4. Interview with Participant 4

**Interview recorded:** 7/12/2020 (NZDT)

**Length:** 2:30:09

**Spoken duration of interview:** Participant (70%), Interviewer (30%)

**Age (years):** Participant (28), Interviewer (29)

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

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

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

psychedelics, people, feel, experience, question, psychedelic trip, lsd, similar, sense, life, anxiety, encountered, psychedelic experience, deities, find, body, dmt, dream, insight, describe

**Interviewer** 00:02

Cool. So, the I've got basically just here sort of a sheet of about 30 questions, I think maybe a little bit more. It's so far seems to take about an hour and a half to maybe up to two hours, depending on the number of follow up questions, as well as funny enough, just the speed at which people talk. So, slower speakers, it just takes a bit more time, which is, that's fine and so I'll read, I'll be reading off some of these, but sometimes quite a few, I guess some of my questions will just be built off your answers and getting clarification for certain things, or you mentioned something that is quite specific to you and it's like, ooo that's interesting can you tell me more about that sort of thing.

**Participant** 00:53

Okay.

**Interviewer** 00:54

So, if it seems a little robotic when I read it, I apologise. So, I'll try and keep it as human like as possible.

**Participant** 01:05

Sure

**Q1. Interviewer** 01:06

Alrighty, so the first question is, why do you use psychedelics?

**Participant** 01:14

The initial use of psychedelics was I kind of just stumbled upon their benefit but for me, I had anxiety which produced dissociative effects and so if I was in a social setting, or trying to keep, like a job like that was dealing with the public more, what would end up happening was I would go out of body and depending on how long that distress lasted, I could kind of stay kind of disconnected for a while and so then my first experience with psychedelics quickly showed me that I could kind of be back in my body, because at that point, I had been not very grounded for a really long time and so I continued using them because it wasn't like a linear progress. It was something that I did a couple times and then didn't do again for a while, until it was like my last resort.

**Interviewer** 02:26

And how is it now with this anxiety to disassociation experience?

**Participant** 02:34

I would say it's pretty much gone now. Like it used to happen really easily, like little things would make it happen and now it would probably take, like a very large stress in order for that experience to happen.

**Interviewer** 02:51

And was that a lifelong experience from early childhood to whenever it stopped?

**Participant** 02:59

Yes, yeah. So, it was something that was kind of ongoing, I used to, like, I used to just kind of skip school all the time, like my total absences in school was like, I missed half of high school, because I just couldn't go because of anxiety, basically, I would be in class, and then all of a sudden, you know, you're trying to write a test or something and then I'm out of body and then I have to, like, deal with that, or just, like panic and leave. It's really weird to talk about, like, perspective here, being able to also be like, not there, right? Because some people don't really understand how that works.

**Interviewer** 03:44

Would you be able to describe or elaborate a little bit more on what that experience is like for you? Where, because you're sort of just then describing, you're still seeing it from a first-person perspective, but you're also at the same time seeing yourself from a third person perspective or out of body?

**Participant** 04:06

No, you're usually only seeing from the third like, kind of like, you know a video game, like from above and then people like, somehow your, your body still does stuff, though. So, like, you can be somewhere and then leave the body and then still be able to leave class like you don't become immobile.

**Interviewer** 04:31

And is there in those experiences? I just wait for the plane. Can you hear the plane?

**Participant** 04:40

Not really.

**Interviewer** 04:41

Okay, sorry. I can hear the plane. That's good. Then the microphones cancelling it out, which is nice. When you said, is there a sense in which you're still connected to yourself at that point, like, is it a wilful ability to move on and say leave a classroom or exit a social situation, or does it happen sort of automatically?

**Participant** 05:08

It happens automatically. Like, I can't control it it. I don't. Some people talk about like astral projection and stuff like that and it's not like that it's like only stress involuntary like I just like, go away.

**Interviewer** 05:23

Okay and you're but you're still conscious at this point? The you aware of.

**Participant** 05:31

Yeah, you kind of feel like following yourself around there was a couple times where it would get bad enough that it's like I would have gaps in memory like up to two weeks even. Okay. Yeah, so it's considered like, authentic dissociative disorder.

**Interviewer** 05:51

Yeah. Just out of a little bit curiosity and the third person's perspective, can you look around? Or is it focused on looking at just sort of your yourself, the body at least?

**Participant** 06:06

Yeah, it's mostly just focused on looking at yourself. That's how I experienced it anyway. Okay and then on psychedelics, I've been able to, like control my perspective. Yeah, which is how I was able to go back into the body, but at the same time, I was able to, like, take on the perspective of like, an object if I wanted, which is weird. So, so psychedelics gave me the control to kind of come back into body, but psychedelics can also give you control to maybe throw your, your perception, like how they talk about astral projection.

**Q2. Interviewer** 06:50

Okay. I'm sure we'll get into that a little bit later. So, the next question is, have the reasons why you use psychedelics changed over time? And if so, how have they changed?

**Participant** 07:09

No, for me, they didn't really change over time. Like eventually it did get to the point where you have certain kind of maybe like more mystical experience and then you want to experience that again, but it was mostly a therapeutic thing. Basically, I was, I had tried them when I was maybe 19 at first, and I discovered that it had this therapeutic property, but I didn't pursue it until I was then working with a therapist about the dissociation and a psychiatrist who prescribed me off label use of Dexedrine, which is a focus drug and they told me it's not it's not on label like for diagnosis for this problem, but we have heard that it can help people regain their ability to like, not go out of body and so I was on Dexedrine for two years and it was horrible for me like it, I had experienced rage like because it's an amphetamine, right?

**Interviewer** 08:32

Okay. I didn't know that.

**Participant** 08:34

Yeah. Dexedrine. I was on Vyvanse. It's similar to Ritalin but they're longer lasting than Ritalin. Ritalin is like a four-hour thing, Dexedrine and Vyvanse is like a 10-hour thing.

**Interviewer** 08:49

Would you take both simultaneously?

**Participant** 08:52

No.

**Interviewer** 08:52

Or interchangeably?

**Participant** 08:54

Yeah, one one was just really expensive, so I couldn't stay on Vyvanse anymore. Vyvanse was nicer though Vyvanse was actually helpful. I feel like Dexedrine was just rage producing but it did help me stay in my body that it did do, while I was on it and so I decided I can't do this anymore. Like this is, it made my body hurt, like if I just felt exhausted, like I was just drinking tonnes of coffee or something and so wasn't wasn't like good for a long-term thing. So, I decided to go off of it and then when I went off of it, I was still experiencing that dissociation and so I went on disability for like three months and then at that point, I was like, I don't like this, like I want to be independent. I want to be able to not have this reaction, like what can I do? And so I went and I found psychedelics and that's what ended up working but I did take them as if I was taking a prescription almost. So, it was kind of it was basically like a daily thing for like a year until I until I wasn't doing that anymore.

**Interviewer** 10:15

Was the anxiety that shifts you into a dissociative state, is that only based on social anxiety? Or is it any form of anxiety?

**Participant** 10:29

Any form of anxiety, yeah. Like I had diagnosed PTSD as well. Not like until I was later did these things get diagnosed, but yeah, so it's kind of it was like specific things as well as just general things.

**Q3. Interviewer** 10:50

Okay. So, you sort of spoke to this, the question is, how did you first start using psychedelics? But maybe you can elaborate a little bit more on, maybe? How you heard about them? What got you involved with them? What was the initial motivation to try them things like this?

**Participant** 11:23

Sure, so the first use of actually it's kind of funny, like I had, it was kind of, it's not like peer pressure to use them but I had some friends say, like, Oh, you never come out with us. Why don't you just come out with us this one time? Because I was kind of at the time isolating myself because of the anxiety and then I just thought to myself, okay, like, I have to go do this and then when we were out, we ended up encountering drugs, you know, again, we're 19, so it's bound to happen when you're going out to wherever and I tried them and I had this really profound experience that, I don't know it kind of shaked like, took me out of my shell a little bit. Yeah, so what happened was, it was actually MDMA, the first drug. So, acid came after or psychedelics like mushrooms kind of came after but what first started, the use was an experience with M and I had a visual, like, hallucination on it, where this kind of like, blue angel came to me and it just like, hugged me, and like, I could see it for, like, a couple hours and it just stayed with me the whole time and I didn't have the anxiety anymore.

**Interviewer** 12:52

And that was on MDMA?

**Participant** 12:54

That was MDMA.

**Interviewer** 12:55

Okay.

**Participant** 12:58

So, psychedelics, just it just happened naturally after that, because I went out again, kind of thing, you know. So, I went out first time encountered M, and then after encountering that, I just kind of opened a way to go out again and try a different thing.

**Interviewer** 13:16

Okay, I didn't mention this in the beginning, I usually forget and it comes in like two or three questions later. Just to frame the substances when I'm asking about psychedelics, the ones that I'm particularly interested in is if things like LSD, mushrooms, DMT, Ayahuasca, mescaline, and mescaline like peyote or San Pedro and things like Iboga. Um, particularly trying to look at the kind of the classic psychedelics.

**Participant** 14:00

Oh okay. Yeah, I always think of M like one because it has similar like visuals, but.

**Interviewer** 14:06

Yeah, yes. So, I'm not, I'm not trying to say MDMA is or isn't a psychedelic. I'm just sort of basing it off. Yeah, I'm basing it off what I've read and how different people sort of conceptualise it and there's different different ways in which for example, MDMA might be placed into a stimulant category because it how the particular neurotransmitters it plays with and the the effects it creates.

**Participant** 14:36

So then in that case, if you want to omit that answer, then the first time I encountered psychedelics like, like LSD was at a festival.

**Interviewer** 14:46

And how was that experience?

**Participant** 14:52

The experience was if I'm being honest, we thought we were buying LSD, it was not LSD. It ended up being who knows what it was but the people that I was with said that it was, like psychedelic enough but it lasted for three days, the effects.

**Interviewer** 15:15

Three days? Woah.

**Participant** 15:16

Yeah, so we, we, they were a lot more frustrated than I was, but we don't really know what it was, but it was psychedelic, so I guess that answer doesn't really suit your question either.

**Interviewer** 15:29

That's alright, It's hard, this is the thing, like psychedelics the idea of psychedelics and the category and what's inside of it, what's outside of it, it's porous, you know, different different drugs have overlapping effects and even depending on the individual, you know, a psychedelic will have a particular or, you know, a range of effects for one person and not the same range for the other person and, and then different drugs will overlap in different ways for each individual. So, it's very hard to, you know, black and white say, right, this is in and that's out and that's just how it is. So

**Participant** 16:08

Yeah, but the essence of the answer, is pretty much like in a social kind of party, like setting is where I've first encountered these things.

**Interviewer** 16:19

And did you in those sorts of settings, I would imagine, it would be quite common for you to become to have some level of social anxiety which would precipitate or cause a dissociative effect. When on the psychedelic, was that, did that occur at any point?

**Participant** 16:41

No. I remember, one kind of uncomfortable, like, this is now actually LSD in my times when I was going out and I had a lot of anxiety about being where I was and at the time, I was not someone to really think that, like I had the ability to just walk away from like, my friends or where I was, but the psychedelic was kind of like, like, I had the thought while I was on it. I was like, hey, if you're uncomfortable, you can just leave like you will be you are capable and fine of leaving, and you can get yourself out of here and so instead of like fleeing, I just left. Physically, if that makes sense.

**Interviewer** 17:33

So different style of leaving?

**Participant** 17:35

Yeah

**Interviewer** 17:36

It was sort of more calm?

**Participant** 17:37

Yeah more in control. Yeah, more calm, more in control, and also more like confident, like not feeling like I'm obligated to the situation.

**Q4. Interviewer** 17:49

Cool. So, the next question is, what aspects of psychedelics do you find most meaningful or valuable?

**Participant** 18:07

Um, I think that this, the two most important things about psychedelics that I think that I've experienced is like a feeling of love. That comes from, like a source, some kind of Divine Love, as well as having kind of more of a mystical experience and I think that that's important, because it gives people a perspective of something greater than themselves and their, like immediate surroundings and so and then also like, feeling of connectedness to nature, because sometimes when you're on psychedelic, and you go out into nature, or you're even walking in the city, and you see like a tree or something, there's something about the way that the psychedelic pattern interacts with that thing that looks different than, like concrete. Like you can, yeah, so there's this you get this connectedness to like the living sense of, of nature. Instead of just like a background.

**Interviewer** 19:31

Would you, could you talk a little bit about the idea of this feeling of, I'll start with first like, love or divine love from the source like, is there any more description you can give to that?

**Participant** 19:51

Well, sometimes it's just like a very like warm feeling but I have had actual encounter of like some kind of presence coming to me, and basically telling me that it was a divine source and that it did love me.

**Interviewer** 20:11

Was it in spoken language, the communication between the entity?

**Participant** 20:18

Yeah, kind of like similar to the way that you think in your head, but a completely different voice and I'm not one to have ever heard like voices before, it was only something that happens in a psychedelic setting.

**Interviewer** 20:36

Just to further up, or further follow up on that, the voice that you heard, did it sound like it was coming from, if you can remember within, or like, as if, say, when you're talking to a person, you can sort of locate the voices outside of you

**Participant** 20:53

No, not really, outside of me. It's like an internal kind of, yeah.

**Interviewer** 20:58

Okay and maybe you could also talk to this idea of having mystical experience or experiences. What what was that Like? What was the features of that experience that you remember?

**Participant** 21:18

Sure, um, there's been different ones, like the mystical experience that I will have on something like LSD is different than something that I'll have on DMT. In the case of DMT, it's like wildly visual, like, you're almost like more than a dream, like a really vivid dream and kind of more like fantastical like a dream. So, you kind of you get like a sense of like, a lot of time going by or like you, in one instance, I was like, I had seen myself live different lives but it happened really quickly. You get this sense of like, something like heaven in a way, like something that is really, aesthetically beautiful and like it's pink and lots of flowers and blossoms blowing around and so that kind of sense and then, on LSD, it's like similar, but it's not as vivid and mostly it was like, getting kind of encounters from things that would identify themselves as deities from various different kind of mythologies. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 22:47

Is there any other features that you would include in your I don't know, your personal perspective or feeling of what you would include under the guise of mystical within the psychedelic as well?

**Participant** 23:04

Yeah, kind of you end up like feeling like you are like a child of a divine source like there's there ends up being this kind of sensation that you come from something that wants you to be here. Does that make sense? Yeah.

**Interviewer** 23:26

Is that where is the idea of being wanted and coming from the divine source? Is that quite similar to the idea that you mentioned before about a feeling of love or divine love?

**Participant** 23:39

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 23:45

And one question back on the DMT experiences, you mentioned, seeing yourself live out multiple lives quite quickly. From is by this by the description of quite quickly, do you do you mean in terms of the the objective time that passed during the experience or the subjective experience of seeing yourself living out those lives?

**Participant** 24:13

The sense of time, like, like, it was just like blip, blip, blip, blip in the visual and so, in the trip itself, it felt like time was rushing by, but each of those lifetimes were like a normal average kind of life span. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 24:44

I'm just sort of wondering. So, in the sense that was a normal lifespan. Did you subjectively live out each life in sort of the same sense in which we are here now? Like, the time, it felt like a full lifetime of experience.

**Participant** 25:05

No, it was more like watching something that I intuitively, like saw as myself, like, feed like a baby to being grown up to having children to then dying and then it's like a repeated process.

**Interviewer** 25:22

Okay? Yeah, I'm just I was trying to sort of understand from your experience, how fast it felt as if it was going past as if it was like, you were living multiple lives, it was phew. Now 3000 years old, at the end of this.

**Participant** 25:41

IT was I felt 800 years old at the end of it,

**Interviewer** 25:45

Oh okay [laughs]

**Participant** 25:46

There was like, that was the number that stuck in my, like, whatever time mechanism humans have, it was like, I was out of it and I was like, I just lived for 800 years and this trip that like it, but it's a five minute trip.

**Q5. Interviewer** 26:05

Who knows what's going on there? What aspects of psychedelics do you find most challenging or difficult?

**Participant** 26:21

I think sometimes, like you, you don't always have control over what kind of visuals you have and so that's probably the most challenging thing, I would say that, like 95% of my experience has been positive, and not overly challenging. The one thing that I did mention in the initial survey was sometimes feelings can linger, like more on a psychedelic and so trying to change the setting. Like if you start in a bad setting, and then you end up in a safer setting, sometimes it's hard to shake that initial feeling. So, I find that it's like, the initial time of the psychedelic is crucial for the rest of the trip, maybe other people disagree, but in my experience, that is most important.

**Interviewer** 27:39

I'm just just writing down some of the things so that throughout I can sort of gaze over the things you've mentioned to, to come back to them sometimes too they you know if they're useful piece of pieces of information at different times when different subjects that being talked about. So yeah, just letting, you know, on that. Is there any, so you did describe the lack of control. Is there any, and and the idea of emotions lingering. Is there anything else that would come that you've experienced that is difficult or challenging during your use of psychedelics?

**Participant** 28:27

No, and like, the control is just in the initial vision. Like, what if, if I've been on DMT or something like LSD, and something kind of disturbing comes to me, I have enough control on the drug to get away from that vision but but the initial vision I didn't control but I can stop it if I if I'm not into what I'm seeing, if that makes sense.

**Interviewer** 28:56

And how would you go about doing that to transition or move away from a vision that is disturbing or difficult or challenging? What do you do?

**Participant** 29:08

Usually just change like, if I'm outside, I would go inside. If I'm inside, I would go outside and I usually am alone but if I have someone nearby then it was usually just saying like I'm having a hard time is enough to like dispel your the vision or whatever.

**Interviewer** 29:30

Okay. Would you be able to speak to or sort of paint a picture or describe what types of visions you find disturbing? Like what are the particular things that you kind of don't enjoy and if just to add, if you don't want to answer some questions, you're more than welcome to just pass on it.

**Participant** 30:03

It's usually just been, like, faces of like, sometimes it's just like weird faces. Big teeth is another one that has come up like a couple times as well as on on DMT, like the same time that you can see these kind of like heaven realms, you can see the opposite, which for some people might be disturbing, like it was, it was disturbing, because it's not as beautiful but I didn't feel terrified. So, again, it's like similar to dreams, right? Like, sometimes we see things in dreams that you don't really want to see and if you're lucid enough, you can just be like, I don't want to see this, and then you wake up. So, it's, it's like that. It's just kind of like scary images. Again, like the teeth.

**Q6. Interviewer** 31:20

In what ways have psychedelics affected your life?

**Participant** 31:27

They have affected my life positively, in the way that they've helped me kind of get over anxiety. I was already kind of like a mystically inclined person, like I've been reading Buddhism since I was like 13. So, it was kind of they they've been like confirming of my own personal faith, as well as give me open mind that faith is individual among everybody. It's not just like a, there's not just one thing, everybody has their own personal relationship to the world. So, having perspective on that, so making me more empathetic, like, I'm already trying to be an empathetic person, but it definitely gives you a lot of perspective on on other people, and and, yeah, in some ways, yeah, it helps me be a more honest person as well, like, more authentic. Like, if you, if you if there's something you want to say to someone, for instance, and you just don't want, like you don't, but then you go on psychedelic and maybe you have the insight like, well, I think I will talk to that person about this thing. So, that kind of, into like that kind of development. I don't know.

**Interviewer** 33:04

Did you, you mentioned in reply to the question about how psychedelics have affected your life, this idea of recognising that people have, say, their own kind of personal, religious, spiritual mystical beliefs and and bring that with them. Before using psychedelics, was that not the case? Or was it different in some sense?

**Participant** 33:39

Different, like, more like, I understood that people have their own sense of religion, but I felt in a sense, like, cause I was raised Christian and it never really jived with me that it for some reason, like, as a teenager just feels like wrong, right? But then it's not that it's wrong. It's just that everybody has like a different thing that they connect to, or that kind of thing. So, yeah, in that sense, it it helps me not kind of push away this religion that I grew up with. I don't like ascribe to it, necessarily but I don't feel like it's something that I want to like reject anymore, because I didn't really enjoy the whole church process growing up, but, yeah.

**Q10. Interviewer** 34:30

Have psychedelics provided insights into how to live life well?

**Participant** 34:46

Yes, I would say so. They definitely help you identify places where you maybe have bad habits or they can provide insight into creative pursuit or help you get in touch with your intuitive sense. There's also this weird and fascinating part of psychedelics, that I noticed that if you have a messy room or something, or wherever you do this and there's a mess, like, you will likely want to just start cleaning up, like I have to have everything has to be clean if I'm inside for psychedelics, because otherwise the whole trip, I'll just be like, Oh, look at this mess and I also find that gives you like this sense of, like appreciation of beauty and then when you so I'll be going around the town or something, and then you get a sense, like, why didn't we build this more beautifully? There's always this like, sense that things could be more beautiful, or like thoughtful and how they're done and that sense, I would say, yes, it helps because I think aesthetics are important. I'm pretty sure it was Plato, who also thought that aesthetics were tied to virtue. So

**Interviewer** 36:20

I think a lot of people appreciate beautiful looking things.

**Participant** 36:24

Yeah but the idea also, that when you take care of your surrounding or put thought into the aesthetic of it, it will produce, like, people who have an eye for that beauty and also respect for that beauty but if you grew up in some place that is all just like grey boxes, then maybe you don't really think about beauty as much. So, and the sense of beauty that you can get on psychedelics can be really profound and very inspiring and, and, you know, changing, yeah.

**Interviewer** 37:03

You spoke a little bit to this idea of becoming more in touch with an intuitive sense. I don't know if you could expand on that a bit?

**Participant** 37:16

Sure, I guess like, like, for me, it's probably not advised, but I've made some big decisions after like a psychedelic use. That got me in touch with what I really wanted to do but when I'm not on the psychedelic, then I, you kind of make up excuses why you're not doing that thing, or you try it, you. You know, you just dismiss how you feel but then on psychedelic, you get in touch with how you really feel. So, it can intuitively nag you in like not on psychedelics, but you just dismiss it and then on the psychedelics, it's harder to ignore.

**Interviewer** 38:11

Would you mind, sharing, what sort of big decisions you you, you decided to do or engagement or I'm not sure how to phrase it exactly that psychedelics.

**Participant** 38:26

Sure. Yeah, in both instances, it was leaving, like a bad situation. So, in the first instance, it was leaving a bad, like, living situation with family and then the second time it was leaving a bad living situation with a partner and again, it's like when you're sober, you say, oh, but this is all the ways that this thing is fine and it's, you end up just kind of settling in psychedelics it's like, no, this is why doing this would benefit you. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 39:05

And since making those decisions, how do you feel about them now?

**Participant** 39:13

I feel, I definitely feel like it was the right decision. So, it was very helpful. That doesn't always have like, there's still fallout, right. Because you're still making a change and that's difficult, but it's still it was like, kind of, again, similar to that time when it was like you can leave the party, it was like, you can leave a situation that you don't like, you don't have to just be here because they're your partner, they're your family and even though you think that it's like, loving to stay, it's actually like, not, it's hurting you and then you, your life suffers. So, just giving perspective on on. I don't know, just providing insight into your own intuitive feeling, basically.

**Q13. Interviewer** 40:14

So, we're changing angles a little bit with the what the question's focus. So, the next question is, how do you prepare for a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 40:26

I usually pick a day, quite a bit in advance. So, I mean by quite a bit, it's like two weeks or I'll pick a day that I know that I'm going to do it weekly and I, it's kind of ritualistic that way. Occasionally, it's spontaneous, but rarely.

**Interviewer** 40:57

There was a question that came to mind and then it left, it just sort of floated through. Is there any other sorts of preparations that you make for a psychedelic trip? So, you plan it say two weeks ahead when you're going to do it but what about on the day itself? Is there anything special that you're doing or to get yourself ready?

**Participant** 41:31

Not really, I just I don't, I won't eat before doing it, kind of thing. Yeah, I don't like to eat. I never mix anything.

**Interviewer** 41:44

So, you don't combine psychedelics with other, drugs, for example?

**Participant** 41:50

No, yeah, no.

**Interviewer** 41:51

Okay and do you ever, when you plan, say, in two weeks, on this day, I'm going to do the drug. The psychedelic is, there on that day, do you make a decision as well about how you're feeling and whether or not it's a good day, and you might cancel it If it's not? Or is it once you set you'll do it?

**Participant** 42:20

It's usually like once it's set, I'll do it. So, sometimes that can end up having I wouldn't call it like a negative effect, but you you don't feel like you got as much out of it as you wanted, that might be because you had the feeling you had that morning or maybe you were distracted that whole week and and so I try to I try to like clear my mind before I'm doing it but sometimes if you have something that is kind of pressing in your I don't know some kind of deadline or something then it's not like you think about that while you're on the psychedelic but there's something seems different about the the trip itself when you have things that can be potentially distracting.

**Q14. Interviewer** 43:12

So where do you normally take psychedelics and why do you take them there?

**Participant** 43:19

I mean, I usually do them at home because that's where I spend most of my time. Sometimes just I'll go on a walk. I don't drive and I don't live too close to like crazy nature. I live in Victoria BC. I'm not there now but I live there usually and so you can like go to a park or something but so I just kind of do it where I can which is usually at home but I do like the opportunity to be able to walk down the street. I don't really ever I mean, I started with the partying, but I don't it's not something that I do now. Don't ever, that was a short-lived thing.

**Q15, Q16. Interviewer** 44:17

Can you describe any special arrangements you make in the places where you take psychedelics? If there are any?

**Participant** 44:24

What do you mean?

**Interviewer** 44:25

So that would be for example, in the physical setting where you are, are there any ways in which you you bring say objects into it you set up the lighting of the room you got your bed made comfortable, you have music pre-set, like the different sorts of things physical things that you might arrange in a way that is going to be good for your your experience.

**Participant** 44:53

I usually it's just like clean and then like yoga mat because I will typically while it's coming up, I will stretch. I just kind of, you know, yeah and then if it I feel like I want to move around or leave that place after I'll do that, but I'm usually stretching to begin with.

**Q18. Interviewer** 45:19

And what do you normally do during a psychedelic trip? So, let's say after the initial come up,

**Participant** 45:30

Yeah, usually, I'll either find like a spot in the park nearby, or I'll go on a walk. Or I will just sit and try to have a clear mind. It's kind of a meditative process for me. So, walking is kind of meditative or being in nature's kind of mind clearing things. So, I'm usually trying to, like receive something out of the trip. So, to kind of be like, not distracted. I usually don't have more than one person around if any people.

**Interviewer** 46:29

Would you spend most of your trip sitting down, walking in a park or in a park or meditating in some fashion?

**Participant** 46:43

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 46:47

And is any of those that you have a predominant preference for? Or is it sort of evenly spread across all the different ways?

**Participant** 46:57

It changes. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 46:59

Okay.

**Participant** 47:01

Yeah.

**Q19. Interviewer** 47:07

Is there anything you avoid doing during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 47:12

Um, there's I don't necessarily like purposely avoid anything. I don't really watch anything, though. I don't like watching things on psychedelics, people do but I don't.

**Interviewer** 47:32

By watching things, you mean? What do you mean, sort of like television, computer?

**Participant** 47:38

Yeah. Like, yeah and like, I know, some people will be like, put on like a nature documentary or something that's like, kind of interesting that way, and that's how they like to spend their time on it but I don't like to have anything that I'm like, watching.

**Interviewer** 47:54

Okay. Would you interact with technology during this?

**Participant** 48:05

I try not to. I try not to because I don't like the way the screen looks but, yeah.

**Interviewer** 48:13

What about music?

**Participant** 48:16

Music's, okay. Yeah. Yeah, I don't. I, again, I don't purposely put it on, like for the trip setting or anything, but

**Interviewer** 48:27

Okay. So, during normally, would you be sitting with some sort of music on or usually not? Or a little?

**Participant** 48:40

No, usually not.

**Interviewer** 48:42

Okay.

**Participant** 48:44

And if I did, I'd probably try to avoid like, lyrical things.

**Q20. Interviewer** 48:57

Is there anything special you do after a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 49:02

No, not really.

**Q22. Interviewer** 49:04

No. Okay. Do you practice any type of integration or self-reflection to make sense of your psychedelic your psychedelic experiences? And if so, what does that process involve?

**Participant** 49:22

I'll try to write down interesting things. I'm actually I'm pretty bad for integrating because I don't go back and read what I've written a lot of times, I'll write it down and then I don't go back to it and so I feel like at the start of my psychedelic use, that ended up being not detrimental, but it made it so that what I was learning wasn't learned as efficiently. So, I do think that if people have something on psychedelics that they experience that really helped them they should probably write it down, but they should also go back and read It may be more than once. Yeah, like you want to reconnect to that experience, again, so that it's kind of ingrained into you. Some, some of the experiences are just so profound. Again, it's like dreams, it's like, if you want to go back into a dream, you should probably write it down right away and then if you want to see it again, you have to go back and read it.

**Interviewer** 50:32

Are you writing things down throughout the trip? Or is this sort of like a post, once in the come down, or when sober you're you're writing these things down?

**Participant** 50:44

It's usually after unless it's like something that is just creatively inspired. So, like, I find that if it's like something like a poem, I'll write it down right away but if it's like an insight, I don't write it down until later, because you don't really think about it. It's just kind of experiencing what it is.

**Interviewer** 51:11

This is sort of not of the one of the questions, but, is there any sense in which, during your psychedelic trips that you creatively express yourself?

**Participant** 51:30

Not, not really, I don't. Like sometimes I'll draw or sketch ideas. Or again, I'll like to write down the start of a poem. I like to start a song, but I don't tend to like finish something all the way through on the psychedelics, not yet anyway. It's not something that's happened.

**Interviewer** 51:49

It can be very difficult to focus.

**Participant** 51:51

Yeah. It's usually like I started and then I might come back to it, but it's a lot of starting and not finishing things.

**Q23. Interviewer** 52:05

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

**Participant** 52:16

I think so. Yeah. Like, especially if you been feeling kind of distracted or like disconnected, it can kind of like, set you back into yourself and like your own sense of organisation or like purpose. Or if you know, you've been grumpy at someone or something and you don't even notice that you've been grumpy at them, then it kind of relieves that and you're like, oh, my goodness, like, I can just feel normal with this person.

**Interviewer** 52:54

You've mentioned distraction a few times. Would you be able to describe a bit more what you mean in that term? Because at least I feel or It seems as if you're using it slightly differently than saying, just, I have to be doing something and I got distracted, like I was procrastinating.

**Participant** 53:17

Right. To me like distraction, it can be like, maybe you've hit on something that you wanted to think insightfully about and then someone comes and interrupts you and then if you have to attend to that person, then you won't go into that thought as introspectively. Like, I've I've had it where I've been on a psychedelic, and the first hour or whatever is great and then I noticed the time and I say, oh, shoot, so and so I was coming home at this time and then now it's like, because I'm anticipating someone coming home, and like the things that I might have to do when they come home. It kind of will ruin the depth like I'm not able to go into that depth of thought again.

**Interviewer** 54:11

That makes sense.

**Participant** 54:14

Because then I feel like I have to be like attentive to them. Like my surrounding. Yeah, So I like to usually it's like the earlier the better, like right in the morning. No one else is up for a couple hours and then you kind of get that initial like it's really calming to so for me the morning is a good time, I guess maybe like the late night would be good, but I don't. I'm usually like a morning person.

**Interviewer** 54:43

So, do you. Is it morning time the normal the majority of the time where you would start your psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 54:55

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 54:57

And how early so what how what time are you talking, in terms of the morning?

**Participant** 55:02

It really depends like as early as like 6 or 5, or sometimes like 9, or like 11. So, but before noon, preferably and then you're not, it doesn't affect your sleep either because it can kind of make you stay up if you take it later in the day. I like to sleep so.

**Q24. Interviewer** 55:23

Yeah, sleeps good. Has your psychedelic use changed over time? And if so, how has it changed?

**Participant** 55:43

Yes, it's changed like a lot, because I mentioned that at first, it was this kind of therapeutic thing that I would do, like, pretty much daily or then like, eventually, like every other day kind of thing and so it is this thing that I did to kind of maintain myself and now it's more of this meditative process where it's like, I don't, I don't really care if it's like a once a month thing, or if it's like a once a week thing, or if I go even longer than that, but there was a time where it felt more essential to do regularly.

**Interviewer** 56:23

And could you maybe go into the, you said, a while back that you had you used it daily for about a year?

**Participant** 56:33

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 56:34

And what was the what was going on during that period? What was the, it's sort of changed now, was the motivation, then you said it was therapeutic? What was happening? What was, what were you finding through those experiences?

**Participant** 56:49

I like, again, because it was replacing Dexedrine, and I wasn't super. Like, I just, I just used it like prescription. So, I would usually, like again, take it as early as I can, so that it's not affecting me into the night and then I would just go about any of my usual daily things, including work. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 57:14

And is this mushrooms, psilocybin, DMT. Like, what what psychedelics would you be using?

**Participant** 57:21

That was LSD.

**Interviewer** 57:23

Okay? And do you know what's, what was the sort of the dosages that you were taking during that time?

**Participant** 57:32

It was usually one tab, or because of the way that it kind of dies off, If you use it a lot of the time, then I would end up having to stack it up. Yeah, because you kind of build like tolerance to it. If you're doing it that frequently. Yeah. I was always trying, I was always trying to, like, maintain like the one tab dose though. So, that was like, yeah, because I didn't find that anything less was effective.

**Interviewer** 58:07

And did you notice a drop off in the potency of the experience using it consistently like that over the year?

**Participant** 58:17

Yeah, usually it was, it was like, because it was more of like a helping me to work kind of thing, which is weird. I would do it in the weekdays and then anytime It was my weekend, I wouldn't be on it and so I would find that in the week. It was probably like at one point, I have to switch to having like two or three just to have it to feel like one. Yeah and then and then after the weekend, like it resets really easy doesn't take a long time for that tolerance to to reset.

**Interviewer** 58:56

And did you find it helpful, distracting or, you know, the taking a dose each day? How would it affect your day to day experiences?

**Participant** 59:15

It would help me feel more grounded. Which was the purpose even though I was doing it in a work setting, sometimes like I didn't find it It made me more distressed at all. Yeah, if I don’t, I honestly like I don't even know how I did it but it just that's how I ended up doing. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 59:47

Can I ask what was your your work during that time?

**Participant** 59:51

Yeah, I just did retail. So, lots of people all day.

**Interviewer** 1:00:00

And so did you find that the during that year did, did that help with the dissociation?

**Participant** 1:00:10

Yes, yeah. Yeah, it ended up so that, like, the start of it, I would say I was doing it all the time of that year and then by like the last six months again, it was like maybe every other day because like I knew going into it, it's not like I'm not doing it because I'm bored at work, I'm not doing it to try and have more fun at work. I'm literally just trying to do it to stay off disability and not have to, like and actually make, like a sustainable change to this thing that's happening because I had read certain things that said that people can have like a permanent kind of change through doing psychedelic with their mental health.

**Interviewer** 1:00:59

And did you find that? That a after the kind of high frequency use that there was a more permanent change, In your, your experience or your mental health?

**Participant** 1:01:14

Yeah, I would say so. Yeah because a lot of the kind of a lot of the anxiety was also like, it's a feeling of wanting to like retreat, right. So, you feel uncomfortable with where you are and psychedelics just helped me feel like, a little more self-assured about where I am and how I'm like, I'm not in this terrible setting and that kind of thing.

**Interviewer** 1:01:47

And And nowadays, is that has that feeling lingered of feeling more secure in yourself in a social setting?

**Participant** 1:01:59

Yes, yeah, I would say so. What's interesting now is like, the fact, it sounds so weird to say, because, for me, the experience of LSD has been really like intimate. Like, it felt like there was something there, that was like really wanting me to get better, like, whatever that sensation was and now if I go into the psychedelic, it, if I go into the psychedelic with, like a problem, it almost like doesn't really give me that same insight anymore and I feel like it's like, it'll give me different insight. It's more like mystical now, instead of just like, helping me with my personal life, and I feel like it, it does that because, like, there's a certain amount of it, that's going to be up to me right to, to put it into practice and so it's like, not using something like a crutch, right? Is like it helps me get to this point of stability and then from there, it's like, I should be like, learning how to be okay, without this thing, like needing something. Which was the goal all along right, was the goal of getting off of Dexedrine and stuff like that. Like, I don't want to be on something forever.

**Interviewer** 1:03:22

So, mission accomplished.

**Participant** 1:03:23

Yeah. Very successful.

**Interviewer** 1:03:25

Nice, that's awesome. Sorry, I think my alarms going off. So, when you're using it, within that year, sort of on the daily or later on sort of every other day. Was it were you getting, maybe what we classically thought about as sort of psychedelic effects? Say changes in visual perception or thought changes in how you think about things in a quite, I don't know, like, psychedelic way is not the best description, but it's, for a lot of people substantially different to normal thinking. Or, yeah, were you experiencing that? Or was it more just focused on what you're saying before with the feeling more or less social anxiety and more self-assured in these settings?

**Participant** 1:04:47

Yeah, like it was not like it looked psychedelic but because of a few things that I've already mentioned, like there was the distraction of work but there's also the I find that intention setting before use is really important and so the intention was like literally just to replace this other thing and so during a work day or whatever, there's like, you know, visual, but it's not overwhelming enough. So, I can't, I can't do anything and then there would be senses like being able to like feel people emotionally more but in retail setting, that's almost like more beneficial anyway. So, it didn't really nobody said like, you seem off. Nobody ever said like, something seems wrong with you like what's going on? No one ever said anything and everyone was just kind of like, we're happy to see you come out of your shell more because it was again, at this point where I was, like, potentially going to lose the job because because of the anxiety. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:06:01

Yeah. It's, it's kind of funny to think a retail salesman who's afraid of talking to their customers.

**Participant** 1:06:11

Yeah, and like it, I got it was an art, like an art store. It's pretty big art store but so it was like, I had a lot of experience with like framing and stuff, because I had done gallery jobs before and so retail is like, so not my thing but at the time, it was like what I needed to be doing because again, I kind of I was getting this job, to, I had left this partnership, that was bad. I was kind of like, you need to have this job because you can't, like now you have to be on your own. You know, so it's very crucial that I like get over myself basically.

**Q25. Interviewer** 1:07:07

Right. What do you think, is the core psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:07:23

I think, it's, kind of a hard question because I feel like if you have some problems in your life, like that might be the core, like the core focus of the psychedelic, because in my experience, it will kind of like, find its way to the places of your mind that are having problems but then on the other side of things, the core experience is this, like mystical connection kind of thing and I find that there's this mix between experiences and so some people that I know who it's like, you know, I'll just say like, they lived a really privileged life growing up, and they're like, not very neurotic people at all, they're like, very stable, they come from very supportive family kind of thing. I find that those people like they just have like a very, kind of it's like soft mystical or like, casual or, like, maybe they can do it more recreationally but in my experience, like if there's something that you know, like some kind of a trauma or something or like a bad habit, you have maybe like an addiction, the psychedelic will then, it'll find that within you and like throw it back at you. So, there's kind of in my experience is like two experiences one, which is like therapeutic and one which is like this connective kind of, like joyous experience. Even if you didn't set out to do it recreationally, sometimes you just end up having this really beautiful experience.

**Interviewer** 1:08:59

And just as a little bit of follow up. So, do you think people who come from a privileged but saying a sort of like a more socially stable, loving background, stable family environment, things like this, that they might have a harder time experiencing the profound mystical and potentially therapeutic benefits that people who have come from more disadvantaged or difficult backgrounds would, is that?

**Participant** 1:09:46

I can't say for sure. I just from talking to people, I think that you can probably have the profound experience from any type of life. I just think that you might not end up having to deal with like, your, you know, your heavy psychology or something. If something, you know, bad never happened but I don't and again, I don't know, if like open mindedness comes to play at all, like, I do know some people who they don't really, they're not mystically inclined at all and then when they go on psychedelics, they don't really tend to have that experience, but they haven't really done it that much. So, again, I can only speak for myself, but I think everyone can have the profound experience but there might be like, some things that you have to do. I remember talking to an Ayahuasca shaman once and he said that in his experience, some people they would have, they would come and they would drink the Ayahuasca, and nothing really happens and he said that the way that he thinks about it is that there's some kind of energetic block that is being unblocked even if you're not having the experience, because the person is so resistant, they might have to like go into it way more times than another person but by that point, they might give up because they don't find it interesting. So, that was one thing that was said to me, again, I'm speaking for other people when I say that, but it was something that was told to me.

**Interviewer** 1:11:26

Still interesting, I think, is the idea of not only we have our personal experiences with these substances, but then we also interact with other people who have their own, and we listen and take on some of their own ideas, which form our perceptions about the larger use. I mean, exactly what is happening here, I'm asking you about your experiences to try and understand from your perspective, what's going on, well your personal experiences, but also, you're even telling me your personal experiences of hearing about other people's personal experiences. So, it's sort of like a little leapfrog to finding out more.

**Q27. Interviewer** 1:12:12

[Call dropped out] So you just talked, the the question you just answered before was. What do you think, is the core psychedelic experience? And so, we're just moving on from there. So, can you describe your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:12:31

Okay. Yeah, for me, like it's, it's really personal experience. After kind of a long time of reading, Buddhism things and, and different Vedic philosophy that's kind of like my jam or whatever. I ended up kind of setting the intention of wanting to see or experience the concept of Radha and Radha means like devotion, but Radha is also a figure in Vedic Astrology or Vedic philosophy, but also astrology and it is, it's kind of like Krishna's first love, if you know who Krishna is?

**Interviewer** 1:13:26

I've heard of Krishna.

**Participant** 1:13:28

Yeah [laughs]

**Interviewer** 1:13:30

He's like the head honcho God.

**Participant** 1:13:33

Yeah, yeah and so then I was kind of thinking about that all week, because usually, again, I'll like set an intention for about a week and I think about it, and then I kind of will do my set day that I go into the psychedelic and what ended up happening was same as usual, I started stretching, but then I kind of I went, I was whisked away and all of a sudden, I was a lotus flower and I was like, waving on this water and I'm kind of like coming to and I'm like, Where am I and I'm this lotus flower and then before me is this giant mountain and my perspective, kind of, like as if I was now like a bird goes from the lotus flower, and it kind of flies over the mountain, and it sees all of these activities of Krishna happening and this was before I had read anything with Krishna, but I knew who Krishna and Radha were through doing Vedic astrology. Anyway, and so I saw them doing all these different activities and then it went up to the very top of the mountain and standing up there was Krishna and Radha, and they were embraced and that experience was like, really profound.

**Interviewer** 1:15:00

And was the visual experience of it? Was it similar to how they're depicted in the sort of, how they drawn, for example, like what their visual that the statues they build, And how they visualise Krishna and and Radha? Or was this different to that? Was it more personal or idiosyncratic experience of what they look like.

**Participant** 1:15:32

I think it was more personal because it was very dreamy and like I couldn't, it was more like zoomed in on their eyes. So, like, from afar, I saw these people standing there, but then when it's zoomed in, it didn't really show that faces it just showed, like, eye level, like, you know, movie kind of thing if you were.

**Interviewer** 1:15:56

So, sort of like this bit?

**Participant** 1:15:58

Yeah, people gazing at each other but so.

**Interviewer** 1:16:02

And what did that experience mean to you? Like, how, why is that you're, one of the most sort of meaningful experiences that you've had?

**Participant** 1:16:15

It's really meaningful to me, because of the fact that I, like I asked for the experience and so kind of, to me, it's confirmation that like, when you take this psychedelic, it really does, like work with you, it works with your desire. So, anytime I had a goal me personally anyway, like, anytime I kind of set a goal with it, it would deliver.

**Interviewer** 1:16:47

And so, is that would you describe it as a life changing? Or is this more memorable?

**Participant** 1:16:58

No. I mean, I would personally say it's life changing, because then I kind of started down like a more serious study of the Vedas. So, for me, like in a faith kind of way, it is really significant. Yeah and I don't know that one was really, probably the most profound, though, but I mean, I can think of another one if you want?

**Interviewer** 1:17:30

For sure. Go ahead.

**Participant** 1:17:31

Okay, um, nothing else really profound. That one's probably the most, I mean, another ongoing, like one experience that I had was, again, kind of visual like that, but encountering my own personal shadow. Like, literally like a shadowy figure, like drops out of the ceiling, and we have a conversation and it tells me that it is this shadow aspect of myself, if you're familiar with, of course you are, like Carl Jung kind of thing, like this repressed part of yourself and we had a, we had a conversation, and it was like, I've gone through all of the difficult things that you went through when you were out of body and so you got to go out of body, but I'm the part of you that remained and so that was really spooky because it kind of it was like maybe three different trips that it, we like, had to kind of hash it out with each other.

**Interviewer** 1:18:38

Was it like having a conversation with another person?

**Participant** 1:18:41

It was yeah and it was very much like there in front of me.

**Interviewer** 1:18:46

Eyes open?

**Participant** 1:18:47

Yeah yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:18:48

Okay.

**Participant** 1:18:50

Like kind of like in a dream, it's like, you can tell it's not physical but it's still there, like in front of you.

**Interviewer** 1:19:00

Could you when talking to the shadow was it 3d? Like if you moved around, it had like a full 3d form and stayed in place? Or I don't know, sort of, did you sit down and just discuss and didn't change?

**Participant** 1:19:18

I was always just sitting and facing it. So, I didn't actually I didn't really get up or move around. I was kind of, like, stuck on the conversation.

**Interviewer** 1:19:29

Did you ever try to like poke it? Like, Oh, I just want to see pew.

**Participant** 1:19:34

No, I didn't no, no, I just, yeah and it would, it would just kind of like disappear. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:19:42

And how long would you say that you had say for each individual instance of meeting the shadow. How long would you spend there talking with each other?

**Participant** 1:19:54

The one time was the longest the other times. I think the first time I actually called someone who was close to me, and I said, like this thing has just appeared and this is the stuff that it's telling me and of course, they didn't really know what to do but they ended up coming by and staying with me. Yeah. So, I don't know, I don't really know how long it was just long enough to talk about a couple of things. Like it, it's a weird thing, like, it admitted to being like, the negative voice that sometimes comes in my head. Like, you know, if you get frustrated, you're doing something, you're like, Oh, you're so stupid. Like it said, I'm that part of you and so I, we talked about, like, how it's basically mean to me and how, like, you can't do that anymore and so it was like, it was like a real like hashing out of like, I don't want to feel separate from you anymore and that was its perspective and then I said, I don't want you to be mean to me anymore. So, then there was this, like, integration and then after that point, it didn't really come back. So, there was that kind of resolution and I would say, at that point, was when I felt really most grounded, as well.

**Interviewer** 1:21:30

And have you noticed any long term or enduring changes in how you feel or think, or the thoughts towards yourself, since that sort of combining or integration of yourself and your shadow?

**Participant** 1:21:51

I, I'd say there's more like awareness of what they would call like, the shadow aspect of yourself and just being able to like, notice, when you're being like shadowy, or when, you know, you've kind of you're like, feeling not as, like, worthy, like your self-worth is kind of dimmed and so being able to kind of overcome that feeling and be aware of that aspect of yourself.

**Interviewer** 1:22:32

And so are you, would you say that, that awareness of the, your shadow side, lack of self-worth and things that's sort of more there nowadays?

**Participant** 1:22:47

The, like, the awareness of it.

**Interviewer** 1:22:49

Yeah.

**Participant** 1:22:50

Yeah and being able to overcome it, like before, it felt, in certain instances, almost like, like a possession because when I was younger, I would have, I had, like, an eating disorder and I, this part of me, like, my inner voice was just like, really mean to myself and so that went away, it was like, all kinds of negative self-talk. Not really a thing or like not feeling like you can pursue a particular passion or something, right, like being more artistic and not just getting immediately frustrated and like being like, you can't do that or like, look at how bad you did this kind of thing, do you know what I mean?

**Interviewer** 1:23:42

Sort of self-critical.

**Participant** 1:23:44

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:23:45

Self-limiting thoughts.

**Participant** 1:23:47

Yeah, to the point, like, especially like, if you're, it's like perfectionism, but it's like negative perfectionism, where you can never do any right, like, anything you do is like, you're always wrong, and you'll never be good at it and so now it's like, more way more playful, like, it doesn't matter. If I'm just doing something for fun. Like, I used to think before, like, everything has to be really useful and, and everything has to be, I don't know, perfect. Now, like doesn't really matter.

**Interviewer** 1:24:15

And is that that kind of change between self-criticality or needing to be perfect, did that change happen between the the times that you talked to the self-shadow, or had that been happening further back when, say you're having your eating disorder? And, yeah, was it was this sort of like a short period where it's like [chuuuu], there was that that change, you notice or did it happen over a longer time and maybe included other things, not only those experiences?

**Participant** 1:24:53

It was certainly a progression. Like I remember when I had my eating disorder, going on a psychedelic, and one of the first kind of healing thoughts about that was like, I don't want to think these thoughts anymore, right. So, that was the initial kind of desire was like, I don't want to feel this way anymore. I don't want to do these things. I don't want to think these thoughts and then, but it wasn't until. So, there was like minor progress up until that point, but it was kind of easy to fall back into certain behaviours and it wasn't until that confrontation, because I basically ended up being able to say to myself, like, I won't accept you being mean to me anymore. Like, who, like, what is what is this voice and stop it! And like, I ended up having to, like, say that to it in this like, visual way.

**Interviewer** 1:25:51

That's really cool. Very interesting.

**Participant** 1:25:55

It super interesting. I don't know if you're familiar with the concept of like the daemon or like the daimon, or like the Anima or animus?

**Interviewer** 1:26:04

Not particularly, I think I have some sort of intuition of what you mean by that but I'm not, you can speak to it, give me a bit more clarity on what you mean by that, for sure.

**Participant** 1:26:14

Well, there's a really good essay that you should read, if you haven't, by Carl Jung and his wife and they both give, they give the perspective of the Anima and animus and it's the part of you that is like the opposite of you and so it's usually the opposite gender but it can also take on these like shadow aspects and I had this shadow encounter before reading this essay, which is another interesting thing with psychedelics is it, there tends to be a lot of like synchronicity. like you'll ask for an insight, you get the insight, but then you also have some experience afterward that like, confirms that insight and so finding that essay and reading about it, I was like, oh, my goodness, I wonder if this thing that I have, that I encountered was what Carl Jung has written about, which is like the shadow not only the shadow, though, but this animus, which is this character and what he says is that often it comes out in dreams. So, if you have particular characters in a dream, they're trying to teach you something. He calls it like the Anima, or the Animus, but because of the overlap of quality between psychedelic and dream, like I think that it, it is that same thing, and I've actually had like, a presence, often with me in dreams, the same way that I've had in in a psychedelic trip. Tell me like, I'm going to guide you through this dream, same way that it'll come and be like, I'm going to guide you through this experience on the trip. So, that's really cool topic.

**Interviewer** 1:27:57

It's interesting that you came across Carl Jung's Anima and animus after the experience rather than before.

**Participant** 1:28:07

Yeah, it's it's the same with the with the Krishna and Radha It was like, I knew I was more into Buddhism at the time and then I had just found Vedic astrology and one of one of the stars is ruled by Radha her name means devotion and so I was just curious about this character and I said, Can you show me this person? And then I had the experience and then that's when I went and started reading these texts that showed me these stories that I had watched happen in this trip.

**Interviewer** 1:28:45

One question on, you were saying, in the Radha experience and the Krishna, that you were doing yoga at the time that you sort of became the lotus on the ocean.

**Participant** 1:28:58

Yes.

**Interviewer** 1:28:59

Were you do know, or do you remember during that whole experience, were you still in a doing yoga or in a sort of yoga pose, or did you change and sit down for example, to go into that more?

**Participant** 1:29:18

I was just sitting in the pose. They call it not. It's not the Lotus Pose. Funny enough, but it's like cobbler pose, which.

**Interviewer** 1:29:27

Okay.

**Participant** 1:29:28

Your basically just sitting on the ground in a different kind of way. Similar to the lotus pose but yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:29:34

Yeah, the lotus pose is hard. I can't get my feet up.

**Participant** 1:29:37

This one's like your feet are like this.

**Interviewer** 1:29:41

Yup, oh. Here at the yoga class exercise class that I go to they call a butterfly pose, I think.

**Participant** 1:29:49

Okay, yeah, that one? Yeah, that's the one I've actually and I've never gone to a yoga class. I've done it all from books. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:29:58

You don't need to you. It's easier to do by yourself as well.

**Participant** 1:30:02

Yeah.

**Q26. Interviewer** 1:30:06

Okay, well, moving on. Can you describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:30:16

Okay. Sure, yeah, I wrote about this in the survey, which was, um, in my case, because I have some things that have happened that are kind of upsetting in the past. I have had, like, it's weird, because I've had these experiences, off of psychedelics too, which is basically like a flashback, like, a memory of something from when you're a bit younger, or whatever and so I had that on a psychedelic, and just the fact that I was on the psychedelics made it really disturbed, like, more disturbing than it would already have been, because you feel things a lot more on a psychedelic.

**Interviewer** 1:31:13

And would you be able to describe what you experienced, or would you rather not go into it?

**Participant** 1:31:21

I did, there was, it's really weird if, if what happened was, it was like a computer screen came up but it wasn't really a computer screen, it's just the easiest comparison and then this kind of hand like similar to a mouse like comes and clicks on someone like you're maximising a window on the computer and it came up and it started replaying this memory of mine that i've i've had multiple times. So, it's not to me, it's not like it's showing me something randomly. It was something I'd already seen, but I didn't want to see it and so I was able to actually go and minimise the window but the reason it was distressing is that after I've minimised this memory, I, I kind of uncontrollably ran outside and like I ran down the street and then I stopped and I was just like breathing really heavy like I was, I got really spooked by it. So, I just think about people, if they're on psychedelics and like the potential of that happening, and them also like running away, and like, I didn't feel in control of myself. So, in some sense, like, I feel like that could maybe be harmful for people who have have already experienced flashbacks. So, it'd be one thing people to like, think about. Like, you want to be in a setting where like, you can't run it, there's something dangerous. You probably wouldn't, but it's just like, like I wasn't in a dangerous place, but I think about like if you were by water or something. You're like, you wouldn't want to have that experience and then like just run and anything even just like running into a tree and getting like poked in your eyes like you wouldn't.

**Interviewer** 1:33:11

Oww.

**Participant** 1:33:11

Yeah, right. You wouldn't want that to happen in the dark or something.

**Interviewer** 1:33:14

Yeah. Yeah, there are, yes.

**Participant** 1:33:19

Mostly I would say that psychedelics have not been challenging. That's like the one thing that I found was a little bit challenging was just that for like a split moment. I wasn't actually I didn't feel in control because I was upset, even when you get whisked away into these like visions. You still there's this sense of control but in that distress, I didn't feel in control. I would say mostly there's like, control.

**Interviewer** 1:33:50

Was this when you were running in away and after seeing the that sort of computer screen playing the flashback of the experience you've seen a few times. Did you feel disassociated at that point was it similar to the body was doing what the body was doing and you're just sort of watching that happen, or?

**Participant** 1:34:13

No in that case, like I was very much in my body, like really feeling the adrenaline very, like focused. I just like I couldn't physically stop my body. So, instead of instead of leaving the body, I was able to like physically go somewhere. Whereas without the psychedelic I feel like I probably would have just dissociated. Yeah. I guess people might find like, the whole concept of ego death kind of challenging as well but I have not really found it challenging. Like where you can, it's like feels like you're dying like nothing remains that is like associated to you.

**Q28. Interviewer** 1:35:02

We've got a question coming. Funny enough, literally the next question related to ego death, so you pre-empted it. So, it's not worded very well but if you have experienced ego death, could you describe what it is like?

**Participant** 1:35:26

Yeah, it's usually feels like you're being rushed down a river. In my experience, I would say it's maybe happened to me like four times and each time, it's the same. Where I'm in, it feels like water is rushing by me and all of a sudden, I slipped down it, and all of you, you feel like you've completely gone away from being in a material world. It's usually kind of like black or like muddy looking. Sometimes it looks colourful, but it's usually got this black aspect to it and yeah, you're, you're gone and sometimes you can stop it by thinking about someone like your family, like you somebody feel obligated to, and then you, you'll start to feel that rushing, and then you come back, because you're like, No, I have this thing to do and you won't let you go further but if you just let it go, then you can kind of like, get whisked into this weird place that to me, I can only describe as like, it's like goes from water into like tunnels and then the tunnels are supposed to like they can take you to different places. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:37:02

And a few questions on that that come to mind, you said that you completely go away from the material world. Is there during an experience of ego death, that of the times that you would categorise or define and think about it as such. Was there a sense of having a body, a physical material body or was that not there?

**Participant** 1:37:32

No, the body isn't there anymore. It's all just like, cause some, when a trip is visual, and like, it looks like a place that to me, it feels more like material but in this case, because it's just blackness and there's no body sense and it's just kind of like abstract colours. Yeah, it's it's like, you're just, you're just consciousness and you don't have any, like the association with what the, what your body was the almost like, forget and then when you come back, you're, you kind of feel like, you know, you're like, Oh, I'm this is where I am. Which is it's kind of weird and then the ego death on DMT is different, because it's almost like you become a different kind of being but in some cases, you're just like, you're just consciousness. There's nothing to really perceive except colour.

**Interviewer** 1:38:39

Because that's actually one of the questions I was wanting to ask is of the times that you've experienced ego death. Are they happening on different psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:38:51

Yeah, so LSD, I pretty much only taken LSD and DMT and then mushrooms, like, very few times, but what I find like, on LSD for whatever reason, like it's either something like the Lotus where like, my form is different but in other instances, there's no form and I'm just viewing kind of darkness and in one instance, I was, I said, like, I don't want to be seeing nothing. Like I want to go back and then it felt like I was placed back here, but it felt like there was a distinct other place that was not material that you could still be conscious in and then in DMT, and mushrooms, it's also it's kind of like a dream where like, you, you go somewhere and you see things that are recognisable, but you yourself might be different. So, like you, you know, you go, yeah, kind of like a dream where like, yeah, you still have the sense that you're you but you're seeing completely different things or you're a different form, but you're still kind of tied to you and then in this instance of like, the blackness, it's like, you're almost not you anymore. Like,

**Interviewer** 1:40:19

so sorry, carry on.

**Participant** 1:40:23

Oh, just the type of consciousness seems like more dim. I don't know. That's how I describe it. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:40:42

So, in the, the darkness experience of ego death is there. You said there's sort of a dimming of the consciousness is, is there a sense of identity in that experience? So, you describe not having a sense of having this at least any, maybe any physical form and that one? But is there a sense of who you are? Your life experiences, your identity? Or is that not there as well, or to a lesser degree?

**Participant** 1:41:19

No, it's not really there anymore. Like, it's really similar to sleep, like, where if you've ever kind of been conscious in between sleep, where it's just kind of darkness, it's like that.

**Interviewer** 1:41:37

I can't say that I have, but then again, I forget dreams relatively quickly, as well. So, arguably I maybe and so but in the is the darkness one, and that's on LSD is it?

**Participant** 1:41:54

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:41:55

And on, you're saying on DMT, you've also had a sort of sense of ego death, where there's no longer a sense of a human form, although I think you might have said, you become a different form, potentially?

**Participant** 1:42:13

Yeah, you can kind of become a different form, and it can change but you're in those instances too you're usually just this observer and like, you're not really a form, but sometimes your form like, again, like the flower or like, on certain times, with DMT was like, I was just a white ball.

**Interviewer** 1:42:36

Okay, so did you see yourself from a third person perspective at that point?

**Participant** 1:42:42

No, in on DMT, it's like, you're kind of dual, like, I could watch myself live at these lifetimes but then I was also this, like, white energy, that you just kind of like comes out of the peripheral, from what you've seen, but generally, there's not. It's like, again, it's kind of like a dream, like, in a dream, you never really see like your feet, you know, which is weird, like you don't ever look down, you're just looking at the dream.

**Interviewer** 1:43:12

And then the DMT experience, is there a sense of still being you in the identity, in the identity sense of past experiences, memories, and maybe like goals or desires, or you know, like the things that you might put inside of who you are as, as a personality or as an identity, or is that, Is that similar to the darkness one also, not there?

**Participant** 1:43:41

It's all gone, yeah. Yeah, it's all gone and then when you come back, I've actually felt a sense of like, betrayal, almost where you come back and you're like, this isn't who I am. I'm was actually this thing that is nothing.

**Interviewer** 1:43:57

Okay.

**Participant** 1:43:58

Yeah, it's weird and it's actually again, it's, it's the thing that you associate with which will stop you from going. So, if you feel that sensation you can kind of you can be like, No, no, no, wait, but I just, I have one more drawing to finish. I've got that deadline for this person that I have to, you know, or like, no, my partner is going to be home in 10 minutes. It's like thoughts like that, that stop you from just being like taken away.

**Interviewer** 1:44:32

Attachments?

**Participant** 1:44:34

Yeah, yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:44:39

I haven't had a look at the survey that you filled out but what's the, can you give me an estimate or a rough sort of idea of how many times you've used the different psychedelics and sort of what the proportion because you say you've had about four ego death type of experiences, and I'm just wondering, like, out of all your experiences, how much how rare or common that is for you?

**Participant** 1:45:08

Yeah, like, for me when I see those visions, like they're even though my body goes away, I don't know, I don't consider that ego-death. I don't know what the actual definition of it is, but the times when it's felt most like death is like it's just dark and for me that's like ego death. So, those times is down LSD, I've probably taken LSD, I can't even count how many times I've taken LSD, it's like, in the 1000s, I've had a lot of LSD and then DMT is been probably the next most frequent, which was maybe around 20 to 30 times. I've done that and again, not every time have I gone away somewhere, sometimes with DMT, especially after the, it's like, once I started taking it so frequently, it was like the later ones. It was just kind of like a really intense acid and then, earlier times, it was like, I would actually, physically, not physically, but mentally leave this world and go somewhere completely different. So, yeah, that many times and then, yeah, mushrooms, maybe like five times.

**Interviewer** 1:46:31

And what about, I know it's a little outside scope? What about MDMA?

**Participant** 1:46:36

M I don't, I probably did it a lot but not as much as acid maybe like 100 times or something like that? fairly frequently. Yeah and what's interesting with, they're all quite different, like with mushrooms. Anytime that I had kind of a vision, it felt like I was going into a past life. I would have, I remember a couple times where it was like, I became a different person and I was in a different setting, but I felt like I was me still, there was a sense that it was someone I had already been, which is weird. I've only ever had that on mushrooms, not on the other psychedelics and then, on M, when I got visuals, it was usually kind of random, like more like a really weird dream. Like people's faces would turn into like Greek statue faces and just like really random visual, as opposed to like more purposeful visuals. Or like, does that make sense? Like,

**Interviewer** 1:47:54

yeah, I mean, I can visualise kind of what you're saying. I don't necessarily know if it needs to make sense why that occurs. It just is what it is.

**Participant** 1:48:06

Yeah, just kind of was yeah but I never it was always just this, these random hallucinations on M instead of something that seemed significant.

**Interviewer** 1:48:21

A follow up to the question about ego death and I guess, if you'd like to think about is just that sense of dying as well, as you sort of described as the darkness experience. How has that impacted? How has those experiences impacted you? Has it changed anything significant?

**Participant** 1:48:48

Not not really, for me personally, because I'm already familiar with the idea of like, reincarnation and that kind of thing. So, for me, for me personally, like it helps me make sense of the way that people kind of go between bodies and forms, because that's how I believe in things. So, for me, it's like this confirmation and this kind of interesting insight into death but I don't know if everybody else has that and I don't know if that's really what death is like. It's just how I kind of have made sense of these experiences. Yeah.

**Q7. Interviewer** 1:49:37

I had a question and then I lost it again. So, maybe it'll come back but I'll jump on to the next one. If it pops up, I'll ask it or write it down and ask it. So, the next question is, has your psychedelic use noticeably affected your relationship with with significant others? And if so, how have they been affected?

**Participant** 1:50:01

It has not really affected me. Like, I've only had, I haven't done psychedelics living with my parents, I had one partner who also did psychedelics, so they have no problem. My current partner does not do psychedelics and at first, they were just concerned that for some reason, I wasn't going to like come out of the psychedelic feeling, but then they quickly learned that, like, that's likely to not happen, because I didn't stop using the psychedelic just because they were upset and now they're fine with it. So, for me, it hasn't really affected anyone else negatively.

**Interviewer** 1:50:48

A little more. It's definitely one part of the question but I think the question is asking a little bit more broadly, in terms of through your use of psychedelics has the way in which you, you're you have relationships with significant others, have they changed? Not necessarily just your use of them, affecting it? If you know if they like, Oh, that's a good or a bad thing.

**Participant** 1:51:14

Oh, yeah, definitely. I would say that. There's been times where I've gone into a psychedelic, like thinking that I'll get the insight that like, they're my partner is wrong about something like they wronged me or whatever, like, I'm upset, I'm hurt and I'm, like, expect to have clarity that like, yes, they did hurt you and then it's actually like, what I'll have is this big empathy for them, and how I'm actually the one being like, unloving by being upset at them for this thing that they did and so sometimes they'll flip my perspective in a way that I wasn't expecting because, like, if someone really hurts you, like, you feel hurt, it's like, sure, but then at the same time to have the perspective of like, why, why maybe they did that or like how you played a part is important. Again, it's more just like insight and empathy into the other person's perspective.

**Interviewer** 1:52:24

Do you think you would come to these insights or realisations. without the use of psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:52:35

I actually think that a lot of this information, any kind of insight that you can get, or even the work of like having to come back into your body can be done without psychedelics, I just think that people don't pay attention. They don't feel like sure enough to do the action or, or they don't have, they just don't listen to their insights. So, I feel like, if you did maybe like a lot of meditative practice, you could still get these results that are similar. Especially if I've met someone else who had a dissociative condition, and they work with a therapist, and they say that it's like, they still dissociate, but it's not as bad when they do regular yoga, regular therapy and, and these things, I don't think that it happens as quickly though, so it's like more drawn out process and you probably it takes longer to integrate than doing psychedelic work and certain insights, I think, like very mystical experience is probably reserved for psychedelics because even in even in dreams, it's hard to get those kinds of dreams but, yeah, so I like I think, I think that, you know, maybe if I like, posed a question, and then I was like, This is the day I'm going to meditate all day, like, maybe I would come to a similar insightful conclusion but the impact or like the imprint on my brain would wouldn't be as in like, wouldn't be as strong. I don't know. I mean, I've always said that, for me, I don't know how I would have got back into body had I not had psychedelics, because I would never have been the type of person to seek out help from another person like a therapist until like a certain amount of the work had already been done. So, In certain cases I do think like that It's almost nearly impossible for certain people to shake out of themselves like addictions too like that's something that I could see you not really being done for everybody without a psychedelic, or at the very least, like, they'll be more susceptible to fall back into it if there's not psychedelic use. So, it's kind of like yes and no, I think that it's a lot better to do psychedelics and I do think there's complicated cases that are probably best suited for psychedelic.

**Interviewer** 1:55:30

Did you engage in any type of therapy with a I don't know, psychologist, psychiatrist with about the dissociation?

**Participant** 1:55:42

Yeah, I did go to a psychologist for about a year and a half, pretty regular and that was before I was really doing. I wasn't doing any psychedelic when I was seeing her. So, that was just that and.

**Interviewer** 1:55:58

Was it helpful?

**Participant** 1:55:59

It like it was helpful when I was there talking to her, but then it's not as helpful when you go away, and what was happening in the therapy sessions was as soon as I started talking about something that caused me anxiety, I would dissociate, and then our session would stall because I would tell her, like, I'm out of body right now and I can't, like see you proper, like, you look really far away and so it's hard to talk to you and then we would just kind of have to wait that out or sometimes it would stop the whole session whereas the psychedelic I never like you can just take psychedelic and and you go into body or you can kind of control it, and still have like a healing experience. So, for me, I eventually stopped going to therapy because I kind of like heard what I wanted from her and then I just didn't find it useful to keep paying for.

**Q8. Interviewer** 1:57:15

Have psychedelics changed how you think and feel about yourself?

**Participant** 1:57:22

Yes, yeah. I would say so. Yeah, a lot more like confidence and able to like interact with people and also to be able to empathise in a way that I can interact with the people who did cause me some pain, which is like my family, like, there was a time when I couldn't talk to them at all and now I can we actually have a relationship and I don't think I would have been able to do that without the kind of that empathy and perspective of like seeing from someone else and just kind of allowing myself to forgive everything is a lot easier on a psychedelics because you feel like accompanied by that love.

**Interviewer** 1:58:20

just jumping back on, I think I sort of remembered the question I was curious to ask, in terms of your experiences with death with ego there? Is this sense of not having a body similar in the sense of being dissociated? Or is when you're disassociated, there's still a sense of actually having a body?

**Participant** 1:58:54

It's, it's kind of is similar to ego death because you end up feeling like, why am I following this body around when I can be out here? Um, and so you know, that it's you because you can see that you're you whereas in these other instances, usually your physical body is gone and so there's not that like, memory to see like, oh, there I am. You don't. So, it's like, you feel like there's no need to associate with that person but for some reason you're hanging around this person. Yeah. So, for me what happened, it was one thing, doing certain exercises with my psychologist that did actually help me come back into body really grounded. What ended up happening at first was I felt trapped, like ceilings looked really short. So, I was used to like being up high and all of a sudden it felt like, and like being in the body at first, I was like, I rejected it. I was like, this isn't even me kind of thing and then I got over it, but because more fun to live in a body when you're here anyway, if you're in a dream, it's kind of different. Like, you don't need a body in a dream but here you need a body.

**Interviewer** 2:00:33

What sort of techniques were helpful for you?

**Participant** 2:00:38

we did, it was just a lot of CBT and we would do, it's kind of like silly things like cold therapy and stuff. So, like, you get yourself you take like ice to your body, and you make yourself really cold. Or like you try to do certain things of each of the senses and it's kind of helps your awareness like, come back into your body. It's just not super long lasting. Yeah. Harder to maintain.

**Interviewer** 2:01:23

Well you can't take ice everywhere.

**Participant** 2:01:24

Yeah, exactly.

**Interviewer** 2:01:34

And the follow up, sort of jumping a bit back in between questions, but on the follow up to the question how psychedelics change how you think and feel about yourself? How have those changes impacted your life?

**Participant** 2:01:49

Yeah, the changes, I would say, they've allowed me to be more independent. Like, I'm not, like worried about taking care of myself anymore. I'm not worried about going into public situations. Like I don't even think about it anymore. It's complete. It's like night and day, like, just totally functional and you know, able to pursue things that have meaning. So, like art, or stuff like that. Just not to be absorbed in like, this kind of negative thought also.

**Interviewer** 2:02:55

So, you, are you able to go into public settings now with basically no concerns about having some form of social anxiety?

**Participant** 2:03:08

Yeah, it's not, it doesn't really produce anxiety anymore. It's more like it would just be irritating. Like, I'm sure lots of people would feel like, like, if you go somewhere, and it's really busy, or it's really noisy, you're just kind of like, oh, my goodness, like, this is annoying. Instead of panic, I need to run away and I need to not be in my body and I feel unsafe. Like, that's the difference, like everything's milder now.

**Interviewer** 2:03:35

And that that change would just to sort of like close the loop, would you locate that change to have occurred within that kind of year period where you did a lot of LSD?

**Participant** 2:03:53

It no, it took about three years to really overcome. It was basically like, I went from my full kind of year of taking it almost all the time to then the next two years being like taking it once a week and then now it's like, I don't I don't even really need to take it if I don't want to. It's like, yeah, so that's kind of been the way that I've tapered off of it and now it's just like, if I want to have an experience, like now it's now it's more enjoyable. Like now I can be like, you know what, I want to go on a walk in the woods and I want to just feel everything stronger than I can go and do that and like that's the kind of that's the difference now. Instead of like, needing this thing and like working through all of this psychology now. It's like I can go and it's just enjoyable. Like, I might not even have anything super profound happen. It's just like this really lovely kind of time. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:04:57

So, from a so it happened over a three-year period, but I guess the question is, and I don't want to sort of like, say that it is or put words in your mouth is the idea that I'm trying to avoid here but over that three year period, would you attribute the change from, now it's sort of irritating, potentially, in a you know, very busy person environment versus before, which is anxiety provoking, fear inducing, avoidance run away. Is that over the three-year period, do you attribute that to the psychedelic use, mostly or other other things that you think might have contributed to you being able to have this sort of transition or change or transformation?

**Participant** 2:05:51

I do think that it was mostly the psychedelic but another potential factor is like leaving a bad partnership but I don't, it's not like it's, the person wasn't bad they just, they had a lot of habits that weren't what I wanted to continue, like living with someone like so I don't like I don't really find that their experience is that distressing. So, I do think that it was mostly the psychedelics that helped and then like, maybe a minor aspect of that would be like, just kind of leaving a situation and having relief from that but again, I don't really see that being as impactful as certainly not as changing to my behaviour as the psychedelics yeah. For me, I'm like, I attribute psychedelics to me personally, for like, the improvement of my life, like I had the will to change my life, but it was mostly the psychedelics and like, that's, that's why I'm doing the survey and interview, because I do think that it's beneficial and life changing for people in a variety of different ways, like lots of different applications potentially because even if you've not had something traumatic happen to you, and you're just someone who's like, you know, fresh out of university, and you're like, Oh, I have this career that I'm deciding to do, but I feel kind of empty and then like, there's still benefits of psychedelic for that person, even though they don't have distress, right, they can still like, take it, and be like, oh, there's more to my emotional world than just like this career and this school path that I've decided to do, so the application or benefit of it is like, can be for, you know, average people or or not distressed people as well as for distressed people.

**Interviewer** 2:08:00

So, you don't have to have necessarily anything going wrong in your life to benefit from the use?

**Participant** 2:08:08

And to like have, like a probably changing experience. Just might not like be as might not be as life changing, because you're not like, so, like, depressed? I don't know. Like, if you're a happy person already, like it would, it would just be this nice thing. I don't know.

**Interviewer** 2:08:31

If you already really, if your life's already so really good you don't need to change it that much, I guess.

**Participant** 2:08:36

Yeah but you still might be able to change it, like in this still profound way just might not be like a total 180 of your life. It might just like enhance your already good life. A little bit, you know.

**Interviewer** 2:08:48

Nothing wrong with that.

**Participant** 2:08:50

No not at all.

**Interviewer** 2:08:53

One sort of final, not the end of the interview question but final question on the that sort of idea of the three years leading to the sort of transformation before that period, like those three years. Firstly, sort of how long ago would you say that, Is that like the sense now to three years ago? Or was that is there like, have been sometime between that as well?

**Participant** 2:09:17

It's like two years ago now? Like a one? Yeah, about two years ago? Was that three-year period?

**Interviewer** 2:09:25

Okay and before that, so that? Yeah, before that period, had you experienced and were continuing to experience social anxiety throughout your life before that? Or did it, was it something new that came in like or had it always been there?

**Participant** 2:09:48

No, it had always been there. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:09:50

Okay because that speaks. If I may ask, how long was the relationship that you were in that you ended up leaving during that period?

**Participant** 2:10:01

it was six years.

**Interviewer** 2:10:03

Okay.

**Participant** 2:10:04

So, it's quite a long relationship.

**Q29. Interviewer** 2:10:25

So, we're changing again to a little bit different focus of the questions and the first one is have your experiences with psychedelics and you've definitely spoken to this, I think, but have your experiences with psychedelics affected your spiritual or religious beliefs? And if so, how have they been affected?

**Participant** 2:10:48

Yeah, yeah. For me, it's just, it's kind of confirmed my own belief system but as well, like it's weird because I've actually, I've encountered, like, deities or concepts that I would say are interfaith. So, I've encountered things from, like, similar in Islamic description, as well as things that have come to me and like identified themselves as particular angels that are like of Christian origin, or more like, not as defined kind of like shamanic things like just spirits and then I've also had really specific encounters with, like, Vedic imagery and deity kind of things. So, again, I end up just thinking that it's like, it's like an interfaith world, and whatever you gravitate towards, is just how it works for you. Um, so I'm, like, open minded to the fact that there's like, lots of potential of like, what works with people and experiences that they can have, it's just like, it's like reading a genre of book. It's like, I like this genre book better than I like this genre of book and that changes between people. It's like, kind of like, religion can be this inner muse and you can use that to inspire your life. So, that's like how I think of it now as opposed to like having to find this like definite truth or something. It's like truth is different for everybody.

**Interviewer** 2:12:36

Okay. That's interesting and I think we'll come back to that in just a second, but I had one question that I'd like to ask first, I'll just write that down. So, I think you've spoken to this already but the idea of encountering these deities, is there a sense in which they are another entity that is conscious of themselves and separate from you in sort of a manner like the difference between me and you being, from my particular perspective? I guess I don't want to put, I imagine that you imagine that I'm a person who actually exists and has my own conscious experience and so I'm just wondering, do you is that the sense that you get with these other entities, deities that you encounter during your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 2:13:34

Yes, the way that I think about it is that these things were, they existed at some point in time and then every human has the human aura within them, which is like some kind of record of all time. Particular deities, they just, they can they move differently in time, but I do think that they have their own kind of, like, self to them. Yeah, but what I really think is that they're archetypal as well. So, similar to like, how you get random characters in dreams or like maybe you have repeated characters in dreams, and sometimes you don't know them, but but you do know them because you've dreamed of them before. It's similar to that. It's hard to explain, like for me, I have actual places that I go back to in dreams and I know them, and I know the people there but they're not real people that I know in real life, but I can go and dream about them again and so it's like certain things will come to you when you archetypally need that.

**Interviewer** 2:15:04

Okay. In your dream experiences, do you, for people or conscious entities that you encounter in your dreams. Do you attribute the same sort of selfhood that you would to the deities or entities that you encounter during the LSD experience?

**Participant** 2:15:26

No, no, they seem more just like minor characters. Like these deities, like they seem. There's like a different kind of power to them.

**Interviewer** 2:15:46

Again, the alarm was for, the first one was to water the garden because they go to community garden, so we've got our own plots there and the next one was letting me know that yoga class starts in 20 minutes but that's, we're going to just skip that because this is more interesting.

**Participant** 2:16:05

Well, I do I have, I have to kind of wrap up soon, because I have to meet someone, but

**Interviewer** 2:16:11

cool. Well we're near the end is about 123456, about eight questions.

**Participant** 2:16:22

Okay.

**Interviewer** 2:16:22

How much time do you have? Because I can use that to sort of gauge how much I can ask additional, or how how quickly I can go through.

**Participant** 2:16:29

I think about 10 minutes would be good, but

**Interviewer** 2:16:32

10 minutes? Okay.

**Participant** 2:16:34

I'll but I'll go till 20 minutes.

**Interviewer** 2:16:38

Okay. cool, alright. So, all right, then, we'll keep it short and sweet. Have you ever experienced a spiritual crisis because of your psychedelic use? And what helped you, if you did experience this, what helped you get through this experience?

**Participant** 2:17:02

Um, there was a time when I kind of, I felt like I was getting regular, like visitations from these deities, or these beings and they were providing me like, conversation or some kind of insight and at one point, I was kind of told, like, okay, you're kind of good, and like, we don't need to help you as much anymore and now they don't come as frequently. Not really a spiritual crisis, though. So, but for a while, I felt like this, there was this despair, like, like, could I trust what those experiences were like, what were they? like, now that they're gone. Like, there was this, yeah, a sense of despair, where it was like, um, I feel kind of lonely and now I'm not sure but it was, it was kind of me being dramatic because in the end, it's like, No, you have to just like trust that the experience is valuable to you, or whatever you know. Like, it's, it sounds silly to say it out loud, but at the time, like, it was kind of like really down about it but no, I don't know. spiritual crisis. Not really a crisis, though.

**Q30. Interviewer** 2:18:16

Okay. Have psychedelics changed how you think or feel about death or the process of dying?

**Participant** 2:18:28

Yes, I think like, to me, it makes. It's not like it makes more sense but it kind of does. Like I feel like I understand that, It's just something that happens and like, you go on in some kind of way doesn't really make it less scary, but you do feel a little bit more comfortable with it. There's some more acceptance

**Q31. Interviewer** 2:19:04

Have psychedelics changed any fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality? And if so, what has changed?

**Participant** 2:19:14

Um, nothing again, nothing really changed. It was more just like a confirmation of how I feel.

**Q32. Interviewer** 2:19:39

Have psychedelics changed your outlook on life? And if so, how has it changed?

**Participant** 2:19:47

Yes, I I believe that life is more like it's it's weird because sometimes bad things happen, but life is actually it is like this gift, right? So, it is this really special thing to be experiencing things and not just, I don't think that it's like a random thing that just happens to you or happens and I think that there's intelligence behind it, and a purpose.

**Interviewer** 2:20:19

And this if there so you're saying there was a change? What was it like before?

**Participant** 2:20:30

More just like a hopelessness kind of feeling about what life is and like this kind of sense of impending doom like, like, either like the world is going to end or, you know, I'm not going to make it successful, or I'm, you know, something bad is there's just kind of this looming sense of like, doom, for whatever reason, and that's gone now. Like, even if, like, even in the face of some kind of disaster, I feel like I would be more calm about it now.

**Interviewer** 2:21:09

And was that feeling of impending doom and hopelessness, a common experience prior to your psychedelic use? And was it long lived?

**Participant** 2:21:21

Yeah, it was most of my teen years into my, like, early 20s kind of feeling.

**Interviewer** 2:21:35

If psychedelics have a role to play in society? What do you think it is?

**Participant** 2:21:42

I think that I think it will go like, in a way that seems logical, which is like, the way that they've already started, which is helping people with kind of severe cases of mental health into just being being allowed, just as like a right to have the kind of experience that you want and being able to pursue that experience, if you think that it will, you know, benefit your spirituality or even your, you know, enjoyment of going to the beach or something like I think that it has that place, however, people want to use it and I think people have been using psychedelics for all of time and they've probably been using it in a variety of ways, which is recreational to therapeutic and I think to make it illegal is wrong now and that people should be able to have it in whatever way they see fit for themselves personally.

**Q6e. Interviewer** 2:22:56

Has psychedelic use affected your use of other drugs? And if so, how have they been affected?

**Participant** 2:23:04

I would say really quickly, like psychedelics replaced any kind of want to do any other drugs. Not that I really had experimented with that many beside from psychedelics, I've really only taken M, but I quickly didn't want to take M anymore and I don't know.

**Interviewer** 2:23:31

What about alcohol or cigarettes or marijuana?

**Participant** 2:23:35

I've never smoked I've never drank I don't really smoke weed. It, I would say it gave me insight on not even having coffee. Like it's just something that kind of dampened my experience eventually, like it's just not something that I felt was good for me anymore and so I don't have caffeine really. Yeah, so I must I'm pretty much sober person now, except for occasional psychedelic but.

**Interviewer** 2:24:10

And when is that a positive thing in your life, do you think this?

**Participant** 2:24:16

I personally think so. Yeah. Yeah.

**Q34. Interviewer** 2:24:25

Have psychedelics changed how you think about the human species and what we're doing?

**Participant** 2:24:32

Um, I don't know. No, I feel like it's just given me more acceptance of what we're doing. Yeah.

**Q35. Interviewer** 2:24:49

And what advice would you give to people who are interested in or currently using psychedelics?

**Participant** 2:24:58

Advice, the advice that I do give to people if they ask me is like, I say that you should either try to clear your mind for a while before using it like a couple days, and not try to don't get too anxious about this thing that you're doing or think about something really specific. Like, I advise people even to say like, if there's no specific thing that you're trying to work through. Maybe just focus on the fact that you want to have positive experience when you take it and just make sure that your setting is good. Like you're not around too many people but if you feel nervous, then you have someone there that can be around. That's mostly my advice that I give people. Oh, and I always tell them to like, even if you have to write it down or something like just like, have it in your mind that it won't last forever. If for some reason you do feel uncomfortable. It's like, have it somewhere, like written down or someone you can call just be like, tell me that's not going to last forever, because it never does and this feeling was eventually die down So

**Interviewer** 2:26:16

Yup, Yeah. It can feel like that, that's for sure.

**Participant** 2:26:21

Yeah, that's why I tell people that's one of people's main worries I find is like, what if I don't come out of it? I'm like, you will probably come out of it. Yeah.

**Q36. Interviewer** 2:26:33

And final question is more open ended, so to speak. Are there any final thoughts or comments that you'd like to mention before we conclude? Or as well questions?

**Participant** 2:26:50

No, that's, that's all Really. Um, yeah, I just, I thought it would be really interesting to participate in the study, or whatever. I think I've done one survey before but I think that it's good to just do what you're doing, which is get a lot of different perspective about what it is because I think that what we would more commonly find is that people generally have positive experience on these things, probably even more so than something like alcohol or that kind of thing. So, yeah. So, that's all, I think that it's beneficial.

**END OF INTERVIEW**

**Interviewer** 2:27:29

And how did you find the the interview? Was it alright for you?

**Participant** 2:27:36

I found it just I follow a couple of different psychedelics societies of BC and they share things all the time. So, it was shared in one of the groups and I was just like, yeah, I'll do it.

**Interviewer** 2:27:50

That's cool. All right. Um, well, that's basically it. Thanks for participating, [interviewee]. very much appreciate your answers. Again, if you'd like, would you like me to send you the video and transcript at all?

**Participant** 2:28:10

You can, you can send the transcript I don't need the video really, but the transcript would be cool, yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:28:17

Yep. So, once I have that done, I'll just email you it and if you if you'd like to do any follow up, if you have any questions or anything later, you're more than welcome to email me in the future. Yeah, just a big, really big thank you for participating. It's one thing I didn't mention is I think it's quite the evidence seems to be evidence, the study, you know, it's quite male dominated in terms of the people answering it and I think that's just normal. Like, I think the majority of psychedelic uses are just guys and so it's good, I think, to also get a female perspective. In case there's sort of differences in in the male female dynamic of use and how it affects each individual. So

**Participant** 2:29:16

yeah, it even when I go to groups like to meet up it's a lot of it's mostly guys, and then just like one or two girls, so yeah but yeah, yeah, it's cool to join and good luck with the other survey.

**Interviewer** 2:29:31

Thank you. Would you like, once it's written up, would you like a copy of the thesis to have a read through because I can just send you that once that's done as well?

**Participant** 2:29:42

Yeah, that'd be cool. Yeah, as long as you if you don't mind. Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:29:46

Yeah, not a problem. I'll make sure to send that through once it's done then.

**Participant** 2:29:52

Okay cool.

**Interviewer** 2:29:53

All right. Well, thank you, [interviewee]. Very much. You know, big thank you for your time because it's long. I know.

**Participant** 2:30:00

Oh no, that's good. Yeah, it was fun. Okay. Okay. See you.

**Interviewer** 2:30:03

All right. Bye

**Participant** 2:30:04

Bye.