21. Interview with Participant 21(Part 1)

**Interview recorded:** 22/02/2021 (NZDT)

**Length:** 3:23:23 (part 1) & 1:15:34 (part 2)

**Spoken duration of interview:**

Part 1 – [Participant (83%), Interviewer (17%)]

Part 2 – [Participant (90%), Interviewer (10%)]

**Age (years):** Participant (45), Interviewer (30)

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

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

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

psychedelics, feel, experience, psychedelic experiences, person, trip, part, bit, day, move, aware, point, muscles, guess, effect, sense, happen, started, learn, life

**Interviewer** 00:03

So, in terms.

**Participant** 00:03

There we go.

**Interviewer** 00:04

Yep, cool. So, in terms of the length, the interviews seem to last between about two and a half hours to three hours in terms of the whole interview itself. So, that usually ends up being maybe about like four hours in total that we spend talking because there's a little bit at the beginning that we just did and then there's quite often some talking at the end, because the interesting thing came, interesting things come up and it's just nice to discuss different things once you've gone through it all. So, if you need to take any breaks, if you need to go toilet, you want something to drink, eat anything like that, perfectly fine to just like, take a break and go have a breather or something like that. So, if you're getting uncomfortable, you know, sitting down where you are, or you just, you know, you need a break, just let me know and no problems, we can just do that. So, one final thing is, for in terms of the scope of the study, we're aske we're going to be talking about your psychedelic experiences, the effects of psychedelics have had on you and your life and your beliefs and all those good things. So, one thing that's important to note or to sort of state that at the beginning is what drugs that we'd like you to consider for the for the purposes of this study as psychedelics and which drugs we would like you to exclude from kind of talking about when answering the questions related to psychedelics.

**Q1. Interviewer** 01:33

So, in terms of the specific drugs that we'd like you to include within the psychedelic box, are the normal classic psychedelics such as LSD, psilocybin, DMT, and mescaline and any of the so, mescaline in its chemical form, or in peyote, or San Pedro, or something like that and also, if you've ever used Ayahuasca or Iboga, those are also fine to include as psychedelic experiences and if you've had any of the analogues of these drugs, so if you've had another version of LSD or psilocybin, and you've had say, 5-MeO-DMT, or if you've used something like to 2C-B, those are all, for the purpose of this interview, you can just include those as your psychedelic experiences, and you don't have to necessarily differentiate between them unless you think it's important to let us know that this particular experience was on this particular drug. In terms of drugs that, not necessarily a commonly mistaken for a psychedelic, but there is certainly sort of overlap depending on the dosage and personal reaction to these drugs. The ones we'd like you to exclude from considering psychedelic are cannabis, MDMA, ketamine, and salvia. So, if you've had any experience with those, if you're able to, as best you can kind of parse them out and sort of separate If you've got, you know, reasons why you use these drugs, which is somewhat different to why you use psychedelics, to the best that you can answer it without including those drugs. So, and, and all cases, really, any of the drugs that we didn't, I didn't mention in the psychedelic box, you can also exclude I just mentioned those main four because they, in my head are the most likely that people might bring into describing their psychedelic experiences, or having overlapping effects. Is that all good? All right. So, that's all the preamble. So, there's about 40 questions. There's about 40 questions that we'll go through, and we won't necessarily ask all of them depending on your answers to other questions. Sometimes the answers answer some other questions I'm going to ask later, so I'll skip some if I feel like that's occurred but to start off, we start really broad and the first question is, why do you use psychedelics?

**Participant** 04:18

So, nowadays, it is because it helps me more or less, just clean the attic, helps me do kind of a general reset on myself. So, say, like workplace stress, or if I feel like I'm getting too much in a rut, say if I'm stuck in my habits, then that will usually flush all that out. You know, so that's one part of it. The other part of it would be also for more spiritual and meditative purposes but for the most part, it's like a really like a general reset button and recreationally, not so much. That hasn't been my thing lately not to say, you know that it won't happen, but if I was, you know, in the right company, it would be, but it's more for the previously mentioned reasons that I do. So, it, it makes me more say more like a spontaneous human again.

**Q2. Interviewer** 05:50

Cool. Have the reasons why you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 06:04

At the beginning, it started because of curiosity, I just heard the descriptions of experiences, and it was very compelling. So, it's started out that way out of curiosity and then later on, like, once I was in my late teens, early 20s, it was, it was a mixture of like, it just renewed my, like, a sense of wonderment. You know, towards everything. Also, there's a recreational aspect to it as well. You know, so it started out that way and then it became more serious when I accidentally took some doses, higher doses that, you know, it wasn't an intention of mine to, to go that far and that's when I started learning some of the more deeper, deeper level things and so, it was a mixture of like, the type of reset mentioned before and it also became, there was a an exploration factor in there as well. To start going a little bit further to see to see what is beyond you know, what is past that.

**Q3. Interviewer** 07:34

How did you first start using psychedelics?

**Participant** 07:39

So, I was in high school, just out of curiosity, had a friend who was slightly older than the rest of us who was going to university and then they were able to procure some LSD. So, that's how I began I was 17. Just before I turned 17 years old, about a month for my 17th birthday.

**Interviewer** 08:18

And what was your first experience like with LSD?

**Participant** 08:25

Definitely, it was strongly recreational, nothing, nothing too extreme. We were listening to music and looking at books, you know, looking at surrealist art books that that was the bulk of the experience and say the things that come along with that things were much more they were intensified the aesthetic the impressions that were left upon you know, me by the art and the music were much more pronounced so I was very much into that the that increased emotional impact that that again viewing art and also listening to music created.

**Interviewer** 09:34

And did after your first uses LSD was it, did psychedelics become more common in your life at that point? So, I mean, obviously that's the first time but was it a sort of one off and then you got into it later on or just sort of from there you more curious and went deeper into the different types of experiences?

**Participant** 09:59

Definitely wanted me to go deeper into it. So, I definitely wanted to continue with it. To see, you know, to see what more I could experience and also, everything that I went through was very positive. So, I wanted to experience that again as well.

**Interviewer** 10:23

And during the initial phase of using psychedelics, was it something you were doing with friends recreationally each time? Was it a sort of mix of places and spaces and how you used it? Do you remember?

**Participant** 10:45

In the early days, it was a mixture, pretty much a 50/50 mixture between with friends and then also by myself.

**Interviewer** 11:12

And at what point did you take this higher dose than you had intended to and which led to a sort of increased understanding or movement towards the deeper aspects of psychedelic use?

**Participant** 11:29

That happened around 2011. Yeah, 2011, and what started that was, that was the first time that I did it in darkness.

**Interviewer** 11:50

Okay.

**Participant** 11:52

Complete darkness.

**Interviewer** 12:02

And how old were you when this occurred?

**Participant** 12:06

So that would have been? Let's see, that would have been in my early 30s. So, to get an exact age for those 2000. So, 2000. So, the 2005 would have been so about 30, about 36 years old. Was when that began.

**Interviewer** 12:31

That's quite a bit that's there's almost 20 years after you first had tried them. Had you between that period of this from 17 to 36. Was psychedelic use, how common was it in your life over that period?

**Participant** 12:47

Okay, so from the age of 17, to 19, or 20, it was fairly common, and then I just drifted away from it. I don't remember too many of the details just kind of life brought me away from it. It might have been just difficulty of procurement and then I went through a very brief phase, this was around the year 2000, where there was some LSD coming back into the scene and I was able to trip a few times and then because there was that big bust that happened around that time and so that that dried up the supply and so at some point, I just stopped thinking about it and then it was in 2011/2010, that someone I knew, all of a sudden they had mushrooms, and that's what really, really kicked things off for me.

**Interviewer** 13:58

So, in terms of across that period, it was more in sort of early use, and then sort of a break and then sporadic when it came available with the LSD and then another kind of long break and then sort of maybe almost like three phase uses.

**Participant** 14:15

Mmm.

**Interviewer** 14:16

Okay.

**Participant** 14:17

And the serious phase was the one began in 2011. From 2011 to through 2013 or 2014. I was tripping a lot, especially around the year 2011 to 2012.

**Interviewer** 14:38

And what is a lot by your standards there? Like, how often is that and what sort of dosages are you talking here?

**Participant** 14:47

Okay, so around that time, there would be stretches where it would be sometimes every other day and sometimes maybe every two days and so I would start increasing doses because the way it works is usually the first trip you'd be working, you'd be working out a bunch of negative stuff, getting rid of some anxiety, guilt beating yourself up. Then after that, you know, that's where you can really start sailing. So, it would be again sometimes every other day and then it might be consecutive days but yes, trying to give you some better numbers, but how it evened out to, you know, sometimes it'd be three or four days, but around that time, at least once a week, you know, with a couple stretches where I just didn't have the time or other things are going on but that's how frequent it was. Now if you want to talk about doses anywhere from three grammes to 10 and I would say a good average would be in the range of five to seven grammes.

**Interviewer** 16:24

Did you have a particular strain of mushroom you were using at this point?

**Participant** 16:33

Yes, so favourite would have been Cambodian, golden teacher and Mazatapec. So, in order of preference, it was Cambodian, Mazatapec and golden teacher.

**Interviewer** 16:54

How do you mezzetta pack. How do you spell that one? Do you know?

**Participant** 16:58

Yes, sir. M A Z A T A P E C

**Interviewer** 17:07

Okay. Mazatapec. So, that would be [mumbling], and were they equivalent in terms of the psilocybin potency or strength of you know, per weight?

**Participant** 17:25

Yeah, that they always say that they're all the same. It doesn't seem to have been my experience to be honest, it seemed the Cambodians were stronger but the Mazatapec, that one seemed a little bit more, more mellow and the golden teacher was somewhat similar as well.

**Q4. Interviewer** 17:54

So, um, what aspects of psychedelics do you find most meaningful or valuable?

**Participant** 18:03

Most meaningful or valuable? Definitely, the fact that it allows me to become aware of say, things that trigger me things that push my buttons, it brings up things from the past and it created an environment where I could confront those and then they would be resolved. So, you'd normally you would think it would be somewhat of a traumatic experience being you know, put in front of the mirror like that, but the way it felt is, yeah I would go through a memory or an impression would come to me and just being aware of it seemed to have a dissolving effect on it. So, it wasn't like I was re-experiencing any sort of trauma or negativity is that I would see the situation and then my awareness of it would bring that to a conclusion and then in normal life, that also helps me to become aware. Again, I feel that I am reacting automatically to a situation you know, like a subconscious reaction, things like that, it made me more aware of that. So, it helped me have like say thicker skin and like in general be it in outside outdoors in social scenes, also the workplace. Creating that awareness in myself made me better at interacting with people and, and being around people because it also helped me recognise when you know, they were in a situation where their buttons were being pushed. So, I would not take things personally, if someone reacted in a certain way to something, it gave me a distance from that to where I would say, okay, that's a reaction that they're having and it's not so much about me. It's about, you know, the things that they're working through as an individual, and an unintended consequence of all that is that I started noticing at work. My co-workers started liking me a lot more, almost to a level where it seems somewhat comical to me because they, it's almost like they weren't aware of like, all of a sudden, out of nowhere, these people are saying good things about me, and how I'm a nice person and how I'm great to work with. I thought that was very interesting. My co-workers were reacting to me much more positively. The same with management. It was almost like a switch had been flipped, and they weren't even aware of it. You know, my likability just increased and it seemed very sudden, and it surprised me, the people did not seem to. They didn't seem to be aware of their own reactions, or own positive reactions towards me, that seemed to come out of nowhere.

**Interviewer** 21:35

Sorry, I just got my alarm going off.

**Participant** 21:39

Yeah that's fine. Okay, so then then the question again, was basically what is the greatest significance to me now? Right?

**Interviewer** 21:51

Yes, that's like what is most meaningful or valuable, but also what is most significant, that's, you know, quite synonymous really.

**Participant** 22:00

So on a normal day to day level, that is the most significant that again, it taught me how to be aware of myself psychologically, to take more control over my behaviour, which allows me to interact with other people better and then, spiritually too and that's where it can get a little bit more, more abstract but I, it brings me into this sense that that our perceptions either creates a reality around us or they have a tremendous impact and that could easily have more down to earth explanations such as, maybe your mental state is simply closing you off to opportunities that are already there in the first place. So, as far as you know, controlling reality could be as simple as that or it could be that we do have an active creative impact on the universe around us.

**Interviewer** 23:14

Mm hmm. Yeah, seems quite likely. Yeah and why would you, why do you couch that in a sort of spiritual framework is there what aspect because what you said there seems to me fits quite easily within just the normal sort of rational framework. So, I wonder, what's the, for you, what's the spiritual side of that understanding?

**Participant** 23:47

The spiritual side would be because that brings me deeper into myself and so, I feel that when it comes to spirituality, a large part of that is understanding your ego because those are your automatic robotic reactions to the world around you and the first steps in your spiritual journey involve that as far as becoming aware of those reactions that you have that are not conscious and so you have like the breathing exercises in yoga you have the asanas and yoga which basically you know, those teach you to bring your body under control and see, let me gather that thought together a little bit because once you bring the physical side of yourself under control, once you learn to sit still and control your breathing, then the next step from that is you become more aware of you become more aware of that pure consciousness in yourself and so from there you begin to explore say, your beliefs and your ideas about reality and, and what you know what may be incorrect, sorry. What may be incorrect or limiting as far as what you can achieve, so it makes you aware that you can change as an individual and if you can change as an individual, then you can change the course of your life and you can almost change the world around you by the energy you project alone. So, that almost still sounds more scientific than spiritual and I guess you want to get into my spiritual beliefs. In a nutshell, I believe that while we're here on this world, we need to take control of our consciousness as described, to prepare ourselves for, you know, what comes after we pass on. So, we don't want to be say not necessarily a victim, but we don't want to be under like say, we want to have control. So, it's like you want to integrate your soul and you want to bring your consciousness into something that can have some integrity, to move on into this afterlife and then from there, having control of that body of light that you work to create, or you know, whatever you may like to call it, then from there, you can move on to the next step, whatever that may be. So, it's about having control over continuity of consciousness, the Tibetan Book of the Dead, had a very significant influence on that idea. Where, you know, they want to instruct a dying person not to not to be dazzled by all of the things that they see around them, which are more or less impressions that they have from their life before that comes to them randomly. So, that's where the spiritual side comes in, as well. So, it is almost a rehearsal of, of death and it goes back to that.

**Participant** 28:16

The Tibetan Book of the Dead, there's a constant reminder there to say that everything that you perceive is a reflection of the mind and if that's what you can remember, if you can remember that one thing that is what will bring you to that state of heaven, or enlightenment, or Nirvana. So, not to be dazzled, not to be afraid, or drawn to anything that you see around you, because that is just something that you created. They're phantoms and once you conquer that then that's when you move on. So, in the more extreme trips that I had, I had moments where just everything around me became a pure chaos. So, just random auditory impressions like just random sounds that I would hear repeated over and over things to be stacked on top of each other and the same thing with thoughts and images, just like this chaotic whirlwind of images and then something inside me said to be still and once again, that all of that is a reflection of the mind and then all of a sudden that chaos would become still and I would have a feeling maybe comparable to jumping off of a waterfall in the water, and then you just come out of it feeling very refreshed. You feel refreshed and renewed. It was like all of these things got washed out of me as far as things in the past. That may have had an influence on my automatic behaviours. I had a lot of experiences with like strange muscle twitching and like a lack of control, lack of muscular control and I always interpreted that is those old things just shaking out of me and at one point I learned, I can only say mushrooms taught me to do this but at some point I had an experience and they said, just flex all of the muscles in your body and once I started doing that, that is when the anxiety and that chaos would, would go away.

**Interviewer** 30:51

So, do you mean by flex like tense the muscles?

**Participant** 30:54

Right. So, most commonly remember, like a standard prayer posture, seems to work the best where I'd just be kind of sitting on my feet, I'd be on my knees and I'd clasp my hands in front of my chest, and basically a prayer posture but that that allowed me to tense all my muscles and once that would happen again, like the weirdness the anxiety that the shakiness would go away, because when I started taking higher doses, I was having issues with muscle control, and just like general shakiness and the moment where that really kicked in was, I had to go to the bathroom, but I was having trouble with my coordination and that's when this intuition came and it said, Yeah, tense all of your muscles and so just trying to walk like that, if I flex as many muscles as I could, that that shaking, stopped and I had more control and then later on, it branched over to controlling that anxiety that would come with a higher doses.

**Q5. Interviewer** 32:24

What aspects of psychedelics Do you find most challenging or difficult?

**Participant** 32:32

See aspects that are challenging or difficult. I would definitely say one of them is sometimes you do have moments where you have to face something in your past and in that heightened state, it can, it cannot be easy while it's happening but afterwards, it turns into a positive thing. So, that part is always challenging and as long as I make sure I'm in a good environment, where I cannot be disturbed, then anything that might pop up with a level of anxiety I can deal with but, but sometimes like a strong anxiety can be challenging and that's more of a physical thing. I believe that you have this the intense amount of buzzing, going through your body and you might feel your heart rate going up and back to the tensing your muscles. I think that calms you down because I believe that that sometimes people freak out because they're having a mental reaction to something that's happening to them physically because normally, you equate that anxiety, that nervousness with something bad, but this is different and I learned that that a freak out oftentimes involves a person, they get up and they move around uncontrollably. They feel they have to run around, they might have to scream call for help, or whatever but stopping the body and controlling the body is what worked for me as far as making that stuff go away. So, yeah, the that anxiety that comes on is definitely very challenging, and making sure that I have an environment where I can deal with that was a concern of mine was always someone else seeing me in a certain state and not understanding that I can get through that and that they might either try to be too helpful, or get extremely worried or, you know, say call, like emfs, like call an ambulance or something like that, I always need to make sure that that is not going to be a possibility because I did have moments where, for one reason or another, I thought I was going to die. I don't know, if it's just the ego fighting me but those moments there had to make a decision and the decision was, I would rather risk that than then deal with potential consequences later of calling an ambulance and, and sure enough, you know, there's something in me that just said, you're going to have to sit in and you just got to go along with the ride, you got to deal with it and so sure enough, it's yeah, I try to tell everyone that just said, you know, no matter how bad it gets, you just need to realise you can get through it, you're not going to die. You know, like that voice is telling you.

**Participant** 36:12

I think that's just one of the most standard base reactions of the human ego is just, you know, you don't do something you're going to die. That's like one of the last one of the last mechanisms it has and then once that goes away, you know, then you're good. Now, I will say, you know, I understand the importance of this thing that we call the ego and that is there so you do not have to constantly learn certain things over and over. So, you have certain situations, you know, how to deal with those, but your ego can limit you, when your automatic behaviours prevent you from learning, you know, it's a double-edged sword.

**Interviewer** 37:03

Yes, well, with efficient habits or patterns of behaviour. Sometimes they're suboptimal for the conditions you're in, but you just run them through, because that's the default, that's the thing that, you know, it works good enough, but maybe is not. Maybe you don't recognise it's worth altering them at that point.

**Participant** 37:27

Because we're, as a species, I guess, we're still relatively young. So, that ego mechanism was very important for survival, or the you know, to throw a spear at that sabre toothed tiger or, you know, run like heck, but when it comes to this world, which is a tad safer than it was in those precarious times, you know, now, we're in a world where we need, you know, not necessarily need to but, we want to focus on creation and innovation. You know, basic survival, for most of us, thankfully, is no longer our top concern. So, that's where the ego gets in the way if you want to advance in one manner or another or if you don't like the way your life is, you know, you need to take control of your automatic reactions to situations. So, you can, you know, move into a different space, a better space.

**Interviewer** 38:38

Makes a lot of sense. So, some of the next questions are going to the question I start with is, in what ways have psychedelics affected your life. So, it's quite broad in terms of its scope and so you answer that however it feels natural to do and I have a couple of follow up questions related to how psychedelics have affected your life, but they go into more specific aspects if you don't necessarily cover them during your sort of more broad general answer to that question. So, the next seven questions are just related to this, this topical theme lets say.

**Participant** 39:19

Okay,

**Q6. Interviewer** 39:20

Yes, in what ways has psychedelics affected your life?

**Participant** 39:27

Firstly, it did teach me to always be aware of falling into, into routines or habits that may not be useful. So, taught me to be aware of myself and to always to persevere with pursuing goals, things that I want to do. Not to become too complacent with my life the way it is now. You know, sometimes it's nice to take a break, but if this is not the ideal life that I want. It reminds me to keep pursuing that keep pursuing more and as I touched on before. When it comes to dealing with people, and interpersonal relations, it made me aware of the fact that any type of response a person may have, to me sort of reaction isn't necessarily about me as a person, they may be having a bad day, they may be going through difficult things in their life. So, any sort of negative response, I don't take it personally and a couple times, I made good friends that way, from not being not shrinking back or being offended by a person's behaviour but simply having that awareness having that understanding that, for that given moment was not any sort of be all, or end all that people are constantly changing, at least they should be, you know, we're always learning, we're adapting, you know, things are happening. So, you know, you talk to one person one day, and talk to him the second day, so then maybe even an hour later, they might be a completely different person. So, it's really, really opened me up to the world of people, and social dynamics. So, it absolutely has made me better people person and then also so I covered those two things. Also motivates me to learn just brought a reminder to me that the where I'm at now is not the be all end all of my knowledge, nor does it ever have to be that I can always pursue things, I can always learn things, I can find out ways to learn more efficiently, that I can always keep moving, you know, just because I'm done with school and university, I can still I mean, we have insane amounts of information available to us right now. You know, and so some of the things I do now just watch YouTube courses, like they have university courses there and I'll sit there with a notebook as if I were in a classroom and take notes, you know, so yeah, it helped motivate me to always keep learning always, to always be, I guess, I would say maybe to be in a pursuit of something but not necessarily for its own sake, but it just, it heightens my enjoyment of life and the world that I live in.

**Interviewer** 42:52

Can I just want to note, the mic has just begun, again, to sort of scratch on the I think your collar a little bit. So, I wonder, I'm not I've seen someone, it's sort of like a wraparound thing where I think they twisted a couple of times, I think there's some way of like hanging it just so that it's a bit more like tighter. So, it's sort of like that a little bit, but you'd have to play with it. I'm not too sure.

**Participant** 43:17

Can you hear me?

**Interviewer** 43:19

Yeah, I can hear you there. Is that comfortable for you?

**Participant** 43:21

Does that sound good?

**Interviewer** 43:22

Yeah sounds alright.

**Participant** 43:23

Yeah, I can't even tell.

**Interviewer** 43:24

Okay. One thing you mentioned about the opening up to other people and sort of recognising their automatic reactions. Can you describe a little bit about what you were like before in terms of your social interactions, compared to after your using of psychedelics and just one clarification, if I can say it is, when you're talking about these changes, is this something that occurred over the sort of the three phases or is this more located to that third phase where you started exploring it more deeply?

**Participant** 44:08

The third phase.

**Interviewer** 44:10

Okay.

**Participant** 44:10

Absolutely. The third phase. Okay, so yes, so before, say, if I had usually say, like my first interaction with a person that would usually dictate the course of future social interactions with that individual, you know, so say if there's a negative experience, maybe I wouldn't ever want to talk to that person again. So, I would take things a little bit more personally like I would become offended by something, you know. So, again, like that first impression would have a very large impact or even later on, if there was something negative would happen, if there's an argument, then, you know, I would hold on to that, you know, and I might stew over it or depending on the type of person it was, I would feel either, you know, possibly offended, intimidated. So, yeah, I would hold on to those things. That's how I was before, before all this happened, you know, now I can, typically, if something happens, I can easily just, like, blow it off because now, as opposed to, then, I did discover that, you know, if you lead more with your energy that people will respond to that. You know, which is something we don't often forget, because we often lose awareness of ourselves, you know, going through life and when once you're around people, your perspective is a little bit different. You know, you see things and you perceive things, but you're not aware of your own reactions. So yeah, so when it comes to that thinking, of any other ways, I can elaborate on that. How it was before. So, I would say that that is part of maybe it would, would made me less. I'm not, I'm not a leader in my profession but that helped me develop like leadership characteristics, I suppose you'd call it and also, along with that, I felt more static. I felt more like I had less control over my life and the course of my life. Before that, now, I realise I mean, the sky's technically the limit, as far as how much work I want to put into a situation, you know, and a lot of it is really just, you know, buckling down and learning something.

**Q6a. Interviewer** 47:36

All right, thank you. Has your personality or identity been shaped by your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 47:49

Absolutely.

**Interviewer** 47:57

Can you describe that a little bit?

**Participant** 48:02

Yeah, so I guess let me start with my, my personality is, as I've described before, in a nutshell, it makes me much better as far as interacting with people having smooth social interactions and adaptability. Yeah, I don't think it was really a result of the psychedelics, but alright, I have definitely become a bit of an introvert and I don't shun people, but I don't mind being alone, I enjoy being alone but I can also be very, very personable, I don't feel when I'm around people, I don't feel pressured to have to talk and say things just because I'm around somebody, you know, I don't mind hanging out and not saying anything, if I don't have anything to say, you know, I don't feel any sort of pressure to talk but back to how it's affected my personality. Again, it's made me more, much more empathy. I have a lot of empathy now, much more than I used to have. So, I can put myself in another person's shoes. You know, I can assess what they're going through and so because of that, yeah, it's made me more of a compassionate understanding person. So, that makes me a person who is more helpful in general. You know, with that awareness also comes an awareness of say, if anybody might just be coming to me for a favour, you know, things like that. I can pick things like that out. Much, much easier now than I used to, but yeah, in general, and maybe just a warmer person. So, that makes you, you know, a better member of society in general. So, yeah, so we have that. So, yeah, for my personality, and I don't know, if I don't know if like a better learner is what you can consider part of a personality but that's more maybe part of my worldview, which is just that, you know, I can probably learn anything I want. Some things might take an extremely long time but in general, you know, just because I don't know something doesn't mean I can't learn. You know, and especially with these days, you have YouTube, I can easily find, say, a basic mathematics course or to get me into that. So, I would say that sums up how it's changed my personality. Now, as far as my identity as a person. You know, going back to when I was a teenager, even though I had like, a long period of time, where I was not using psychedelics. I felt this affinity and I definitely, definitely like the word identity, I felt that this was a part of me, absolutely, that this was something that would be a part of me for the rest of my life and it turned out to be the case, I feel like, once I started tripping again, in 2011, that's when I really feel like I found myself. So, so I don't, as far as changing my identity. I feel like maybe I found a piece of myself when that happened and even if I go for long periods of time, with without tripping, I still feel that that is a part of me, that is part of who I am because it's been nothing but beneficial. You know, to my life, not always easy, but always very, very beneficial to have that so. So, it's clearly not say a dependency type of thing because I go for long stretches without, but as far as my identity I'm a person who uses psychedelics, and I neither encourage or discourage anyone I like to leave that up to the individual I don't necessarily want to try and influence people, I want that to be their own personal decision.

**Interviewer** 52:51

So just to clarify or to touch on what you just said there. Rather than the idea being that psychedelics have shaped your identity. Are you more saying that you are expressing who you were more now? Because you sort of mentioned you found yourself so that's to me, almost like you, you're discovering what you are, rather than changing who you are.

**Participant** 53:23

I just want to process that for a moment just to make sure just because simply, I absolutely agree with you. I just want to make sure it's not your words influencing me, so that's why I want to process for a moment, but yeah, you could say maybe it has enhanced who I am. So, I mean, I've always been into somewhat eccentric things and interests. I was always into, you know, UFOs and, you know, say Bigfoot so I was always at home with those things but so, yes, I would say that, as far as the psychedelics helping me express my identity. I would say that yeah, it motivates me to be more creative. I hope I'm not straying too much here. When it comes when it comes like I'm rambling a little bit.

**Interviewer** 54:42

No, it's all right. All good. All good.

**Participant** 54:51

So in in a nutshell, then I would say yes. As far as sculpting my identity, I would say it more enhances who I am. So, say if something were to happen, or I know I wouldn't be able to trip for like extended period of time, I wouldn't have a problem with that but I do feel when available that it is something important and again, it helps me to keep being a human and the word spontaneity and spontaneous keeps coming up but yeah to be to break me out of habits to keep me moving forward. You know, because that's one of the unfortunate things that come with ageing is you know, you tend to get set in your ways and so this always helps me break out of that. Can I do it without? Absolutely, but I guess I do enjoy that enhancement and I will say, I think that there is something else to add more than just a person's mindset. There seems to be something going on a chemistry related level and I think I touched on this on the interview, but I used to be a very regular alcohol drinker and during that time, where I was like tripping a lot, I didn't realise it at first, but actually I lost my interest in alcohol and that was something that was concerning me for a while, I always felt like things would be a little bit better if I just had like a couple of beers, you know that thing was always there like nagging me and I used to drink almost every day and that went away and it's because I wasn't aware of it and I understand there's been research with alcoholism. I think that there's something going on, that it does something to a person's neuro chemistry that helps get him over that hurdle. Like, like an alcoholic.

**Interviewer** 57:17

Is that. So, that wasn't something that's actually the first time you mentioned that was were you drinking a lot when you were younger or was this prior to this third phase of use, or even the second phase?

**Participant** 57:29

I started drinking, I didn't drink much at all, like, you know, through high school and early 20s I did a bit a little bit, but it was around the age of 30 that I started drinking, and it became somewhat heavy. I always went to work every day, you know. So, I would call myself very close to being a functional alcoholic. Like I never had any serious effects if I didn't drink, but it was a psychological thing and again, I always just felt like life would be a little bit better if I had something to drink and then yeah, that I wasn't aware of how that happened as far as like losing that interest in drinking but it's something that, you know, concerned me a little bit but yeah, wound up taking care of itself.

**Interviewer** 58:31

So, it, was there, during your third wave of use, did this, it just went away from, like was there any intention to is that as a thing to address during your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 58:48

No.

**Interviewer** 58:48

Was it something that came up in terms of, you sort of mentioned, old memories can come up and you're kind of by facing them they resolve themselves was that was the alcohol drinking, was that something that came up during the experience or just sort of dropped away by itself?

**Participant** 59:04

No.

**Interviewer** 59:05

Okay.

**Participant** 59:05

Yeah, there were never any thoughts about alcohol or drinking or controlling that habit. Yeah, it just went away. Like say, typically the way I walked through life during that time, where I was drinking a lot was I wanted to stop because I knew some of the effects it was having on me, but it didn't seem to have any, any sort of like top priority. So, I think that's why I never thought about it. You know, when I was tripping, and then at some point, probably after several months, maybe about a half a year of being in that phase, that's when it dawned on me that that interest in alcohol was basically gone.

**Interviewer** 1:00:20

And what was your use like of alcohol? So, what you were drinking each day were you and what sort of were the amounts?

**Participant** 1:00:32

Yeah, so I was drinking every day for a period of time, I was drinking a fifth of rum every day and a half. So, it would be to two fifths or rum every three days and then later on, I switch to very high alcoholic content, beer, you know, anywhere from seven to, you know, 15% or higher alcohol, and that was pretty much a daily thing. If I had to skip a day, for whatever reason, there's something going on, you know, it didn't hurt me but as long as I had that option, yeah, I was drinking alcohol every day.

**Interviewer** 1:01:18

And was there a particular reason? Was there something going on in your life around that time that this was being used to manage or deal with?

**Participant** 1:01:28

There was no escapism in it whatsoever. Just went through, it began when I was working a lot and then on my time off, it was it just became extremely fun, to get very drunk to just listen to music and then from there became a habit and so as opposed to like a form of escapism, what it was, was I developed this belief that things would just be better with alcohol. You know, and that's how it became a habit and that was always the underlying thing that I feel like everything would be more fun, everything would be more enjoyable. So, you could say it was an attempt, even if it was unconscious, that may be trying to make things feel new, over again, that actually that is definitely what it was now that I think about it, because that emotional release would come through it. Yeah, I could listen to, you know, the same albums on a very regular basis and still get that feeling. You know, ear buds are having a tough time staying in all sudden, one second.

**Interviewer** 1:02:55

That's all good.

**Participant** 1:02:59

I've never used this before. Okay, yeah, there's still does that sound okay?

**Q6b. Interviewer** 1:03:08

Mhmm. Has your psychedelic use changed any of your long-term goals or life purpose?

**Participant** 1:03:33

I would say that has to be a definite yes, and a large part of that is it made me say more ambitious as a person, not unnecessarily ambitious as in working 80 hours a week or 100 hours a week, but it made me more ambitious, as in always wanting to maybe move forward and learn things and then when it comes to the job situation, you know, to maybe be cognizant of not being too settled, to think, Okay, well, if my pay is comfortable, and I have good benefits, you know if I want something else, if I'm not getting what I want out of life, maybe it is time to really start thinking about some form of career change. So, yeah, so it is built on my ambition level like that but more with me, the way it's manifested is it made me, it drove me to work harder to maybe put myself in a situation where I can have a gap year, take some time off because I am 46 years old, so I've never my entire adult life. I've always worked 40 hours a week even when I was going to school, that I still work full time. Going through that and so it's helped me to remain aware that, you know, there is more to life than just your job. So, that very strongly motivated me again to put a lot of focus on my financial situation and work towards getting myself towards a spot where I can either take some time off, or, you know, maybe earn a little, at least a little bit of passive income and then I could just augment that by, you know, pretty much any job, any low paying job where I could, you know, pull weeds out of someone's parking lot, because I wouldn't need much. So, yeah, that very, very strong motivation to think about doing something different with the second part of my life. It made me think really hard about that because one thing about me, is I've always had this sense of, Okay, I need to support myself, so I have to go to work all the time and then I stay at jobs for a really long time ago, I'm 46 years old, and I've only had four jobs and the current one, I've been at for 20 years.

**Interviewer** 1:06:23

That's a long time.

**Participant** 1:06:23

Yeah, so it's tough, too, it's tough to move on when you get all of that vacation time and you know, the benefits, but with the general state of the world, and the economy, I feel that, you know, this gravy train probably isn't going to last forever. So, I feel like something's going to happen, you know, we have some kind of major crash that we're due for and I want to prepare for that. Now, that also goes into something else. Back around 2012, you know, 2013 started having this strange sense that I needed to prepare for something and so I started going through all my stuff, like all my clutter, and just organising everything. So, not only like, like, my possessions, getting that stuff more organised, but also getting all the debts that I owed, getting that paid off. Just had the sense that I need to prepare for something and I need to be as flexible as possible. This appears to be it, you know, what's going on right now. So, that was part of it, too, that that sense that I needed to get ready for something.

**Q6e. Interviewer** 1:06:47

Have psychedelics caused you to seriously question your own beliefs?

**Participant** 1:08:26

So, my beliefs have typically been so in tune with, with them. Not an extreme amount but I guess my core beliefs include the idea that I should be questioning my beliefs in the first place. So, I would say they've acted more as a reminder that I need to examine and question my beliefs, then something that, you know, changed or really like caused any sort of shock. Probably because my first psychedelic experiences are at such an early age. So, it did make me comfortable with the idea that you know, you should challenge your own personal beliefs because they may be really limiting yourself in your life.

**Participant** 1:09:48

I think that's one of our possibly one of the biggest mistakes that a person can make is getting too settled in their beliefs because you never know when somethings going to come along, that might completely blow away your idea of reality. I think a good example would be said the discovery of gobekli teppei. It completely rewrites human history but there are people that they don't like that challenge. They don't like having the idea of having to rewrite all of this when they had this nice convenient model with you know, the Sumerians being the first city builders. Yeah, so that's a good example of the type of thing that you need to be you need to be comfortable, somewhat and prepared for your own your own beliefs to be challenged, like, who knows, I might be store for something around the corner that really might shake me to the core, but at least I'm somewhat prepared for that.

**6d. Interviewer** 1:10:58

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

**Participant** 1:11:05

Definitely. So, because it made me more aware that, again of the reactions that I was having to people, those responses that I would have, which you know, that goes all the way back to early childhood and how you're raised and say your, where you might stand in the hierarchy, as far as you know, how many kids on the playground you can beat up or how many can beat you up, you know, where you stand on that because a lot of people at that very early age, where they are on a sort of like against social hierarchy, whether it be in society or in the workplace, some people will become conditioned to be very, say, subservient, or passive. So, yeah, so it made me aware of that, and helped me be aware again, that I can change myself when it comes to things like that. As far as having more control over my consciousness, and my response to situations.

**Interviewer** 1:12:37

Well, that's it, that's a real big thing there, I think because it basically underpins all future interactions, if you recognise your, the systems or situations or process you grew up in, and the conditioning that put into you, and the patterns and the thoughts and your automatic reactions, recognising that just means it's like well, can change anything about this, and that can change the trajectory, how I make my way through the rest of my life. So, it's very simple, but very impactful.

**Participant** 1:13:10

Absolutely and that's why I think that these could be a very good tool to help people get past some things like that. Especially things like social anxiety and other traumas, you know, and as I mentioned, I'm a complete believer in as far as like, helping alcoholics, you know, and it seems like even though like my most extreme experiences happen when I was by myself, they also had this, I don't know if I want to call it like a gentleness but it was there, you know, I was able to get through the situation and confront those things because again, usually when it comes to that, that can be very traumatic, but I also don't have anything in my past that would really be what you call like traumatising. So, I've definitely had to say that there are people out there that would need much more supervision than myself but I see a lot of people around me, you know, it's been sad, people who were very bright, full of potential. They could do so many things, but they're caged in by their own, you know, limiting beliefs and I feel that that could you know, people like that can really be helped by this, and they can really work to shape their lives into something that they want it to be, as opposed to just thinking okay, well, that's just how it is. You know, I hear that all the time. That's just how it is. Those are just the rules like there's this some kind of unwritten rule book or rulebook that I've never seen for how the universe is and how you should behave in society. You know, it's just not, it's just not there but some people have had such strict, you know, experiences or experiences that left such a strong impression on that they never even break out of that. To think that life can be different.

**Interviewer** 1:15:26

It just, you mentioned that gives me shivers down the spine thinking about the, because a few people have mentioned this, it is this sort of idea. I think that unwritten book that people follow is, it seems like the we go through life, and there's many interactions that we have, and many things that we observe, that we're not particularly interacting with, where we pick up the social norms and the behaviours, like, the normal behaviours of the society, or the culture or the community we exist in and that becomes the playbook, this invisible playbook, where it's like, oh, that's what you do in that situation, because I've seen that play itself out many times in different versions and this is the common way in which people react to that and in some sense, you then that's, that becomes the social norm, like getting breaking that mould is actually weird, and abnormal and it takes some level of either internal push, which is must be very, very strong emotion, maybe, or an extremely new and different change in the environment, which just necessitates a massive change in how you respond to it. So, I think, right now, you know, yeah, right. Now we're in the midst of COVID. Which is not necessarily abnormal. I mean, maybe for the moment it is, but it's like, I mean, that's happened throughout history but a lot of patterns are being broken and people have to figure these things out and certainly seems psychedelics, for a number of people are very helpful in being able to cross those invisible thresholds that people assume exist, but actually, it just kind of impressions about how things should be done but then there's no, there's no, you have to do it this way. It's just convention, essentially.

**Participant** 1:17:29

And I understand that in tribal times, when, again, life was precarious. I'll use that word again, when survival was very important, that is when you really needed a certain rulebook there to allow for survival of the tribe but you know, we don't need that anymore the way we used to and so that allows for a lot more individual freedom. I think that that's a big theme for the times that we live in right now. Is this is we have enough abundance, we have enough wealth, we have enough technology, ease of living, now's definitely a time to you know, work on allowing the individual to cultivate themselves and to learn what they really want to do with their lives.

**6e. Interviewer** 1:18:42

Yes, and setting up systems as well to facilitate that. So, making it easier for people. So, you definitely touched on this talking about your alcohol use, but if there's any other ones to mention, has your psychedelic use affected your use of other drugs?

**Participant** 1:19:03

I don't really do much else. So, really, you know, as far as cannabis I don't have any aversions to, it's just not been my style a lot, you know. So, I do enjoy it when you know when the mood strikes me. So, no, it hasn't really affected that. Still there, Andrew? Okay. Yeah, I just got a I got a low battery message on my phone. So, what I'm going to do is I have the other one right here. So, I'm just I was just going to switch over to the other phone and do that that way. Not quite yet. Let me finish this question. I don't know maybe you might want to know this for the sake of the interview, but my, my main thing is nootropics. So, piracetam is what I, as my favourite thing.

**Interviewer** 1:19:08

How do you spell that?

**Participant** 1:20:31

P I R A C E T A M

**Interviewer** 1:20:40

Piracetam and what is that, so that's a nootropic, what is it, does it, do you know what the effects are of it or is it more like a general cognitive enhancer?

**Participant** 1:20:50

So, it aids in better utilisation of oxygen in the blood. So, they use it for surgery in Europe, some European countries because if something happens and a person's heart stops, their brain can survive longer without oxygen. So, it increases that oxygen utilisation in the blood and it also helps enhance communication between the brain hemispheres. So, I typically use that every single day but that's not any sort of intoxication or buzz. So, yeah, they haven't had any effect on that. In one direction or another. You know, it hasn't, made me more enthusiastic about it nor has it made me think that that's a bad thing.

**Interviewer** 1:21:53

Does it, do you notice any differences when you don't take it compared to when you do?

**Participant** 1:22:02

I haven't gone long enough to notice the difference. Like say, I might go week, two weeks without the but I think in general, I've probably internalised, maybe a new mindset because of that but I can't say in one way or another simply because I have not discontinued for an extended period of time but say, under optimal conditions. There's typically like a little bit of a lift but there are times when I'm distracted from it too say something might be going on with my job, I might be so focused and when I'm doing that I'm not even aware.

**Interviewer** 1:23:11

So, would you like to swap over the phone or should I jump into another question?

**Participant** 1:23:17

Yeah, I don't have a plan on what I'm going to do. So, go ahead and jump into the other question this the sound of this room isn't distracting or anything is it?

**Interviewer** 1:23:29

Not it's alright.

**Participant** 1:23:31

Okay, yeah as long as long as it's not interfering with the audio quality.

**Q7. Interviewer** 1:23:35

So, the next question is have your psychedelic experiences affected your relationships with significant others? So, by significant other, this could be family, this could be friends, this could be a partner, this could be children, it could just people who are important in your life to you.

**Participant** 1:23:56

Oh, it definitely has it's made me a warmer person. Now in this particular case. So, what makes this I guess unique is I was in a long term relationship when I started tripping again and so her and I were together for a total of eight years and so was so 2016 was when we broke up, but I did become very aware I felt that I needed out of that relationship. Not for any bad reasons or anything like that. It basically it had run its course and okay, so I needed to just take care of things in my own life, which goes back to what I was saying about the financial situation that since I needed to prepare for something. You know, she had her things in her life that she was, you know, tackling, and I had mine and our habits were kind of different and so that's why I needed to move on. Actually see something. I wonder if I could join this on both phones. Alright so I'm just download the zoom on this other phone right now. Yeah, I should be able to make this pretty seamless.

**Interviewer** 1:25:59

Cool. Can you talk a little bit about so was it the psychedelics that, gave you a sense of the relationship needing to come to an end or is this something that sort of would have played itself out regardless?

**Participant** 1:26:13

I'd say they gave me the courage to finally stand up and say, I need to move on. Is this what really happened I would say it brought me to that point, because, you know, again, it was neither good nor bad. Actually, it was good to be honest. It was all good but the relationship had just run its course is what happened and, you know, we just needed to move our separate ways and so since then I've pretty much just kept to myself, you know, so say as far as the impact on like a relationship. I don't have any input on that currently but it's certainly helped like, with my relationships with people in general.

**Interviewer** 1:27:33

And what about with family members?

**Participant** 1:27:39

Lets see, so I don't, there's only a few members of my family that I really talk to on a regular basis. Mostly my folks like my parents and so, you know, now they're getting a little bit older that actually that brought me a little bit closer to them. Okay, cool. Let me leave this. Yeah, I'm going to leave this and I'm going to join again, I just need to plug in. Just need to plug in the headset. Yeah, I'm still here on this phone. Alright, so yeah, let me I'm going to disconnect the headset from this move to the phone. I'll be right back.

**Interviewer** 1:28:49

Yep, no problems.

**Participant** 1:29:47

Thanks for your patience. Okay, should be good to go.

**Interviewer** 1:30:14

So, the one is that the one was the video now that you'll be using?

**Participant** 1:30:21

Okay, yeah, so

**Interviewer** 1:30:28

alright, so I'll just mute the other one.

**Participant** 1:30:44

All right. How's it sound now?

**Interviewer** 1:30:49

Yeah, it sounds good. Maybe I just moved the other one out.

**Participant** 1:30:53

Okay, yeah, cause I might have to switch back over to it. So, it's charging now.

**Interviewer** 1:30:58

Okay, yep, no problems. Well, just if we need to switch you should just be able to.

**Participant** 1:31:03

Exactly, yeah.

**Q8. Interviewer** 1:31:07

Okay, so the next question is, have psychedelics changed how you think and feel about yourself?

**Participant** 1:31:19

Yeah, feel much better about myself and that's because I feel more in control, like more in control of my life. I feel like it's definitely made me a better person, It's made me a nicer person, much more empathy. I was never say like a self-loathing person but no matter what happens now, I feel that yeah, I am always worth liking, you know. So, yeah, it's like all around just made me feel much better about myself and I'd say if you wanted to bring it down to one single point, that would be because I know I have more control. If there's something I don't like I can work to change it, you know.

**Q9. Interviewer** 1:32:39

So, this question, the next one is quite similar. It's just slightly worded differently and the I'll explain a little bit after I read it, just so it makes more sense. So, the question is, have psychedelics changed how you view yourself? And so the difference that I'm trying to elicit with the two questions is one sort of, maybe more like an internal sense, like your feeling or thoughts inside you. Whereas the view yourself is a little bit more like seeing yourself from a third person perspective, and whether or not that level of analysis or self-reflection has changed.

**Participant** 1:33:20

Ok, so we're, we're focusing on that more third person perspective.

**Interviewer** 1:33:25

Yeah, that's what this question. Have psychedelics changed how you view yourself is sort of trying to get at.

**Participant** 1:33:34

Yeah, they definitely have now. So, if I were to, like, put myself outside of myself and view from that perspective, then I see a person who is more driven and motivated to learn, to do new things, to think about what they want to do with their life to think about what direction they want to go in, and to take active steps to go in that direction. So, looking at myself from that outside perspective, that's what I see and so, again, over a long term, I see a person who is learning to be more patient more understanding with other people who has whose social IQ has noticeably increased, you know, over the period of time. So yeah, that's what I see. From the outside. Again, it goes back to, again, more, that willingness to take control of my life to move it in the direction that I want and to think about, you know, again, you talked about like the playbook and the rulebook to, to think about what I really want and to go by that, as opposed to, you know, trying to be a part of someone else's creation. While always practising the golden rule to, you know, I don't think that me being my best self or living the life that I want to live should involve stepping on people, because that's, I don't want that happening to me. So, I see myself more as a citizen of the world, or that I have, I do have some role in society that I should step up that there's some way that I could, you know, be part of a team, there's something that I could contribute, you know, whether it be like some sort of mutually beneficial relationship where I have some skill, and then when I contribute that skill to a group, then the other people in that group have a skill like that and in the same way, I've been influenced and I've learned from people, I know that there are people that can learn for me, so I should put myself out there a little bit, you know, potentially be some sort of positive influence on somebody and that would be my way of paying back to the people that have in one way or another, you know, mentored or influenced me in a very positive manner.

**Interviewer** 1:37:02

One thing you mentioned just a little while ago, the idea of your social IQ increasing, I was just thinking it would I wonder if we actually have a measure of social IQ, like we do have for IQ IQ because I feel like that would actually be a really useful tool to be able to quantify, you know, people's ability to socially interact, not just solve mental math problems and rotating objects and stuff like this, they are very helpful in a technical aspect, but not necessarily in a workplace situation. You know, getting along, being able to facilitate positive growth relationships with other people is sometimes much more useful than the knowledge that you have.

**Participant** 1:37:54

So, since I didn't create that term, I think it's safe to assume that somebody has created a system, some sort of metric for measuring that.

**Interviewer** 1:38:09

I think I'll look that up a little bit later.

**Participant** 1:38:10

Worth looking into, yeah.

**Q10. Interviewer** 1:38:17

Have psychedelics provided insights into how to live life well?

**Participant** 1:38:24

Yes, absolutely and, you know, just to kind of recap on what was discussed earlier, as far as living life, well, you could sum that up as making the decision to do what you want to be happy and along with that, you know, the willingness to reach out and learn, you know, sometimes you need to find your answers either through a search or, you know, have that openness or even courage to reach out to other people. You know, to see what you can learn. So, yeah, absolutely.

**Q11. Interviewer** 1:39:11

Have psychedelics shaped your worldview?

**Participant** 1:39:18

Yes, absolutely, and that goes back to the belief that things are not as static as we often write them up to be. That things can change and that always begins with you, that begins with the individual working to change themselves and that psychedelic state of being, you know, somewhat dissolved or broken apart. A little bit allows for that, you know, level of self-examination where you can, you know, sometimes just change things by bringing that up into the level of awareness. So, it's trying to find a more descriptive way to explain how things happen, but the way I recall it, say whether it's sometime I acted badly or again discovering you know, the cause of some trigger mechanism of a button mind, you know button that would get pushed. I always remember it is this I just remember is becoming aware of it during the trip, and so there was no symbolic slaying the dragon or anything like that it was simply the issue would come into my awareness, and then it would either be completely resolved or its impact would be substantially diminished. Like that. So, it was almost just seeing it there would fix it. So, there was no having to say relive anything difficult. There was no real like having to like relive a difficult experience but I have to say that is one individual. So, that's why I would never tell anyone who's had some really, really rough times in the past they, oh yeah, you just go out and do this, and you'll be fine. You know, I can only speak from my own experience but I think that this is, I don't think, I would say I know that this this is a very valuable therapeutic mechanism and I think that criminalising this has caused harm to a lot of people by keeping this resource away from them, because again, from my own experience, it created an environment that was rather gentle and compassionate as far as confronting like old issues from the past, like negative things and, and being aware of, of negative aspects of myself, you know, you would think that, in that state, you know, that you would be weakened, or very susceptible to things and like, really, really coming down on yourself a lot harder. I think I had a few moments like that the memory is fuzzy but in general, I always remember it as a very healing type of situation where it, there was a detachment from it. So, I could view it somewhat from outside, but I was still sort of living it at the same time and I think that that little bit of a sense of detachment is what made that a lot easier to go through and made the experience much, much smoother.

**Interviewer** 1:43:51

Just there to clarify with the sense of detachment, are you talking about during a psychedelic experience, you had a sense of being able to be somewhat detached from the content of the what was going on?

**Participant** 1:44:03

Correct. So, usually when I would go through that phase, I'd be laying down and so I wasn't really moving. So, there would not be much awareness of my body or my physical surroundings and at that point, I would be very back in inside. Inside my head, you can call it inside the, going through this experience and I do recall there were times where I would see it through my eyes but I would be both the experiencer and somewhat the observer at the same time and again that that detachment, that slight detachment seems to been what, again, what made a lot easier and I think that detachment was necessary too, because the same way like a therapist, they are outside of your experience. So, it's almost as if you can be both the patient and therapist at the same time simultaneously. You know, because I guess that's what it is like, you're where your therapist would sort of be, they would analyse it, and then they might even be an externalisation. I've never been to therapy, so I can't really say is my guess but I guess that they, they offer that sense of detachment and that they are sort of a maybe a calm rock. For someone to lean on. They want to be a passive part. So, yeah, I definitely look back and see myself being in being in both roles and there was never at those moments, there was never a sense of say, another presence like a third party standing there observing or watching. Never felt anything like that during those times.

**Interviewer** 1:46:06

Can I just with the mic, it's tapping a little bit while you're moving, I think because you've rearranged it a bit.

**Participant** 1:46:14

Apologise for that, I tried to see if I could use my work headset with my laptop but that wasn't working. There it is. Okay. There's the microphone. Alright, how's that sound?

**Interviewer** 1:46:42

I'll let you know. That's just it's mostly when the I think there's like one particular movement, maybe where that it was like rubbing onto hair a little bit. It just sounded like tapping. I was finding I was just finding myself like noticing the tapping while listening. I like it's just stealing some of my attention.

**Participant** 1:47:01

Yeah, it's fine, I'll try to be aware, too, you mentioned you're going to filter some of the sounds out and how that would interfere with it.

**Interviewer** 1:47:20

Yes, the reason that I asked, because I started I didn't do that in the beginning with the interviews, ask anyone to do anything with microphones but what I noticed was on the occasions where people would use their speakers, what happens essentially is when I'm talking to them, or if I make any sounds, it gets picked up by my microphone, it feeds through this comes out and the microphone on the thing picks up the sound from the computer, and then it because it's trying to like only hear your voice and filter out mine sort of muffles the sound because obviously can't perfectly just separate these sounds out and sometimes it would, if I asked a question, it would sort of if I start talking, it would mute you from my side. So, I'd talk and your voice would kind of cut out because for some reason it would make it silent, I don't know. So, I've missed some of the words sometimes if I sort of add, if I jumped in a little bit near the end, it would cut out some of the words. So, that's why I just started asking if people had basic microphones because it saves this, these here can't feed the sound into the microphone, that's the main thing.

**Participant** 1:48:34

Yeah, no problems this, this is the first time that I've used these the earbuds and the headset. So, you know how it is when you move into an apartment and you have to internalise certain motions, or you don't want to slam the cupboard door all the time. It's kind of how it is with these so I'm getting used to, you know, being aware of my movements when using these, but I'll probably just try and hold on to it like this the rest of the time. It's no big deal.

**Interviewer** 1:49:03

All right. Thank you just Yeah, thank you.

**Participant** 1:49:06

Yeah, no problem. Yeah, trying to make this easy for you.

**Q12. Interviewer** 1:49:09

Thank you. Yeah, one of the one of the important reasons like, it's, it's not like it takes a little of attention because you hear the tapping and it's like, you know, like five or 10% of brains like tapping, tapping, tapping, listen at the same time but more the main reason is that later on when I when they get when we go to transcribe them, I first put it through a AI driven algorithm, which automatically detects text [speech] and then spits out like the transcript and the more that this sort of muffled interference, the harder it is for it to pick up the speech and so it's usually the cleaner the first pass is with that and then I come through and fix it up to make sure it's correct, the easier it is for me when I go to transcribe it because there's less mistakes to deal with. Yeah, that's the main reason for the good audio quality being important, because for the most part, the muffled isn't really that bad for me to hear, I think it's for the algorithm to be able to understand. So, the next question is, have psychedelics changed your relationship with nature?

**Participant** 1:50:20

A little bit not a lot. Actually, no, I take that back, something interesting happened. So, you know, being a teenager, you know, kind of a BL punk hippie kid, I was always into, you know, the environment and being aware of nature and thinking, okay, we need to preserve and protect this but I guess It never really dawned on me how things did change now. Back then, there was more of a feeling of, uh, you know, it's the planet, we need to protect it, we need to preserve it. But now I feel more of an affinity more of a relationship, not that I am any sort of extreme activist, but say when I look at the trees, I see them more as a living presence, as opposed to, you know, just a tree. As far as animals go, I've always had, you know, a decent relationship with animals, but yeah, maybe I feel more connected, more in tune as if, you know, all life on the planet has a form of shared consciousness, something on a possibly on a genetic level, that life itself, like all life is connected and that could also go back to part of one of my general beliefs that the world is potentially a reflection of your own consciousness that you know you perceive things and so your brain has to filter that down, it has to condense things into a form that that we can work with, that isn't too overwhelming, but I feel that there is sort of an ocean of life out there and that that's how, like, all life would be interconnected. So, I'm more aware of that, especially when it comes to looking at plants and trees. That there's actual life there, whereas so again, when it comes to plants, like I knew that they're alive, but say it's not like a dog or cat something that can look at you and acknowledge your presence. It has eyes but no, I feel that more strongly now with the plants that there's this life and I do feel sometimes that they acknowledge me. So, yeah, that interconnection and it also expanded when it comes to my relationships like nature and plants and animals. It expanded my view of time that life itself has been moving and evolving on this incomprehensible to us timescale and so when it comes to some environmental issues I am less inclined to think say that humans can destroy the planet. We certainly do a lot of damage, but I feel in the end. We're just going to damage us because we've weakened ourselves as far as being able to handle extremes of environment, unlike animals and plants.

**Participant** 1:55:13

So, I feel that we could potentially pollute ourselves out of existence but plants and animals will always survive, the earth will be here. Like George Carlin used to say, you know, if the earth wants to shake us off, like a bunch of fleas. So, from that standpoint, I don't feel, how to say this, that we're as dangerous to the planet, as some of us may think we are. It's certainly horrible to see some of the scenes like say, Chernobyl and oil spills and oceans filled with plastic but I think most people sometimes view that more from the perspective of the impact that it can have on the human race because, say, if we deplete the oceans so much to the point where we can't feed ourselves, once we're gone, all those fish will come back, all that plankton will come back, and they will thrive, because you know, our presence isn't there. Now, that isn't to say that I don't believe that we should be aware of environmental issues, and that we should be, we need to work towards a cleaner existence but I think sometimes maybe as humans, we maybe overestimate our power over this planet. I believe that there's a very powerful life force of the planet itself and all life on the planet and I feel that again, that would it is stronger than humanity.

**Interviewer** 1:57:13

And are these thoughts, or the feelings of the sense is this something that you held before using psychedelics or are these sort of ideas and insights, thoughts and feelings that came from your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 1:57:30

No, I didn't have this level before. This sense of connection. Now, as I mentioned before I said, you know, like my more therapeutic experiences where I never felt like there was another party standing there but I absolutely feel an intelligence behind the mushrooms and also the Ayahuasca there's a spirit there, there's a being, an identity and coming into contact with that, that is what opened up the level of connection that I feel with nature but it sounds kind of kind of contradictory I guess but it is true, though, that feeling that experiencing that is what lessened any sense of panic that I would feel that if we don't stop immediately, we're going to destroy the world. I think that the earth and that life force will make sure that that doesn't happen and it's last resort, will be to get rid of us and it's not necessarily out of cruelty but, you know, I think if we cannot be good stewards of this planet, then you know, it will deal with us.

**Interviewer** 1:59:19

Yes, well, I guess COVID showing just how fragile our societies really are.

**Participant** 1:59:23

Yes. Absolutely.

**Interviewer** 1:59:24

I think we like to think about selves, as very as you're saying before, like there's a sense of things being very static, stable, and that probably gives a sense of like longevity strength of stability, but things can change rather quickly and from just from one small microorganism saying hey, time to use you as a host. So, yeah.

**Participant** 1:59:59

Cause I understand that, you know, all the casualties these are people's loved ones and, you know, these are friends, family members that have gone so that's why I'm not, again I view the situation with a lot of empathy but at the same time, I feel that we were due for some sort of situation like this not that I wanted it to happen. I think it also has, you know, woken many of us up as far as thinking about our lives, what we want to do with our lives, you know, and what's most important in life too, with all this time, when you're faced with like a mass casualty situation, most of the time we associate that with like a war, not a pandemic and I've had a few discussions with people about this is really caused us to really evaluate our lives. So, that's a kind of a psychedelic effect too, that this has had on us, you know.

**Q13. Interviewer** 2:01:19

So, we're changing the focus of questions for the next 11 questions. So, the next couple of questions are going to be asking about your psychedelic use, like the nuts and bolts of how you go about using psychedelics so it's more like the How to Guide for lack of a better sort of description. So, first question is, how do you prepare yourself for a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:02:04

Okay, so almost always a fast because not having a bunch of food in my system. I just feel better, I feel like the energy flows better and just in the past, I think about how. Yeah, I just felt like I had a meal, a heavy meal. Like, just that feeling of the food would just be, not extremely uncomfortable, but a little bit uncomfortable and it just, it interfered with the quality of the experience. So, typically a fast and usually that would begin at the beginning of the day. So, I typically like to trip at night and this goes back to the darkness situation I have at times used like a sleep mask to shut the light out but usually it's somewhat of a day long preparation and the main part of it really is the fast so it begins with that and then you know, pretty much just like the standard type of thing, it just feels good to take a shower beforehand and try not to put too much thought into it. I do like to lay tarot cards out if I want to maybe guide the experience in a certain direction that will set a little bit of a framework. So, that's the main part of the physical preparation and then the other part is, I just, usually I have like the you know the bed made up oftentimes I'll lay down, I'll be there. You know, you should be like either like kneeling on the floor or lying down. Like when things really kick off. Usually I'll be laying down and so I mentioned the situation of like, say like the darkness and in the past, you know, I used to have books handy thinking that later on, I would want to read a certain book or review a certain book but every time I did that the experience was never about reading a book it was about the experience itself and so it was more of an internal thing then would be about reading a book it was about instead of learning from something outside of me, I would be learning from inside but yeah, as far as the preparations more or less, like just making sure like the places kind of tidy general stuff I don't like to overthink things too much. I used to, but when it's all about going inside yourself then having a lot of decorum all around you for some, like, you know, ritual purpose. I've found it's unnecessary.

**Participant** 2:05:58

Yeah, and this may be noteworthy as well, in the past, I used to say maybe have a candle or something but I mean, I know it's real. I got to a point where I became very susceptible to like the candle flame, and then the wax and I guess they use lead and on higher doses, my eyes would start watering and in my nose would start running and it wasn't until something told me as though it was the candle. I don't know, maybe it was an auto suggestion but something popped into my head that something was going on with those candle wicks and I yeah, I become extremely sensitive to that. So, I stopped doing that. I used to burn incense to and these things came out of nowhere to is very strange. Like, I couldn't use incense anymore, I remember like, my skin would just have this burning sensation. I don't have that one when I'm not tripping, but it's on those, like it makes me hypersensitive. Now I used to have an apartment, it was right over a busy intersection and I would have similar experiences during rush hour. Now again, it is what it is maybe I'm right, maybe I'm wrong, but I felt like the increased auto exhaust in the air that I became more susceptible to that. So, as far as environment again, I try to make sure that like certain smells, or certain things are not hanging in the air. The same applies to laundry. Like part of the preparation used to be to wash all the bed sheets and all the bedding right before but I was also like really susceptible to like the dryer sheets or the dust in the dryer. So, typically, I would maybe like wash the sheets the day before but using anything fresh out of the dryer always seems to have some sort of irritating effect on me.

**Participant** 2:08:56

So yeah, so when it comes to preparation, it's fairly minimal. The fast is the most important part I would say like the fast is the central part and again, what that is really about is it just helps me not be aware of my body. So, I could go you know, inside and I don't have like in like that feeling of a bunch of food, my stomach. And music. Beethoven's symphonies also became a very important part of that. Specifically, the seventh and ninth symphonies. So, oftentimes I would listen to either or both of those during a trip because I always felt that those had somewhat of almost like a restructuring effect on me, it's almost like I feel like those symphonies were designed to put you back together in a more coherent way, especially the ninth and I always felt that the seventh symphony had this aspect of say, bringing up like, old karma, and heavy feelings and then resolving them. Like if you listen to that symphony, the second movement, it's pretty heavy, it's pretty moody and I feel like that that will help drag all of this stuff up to the surface and then once you reach the third and fourth movements, it's all about it's all about it dancing and moving forward. So, yeah, so classical music was a big part of it. Sometimes I'll listen to some of the drones that you see on YouTube as far as frequencies certain frequencies. I listen to those but yeah, that the Beethoven has always been an integral segment. Now before that, I listen to all kinds of different music can be like, you know, somewhat psychedelically oriented, but yeah, the classical music became a part of it. I picked that up from Robert Anton Wilson, in the book Prometheus rising when it comes to the classical music, and in other times I will listen to say the Mongolian throat singing like that type of shamanic music. So, that for the most part sums it up as far as preparation. I might have like some water handy or something but not too much.

**Q14. Interviewer** 2:12:03

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

**Participant** 2:12:13

Normally at home, and I do that because that is somewhere I know where I can be and this is for high doses because I know I could be undisturbed and I don't have to worry about, say knocking on my door. Any sort of disruption like that, now, let's say the phone, I could turn the you know, turn the ringer off, I could silence everything. So, the main point of it is so I can shut the entire world out because if I'm going to be completely blown apart, I need to allow myself like that time to go through that whole process and then and then put myself together without having to like say interact with anyone. So, I always need to have like this feeling that you know, like say no one can knock on the door. No one you know, like no one can surprise me and then I know that I'm okay.

**Q15. Interviewer** 2:13:48

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

**Participant** 2:13:55

Not anymore. I use the tarot cards, but they're not necessary. I like to lay them out because they for me, they can set the energy. So, I can dial it up with something that is like really fiery and chaotic or I can have something laid out that is more calm. Now I remember a specific time when I had this, this combination laid out and it was just like fire. All this fire and excitement and when the trip really kicked in. This is during the day and so I had like a sleep mask on over my eyes and I needed to, like go to the bathroom and it's funny cause something inside of my head said don't open your eyes don't open your eyes. Okay. Well I did and I think I just remember the room was just alive in. So, you see cave paintings that are just nothing but dots, like just tonnes and tonnes of dots and I that's basically what I went through like everything were these red dots just flying all over the place. So, not that it was scary it was just intense. You know, it was just overwhelming but ya know that memory, just the memory comes to mind of the air being filled with that much electricity and excitement. So, I guess I was sort of an aside, but in the end, I don't really feel like there is any sort of ritual paraphernalia that is absolutely necessary but I feel that that having a minimal amount of things around you can act as a guide, you know, whether it be it could be anything, you know, if you wanted to have a crucifix handy, I feel that it's like, your subconscious is like, aware that that protective element is there. You know, and it's helpful but other than that, yeah not too much I feel necessary. I do like, you know, that darkness because again, that allows me to really go inward, you know, and not be focused on things around me because the experience is much more different. When, like all awareness of your body and your surroundings are gone. Say, high doses are they're much easier to handle because it's when you see the world around you just in complete chaos. Yeah, it's, it's, it's a little interesting that if your eyes are closed, and it's dark, it's completely different to where you're looking back like it's almost as if I wasn't quite aware at how high dose I was on until say, I turn the lights on. So, because in the past, I used to think that like the visual aspect of it was a really important thing but for me now, it's not important at all, I'm not interested in and say looking at something and seeing visuals, it's all about the experience, you know and that's just my preference. I mean, I know there are people who, you know, that's what they want and there's nothing wrong with that. It's all you know, that's up to the individual.

**Interviewer** 2:18:29

Is that by the visual aspect there, do you mean in the sense when you have eyes open and the lights are on and you can see how your environment is melting or morphing or changing

**Participant** 2:18:47

Crawling

**Interviewer** 2:18:47

or do you have the internal mental experience, like the visual experiences with eyes closed Is that also what you find less important now in terms of visual content?

**Participant** 2:19:04

Right, so like how having the eyes open, it's very distracting from the internal experience. So, if, again, if you can have that darkness, if you have your eyes closed, that's where you really go somewhere else, as opposed to having your eyes open then you're more rooted here and so anything that is sort of like meditative. You know, it's not that that greatly interferes with that, at least as far as my experience goes.

**Q16. Interviewer** 2:19:52

How do you prepare the space where you take psychedelics?

**Participant** 2:19:58

Now, it's pretty minimal so say as long as everything is in good order, and typically that space, usually the same spot that I sleep and I keep that pretty minimal. So, there's typically not much not much preparation at all, you know, say, any sort of thorough cleaning, I like to do on a preceeding day and again, a lot of that has to deal with it seems like I have a heightened sensitivity to anything used to clean. So, I know that that could kind of be sort of out of the air because yeah in the past, again, it used to be like much more elaborate to make production out of it, and you know, do all these things but as time went by, it became a little bit more unnecessary to me. I think that those things are important to a lot of people up to a certain point because it will guide the experience into something more positive if you ritualize that beforehand, you know, all of that preparation, because you know, you want to ensure that something good happens but I think I've internalised a lot of that, because of the things that happened during the really crazy trips and the things that I've learned then. So, those things aren't as necessary now.

**Q17. Interviewer** 2:21:46

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

**Participant** 2:21:57

Yeah, the main thing, again, the it's the fast and if I make a tea, usually, I like to have the tea made somewhat in advance, just so I can have it all done or if I'm going to take like a second dose during that trip, then I like to have the tea ready to go. So, I don't have to prepare it while I'm tripping, you know that it's there, and I could just take it. So, that's pretty much it. There might be other mundane things too. I don't know, like, say if I have bills to pay or something. I might pay the bills or, I don't know, stuff like that usually pretty random, I think, oh okay, well, you know, I might have maybe just wash the car today and it just adds a little bit, but none of that is necessary.

**Interviewer** 2:23:07

Just one thing in terms of your preparation, do you is the entire day dedicated to a psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 2:23:24

Somewhat but not too much, because that could be a workday and if I were to do that, which of course I was doing that a lot you know, in the past. Usually I might have something a little bit prepared in the morning but usually I would try to make sure that I could jump into the experience as soon as possible. So, more or less just making sure things were in good order you know, so say if I was going to make it into a tea or say other times, I would maybe juice some grapefruits or have you know either lemon juice citrus fruit ready. I would do that early in the morning before leaving for work. So, I'd pretty much just come home and jump straight into it and then, plus a lot of that time happened to when I was dating that girl so I would have it timed out to where she would come home from work later and so usually by the time she would get home I'd be like coming down from it. I'd be past it. You know, like her and I did trip together at times but she didn't do as often as I did. So, I was doing those really extreme trips, especially the tea would also shorten the duration of it, but heighten the intensity of it and so it kind of worked out perfectly because I never felt shortening the duration detracted from the experience because there's always a sense of being outside of time anyways and so towards the end, I would feel more like I was reconnecting with this time that we're on, you know, almost like I was slowing down, like I was slowing myself down, kind of like landing back in my body from moving in a much higher speed.

**Q18. Interviewer** 2:25:33

What are you doing? Sorry, what are you normally doing physically during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:25:42

So usually that alternates between, between laying down or being in the type of position that I mentioned earlier. Not for any particular religious reasons but that prayer posture that I mentioned earlier, where I'd be like, on my knees, like sitting on my feet, basically, like rock pose yoga, they call that rock pose, except my hands be clasped together with my chest, because that way I could tighten or tense as many muscles that I could be aware of and so that that would be a part of, I guess, you'd call it like an energetic alignment. Just holding all those muscles tense like that it would like it would reset me so say, that would clear out, I don't know, maybe like any stress, or any tensions that I experienced during the day. So, physically, those are the two, the two main things most of the time. Never, up to this point, at least, never did anything like any sort of like, like ritual dancing, sometimes I would do some yoga poses and couple years ago, I bought an inversion table. So, sometimes I spent some time on the inversion table too. So, the physically that pretty much sums it up.

**Interviewer** 2:27:19

What's an inversion table?

**Participant** 2:27:22

Okay, so you have so you see, you lay on this table, and then you can invert yourself. So, it takes all the pressure off your spine, like I don't have back problems or anything like that but the original reason that I got that is you know, some people would, they trepan themselves, and that hanging upside down for a certain period of time is supposed to pretty much give you the same effect. So, it was really about more seeing of seeing what I can do to put myself in a creative state, but yeah, it feels amazing. Once you start to feel like your vertebrae sort of gently separate, and you don't feel the effect of gravity on your spine.

**Interviewer** 2:28:18

So, you're basically upside down with the stretching your back out?

**Participant** 2:28:22

Right.

**Interviewer** 2:28:23

Okay and how are holding yourself inside that are your knees like locked in somewhere or?

**Participant** 2:28:28

There's, your, your feet. There's like a padded, like a padded bar that you lock your feet into, so it holds on to your feet and so you don't have to be completely upside down. You can also be at a very shallow angle, and still like get some very good benefits of it. So, I would put that I would categorise that in the same as like doing yoga basically the same type of effect, you know, you're basically stretching your body so that helps release toxins and also you know, you will store a lot in muscle tension. Like say, if you had a really stressful day, sometimes your shoulders would be really tense. So, those type of things just help work that out.

**Interviewer** 2:29:20

So, do you ever use the inversion table while on psychedelics?

**Participant** 2:29:38

Yes, usually towards the beginning. Up to this point, you know that can easily change but usually it would start out that way. So, it's like a good a good lead into everything.

**Q19. Interviewer** 2:29:59

Is there anything you avoid doing or interacting with during your psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:30:07

The news. Yeah, definitely, definitely avoid the news. Yeah, so say current events in general. See what else would fall under that things like maybe I don't know, say like, if there's some issue that needs addressing. If I'm going to make the decision to do this, then I've already decided that that thing, I can deal with it later. So, yeah, so I won’t get involved in any reminders of that situation. So, again, like no news, anything like that, that I might need to put on the backburner but typically, if I'm going to do that, then I know, it's something that I can easily handle down the road anyways. So, I will put my phone on silent because I don't want to be distracted by text alerts or anything like that. Social media. I don't want to be involved in any social media, because that's not what this is about. So, I want to just, you know, tune all that stuff out, because it's not going anywhere. So, those are the things that I avoid, and you can say to I will avoid eating too and let's see what else that pretty much sums it up because I know I'm going to go somewhere else. So, thing things relate to the world in mundane life. I set those aside, you know, I made a decision that I'll address all that when I'm done.

**Q20. Interviewer** 2:32:10

Is there anything special you do after a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:32:16

No, afterwards, that's always very free form. That can range from anything from a I might eat, I might call a family member, I might go and do something I might go for a walk, bike ride. So, yeah as far as like, what happens afterwards, there's nothing regular to it. So it's all about going with the flow, like whatever I feel like doing.

**Q21. Interviewer** 2:32:55

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

**Participant** 2:33:04

Tensing the muscles, that was a major, major breakthrough for me, I would say and that began on a solo trip, it was during the day, all the lights were on and everything and of course, I was by myself and this anxiety kicked in and it was that moment where I remember I had to like go to the restroom and I think part of that part of the anxiety was because I had to open my eyes and I had to navigate and like I was having like muscle tremors, like a lack of coordination and then someone just said, If you tighten all your muscles, you can control your movements better and then from there, what that led to was knowing or learning that I can handle the anxiety it would make that anxiety go away. So, whenever a person's having a really, really tough time, that's what I tell them to do is to stay still and if you can tense all those muscles and stay there as long as you can and you know, and try to breathe slower but whenever I did that, I would kind of lose awareness of my breath and that goes back to an observation and the idea that I have is that when a freak out happens, a person has a tendency to jump up and run around and move around in panic and I found that being still is what made that go away and to do that with your muscles tense is a lot easier than just trying lay down because you feel that jitteriness, so you need to do something with your muscles. So, if they're if they're engaged, you know, and then if things are kind of like locked in the place, you finally reach a moment where it just goes away.

**Interviewer** 2:35:19

Okay and how long would you hold the tension or are your muscles tense for, Is it like a fluctuating thing where you're tense and release tense and release or more like a long period.

**Participant** 2:35:35

I would say, because usually, I was tripping pretty hard when that would happen. I think a safe thing to say is about a minute. You know, and I think maybe part of that is, is using your willpower, using your willpower to stay there and feeling like you want to let go but you, stay there until you just know. So, yeah, so it's not an on and off on off thing it is, it's a steady thing.

**Interviewer** 2:36:17

Is there any other techniques you use to manage difficult or challenging situations or content or experiences that are coming up during your psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 2:36:30

Yeah, there's sort of like a didgeridoo type humming that I would do and that was another thing that came spontaneously and so what I would do is I would go [making humming noises] and so I would like, kind of move around and experiment with like, opening out my chest cavity and what's really important about that, is you start to feel like this vibration or resonation in your skull, by making that sound, so you kind of like adjust again your chest cavity, your throat, in your cheeks and it's like you reach this point where you just you feel your head vibrate, and it has a very, very calming effect and I've used that outside of the situations. I had a moment where yeah, I thought I think I came close to this a couple years ago and I think I came close to a cocaine overdose and I remember becoming very disoriented and sweaty and I did that, that humming and all of a sudden I stabilised myself, I calmed myself down and brought myself back from that without any requiring any sort of attention whatsoever medical attention whatsoever. So, yeah, that’s noteworthy and so I have that because what I've walked away with from a lot of this is how much psychological baggage you carry in your muscles and so, these things help bring that out, you know, cause I mean, this is derived from yoga, the same type of thing, according to that belief system, that certain movements and certain poses can clear out certain kinds of stress or certain kinds of the emotions that they will clear that out.

**Participant** 2:39:38

And so, yeah, as far as physical techniques to get through a bad trip, those and every time every time I did that, you know, it turned out in the end that it was a positive experience because something got resolved. Now. It also never hurts to say again, Any religious artefacts, anything like that, that gives you like a little bit of sense of protection. So, again, it could be like, say a crucifix or a bible, you know, quran or any other book and it works because you know, it's there. Like it's a subconscious thing like I've never had any moment where I needed to reach for something like that. Like I kind of, like lost awareness of the fact that it was there, but I knew it was there, but I didn't need to reach for it. You know, and so it's like on a subconscious level, it's like your taken care of. Other people too, might be like a childhood item or something like that, you know, anything that brings you comfort. So, that part's pretty much common sense. I'm sure that those things have been covered before. The thing with tensing your muscles that's one thing that I haven't really heard from many people.

**Interviewer** 2:41:23

Well, that's part of the reasons to come to these, these interviews because you discover different techniques people use, which I think, potentially could be much more useful, you know, spread the word a little bit and be like, oh, yeah, that actually is helpful and having a list or a repertoire of all these different things as a person can find maybe something that works for them. So, thank you,

**Participant** 2:41:50

Yeah sure, maybe one last thing might be, one of my early motivations was simply not wanting to deal with any legal consequences. You know, if I were to call for help, so maybe even a note just write yourself a note saying, okay, you're going to get through this you don't need to you just need to stick it out. It'll be over sooner than you think. I think that'd be helpful too and reminding you know reminding yourself before you go into the experience as well that you're not going to experience anything that you cannot handle you know that you can make it through it. I've semi jokingly told a couple people you know I think one of my one of my big secrets is more or less to go somewhere where you can't call for help.

**Interviewer** 2:43:01

Well, I think that fits into your the idea that if you stay very still part of the freaking out like, even how you define a freak out is that you don't know if someone's freaking out they're sitting there quiet and still, you know they seem alright, you know, they're just chilling. Even if the internal sense is chaotic and anxiety inducing fear inducing, but the moment you start to physically act out the internal and go around, acting crazy essentially and asking people to help you because what's going on in here you can't manage it. That's when you get the external world involved and that's where a freak out turns into intervention.

**Participant** 2:43:45

Turns into yeah, it turns into a positive feedback loop. Once you set that off, like you said, cause you react and then they react to you and then that's typically when the person freaking out, sometimes they might try to say, I'm fine, I'm fine, but then the other person is panicking and it escalates situation.

**Q22. Interviewer** 2:44:13

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

**Participant** 2:44:30

Usually, I might go into the experience with the intention of doing something specific but when it comes to turning it into some sort of structured meditation. A lot of my experiences have been more about letting all of that stuff go and going with the experience. So, as far as techniques, Well, one thing I do have to say, I don't consider this, this any sort of meditation, but when the effects starts coming on I like using a simple ritual, the lesser banishing ritual of the pentagram and I feel that it brings everything back into like a sense of harmony like it removes some of the disorder of the experience makes me feel like I'm surrounded by surrounded by like this very positive, sort of, like geometric coherence and that sort of goes into the anxiety thing, too but I, I try not to put I try not to put like, too much of a structure on it. Now, things typically will unfold spontaneously, it might result in me like holding on to a certain pose for a specific period of time. You know, it might lead me through a series of impressions but, but you know, actually my thing of it, I would kind of say, that's what the Beethoven's Symphony comes into, because I feel like that, that does begin to add a structure to it and again, with the specific symphonies, like the Ninth Symphony would be about rebuilding myself into something more organised, more orderly, like more capable of doing productive things in this world. As a is what that would do, but I never, I guess I just never couched things under that banner of like a meditative practice because I guess like, when I think about my, my personal definition of a meditation is more something where you try to maybe bring things to a halt you want to try to stop things, and open yourself up to spontaneity or, you know, but usually the experience itself would just unfold into something and that can be it's tough to tell where it'll take me like something, you know, something might come up. Other times, it may seem like almost like just the experience that I've repeated over and over too many times, but then once I'd come out of that realise that I was still refreshed but I guess because in the past when I tried to walk into this with certain expectations, that's where like, a lot of the books are involved, I'd think I'd study a book and I wind up like never touching the book.

**Interviewer** 2:49:00

So, in terms of, after the experience, do you do you engage in any sort of meditations or integrative or self-reflective practices?

**Participant** 2:49:19

I would say maybe I might just kind of review and reflect on what happened but I have never partaken in a meditation where I repeated a mantra. Actually, this question actually sparks an interest in doing that, to see what would happen and to see how that would go but, I guess what the purpose of that meditation or that that integrative practice, that is usually what happens during the course of the trip and that would be at a point where I'm more or less lost most awareness of my physical body, you know, there is, more or less kind of that awareness is hanging by a thread because at that point, I'm typically that is where I would have to lay down, you know, because the effects on your muscles, you reach a point where you're, you're the, how do you say, this is not a loss of motor control, but that you say, your muscles like, feel very weakened and so that is what prompts you to, like, lay down. So, I wouldn't call that a lack of motor coordination. Yeah, you just, I guess, like, that's the way I would describe it as feeling kind of, maybe weak, or your muscles are definitely not as strong as they were beforehand. You know, and that might be a by-product of the fact that it's my understanding that when you're on psilocybin, that is supposed to more or less put you in a state where you're practically in a waking dream. So, there might be something else that goes along with that. I know you have brain chemicals that try to inhibit your muscles to keep it from moving around in your sleep. It could be that that might be kicking in but yeah almost always on those high doses, I reach a point where I just kind of lay down and stop moving, it doesn't feel like my body wants to sit in a position or even be upright for that matter. It's like you just want to let go and then that is where it would become a meditation and I guess now that I think about it. That is when you do meditate, the purpose of sitting still and the purpose of repeating a mantra is, so you can lose all that awareness.

**Interviewer** 2:52:40

Well, there's definitely correlations or similarities between deep meditative states and psychedelic experiences and I think that's kind of reasonably well documented in a number of books and I think even science, kind of investigating the correlations, for example, with the brain, EEG's and states like that, and how similar they are to both of those experiences and certainly the content, if there is any content, sometimes there's no content, but the changes and experiences also definitely described as somewhat similar. So, yeah, it makes quite a lot of sense that both are kind of doing the same thing, sort of almost just, disconnecting from the world, the external.

**Participant** 2:53:34

You know now that you bring that up. I guess because I haven't discussed a lot of this out loud with people but you know, like, I think back to the times where I would meditate sober, and one of your biggest obstacles is dealing with and letting go of random thoughts of things that happened during the day and getting rid of those. Now when I look back, yeah, those things don't happen. It is more of a passive experience when it comes to thought. It is more like a flow of things. So, it's not that there's any sort of aim, it's not as if I'm looking for something is that things come up to the surface the things that would happen are things that you know, were not planned ahead of time. I don't think I've ever really entered into a psychedelic situation where I wanted to do something specific. I think maybe that would be more in line with LSD because I know there was a study in the 50s or 60s where they took some professionals like a mathematician, architect, engineer, and they wanted them to work on something, some problem that had been challenging them and they wanted them to do that during the peak of the trip. Now, I feel LSD is much more, it has that scientific feel to it but I used to want to try and create music on mushrooms, but it just didn't seem to happen. It seemed like it, do you know that whole thing of like, say, being able to like do a mathematical problem, or solve an issue, or design something that level of coordination would not be there. Now I could easily come out of the experience, maybe the next day or two. I would have a newfound mental clarity, where I could learn something or tackle something, but certainly not in the middle of a mushroom trip. Like any sort of technical ability, your capabilities seem to go out the window temporarily.

**Interviewer** 2:56:32

Hmm. I know with those studies, because I've read them. I don't know if it was one or multiple studies and it was just one. The, with the creative sort of problem solving they that was they did that after the peak I believe they had gave them it, I think they didn't do much in the beginning until the effects came on and then they would just sort of experience that I think they all kind of had their own couches to lay down on and just sort of let it happen and then once I think a couple of hours in, probably like four or five, then they were directed or encouraged to try and work on the problem sort of after the peak and when they had a level of awareness again, that they could actually, you know, have some structure to their thoughts that would allow them to come in and apply their particular skillset to the problem that they were trying to solve. I think it was also not as super high dose either so that the you know, like the threshold level of noticeable effects and how much further ahead you get of that like you're only getting a kind of a shorter duration and it's smaller peak. So, it's not as they're not as perturbed from their normal states is very high doses of psychedelics.

**Participant** 2:57:53

When it comes to mushrooms even coming down I never really felt like doing anything like that, except the things like going for a walk, of course, but not anything involving any sort of level of like technical capability. This felt like it needed to be put on the shelf until later. Now, I've experienced quite the opposite on LSD. LSD was something where I felt like I wanted to maybe like do something or learn something or, you know, cause it always felt more scientific, I guess I would call it you know, and I think it. I guess it helps you work with the outside world better but I just feel that psilocybin is much more of an internal experience you know, and which goes along lines with like Ayahuasca as well because of very similar molecules seem to have that feel that that same vibe, that same theme.

**Q23. Interviewer** 2:59:13

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

**Participant** 2:59:22

Absolutely, like I noticed that people. People in general, will respond much more positively to me. I can tell that because I've flushed myself out and I've gotten rid of a bunch of gunk like just you know, say old stress or say some problem that I was dealing with, it's all gone. Like it's like that muscle memory of that is gone and people like out in public or people I know that they will have a lot, their reception on me is much more warm. I mean I'm a fairly friendly person in the first place but I noticed that strangers seem to respond much more positively to me. It's like so they pick up something they can tell that people feel that I'm cleared out, you know that this guy's like walking around and he feels good and he's relaxed. So, it's almost like say you had a bunch of concerns or something that you don't need to hold on to anymore and they're gone, you know and so I feel refreshed, that is a excellent word to use, LikeI feel that sense of being refreshed and more present. So, coming out of it, you know, I mean like you go through life, and you're sort of in your head to an extent instead of living more completely in the moment and so the thoughts in your head, I think they translate outwards through your nonverbal communications and the energy you send out and I think people sometimes they get, like a funny feeling, if you're thinking a lot, if you're thinking too much, they pick up on that but I'm not as internalised afterwards and that's what people pick on, that pick up on that there's a person who is, is living in the moment, and say, they're not they, like I don't feel like, how would I put it? So usually, when I go out in public, how to say this? Like I sort of like try to be polite and not imposing on people but say, after a trip, I go out and don't even like really think about things like that and like, say strangers are more likely to start up random conversations with me or if I walk by someone, like people seem to want to be more engaging with me, after a trip. So, that's one thing and then because, yeah, cause like even when my life, I don't experience much stress at all, but still, I go through life and, you know, maybe just like think too much, instead of just being spontaneous and living and it kind of has a build-up effect and so when all that's gone, so people are very warm towards me for that period of time afterwards and then also, I might have some sort of mental breakthrough, like, a new idea, I might see something in a different way. Like, I might see a different perspective on something, say, there's no need for like a specific example but say, if I had always been doing something a certain way, for a long time, without even thinking about it, because that's just how I did it and all of a sudden, I might realise that there's a much easier way to get that done. Those are the types of things that will happen or, say, there might be a concept that I was having difficulty understanding and then all of a sudden, that I'd be able to see that in a different light. So, I'll be able to, like shift my perspective more. So, say, thinking outside the box, things like that or say, this kind of a more or less using this as a metaphor, but how they say, if you want to, like try to copy a picture, turn it upside down and draw it that way, because you can see in a different way.

**Participant** 3:04:22

Yeah, I can shift like I'm able to shift my perspective around and then it also makes me more open, it's easier for me to maybe try and see a different person's worldview. If I disagree with somebody, because it's very easy for me if I have some sort of dispute with a person or disagreement, to be so caught up in the moment where I'm not aware of how I'm filtering the situation. So, it allows me to slow down and try to see the other person's side of a situation. You know because say if you are in some sort of debate you have a tendency to become too focused on like, just say trying to win, you know, is to understand that there's a different side to it, I'm not the centre of the universe.

**Q24. Interviewer** 3:05:28

Has how you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 3:05:35

How I use them? it has changed and I think it will continue to change because I've done so much work on myself in the past, I can probably see myself, maybe moving back in towards more of like, a recreational or social type of thing. if the right parties are interested in doing that, like say, maybe out on a camping trip. I've also a couple times I’ve tripped with people when it was the first time I kind of got away from that. I'm just like, very selective when it comes to the individual but I think it'd be more I'm on a good footing to do things like that, to do things like that again. So, I think that's how I might choose because I might reach a point where, you know the whole thing in total darkness, it may just get like, old, you know, maybe I learned everything I felt like I needed to learn or I just need to take a break. You know, but I think that probably a future direction for me is more towards being engaged with people and the public and maybe seeing what I might have to offer that way and so, yeah, so cause it started out recreationally and even when I got back into it, in 2011, that was fairly recreational. Basically what happened was, I just found out that somebody had some stuff available and I was like man I'd really like to do that again and then, so it started out that way and then it became more of a deeper thing and I was at a period of my life, I feel like I was really asleep at the wheel. Say yeah, you know, had the job and things were okay, but felt like maybe there was like, there was definitely a little bit too much stagnation going on in my life where it was very routine and when I started tripping again, that's when, that's when the interest really kicked into wanting to take, like, more control of my life and I think a big part of that is I've been grappling you know, quite a bit with the concept of working for somebody else to have to earn my money. You know, I would rather I would rather have an income situation where I don't have to follow the strict schedule. You know that's been something. That's the toughest thing about my job, really, I don't enjoy, like this strict schedule, I want a schedule, I could shift around more and so this really made me think about that about moving in a different direction or at least getting myself to a place where I could work a bunch, save a bunch of money and then not work for a while you know, and to start learning about different ways that people make money cause I have learned that yeah, you're never going to have that type of life if you work for someone else. So, you need to start thinking about different ways to bring money in, you know, whether it be investing or even developing streams of purely passive income. So, those things they seemed inaccessible to me, but now they're much more accessible. You know, and so things like money and finance. So, that was a major blind spot in my life. So, then I started studying, investing and how people invest, and what are good stores of value, and how people make money on their own, you know, the different ways.

**Q25. Interviewer** 3:10:28

So those are the questions related to how you use psychedelics. The next three questions, well, two questions, really but there's one before those. So, the next two questions are going to ask specifically about particular psychedelic experiences. So, one is asking, is going to ask you about your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience and the other is going to ask you to describe a your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience. Now, for some people, these are the same one. for other people. You could also consider the second question is asking, if you have a very powerful, negative challenging experience you want to go through, you might also want to balance it with a very life changing positive one or you might have had two negative ones you want to talk about. So, I'm just, it's just to leave it open so that you're aware of the two kinds of questions and you can think, which ones you would like to talk about. So, before we get to those two questions, there's just one question, which is, what do you, for you personally, what do you think is the core psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 3:11:44

The core psychedelic experience is to remind you that you are not a static, fixed thing that you can change yourself, and you can change your life. On, so that's on an individual level. Okay, so that you're not tied to a specific destiny, you are not a victim of circumstance, that you have the ability to change that. So, that is one aspect of it and then the other aspect is, I mentioned before that there is this dynamic life force that covers the planet, and drives the planet, and that not only are we individuals, but we're also part of something larger. So, not only that, there's more to this reality and this universe then we can see that is much more malleable, that you could be an individual and pursue the things you want to pursue, to really think about and find out, you know, back to the identity thing to figure out who you really want to be what you want to do. So, there's the individual part and then the other part is, is understanding that you have you have a role, in all of this in this society, and this, the entire ecosystem of the planet, and that, that you have something that you can contribute, you have something positive that you can give to the world. So, not only can you be completely fulfilled individual, but at the same time, you can also be part of this massive tribe, this society, and that you have things to offer as other people have things to offer to you and that is why it's important to be somewhat social, on some level, even though it's not for everybody, I will say that some people want to be, you know, it's that sort of thing, you know they might be very, very far into the autistic spectrum but even then, they still have something to contribute because they're excellent developers. They create software. So, even if they don't want to interact with people they're bringing value to everyone to civilization as a whole. So, those two things like finding your place and balancing that out, you know where you fit. So, being immersed in this universe, but also realising that there's more to this universe than we even believe and that it is not always fixed. That, you know, you, sometimes you can magically attract and draw things to you. You know by what you project, so yeah, brings you back into that, you know, you can pretty much do whatever you want to be. You know, I think it boils down to those things right there and so yeah, just sorry. Yes, say like, the thing is where, you know, like, you can change yourself and all that, I guess that that relates to, you know, what people call it ego death as well because, again, the ego is those fixed or those things that you view as fixed. Those automatic reactions that you can turn that around. You know, I think that that's what a person experiences when they experience ego death is their filters and their lenses that they view the world through have been removed.

**Q26. Interviewer** 3:16:50

So, the following question is, can you describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 3:17:01

Yes, so I kind of have two, and they're pretty short answers. So, when it comes to challenging things, those were spontaneously being brought back to like, childhood events, like being very young and separated from my parents, you know, and having like, teachers, you know, just kind of enjoy being mean to kids. I didn't realise how traumatic those were, you know how scary that was until I went back and visited that. So, it was kind of difficult, but it was difficult when I was going through it but now I'm grateful for that experience, that I could shrug that off. That was changing. So, that was challenging it was because It felt embarrassing. Now, the other one is the one that I think is more important, actually, it wasn't negative, but it was very, very overwhelming and that was the time when out of nowhere everything just disappeared and so I remember that it was in the daytime too and I was in that kneeling posture. I had my eyes closed, and I had like a sheet or blanket over my head and the best way I can describe it is that it's like the universe just blanked out. Okay, so it was it's difficult to describe that everything is gone. So, it wasn't blackness, it wasn't light. It was just everything was gone but my awareness was intact and that was the only thing that was there. So, it'd be sort of comparable somewhat to being placed in a dark room but again, that dark room is still something this was nothing. Nothing just no colours, nothing to see nothing to feel. Nothing to hear. It was just all gone and I was there and when that happened, I thought oh shit, you finally went too far. Yeah, and not knowing what was going to happen. So, there was no I know Terence McKenna talked about experiencing a void and he sounded like he felt like this sense of meaningless and despair. I did not feel that I felt like oh shit. You just left the planet. You know, you're not coming back. Okay. That's what I was going through. So, the type of thing that people say and feel the first when they have DMT experience, okay and so being in that state, I'm like, Oh, my God, I just, I'm gone. I'm done. It wasn't necessarily. Yep. It was kind of scary but it was because it was overwhelming, not knowing what's going to happen next and it's the fact that there was nothing, nothing to see. No stimulus whatsoever. That was such a shock and then just went away and so there's something beyond that. That happened six or seven years ago, and it never happened again and I have to say, I kind of want it to happen again, because I want to see what happens after that. You know, because I came out of it, you know. So, there's something beyond that but I was just too shocked at that point. You know, it was just too much like too much to deal with. So, that was that was challenging, but at the same time, feel down the road, I'll probably be ready for that again. So, that was the challenging one and that only that lasted only for a very short time. So, then the life changing one, which one was the most life changing one?

**Q27. Interviewer** 3:21:43

Or memorable.

**Participant** 3:21:56

Let's see. So, I guess I should probably divide that up into two, like early one and the later one. Now, in early one. It was spring time was on spring break. So, I was, it was my junior year of high school and this was another solo trip, it was in the summer time and I took, yeah I took three hits of LSD and I remember listening to the Tangerine Dream album Phaedra and it just completely, in headphones and It took me on a real journey. Yeah, so that one took me on a real journey there and nothing specific but that was the first experience I felt I was like really, really out of my body like gone and so I was just like, it's almost like visiting a different world. So, say, on a mental level, it's not like I learned anything like that but it was very, very intense.

21. Interview with Participant 21 (part 2)

**Interviewer** 00:00

[interlude] So I think

**Participant** 00:06

most memorable.

**Interviewer** 00:07

Yeah. You mentioned the tangerine gene gene or genes.

**Participant** 00:12

Dream.

**Interviewer** 00:13

Dream, Tangerine Dream. Yes, that makes more sense and I think you said you had one out there, that was you were going to start talking about?

**Participant** 00:25

Yeah, so the first one that was, you know, during the early phase, I was like, you know, super young and then. So, when it comes to more recent times, this kind of covers a few this happened more than once but it does go back to when I'd experience moments where everything would just turn into chaos and so I would hear random audio things. You name it, like one of the things I remember the most was a co-worker of mine joking around mimicking like a dog sniffing something, and just all these other things piled on top of that, just random memories, audio sounds and then visually, I just felt like, everything was just swirling violently around me and so it started to feel really, really out of control and then that's when I started using the stuff that I had mentioned earlier and then it would bring everything into order, and so then I'd feel calm, and I just feel extremely, extremely refreshed. Like, like, after you had like that feeling you get after you have like a really, really good time. Where say, if you rode a roller coaster, or like I mentioned the waterfall earlier, and you just feel rejuvenated and refreshed and renewed once that chaos went away. So, yeah that happened several times and yeah, what else is I put those very high up as being memorable, because simply because of the, this the sense of renewal that I felt, now, there was nothing. Nothing specific or concrete behind what caused that, like, it wasn't like, I felt like I was cured of anything, or that any problem or issue had been resolved. It was just this very, very strong sense of renewal and refresh, like you're, like there's just a return to like life feeling more vivid, and more exciting again, which I have to add that on to part of the core of the psychedelic experience as well. To refresh life to make life seem new and exciting again. You know, like when you're say when you're much younger, and you're able to enjoy the simple pleasures of life, like, just laying out in the sun. You know, on a summer day, being able to appreciate that stuff, say, you know during your early schooling, and it's summertime, and you have that whole three months free and just like the world is like so alive and so vivid. The sense of that returning or there's the UFOs which wasn't really connected to the mushrooms but I don't know if you want to talk about that or not.

**Interviewer** 04:13

Is that something memorable that you've that you've had going on?

**Participant** 04:18

It was extremely memorable because I was tripping on mushrooms and saw UFOs but I feel like I should just leave it at that because I the UFO aspect of it really wasn't part of the psychedelic experience, unless you want to hear about it.

**Interviewer** 04:41

Yeah, jump into it. I mean, what's the was it, in what sense do you mean it wasn't part of the psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 04:51

I think that it just happened to be that I was tripping at the time that it happened but here's the story. So, I was up in Michigan, on the Great Lakes, and I was up there for a wedding and there are a tonne of us in this house and this is way out in the middle of nowhere. Okay and so it was at the end, it was a last night that we were there and I had truffles, I brought some truffles with me and so at the end of the night, the only two people left outside were me and my girlfriend's cousin and we're both tripping, and we're just looking at the sky and all of a sudden I look over. There's this hill, and it is dark out there. You know, and I didn't really remember what had been over in this spot but I just noticed that like this light on this hill was not there earlier in the night and I thought it was like a floodlight in somebody's yard. I couldn't see what was there other than that light and next thing I know, this light starts, it was like a mist of orange mist that had like a mass to it and it started changing shape and this blue mist developed inside it and it started pushing on the orange mist and the next thing I know, I see what looks like two parallel beams from car headlights like shining back and forth inside of this, this dome of mist and when that happened, me and the other guy were looking at each other. We're like, yeah, this is real, we're seeing this, we are really seeing this and all of a sudden, this little pinpoint of light just drops down from the sky and start zigzagging and goes inside that that dome and, you know, the funny thing is that he is way more dumbfounded by this than I am, I'm perplexed because this is clearly not normal but uh, yeah, we both kept looking at each other, we confirm that we saw what we were seeing, we see something drop down from the sky, we see this dome of mist and it is changing shape. So, it's like a it's a glowing fog but it has a definite dome shape to it but it would also kind of expand and contract and there were times where we would look up at the sky and there'd be like a stationary light and it would just blink out and so we just stood there watching this and the strangest thing if I had not been tripping, I would have been scared. So, I just felt this, this thing that said, Okay, well, don't do anything crazy, like don't shine a flashlight in that direction. Just leave it alone and I started thinking maybe I should go inside and I thought it was kind of odd that he went inside. It was like, like he lost interest in it and so I just stood there and watched it respectfully. This thing happen and then it all ended it was around 4am and the ingrown irrigation kicked on. So, I had to run like hell, you know, cause it was super, super cold out. That's yeah, that's how they ended the night. So, that was memorable but I can't say that the psychedelics caused it to happen but I've been an astronomy buff for decades and so I know what I'm seeing when I looked at the sky, or when I look around, and I saw this stuff was very anomalous and the next day, what did freak me out was once it was daylight, how close this event happened. It was less than a quarter of a mile away. I thought it was farther. You know, it was very, very close. This this this strange mist that just developed in this wooded area and there was nothing in that spot. I thought it was a house or somebody's yard. There was nothing It was a hill and just trees. So, yeah, that was the UFO experience.

**Interviewer** 09:42

Okay and in terms of how, how high was your dose at that point? Was it hallucination? hallucinate visual hallucinating, generating level, like changing the world around you or sort of kind of a reasonable, moderate, or light dose that wouldn't promote the intensity of that kind of visual hallucination?

**Participant** 10:06

Visually Not much, maybe a small amount of like the stereotypical trails. Now I will say this, I have seen things that weren't there before. This was not one of those cases or not necessarily seeing things that weren't there but my mind has grossly interpreted something that I was looking at, you know, because I remember there I was in a hotel and I was looking down in this specific incident and I'm thinking of where there are hanging flowerpots full of flowers, but when I looked down it looked like there's a group of people standing very close together all looking up the next day they're flowers but in the UFO incident no, visually everything was very coherent. It was not a very high dose either. You know in that case, so.

**Interviewer** 11:12

Should've run over to the hill man. See what's going on.

**Participant** 11:17

Might not be here today if I did that.

**Interviewer** 11:19

\*laughs\*

**Participant** 11:20

But it turned out once I got back home that that area of Michigan is a real hotbed for UFO activity.

**Interviewer** 11:28

Okay.

**Participant** 11:31

And in that general area is a was that Dan [David] Paulides the missing 411 guy that was up around one of the parts that are hotspot for people turning up missing too. So, something strange about that area.

**Interviewer** 11:54

Well, anonymous.

**Participant** 11:57

Anomalous

**Interviewer** 11:58

Anomalous. Yes, it's an anomalous experience. One, I'm open, I'm open to these things. I don't see why it couldn't be that but I guess, like not to put a judgement on it, I would try and go through all the most rational answers before I get to like aliens. So

**Participant** 12:17

Absolutely.

**Interviewer** 12:18

Maybe people are fucking with other people.

**Participant** 12:21

Yeah, you know, I've learned not to, you know, not to jump to conclusions or like, was it from the X Files? Moulders poster, I want to believe, you know, you can’t be that way. If you're going to investigate that stuff. You have to be you have to be open to the fact that yeah, there could have been a very rational explanation to it. You know. So

**Interviewer** 12:48

It definitely sounds anomalous.

**Participant** 12:49

Yeah, I leave it at what it is, not going to say it was aliens. It could have been something our own government was up to, too you know, who knows but whatever it was, it was definitely there. That's the most I can say.

**Q28. Interviewer** 13:07

Okay, right. So, swapping to another question. This one is related, is worded poorly, but is I'll ask you how it's worded but basically, it's if you have ever experienced ego death, could you describe what it was like?

**Participant** 13:34

The best way for me to describe that we touched on that earlier and I don't know, there might be more to it, than the words that I use, but we're talking about meditation, and the purpose of meditation is to get rid of thoughts and random impressions. So, you want to keep your body still, you recite the mantra you control your breathing, with the aim of reaching that state where your body's gone and your thoughts are gone, but you have an awareness. Now. The difference would be in that ego death state, you have an awareness, okay but you're not. Your ego is what processes those thoughts. Your ego is what tries to map your reality. Your ego is where you have a response and a reaction. So, in an ego death state as intense as it is, your emotional reactions to such an astonishing thing are also gone. So, when you are, when you are just the centre of awareness, you know you will see things. Typically, when you're that far in very abstract, usually maybe colours, or maybe a singular light thing, things are shapeless and again, if you took me right now and threw me into something like that threw me out in this space, I'd be freaking out, I'd be surprised, I'd be awe stricken but all of that has been removed and also your again like say the my words and my thoughts those are those are derived from my ego right now. Okay, because I'm like looking at this door in front of me and I am mapping that out, I'm thinking that's a door and in an ego death state you do not have that it is pure consciousness. So, you are passive would be a good word because you're not processing information, say going around, if I'm driving, I'm constantly processing information, oh, there's a stop sign up there. You know, you know you need to stop or song comes on the radio, and I'm thinking about the song and then I'm thinking about other things while I'm driving. So, it's like a normal beta wave state consciousness. So, you constantly have all of these thoughts going through your head impressions and thinking about things that the ego death, it removes that because you're no longer that mechanism of mapping the universe and creating things is gone. So, say you might see something like in the normal realm, like, okay, that is that is an orange, or that's a grapefruit or that's a tennis ball but you're not thinking that in ego death, because you're just awareness and so it's to the point where you, if you do see something, it's almost you're not concerned about it, because you have reached this very, like very primordial level of existence where you are. I want to use the term above, but you're outside of things being differentiated from each other. So, when you reach the source, when, like, everything is pure potential, you can't really put a form on that you can't quantify might be the proper word and it's not your interest anyways, to want that, because there is this, like, sense of wholeness, but you're not necessarily aware of that because you are in it and so there's a there's like a peacefulness to that because you're not worrying about anything and it's like everything is balanced but when it is balanced like that it is it's some sort of zero type state because it's not moving in this direction or that direction. Like any inertia or any tendency is brought to complete balance or it's like a form like a form of stillness and so I guess the person's reason for, for wanting to reach such a state is going back to earlier. You know, if your consciousness will survive after your death, then you don't want it to be to be clouded by thoughts and impressions from a past life. So, that would be one function of experiencing ego death and then while you're still alive, that is important, because that goes to show you that your thoughts and your behaviours and the things you do without realising that is not who you are, that is not who you have to be. So, that's why ego death can be important because you can see that there's something outside of that, you know, there's something outside of you living in your head, and looking at the world and constantly thinking thoughts when you're going to the world and reacting. So, it's your, like a, if there's even anything to observe, you know, you're a pure observer but I feel like even an observer, your past that action because observing something is still an action. So, again, the ego is where your ideas about reality, your models of the universe, your ideas of what is right, and what is wrong, of how things work. That that is all on the level of ego, like, say, learning, learning a skill, taking a class. That is that is pretty much ego based, because you are, you're shaping, I guess you could say, you're shaping your perception of the world by learning something new. So, I feel that if you feel a sense of like fear or excitement or exhilaration, that may not quite be ego death, because still you're processing something, it's like it's not quite gone yet but I guess you can sum it up by a simultaneous completeness, but also sort of an emptiness and that emptiness comes from again, the fact that there are no tendencies in any direction, that it is just pure existence. So, even though you're experiencing things, you're not looking for anything, you're not trying to understand anything, because it is already complete.

**Interviewer** 23:01

Sounds very paradoxical.

**Participant** 23:05

To be all encompassing, it has to be

**Interviewer** 23:11

and would you have would you say you've experienced the state like this before?

**Participant** 23:17

I have, but it's never been something that I felt was like an aim, or a goal and so when that, actually let me fix this headset. I feel that when something like that happens, it's more of I guess I would view it as a gift and maybe that is part of the experience that for that to happen, I guess maybe you need to have no expectations. Which does go along the lines with the little bit that I understand regarding like Buddhist meditation where when you read some of the states like Samadhi you know, union with an object that they say you don't want to hold on to that. So, something might be like very, very pleasant, like very good, but there's more beyond that. So, you reach a level of union but it's like you want to keep going you want to keep removing things. Yeah. Which is how the ego death is, you know, you're stripping away beliefs and thoughts and ideas.

**Q29. Interviewer** 25:09

Have experiences with psychedelics affected your spiritual or religious beliefs?

**Participant** 25:16

Have they affected those beliefs? I would have to say yes but say I don't necessarily come from a very religious background but I guess when it comes to spirituality, for me, I think it goes back to the idea that there's more to the world around us then than we see and also touching back. Like on a pure technical level. I don't have any concrete ideas of what exactly is out there, but I feel the, there seems to be a pattern in religions which deal around say, getting things off your chest, whether it's confessing your sins, clearing out your karma, you know, professing faith, that I believe that the purpose of those things is to clear your consciousness. So, that after you die, you can enter that state of that pure awareness, like that ego death thing you were talking about and that there's something beyond that to navigate, which at least from my perspective, is beyond our current understanding, because we have to navigate through this world, this physical world, with an ego. So, going through and travelling through some sort of world or universe. Without that is, is very difficult for me to try to wrap my head around of what that would be like. Okay, so, I think that it has cemented my belief that there is something after death, and you know, when it comes to religion and spirituality, I do have to say my acceptance of my own death, it brought me into thinking about that on a regular basis and always being aware of the fact that, that day will come, instead of say, pushing it out of my mind. Where, you know, I was forced to confront that and I remember, there was one day where I was just kind of free floating, experiencing and all of a sudden, something just made me think about the fact that I will have to die someday and it was very depressing at first but somehow, I found a documentary on the Tibetan Book of the Dead and watching that, while still tripping really, really, really helped me out really helped me think about that, and it brought me definitely to an acceptance that that day is going to come and I don't feel as fearful or depressed about it, about that day happening and so I don't feel this need to try to push that away, to run from it but that I think about it often not in any sort of morbid way but feeling that I need to understand that I need to, you know, emotionally and mentally have my ducks in a row. So, that I don't have like anything nagging at me during my final moments. You know, cause I always say your life passes before your eyes. Well I feel the reason for all of the confessions and you know, that you want to get all of that karma off of you. So, you can go through that transition process into that other world and not get thrown off course, in some manner, whether it be thinking you need to temporarily go through some kind of hell to get to heaven, or that you want to make sure that you don't get like frightened into running away from something and then having to reincarnate again. I believe that that is the purpose of religion is to bring you the peace with everything. So, you can go through that process and go to that next level, whatever that level is. So, that is how that really affected my beliefs are you know, experiences on a religious level, because I, obviously, I don't think there's a single religion that really doesn't focus on death and what happens after death. So, I believe that somebody knows something about what happens after we die but that it is maybe not such an easy thing to explain to, again, a person who is living in a body and again, living in a world where we have to define things and create maps and models that whatever is out there is beyond that because there's no, you know, there's nothing solid.

**Q30. Interviewer** 32:16

You kind of just touched on this with your answer. So, maybe we can skip over it but I'll just mention that in case you want to add something to it. The question is have psychedelics changed how you think and feel about death or the process of dying? So, I feel like what you just said was kind of directly fed into that. So, I don't know if there's anything else you'd like to add there.

**Participant** 32:41

Yeah, not too much other than, again, it was something that I used to try to not think about or move away from but yeah, I feel that, that accepting that and, you know, preparing for it in some way enhances life and so, yeah, I mentioned that I'm much more comfortable with that happening because at the beginning, when it first happened, I remember very, very, very depressing once this, this thought, and again, it was very random but when it presented itself to me, it was almost like a lesson or a challenge that I had to confront before I can move any further and so in the end, I feel yeah, it's just made me appreciate life more and, you know, it was roughly around that same time I remember, a friend of mine, who was not tripping or anything like that. You know, he came to me and talked about, he's the same age as me, you know, he talked about becoming very depressed about that thought, you know, of death and dying and I told him my experiences and how depressing how challenging it was, you know, to go through. So, yeah, I'm grateful for that. Very, very, very grateful for that.

**Interviewer** 34:42

How did he respond when you told him about your experiences?

**Participant** 34:48

Didn't have much to say. I think part of it was, you know, he was still immersed in that that sad feeling and so, you know, like anyone who's feeling down, typically, you know, not much that can be done to like really like, lift them out of that sometimes you could find the right words to say, but usually, I feel like they need to, they need to travel through that and, you know, as far as relating it to psychedelics, he was actually there the first time I tripped, but his wife is very disapproving of that.

**Q31. Interviewer** 35:52

So, the next question is somewhat similar to the spiritual religious beliefs question, but it's written in a way that's more secular. So, sometimes, it gets at different aspects of maybe belief structures that people have that wouldn't necessarily be considered spiritual or religious, although could be just depending on the person and how they frame it. So, the question, if you feel like you've answered it, we can move on as well but the question is, have psychedelics changed any fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality?

**Participant** 36:29

That it is malleable. You know my beliefs when it comes to that, you know, typically I don't express these that that often but this thing that we call the solid world around us, I believe, is more of a reflection, or an end product of something that begins, as I mentioned earlier, with the ego death, that thing, that pure state of potential reality where anything could be anything and so in that realm, you move down another level, where you have a couple levels where things are not solid but as they descend, they start to take a form and that, again, that this is only the final result of something that happens on a higher plane and so I do believe that we can project ourselves in a way that they can make things happen. Now, when you do have coincidences or synchronicities like that. I personally like to not attribute that to magic or just pure chance, I prefer to just leave it as is because I'm not sure at this point, whether or not ascribing a cause to it, is worth it or if it will add to the experience or make it happen more often. There's a part of me that believes the best thing to do is when those things happen to just accept it and I guess maybe it goes along with like the cliche, a watched pot never boils. I do kind of have a belief that if I put too much conscious thought into things like that, that I might interfere with it, which is why I try to choose to just accept those things as they happen, you know, and not be too scientific about it, which you would think that the way to be is to see if you can distil that down into to a technique but I feel that might be me putting a sort of a cage on this thing and prevent it from happening so that's how it's affected my view of reality that again there are successive levels, and that this you could almost call this solid world like a shadow. You know, but it's, we can touch it, we can knock on it but it is reality in its most limited form because you can't, it does not like stay on like this railing or the door in front of me, I can't look at that door and make it turn into something else and that's why I view this, this is the most limited level and that's when it comes to like say things like the law of attraction, you want to work on that, that higher level and like different traditions have said that emotions are how you work through that how you mould that, like, you see that in think and grow rich, from Napoleon Hill, where he talks about one of the first steps is having a burning desire for something to happen. So, that there's this emotional level of it and I feel that that is the first level going back up to that source is those strong emotions because they in western philosophy, they equate emotions with the element of water and water is fluid it can bend, it can change shape. So, I understand why they would compare it to like a form of water a fluid that you can work with, that is sort of has a solidity to it. Well, yes, solidity and in the sense that water is tangible, and you can touch it, but you know, it doesn't have its own shape. So, that is what you begin working with, as far as, again, like to use the law of attraction or making these happen, creating synchronicities that you're acting on that and, you know, along those lines, I mean, you know, we did reach a point in physics where, when in the 1700s or 1800s, you know, physicists became very confounded because their experiments are showing that matter exhibits the property of both solid particles and waves. You know, and I feel, that that is the level that we begin acting on and so I never went into physics I'm not sure how they explain that matter can be composed of a solid particle and a moving wave at the same time.

**Interviewer** 43:25

I don't think they have. I think it's still just like it's what it is, but we don't know why.

**Participant** 43:33

Because even with a solid particle model, you still have matter being composed the what 99% empty space and with a hydrogen atom alone, I like the hydrogen atom is perfect example, because the entire surface of that hydrogen atom is from the motion of one electron that has to move so fast that it has to create the entire surface area of the atom at the same time and then what the metaphors they use, if you have what if the proton was a baseball then the electron would be you know what, a marble a couple miles away. So, I think it's important to keep an open mind to things like that to not think even if it turned out to be not true In the end, I feel that is more advantageous to believe that you can influence reality instead of thinking, awww it's just way it's always going to be. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 44:53

I guess if you if you boil it down to that sort of simple idea, it is that sense of which you've been talking about. You have a level of control over reality, you can act out your, your, your internal desires or will and the reality will respond and is malleable to that and that for some people, they have very self-limiting beliefs where as you say, the world is just always how it is, I follow all the social norms and the rulebook that hasn't been written and so long as I do that, you know, I'll get my make my way through life but there's this sense of being maybe more trapped than what you're describing here and that by opening up that experience, by having a psychedelic experience, or the or the types of psychedelic experiences you've had, there's this increased sense of, I don't know, the word comes when it's permeability, but I, but I guess it's sort of like

**Participant** 46:09

permeability is a good word and malleability.

**Q32. Interviewer** 46:17

Well, anyway, thank you. It was very elaborate. So, we've just got a few questions left four main ones and then the last one is one that usually doesn't get much of a response. So, the question is, have psychedelics changed your outlook on life?

**Participant** 46:40

Yes, absolutely. which I'd say, pretty much the entire discussion has, I would say should be good enough. I don't want to take up too much of your time but yeah, it's definitely changed my outlook, and it is a much more positive outlook. So, it's made me a happier person and it's made me a better person, as far as how, you know, how I interact with people, because now I see, you know, another point of view like another soul, that person has dreams and aspirations, as opposed to like me having a more self-centred or narcissistic viewpoint of the world where I'm reacting with objects or whatever, no these are living breathing souls, you know.

**Q33. Interviewer** 47:52

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

**Participant** 48:03

So, I don't see one specific role. I think in general, for like, most people in general, I would attribute that to healing and therapy. So, that again, they can wake people up, they can bring back their zeal for life and as mentioned, they can write their own rulebook for life. So, I feel that for the people in general, that that is good, right there, because everyone has different levels of aspiration and what they want out of life, you know, some people like they, you know, they don't mind going to work at a job every day, and they just want to be a little bit happier while they're doing that, you know, so that's one rule right there and I can say too, I do not want to discount or write off recreational aspect of it either because some people that's where they're at, and this is what they want to do and it brings a lot of enjoyment to their life. You know, and anyone has the right, you know, to take that much deeper. If they choose, but there's nothing wrong with not wanting to do that either. You know, again, if you just want to add some colour to your life then yeah, that to me, that is very, very acceptable. You know, cause again, why not, you know, why not just try to be happy? So, yeah that's for what I would put under the umbrella of the general population, you know, again, just kind of wakes them up makes them think about how they're living their life, compared to how they really would like to live their life.

**Q34. Interviewer** 50:43

Have psychedelics shaped your view of humanity's future?

**Participant** 50:50

In a much more positive way, absolutely because it has recently become my understanding that psychedelics seem to be playing a pretty important role in the cryptocurrency community and so clearly, this is helping people to think more outside the box and create situations that do benefit humanity as a whole. Now say when it comes to cryptocurrency, what that's doing right there is that is putting financial control back into the hands of the people, and out of the hands of central banks and it's just fascinating that the, you know, began with Bitcoin and this thing came from an anonymous individual, and it practically took the world by storm, and even the blockchain network itself reminds me of mycelium. You know, and so yeah, so I think that clearly the connection between those two after studying cryptocurrencies and blockchain, I feel that that technology is a major step towards greater liberty and freedom for everyone, and the impact in developing countries that cryptocurrency has had, where somebody would work in a country, one country, and they need to send money to the relatives back home and so now, you don't have to go through this banking system that gouges you with all of these fees and takes way too long to get your money over there. Now you can send funds to family instantaneously and in these other countries, again, this is like saved lives, you know, and governments tried to stop it, but they can't and then now in the United States, too many large corporations are investing in it, because they're concerned about the value of the dollar declining. So, the institutional investment like that makes it even tougher to get rid of, you know, because now, these are the people that fund political campaigns, which is essentially bribing a politician, you know, it's becoming an invisible thing and, again, it's putting a lot of control and a lot of freedom back into the hands of people and it's also being used. There's like a blockchain version of YouTube, there's now a blockchain version of Facebook. So, now you're starting to get into the territory of not being able to censor people, or prevent people from having access to very important information that they can use to enhance their lives and so, not only that, but there have been other examples like maybe like Timothy Leary, Terence McKenna, people who had these great visions for people wanting to just live a more fulfilling life, to be a better part of the community to not be you know, fighting with each other. So, much. So, yeah, on humanity as a whole. I feel that even during times when they're not up at the surface, that psychedelics have been a very substantial driving force behind the positive development of humanity.

**Interviewer** 55:17

You can, almost just comes to mind the analogy of the actual fungus and sort of like the mycelium network under the ground that's invisible and you sometimes see the fruiting body of the mushroom popping up and that's the, what you could say, and maybe in the global consciousness of it becoming more prominent and aware and expressing itself but it's always sort of underground, both figuratively and kind of literally, and people are unable to stamp it out because it's just it finds new sources in other places.

**Participant** 55:58

It will yes, it'll keep coming you have to basically get rid of the earth, or the soil, you know, to stop that from happening and when I started getting back into this, at that time, yeah, I started to see the new consciousness revolution is more subdued on the surface, but I feel it is more, more concrete and has more impact than what the 1960s had because now you have people that they're more under the radar and they're very innovative and you didn't have computers, or you did have, you know, these vacuum tubes back in the 1960s but, you know, now like me talking to you right now, on this phone. I mean, this is Star Trek, you know, this is science fiction, what I'm holding here my hand right now and so now you have this in the hands of you know, everyone and then you combine that with psychedelics. So, now you have this free flow of information out there and so it does feel good and like you said it's this mycelial network is all over the planet it is now like a computer network you know, and yeah, if you say with the blockchain if you squash one node, you have all the other nodes on the planet to deal with, you can't get rid of it now.

**Interviewer** 57:43

One mycelium brother talking to another.

**Participant** 57:49

And even as of recent, because of forums like the shroomery there's absolutely a proliferation of cultivators who they take their spent substrate and they toss it everywhere, you know, so, I do feel that in the psilocybin molecule, that there is a an intelligence that it was reaching out to us and you know, that it was meant to make an out into the greater world as a whole. You know, like I think back to in Mexico in the 1930s when R Gordon Watson went out there, and I could certainly understand why they wanted to keep it a secret but at the same time, it needed to get out there to the general world. So, I mean, they were, you know, they held it in great reverence, but at the same time, feel that the mushrooms they wanted to reach the entire world, you know, not just not just an isolated culture. So, I'm not saying I don't believe that they guarded their secret out of jealousy. It was more of a respect and a protective intent that they had. So, wasn't malicious. So, wasn't about trying to, you know, one up anybody or have a specific advantage and there was certainly a pretty negative period afterwards. When I understand because Maria Sabina was. you know, she became a pariah for, introducing R Gordon Watson to mushrooms and I believe they burned her house down. Yeah but I think at the end, she even accepted the fact that they needed to reach the entire world as a whole. You know, because I feel like that's how it started out much earlier, during the course of the rise of humans is that these mushrooms were all over the planet and we see this clear evidence that they're being consumed everywhere. So, that was the beginning of it, you know and lately, I've been jokingly kind of telling myself that the maybe Terrence just used the year 2012, to make sure that enough people would be prepared for 2021 because this seems more like what they were insinuating, with 2012. You know, this is the time where we have the real upheaval going on and things seem to be speeding up more and things are more interconnected. This seems more like a singularity event than 2012 did.

**Interviewer** 1:01:32

Yeah, well, from what I heard, and I've listened to plenty of Terence McKenna as well. The Mayan calendar was the big thing that sort of was focused around that I was having a conversation with somebody I think about this, talking about the I think they were also sort of talking about how 2020 seems to be and 2021 seems to be more like the catalyst or the bigger change I was like, it could just be that the Mayan people were off by a, you know, some minor fraction of a degree over multiple 1000s of years. They probably didn't have perfectly calibrated telescopes or something. So, it's quite possible that there is just a calculation error.

**Participant** 1:02:20

I do find it fascinating, though, that it seems like two numbers were transposed. As opposed to actually you supposed to be like, Oh, I 2023. Yeah, you know, 2023 or 2009? So, yeah, just very, very, very fascinating. For sure. I don't know, if maybe there's, there's some mystery to delve into and when studying the I Ching when it comes to transposing those numbers, you know, or not.

**Interviewer** 1:03:00

I know there's a, I was reading recently, I didn't read it, but someone was talking about someone wrote a book about Maria Sabina, and went through her sort of life and all the experience after R Gordon Watson and her meeting him and that sort of tourism that built up around that because of, you know, psychedelic seeker hippies coming along and wanting to have their own experiences and I just thought I'd mention that in case it's something you're interested in having a look at, because I think someone wrote a full book about that, that sort of whole thing.

**Participant** 1:03:34

I'll have to look that up. Yeah. It's a fascinating story and I do feel I do feel bad for what happened to her, you know, and the fallout of that but it is what it is but yeah, I'm going to look that up. Should be easy to find.

**Q35. Interviewer** 1:03:55

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

**Participant** 1:04:04

Okay, so for people that are interested, first and foremost, do not succumb to any sort of peer pressure. Make sure that it's something that you want to do and that these people should definitely you know, if they're going to trip with another person for the first time, they should be very explicit, what kind of environment they want, and who they want around. You know, if they just want to want one person that's fine, or they want to make sure that there are no strangers but yeah, they should really think out the environment that they want. I think those two are of the utmost importance and then the rest of I think the rest of it is combination of, you know, the standard stuff and common sense stuff like, you know, if you're an artist, just have some supplies there, whether it be a pen and notebook, or watercolours, any, any books may be inspirational. So, yeah, a lot of that stuff is covered before, but I think the most important thing is to be very, to really, really put their foot down about what the setting is because they want to make sure that there's not going to be any individuals around that make them uncomfortable, you know, or large groups. I think that they should be very careful with suggestions that people have, like, I think, like a really bad idea be the first time should be at a concert, you know, they'll work great for some people, but it's going to depend on the concert, it's going to depend on the people attending the concert. So, that and don't try not to be if they're curious about it, don't let anyone discourage them. Like you can read the bad stories you need to learn from them but you know, they need to just like think about where they're at, like, if they have some issues, you know, they need to decide whether or not they should avoid it, or they should take measures beforehand to make sure that they can deal with that. Another piece of super cliche and standard advice would be, you know start with very small doses, because you can just work your way up. That one and then pretty much under taking control of set and setting. I mean if they want to, you know, ritualize it a little bit in any way they want because that just adds to the preparation and then later on, you know, it gives you a sense of calm, because they think, okay, I've set everything up. So, everything's going to be good, you know, that always helps and also be careful about talking too much about it. Be aware of their audience because they don't want to either attract any negative attention from any source.

**Q36. Interviewer** 1:08:26

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

**Participant** 1:08:37

Yeah, I could see why there isn't much of a response to that, because you covered quite a bit here. So, yeah, any final thoughts or comments? I think one parting comment is, I do believe that this is something that is very, very beneficial to humanity as a whole. For anyone who might be seeking a deeper meaning to life. Someone who wants to, again, if they're feeling stuck, you know, if they want to be able to move forward, anyone who feels like they're not living up to their true potential. I think that this has a lot to offer and say with proper supervision, of course, anyone who is dealing with a past trauma. I think if proper caution is taken, I think that people can reach some real breakthroughs. I definitely believe that working with terminally ill people should be allowed to continue unimpeded, they should not put any barriers up at all for people going through that. So, of course, along with that, it's always a person's choice as well but I do after having done mushrooms and the experiences I've had, I feel that they were reaching out to us that they want us to form a relationship with them even the way they grow, where they typically, either where humans have disturbed the earth, or, you know, they grow in fields where pastures for different animals that humans sort of cohabitate with be it horses, pigs cows, you know, so it seems like everything about them was designed to get our attention and see what it is they had to offer. Yeah, and it was even Terrence himself I believe, who said, it seemed like that molecule is practically designed to fit into our brain receptors. So, I feel that they kind of kicked off our evolution, almost like the monolith in 2001 and I feel that we're reaching a point in history where something has circled around and we're at this other new beginning and I think that that's why there is such a resurgence in psychedelics because we're ready for this next stage and I don't want to really put any, I don't want to try and mould what that might be, because you don't quite know, it could be something beyond me, you know, some new potential that humans have and I also think that they are making us aware of how we need to stand up for individual liberty and freedom and find creative ways to circumvent tyranny, or anybody who would want to, you know, basically use us in any way, if we don't want to consent to that, then you know, that could be something as simple as your, you know boss getting rich off of your work, you know. Say if you're working in some factory, whatever, and this guy is, you know, making tonnes of money. It is absolutely your right, you know, if someone wants to work to that for someone else, but that is not the be all end all and because I've noticed, it seems like people can be raised or cultivated to have those mindsets of, you know, the entrepreneur versus the employee because I know I come from a long line of employees. So, developing that entrepreneurial mindset is something very, very new to me and again, the psychedelics have played a major role in my shifts and belief on that and my understanding of myself and what can be done because it used to seem so anything like in it, like starting a business, or investing, it seemed inaccessible to me, you know, not anymore. You know, I learned that you just need to seek that information out. Proceed with caution. So, yeah, it's opened up a world of possibility for me and the funny thing is that I never thought it would turn into something like that, I thought it would be something more esoteric, you know, esoteric or spiritual, but instead it completely turned around into taking an interest in understanding things like money and finance and technology which in turn is just, you know, paving the way for me to have more control over my life and my time, how I spend my time. I think that pretty much sums it up.

**Interviewer** 1:15:26

Cool alrighty then I will shut that.