22. Interview with Participant 22

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**Length:** 2:57:57

**Spoken duration of interview:** Participant (75%), Interviewer (25%)

**Age (years):** Participant (28), Interviewer (30)

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

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

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

psychedelics, psychedelic experience, people, life, feeling, experience, trip, feel, question, psilocybin, changed, happening, deal, bit, describe, learning, aggression, dose, mushrooms, dosage

**Interviewer** 00:00

Fellow New Zealander.

**Participant** 00:02

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 00:04

So one final thing before we jump in, is we're going to be on Well, I'm going to be asking you about your psychedelic experiences and all the different sort of things related to that but for clarity, one thing to best to note at the beginning is what drugs or substances that we are talking about, or I'm asking about when I want you to be talking about your psychedelic experiences.

**Participant** 00:29

Yeah. Okay.

**Interviewer** 00:31

So, the main ones that we'd like you to include within the for the purposes of this interview, in the psychedelic box of psychedelic experiences are your classic psychedelics, such as LSD, psilocybin, magic mushrooms, DMT, or dimethyltryptamine, and mescaline. So, anything like peyote or San Pedro, but also if you've used ones like Ayahuasca, or Iboga, they're also psychedelics, for sure and you can drop those all into your psychedelic experiences and tell me about them and if you've had any analogues of those drugs as well, so if you've had for example, 1p-LSD, or some analogue of LSD, just include them in it's like I'm not, there's a limit to the to the specificity or the like the preciseness of like needing to differentiate the you know, LSD being different from 1p-LSD being different from psilocybin. So, we're talking more your psychedelic experiences in general. So, if you've had any analogues of those, that's, that's fine to just treat them similar. Some drugs that may be some people consider or might consider psychedelic that we would like you not to include in your reasons for using or the experiences that you've had. So, drugs including cannabis, so I've heard people say very high doses of THC can be psychedelic like I don't, I've never personally experienced that, but that for some people, that might be the case in MDMA. So, if you've had any ecstasy, that's definitely has some similar overlapping effects but again, if you can separate that out, and the other two are ketamine and salvia. So, ketamine is generally described as a dissociative, but dissociation is quite a common experience on psychedelics so their, their effects for a lot of people are quite similar, although different as well and I don't know about salvia. I think that's like a I don't know how they that's classified. It might be a deliriant. It might be a dissociative, I'm not 100% on that but definitely mind altering, for sure. So, any of the actually, just in that vein, any drug that wasn't included as like positively as the psychedelics so LSD, psilocybin, DMT, Ayahuasca, mescaline, or Iboga, or any of their analogues, you can consider all other drugs is to be considered excluded out of that but I mentioned those main four just because those seem to be potentially the most likely ones that will get lumped in with psychedelic experiences.

**Participant** 03:18

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 03:19

All right. So, that's all the preamble.

**Participant** 03:25

All right. Give me one second, Andrew, I just stir the old stove top.

**Interviewer** 03:29

Sure.

**Participant** 03:30

Just a sec. All right, sorted.

**Interviewer** 04:13

And if, one thing to note as well as these go reasonably long. So, it's, it generally takes depending on how much detail you go into answers, and my follow up questions can sometimes be quite a few but in general, the time that it takes to complete the interview is two and a half to three hours.

**Participant** 04:36

Ok.

**Q1. Interviewer** 04:36

If you need take any breaks, you need toilet, you want to have something to eat anything like that. There's no problems whatsoever, to like to take some breaks in between. I don't expect people to have to sit down for three hours straight and just get it all done and it's gone longer. Sometimes, especially with people who have very elaborate belief systems that they want to convey. So, which can take some time to get through. So, yeah, just let you know, it sort of takes about three hours. So, the first question, we start nice and broad, and it is, why do you use psychedelics?

**Participant** 05:20

Um, I use psychedelics today, because I've gained a lot from them over time. My understanding of psychedelics and how I feel was appropriate to use them has increased over time. So, yeah, I use them, too, to get back to my real self as best I can. Often to try and feel a sense of what it truly means to be alive and sometimes to remove myself from some of the distractions or routines or rigidness of daily life, sometimes. I use certain psychedelics for stress relief, to put issues to bed that are weighing on your mind. Yeah, many reasons and it can come down to you know, understanding your dose. So, there's different dosages for different things you're trying to achieve but all in all, I use them because I want to feel good, I want to be a good person. I want to make the most of my life and I want to I want to experience what it what it really means to be alive and have a consciousness and have emotions and I think psychedelics helps with that.

**Interviewer** 07:28

Just one thing to note in terms of your microphone, I can't see it, but I can hear I think it's breathing unless it's rubbing.

**Participant** 07:50

Oh okay

**Interviewer** 07:51

to speaking. So, I don't know if there's a way I don't know what your microphone setup is but if there's a way just to maybe angle it a bit away, so the \*breaths out\* out does sort of go in like, I don't even know how to say it like ooh, sound a little bit. If what you what you do fixes it. I'll let you know if it if it carries on.

**Participant** 08:11

Okay.

**Interviewer** 08:14

It's okay. It's okay, though because it's just between when you're speaking, I think when you're breathing out, but slightly distracting is all.

**Participant** 08:23

Okay.

**Q2. Interviewer** 08:25

So, the second question is, have the reasons why you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 08:33

Yes.

**Interviewer** 08:39

Can you speak to that? So just to note, if I ask any closed ended questions that you can, you can answer like the yes to, first, if you can give me like the yes or no, if you've got like a good sort of feeling on a like a yes or no to that. Start with that and then let me know and then I'm happy for you to elaborate and to sort of describe that question in more detail.

**Participant** 09:00

Yeah. So, it's, yeah, it's certainly changed. It was something that I experienced for the first time without putting a lot of thought into what I was doing and that certainly changed.

**Interviewer** 09:38

And has that. Has that change, Was that over a long period of time? Was it a sort of flip in terms of like, at one point you just started very rapidly changing the way in which you use psychedelics or was it more like a gradual process, how you go about using them now compared to how you did originally?

**Participant** 10:01

Yeah, I think I think it was a gradual process. It comes with maturity, integration as well. As you know, it takes time, sometimes to process, some of the things that come can come up in a psychedelic experience. So, definitely over time, for sure but on the other on the other hand, my very my very first psychedelic experience was rather traumatic and because of that, I was able to make a very clear flip in my approach and my respect towards psychedelics going into it a second time. So, yeah.

**Q3. Interviewer** 11:19

And how did you first start using psychedelics?

**Participant** 11:23

Um, so I ate a bunch of psilocybin mushrooms and yeah, I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know how, you know what sort of dosage I was taking. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 11:49

You just ate an unknown quantity?

**Participant** 11:52

Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 11:59

Looking back on that. Do you have a sense of what the not necessarily the amount, but the strength of the dose that took was?

**Participant** 12:09

Yeah, for sure. Yeah, I know. It was an absurd amount.

**Interviewer** 12:14

Okay. So, absurd amount that's beyond strong.

**Participant** 12:18

Yeah but I didn't know, you know?

**Interviewer** 12:24

Yeah. Yeah and when was that? When was the first time that you used them?

**Participant** 12:30

So, 19 years old? Yeah.

**Interviewer** 12:38

And how long ago was that?

**Participant** 12:42

That's 10 years ago.

**Interviewer** 12:49

And was it by yourself with other people? That was a setting,

**Participant** 12:54

it seems that the setting was just at a at a flat. You know, coming home after studying and so there was nothing particularly wrong with the setting but the issue was the motive for doing it and not understanding the dose. Yeah. So, it was just another day basically, we were heading home to go and have a sesh [session] or whatever and then we ended up doing that.

**Interviewer** 13:49

So, did you do that with other people?

**Participant** 13:51

No, but there was a friend there.

**Interviewer** 14:04

And what had your sort of drug use been like before that? Had you used other mind-altering substances?

**Participant** 14:11

Just marijuana. So, I was yeah. More than keen to smoke some marijuana often enough.

**Interviewer** 14:22

And I imagine alcohol as well, or?

**Participant** 14:26

Yeah, yeah.

**Interviewer** 14:35

And how did you come into contact with the mushrooms where like, had you just. yeah?

**Participant** 14:43

Yeah, a friend from course had foraged them and then provided a bag to my other friend, and then I ended up eating them.

**Interviewer** 15:06

Okay, so I have a couple of questions later, that ask about your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience, and also your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience and I just, I wonder if I just ask you now, would you, when asking about your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience, would your first one fall into that?

**Participant** 15:33

Definitely that's it.

**Q4. Interviewer** 15:35

Then we will, we'll hold off that one and we'll come back to that a bit later in the course of the questions, because otherwise I, I would, I would just stay on the topic and then you could tell the other story a bit later but that's, that's alright then. So, we'll come back to this. So, fourth question is, what aspects of psychedelics do you find most meaningful or valuable?

**Participant** 16:04

Um, I don't know if I can pinpoint that one. Yeah, can you say that question again?

**Interviewer** 16:16

Yeah. So, what aspects of psychedelics do you find most meaningful or valuable? It can be multiple ones. So, it doesn't just have to be the peaky top.

**Participant** 16:30

Yeah, um, it's a difficult one to answer but first of all, you know, like, the closed eyes visual aspect of a psychedelic experience shows that perhaps, like, we've only ever seen the world through, through our own two eyes, you know, and that's how we interface with the universe, that's how we see it and that and for psychedelics, to visually blow that apart, and to see all sorts of, you know, geometry and, and colours, patterns, things like that, that. To me, that's amazing and that's, that's one of the most amazing things about it most valuable because that's inspiring. For me, that shows that there is I don't know, there's just so much more depth to our consciousness or to this life or any or whatever, then we at first perceive, apparently. The next thing has to be just the way psychedelics put the ball back in your court, it's super valuable like, you can spend your entire life always reacting outward, or it's easy to blame external factors, things like that, whereas psychedelics always puts the ball back in your court and that's important and valuable. I think

**Interviewer** 18:25

Can you, just done that metaphor. Can you elaborate a little bit on what that means?

**Participant** 18:30

Yeah, what that means for me is that you can have a range of sometimes problems and it's easy to remove yourself from those problems and blame other people or whatever. Psychedelics will take you through that journey of understanding your emotions, understanding these circumstances, and then helping you to realise that you have control over that. Whether you change your direction, you learn to deal with how you feel about that. You stop that behaviour that's causing this for you, you know, It all tends to point back to you. From my experience, and that's so valuable, because we don't often, I haven't found that level of accountability in any other experience. Accountability, but empowerment as well. So, it's not only like you're the reason for this, but it's also that you are the one that can do something about this and make this better or whatever. Yeah. So, that's what I mean by putting the ball back in your court.

**Interviewer** 19:54

I think it's a good description. Thank you. Just on a little follow up on that, does that sense of empowerment and accountability control or putting the ball back in your own court. Does that ever go too far? Is there a Is there a degree of which you take ownership of the problems that are too far outside of your control that it's becomes an unhelpful perspective?

**Participant** 20:33

That's an interesting one. I think I can see what you mean, by asking that question. I guess but I don't know how to answer that, sorry.

**Interviewer** 20:55

Nope, no problems. Did you have anything else or additional in terms of in terms of aspects of psychedelics that you find meaningful or valuable?

**Participant** 21:12

Yeah. It creates a unique opportunity for bonding. Like if you're doing if you're doing that with somebody. Yeah, a unique opportunity for bonding. Yeah. There's yeah, there's countless benefits as far as I'm concerned, things of value to be found.

**Interviewer** 21:51

And you'd consider those the three you've mentioned so far as being kind of the most prominent ones? Or do you think there's, because the idea of this question is to sort of. Yeah, what people kind of, if they, if you can rank it to some degree, like, what is the really, you know, there's lots of benefits, but are there some really good ones that are like really make it that are important to the experience?

**Participant** 22:23

Yeah, I'm happy with what I've said there. Yeah.

**Q5. Interviewer** 22:31

Cool. What aspects of psychedelics do you find most challenging or difficult?

**Participant** 22:44

Well, I think there's like a lot of personal realisations that you can, you can have during a psychedelic experience that can be difficult to accept. So, the saying there is a hard pill to swallow, I guess. So Yeah. What was that question again sorry?

**Interviewer** 23:15

So, the question was, what aspect of psychedelics do you find most challenging or difficult?

**Participant** 23:21

Yep. So, the definitely the realisation, some of the tough realisations about yourself can be very, very difficult. The weirdness of the come up can be a challenge for people. Just as things start to get a little bit you know, reality starts to slide a bit on the come up can be challenging but yeah, for me, the most challenging things have always been those hard pills to swallow, man those self-realisations because you, people can go through their entire life. Like, I don't know, just so unaware of their own problems, and, and I was no different. I was always, I don't know. I had a, I had a better, I saw myself as something better than I actually was and I don't know how that happened but I think that's just life and I think yeah, so being able to have an experience that opened my mind up to the choices that I was making. The person that I was, yeah rough man. Rough to realise that, yeah, you it's a psychedelic experience can make you feel like you've been living a lie and yeah, so, so that that is challenging to deal with that.

**Interviewer** 25:26

And is that in terms of this, the, the hard pill to swallow the realisations of yourself and accepting those, is that difficult, only within or during the psychedelic experience, or does that carry on beyond when you back into normal life as well?

**Participant** 25:53

I think it has the potential to for sure and then that and I think that will certainly come down to the individual and that's where your integration, your ability to process things, your willingness to learn. I think that's where those things come into play. So, it's, it's definitely more traumatic at the time, the feelings, the sensations, whatever it is, you're experiencing, is obviously going to be a lot stronger at the time but once you know, you know, and you can't, you can't unsee or unhear what you were told and, and yeah, and I think that's part of the reason how, you know, they do create long lasting change, because it's in your face, it's as intense as ever, and it's as real as ever at the time and you can't you can't go back to not seeing that or not knowing that about yourself. So, then it's up to you. Do you want to be continually traumatised by that in the long term? Or are you going to take that on board? Seeing as the ball is in your court and do something about it? So, I think that comes down to the individual. How, how long some of these things could fester for, I guess. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 27:39

And then and so just one thing to note is the questions, what I'm trying to look for is your personal experience of those things. So, one of the questions that comes to mind is how has that been for you in terms of facing realisations? Have you found, like, as you described, they have been difficult, but have you? Lets say, risen up to that challenge of taking those realisations and integrating them?

**Participant** 28:12

Definitely, definitely.

**Interviewer** 28:12

Are there any that you have not dealt with yet? Are there things that that are still irksome to you or hey, you're having difficulty with, understanding maybe?

**Participant** 28:29

Um, yeah, yep. Every day. Yeah but the things, the things that have come up that have needed attention, have been attended to. So, it's not like all of your problems are solved at once. It's, you know, things come up and then those are the things that usually I will deal with, or whatever and a couple of them have been, have been that big of a thing that they've been dealing with that has put me into a new phase of, of life where I'm, yeah, really, most of the time quite happy and yeah, so

**Interviewer** 29:26

That's good to hear.

**Participant** 29:27

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 29:36

So then, a couple of the well, seven questions, the following seven questions are going to be asking about ways in which psychedelics have affected your life.

**Participant** 29:48

Yeah.

**Q6. Interviewer** 29:48

And so the first question starts relatively broad and you can go in any direction that feels right for you to answer that question, and then I have a couple of follow up questions that I'm going to drill down into some specific areas, if you don't necessarily cover them in your initial answer and that's just to sort of flesh out the different areas of life where psychedelics may have affected some aspects. So, the first question is, in what ways have psychedelics affected your life?

**Participant** 30:24

There's been many ways psychedelics have affected my life. The, but you want to know how? How have they affected my life?

**Interviewer** 30:46

Um, well, I guess they how is the sort of, In what way?

**Participant** 30:52

Oh, In what way, ok.

**Interviewer** 30:53

Yeah. So, it is a little how because it's like, you have to act it out for it to necessarily have affected you, but it but it could be also thoughts and how those have played themselves out as well.

**Participant** 31:05

Cool. Okay, so psychedelics, mushrooms in particular bought me back to the earth, is the best way to describe that, you know, showed me where I fit in with the bugs, the plants that air, the sun showed me my place in the natural order and it showed me how beautiful all of that was. So, so in what way has it affected my life in that area is you know, now I'm a gardener. Now, I grow my own food. I wear bare feet, you know, like, if I can get a chance to go for a walk, in bare feet, I'll do that because I love the way the ground feels, you know, I want to feel that I don't, I don't want to, I wasn't born with shoes and I understand that, you know, like these little changes like that to the psyche. You know, I've had experiences in my own garden where all of a sudden, because I've had the right dosage of mushrooms or whatever I can hear the birds I can see the ants I can make all these connections in the living world that I wouldn't have otherwise probably made. It's affected my ability to deal with myself, my own emotions, particularly the negative ones. So, they've taught me a lot about how to they've taught me, I don't know. Do they teach you or do you teach yourself? But I now understand what my triggers are. I understand what makes me unhappy and I also understand now that happiness is all I'm really after and when I'm happy I'm a good person. So, I make all of these connections about my emotions and how having control of that can actually make you a far more useful human and yeah and what other ways has it affected my life? It's allowed me to find peace and meaning in my current situation.

**Participant** 34:11

Yeah, it also just sparks you know, invigoration for life and giving you that sense that you do only get one life and where do you want to be at the end of that whenever that is? You know, what, what kind of person do you want to say that you were? And for me that that's valuable because we're distracted, I am distracted by you know, my job, money, social status. All of these things that keep us, that keep me kind of feeling like a lab rat sometimes or make me feel like I don't have full autonomy over my own life. My own choices. So, psychedelics allowed me to reason with that and helped me to implement things step by step. So, that's been valuable for me. Yeah.

**Q6a. Interviewer** 35:38

Sounds really good. So, some of the follow up questions are, has your personality or identity been shaped by your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 35:54

Yes. It has.

**Interviewer** 36:06

Would you be able to elaborate on that?

**Participant** 36:12

Yeah, so I think it. Yep. Can you say that question one more time, please?

**Interviewer** 36:26

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

**Participant** 36:38

Yeah, most certainly has and that's, how? Because, because from the age of 19, I was, I did have that first traumatic experience, which showed me the path that I was on and it wasn't a path that I wanted to stay on. So, because of that experience alone, I was shown exactly who I was and I wasn't becoming that person, I was already that person and that person who I realised I was not someone that I felt like I could live with, basically. Um, so this is 10 years ago, and on that particular night, I felt so worthless, because it had just exposed. It just exposed my crap, man and but I woke up the next day, and I've never repeated that behaviour. There was one particular thing that came up and I've literally never done that, since.

**Interviewer** 38:08

Could you speak to that? What is that?

**Participant** 38:10

Yeah, I borrowed money off somebody and I, I took it with a little intention of paying it back.

**Interviewer** 38:17

Okay.

**Participant** 38:18

And at the time, it didn't seem like a big deal and then I, I took this dosage, and it just smacked me in the face and was like, you're a piece of shit. Why would you do that? And, you know, we have these levels of empathy and stuff like that and I, I, at the time, I wanted to think I was a good person but apparently, I had a lot of work to do and that showed me that and then, and it was traumatic at the time but the next day, I woke up, and I was like. Well, I'm never doing that again. I'm never repeating that behaviour and I haven't to this to this day, so. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 39:15

Did you end up paying the person back who you borrowed the money off?

**Participant** 39:18

Yeah, I did.

**Interviewer** 39:20

Good for you, man.

**Participant** 39:21

Yeah and it was a close friend. That was the problem. Yeah and so. So, seeing that about yourself at 19 years old was I mean, looking back, one of the best things that could have happened to me so I'm, it was it was super irresponsible and super traumatic how it all came about and I wanted to die that night, because it was horrible. I couldn't escape what was being shown to me but yeah, just the next day. It just was just like, I never want to feel like that, again, because of something I've done, or the way I've treated someone, like, like, I did that, and I feel like crap about that and I never want to feel that worthless again. So, the solution was simple. Don't do that again. You know, call your friend apologise. Explain how it got to this. Yeah. So, that's, you know, that's one. Yeah, I think we were talking about like dealing with more than the negative things first, or? I can't quite remember how we got to that. But

**Interviewer** 40:55

Well were you so the question was, has your personality or identity been shaped by your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 41:01

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 41:01

And you said yes and that your first experience showed you that the path you were on, showed you the path you were on, and that the person that you were was basically somebody you didn't want it to be? That's what I've sort of got written here.

**Participant** 41:14

Yeah, yeah perfect.

**Interviewer** 41:16

Yeah and then you sort of went into detail a little bit about a particular aspect of that experience that you made you feel worthless.

**Participant** 41:25

Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 41:27

Cool. So, I don't know if you're able to, but reflecting back on the person who you were, how would you describe yourself then and how would you describe yourself now?

**Participant** 41:44

So, in a sense, I'm exactly the same person. Obviously, that hasn't changed but I just, I have different ideas of like, what I thought I wanted out of life. The types of activities that I thought were going to be fun just to do forever, you know, like, you know, some of those some of the destructive behaviours, you can get away with it at that age, and stuff like that but I felt like that, that was kind of like the life and, and I would go down that track for as long as I wanted or whatever. So, yeah, that experience just showed me that I was just so wrong about who I thought I was, and where I thought I was going because I thought I was on track to be the man and I wasn't. Yeah and so talk about hard pills to swallow, you know.

**Interviewer** 42:58

Yeah, it's good way to catch phrase it, you're on track to be the man and you weren't.

**Participant** 43:03

Yeah.

**Q6b. Interviewer** 43:25

So, sort of a follow on from that. Is, has your psychedelic use altered any of your long-term goals or life purpose?

**Participant** 43:34

Yeah, definitely, definitely. So, you've got to take it right back. People talk about you know, like the, I think they call it like the red pill syndrome.

**Interviewer** 43:51

Sort of like the Morpheus, the blue pill, red pill thing. Yeah.

**Participant** 43:54

And, and the red pill syndrome is when you wake up to the fact that there are all of these atrocities on the planet, we don't, whatever realisations you're having about typically, society, hierarchy, money, ambition around what society tells you is the definition of success. I think psychedelics blew all of that out of the water for me and was just like, like, you, you don't have to chase what society tells you because if you look at it, from this perspective on a bunch of mushrooms, it's just laughable. It's absolutely laughable the games that we're playing on a day to day basis and yeah. So, so going back to the question was initially, I was stunned with this whole societies crap, this is so wrong, we've gone so far away from who we are spiritually or whatever and all we do now is go to work and make money and, and stuff like that and so for a while there I was looking at that kind of like, I was frustrated by that. Yeah, so psychedelics opened me up to that and gave me those realisations but then over time, I became frustrated because I was like, I do want more for my life I do. I, I can get by with basic things and I don't feel necessarily as free as what a life form on this planet could feel and so for me, that was like, frustrating. It was just like aww but yeah, you learn from that as well.

**Interviewer** 43:54

And so, were there any specific long-term goals that you, you changed, that are now sort of what you might attribute to your realisations or your understandings?

**Participant** 46:35

Yeah. So, I always I always wanted to be, you know, like an entrepreneur or go into business or have some level of social fame, if you will. You know, it was pretty much just like, money, power, popularity, like those are, that's what you want to head for and I was all keen for that, definitely. I wanted to be rich, famous, whatever was going to yeah and yeah, that's completely changed. I'm not, I'm not motivated by money a single bit. I have resolved personal conflicts, and now done things in my own life that I'm proud of, to the point where I don't care about what your social circle, where you place me or whatever and I don't care how you want to rank me in your social circles or whatever. Yeah, I think it's, it's just brought me back to wanting time wanting time to be the most valuable thing, because I feel like that's all that's all we've really got. So, yeah, for me, it's shifted from trying to make lots of money to get things to sort out your finances so that maybe you can buy some of your time back. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 48:42

And what would you like to do with that time if you had it?

**Participant** 48:48

Just be happy. Just be the present. You know. I nowadays I'm satisfied by simple things and just yeah, just having that awareness of my emotions now and having that understanding that all I need to be is happy and I can do everything else and I will have a great life.

**Q6c. Interviewer** 49:31

Have psychedelics caused you to seriously question your own beliefs?

**Participant** 49:39

Yes, many a time.

**Interviewer** 49:52

Are there any in particular that you that come to mind?

**Participant** 49:59

um,

**Interviewer** 50:03

Because you definitely spoke to one just before, like the idea of society's definition of success and embodying or living that out but I wonder if there's any other ones that you think are significant?

**Participant** 50:19

You can you say the question just one more time again, please?

**Interviewer** 50:22

Yep. Have psychedelics caused you to seriously question your own beliefs?

**Participant** 50:27

Yeah, yeah. So, yeah. Most beliefs, I mean, just beliefs about reality, beliefs about the planet political beliefs, judgmental beliefs about people and their beliefs and things like that. Yeah, I think that that's one of the merits is that your beliefs are being challenged through these experiences.

**Q6d. Interviewer** 51:31

Has your understanding of yourself changed due to your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 51:37

Yeah, great greatly. Yeah, because of these things that we're discussing, you know, because of your bad behaviours, being exposed, because of having positive experiences, where you're learning about your emotions, and, and travelling through, you know, infinite beauty and things like that, like. Yeah, so it's not all just learning from the negative, you know, I've had, I've only had the one negative experience, and I've had many, many positive experiences from there. So

**Interviewer** 52:31

Sounds like a good ratio.

**Participant** 52:33

Yeah, just Yeah. I mean, yeah, a lots change but for me, I just had this massive trigger with stress and it would affect my, I don't know, my rationale, basically and so I've been able to learn about that through psychedelic experiences, and learning to acknowledge stress and things like that, you know, acknowledge these feelings and because of that, because of that traumatic experience, I know exactly how I don't want to feel. I know what the lowest of the low is, and it's nowhere I would want to be. So

**Q6e. Interviewer** 53:33

Has your psychedelic use affected your use of other drugs?

**Participant** 53:50

Probably not in any way that I think. Yeah. Not that I can tell anyway.

**Interviewer** 54:05

And just get a little context of that. Have you had any particularly problematic use of other drugs or has it been, have you had a reasonably alright, relationship with the other types of drugs you have used in your life?

**Participant** 54:23

Yeah. So So, the first one, yeah. Okay. Yeah and so that's where it gets interesting, because what you've got to bear in mind is that this first experience came in at 19 and the path that I was going on was in search of that destructive behaviour. So, I had this experience at 19 and we're talking 10 years later, and I'm telling you, I've never had a problem with you know.

**Interviewer** 54:57

Yeah.

**Participant** 54:59

That could be completely different if it wasn't for that experience.

**Interviewer** 55:03

Mm hmm. So, potentially pre-emptively avoided the negatives of getting down that path.

**Participant** 55:13

Yeah. Yeah, possibly ay. I mean, you never know but I switched trains that they so, yeah.

**Interviewer** 55:22

So, would you say, thinking back the path that that you were on, was leading down to into a direction of potentially abusive relationship or an unhealthy relationship with drug use?

**Participant** 55:36

For sure. Yeah, it would have been an unhealthy relationship with anything I would have pursued, I think.

**Q7. Interviewer** 56:06

Have your psychedelic experiences affected your relationships with significant others? And in this case, significant others could be a partner, it could be parents, it could be siblings, it could be friends, can be basically anybody who's important in your life or was important.

**Participant** 56:26

Yeah. Yeah, so it definitely, definitely has. So, we, we've mentioned that before about how psychedelics has a tendency to put the ball back in your court. So, for me, part of psychedelics was teaching me about my, my place in these relationships with significant others and, and where I fit into that, and teaching me to take control of my role in that relationship in a positive and a positive way that's useful for the people that you're having relationships with.

**Interviewer** 57:32

Are there any specific relationships that come to mind that have been sort of on the top of the list of ones that were affected by your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 57:42

Yeah, for sure. So, my relationship with my partner, I think has improved.

**Interviewer** 57:58

Were you with this person before you had had your first psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 58:05

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 58:06

Okay and are you still with them now?

**Participant** 58:09

Yep.

**Interviewer** 58:13

And can you describe a little bit if you're able to remember what the relationship was like? And what it's like now, and I guess, what, what at what I think, you know, the improvement in that relationship, what you attribute to your, your, what you've learned through your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 58:34

Yeah, so the big one is just having that ball back in your own court. Like, for me with any sort of relationship or anything like that, the easiest thing to do was always to blame another person, always to feel frustrated and if you're feeling frustrated, you'll find any, any reason to feel frustrated with any sort of circumstance or something like that. So, learning about myself, my feelings, my triggers, has just, yeah, just that emotional awareness. Resolving some of these internal conflicts and frustrations that I had with my circumstances or my life or whatever. You know, having the ball back in my own court and feeling empowered enough to make those changes, has yeah, significantly improved our relationship, I think.

**Interviewer** 59:39

And have you does your partner also do psychedelics?

**Participant** 59:43

No.

**Interviewer** 59:45

Never?

**Participant** 59:46

Never.

**Interviewer** 59:48

And she, but she, does she know about your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 59:50

Yep.

**Interviewer** 59:51

And how is that, does that cause any issues in the relationship?

**Participant** 59:58

So, it was an interesting one to begin with, where I felt like my partner didn't quite understand that there was something to gain from psychedelics and to be fair, I didn't always understand that as well, that took time and maturity and integration and processing right but yeah, I felt initially that. Yeah, perhaps she didn't realise that. There were some pretty amazing things happening during these experiences and so one time, I had an experience where I was, I was, you know, again, mushrooms and I was feeling kind of uneasy, because I felt like she was going to be at home worrying about me or something like that. So, but then I just had this very quick realisation that the answer to that is communication, It's as simple as that, communication. So, I ended up, you know, going home, sleeping that experience off or whatever and then within a couple of days, I actually sort of sat her down and said, like, I need you to trust me on this one and that sounds farfetched and yes, we, we do trip, and that and so I sort of made this promise to her that if I'm going to go and do that, I'm going to make sure I've got my stuff organised and then I'm going to go and do that but in return, I really need you to understand that I'm, I'm really getting something out of this and I think it's making me a better person and we, yeah, there's never been a concern of mine since. So, yeah, it was. Yeah and it was just communication and that solution was given to me during a psychedelic experience. So, if you want one example of how that's an improved relationship, there's one there.

**Interviewer** 1:02:20

And just out of curiosity, does your partner have a reason why she hasn't wanted to try them? Because you've been doing them for quite a long time now. Seems almost. seems very unlikely that someone must have a very good reason to for 10 years to basically say, I'm never going to try these.

**Participant** 1:02:44

Yeah, I can't speak for that and I've made I've made peace with that. That's okay with me and it's not a never, never say never sort of thing but yeah, I mean, I don't know, we're fed a lot of misinformation about psychedelics and I think, yeah, I think there probably is an element of social conditioning that probably puts people off to a certain extent and propaganda or whatever you want to call it. Yeah and then some people are just happy, like, my partner's happy. She's, um, she didn't struggle with any of the things I struggled with. So, yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:03:44

Well, that's fair enough. If you're happy, you don't need to disturb that.

**Participant** 1:03:48

Yeah.

**Q8. Interviewer** 1:03:55

So, there's two questions. Now that is similar in their focus, but it's worded slightly differently. The first one is, have psychedelics changed how you think and feel about yourself?

**Participant** 1:04:15

Yep, they have. So, there's, there's been like the, you know, I've had the negative the worthless feelings of self but yeah, I've just had such empowering feelings of self as well but it's a very internalised experience for me and it is all about Yeah, learning about the self, I guess.

**Q9. Interviewer** 1:05:01

Does that, so that the next question which is similar is have psychedelics changed how you view yourself? And so, I thought, I was just thinking, maybe to elaborate on what the purpose of these questions are trying to get at. So, the first one is trying to look at, from an internal sense. How do you relate to yourself more, you know, is there increased / decreased levels of love or acceptance or forgiveness towards yourself? Is there changes in how the voice in the back of the head speaks to you or what it says for example?

**Participant** 1:05:39

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:05:41

And then the other one is sort of trying to get an outside perspective, obviously, from within. So, like, if you were to view yourself from third person, what would that look like to you? How is this person changed when you reflect from that point of view? So I wonder, you sort of described you've had that you've had that experience, feeling worthless, and you've been empowered by them, but has this has this changed, sort of your day to day experience, towards sort of your self-worth, or your how you, I guess, how you how you value yourself, how you think about yourself, has the thoughts in your head towards yourself become more or less positive, for example, in terms of like, motivating, I guess, rather than destructive rumination towards, you know, things that you do, or who you are. So, I wonder if that sort of pulls out anything that you're considering or thinking about at the moment?

**Participant** 1:06:52

I think, I think like we talked about earlier, how stress is my main trigger and for me, stress comes from the conversations in your head, that you do have with yourself and so, yeah, I think I've I have learned to, to ease some of those conversations in the mind and I can, I can usually resolve them a lot quicker these days. So, I'm not too sure if that really comes down to how I'm viewing myself, but

**Interviewer** 1:07:47

on the viewing part, so how would you if you were, if you were to describe yourself from a third person perspective, how would you describe yourself?

**Participant** 1:08:05

That's one of those ones that I'm always torn, torn with, because half of you just cares so much about how other people view you and then the other part of me knows that you've got to get rid of some of that to grow and you've got to forget about other people's perception of you. So, yeah, it depends if I'm having a good day, a bad day, a cocky day, a vulnerable day, you know. Yeah. Your impression of how people are viewing you can definitely change based on your confidence, your mood.

**Interviewer** 1:09:01

In this instance, it's not necessarily how you think other people see you but if you are able to abstractly view yourself from third person, how would you? How do you personally describe yourself? Is that even I don't even know if that really makes sense. It's just an attempt to get a get at the idea of your self-image. So, there's like an internal sense of who you are, and then there's like, how you think you project yourself into the world?

**Participant** 1:09:34

Yeah, see, it's the it's the internal, the internal perception is the valuable one for me. Whereas as the other one is, is the ego driven one that psychedelics can expose, and sometimes teach you to sort of get better at so. So, I don't know.

**Interviewer** 1:10:00

That's all right.

**Participant** 1:10:01

I don't know man.

**Interviewer** 1:10:02

Okay, no problems, we'll move on.

**Participant** 1:10:04

Yeah.

**Q10. Interviewer** 1:10:06

And that's fine. That's perfectly fine. Some of these questions with other people who I've interviewed, they don't you just don't have an answer to this. Like you're not really sure how to answer it. It's not, you know, it doesn't fit into how people say, think about themselves or feel like I just, you know, here's what I can say to that but it doesn't really, there's not more to add. So, if you come across questions like that is perfectly fine. Just be like, don't really have much to say in regards to that and that's no problems. Have psychedelics provided insight into how to live life well?

**Participant** 1:10:45

Yeah, I think so. So, sort of pulling me away from that, money, fame, sort of idea of success and, you know, with the mushrooms bringing you back to the roots of the earth, or the LSD kind of shooting you out to the universe and, and showing you some of the magnificence of the of what's beyond Earth, you know. I don't know. Yeah, those two things for me have been right up there. You might need to prompt me on that question again.

**Interviewer** 1:11:36

So, the question was, have psychedelics provided insights into how to live life well?

**Participant** 1:11:43

Yeah. So, yeah. So, the roots of the earth and the magnificence of the universe, that's Yeah, that's, that's helped me understand that there are only basic things that I want out of life and so because of that, I'm, you know, shaping my life in such a way, as best I can. Yeah.

**Q11. Interviewer** 1:12:31

Have psychedelics shaped your worldview?

**Participant** 1:12:39

Yeah, definitely. So, the societal and hierarchical. Yeah, definitely, that that sort of. Yeah, that that changed my worldview. Understanding that you know, there are powers in place, there are systems there are hierarchies, like understanding that was one thing, but then being able to then decide where I fit into that, and whether I want to feel frustrated or belittled by that or, or if I just want to adjust my life so that I get what I want out of it and that tends to just be happiness. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:13:50

Does the happiness come in a particular form? Like, is there a dream that you have of how you want your life to be or is it more general a general sense of happiness?

**Participant** 1:14:03

I think happiness for me just as about being present, about feeling less obliged and more free.

**Interviewer** 1:14:24

Yeah.

**Participant** 1:14:27

I don't I don't personally get a lot of career satisfaction. So, that's been one for me that I've had to deal with and, and learn to be okay with that this sort of time in my life.

**Q12. Interviewer** 1:15:00

Have psychedelics changed your relationship with nature?

**Participant** 1:15:04

Yes, definitely. Yeah. So, it's, just this, there's so many connections to be made there, and we'll never cover it all, but like, yeah, I've learned how to grow food. So, I've been growing food and herbs and all sorts for years now. So, that's, to me, that's nature. I exercise a lot now, you know, I'm fit and healthy, I look after my body. So, that's nature. You know, I love the sound of any birds, any insects it's just for sure, just absolutely changed my connection to nature, my understanding of and it's just prompted a whole lot of interests that may not have otherwise been there and so when I talk about happiness, you know, like those things make me happy. So

**Interviewer** 1:16:27

Has it prompted you to spend more time in natural environments, for example, like going camping or going on hikes in nature or just being in nature more often?

**Participant** 1:16:43

Yeah, it has.

**Interviewer** 1:17:01

And what about environmental concerns has it played a role in your, in your concern, or understanding of the issues related to pollution and climate change the way humans are impacting the environment?

**Participant** 1:17:20

Yep, definitely. Yeah and so that, that was kind of what I was touching on earlier with that red pill syndrome as well, where you wake up to some of those atrocities, and you almost don't know how to feel about it. You don't always know what you can do about it, but it doesn't sit right with you. With me, you know, so. So, there were times in my life where that was actually super frustrating and I didn't know how to deal with it because I was like, man, this is, this is atrocious what's happening and I, I don't want to be a part of that. Like, it's, it's obvious that there are these environmental issues and things like that, and we just contribute so blindly to it every day, and nobody cares, like, and so for me, that was just like, super frustrating and so, so that for me, you know, I started to get, you know, fears, like what happens when all of this collapses, like, you know, and so it's all of these types of ideas that prompt changes, like growing food and things like that. So, some of these ideas can snowball from one thing to another, you know, but yes, definitely opened my eyes up to environmental issues and things like that.

**Interviewer** 1:18:54

And has it motivated you. So, I guess the gardening is definitely one aspect to this question but what I'm going to ask is have it motivated you to get involved with any projects or movements or groups who are trying to manage or deal with the environmental issues?

**Participant** 1:19:14

Yeah, definitely, definitely. So, you know, we're in groups where we were like swapping vegetables and stuff like that off Facebook. So, trying to create some sort of community where food can be sourced locally, you know, instead of brought in on trucks or imported from the other side of the world type thing. So, yeah. Yeah. It always starts with the idea or the realisation and then it's up to you whether you're going to pursue that any further. So, for me, yeah, like, definitely just trying to or changing my diet. So, that cut out a lot of plastics. Um, yeah, definitely.

**Interviewer** 1:19:57

Ok.

**Participant** 1:20:06

Yeah. Next, next.

**Interviewer** 1:20:20

Next Yep. So, the next cut 11 questions are going to be going into, or the focus or of them are related to your psychedelic use, how the sort of how to what you do, personally, your preparation, different things around what you're doing when you're tripping and some other, like, if you do if you have any particular types of integration practices, what are they? What do they look like? So, those are the next that's the focus for the next probably like 20, whew maybe like 40 minutes.

**Participant** 1:20:56

Okay.

**Q13. Interviewer** 1:20:57

So, the first question is, how do you prepare yourself for a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:21:04

Yeah, so that very much depends on the dose.

**Interviewer** 1:21:10

Do you want to do me then, start with the low dose and work up in terms of the differences?

**Participant** 1:21:17

Yeah, so. So, psilocybin is my psychedelic drug of choice. I've used LSD. I've, I've had a full-on breakthrough experience on DMT once, but psilocybin is the one that allows me to confront my feelings and feel the way I want to feel and get through. Get through the things that I need to. Sorry, question again, please.

**Interviewer** 1:21:50

So how do you prepare yourself for a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:21:55

So yep, depends on the dose. So, a microdose, or slightly moving into the recreational dose of psilocybin, I don't feel like most of the time you need to prepare so much for if I'm going for a big dose where I know that I'm crossing over well, and truly, then, yeah, my preparation is pretty much like, I want to, I want to feel good about myself as best I can, before going into that. So, I'm going to make sure my jobs are done at home, I'm going to make sure my you know, my partner and that they know what's up what's happening. Then I'm probably going to go and do some exercise and just sort of recalibrate. A little bit. Yeah. Get a bit of get a bit of stress out and, and that and then I will go into a big dose from there, usually.

**Interviewer** 1:23:09

And is this all on the same day? The or do you is this as sort of leading into it like a few days in advance?

**Participant** 1:23:17

It can definitely be like a few days sort of thing. Like, we'll usually put the time aside, if we know it's going to be big one. So, we as in me and a couple of friends or myself or whatever, but if you're planning yeah, the bigger ones I tend to plan for now and yeah, so there's usually a period of a couple of days there and like, I always want something nutritious in my belly, like, I don't want I need a bit of energy to ride through some of the challenging parts of a trip. Cause yeah, like, I mean, the best trips that I still have, they're challenging, challenging moments and for me, I want some good healthy food in the belly and I'm ready to go.

**Interviewer** 1:24:11

Mm hmm. So, you don't do any sort of fasting related to your use?

**Participant** 1:24:15

No, no, no, I haven’t done that one and I don't think I would for a bigger dose of mushrooms.

**Q14. Interviewer** 1:24:38

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

**Participant** 1:24:52

So definitely in a safe home, of someone that we know and trust very much but that's on the sort of dose where you're floored, you know, like, these. Yeah. When you're when you're on the carpet for three or four hours, unable to open your eyes and even move like those sort of things, but that doesn't happen often and, but other than that, you know, the smaller doses, the ones that are just for trying to unblock a bit of thought congestion or deal with a bit of stress or put a problem to bed or whatever. I can have a dose like that and where I see fit, basically, so sometimes I'll have like a microdose and I'll go and get a massage and then, and that will just de stress me, I'll come out, I'll come out just feeling the best and then if I want to, if I've, if I've got more exploration to do, then I'll go home, lock the doors, and then dose up from there but yeah, generally in terms of large doses, that would only be averaging no more than once or twice a year kind of thing.

**Interviewer** 1:26:45

What for you now is the large dose?

**Participant** 1:27:00

Pretty much anything, anything that is going to put me to the point where I don't want to talk. I need to close my eyes lie down and I'm going for it but yeah, set and setting is a big one. So, dosage can be unpredictable. It's not always what you see is what you get.

**Q15. Interviewer** 1:27:42

Are there any items that are important to have with you in tripping? No?

**Participant** 1:27:54

Nope, not that I've not know that I feel.

**Interviewer** 1:27:59

So just to touch on that, too. is music, for example, something that you use?

**Participant** 1:28:07

Oh, yes, yeah, definitely. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:28:22

Just to go on a little to that. Do you have a type of music genre, or style of music that is particular to taking psychedelics or is it just your generic listening?

**Participant** 1:28:36

Definitely not your generic listening. Like, I've got I've got a playlist on Spotify that I've liked collated over time and yeah, I like, I like songs that have emotive stories. You know, I don't mind lyrics when I'm tripping. You know things about things about love feelings, you know, the journey. I love these types of things but then, I love jazz. I love instrumental stuff, you know, good guitar work and then I love like tribal dubstep and like, you know, just these big long electronic mixers that can take you around the world, you know, because they've got cultural sounds, and then they've got the sounds of forests and animals and different instruments, and things, you know, Indian instruments, Arabian instruments, and the next minute you've got like a French accordion or whatever, like, and you're being taken around like a cultural kind of like journey. So, yeah, lots man. lots of different music, but music is I think for me, is a key for being able to like mind surf. So, so for me, like, the best, the best work is always done for me when I've got my eyes closed and, and I'm basically like closed eyes visual, mind surfing, and the music. The music controls a big part of that for you. You've kind of got to take passenger in and let it take you. Yeah.

**Participant** 1:30:44

So, and then so that that's kind of, like this space that I'm striving for. Yeah, I want to get to that space of, of peace and, and boundlessness where I can just, yeah, feel all of these different things and I think yeah, that that, for me is where, you know, reasoning with my feelings and these insights and inspiration and as well as the, you know, fractal, the geometry, all of that sort of stuff coming into it, too. So

**Q16. Interviewer** 1:31:30

How do you prepare the space where you take psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:31:34

Yep. So, it's just about comfort for us. You know, like, or for me. Yeah, it's, it's just about being comfortable.

**Interviewer** 1:31:49

What does that look like?

**Participant** 1:31:52

Safe. No one, no one there that we don't want there. Typically, a locked door and then yeah, you know, a few snacks. A blanket. You know, music. Sometimes we can put some lights on or do something like that but the key thing is just safety and comfort, I think and just being free to you know, if you want to take your shirt off and lie face down on the carpet, then you go and do that, like, and I'm only interested in tripping with people that will allow me that freedom. Yeah. So, it's, it's yeah, it's not how the space looks. It's, it's what the space is and, and making sure that's, that's safe and free and comfortable.

**Interviewer** 1:33:03

One question that seems to have come up or not question that has come up but one answer that comes up commonly. So, I ask the question, just to say, is the space where you take psychedelics, do you do any cleaning or tidying up beforehand?

**Participant** 1:33:23

Yeah, yeah. I think so. Little things can really bug you during the come up. So, yeah, I think so. It depends on the seasons, like a small thing could be lighting the fire, you know, and then and you've got a nice warm lounge, and you've got a fire there. So, it's a small, small thing, not necessarily cleaning, but it is, you know, setting the temperature and the vibe and that.

**Interviewer** 1:34:09

Aww I had the idea and I lost it.

**Participant** 1:34:16

But I've definitely vacuumed before I've gone out for a massage because I knew I was coming home to the floor.

**Interviewer** 1:34:23

Okay. Fair enough. You don't want itchy crumbs on Yeah, bare skin.

**Participant** 1:34:29

Yep.

**Interviewer** 1:34:38

Do you in terms of your psychedelic experiences, what would be the ratio of doing it by yourself versus or compared to doing it in a group with other people?

**Participant** 1:34:52

Yeah, so comes down to dosage again, so I've ingested, you know, some level of psilocybin hundreds of times more by myself, then I would have you ever with friends but in terms of the sort of massive trips that you're not likely to forget. I've had probably a pretty equal amount of by myself and with friends. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:35:52

And is it the same friend group that you're doing it with?

**Participant** 1:35:55

Yeah, pretty much like, I talked about the unique opportunity for bonding earlier, and just, you know, the trust and the safety of that space, and things like that and yeah, people's vulnerabilities, their insecurities, all of these things are going to come up, or have the potential to come up and so because of that, yeah, it's a pretty small circle. Sometimes we will initiate, you know, like, maybe one extra person now and then but yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:36:42

And just follow up on that. What's the typical size of the group who you're doing it with?

**Participant** 1:36:48

So would be two to three to, I mean, the most I've ever had a full-on trip with was four people.

**Interviewer** 1:36:58

Is that including yourself?

**Participant** 1:36:59

Yeah, that's including me.

**Q17. Interviewer** 1:37:09

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

**Participant** 1:37:26

Nah, I don't I don't think so.

**Q18. Interviewer** 1:37:29

Cool. What are you normally doing physically during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:37:40

So pretty much being still. Yeah. Like, yeah, that's the space I'm looking for is where I can get to that point where I'm just still and I can just close my eyes and go through it.

**Interviewer** 1:38:06

Is there any particular posture that you maintain or is common for you?

**Participant** 1:38:11

Usually just either sunk back into the couch with my eyes closed head back or on the floor. Like yeah, flat on your back on the floor.

**Interviewer** 1:38:40

So, do you ever do it in your bedroom, for example, by yourself and use the bed or are you this is not?

**Participant** 1:38:48

Na, I've always used the lounge actually, when I've been by myself. I've never really gone to bed and done it.

**Q19. Interviewer** 1:39:00

Cool. Is there anything you avoid doing or interacting with during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:39:20

I definitely don't care much for my cell phone. If you want me you can get me later. I don't I don't want to hear obscene lyrics or like repulsive lyrics, or especially during the come up when it has the ability to affect the direction of the trip. Yeah, I don't want to hear any agitating music or anything like that. So, I definitely would avoid. Yeah, obscene, obscene music and yeah, this the setting obviously is important with those small circles as well. Like you don't want people bugging you because of what they're saying or yeah. So, I would avoid, avoid people with energies I don't agree with as well.

**Interviewer** 1:40:49

Does that, does that just the type of people who you wouldn't have or who wouldn't do well in a group tripping with you? Do they have a particular characteristic? Is there some way that you could describe? Like, is there a common trait or theme about people who wouldn't fit in well, that would cause issues for you?

**Participant** 1:41:19

Yeah, I think, I think people that tend to make jokes at other people's expense. You know, for lack of a word bullies better word bullies. Yeah. I don't know. I think, I think there needs to be some level of mutual respect and, and for me, actually, there needs to be quite a level of mutual respect but yeah, as I don't, it's not so much about being able to identify these things beforehand. It's about for me, it's about keeping the circle small anyway, because things may come up in other people that you just would never have expected and that can throw, throw everyone.

**Interviewer** 1:42:36

Does but does doing it in the group, other than a bonding experience is does that have a different purpose to doing it on your own?

**Participant** 1:42:49

Yeah, I think so. Like the, you know, there's the absolute ridiculousness and the funniness of you no tripping. So, that's like, it can be wicked fun, for starters. So, all going well, you're going to be having a great night, which you want to share with a couple of mates, yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:43:26

And what about in relation to sort of the introspective aspect where you're dealing with issues that are coming up for you? Is that does the group setting also facilitate a sort of level of support for people who are dealing with their own shit or is that not the purpose of that particular setting?

**Participant** 1:43:51

I, I think that there needs to be freedom for it to go in that direction if need be and so if Yeah, and if you're not around people that are going to allow that, then it's not going to be the best. Yeah, like I've had one in a group setting where I ended up on the floor for about four hours in absolute silence and, you know, I felt like we were all in it together but I was very much as alone as ever in that space. At the same time, I had the highest dose. So, they sort of started to come to a couple of hours before me and I was just flat on the floor, and I knew that it wasn't going to be over anytime soon and they just they just allow that and they check in on me every half an hour, you all good, bro? Yeah and it's like, you know, I don't I don't, that's not the time for conversation. That's not the time for jokes. That's not the time for whatever else he's doing. That was my time and I have friends that will that are not going to bug you. Yeah, and that's important, super important and because of that, like I know that I can trust these dudes man like that, you know. So, we've been through the funny trips, we've been through the trips where everyone's on the same page but we've also been through the trips where I've been absolutely floored having a series of deaths and rebirths and whatnot and my friends have got my back and then not bugging me and, yeah, that's really important.

**Interviewer** 1:46:03

In the group setting is there. Have you had experiences where the you or other group members have had to support another person going through a difficult experience?

**Participant** 1:46:21

Na, that that really hasn't happened, luckily, not in the group setting no and that's not going to be an easy thing as it, especially if, if you don't have a sober person there. That's not going to be easy. So, that's when you take into consideration these other factors of how do you prepare for the trip? You know, what sort of space are you looking at? are you cleaning, you know, who's coming to this event? All of these other things we discuss, contribute to, yeah, the direction that that trip can go in.

**Q20. Interviewer** 1:47:19

Is there anything special you do after a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:47:26

No, no.

**Interviewer** 1:47:32

And so one thing in terms of the preparation, how much are you taking the is the entire day dedicated to this experience? Do you leave time the next day to deal with it? Like what's the how does that sort of package look?

**Participant** 1:47:51

I think yeah. Like, you can return back to baseline on a same day, but like, you always need a good, good sleep at some point, I think. So, yeah, it depends. It can happen at different times at different parts of the week, or whatever but I think for me, it's always about making sure you get that good sleep in, whenever that is, whether it's the next night or whatever, but yeah.

**Q21. Interviewer** 1:48:42

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

**Participant** 1:48:51

Yeah. So, so you know, learning to breathe. Yeah breathing technique is something that can come up during a pretty full on trip, I think and just, I think, you know, in meditation, how they talk about like watching, watching thoughts go past instead of binding too much to them and getting too attached to these thoughts, basically. So, I try to take that approach, as well and then like when some of the darker visuals will come through and stuff like that. Instead of like reacting to that. I've developed techniques just to acknowledge that and just watch it go past and then yeah, like in a trip nothing ever stays the same for too long. So, yes, so you've got to learn to watch these things go past, especially in some of the more difficult moments and just be willing to, to stand tall, you made the decision to go into this. So, breathe. Watch it, let it happen and then you'll be on to the next thing before you know it.

**Q22. Interviewer** 1:50:38

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

**Participant** 1:51:04

I mean, I try to talk about the talk about things for a starters. You know, share what came up with friends or, you know, I often tell my partner and that. What, can you say that question again, please sorry?

**Interviewer** 1:51:25

Yep. So, are there, oh sorry. Could you describe any type of integration or self-reflective practices that you engage in to make sense of your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 1:51:41

Certainly nothing ritualistic or, or anything like that. Yeah, it's just comes down to processing it and then yeah, I do like to talk about it, because then it puts it out in in the, in the open space, and then it becomes something that like, you can continue to work on.

**Interviewer** 1:52:08

Yeah. For example, do you have anything? Do you write down your experiences? Do you have a sort of record of what happened?

**Participant** 1:52:15

Okay, yeah, I have, um, I've written like, one or two trip reports, just for the sake of, you know, sharing it with other people on forums and that but yeah, it's, it's, it usually just comes down to a lot of a lot of thought, really, nothing else.

**Interviewer** 1:52:41

Makes sense I think, really, it's, you know, a lot of what integration is just a lot more thinking.

**Participant** 1:52:49

Yeah.

**Q23. Interviewer** 1:52:53

Are there any noticeable changes in how you think or feel in the days or weeks following psychedelic use?

**Participant** 1:53:01

Yeah. Definitely. Like it, it sometimes can just feel like a fresh start. Depending on dosage, or just a fresh reset. put it that way. Yeah. Which, which can be a great thing. Like if you're feeling snowed under or, I don't know, whatever, whatever people are dealing with, I know that I've, I've had plenty of reasons going into different trips and, and stuff and so to come out of that, just feeling that sense of amazement., love happiness. I mean, yeah, a lot of a lot of adults are just missing happiness from their daily lives. So, to get to get that level of joy and happiness and love from an experience like that can give you the boost that you need just to keep going. Just a reset and you just do you just keep going. Get some clarity.

**Interviewer** 1:54:24

And does it have a do you have some sort of typical duration that you might have this what's typically referred to as afterglow, period?

**Participant** 1:54:36

Yeah, it's so circumstantial, though, it just depends what's, what's going on. Sometimes the afterglow is not always a glow and sometimes it's actually just you sitting there on Monday morning at work, feeling like an alien after such a profound experience over the weekend and then you're just back at your desk doing your job and you actually haven't had had any time to sort of glow there and so sometimes that can just feel so like, like compared to the heights of the mushroom trip and what you've experienced there compared to just back to the monotony of your job. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:55:31

Yeah.

**Participant** 1:55:35

So that can leave you feeling the opposite of glowing for a day or two to be fair but then yeah, there's I don't know, I know people where you've seen them glowing for months and months afterwards, you know, so it all depends.

**Q24. Interviewer** 1:56:07

Has how you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 1:56:12

Yes, yeah. Yep, definitely. So, the first time I used them that we talked about, the only reason I ate those is because I we couldn't find any weed. So, so that's what I did instead. That's why I used them that day and that was the only reason why. So, yeah, I found out pretty hard that that was a dumb decision but yeah, it's just completely changed now, like, last Thursday me and a friend had a small amount of hash brownie and a low dose of psilocybin and went and got a massage together and yeah, so that's how I'm using them. 10 years later, is you know, I've been exercising, I've been working all week and I just want to really declutter, de-stress and just get all that pressed out. So, yeah. So, then it becomes like, you're not just using a psychedelic, it's actually self-care and, and that, you know,

**Interviewer** 1:57:44

After your first experience, was the, if you excluded the first experience in terms of how you've changed your psychedelic use, what would this is there a major difference between the subsequent experiences and how you use now?

**Participant** 1:58:03

Yeah, because I know, I know what I get from it now and I know what the possibilities are, and I know, I know what can be dealt to easily with a substance like psilocybin. So, definitely, definitely has changed over time.

**Q25. Interviewer** 1:58:39

Okay, so those are all the how tos. The next question is, what do you think is the core psychedelic experience, and this is for you personally, what is the core psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:58:59

It's having your brain blown apart, and it's having your, your idea of the world around you sort of broken down and rebuilt. It's an experience that allows you to see through your own bullshit. All of your excuses or all of the protections that your ego sort of puts in place to protect yourself from feeling bad or sad or depressed or whatever. Those get shattered and then all you're left with is an honest look at who you are. The world around you what we're doing, where we're going and yeah, it yeah, it's a big one but it's just taking you outside of what you think is your life and showing you that there's a lot more to it and, and just opening you up to the idea that everything you know, could be completely wrong and you've sort of got, you've got your time here, you've got one life, and it's now up to you. How you want to spend that, I guess but the problem is that all just sounds ridiculous and it doesn't do it any justice either me trying to explain that.

**Interviewer** 2:00:56

Well, I, I think, just to give you some credit, certainly a lot of people and it's described all over the place, you know, these experiences are ineffable, you can't put them into words, but of the language that we do have that points in the direction of what the potentiality of the experience might be, like, I think these do like that does a good job. It's like, even if it doesn't capture the, the experience itself, it's like it's conveying a level of, I don't know. I want to say intensity, but it wouldn't, wouldn't isn't exactly the right word either but the sense of profundity maybe a sense of intensity, a sense of power, or.

**Participant** 2:01:47

Yeah and so with these realisations, you know, that's the interesting thing is that it's, it's showing you this in like a loving way, in a magical way, in a, in a mysterious way. You know, it's, it's showing you in a way that you won't ever have seen before. Like there's no possible way that you can experience that until you do it and that's, yeah, that's a big part of it too. Is that you do have to make that jump, if you want to find out and once you know, you'll never unknow and, and once you once you see what you see you just yeah, you can't unsee and that's, that's a big part of it, too.

**Q26. Interviewer** 2:02:45

That's Pandora's box. All right. So, the questions I mentioned a while ago about asking about your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience, and also your most memorable or life changing. Those are the next two questions. So, firstly, can you please describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 2:03:21

Yeah, so my most negative experience was my first experience where I ingested 24 mushrooms of an unknown weight and yeah, just had the worst time and basically wanted to die that night, because I felt worthless it exposed my bad behaviour it showed me who I was, and I did not, did not want to be that person at all but I already was, so it absolutely tormented me and I couldn't escape it for the duration of that trip. Was really, really, really, I wouldn't wish I wouldn't wish that upon anybody. What was happening at the time. But, you know, in hindsight, I woke up the next day and I was okay.

**Interviewer** 2:04:33

It was the kick in the butt you needed.

**Participant** 2:04:35

Yeah, apparently.

**Interviewer** 2:04:38

Can you I don't know if you're able to where you have memory of it but can you go into a description of maybe the particular content that you're experiencing? The emotions like what? Because from a large point of view, you've kind of described what happened but I wonder like, sometimes it's good to connect like these are the types of things that I saw and use the types of feelings associated and that gives, I think people reading it will get a better sense of like, Oh, shit, okay, I can see how that, you know, could torment me, for example.

**Participant** 2:05:12

So, when it started coming on, I had just outrageous feelings of nausea for a start and I just couldn't get it to set to sit right with me and I'd been making bad decisions and yeah, because of that discomfort, I ended up, curled up under a blanket with the blanket over my head, just wanting the feeling of guilt and worthlessness to stop. The problem is that, as I close my eyes, all I could see was dark art and it was like walking into the mind of like, a dark tattoo artist. You know, if you walk into the shop of a tattoo artist who's super dark, all you're going to see is like skulls and spiders and bats and, and claws and, and just dark, dark art and I was just, yeah, I closed, just kept trying to close my eyes to get away from what I was feeling and that's all that was being thrown at me, was just that dark art and I didn't, it didn't make sense to me. What was happening with the visuals but I knew why I was feeling so shit and it was because of because I had effectively made plans to rip off a friend. I didn't see it as ripping off at the time and that was what was so delusional about who I was and the past, I was going down and it just, it just made me feel guilt, but 1000 times over to the very pit of my core. To the point where, like I didn't, I didn't want to live with that person. So, like the easiest way to explain it as like, I felt like I wanted to kill myself that night. It's the only time I've ever felt like that in my entire life.

**Interviewer** 2:07:45

And I just what stopped you in that, in that case, if you felt so intense of a feeling to wanting to kill yourself?

**Participant** 2:07:55

because it never got to the point where it was like, that's what I'm going to do. It was just like, this is how I'm feeling like I want to die. I feel so, so worthless right now that I don't want to be. I don't want to be this person but it was it was never a conversation of like, you know, it was never a conversation of how do I implement that? It was just like, I'm just feeling so disgusting.

**Interviewer** 2:08:41

If I can ask, you said that when you had borrowed the money originally, you had not conceptualised it as you ripping off your friend but that was sort of like the intention or you didn't have the intention of paying it back. Yeah, what was what was the frame then? Like how did how was that justified to yourself? Like, I'm not stealing, but I'm not going to pay it back either?

**Participant** 2:09:08

Because simply because he had money more money than I did at the time and I feel like he I don't know. I was I was being an idiot and so I was justifying it to myself in any way that I could, I guess yeah. So, no matter which way you look at it, it's not going to make sense because that's the wrong thing to do but a person going down a bad path will justify those things to himself and it wasn't until I was smacked in the face by those mushrooms that I saw what I was doing.

**Q27. Interviewer** 2:10:03

Can you describe your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience? And I guess I should have mentioned it before some people, you know, that could be the one you just described, you might say like, yes, that is the most memorable life changing. So, in this case, if you'd like to substitute an alternative one that what you also think is really worth talking about. Love to hear that if you feel like that's those two are the same insufficient, that's fine as well.

**Participant** 2:10:38

Yeah. I could, I could definitely tell you about one experience that I got a lot out of. So, part of my integration and learning to deal with myself was to take up martial arts and become a Muay Thai fighter and I, I was working, working towards one of my fights, and I've been training for months leading up to this fight and during those months, I experienced a lot of highs and lows, a lot of fears, a lot of anxieties. A lot of really good days, where I was really proud of myself and absolutely smashed it, you know, so massive highs, and massive lows, fear of the unknown fear of the opponent, these types of things and so this is kind of where we talk about as well how the use of psychedelics changes over time as well. So, I remember, I got through all of the training, and I was two days away from this fight. So, I went and had a had a small recreational dose and I went in for a big long deep tissue massage, and got all my body rubbed down and, and relaxed my mind and that and then I went home, and I dosed up even higher and then I put the sounds on, lit the fire, had a shower and then by that point, I was like tripping, basically but I was completely relaxed and submitted from the massage. So, I was already in the space where I wanted to be and then, so I just lay down, chuck the music on and then I started thinking about this fight. That was like, less than 48 hours away and I started having visions of you know, myself of warriors preparing for battle. Yeah, these interesting preparations before a battle and then I just had this like, overwhelming appreciation, like just for my life, for the fact that I have come this far, and I'm now strong and fit and healthy and, you know, so I was feeling just really, really thankful and I was flat out on the floor, with my eyes closed and then I just felt like this overwhelming urge to cry, like the emotion was just building up and that's when I stopped myself and I was like, No, now's not the time to cry. You've got a fight in two days, you, no, you don't cry and then this voice, this authoritative voice of myself, or my father, or God or anything. It just said, feel yourself, son. Feel it and so I just submitted to that. Feeling whatever was coming up, and I just cried and cried and cried and cried for 15-20 minutes, half an hour. I'm not too sure how long and I just didn't fight it at all and I just I just felt it because that was the command was to feel, feel what I'm feeling and feel it for real. That was the instruction and so I went through this massive, it all happened really fast but I felt like in that moment, I experienced all of the feelings that had been feeling over the last couple of months in the training. So, all of those fears of this opponent, all of those anxieties, the inadequacies, I felt those lows and I accepted them all again but then at the same time, I felt all of those highs from the success of my training and everything like that and they were all just absolutely flooding me and I was just crying and crying and crying like it was every single emotion at once and I was I felt it, I felt it for real and it was powerful and, and, yeah, basically, I, I submitted to that I got through it and then the next day, I just woke up, fearless. I woke up focused, and I knew, I knew exactly where I was at and I was just no longer, no longer had any concern about what was about to unfold and previously, I've used a lot of aggression to get through my fights and that's been my main, that's been my main cover and I was able to let all of that go and I came out into this next fight with just a massive smile on my face, I didn't need to be aggressive because I wasn't scared. I wasn't worried about whether I would win or lose, I wasn't, I wasn't worried about any of those complex feelings that surrounded the fight. I just, it was just gone, it was washed clean, and what was going to happen was going to happen and that was that and all I had to do was be there for it and let it happen and yeah, I won that fight and I felt great about it and I didn't have to get aggressive or do anything, It was actually quite a smooth ride and everything worked out and I attribute that to, to having, to feeling myself and to feeling those feelings and from submitting to the instruction, which was to let go and cry and feel that fear. Feel it, feel all of it and then deal with it. Yeah, so that to me, that's profound. Like, yeah. That's something else and, and I don't know how else you experience something like that. So, yeah. is one example.

**Interviewer** 2:18:09

It was good one, not that I'm ranking them, but it was a, don’t know, sort of just really nice to listen to us all.

**Participant** 2:18:29

So, it's powerful stuff. Like it really is to the very core of our existence. Like that's what I was feeling that night was, was what it meant to be alive, what it meant to be afraid of, of an outcome of a violent encounter, you know, like, that's life or death and, and it was just yeah, it was amazing to feel all that just rushing in all at once, but in a loving way in a comforting way and like in a in a way that tells you it's okay. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:19:14

Did that experience like after the fight, was there a prolonged sense of what I can only kind of see or describe as like an emotional calmness?

**Participant** 2:19:28

Yeah, definitely. Yeah. It's, it's changed a lot change because of that and now and now I know that I can, I can win my hardest battles without aggression and, and, you know, so, aggression is something that a lot of males are struggling with. A lot of people I know struggle with managing their aggression. They got no idea, yeah, so for me that was powerful to be able to, to do all of that and, and get through an event like that without having this feeling of aggression or anger or anything like that, you know. It's kind of like, yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:20:20

The, in your previous Muy Thai fights, you're saying that you, you approached those with a sense of aggression or anger or maybe just aggression.

**Participant** 2:20:31

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:20:32

What is the, are you able to speak to the difference? What is coming into the fight with aggression? is that if, what is that? Obviously, the feeling is aggression but what does it mean is that I do want to hurt that person is that like a sort of? What's the difference in mindset that's going on there, when you're coming into it, just say, because it's the, this both still fight, you don't particularly want to lose.

**Participant** 2:20:58

Yeah so.

**Interviewer** 2:20:59

Don't want to get hurt necessarily.

**Participant** 2:21:01

I don't know how to explain it but aggression as a thought process, that's milliseconds before the action. So, if you're, if you're looking to attack someone with aggression, that aggression is in the way of your attack, I think, by a few milliseconds, because you have made the choice to be aggressive. So, removing that puts you into more of a present space. Yeah, where you might be more likely to achieve the desired outcome. So, you take fighting away from that completely, and you look at any other scenario. You know, if you're struggling with something with someone or whatever, when you address that, aggression is going to get in the way of your outcome and if you can, remove that aspect of it and go into things, like a lot clearer, less emotional baggage, then yeah, you're just more present, you can deal with your emotions, and you can reach that desired outcome. Think.

**Interviewer** 2:22:33

Okay, well, thank you for that there was. I didn't take any notes on that because I don't, there was not an easy way to conceptualise that, so I'll just go and listen through that again and maybe something will come up later, and a way to put a type of summary on it but I'm not even sure I'll be able to do that but very interesting, certainly very interesting and I think it does, like whatever that is, it does speak to something important or deep about the, I guess it's not just a psychedelic experience, the person can have an intense emotional release like that, outside of context like that.

**Participant** 2:23:15

Exactly yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:23:16

But that certainly seems like a good catalyst for those types of experiences.

**Participant** 2:23:22

Well, that's what you begin to understand as well in the integration is that you have feelings and emotions on a daily basis and so you can learn to deal with them and yeah, so psychedelics has been a major catalyst for my learning in that department, for sure.

**Q28. Interviewer** 2:23:50

So, the next question is, if you have ever experienced ego death, or ego dissolution, could you describe what it was a like?

**Participant** 2:24:07

Yeah, so, I mean, I've had countless humbling experiences. I don't know where we start to differentiate between, like something that's humbling and something that's like ego death.

**Interviewer** 2:24:24

What do you want if one of the so part of the question there's a few kind of things, in it, I’ve only read you the first part. The idea is, I'm trying to get a sense of what people think ego death is as an experience.

**Participant** 2:24:39

Yep, okay.

**Interviewer** 2:24:40

So, a lot of different people have their own kind of individual ways of describing it and there's some similarities and some dissimilarities. So, I wonder maybe you want to first start with what do you, how would you conceptualise ego death, and that can be based on your personal experiences and then you might want to describe a time you've had that experience. I don't know if that helps, but that's sort of where we're trying to. That's what I'm aiming at.

**Participant** 2:25:09

Yeah. So, I think they can bring you to like a place of like, absolute silliness, where you can no longer take yourself too seriously in some certain aspects. So, I mean, yeah, that that can start to dissolve some of your ego like when you realise that you're just as silly as the guy next to you, then, you know, that can break down some of your ego and that, but I don't know, depends on the levels, I've had one experience where I was tripping on the floor from about 9pm right through till, like 6am, it was quite a large dose and that that was the one I was mentioning earlier, where my mates were there and they were kind of checking in on me, every now and then and stuff and yeah, I was going through a series of deaths and rebirths on the floor and so it was all closed eyes, visuals, everything I talk about most of the time is all closed eyes and what I watched was, I could see like, an aura of myself, I could see the whole outline of my body and stuff, but it was it was composed of like, beautiful geometry and colours and things like that but then what started happening was like my fingers, this is in my mind, my fingers detached from my hands and then my hands started to detach from my arms and then my arms started to detach from like, my torso and everything started to just pull apart and like, I felt like I could see like, my bones and stuff and my body was just being like, pulled, pulled apart. Like, you know, how you go into a black hole and you get like, your atoms get pulled apart or whatever.

**Interviewer** 2:27:27

Sort of like a tshhhh \*mimes explosion\*

**Participant** 2:27:28

Yeah, that's, that's what it felt like but it was wrapped in beauty it was cloaked in in colours and patterns that you can't describe and so and, and I could just as that was happening, I could just feel this absolute whiting out of my, myself and my existence and I was getting to that point where I was just wasn't able to process what was happening and it felt like, memory of self was fading. It felt like yeah, it felt like it was being killed off and at that time, I felt like I was being killed off and at that moment, I, I couldn't reason with anything. There were no memories of myself that I could anchor myself with, or anything like that. Like, everything was just dissolving my mind my memory, my body it felt like and so I was basically presented with that choice to accept it and watch it happen or to be like, wait, I, I want my memory like, you know, and then sort of snap out of it and try and pull back and find my memory. So, I was sort of faced with that choice and I remember just letting it all happen again and the whole body just disintegrating the mind got completely wiped out like a white purgatory type space, you know, a time chamber if you ever a hyperbolic time chamber. If you ever watched Dragon ball Z or

**Interviewer** 2:29:25

Oh yes, something where they train?

**Participant** 2:29:27

Yeah, you know, something like that. Just a white a white out of space

**Interviewer** 2:29:32

just for infinite in all directions.

**Participant** 2:29:33

Yeah, exactly and there was no memory of self and I just watched it happen I sank through the floor, died and as I submitted to that death, I just got shot straight back up into the realms of pleasure again, and rebirth like that death was cold and strange and, and was a nothingness that I had to accept and then the reward for that was that it just rebirth me and then it just shot me straight up into like a 60 minute peak of just absolute unexplainable bliss of just pleasure and, and colours and love and joy and reassurance and, and, and just that feeling that like, I was I was strong enough to, to submit to that and, and my reward is this peak now that I'm being shown, you know, the magnificence of the universe and all of that sort of stuff with what I'm seeing. Yeah, for me, that's probably the closest, but that's that would be the sort of only ego death sort of thing I can explain because I did have the sense that I died was dying several times and I had no choice, but to accept that, because I had made the decision to go to that space. So, I was Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:31:24

Did that a repeat a few times? Did you die, rebirth have bliss and pleasure and then die again?

**Participant** 2:31:31

Yeah. Yeah, a couple of times on the, on the floor there.

**Interviewer** 2:31:36

Sounds pretty intense dude.

**Participant** 2:31:40

Yeah but it's, it was sort of connected with, with life lessons. So, I'd gone through some of that integration of, you know, learning how to fight, becoming healthy. You know, training and, and changing my diet, I've gone through all of these steps over a number of years and when I when I hit that ego death thing, the message, the message to me was that I was on the right track and I'm deliberately seeking out challenge to better myself and that was one of them and I passed it and here's the reward is the bliss and the beauty and yeah, but the message to me was like a keep going, son, like you've chosen this path and you're actually on the right one. Which is, you know, you compare that to the trip 10 years ago and that's a completely different story. Yeah, so it's gone from son, you're, you're on the worst possible path to like. Well done, like you're actually getting stronger, and you're on, you're on the right path and then I had my first DMT breakthrough was only several months ago. So, I've, I've been using psilocybin for years and years now. I acquired some DMT, about two and a half years ago, but never, never touched it and then I did a couple of months ago, and that message was very much the same, because that shot me into a very strange reality that was far different from the mushroom realm and I was forced to take to take passenger and all I could do was watch and I was suspended and DMT vision for probably about six minutes and then whatever was controlling that trip for me, released me back into this realm and I just face flat on the floor and just cried for 15 minutes, because they had shown me that and then returned me safely and unscathed and unbroken and the message from that was everything clicked into place and made sense. It was like all of these mushroom trips, all of this integration, all of this trying to grow and better yourself and stuff like that, that that DMT trip confirmed all of that for me, because I know that if I hadn't have gone through the growth that I had, then I think they would have been merciless with me and everything was just very, very clear that these ideas I've been pursuing my wonder for the universe and the earth and stuff like that as like a wholesome direction and that's an okay path to be on and I just felt like, yeah, I felt reassured after that DMT trip as full on as it was. Yeah and so that. So, my point by bringing that up, as I think my ability to navigate that one was a result of integration from several years of seeking out these, the sort of healing with the mushrooms. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:35:33

Well, I think that that seems to be very elaborate, detailed and description of what, uh, what ego death could be like. So, definitely think you've answered that question. I wonder. One of the follow up questions. I have two that is, how has that experience impacted you? Was there was there some long term.

**Participant** 2:36:03

For the ego death one?

**Interviewer** 2:36:05

Yeah.

**Participant** 2:36:06

Not so much. I think I think I've been on a path for a number of years now and I think it just reaffirms that I was on the right path and yeah. So, I don't I don't think it changed much it reassured what I've been learning and going through.

**Interviewer** 2:36:40

So, validated yourself.

**Participant** 2:36:41

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah and where I was at.

**Interviewer** 2:36:47

Hey, that's a good message to hear, I guess really. Like, you’re doing it right, and keep going. You're like, all right.

**Participant** 2:36:52

Yeah.

**Q29. Interviewer** 2:36:58

So, changing the direction of the questions a little bit. Have your experiences with psychedelics affected your spiritual or religious beliefs?

**Participant** 2:37:10

Um, that's a hard one, because I'm still, I'm still as unanswered on religion and spirituality as I've ever been. So, I've always believed in some sort of higher power, I guess, or the idea that the universe isn't a mistake, I guess but at the same time, I have beyond that I have absolutely no answers and I don't think that's changed much but what I do know is that there's far more to this, then then what we see at face value and so to me, that's, that's worth exploring. That's worth talking about. In a limitless, in limitless way, like you could have any conversation about that and go anywhere, and I'm okay with that.

**Q30. Interviewer** 2:38:26

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

**Participant** 2:38:37

Um, yeah, yeah, I think so. Like, I'm still coming to terms with it, I guess but I think it does. It depends on your experience, but I think it can alleviate some of the anxiety around your own mortality.

**Interviewer** 2:39:11

Has it done that for you?

**Participant** 2:39:13

Yeah, but at the same time, there's, I've got to do my bit as well. You know, like, if I don't want to fear death, then I need to make every day count or, you know, I need to be a good person so that when I am on my deathbed, I'm not lying there. As someone who I don't want to be, and I've got no time left. So, so, so yeah, I think if you're, if you're focused on being a good person, you're focused on things that are important to you. Yeah, I guess it has changed the way I view death and it's certainly not the end, you know, like it might, I don't know what it means for me but life goes on, especially here. You know, life will go on and I'm okay with that.

**Interviewer** 2:40:27

Just a quick follow up on that, when you say death is not the end, do you mean it in the sense that the people in the world that we exist in carry on and you die or do you mean that in the sense of like something youness carries on beyond death?

**Participant** 2:40:49

Yeah, good question. So, what I meant was that life in this realm will continue. Yeah, and, and life in this realm is uniquely special and, and this is the life and, and, and the life force that we're opened up to during these psychedelic experiences. That's where I've come from, it's where I am now and, and that magnificence will go on and on, regardless of whether I'm alive or not and that's an amazing thing. Yeah.

**Q31. Interviewer** 2:41:41

So, this question is somewhat similar to the spiritual religious belief question, but it's more secular in its description, just in case the It gets at a different aspect of the it that doesn't really get picked up on by the spiritual religious question. So, basically, it is have psychedelics changed any fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality?

**Participant** 2:42:08

Yeah, yep, it has, I mean, everything sort of talked about it before, but like, we interface the world with the limited senses that we have and we've always looked out of two eyes and looked at this, you know, 3d scape. Whereas the psychedelic realm, I don't know, that that just seems multi-dimensional, it doesn't seem like a 3d type thing. It seems just like something that goes so far beyond that, and every which direction and not only that, but it syncs it syncs with your emotions, it syncs with other senses, you know, you get synaesthesia and things like that, where things cross over during trips and stuff like that. So, it just really, really does shake up your idea of reality and I don't know what what's holding all of us together and in place, you know. Yeah, so I can't help but wonder now. Like, I don't have any answers. I got more questions now. You know, it was almost easier when everything was 3d and but.

**Interviewer** 2:43:59

does that have any effects on your sort of day to day life?

**Participant** 2:44:19

I don't, I don't think I can give any like interesting example no.

**Q32. Interviewer** 2:44:27

Cool no worries, have a psychedelics changed your outlook on life?

**Participant** 2:44:39

Yeah, yep, they have. So, um, yeah, yeah. Everything is over time and everything comes down to what these experiences are. What's actually coming up, and then what you're integrating but yes, it's changed in many ways.

**Interviewer** 2:45:08

If I can simplify it down, if you're willing to answer this one, is it in terms of outlook, has it become, say more optimistic or positive or more pessimistic and negative?

**Participant** 2:45:20

Yeah, definitely more optimistic. For sure. Yeah and, and why I'm not too sure, maybe it's going back to that putting the ball in your own court type thing, you know, you can have all of these realisations and then the power is just given straight back to you. What are you going to do about it? But, you know, that's given to you in like, a loving and an astounding and like a magical way that I would expect would change most people's outlook.

**Q33. Interviewer** 2:46:06

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

**Participant** 2:46:14

um, I would love to see psychedelics playing a greater role in society from the very top down. Like just the increase in empathy and connectedness to the earth, or the universe the understanding of people's selves, you know, and attaching from detaching, sorry, from ideas, like, you know, like, like greed’s a big one and, yeah, some of those ideas if people could remove themselves from some of those, then I think we'd have a world where people are a lot happier, people are treated better, resources are shared more easily. You know, the environment is a top priority. Other life forms are, you know, shown more respect than what they're currently given. I think, yeah, there's, there's so many positive changes that would come through if psychedelics had a bigger role in society. But, um, you know, like, they have their role at the moment, you know, there's people out there that are using them and there's people out there that are doing the work and getting great things out of them. So, yeah, they have their place now, and but yeah, I'd love to see more of that, you know, I would love to see politicians, leaders, you know, if you want to command an army, then I want to know that you've, you've got your heart in the right place, you know, I want to know that you're, you're high on empathy, and you know, how to resolve your own problems first before, before getting into conflict or whatever, you know, I would love to see from the top down, people using these things.

**Q34. Interviewer** 2:48:52

Have psychedelics shaped your view of humanity's future?

**Participant** 2:48:59

Yes. So, the thing about psychedelics is like, I feel like I'm literally experiencing like heaven on earth as like a way to describe it. When I'm in, in the mushroom realm, it's just a perfect it's a perfect feeling of like beauty and so when I imagine future I feel like if we got our shit together, and everybody was dealing to their problems and stuff like that, I feel like there's no reason why later down the track in our evolution, why we can't feel like that all the time. You know, like why? So, I've, in my mind, I can imagine this perfect utopia where people are enlightened people are able to manage their feelings. They're constantly happy. They're constantly sharing, psychedelics tells me that that's possible. That's possible but yeah, sorry. Can you prompt me with that question again?

**Interviewer** 2:50:18

Yeah, the question was have psychedelics shaped your view of humanity's future?

**Participant** 2:50:23

Future, yeah, of course. So, there's, there's that aspect to it, where I can picture this the state of perfection that we could evolve into. If we strive hard enough, I can see that because I've felt it when I've been in those spaces. But, yeah, on the other hand, I can see how much I can see how much, people, how many people out there aren't dealing with their problems and so these problems are affecting people around them in and their communities and their societies. So, I think, like, so long as we're out weighed, it's hard to imagine us ever reaching that sort of enlightened state of being because we're fighting an uphill battle against people that aren't taking these things into consideration. Yeah, so yeah, it's changed my view and in a way that like, I want to contribute to like a better future as well and so I'm willing to make my own changes, if I can try and, yeah, if I can remove myself from some of the atrocities that are happening now, and then try and put steps in place to create a better of future, even if it's just for me, or my family, you know, you start small and then these things have a way of like, spreading and rubbing off onto other people and things like that. So, yeah, I can imagine, like the best future ever and I can also imagine some futures, that make you pretty concerned for the state of the world as well.

**Interviewer** 2:51:08

Feels like we're already in one.

**Participant** 2:52:32

Yeah. So, and, and I think about that sort of stuff all the time and, and yeah, so that's, that's why when I was saying earlier about that whole red pill syndrome, and the frustration about waking up to some of these things but you know, it comes down to, to me at the end of the day, and what am I, what am I going to do? And what how am I going to feel about that?

**Q35. Interviewer** 2:53:06

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

**Participant** 2:53:17

Yeah, so, so, so I always say, Don't take it from me, go and do a bit of reading, go and read what other people have to say and how they've benefitted from these things and, and start to think about, I don't know, just see if any of that resonates with you. Like, I can talk all day about me and what I've been through, but I'm just one guy. So, go and read some information, start processing it, start seeing what other people are getting out of this, and then come back and we'll talk again, kind of thing. It's, it's certainly not something that I would throw anybody into too quickly but again, it depends on what their intention is, and, and what they're actually seeking to get out of it. Yeah but quite often, it just starts with good old intellectual conversation and just being willing to share a bit about myself, you know, like, if I can be vulnerable and tell someone about what I've been through and what I've got out of it, then, you know, that resounds as well but research, research, find out the benefits that are actually attracting you to this in the first place and why you're even asking about it and the last thing is just continue to ask questions. Yeah cause once you cover once you cover those bases, that's going to open up a whole other range of dialogue and you can go from there.

**Q36. Interviewer** 2:55:44

Okay, and the final question is kind of less of a question but are there any final thoughts or comments you would like to mention before we conclude the interview?

**Participant** 2:56:06

No, No, not really. Yeah. I think I'm definitely an advocate for the use of psychedelics. I'm an advocate for the pursuit of like daily growth. So, it's, you know, if, if you're onto daily growth in and you're not onto psychedelics, and you're doing well, awesome, like, I'm not going to bash psychedelics in anyone's face but yeah, I think there's real power there to experience you know, 10 years of growth, 10 years of hard work and therapy you can do in a six hour session, you know, you can have a range of experiences and realisations that you may never find in your life. So, that's, that's powerful. You know, I'm glad that conversations like this are happening, you know, between you and I, and, and anyone else you've spoken to, or whatever. So, that was the biggest thing for me. You know, filling out the survey, it's like, if I can contribute in any way to you know, this sort of data and that then I certainly will. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:57:36

And you have so, thank you very much

**Participant** 2:57:39

Yeah, no thank you.

**Interviewer** 2:57:40

For taking the time to share your experiences and your knowledge with me and potentially anybody who reads my thesis.

**Participant** 2:57:50

Yeah. Awesome.

**Interviewer** 2:57:52

Yeah.