the wheels are still turning.

**Interviewer** 23:40

I, if I can drill into that a little bit, that that sort of understanding that doing anything is going to impact your life and so my past experiences of using any drugs is kind of going to or having any experience is going to lead me into where I am now. So, I wonder how is it or in what way does psychedelics stand out to you as being like important or meaningful in your life? And that being different from say, other drugs that you've used, that you wouldn't necessarily, maybe you would, emphasise as being sort of like that?

**Participant** 24:31

Well, I don't, I don't like I may. I like the feeling that methamphetamine gives me when I take it but I don't like the consequences. I don't like what happens afterwards. You know, I don't like the person, it makes me eight hours into the experience, you know? I like what happens to me when I take acid, I like what happens to me when I take mushrooms. DMT slapped me every single time.

**Interviewer** 25:17

Gave us a hyper dimensional bitch slap?

**Participant** 25:20

Yeah, fuck \*laughs\*. I've yet to make my peace with her.

**Q5. Interviewer** 25:41

Cool. All right, that makes I think that makes a lot of sense. What aspects of psychedelics do you find most challenging or difficult?

**Participant** 26:20

Every time I take something like a macro dose, I'm always super excited until I'm just about to take it and then I take it and like, I'm just confronted with all of my issues that I'm dealing with and like I feel like not liking that is kind of like a naive way of looking at it because really, this drug is trying to help you. It's giving you the it's showing you the doorway to work through everything in this brief 12-hour window. It's giving me the window of opportunity and like that is, I don't know. I don't know how else to answer your question I any, any way of not appreciating the psychedelic experience, in my personal opinion is a naive way of looking at it and you need to do more, if you don't like it or then it's just not for you, you know, like. Who am I to push my medicine on you? You know, like, that's not okay. Everybody's got their own prescriptions. Everybody's dealing with their own shit, you know.

**Interviewer** 28:13

So, yeah, and in terms of that question of what aspects of psychedelics do you find most challenging or difficult? It's just, yeah, not the not negative in that sense. So, it's just, it's more that it's not necessarily asking

**Participant** 28:33

like, the, the, the come up, the come up is challenging. It's always going to be challenging, the come up is especially challenging, the more I take, and like, I want to take more, but it's like, I want to be where it gets me but like, it's just the come up, you know, it always kind of like it's just so intense sometimes. So, like, I got to take it in like halves, you know, so that I can come up there gradually so that it's not like so much on my stomach. I haven't tried mescaline yet. I'm interested like this is supposed to be it's probably hard on your stomach because you're not probably you're probably not supposed to use it too much. You know, it's it probably hurts you because you're using it too much.

**Interviewer** 29:25

The mushrooms or mescaline?

**Participant** 29:27

I don't know maybe it's maybe it's supposed to be like a shitty. Like maybe you're supposed to go through some shitty purging you know, it's a purge before like the light on the other end of the tunnel, you know. Like you throw up every time you take this cactus. It doesn't matter who you are. The cactus will always make you throw up.

**Interviewer** 29:55

Quite similar to Ayahuasca in that sense.

**Participant** 29:57

Yeah, exactly. Like maybe you just need to go through this and like maybe it's the stomach that hurts when I'm on mushrooms, maybe that's just the thing that I need to go through that it needs that it pushes me through. You know, but that's what I find those the most challenging. It's the stomach aches. Yeah, that that makes me not want to take as big of a dose but it makes me not really want to take a dose at all, but like, I know I need it but like, I know that, like, my stomach's going to hurt.

**Interviewer** 30:37

Are you taking most commonly the penis envy mushrooms?

**Participant** 30:43

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 30:44

And is that, are you eating just the mushrooms raw? Are you doing sort of like tea extracts and stuff like this?

**Participant** 30:50

Oh, sometimes tea sometimes raw. It's mostly just flesh and I grind it up sometimes.

**Interviewer** 30:57

And do you notice any difference between the routes of use and in the stomach pains?

**Participant** 31:04

The stomach pains it makes me feel really empty when I drink tea and that also, I don't know if it's hand in hand with like, the come up being really fast and really intense and that being why like, my stomach just feels like really empty. You know, it feels like that. Like that all tensed up. Yeah, like a huge knot.

**Interviewer** 31:34

Well, with one thing that I've learned in psychology, for example, is that your stress response actually shuts down the, your digestive system in a sort of fight or flight stress response. So, people who have chronic stress, for example, do experience a lot of stomach or intestinal pain because it's the you know, they're chronically anxious steroids or corticosteroids being released through the body. So, one thought that I had on that potentially, it's, it's just the immediate sort of not necessarily anxiety, but that energised feeling coming up, which is sort of just putting you into a somewhat of a state of sympathetic state, which is basically your fear or like kind of stress response could be that and then it's just sort of the stomach's turning itself off, so it's cramping a bit.

**Participant** 32:41

Yeah, it depends because like, I used to smoke a lot of nicotine and it like I just recently quit and so I haven't done a big mushroom trip since I quit smoking nicotine. I'm on a microdose right now and I feel good. Stomach, my stomach doesn't hurt

**Interviewer** 33:03

Of Nicotine?

**Participant** 33:03

No of psilocybin

**Interviewer** 33:05

Oh yes.

**Participant** 33:07

My stomach doesn't hurt the microdoses usually don't, don't hurt. I meditated this morning. I feel good. I feel good but nicotine. Yeah, okay, nicotine might have had a huge effect on how my stomach feels on psilocybin and caffeine intake as well has a huge part, like if I'm just taking the mushrooms and I'm not doing anything else, and I'm not eating, but usually I'm going to want to eat in the mornings when I wake up, you know, and I'm going to want to have a cup of coffee with my bong rip and like, usually doesn't, doesn't go like that where I don't have anything.

**Interviewer** 33:59

So, when you do fast, do you find that your stomach's actually less painful or less cramped?

**Participant** 34:10

Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 34:18

Well maybe you got to listen to it?

**Participant** 34:20

Yeah.

**Q6. Interviewer** 34:25

So, the next couple of questions, the broad question that it starts with, is, in what ways have psychedelics affected your life? And there's going to be some follow up questions to this depending on how you answer it. So, if you give, if you answer some of the follow up questions, I just wont to ask them, of course. So, we start broad, and then I narrow into some specifics to get some kind of more detail in terms of different aspects that you might not cover by just touching on it in a broad sense straightaway. So, there's about seven questions that sort of a fall within this sort of focus. So, first off, starting broad is, in what ways have psychedelics affected your life?

**Participant** 35:29

My, it's affected how I think it's affected and how I feel it's affected how I understand how, like, other people are talking to me, or like how I'm talking to myself in my head, it's helped me understand my thoughts and understand my place in the world.

**Interviewer** 36:41

In terms of the degree or the level, or the intensity of those sort of a sort of like a level of or measure of how much change has occurred. How would you, how would you describe that sort of the degree of change in terms of your. Maybe, yeah, it's hard to say, because you've, you've talked a little bit, you said, you started using them when you're sort of about 15 or so and then you've started using them recreate recreation therapeutically, sort of within the last year. So, I don't know. I guess.

**Participant** 37:26

I was using them a lot. I was using a lot.

**Interviewer** 37:30

When you're younger?

**Participant** 37:32

Yeah. I've been using, like, constantly but the reason behind it has changed.

**Interviewer** 37:42

Do you think so, yeah? What I'm trying to get at as sort of what I recognise is the question that I want to ask is, you know, how, to what degree do you think they've kind of changed you, but depending on where you think about this sort of change, you know, if it's over five years, it's, it would be like the last, you know, five years of your life compared to the first 15. Whereas if it was just say, within the last year, it would be the, you know, the last 19 years, compared to the last one year. So, I'm just, where do you think the most significant change has occurred in terms of their effect on your life?

**Participant** 38:22

When I've been using them when I was abstaining from all other drugs, aside from marijuana. When I was using them with other drugs, it just made me crazier. Made me more detached from reality but without the other drugs, I feel like it attaches me.

**Interviewer** 39:37

and what motivated you to abstain from the use of other drugs?

**Participant** 39:44

They were killing me. They were like giving me weird, like pains and like I was peeing weird and like my bladder wasn't working. It was but it was like I was peeing out this like oily substance from doing too much research chemicals. It was just gnarly man and I didn't want to be there anymore. I thought there was a better way. Like millions of others who have gone down the same path that I was going.

**Interviewer** 40:30

And was there a turning point was there like a specific event that occurred that sort of just made you give them up?

**Participant** 40:44

I took acid one night at my parents’ house and then it was like, confronted me with like this, this option, it was like, I can go to the bathroom and slit my wrists, or I can go upstairs and talk to my parents and I went upstairs and talked to my parents.

**Interviewer** 41:13

That was a good decision.

**Participant** 41:17

I think so too.

**Interviewer** 41:21

Glad you're here, dude.

**Participant** 41:24

Glad to be here.

**Interviewer** 41:32

Sounds like you got a lovely girl who loves you. So, your, looks like you're in a good place.

**Participant** 41:39

I'm lucky.

**Interviewer** 42:16

Can I ask what was the, where was the feeling coming from that you wanted to kill yourself?

**Participant** 42:24

I was raped by my uncle when I was 9 and I just have this hatred inside of me for everything and everyone and if I don't trip out every couple weeks, or months I feel like I'm going to go fucking nuts.

**Interviewer** 42:52

And did you talk to your parents at this?

**Participant** 42:55

Yeah, I have. I need to go to a counsellor because this is like more recent, I just started dealing with this. This cloud of darkness. Like these memories, like I was flipping through all of these memories, because acid is a PTSD drug, right. Like, if you take it, you're going to start flipping through memories and shit and that's what that's what was happening to me, but I wasn't really realising it. So, I was living through all these memories and then I was like, super confused about my sexuality for like, a long time. You know. Just fucked up man but like psychedelics are really good.

**Interviewer** 43:42

Are you seeing counsellor at the moment?

**Participant** 43:45

No, I need to I need to start doing that. I need to do some research. I'm probably going to do some research in the next couple days here is I just started talking about it with well, no, like, going to see counsellor. I was talking about it with my girlfriend after work yesterday. Like it's something on my mind. Something on the plate that I'm going to do

**Interviewer** 44:18

Yeah, I think talking about these things. Like not just, you know, such terrible difficult things, but just even normal problems is very helpful just to get it out and then to and then for other people to acknowledge it,

**Participant** 44:35

Not just internalise everything. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 44:38

Yeah.

**Participant** 44:39

And like even like with my girlfriend, like, it's, I can't put all this fucking weight on her because she has all this weight that she's like, you know, like, it's just then we're going to drag both of us down and that sucks, too.

**Interviewer** 44:53

Yeah, outside help can be very helpful.

**Participant** 44:57

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 44:57

Especially when they're a bit more detached from your life because then it's like, putting it out into the world a bit more than just putting it into a one-layer bigger inward bubble where it's like your relationship now has to deal with that. Which can be very difficult. Sounds like a good thing, man. I'd encourage you to do that.

**Participant** 45:21

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 45:25

It can head you. When you had been using a lot of like the alcohol, MDMA Ecstasy, meth beforehand, had you known what, like the reasons why you had used it, like was there in terms of the event with your uncle?

**Participant** 45:44

It happened to me so young, I didn't even know what it was, you know, I had I like, it kind of it was like the Stockholm Syndrome kind of thing, you know. I didn't, I didn't realise like, I was 9 years old, you know, like this. I didn't know what the words were to explain it, you know.

**Interviewer** 46:10

But you had a feeling?

**Participant** 46:11

I had a feeling. I had a feeling it was bad. So, I just put it away, you know and then he died a couple months after. So, it was like, the badman disappeared, you know? I thought I was doing the right thing. Such a young kid, man. Don't really know what the right thing is.

**Interviewer** 46:43

Yeah, no, that's well especially because it's your family. How do you, you know.

**Participant** 46:51

Exactly, that's my mom's brother. Everybody thinks he's a good guy.

**Interviewer** 47:03

People are fucked up dude.

**Participant** 47:04

I know, yeah. I'm going to take a break, Andrew.

**Interviewer** 47:22

Yeah, no worries, man.

**Participant** 49:36

Thank you.

**Interviewer** 49:37

Yeah, no worries. Good to carry on?

**Participant** 49:47

Yeah, just one moment. Good to carry on.

**Q6a. Interviewer** 50:12

Has your personality or identity been shaped by your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 50:24

It's helped me shape my personality.

**Interviewer** 50:47

Can you elaborate a bit on that, what do you mean?

**Participant** 50:50

Like everything I like, I don't know if I'd be that into if I didn't do psychedelics. Like, yeah, I played I played some guitar before I started using psychedelics, but like, I never started appreciating the music until after. Like, I used to exercise a lot, do a lot of fitness, I was a pretty good hockey player and, but like it always felt it didn't feel like I was there but like, now when I exercise, it's like, I'm feeling everything in my body working to do this, you know. I just feel like there's a level of level of appreciation that wasn't there beforehand.

**Interviewer** 52:49

And was this. So, I think just jumping back for a little bit of clarity. When, when we're when I'm asking about sort of how psychedelics affected you. When I don't know if we really covered this, but when do you think would be the most significant change? Or do you attribute it to your whole psychedelic use history or more to that abstinent period like this is where the appreciation comes in this is where the shaping your personality does, or would you is it as sort of soup so to speak?

**Participant** 53:31

It is it is a sort of soup but there are chunks like the period of abstinence really helped shape my truth because all that other stuff wasn't involved and I was just seeing myself bare bones, this is what I go through my daily life, like without needing anything. Like, it was really easy to lie to myself when I was using all the other drugs and so when I would do the psychedelics, it would bring me to like that point of realisation and like, I would start going through the memory and then like my brain wouldn't like allow myself to like go through it, you know, it was like locked up, because there was like some part of me, you know and I feel like if I had like not lied to myself, I don't know if I'd be here right now, I'd probably I could be in jail. I could be dead.

**Interviewer** 55:14

Yeah, I think one thing I definitely learned is the people who, who repressed memories or suppressed experiences like that. People often do that for very healthy reasons, to cope with the magnitude of these, of problems that they've experienced,

**Participant** 55:35

Like, I don't want to grow up as a kid who got raped, you know?

**Interviewer** 55:39

Yup.

**Participant** 55:41

Like,

**Interviewer** 55:47

You didn't, at 9, you don't have the capacity to be able to.

**Participant** 55:50

Totally but that's, that's like something that's like stopping myself at like 14. You know, that's something that's like stopping myself from thinking about that kind of stuff at like, 12 or like, 13 when, like, I'm starting to realise what sex is and like, you know.

**Interviewer** 56:06

Yeah.

**Participant** 56:08

and then I'm super anxious because I feel really shitty about myself, because that happened and I don't know if I'm, like a guy or a girl and like, you know, like, I'm obviously a guy cause I have a penis, but you know, like, I don't understand what's going on. Like, my parents didn't tell me anything man like.

**Interviewer** 56:27

No sex ed stuff?

**Participant** 56:29

No sex ed stuff, I was Christian. Raised in a very Christian home.

**Interviewer** 56:37

Yep, layer on the repression.

**Participant** 56:39

Yeah. Like I said, I don't know if I would be in the same spot, today, if I didn't have that like lifetimes of spiritual work that taking psychedelics does for me, it helps me like, look back at myself, you know but also something I feel like I don't know if it's just how I've always been but like, I've I feel like the voice in my head is kind of like, loud. Louder, but like, I feel like it's easy to quiet it but like, I don't know if it's just like normal or like, if I'm just like, tripping out because like, I do a lot of fucking acid. You know, like, and like, it could just be like, the propaganda starting to like, you know, there's a lot of different perspectives that I could be looking at it right now and like, I just feel normal. I feel safe. I feel good. So, why is that not okay?

**Interviewer** 57:43

It is okay.

**Participant** 57:44

Yeah, exactly.

**Interviewer** 57:46

Feeling good is okay.

**Participant** 57:47

Exactly.

**Interviewer** 57:50

What else is life for man?

**Participant** 57:52

Exactly. I was growing up with all these voices telling me no.

**Interviewer** 58:05

That's Christianity for you. You're saying the voice is louder in your head, you mean just like a volume level? Like you're just in your head sounds louder?

**Participant** 58:15

It might be a little louder, yeah.

**Interviewer** 58:17

And is that, is the voice generally, positive, negative neutral in terms of what's been talking about.

**Participant** 58:26

It's me man, it's me. It's like everything that I am, you know, it's like, but it's like a smarter me. You know, it's like, the it's, I don't know, if it's really me, though, you know, like, it's, it feels like my spirit, you know? And like it like, and it being louder is not a good or bad thing, but it's just sometimes it's distracting because I smoke a lot of weed, but that's probably why it's distracting and if I don't smoke as much weed, I'll probably quiet down.

**Interviewer** 59:13

And does it is that you, your spirit or the bigger you is that, do you hear it in terms of like the internal voice where it's like commentary on the world or commentary on yourself or is it a feeling?

**Participant** 59:28

It's like thoughts, it’s feeling. Yeah. thoughts, feeling, it’s anything, it’s everything going through my head. It's just turned up louder. You know,

**Interviewer** 59:38

okay.

**Participant** 59:43

It's just distracting a little bit, but that could be like, because I'm smoking a lot of weed but I'm smoking a lot of weed right now because I just quit fucking smoking cigarettes. You know, like.

**Interviewer** 59:56

One step at a time.

**Participant** 59:57

Yeah \*laughs\*.

**Q6b. Interviewer** 1:00:06

Has your psychedelic use altered any of your long-term goals or life purpose?

**Participant** 1:00:20

I felt like it was my life purpose to play guitar and like I would spend hours every day, practising but like, before I started using psychedelics as a form of escapism to escape from like those, those thoughts, the darkness, we'll call it. I used hockey as a form of escapism and then so I think music turned into that hockey for me, you know, with my use of psychedelics and then like I find I felt like I had like this great purpose like, aliens were showing me guitars, you know what I mean? Like, it's just because I like guitars, and I saw a guitar and I have a guitar in my room.

**Interviewer** 1:01:23

And now, do you have different goals?

**Participant** 1:01:28

I just want to be present in the moment, in every moment. In everything that I do I want to be present. I don't really know where it will take me but I want to be present because I wasn't present for so long.

**Interviewer** 1:01:59

Could you describe a little bit about what do you mean by being present?

**Participant** 1:02:03

It's like, not thinking about anything just fully in the groove of the moment. Fully in tune with what I'm doing and with my purpose in this moment, not be thinking about other things, other moments while I'm in this moment because then it's just like a soup and I'm just like this this disassociated, hovering form, that's like, looking at my body and that's what its felt like. That's what it that's what it felt like, just living life and I don't want to live life like that.

**Q6c. Interviewer** 1:03:27

Have psychedelics caused you to seriously question your own beliefs?

**Participant** 1:03:33

Yes, yes. Christianity was a core belief drilled into me since I was a child and it's still like, I'm still dealing with certain like, blocks in my head that are there from a kid and that like, it's just like unconscious little ticks or like things that I say that I don't even really realise that I'm saying, until I've said them, and like, it's like, oh, shit, I really like have a pattern in my brain that's thinking like that. Like, there's really a part of me that like, is stuck like that and like, especially growing up in the community that I grew up in, like it was all really hockey related and it was like, I wouldn't necessarily say, white, but they all had that kind of racy mentality, you know what I mean? It wasn't like white but it was all like very, it was all very, like, a hierarchical way of thinking about things and way of thinking about and judging everybody. You know, it was like, very egotistical. I feel and yeah, I feel like I. Oh, shit, dude, my girlfriend's freaking out I.

**Interviewer** 1:05:34

You got to go get it?

**Participant** 1:05:36

Give me Give me 10 minutes. I'm going to call her.

**Interviewer** 1:05:37

All right, man [conversation ended and we rescheduled to finish the interview a week later. The following is the second interview]. That would help that I wrote I wrote down the stuff that should be fine for these ones. What about alcohol, was alcohol ever?

**Participant** 1:06:09

Oh, yeah, alcohol. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, alcohol is a big thing for me like, I don't drink anymore. Like I, I had a glass of wine yesterday and I felt like I was like poisoning my body. It just felt gross. Yeah, alcohol was like, the first thing I found.

**Interviewer** 1:06:39

And can you speak, so to get a sort of sense of the magnitude of change. What was your sort of use around these drugs before getting into psychedelics and what does it sort of look like now?

**Participant** 1:06:51

I was, I was using it to blackout.

**Interviewer** 1:06:54

Okay.

**Participant** 1:06:57

I was using it so that I wouldn't remember. I was using it to, like numb myself, from everything around me.

**Interviewer** 1:07:22

And would that be a sort of daily thing multiple times a week? More or less?

**Participant** 1:07:30

Multiple times a week.

**Interviewer** 1:07:40

And do you use, sorry, do you use any of these any more like just a little bit, recreationally or anything?

**Participant** 1:07:46

No.

**Interviewer** 1:07:58

And in your own judgement, how would you describe the, your use, like in terms of let's say, if you put on like how healthy was it? Was it destructive? What sort of how was it affecting your life, your drug use of that, around these?

**Participant** 1:08:20

My drug use is self-destructive and when I use psychedelic drugs, it's like, I feel like I'm doing some growth and like I'm uncovering some part of myself and I feel okay about my drug use but I don't believe drugs are inherently bad. I just believe that my abuse of certain substances was bad and will ultimately lead to my demise. So, it is better for myself if I don't use those drugs. If I want to live because like, it's not like, I'll use this one drug and I'm going to die immediately. It's like, where will it lead me eventually? You know, like, it ultimately gives me a licence to do it again. It's like if I go to the store and buy a pack of cigarettes, or like if I walk upstairs to my laundry room, and I pick up that cigarette that's I found on the ground like a month ago, and I take a Bong rip with it, you know, like, I'm just going to the store, you know, there's and then it's not there. I'm not going to be able to look at it and then I'm just going to be craving it more. Why not just not do it.

**Interviewer** 1:09:54

So was there for your drug use around sort of pills, amphetamines, cocaine, MDMA, ketamine, ecstasy, alcohol and, and whatnot. Was there a craving to use it?

**Participant** 1:10:08

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:10:09

Was there sort of, and how is that now? Is there still a craving?

**Participant** 1:10:14

There's still a craving, It's, it's easier to not pay attention to it.

**Interviewer** 1:10:20

Okay.

**Participant** 1:10:22

Like the farther that's away and like the closer I get to it. Like, if I have a drink, I'm going to get harder cravings then if I don't have a drink.

**Interviewer** 1:10:44

Was that something that you just said before that you had had a glass of wine the night before.

**Participant** 1:10:49

Yeah last night and it was terrible, Like I just felt sick.

**Interviewer** 1:10:56

Were there cravings though after that?

**Participant** 1:10:59

It was really bad and nicotine cravings. Not so much coke. It was yeah, it was really bad cravings, just in general, those cravings.

**Q7. Interviewer** 1:11:20

Have your psychedelic experiences affected your relationships with significant others?

**Participant** 1:11:28

Yes. Yes. It's kind of pushed me away, because of my stance on the subject, and where they stand on the subject, but we just don't really talk about it.

**Interviewer** 1:11:53

Who?

**Participant** 1:11:53

It's like my family. Like, my, my sister is open minded. I don't know about my other sister, we don't really talk much but like, yeah, that's back on the stigma.

**Interviewer** 1:12:23

And is that sort of being pushed away from your family, is it related to your drug use in just overall, or specifically related to psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:12:35

It was my drug use, and then I opened up to them about my past and then, like it, it's less so my drug use now because I'm clean from that other stuff and, like, they understand that I'm doing what's best for myself. So, it doesn't really matter how I'm getting there. We just don't talk about it.

**Interviewer** 1:13:16

Okay. So, does that cause any sort of issues within your relationship with your family or is it just simply that you guys don't agree on this particular topic, but you can you get along with the rest of it is stuff?

**Participant** 1:13:48

Yeah, we just don't agree on that but we can always find some ground to agree on, doesn't necessarily have to be on this one subject.

**Interviewer** 1:14:01

So, you haven't been sort of ostracised from your family completely because of

**Participant** 1:14:05

No.

**Q8. Interviewer** 1:14:06

Okay. Have psychedelics changed how you think and feel about yourself?

**Participant** 1:14:28

Yes, it's um, I feel like I'm, like, I, feel deeper and like I think deeper and I understand more perspectives of myself. So, I'm just more aware.

**Interviewer** 1:15:16

And what do you think that sense of having a deeper understanding of yourself or understanding more perspectives about yourself. How does that? Is there any benefits or negatives to that in your life? What if you were to try and be like, what's the main thing that comes from this deeper understanding? What would that kind of thing be?

**Participant** 1:15:41

Monitor my habits, and to monitor how I act in the world and to basically have more control be more technical. To gain more knowledge. I'm just curious.

**Interviewer** 1:16:22

Do you mean that and like, more curious than you were before?

**Participant** 1:16:27

I feel like I was always curious. It's not like I go in every time and like, I'm just left on like a cliff hanger. It's like, I know what I'm doing and I know, I know what it's doing to me, now. So, it's like, kind of like a it's just a different kind of curious. It's like, what more can I explore?

**Q9. Interviewer** 1:17:23

Have psychedelics changed how you view yourself?

**Participant** 1:17:26

Yes, yes, they've, through each and depending on how much I would do, it would change how I viewed myself exponentially through like, through each trip. Like after I drop a bunch of acid, I'd wake up the next morning and like, I'd hate myself or then like I drop acid the next week, and I, I feel really good. You know, it fluctuated, often, but usually, I feel really good after taking acid for the next two weeks, and then like it starts to drop off. The afterglow, period. Same with same with mushrooms. Mushrooms are more emotional for me though and I feel like this really low down to earth feeling when I'm on mushrooms, whereas acid I feel like I'm high. You know don't like a like a weed high but like without the haze. Clear. It's like two weeks for me though, is the period.

**Interviewer** 1:19:12

that for both mushrooms and LSD?

**Participant** 1:19:16

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:19:23

Do you use them for different purposes? So, you sort of just described that LSD gives you a sort of high with clarity, whereas mushrooms is more like grounding in yourself?

**Participant** 1:19:34

Yes, yes. I'm. So, two weeks ago I took acid and like I would like to level out with a couple micro doses of mushrooms weeks after just to get myself more in my emotions and down to earth because doing acid like a big dose of acid can put me out of my body and it's just I need to come back down. It, it's a lot of the thinking I do is like, really cold, hard. Truth and sometimes it's a lot to stomach and, like, reset back into the world and my life and what I feel right now is doing the mushrooms and kind of getting back into my body. It's working. It's working. I feel really good right now.

**Interviewer** 1:20:47

Are you currently using micro dosing mushrooms?

**Participant** 1:20:51

Yeah. Yeah.

**Q10. Interviewer** 1:20:59

Have psychedelics provided insights into how to live life well?

**Participant** 1:21:06

Yes. Yes but not like it kind of gives me the ability to think about the other side, and like I have like these thoughts, just normally, when I'm sitting here, sober, like, they're, It's it doesn't stop happening only when I'm on, or it doesn't happen only when I'm on psychedelics, right. The creativity still flows, even when I'm not on a trip because, yeah, it's all yeah. Life is a trip.

**Interviewer** 1:22:13

I've said that a few times.

**Participant** 1:22:18

\*laughs\*

**Interviewer** 1:22:52

So just a little follow up on that. You said, when I asked the question, have psychedelics provided insights into how to live life well. You said yes and then you made the caveat like, but not but then you kind of didn't finish that thought and I just wonder if I can. My assumption was that you're going to say something like, they haven't provided direct sort of this is what you should do because you sort of moved on and said, it lets you think about the other. So, I don't know if you can, does it, has it provided you any specific insights or is it more like it's giving you the capacity to find them yourself, or something like this?

**Participant** 1:23:36

It's given me the capacity to find them myself, like it's held my hand shown me but I've had to like walk through and see for myself and some sometimes like I took I took trips a couple years ago, and I would flip through, like these repressed memories and like it would be showing me them but I just wouldn't want to see it. So, like, I needed to make the decision to see.

**Q11. Interviewer** 1:24:46

Have psychedelics shaped your worldview?

**Participant** 1:24:54

It's helped shape my worldview. It's made it a little, it's made it positive in terms of strengthening my connection that I feel to the earth and the inhabitants. I feel like without psychedelics, I would be really cut off and cynical. I'm a lot more patient as well, because I can like think about, like the rush that the other person may be in, like, that's just an example but I can think of the other perspective and that makes me patient, it's not the fact that, oh, I'm more patient, because I can wait here. It's the understanding that I've learned and this goes into the me growing in awareness of myself, because then I can watch my behaviours and I can monitor if I'm, if my body is, like, raising in heart pressure, then I can tell if I'm getting anxious, or like, if my voice is raising, if I'm talking to somebody and like, my emotions are getting like, before I didn't know what was going on. I was just led around. I was just this beast. Still am I still am an animal but I'm, I'm learning more about myself.

**Interviewer** 1:27:44

It sounds in some sense, like you're becoming more integrated with yourself.

**Participant** 1:27:53

Mmm.

**Interviewer** 1:27:54

This idea of in the moment, being able to take on another person's perspective, understand what's going on for them, be able to through that understanding, have patience, but also at the same time recognise if emotions are coming up that are, I guess, going to be unhelpful for you, or we're going to disrupt the situation in the way you rather, you wouldn't prefer and that recognition, I guess, does that kick in then at some point where you're able to put in sort of control and be like, okay, now we need to do to kind of manage these emotions because of the factors you know, in the situation you're in?

**Participant** 1:28:43

Yeah, I'm still working on that.

**Q12. Interviewer** 1:28:55

Have psychedelics changed your relationship with nature?

**Participant** 1:29:01

Yes, they've made me more appreciative. I've grown in appreciation for nature, after taking psychedelics.

**Interviewer** 1:29:28

Has that, what's the right word? Translated, has that appreciation translated into any changes in your behaviour or like in relation to nature? So, what comes to mind, you know, you spend more time in it, for example, or you've become active in being, protecting the environment. For example, just two examples. Something you know

**Participant** 1:30:00

Um, No, I haven't. I haven't really grown in terms of like, being more active in anything like that any groups or organisations or anything like that, but like I pick up butts. Like I, and garbage I see on the ground because it's gross. I don't like to see that, so I pick it up.

**Interviewer** 1:30:35

Is that something you wouldn't do before?

**Participant** 1:30:38

Psychedelics have maybe made me like, realise that I actually care about the earth. It's kind of like made clear what I care about and what I don't care about.

**Interviewer** 1:31:14

And could you speak to that a little bit this idea of psychedelics helping you to realise what you care about? Are there some big or important or noteworthy points or values or cares that have come up for you that you're, you might otherwise not have been, had been emphasised as much before or that you didn't even recognise before?

**Participant** 1:31:50

It's enhanced the number of perspectives that I'm able to see. So, in turn, I'm able to make it clear what I actually deeply, what actually deeply matters to me, and what is just like a passing thing. What will remain consistent versus what is just instant gratification.

**Interviewer** 1:33:02

And has any central ideas or so you're saying through having multiple perspectives, you were able to see what's consistent across them and that's how you can kind of recognise that that's an important feature or something that you might value care about. Is there any could you identify if you can't it's fine as well but is there any consistency across those perspectives that you would like to share in terms of like what you care about deeply?

**Participant** 1:33:35

Music it's always spoken to me very deep primal level like its language is euphoria. I just love it man. Always have and like, yeah, Music has always been very consistent. Doesn't really matter what like right now I'm really into like slamming brutal death metal like defeated sanity. I'm really, really enjoying right now. They're like, kind of technical too which is really cool.

**Interviewer** 1:34:40

Does that also come in the form of you like to make music?

**Participant** 1:34:44

Yeah, I do. I do. I haven't. I haven't been writing as much recently, but like right now. I'm just not really doing anything, I'm working a lot but like, I need to practice guitar a lot to catch up because this couple months I've been slacking.

**Interviewer** 1:35:16

Well there's is a plan.

**Participant** 1:35:18

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:35:20

\*mimes playing guitar while making pinging noises\*

**Participant** 1:35:23

Work on my sweet picking.

**Q13. Interviewer** 1:35:28

So, the, oh, is that? Yes. Okay, so the next couple of questions are changing the focus of what they're asking about. So, we're going to be going into your, how to, of psychedelics, let's say. Just the basic nuts and bolts about what you do to prepare yourself, what goes on during a trip, the things that you need, things that you don't need and just a number of things just related to the kind of what you do physically to prepare yourself and set up your space and all these sorts of things. So, the first question is, how do you prepare yourself for a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:36:17

I like to sit in silence and just like meditate on really, not necessarily think about anything in particular, have thoughts float into my brain, I acknowledge them and let them be, sit and I like to do that on psychedelics, too. I don't really like to do anything on psychedelics, if something pops into my head, sometimes I'll do it. I just like to be in, like, what I call my home.

**Interviewer** 1:36:59

And what's that?

**Participant** 1:37:00

Just a safe space. With. Yeah, a safe space. Sometimes it is my home. Sometimes it's in a park. Sometimes it's in a car. Sometimes it's in my friend's garage.

**Interviewer** 1:37:35

And is there any, So I'm imagining that this sitting in silence and meditating, this is something that you do almost immediately before that you take the psychedelic, or is this something?

**Participant** 1:37:48

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:37:48

Is there some sort of longer-term prep to get yourself sort of ready for the trip that you may have be planning?

**Participant** 1:38:00

That's like that's about it. I want to I want to start doing more, but that's about it.

**Interviewer** 1:38:05

Okay.

**Participant** 1:38:06

Yeah. Like I'm thinking about it and I'm fully determined that I'm going to do this, and I'm going to go in and then I like sit, relax.

**Interviewer** 1:38:30

And how, sort of, how much prior to taking a psychedelic, do you make the decision or recognise that you might be feeling like you want to take a psychedelic, and then sort of plan to do it?

**Participant** 1:38:45

Sometimes it's weeks, sometimes it's months, sometimes it's days, sometimes it's hours. It really, really depends.

**Interviewer** 1:38:52

Okay.

**Participant** 1:38:59

Like, right now I'm on a schedule, but a couple months ago, I was not taking them every week. I was taking them every like couple months. So, it really, really depends.

**Interviewer** 1:39:16

Is the by Schedule do you mean that for a macro dose or is that for the micro dosing.

**Participant** 1:39:21

like I macro dosed on the 13th and I micro dosed last Saturday and I microdosed this Saturday.

**Interviewer** 1:39:30

And how long at the moment do you sort of leave between macro doses?

**Participant** 1:39:36

Seven days. No, no macro doses macro doses, it’s been about a month. Yeah and then three months. No, no, yeah, I've been leaving about a month in between macrodoses.

**Interviewer** 1:39:57

Do you find that's enough time for the previous experience to settle and to be ready for the next one?

**Participant** 1:40:06

Sometimes it's sometimes it's more. It depends how heavy it was and if I hear it again, hear the call.

**Q14. Interviewer** 1:40:20

Where do you normally take psychedelics and why do you take them there?

**Participant** 1:40:28

Because I feel safe.

**Interviewer** 1:40:31

Sorry, you didn't mention where.

**Participant** 1:40:34

Well in, wherever I'd like to.

**Interviewer** 1:40:38

Okay, so long as you feel safe?

**Participant** 1:40:40

Yeah. Usually in my home.

**Q15. Interviewer** 1:41:16

Are there any items that are important to have with you when tripping?

**Participant** 1:41:22

Before it was cigarettes, but now like rolling papers and weed, a lighter, a bong. I like to have showers when I'm tripping. That's like, the only thing that's remained consistent because I feel really dirty and like, gross after I've like been at the peak for a good amount of time. Midway through the peak, I need to shower because like I'm not getting increasingly high. It's just how I personally feel like is always the perfect time to shower is like in the middle of the peak.

**Interviewer** 1:42:26

Is that are you getting quite sweaty and smelly at that point?

**Participant** 1:42:29

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:42:29

Or is it just this like personal sense of grossness

**Participant** 1:42:35

Sweaty yeah. I don't know if I sweat more when I'm on psychedelics, acid for sure, for sure I do but yeah, I don't know. Maybe I'm just more aware of how much I'm actually sweating on a day to day basis. Like right now I feel pretty sweaty.

**Interviewer** 1:43:10

But not so gross?

**Participant** 1:43:12

Not so gross but if I was like, maybe on a macro dose right now, I'd probably feel pretty gross. Like, I can feel some rez around my moustache and like I can feel the layer of dirt on my face because I haven't showered since last night. So, totally if my perception was heightened to that point, I need a shower.

**Interviewer** 1:43:56

Makes sense. Does I just know from personal experience as well showers feel bloody awesome.

**Participant** 1:44:04

Oh yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:44:06

I think it's not just grossness.

**Participant** 1:44:08

Bathing too, it's the best.

**Q16. Interviewer** 1:44:15

How do you prepare the space where you take psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:44:25

Like let It be quiet and clean. Get the dishes done. Not necessarily organised in a specific way but just clean just tidy. So, there's nothing like for us to like hit or anything you know if we're just like high and not paying attention.

**Interviewer** 1:45:08

Is there any other reasons why you would clean the space? Is it just about the hazards or are there other reasons?

**Participant** 1:45:17

Well, it makes me feel uneasy but I feel like that that feeling is from the reasoning behind it of the hazards. I just don't want anything to go like missing or something, maybe. I don't know. That feeling could be, feeling just without a reason. It's not like, it's not necessarily I need to have everything clean. It's just makes me feel better and yeah, makes me feel better.

**Interviewer** 1:46:31

Is it the fact that it's clean or is it a cleaning process that is the thing that makes you feel better, or both?

**Participant** 1:46:39

The fact that it's the fact that it's clean. I just like don't like feeling dirty and on psychedelics, it's like that feelings intensed or intensified. That's why I like to shower because, like, I feel dirty and like that feeling is intensified if my space that I'm using in is dirty and then like, it's mirrored into my head where like, my head just feels like a mess and then I don't feel like I can get through anything and then it just feels like a waste of 12 hours because I just feel like my brains fried.

**Interviewer** 1:47:30

So tidy house tidy, Brain.

**Participant** 1:47:37

Yeah.

**Q17. Interviewer** 1:47:46

Are there any other preparations you make prior to taking a psychedelic that you might not have mentioned so far?

**Participant** 1:48:02

I like to have a good night's sleep before and just make sure that I don't have anything for a couple days because it takes a lot out of me. I feel really drained after, especially LSD.

**Interviewer** 1:48:34

Is the is the day that you take a psychedelic on, is that fully kind of dedicated to the psychedelic experience or will you do things on that day as well?

**Participant** 1:48:44

Fully dedicated.

**Interviewer** 1:48:52

and would you take a psychedelic if you didn't have a day after the experience free?

**Participant** 1:49:00

Ah no, I wouldn't. I would smoke DMT. I would microdose but I wouldn’t take a fat load of acid before work tomorrow.

**Interviewer** 1:49:23

Intensify the car washing.

**Participant** 1:49:25

\*laughs\* It wouldn’t be that bad but like I used to I used to be that guy and then it slapped me. Did it for work one day at the dishwashing joint, could not handle myself I almost walked out and quit but well, I could handle myself. It was bad. It was bad. Not a good experience.

**Interviewer** 1:49:52

And what, when during the day or night, do you, is your kind of preference for taking a psychedelic?

**Participant** 1:50:03

I like to take it like right in the morning. So, that I'm not getting on a wacko schedule, for peace of mind right now with work because it's pretty consistent and that's really nice.

**Q18. Interviewer** 1:50:36

What are you normally doing physically during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:50:43

Laying down, sitting, standing, moving around, sometimes walking, a lot of like weird bodily motions that I suddenly become aware of. Especially with LSD, like, I find that my jaw tenses up sometimes and like, last time, I took acid, it was really, really sore right here [right side of neck and jaw] and I became aware of how sore it was right here [top or right shoulder and neck] and how the soreness was attached to right here, and my jaw and my jaw was like, just staying like that but it was tensed up like that but like, I just couldn't release the tension in here [indicates both sides of the lower jaw]. For the life of me, I just couldn't release the tension in here.

**Interviewer** 1:51:41

Was that, if you have any kind of reflections on that, was that a consequence of the psychedelic use or was that something that was already there that you just hadn't noticed?

**Participant** 1:51:54

It could have been already there from work because I just hold a pressure wash gun for seven hours a day and that is like attached to right here and to where I would be because it would be exactly, it makes sense. It makes sense, totally and my girlfriend was massaging my hand that day, and it was like really sore. So, it was probably me becoming more aware of the pains and aches in my body because of the increase of perspective.

**Interviewer** 1:52:31

I find I get similar experience of intensified feelings of the body, which often lead to like, Oh, I didn't realise that hurt awww or that aches, hurts over here for some reason. Why is that? By weird bodily positions, is it only, do you only mean in the sense of like, with sort of weird feelings in the body or do you mean also sort of like you put yourself into odd kind of?

**Participant** 1:53:03

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:53:04

Organisation lets say.

**Participant** 1:53:05

That too and I don't even realise it and like, I don't even realise it. Sometimes it's slight, sometimes it's a lot. It's just, um, I feel like I'm moving along with the flow and that, in turn is showing itself in the physical realm.

**Interviewer** 1:53:54

You're like a human pretzel.

**Participant** 1:53:56

Mm hmm.

**Interviewer** 1:54:02

Is there anything that you would avoid doing or interacting with during a psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:54:10

Um, walking down certain areas of the city.

**Interviewer** 1:54:29

Would you when sober avoid them?

**Participant** 1:54:32

I would, yeah, I would avoid those places when I was sober too.

**Interviewer** 1:54:35

Okay.

**Participant** 1:54:36

But like, I just want to be safe. You know, I don't want to put myself in any situations like that when I'm super high like that. Like just do anything that's outside of like my house. Like, I don't want to go talk to my parents when I'm super high. I don't want to go to the mall.

**Interviewer** 1:55:28

So, is there a general aversion to interacting with other people?

**Participant** 1:55:32

Yes, other than my girlfriend who is also high.

**Interviewer** 1:55:52

When you when you're tripping, is it, how often or how common is it to do it, say with you, your girlfriend, or other people versus doing it by yourself?

**Participant** 1:56:09

It's, it's, it's pretty common. I've done it a lot by myself. I've done it a lot with my girlfriend, and I've done it a lot with other people.

**Interviewer** 1:56:20

Okay.

**Participant** 1:56:32

Like right now, in this moment, I feel like I would really benefit from a trip by myself because the past, I haven't had a I haven't had a solo trip in a long time.

**Interviewer** 1:56:56

Is there any noticeable differences between tripping in those kind of different group contexts with say with your girlfriend, by yourself or with a kind of group of people?

**Participant** 1:57:11

I don't necessarily feel like there's, it's just different distractions. Sometimes it's just more things to be distracted by. From what's really going on in my head. When I'm on a macro dose, I don't really want to be around people and when I am around people, I don't really talk to those people that I'm around with. I just sit there and like meditate. Sometimes with my eyes open. Sometimes with them closed, I'm still like, intensely aware of my surroundings. It's just, I'm just chilling. There's like nothing better to do than like, sit here and enjoy myself.

**Interviewer** 1:58:18

Is that the same with your girlfriend as well?

**Participant** 1:58:21

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:58:23

So is a lot of those trips, in the presence of each other, but not talking?

**Participant** 1:58:30

There has been moments like that. Yes. When I've been really ingulfed with dealing with my own past regressed trauma. This is like, pretty recent and yeah, at some points, it's felt like, she's felt like a distraction from what's really going on because when we were on acid, she didn't take as much as me. So, we weren't in the same headspace and but like, she's on her own trip, man, you know. Everybody's on their own trip. Everybody like just feels like me. Unless they tell me otherwise and then we have a conversation but like, psychedelics give me like this intense rush of euphoria where it's like serotonin clicking into my brain. So, like, I'm on this powerful drug. I just want to like sit here and like, enjoy it.

**Interviewer** 1:59:51

Does the do you ever need the support of other people if you're having sort of like difficult moments? Is that part of the reason why you might trip with other people or is it?

**Participant** 2:00:04

No.

**Interviewer** 2:00:05

Okay.

**Participant** 2:00:10

Sometimes I find they may need me and then like I don't I kind of like, get away from that. Kind of. No, I find that yeah, I'm, I'm a pretty, I'm a pretty upright totem pole. In terms of support. Like people always I've, I'm the one that people turn to not, not the other way around.

**Q20. Interviewer** 2:00:56

Is there anything special you do after a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:01:13

No, no, not special in terms of like ritualistically but I find increases in my drive to like, read and write and like, do creative pursuits. I have an increase in drive to, like, quit doing self-destructive things and to start building up myself.

**Interviewer** 2:02:11

One thing, kind of jumping back to some of the older questions that we were just covering. I didn't ask about music in terms of your sort of setup. Is that something that's important or prominent in your, when you're on a psychedelic do you have music going or is that something you do without?

**Participant** 2:02:32

Yeah, it depends. It depends. Sometimes I like it, but sometimes it feels just like a distraction. Like that's [call cut out].

**Interviewer** 2:02:58

Zoom's quite good about that. You just pause the recording just hang around, come back. No problems. Was it the power you just sort of like?

**Participant** 2:03:08

No, my apple, my computer died.

**Interviewer** 2:03:12

Blue screen of death level.

**Participant** 2:03:15

Yeah. Yeah. Cause I didn't plug it in. I haven't used it since we were on the computer last, since Saturday.

**Q21. Interviewer** 2:03:36

Are there any helpful techniques you use to navigate difficult or challenging moments during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:03:43

Um, breathe and like focus on my breath. Pay attention to my body breathing.

**Interviewer** 2:04:09

Any other things you might do?

**Participant** 2:04:15

Um, I don't smoke cigarettes anymore. Like talk about it but smoking cigarettes was a big one but

**Interviewer** 2:04:41

Did that used to help?

**Participant** 2:04:43

Well, I'd feel like it helped but really it wasn't. It was like pushing it down.

**Interviewer** 2:04:57

Well supposedly cigarettes are MAO inhibitors. So, I don't know if you know that, like in Ayahuasca traditions, they use Mapacho, which is a just a jungle tobacco essentially similar to normal tobacco, and in normal tobacco as well. So, there's supposed to be MAO inhibitors. Do you know, do you know what MAO is?

**Participant** 2:05:27

I do, I do know about that. I have I have gone on the tangent where like, cigarettes are actually good for me, but like, right now, I'm just like, trying not to smoke them every day.

**Interviewer** 2:05:39

Yeah, well, I support that.

**Participant** 2:05:42

Word.

**Q22. Interviewer** 2:05:51

Okay. Could you describe any type of integration or self-reflective practices that you engage in to make sense of your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 2:06:08

To focus on my breath, and to, like, think, and to, like, accept and sometimes it's just to, like, repeat those affirmations in my head as like, my head just wraps around the thought more and more and it gets deeper and deeper.

**Interviewer** 2:06:42

And is that I'm assuming that is during the trip?

**Participant** 2:06:46

Oh, yeah. Yeah, it can be during, before, or after sometimes, just whenever a challenging thought comes into my head but more so more so when I'm on the trip, yes. I make a solid point.

**Q23. Interviewer** 2:07:17

I think you've spoken to this so if you don't think there's anything to add, we can skip this one but the question is, are there any noticeable changes and how you think or feel in the days or weeks following psychedelic use?

**Participant** 2:07:31

Yes, there is an increase in how I can relate to others and in my, like, my willingness to do stuff and my drive, and like, how quiet my cravings are, for other for other drugs, other substances.

**Interviewer** 2:08:07

And how long does it typically last for?

**Participant** 2:08:11

around two weeks, give or take a week, depending on the dose. On a micro dose that lasts three to five days.

**Interviewer** 2:08:34

Would you say that's to the same degree in terms of the [macro dose]

**Participant** 2:08:39

No.

**Interviewer** 2:08:39

Okay.

**Participant** 2:08:40

No, and there's, there's a want that needs to come from myself as well. If I don't want to have that drive, I'm going to put that energy towards something that I actually want. So, it could be getting more cocaine.

**Interviewer** 2:09:19

Can you elaborate a little bit I'm just slightly confused?

**Participant** 2:09:22

Like if my life was, I was going to the club every night, and I took a microdose like, yesterday, and I was going to do cocaine the next night. I'd probably still do cocaine the next night.

**Interviewer** 2:09:38

hmm. So, they sort of have to line up both what you want to do and the cravings.

**Participant** 2:09:48

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:09:49

Okay.

**Participant** 2:10:03

I don't want to do that to myself, because I can see what will happen if I do that to myself, and I can see the road that I'm going to go down because of the increase in perception from the psychedelics, and I just if I hadn't used psychedelics, I wouldn't be able to see the path that I was going down, I just go down it.

**Interviewer** 2:10:46

So, would you make a distinction between the sense of wanting something and craving something?

**Participant** 2:11:04

Craving would be like, even if something is hurting me, I still want it, intensely. Like, it hurts my brain if I don't have it, because I'm always thinking and it feels really, really loud. If I don't have it, or it literally physically hurts my body. Like, I feel sick. I'm going to puke if I don't have this but it's hurting me but I still want it. I can't explain why I want it. It could be about a person too.

**Interviewer** 2:12:11

What do you mean, in that sense?

**Participant** 2:12:13

Like, say, I had this ex that I was in love with blah, blah, blah, and then she hurt me and I was immature in my thinking, and I was too attached, you know, like, it happens.

**Q24. Interviewer** 2:12:42

Has how you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 2:12:52

No, the fundamental reason to gain more knowledge has always remained the same.

**Interviewer** 2:12:58

It's not necessarily the purpose or the reasons but the, the actual sort of process of using it like where, how much how often.

**Participant** 2:13:11

Yes, significantly. It always changes and it's, and it can change drastically from experience to experience or it can change like not that significantly. It can be pretty stagnant.

**Interviewer** 2:13:35

Okay. So, do you, would you, do you have a stable pattern of use? Like, is there is there a consistent way in which you've used psychedelics across your, your use or is it sort of it's just, as you say, kind of always changing and so there's no particular way in which you use them?

**Participant** 2:14:01

There's no particular way in which I use them, no particular pattern.

**Q25. Interviewer** 2:14:26

So that's all the how to questions. The next few questions are going to be asking about your psychedelic experiences. So, well, so I'll just sort of just read it out but before I ask the questions, I just want to sort of give you a bit of context to it so you can have a bit of prep ready for it. So, the two questions that ask about your psychedelic experiences, one, can you describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience? And the other one is can you do describe your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience? Now, I've, I've got it written here the most. So, that sort of signifies like, one experience, but if you don't particularly have like one, really one experience that really fits that sort of question, how its framed, and you have one or two or three that you'd like to mention that you think are kind of important points that you want to bring up. It's okay, the most is not supposed to necessarily limit you to just describing one experience it's more like trying to emphasise like the intensity or the power of that experience in the sense of like, it was challenging, or it was difficult, or it was they were really life changing or memorable. So, in that sense, it's more like the emphasis then there has to be a singular experience. So, before we hop into those questions, I have one question, which is, what do you, so yeah, for you personally based on your own first, first person subjective experience of psychedelics, what do you think is the core psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 2:16:32

An increase in awareness. My eyes always flip up when I'm on a big dose, like, up to, up to my pineal gland, like that and like, I'm kind of like, seeing through, like, like that but like, it's just happening to me normally, and like, I'm like just seeing normally like that, but like, and that is kind of in turn where my visuals come from and so like, it's kind of like my dream world is like, it's like, I'm going through REM sleep but like, I'm awake. So, like, my dreams, and memories are leaking through into the physical realm and so like, I'm half here, half there, you know.

**Interviewer** 2:18:06

Like a lucid dream?

**Participant** 2:18:07

Yeah. Kind of like that, when I'm on a big dose.

**Q26. Interviewer** 2:18:30

Can you describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 2:18:39

Yes, so, I was in my friend's basement. We were taking acid. We were on 300 micrograms. We were on 600 micrograms. We were on two hits.

**Interviewer** 2:19:13

600 each?

**Participant** 2:19:14

600 each 600 for me and 600 for him and we did some ketamine, and then we smoked some DMT and

**Interviewer** 2:19:32

\*laughs\* layering it on.

**Participant** 2:19:35

Yeah and, like, as soon as I smoked it, I felt like my soul was being sucked out of my body and like, this red thing was jumping in and out of me and like I had no control over it. It was jumping in and out of me and like these, it was all in my vision like at the at the moment. I thought it was Like, I thought it was anything, it could have been anything. You know, like I was thinking Satan. That's what I was thinking because of my Christianity, because my Christianity, my Christian upbringing and so it was jumping in and out of me and like, I didn't know what my glasses were and I was asking them what was going on, but they didn't know what was going on because they were high as fuck too and like it was, it was so confusing. I felt like I was going to die, I felt like I was going to seize it was super intense, it was like a hyper slap. What I had realised later on was that that red thing was the DMT showing the representation of myself and it was just, me not being okay with certain parts of myself, and me not allowing myself to feel certain parts of myself and that red thing had been pretty consistent in a couple trips leading up to this particular DMT excursion and it had come on, when I had been mixing ketamine in.

**Interviewer** 2:21:18

In your other experiences?

**Participant** 2:21:23

Yeah, only when I had been mixing ketamine in had I gained the ability to see the thing that was like, the thing that I wasn't allowing myself to be, you know, it was like, the other side of me, but the ketamine was like, putting me in an ego death state where like, I'm my normal, higher self, my normal [name] being where I'm seeing like my other, my other me that's like me all the time, but like, I'm able to see from a different perspective because of the ketamine. It's yeah. It was all very confusing, but I understand it now and it all it all seemed like, it was like Satan, and it was like, and it all pushed me towards a very psychotic state of mind, in the moment, because of what I wasn't allowing myself to feel and see.

**Interviewer** 2:22:40

Have you since then had similar experience of the red thing coming up in other? No?

**Participant** 2:22:48

I have not. I have not.

**Interviewer** 2:22:55

What did you take, was there a takeaway from that experience? Did you learn anything? Did you, das there a lesson to be drawn from that?

**Participant** 2:23:04

Not so much, right after I kind of got the notion that I shouldn't smoke DMT for a while and I still I still haven't smoked DMT yet, but the time will be right, eventually but um, yeah, I just that was the original takeaway but now, like it took it took some time for me to integrate it and for me to think about what it could have meant, and for me to reach the final conclusion of what it actually did mean.

**Interviewer** 2:23:48

How long ago did you have that experience?

**Participant** 2:23:53

Two years ago, and it took me a year, it took me a year to kind of integrate it fully. Not to say it took me a year to take psychedelics again but it took me a year to integrate that experience.

**Interviewer** 2:24:22

Was there any emotions that are that were attached or happening during that experience?

**Participant** 2:24:31

It was fear. Fear, yeah, it was that emotion had been super constant, in a lot of my trips. It's like this Primal Fear that I return to, like the PTSD, memory states. I those repressed memories, I was feeling fear. It didn't have to be the repressed memories. It just had to be any time I would go back to that that moment of fear, I wouldn't have to be in the actual memory but I would be feeling the emotions that I felt in that moment when I was a kid and I would just return to that, like.

**Interviewer** 2:24:33

Fear? Is it something that still comes up in your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 2:25:21

Not so much. Not so much. I'm able to, something I've been doing recently is working through those memories from like a different perspective and, like being with the fear, not so much of letting it take me over.

**Q27. Interviewer** 2:26:04

So, the next question is, can you describe your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 2:26:15

I had this, I had a, I had a trip about three years ago, at folk fest, where it was like the third day and I had been taking acid for, for three days already and I remember just standing beside a tree and seeing this woman this like entity, female form, it might not have even been a female, I don't know, it had long flowing hair and it had like, explained to me, like my life and like everything and what it meant, but looking back on it now, all of that stuff, like I was feeling really, really crazy in that time because of these memories that I had been repressing and so I needed a reason to like live, you know, I needed to give myself a reason to live because I, like Truly, I hated everything and I couldn't get on without lying to myself. So, I had to make up all this bullshit and like it, it was cool that it was super super visual it that was like, the most intense visually that I've ever had but like, it turns out that it means shit, because it's all just a bullshit veil that I'm trying to pull over my head and that is consistent with my psychedelic trips is that it feels like a veils being lifted off my head, but, is it really? Like I'm just learning more that I don't know, anything. What is the point?

**Interviewer** 2:28:51

Of life?

**Participant** 2:28:55

Yeah, have anything you know of, of doing anything. Like I'm just curious and I'm more curious now that I know more, my curiosity is only growing.

**Interviewer** 2:29:35

Is the is this sort of growth in curiosity, is that something that motivates you to want to keep living?

**Participant** 2:29:44

Yeah, yeah. Maybe it'll get easier. Probably It'll turn into new problems, different problems, making the old problems easier, but not because everything's getting easier, but because I'm getting better.

**Interviewer** 2:30:26

Better in what sense?

**Participant** 2:30:29

Better at being, better in existing. Being a better human being, better to live along with, better to be.

**Interviewer** 2:31:00

Do you, do you feel that psychedelics have been, even though that they've showed you these repressed memories, and the trauma had they has been an overall positive or sort of negative experience?

**Participant** 2:31:20

It's been positive. Even when it was happening to me, it was still positive even, even though I was lying to myself, it was still positive.

**Interviewer** 2:31:41

So, do you think the woman or entity of the flowing hair was some sort of projection of your mind trying to convince you that you had a purpose so that you've kept on living?

**Participant** 2:31:58

Well, it could have been, it could have been, that would go very in line with everything else that psychedelics have done for me. Like, I don't think that they bring me to a different world where I see all these weird entities and shit, I think that I'm able to see inside my brain, like, it's like a key, you know, and I'm able to, like go into my brain and like, examine for myself.

**Interviewer** 2:32:55

Have you come to some sort of understanding about what the point of life is or the point of your life or reasons to keep living?

**Participant** 2:33:13

The love.

**Interviewer** 2:33:30

Could then the, the entity, the woman with the flowing hair, could that be a manifestation of love towards yourself?

**Participant** 2:33:42

It could have been, the love that I didn't have, but wanted to achieve for myself. Yeah, it makes sense totally, thank you.

**Interviewer** 2:34:24

That just came to mind because you know, from my understanding of what you were saying had said, unless I had misheard, was that the woman had sort of told you given you some meaning or purpose as to why to hang around and if, if the purpose to live and hang around is love, then the thing which gives you that purpose is acting out, that sort of that essence. So, it just seems just like a loopy sort of thing on itself.

**Participant** 2:34:57

And the reason why I see it as a woman is because it's like, it feels so apart from me and I don't have the self-esteem to even, love, I don't, yeah, exactly, exactly.

**Interviewer** 2:35:26

Is there any more you want to add to the question of describing your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience? Or do you feel like you've covered what you'd like to there?

**Participant** 2:35:39

The first time I took acid, I was, I was meditating about, like, about six hours in on my friend's couch and I was meditating to All You Need Is Love by The Beatles on repeat and just focusing on the word love, and like feeling the energy of love flow through me and I was just getting deeper and deeper and deeper with it. Until finally this like bright light burst and it was this alien. Like, kind of like Indiana Jones Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, like that kind of alien and it was like the key to life is love and this is the first time I ever took acid and like it's the key to life is love. The key to life is love. That was the most significant and that wasn't the most intense definitely, but most significant.

**Q28. Interviewer** 2:37:37

If you have ever experienced ego death, could you describe what it was like?

**Participant** 2:37:47

Ego death, yeah, I feel like I'm floating away from my body, but like I'm becoming more into my body. Just like not in my physical form anymore and it always, I always achieve ego death. If I take more than 300 micrograms, or two grammes of penis envies 3.5 grammes of penis envies not two grammes of penis envies.

**Interviewer** 2:38:42

3.5

**Participant** 2:38:43

3.5 of penis envies. 5 with regular mushrooms.

**Interviewer** 2:38:54

What's the do you know, the psilocybin percentage of the penis envies?

**Participant** 2:39:02

I think it's somewhere in the point two, and everything else is point one, or like two is it?

**Interviewer** 2:39:12

Is it I think you mean 2% I believe?

**Participant** 2:39:15

Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:39:17

Cause point two. I think that's at least from the ones I've seen. That's the very low end of the scale.

**Participant** 2:39:23

Yeah. Yeah. It's somewhere in the 2's and everything else is like one. I think is it as asaturians, is that how you say it?

**Interviewer** 2:39:43

Azurescens [provided correct spelling] or something like that? Yeah, the one Paul Stamets talks about.

**Participant** 2:39:49

Yeah, they're like, one 1.6

**Interviewer** 2:39:54

Supposedly you get physical some sort of physical paralysis taking those though. I don't know about that, though but I think it was mentioned in one of his talks.

**Participant** 2:40:07

That's pretty cool. Pretty cool.

**Interviewer** 2:40:10

Or freaky if you want to actually move.

**Participant** 2:40:14

I don't know, I've had that feeling on when I was mixing ketamine and mushrooms. Mm hmm but like, it wasn't, the paralysis could be described as, like, the red thing was on top of me and I couldn't move. So, like I knew what it was. It wasn't like I just couldn't move and there wasn't seeing anything in front of me, or anything. It was like this thing, this thing in my imagination was blocking me from going anywhere. Who's not allowing me to do anything? Sorry, my cat just fell.

**Interviewer** 2:41:05

No worries but he so you've obviously had a number of experiences that you consider where you've had ego death. How have these experiences of ego death impacted you? Is there any specific things you now believe or have learned, or has it affected how you act in life because of having an experience of ego death?

**Participant** 2:41:38

My macro doses are ego death doses, I try not to do anything underneath an ego death dose, because I don't feel like I get the same benefits. I don't feel like I've gone deep enough, I feel like there's something missing. I feel like I haven't seen all that I went there to see and then I feel like it's a waste of time and like, it's not really going to make a difference. I just feel uncomfortable and that may have that started, since I became more comfortable with the feelings of psychedelics and as I've grown to know, and expect, what the normal bodily sensations are, and what the changes in my brain are an increase in speed of thoughts, and images coming into my head.

**Interviewer** 2:43:00

Just a couple like two kind of questions in relation to ego death experiences that you've had. During your experience of ego deaths, Is this. Is there still a sense of having your identity?

**Participant** 2:43:16

No.

**Interviewer** 2:43:18

There's no, there's no [name] there anymore?

**Participant** 2:43:24

No.

**Interviewer** 2:43:25

And what about a body as there's still a sense of having because you said you're floating away from your body, but also coming into your body. So, that's obviously you know, psychedelics create paradoxical experiences, for sure and I wonder. So, firstly, the first bit is, are you Is there a sense of having a physical body or are you both losing your identity and losing a sense of having a physical form?

**Participant** 2:43:50

Yeah, I'm losing my identity and then, that kind of coincides with my physical form, my physical form feels like my identity. Like, I just don't feel like I'm a part of this anymore but I still feel like I feel like more intensely myself than ever, but I don't feel like I'm this physical form.

**Interviewer** 2:44:16

Okay. So, it's, it's like you're going back to the, your essence that isn't

**Participant** 2:44:23

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:44:24

part of the physical

**Participant** 2:44:24

Yeah and that's in part of why I feel dirty and why I want to shower, because I'm in this like, gross, dirty flesh vessel and like, I want my house to be clean, you know and then, like, I'm learning about my habits and behaviours, and how I need to be a better person because this experience is making me realise of how eternally shit I am and how eternally shit this world is and how I can make an inkling better, if I just do something.

**Interviewer** 2:45:09

Do you normally take that perspective, sort of it seems rather pessimistic like that the whole world shit, everything's kind of like that, is that, do you feel that on a sort of day to day basis or is there a lot of positivity in your life as well and enjoyment?

**Participant** 2:45:29

Well, like, yes, I do see the pessimistic side very often, but there are positives in it, you know, like, I'm here, so I might as well make the best of it, you know and, like, it's not all bad, like, my apartments chill, I have a beautiful girlfriend, who loves me. I have a nice guitar. I have a car. Like I have a shelter you know. It's not like I'm living in the jungle.

**Interviewer** 2:46:13

Well some people like doing that \*laughs\*.

**Participant** 2:46:15

That wouldn’t be too bad either. You know, like,

**Interviewer** 2:46:21

Just depends on your frame of mind, I guess.

**Participant** 2:46:23

Yeah, there's just like a lot of things that I want to do and that, like, I wouldn't want to do them If there was one thing and my brain turns the other way.

**Interviewer** 2:46:41

Can you, so this sense of ego death is a quite interesting thing to kind of investigate. So, I have, you know, I just like to probe it as much as I can. To get all the juice.

**Participant** 2:46:52

Yeah, you know, how the Buddhist speak about there being an ego and a higher self in the human body?

**Interviewer** 2:47:00

mhmm.

**Participant** 2:47:00

Making up like the human mind, how there's an ego and a higher self always conversing kind of.

**Interviewer** 2:47:07

I think it's the difference between the self that is everything and a self that is kind of more individualised.

**Participant** 2:47:17

Yes and I feel like in ego death, my personal experience is I go into my higher self and my ego dies and that, in turn can be intense, if I don't know what's happening but it can become just a normal thing and for me to go into my higher self, pretty easily, if you do it religiously.

**Interviewer** 2:47:44

Is there does the self that you, lets say retract back into or float into, is that, does that have a scale in terms of like, is it larger, physically, or from the sense of perspective. Is it larger than the individual self that I'm talking to now or can you get to that same place by going really deep inwards as well?

**Participant** 2:48:14

Yeah. you can.

**Interviewer** 2:48:16

So, it's both this way and that way [points inwards and outwards]?

**Participant** 2:48:19

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:48:19

Okay.

**Participant** 2:48:28

Like if I sit here, completely sober, and I think about a thought, and I meditate on that thought, and I go in and I dig deep. Sure enough, soon enough, I will reach that higher self-point, and it will give me the answer because everything I know, or everything I want to know everything I'm seeking the answers for in my life is already within me.

**Interviewer** 2:48:58

So, it's a dialogue between the small self and the bigger self.

**Participant** 2:49:02

Yeah but like the small self is like this physical three dimensional being. So, he only understands things from the three-dimensional being’s perspective. So, the multi-dimensional being needs to come in and say, No, you can't actually do that. That's not okay because what if this person was in blah, blah, blah. Like this isn't right. This is a better way. This way won't do.

**Interviewer** 2:49:46

Is there a sense of having no judgement of that scale as well?

**Participant** 2:49:51

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:49:52

Because here you're describing sort of the larger self-kind of giving guidance as to let's say appropriate action but is there, yeah. The question you said yes to it but just to clarify, like, is there a sense in which it is all okay?

**Participant** 2:50:12

It's not necessarily guidance. It's, everything is okay in that higher self, so I'm able to see everything because everything is okay. Where when I'm in this three-dimensional spot, my beliefs are set. Nothing, not everything is okay and I can't see it from it being like that, where everything is okay, because I'm stuck. Unless I go in.

**Q29. Interviewer** 2:50:56

Have your experiences with psychedelics affected your spiritual or religious beliefs?

**Participant** 2:51:13

Yes, yes. They've, they've made me question and they've, I've grown to be more open minded to other religions and now I have all this knowledge about every other religion, every other big religion, but it doesn't necessarily put me any closer to knowing what this world is like and to like, subscribing to any one belief that I feel is right because still don't know what the fuck is going on and I'm still just here. It's just I know more about people not knowing what the fuck is going on and like, is that information really helpful? Like, it's just history. It's interesting, for sure but it's only, it's only grown my knowledge and yes, it's grown my understanding and acceptance of other people as well. People that are not me.

**Q30. Interviewer** 2:54:25

Have psychedelics changed how you think about, sorry, have psychedelics changed how you think or feel about death or the process of dying?

**Participant** 2:54:37

Um, yes. Death isn’t. Death felt so daunting and so like such a big thing because it's like the end right. It's like, but now I kind of realised that energy doesn't really, energy can never be destroyed it only gets recycled so I know that my spirit what makes me tick isn't really dead it's just my ego and what I have here in this physical realm so it has it has grown my understanding, and helped guide.

**Q31. Interviewer** 2:56:07

Have psychedelics changed any fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality?

**Participant** 2:56:17

Yes, it's made me realise how technical reality is and how like mathematical everything is, everything is a pattern, how divine and beautiful the world around me is. I don't know if it's made me like it's not made me come to like this is a realisation, this is like how the world is now, it's not led me to there it's like, just led me to the understanding that the world is a beautiful place and that I'm beautiful person.

**Interviewer** 2:57:39

Can just, what do you mean by technical? What is that, what are you trying to convey with that? Is that like, sort of synonymous with complex?

**Participant** 2:57:49

Mhmm, yes, very complex. Very complex and like yeah, very complex, complex and technical. Very like there's um everything is in the right place at the right time no matter what.

**Interviewer** 2:58:43

So, would that be the world is perfect in some sense, or the universe is? You know, because it's exactly as it should be?

**Participant** 2:58:55

Yes, nature is, nature is perfect for what nature is. Nature is perfectly nature.

**Q32. Interviewer** 2:59:32

Have psychedelics changed your outlook on life?

**Participant** 2:59:38

Yes, yes. I feel able to see both sides of the coin. That meaning multiple perspectives, perception.

**Interviewer** 3:00:40

So, in terms of your own personal future has that been affected? And how, how would this idea of seeing both sides of the coin translate into that?

**Participant** 3:01:02

I have been able to accept a lot of things and move past them, because of the insights I've gained from taking psychedelics. The future is never determined but every day since I started taking psychedelics, I felt like I'm getting better. I'm moving towards an end goal, but the end goal is right now.

**Q33. Interviewer** 3:02:40

If psychedelics have a role or roles to play in society, what do you think it is or they are?

**Participant** 3:02:53

So, I was talking to my girlfriend about this, because of the fact that I have PTSD and I have been living in a state of repressed memory for my childhood, I am kind of an anomaly in terms of psychedelic use. So, like, right now, I can see it being used for people like me, and for people who are like, terminal cancer patients, not even not even terminal, just cancer patients in general, but I think that in an eventual future, they will be used for, like personal growth means and there will be like, actual information on it and not just speculations, because it's super subjective, you know, a man and I'm an anomaly here because like, most of my trips have been me living through my repressed memories but that's not to say that that's how everybody's trips are, you know, it might be a pretty constant thing that these drugs put us in these REM states, where we are living through our repressed memories and becoming okay with them, like accepting them and coming to the all these crazy insights but I don't know I'm still pretty fresh into this.

**Q34. Interviewer** 3:04:48

Have psychedelics shaped your view of humanity's future?

**Participant** 3:05:04

Not, not really, not really. It's um, I kind of look to the future and keep my eyesight on the positives and the world seems to be doing that. So, I'll just keep doing that.

**Participant** 3:05:49

What can I do to change humanity or like? Capitalism is pretty good, but there are certain things in capitalism that need to change which can come from the higher ups. Which only come from like multiple surveys and doing stuff which are already being done and it’s not some big conspiracy, I’ve been on that tangent but it’s not some big conspiracy, it’s just misinformation and old, greedy, selfish people.

**Interviewer** 3:06:31

Basically

**Participant** 3:06:32

And I think it will change eventually just in due time but it’s like everything’s really subjective like it might be some big conspiracy and there might be reptilians as like the royal family, you know there’s a big paedophile ring and a lot of human trafficking revolving around that area and they’re doing business with China and there’s a lot of girls coming from that area, you know. I don’t know man. I’m going to drive myself fucking crazy if I choose to speculate on that.

**Interviewer** 3:07:16

Yeah, personally I find going down the conspiracy rabbit holes just too much of a time waster really, you just come out more paranoid than when you went in. It’s not a helpful mindset to get anything done.

**Participant** 3:07:32

Cause even if you got face to face contact with them these people are way too good at manipulating people for you to know if they’re telling the truth or not, you know. If that is even the truth, you would not know.

**Interviewer** 3:08:48

Well it seems implausible that there’s actually grey lizard alien people controlling the world. But I’m sure, I guarantee, I am 100% sure that human trafficking and just the nasty normal stuff goes on regardless. It’s just what people do.

**Participant** 3:09:08

Well yeah, it’s greedy people wanting to take the easy way. Like why are there, why are there human trafficking rings? To appease the sex hungry civilians, that don’t want to, you know, who just want an easy fix. It’s to feed instant gratification and that’s like something that psychedelics, I think I’ve already touched on it is the instant gratification part versus what I actually need and want for our survival.

**Q35. Interviewer** 3:09:55

Second to last question is, what advice would you give to people who are interested in using psychedelics?

**Participant** 3:10:06

Take it slow and write everything down. Don’t need to rush into it, but if you’re going to take a big dose, take a big dose.

**Interviewer** 3:10:23

So, don’t hit the middle of the road, getting stuck in-between?

**Participant** 3:10:28

Yeah, yeah.

**Participant** 3:10:34

And I feel like those ego death numbers, like 300ug for acid those are pretty consistent out of all of the people who have been, out of like my community of acid users.

**Q36. Interviewer** 3:11:20

And the final question is, are there any final thoughts or comments you’d like to mention before we conclude the interview?

**Participant** 3:11:30

Umm, yeah it’s all like very early, but did you get any, did you get more information than you had had before?

**Interviewer** 3:11:46

You mean?

**Participant** 3:11:48

Did I help? Like it’s all super subjective but like did all of my information help?

**END OF INTERVIEW**

**Interviewer** 3:11:57

Yeah, for sure. Of course, the limitations of the study is that I have to, if I’m going to ask you a question it’s always going to be subjective right? Doesn’t matter, any topic you ask, if I ask can you talk about your girlfriends experience. That’s your subjective analysis of what’s going on. If I ask you about your internal experiences that’s going to be subjective. So, I don’t think the subjective nature of it is the limiting factor. I just think scientists like to ignore the fact that all information is collected through subjective means but we just say it’s objective so it’s more scientific than somebody describing you know, a self-report for example. Certainly I think, what is called triangulation where a number of sources come together to give you a better, more perspectives on the topic. That can help refine and define, describe what’s going on and you can see where certain individuals personal idiosyncratic, idiosyncrasies, idiosyncraticness, yeah something like that, their own kind of way, particular words, particular thoughts that they have, not say spasms of the mind but very unique to them but not necessarily reflective of the general experience. When you get a number of perspectives you can start to see the commonalities and start to see the unique interpretations and perspectives on each of these issues. I think as a collective, I guess it’s very helpful to talk about themes or the generalities of psychedelics, so not just your experiences, like It’s every person I’ve interviewed is sort of, I’ve given each of you sort of the same questions and they’re related to psychedelics and how they’ve affected people’s lives because we’re trying to generate an understanding is there commonalities or consistencies across people and so it’s almost like if you put everyone in a circle they’re all looking at this object in the centre and they send their sort of information on it and it builds what it’s going to look like and by doing that each individual supports the generation of the whole thing, so in that sense yes it’s been very helpful and in another sense, just there are no right or wrong answers to this, there’s no like, my subjective use of it is somehow less valuable or implausible or valid than anybody else’s because when you actually get down to it, there is no such thing as general effects of psychedelics, there’s only what it does to an individual person there’s only what happens for each person, for each specific moment that they’re having an experience, that’s the reality of the situation.

**Participant** 3:15:08

But there could be a general explanation of effects, of bodily effects, but there’s not, you know and that’s what I’ve been trying to speculate on and trying to figure out, like what it feels like.

**Interviewer** 3:15:26

Do you mean that in general or for you specifically?

**Participant** 3:15:29

In general, in general, what are the actual things that go on in your body when you take these drugs? What is going on?

**Interviewer** 3:15:36

Yeah, I think if you go to like psychonaut wiki, I imagine you know that one.

**Participant** 3:15:45

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 3:15:46

Like on there they have a good break down of the potential effects that people have, you know they go through different word descriptions, euphoria, timelessness, disassociation, leaving your body, changes in visual perception, they’ve got measures or like sort of levels of visual intensity of changes, like fractal patterns leading into geometric landscapes.

**Participant** 3:16:11

Yeah, I’ve seen all that.

**Interviewer** 3:16:16

So, I think when it comes down to if you are a new user and you are coming in and going I want to, I’m an average person, I want to know what are the ball park things that might happen. I think basically the information’s out there. I don’t think we’re going to necessarily discover something entirely new that’s just been, everyone’s sort of like looked away and is ignoring for some reason. I think for the most part, people have been doing this for 60+ years, or 1000’s really, with the literature online, 60+ years of people, millions and millions of people, collectively having experiences and talking to other people and coming to some sort of consensus about the appropriate way to language that experience so that you can convey some actual level of understanding across people who use it and to people who are on outside of the use and are looking in a little bit and wondering what’s going on. So, in that sense, I don’t know if I’ve added anything new, what I think what I’ve added, or what hopefully will be useful is that the process of collecting people’s descriptions of experiences and doing this in a more systematic way is going to allow us to do more with that information. So, the online questionnaire we can run some statistics on it and we can see some of the complexity or technicality simplified a bit and we can see some maybe relationships between use, how people use and the potential outcomes and with the interviews I think, hopefully what that will do is provide additional context to describing the online, the quantitative data, the math numbers, to humanise it, to give it a narrative and a story, to show how it expressed this generality, we do some stats on it and we go on average da da da da da have this experience and then maybe someone who I have interviewed kind of crystalises that abstraction into a individual’s experience, so you go from a generality to a specific person and hopefully what that does it kind of concretises these ideas. So, it doesn’t just say, in general we found this trend, we interviewed a number of people, and the majority of people say also express they felt or experienced that thing and here’s an example or a few examples of how people have described that thing and so it leads from the numbers to a generality to a specific instance and you make that like connection between all three levels and by doing that I think it gives it, people can be more confident about that this is a real thing, so to speak. That these effects aren’t just really individually specific, but they’re actually like general enough and the links have been made between the abstraction so it’s not just kind of, one level of like oh it can be like this but actually there’s like a thousand ways it can kind of be described and it doesn’t really get at really what you’re trying to say. To, here’s the individual instance of that experience and it just, I think it just, hopefully it will make a clear link between these different levels and somehow that will make it more understandable and it will give the information more validity to say something about it. That’s the hope at least. I have to still go and do the analysis and go over the data, but in my head there’s swimming ideas that there are commonalities, there are themes that do seem to be popping up recurringly across people. They might use a little bit of different language to describe it so it might take a little interpretation to see how you can fit these ideas together but there’s definitely some interesting themes that are coming up that I think will be enjoyable to just share, yeah. And I think one other one, it just shows some trends as well, so, just a general survey of psychedelic users, so some of the information we just don’t have, like typical doses for example you see on the psychonaut wiki, but what’s is the sample size of that typical dose? Is that just a couple of people who’ve had a conversation for awhile and they’re like well, you know, I’ve read 20 or 30 trip reports or something and some people gave me these kind of dosages and I just made an average? This is just more validity to the overall evidence pile lets say. So yeah, certainly helpful, and you’re my last interview [interviewee] that’s them all done.

**Participant** 3:21:46

Right on, right on. Is there anywhere that this will be published?

**Interviewer** 3:21:51

Yeah. I’ll send you through the thesis when I’m finished writing it up, so you’ll get a pdf copy no problems, so you don’t have to worry about finding that and I will, I’ll be putting it up on like the shroomery and stuff, I’ll just put it like wherever, like a dropbox or something and just put an open link to it and people can go and download it and read it if they like. Cause it’s, the purpose in the most part is that this is information is about the psychedelic community for the psychedelic community and so it’s just going to be fun I think once people give it a read and give me some feedback on what they thought and have you know start a new dialogue, about like, hey we’ve had all these individual instances and interviews and we did a general kind of survey and now people can reflect on that and be like man that’s pretty cool you found this, oh I don’t really know if like you know your interpretation of this was really fair, you know it’s just another thing for people to ping off and to think about and to hopefully add a little bit of knowledge to some people’s knowledge bank, yeah.

**Participant** 3:23:06

Right on, right on. Well best of luck.

**Interviewer** 3:23:08

Thank you [interviewee]. I will, I’ll send it to you when we’re done, it’s probably going to be a few months until then so you won’t hear from me for a while. I don’t think, I don’t remember if you did, no I guess you didn’t request for me to send you the transcript or anything so you’ll hear from me in a couple of months.

**Participant** 3:23:30

Righteous

**Interviewer** 3:23:31

All right man.

**Participant** 3:23:31

Righteous times flies. Nice to meet you too Andrew. Best of luck.

**Interviewer** 3:23:35

Yeah, peace out.

**Participant** 3:23:36

Peace.

**Interviewer** 3:23:37

Good hanging out.

**Participant** 3:23:38

Yeah, later.

**Interviewer** 3:23:40

Alright man, see ya.

**Participant** 3:23:41

See ya.