25. Interview with Participant 25

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**Length:** 3:06:52

**Spoken duration of interview:** Participant (69%), Interviewer (31%)

**Age (years):** Participant (21), Interviewer (30)

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

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

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

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**Q1. Interviewer** 00:01

All right. So, the first question we start nice and broad is, why do you use psychedelics?

**Participant** 00:14

I started out of curiosity, because I was, I think about 17, 16 or 17, when I started and I think when, once you start, like seeing what they do and what you can learn from them, then it's more about first as self-development, which is, right now becoming really popular and then, for a spiritual use that. I think what I learned from like books about religion, I can just take a look at whether I see it as right or not.

**Interviewer** 01:10

So, would you say that self-development and spiritual uses sort of the main, the main reasons that you are using them?

**Participant** 01:19

I was I was really depressive, and it's really helped me with that. So, I don't know whether you consider it like, self-development or something else.

**Interviewer** 01:28

Okay. You might. Well, yeah, self-development might be a little bit different, that would probably be fall, sort of underlying wellbeing like main, some sort of health related, but I see what you saying. So, I'll just put in dealing with depression.

**Participant** 01:52

And probably to, like, adapt to some really stressful events in my life, because it like makes you more adaptable, more able to face reality, basically.

**Interviewer** 02:27

In terms of the, you were saying just before, to deal with depression, is that something that you received a, went to say, a psychologist or a doctor and received a diagnosis for that or is that more like a sense of feeling depressed, rather than an official label?

**Participant** 02:46

I had, I had like two antidepressants, but I think you can't really see your own diagnosis in this country.

**Interviewer** 02:57

Okay, they don't tell you?

**Participant** 02:59

Yeah, they just tell you Yeah, you feel very anxious, you feel pretty depressed, depressed. Maybe it's like my doctors approach that. I've heard people who like start basing their personality on it. So

**Interviewer** 03:14

Yeah, well, that's the I guess that's the risk a little bit is like, here's your label, and you're like me, and you start identifying with that label and might reinforce the belief that you're, you know, you become even more depressed because you know, like, yes, that describes me.

**Participant** 03:28

Yeah, it sometimes. Seems that way.

**Q2. Interviewer** 03:36

So, have the reasons why you used psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 03:41

Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**Interviewer** 03:44

And is it just the different is it just the evolution of curiosity into this sort of spiritual use and self-development or is there is there more to it than that?

**Participant** 03:56

Hmm. I think right now I can really, I think this might be someone who's older might be able to tell you more about this because I still feel like I'm at the beginning and I also feel like when you are when you take them when you are like 17, and all that stuff happen, you finish high school, you move away from your parents, then all this stuff is can be so like, confusing. It's the outside stuff changes your world so much that you can't really tell.

**Interviewer** 04:47

That makes sense. So, how long, how long have you been using psychedelics for?

**Participant** 05:05

Oh, well, I think about four years, but I had a gap in between when I was taking the antidepressants.

**Interviewer** 05:19

And over those four years, how many times would you have used psychedelics?

**Participant** 05:25

Oh my god. I think about, like, maybe 15, but I'm not really sure.

**Interviewer** 05:39

And is that a particular psychedelic? Do you have a preference as to which one you take?

**Participant** 05:49

Right now, I prefer Ayahuasca and magic mushrooms, because I like the effects and that's what I have and what I can tell is, like, is what it says it is.

**Interviewer** 06:09

Well it's pretty hard to make a fake mushroom.

**Participant** 06:11

Yes. Maybe if you just take a fake mushroom. It's just like normal mushroom that grows outside and it's

**Interviewer** 06:24

Then you're just full

**Participant** 06:25

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 06:27

Okay and have you used other psychedelics outside of Ayahuasca and magic, magic mushrooms?

**Participant** 06:34

Oh, yeah, I started with LSD but I used I cut the first paper into and didn't buy any next one. Oh, and the LSA seeds, as I mentioned, and, well, I think that's all.

**Q3. Interviewer** 07:02

How did you first start using psychedelics?

**Participant** 07:07

Oh, my, then girlfriend, girlfriend was really interested in them and I think we just we bought them together. So, that's I was, like curious about them. Also, before I even like, met her, so it's not like peer pressure, I think.

**Interviewer** 07:50

And what so the was the first, what was the first psychedelic that you took? And what was that? Where did you do it? And what was the sort of experience like?

**Participant** 08:00

it was LSD. I thought I took about one third at first and that was kind of like I felt the effects but mostly it's I was thinking differently. It wasn't something very strong just to see whether it's good for me or doesn't poison me or whatever and the two thirds were really strong and the experience was sort of scary, but also really great. So, I think both of the ways that you can go in there.

**Interviewer** 08:49

And was that one whole tab or multiple?

**Participant** 08:55

That was one tab, and I think it was more than the usual but what people tell you isn't really what it is.

**Interviewer** 09:04

Yeah well.

**Participant** 09:05

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 09:06

They can tell you whatever you like.

**Participant** 09:08

Yeah, they tell you it's 200 micrograms and well.

**Interviewer** 09:12

Yeah. What is a new person know the difference between 100 and 200?

**Participant** 09:17

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 09:19

Okay,

**Participant** 09:19

But it was it was really strong and maybe I'm just really sensitive but.

**Q4. Interviewer** 09:34

What aspects of psychedelics do you find most meaningful or valuable?

**Participant** 09:42

Hmm. I think the most valuable to me is that's it can give you like completely new information because usually a lot of what you learn and a lot of what you like, what you let into yourself is really affected by how where you raised or what were your beliefs since you were a child and I think the, like, most interesting thing is that it lets all of those change and I think there aren't that many, that many ways it can happen. Also, you can just get completely well outside or inside your human experience and just look at it like you would never do otherwise.

**Interviewer** 11:20

So, it provides a new way to sort of look at yourself in the world?

**Participant** 11:27

Yeah, and also like, like, not only new, but like new times 1000.

**Interviewer** 11:40

Okay, you times 1000 I'm right now.

**Participant** 11:49

Yeah, just outside what you would even consider new, I think.

**Interviewer** 12:07

So radically different from your normal experience?

**Participant** 12:12

Yeah and it's weird when people just take it as something that comes only from your mind, because a lot of it is like, as it was coming, like from a completely different place.

**Interviewer** 12:33

Can you elaborate on that? What do you what do you mean by what you just said?

**Participant** 12:45

Well, I think people usually take it as, like a collage of things that are already in your brain, and the thoughts that you already have and what you already experienced but like it can, it can be so new that I don't really think that's the case.

**Interviewer** 13:17

Okay, are you saying that the experiences that you have the content of those experiences is actually not something that comes from your prior experiences, but from some other sort of like place?

**Participant** 13:33

Yeah, I'm not going to start going like conspiracy, person and say from where, but it just seems so like. You sort of when the existentialists say that we are just limited and everyone is ultimately alone, then this can sort of prove that it's not the case.

**Q5. Interviewer** 14:26

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

**Participant** 14:36

I'd say just looking at the fear that you have. Sometimes, you know, just looking at yourself and what you normally do without the justifications that you give yourself, is sometimes really terrible and it can like if you don't cooperate with therapy, or at least something that, like, can teach you to feel better or to feel differently about yourself, then I think it could just put you into a state of like self-hate sometimes maybe because what you see can be unattainable and that's, I imagine could feel really terrible.

**Interviewer** 15:37

Have you experienced that during your psychedelic use or something similar?

**Participant** 15:43

Oh, it's more like something I experience it in my day to day life because I have like this sort of, it's like preposition or?

**Interviewer** 15:59

Sorry, preposition.

**Participant** 16:01

I think I forgot that word but like something that you that's at the start of everything.

**Interviewer** 16:12

Well philosophy might be like a priori assumptions?

**Participant** 16:17

Oh, yeah, Probably so.

**Interviewer** 16:20

But do you want to speak, maybe just add some words to it and I'm sure get the context of what you're trying to say.

**Participant** 16:26

Oh, well, my parents weren't really like, the greatest and when you like, hate yourself from the beginning, then but I think it may be also helped me because if I experienced it like normally, then when it comes to me on a psychedelic trip, I can work with it way better than someone who has never seen something like this but I think there's not many of those people and also I don't know if you have a question about that but another challenging thing would be I think sometimes, especially with the LSA seeds, you can get into a really bad like state physically and it seems like a hypoglycaemia maybe, like really low blood sugar and I think that could be a real danger because, yeah, that gets really tough and I talked to a friend that had a very similar experience from Ayahuasca, and he was actually I think someone called the ambulance on him and they like gave him hyperglycaemia diagnosis. So, and I've never heard about, I've never heard about somebody listing this as a risk. Only the, like food interactions and what can happen, like to your mind and that you can get a psychosis. I think this should be really talked about, especially a lot of people tell you not to eat before, so it would be stronger but when you are in a state when you can't physically eat, because you can't find it, find your hands and whatever.

**Interviewer** 18:45

Yeah. What is food?

**Participant** 18:48

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 18:49

Yeah. Yes, no, I've never heard of that. It does seem to me like my mind first went to that idea of fasting and that, that, to me seems the first. The first thing you'd have to sort of identify as not the cause of low blood sugar in their case, because if yeah, if you're fasting, for example, for the day, the whole day, then you're.

**Participant** 19:17

Yeah, I was actually like, I had lunch and I think well, that's two experiences but I think maybe there's something especially in the like LSA seeds that can cause this because I've read about this on the forums and stuff and people say that they're suffering like toxic, but maybe it could be this but I'm not really sure. Okay.

**Interviewer** 19:49

Do you have that same issue with Ayahuasca use or is this just with LSA seeds?

**Participant** 19:55

Not really, I had to like eat some bread before. Like during the trip because, you know, I know myself, I know that this happened and I know that some like white bread helps but like nothing where it was even approaching something like dangerous. It was mostly that I was hungry and

**Q6. Interviewer** 20:22

Wanted a snack? Fair enough. So, the next couple of questions are going to be asking about the effects that psychedelics have had in your life and I start with the broad question, and then you just take that where it feels right answer for you and then I've got a few sort of specific follow up questions in particular areas of, of a person's life to help flesh out some of the stuff. So, if you cover the ones, some of the parts of the questions that I'm going to ask, I might not ask them, I might just sort of caveat them say it seems like you've answered this question but if you've got any more to add, let me know. Otherwise, we can just kind of skip over it. So, the first question, starting broad again, is, in what ways have psychedelics affected your life?

**Participant** 21:13

I think the, like most, the one that I would most likely say to some, like a doctor, or someone who hasn't had the experience was that I was really suicidal to the point where I was like planning it and I basically spend like 90% of my time, just making the plan really like fool proof maybe and I had, like an Ayahuasca session and it wasn't even like, that much I usually don't drink so, I would like completely lose myself because I drink alone but like afterwards, I like nothing, nothing really. It's kind of like you feel good, but you don't really know what changed and then I was like, taking a walk and I noticed that I don't really, I just stop even thinking about it and also a lot of like, the details that I spend so much time like holding in my mind that they just aren't there. So, if you just ask me, what's the thing that I spent the year thinking about was, it's that wouldn't even be there and it was really like freeing.

**Interviewer** 22:51

And was, was that Ayahuasca session, was that by yourself or were you doing that in a group context?

**Participant** 22:58

By myself.

**Interviewer** 23:06

And how, what was how many times did you use psychedelics before that experience? Or was it was it? Yeah, not necessarily how many but had you used it many times before then?

**Participant** 23:22

I think it was, like my second time with it and like, I don't know, like, fifth time overall but it was my second time after the antidepressants and that like way of thinking was, I think a lot because I stopped taking them and I had the like, time when it all goes really bad because Yeah.

**Interviewer** 24:14

And so how do you feel now? What's how's your how's your sense of around suicidality now?

**Participant** 24:23

Oh, well, I sort of accepted that I will just meet with the idea. Like, a few times, like after it just that it just isn't like it just nuked that way of thinking completely but right now, it's kind of like when something that gets really stressful and I have a really bad month and people around me and really the like, aren't really great or something, then I just get this way of thinking like, yeah, I should do it but it's more of like when children think about it, that I wouldn't really do it right now. It's just an like, idea you have, but you wouldn't act on it.

**Interviewer** 25:52

And so have you, have you, like, has your use of psychedelics since then been for managing sort of your depression and thoughts of suicide, or do you use it, like, I guess I'm trying to sort of understand the intention behind the use now and how it links into what you've just told me.

**Participant** 26:25

Right now, it's, I sort of, like it's, like really tired, I don't know. Well, I think I have, like, those family problems that I had as a kid, right now, too and, like, my father is sending me every week really drunk emails about how I'm the biggest bitch and stuff like that and, you know, so it's not really like depression, that wasn't, that's just, you know, the depression from the beginning that was just growing there but I think the environment isn't like the best, or at least when I talk to my friends, then the people they are with are, like, more, more normal, I think.

**Interviewer** 27:32

Might be better just not to read those emails.

**Participant** 27:36

It's really easy to say, but he just, he has the sort of technique that he writes the important stuff at in the middle. So, you have to like at least scroll there but I started sending it to my friend to read and she tells me the important thing but you know, you just see the email there, and you know, what's in there. So yeah, and I think for what other effects it had on my life. I think before then, but this is also like, the type of change that you can have, like normally with time when you are, like when you will live on your own. So, it's I have, like more self-determination, I think, is it called? It's, I just want to take more like agency in my life and before then, I was just, I didn't know that there's another possibility then what like my parents tell me.

**Interviewer** 29:05

Yes, well, time away from family can definitely develop a sense of independence.

**Participant** 29:12

Yeah and you know, when you like do psychedelics on top of that, then it's, like more intense. So, I think it just in intensifies those like normal developments and I think I'm more able to connect to people around me and just be considerate and be more friendly towards them. So

**Q6a. Interviewer** 30:13

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

**Participant** 30:20

Oh, I think definitely but also right now I can't really, I can't really say like, how much or what part but I think they do make you kind of weird and.

**Interviewer** 30:41

Nothing wrong with being weird.

**Participant** 30:44

Yeah \*giggles\* and I'm way less afraid that I would be but yeah, we just today went to a botanical garden that should be closed and climbed over the fence and I think maybe otherwise I wouldn't do this kind of stuff.

**Interviewer** 31:08

So, what would you, you're just saying you, you are sort of less afraid? What are you able to? And then you gave the example of hopping over the fence. Is there a general more general sense of like what you're less afraid of?

**Participant** 31:21

I think those kind of things that, like the usual person is afraid, like, maybe standing up for someone or when I think there's when somebody asks something in a class then and I don't really agree with them, then I can. Like, I'm less afraid to say my opinion.

**Interviewer** 31:52

So, confrontation?

**Participant** 31:55

Yeah, definitely.

**Interviewer** 31:58

Sorry, you're going to say something else?

**Participant** 32:01

Yeah. Oh, well, last year, well, actually, before I went to college, I had to get money for this, because my job wasn't really making so much. So, I had to do what I was really afraid of before, which was taking a lawyer to talk to my parents that when somebody makes children, then they should like to take care of them, because it's the law and this was really terrible but I was able to do it. It wasn't really like a court or something like when somebody can go into a prison, but the lawyer just talked to them and made, like, an agreement that both sides agreed on but it was really I would be really afraid of it.

**Interviewer** 33:04

And do you think your psychedelic use helped you or allowed you to go through that process?

**Participant** 33:11

Oh, well, not really. Like I took something before and but I think when I just began them, then it made me less afraid in general and it lasted a really long time.

**Q6b. Interviewer** 33:38

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

**Participant** 33:52

Well, I think my long-term goals are maybe, like, more focused about nature and stuff. Like before, then I really wanted to, I didn't care what environment I was living in and right now I go on walks more and just spend time in nature and I'd like to, I'd like to do that for the rest of my life, basically.

**Interviewer** 34:34

And was this something that you feel psychedelics facilitated like, before you said you had a lack of interest in nature was were psychedelics, the thing that generated that new interest or was it other things?

**Participant** 34:53

Ahh yeah probably because before then I could just take a walk and it was alright, but like when you have the afterglow, then you can just go and everything is like, oh my god, like you see all the birds and the river and you can really feel like at home there. So, I think that's really, that was a really, really big part of it.

**Interviewer** 35:40

And is that, does that interest or enjoyment or desire to spend more time or be, you know, involved in nature, environments, or settings more often. Is that also while you're not in an afterglow state where it's just normal everyday thing?

**Participant** 36:04

Yeah, yeah absolutely.

**Interviewer** 36:05

Okay.

**Participant** 36:07

Like, I spent the whole last lockdown, just going every day into this kind of like, half forest half meadow and I spent most of the day there, like, nine hours, and it was amazing.

**Interviewer** 36:27

Sounds lovely.

**Participant** 36:28

Yeah, and I, there's so many different kinds of birds and I saw I Kingfisher like, seven times, and it did a lot for my mental health, maybe, I think going there every day was like, actually better than any afterglow, because well, it's the things around you and I really love the birds. I think they made me more able to understand people that come from, like, really different, like political backgrounds. So, now where when people talk about like, I don't know, the Czech equivalent of a Trump supporter. I can like, sort of see what's made them be like that, why they are feeling like that.

**Interviewer** 37:48

How would you have reacted before to a person like that?

**Participant** 37:55

Well, I would just sort of maybe make a caricature, because it's feels like what a lot of people do and just see them as the sum of their political opinions when and tell myself or yeah, they are, those are really bad and stuff like that.

**Interviewer** 38:30

Sounds like with the nature stuff. It just brings to mind I'm like, that's almost something that's might be more interesting than literature. If you really enjoy nature. You could have it as a career even.

**Participant** 38:46

Oh, well, I'd like to write something for myself too but I'm really like shy to tell it to people because the first thing they usually say is, well, that's not a career and I think with like writing about it, and I've read so many different kinds of books that we're about it I don't know if you will know, Maurice Maeterlinck?

**Interviewer** 39:12

No who's this?

**Participant** 39:14

Oh, he wrote about, he wrote a book that will that's called the intelligence of flowers and it sounds like really like New Agey, but it was 1913 and it's like philosophical and it's not nothing really like esoteric or magical. He just, like tells the basic natural effects and frames them as this like flowers. Like, you know, the path of the hero and stuff like that. So, he makes a narrative for those flowers and it's really interesting, and I think reading that book can just change your view of like nature and like our place in it and I think if I was able to do something similar maybe with a different theme, then it could be really purposeful.

**Interviewer** 40:20

Yeah, why not? Sounds like a good idea.

**Participant** 40:25

I was considering, like, a job in science or something like, ecological but a lot of what I, when I talk with my friends who studied, I think I'm more suited to what I do right now or maybe some kind of art and not like collecting snails.

**Interviewer** 40:51

Yeah, get quite sciency, not as enjoyable I think.

**Participant** 40:58

My friend told me that there's people whose entire job is going and collecting the snails and in a way that's kind of nice, but like what.

**Interviewer** 41:12

Yeah, yeah. Well, if you get to spend all day out in the forest, somewhere looking for snails, that doesn't sound too bad.

**Participant** 41:19

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 41:23

Well, I think it sounds like a really good idea. I would encourage you to write a philosophical treatise on the on nature in a way that is, I don't know resonates with you.

**Participant** 41:38

Thank you.

**Interviewer** 41:40

I'm mean if you spend 9 hours in the forest in a forest meadow, I think you'll have some thoughts about those sorts of things.

**Participant** 41:47

Yeah, it's really interesting how, you know, when you go there for like, 20 minutes a day, and like, once a week and the first seems all the same every time but when you just spend a lot of time there, then it's so different because one day, there's like, this kind of fly flies mating and they're like, everywhere, and they are black, and then their wings reflect light. So, it looks like those kind of floating eyes almost. Yeah, and the second day they are gone. Or one day, there's like, I think the bird is the bird is called Swift and it's the fastest bird and it's like a swallow I think and they go really fast and do some like weird acrobatics. Almost like, it looks really dangerous for the bird, but it's amazing seeing it and

**Interviewer** 42:51

It's that like when they sort of like bomb dive?

**Participant** 42:54

I think Yeah, they I read that they sleep and mate and eat at 200 kilometres an hour. That's impressive.

**Interviewer** 43:08

I don't know if you could mate at 200kms an hour, you probably could like catch them bugs are very difficult.

**Participant** 43:16

It's like live fast, die young, kind of bird.

**Q6c. Interviewer** 43:19

\*laughs\* Have psychedelics caused you to seriously question your own beliefs?

**Participant** 43:36

I think yeah. Also, I'm this kind of person that does it does this like naturally.

**Interviewer** 43:43

Okay.

**Participant** 43:44

I'm kind of like sceptical towards what I believe too and that's sort of how it's always been so, but I think when they open the like, lower depths of yourself and then like, of course, I sort of question my like, political beliefs because my family is sort of right wing and, or, you know, in this country, like, being a communist or even a leftist is a really bad word because what they did in like the, from the 50s to the 80s and so I was considering if, you know, we could be like more. I don't know how you say it, but like nicer to other people, but in a way that wasn't like imprisoning them in camps if they didn't follow that, your ideas of government is much better.

**Interviewer** 45:01

Yes, I think that that's called a democracy.

**Participant** 45:05

Yeah but you know, when you have like, this left wing people who never really like, witness the idea that communism or the attempt to it has cost, then they are sort of ignorant and they are talking about Lenin or, like people like that and he wasn't exactly, he really supported those prison camps and

**Interviewer** 45:34

Yeah, I think, just sort of on that, you can go in any direction, if you if there's a centre, you can go as far right as far left, and you sort of just loop back around to rather extreme anti humanistic behaviour of control.

**Participant** 45:53

Yeah we talk about it in some class like, that's the extreme right wing and the left wing are really similar.

**Interviewer** 46:02

I think, I guess the west, especially I guess, younger generations now who weren't around and you know, I wasn't around when the Iron Curtain was still up and there was still the big sort of issue between the Russia and the states and the countries that had sort of eaten up and, and the rest of the world and the, you know, the communist versus capitalistic kind of ideological issues but there's certainly, there's hopefully, enough nuance that you can be left wing without being communist. Like it shouldn't just be synonymous. You know, there's enough, right and there's enough left, where, while we're both good people, still, we just have differing opinions on certain things, but you're not all the way out here or all the way out here.

**Participant** 46:53

I think about that when I talk to some people from Britain or from the USA, then like, they're, when they were critical of communism, they also didn't talk about those like, really bad things that they did like, the gulags and stuff like that but something about like economy and stuff like, I don't know, it was like there was propaganda, but the actual things that happened were, like, way worse than that and this kind of the people can recognise this It's like propagandists, like telling people, yeah, we can have all the stuff together. Like, you can't make people on the factory when the actual problems was, were about the like, or like they were authoritarian. I wouldn't like to talk about politics too much here.

**Interviewer** 48:05

Yeah, that's okay but so you question your political beliefs.

**Participant** 48:10

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 48:10

That was sort of how we got onto that one. Is there any other types of beliefs that you have questioned, seriously questioned during, during or after or caused by your psychedelic use?

**Participant** 48:25

I think during it, it was also this, like, I used to be really like the atheist, science person but it's also like, when you grow up, then you just realise that the people who believe don't really believe in a man on the cloud, or a lot of them don't.

**Interviewer** 48:58

So, another caricature of religious people or spiritual people?

**Participant** 49:03

Yeah but that was more of a figure of speech. I don't know I used to be just one of the people who just believe in, in science, and that's like nothing past that would even like matter.

**Interviewer** 49:24

And now, what how, what's your sort of stance or perspective on that?

**Participant** 49:32

Oh, I think well, I think when you can, like see on yourself and stuff like that, also when you are in nature, then you just, like maybe witness that there might be or might not be something that, like gives, all of it some meaning but I'm really not the kind of person to say, yeah, it's that one thing and nothing else can even exist.

**Q6d. Interviewer** 50:29

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

**Participant** 50:36

Oh, yeah, definitely. I used to be like, incredibly self-critical, and maybe I still am but before I had, like, completely different metrics for, like, judging myself and judging other people, that it was, like, looking back, it was really, it just seemed really illogical and really mean but yeah, I didn't really know better.

**Interviewer** 51:19

Can you speak to these metrics that you use to judge yourself and others by like,what were they and how, how have they changed?

**Participant** 51:31

Hmm, I think like, basically, the metrics were just to justify judging myself as low as possible in like, I think every, every direction and also before then, I think I didn't have really a healthy, healthy view on eating and I had like, 50 kilogrammes but I felt really fat and stuff and that's completely disappeared.

**Interviewer** 52:28

And as that has this change in your relationship with food, is that a consequence of your psychedelic use or is that also come from other areas?

**Participant** 52:42

I think from the psychedelics mostly.

**Interviewer** 52:48

Can you what it what about it? Why, why did that change? What happened there?

**Participant** 52:53

Oh, it's, I think it's sort of, like complicated and sort of subtle, but I think you can, I could just sort of see that. I don't know the diet culture and stuff isn't really, like isn't really true and you should feed your body so you could have energy to do whatever you want to do.

**Interviewer** 53:39

And in terms of your self-image, like if when you look at yourself in the mirror now, compared to before, what do you is there noticeable differences in terms of how you judge yourself and what is that like?

**Participant** 53:56

Yeah, definitely. I think before then I really couldn't stand looking myself in the eye at all and right now, I'm like, Hello, I don't know and also, like, relationship towards what I think what I say because I think like when I was 16 I wouldn't be able to even like talk to you about this because all of it would be so shameful and yeah, everything like.

**Interviewer** 54:30

and why not now, what, why do you feel comfortable talking about these things now?

**Participant** 54:40

Because I think like, a lot of people have the same thoughts the same, like similar experiences and I'm not really like different kind of like being like, you know, in this bad, way that I would be just at the end of any like, like when there's the evolution thing, and then there's the ape and the person that I would be just way before the Ape.

**Interviewer** 55:19

Okay.

**Participant** 55:21

But yeah, I think this might be a view that I think I think my parents share, even now so.

**Interviewer** 55:33

your old view?

**Participant** 55:35

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 55:38

And if I can ask what's, how's your weight going now? Are you at a healthier weight?

**Participant** 55:45

Oh, I'm like 56, which is like, alright. I have problems eating, but that's because I don't have that much money. I also I always, like feed myself and eat something. It's not because I thought I was like fat or something.

**Q6e. Interviewer** 56:21

Are there any other any other areas? Oh, actually, no, I have a few questions that touch on that a little later. So, I'll come back. I'll come into that in just a sec. So, has your psychedelic use affected your use of other drugs?

**Participant** 56:41

Oh, I had a brief period when I was a smoking I was actually like making butter but I was using a lot of weed. After I stopped taking the antidepressant, because weed help me with, like, the physical problems, and it made me feel a bit better and at that time, it was like really relaxing and right now after I started taking psychedelics, psychedelics again, it's like more, it's, like, similar to them and I don't really have like, I don't really want to use it that much.

**Interviewer** 57:40

And is there a any, what about alcohol?

**Participant** 57:46

Oh, I think too, because I, I don't know, in my country, since you're 16, you sort of drink a lot with your friends to like, show that you're really, really cool and before then, I usually just had a glass of wine with my friends. Nothing really, like too much but you just social drinking and right now I usually at first consider whether it's a state of mind that I want and whether I like want to taste some wine or whatever. So, I drink way less and when I do, it's usually because I want it, not just because I'm with friends and the circumstances are that I should drink.

**Interviewer** 58:43

So, in you just said that you drink way less now? Like, relatively, how much were you drinking before? And so, what does it look like now?

**Participant** 58:53

Oh, well, right now. My social life is like almost zero. So, you can't really compare it.

**Interviewer** 59:01

Okay.

**Participant** 59:01

But before then, when I was in high school, I was drinking like, sometimes once a day, but it was like a glass of wine. I didn't get drunk every day. Oh, and after then, like once a week and so right now, I think the last glass I had was, I think in January and then on Christmas and then I think maybe in September so. Yeah I also save money on that.

**Interviewer** 59:43

So, would you say that the potentially the social life aspect is a larger contributor to the changes in your drinking habit at the moment?

**Participant** 59:57

Yeah, because I'm not really a person. That would drink alcohol alone, so and I'm not really motivated right now to get really drunk only just to have like a glass or something to taste.

**Q7. Interviewer** 1:00:22

Have your psychedelic experiences affected your relationships with significant others?

**Participant** 1:00:32

I think yes, because right now I can just open myself to them. It's also about the shame. Then I used to feel before almost all the time

**Interviewer** 1:00:48

By them, who would them in terms of significant others, is this friends, family?

**Participant** 1:00:55

Oh, my girlfriend and also like, good friends. So

**Interviewer** 1:01:13

So, you mentioned you've mentioned a few times the sense of shame or feeling of shame is that, what, how is that now? Like what's the experience? Like how was it before and what's it like now?

**Participant** 1:01:27

I can't really say that I don't feel any and I feel this is like a long way around or something but I'm more able to look at whether it's really something objective that I did something really, like morally bad that I should be ashamed of, like kicking a dog, which I don't do, but it's an example or something that's just, yeah, I said, good morning to the lady and she said, good afternoon, and oh, my god, what she thinks about me but yeah, before then it was like, in all my thinking, and always present and right now I am more free from that and also, with Ayahuasca, it's like the month after it, I can just experience a state that I think is completely without it and it's just way more healthy than what I even could I could feel and even though that passes, and I think it's like a really temporary effect and I think even like looking into that, it can give you more motivation to grow and to do something about it. Like, I think that's a really like good effect, even though it doesn't last as long. That

**Interviewer** 1:03:23

The shame or the motivation to grow?

**Participant** 1:03:28

Just the, like the afterglow week, that you can sort of see how it can be.

**Q8. Interviewer** 1:04:14

Have psychedelics changed how you think and feel about yourself?

**Participant** 1:04:21

I think I sort of answered that with the previous question. So, I can more think about myself how I, like maybe want to think about myself, and meaning not that I can lie to myself as much as I can, but it can be maybe more objective and when someone says that I did something well, then I can really believe them and not say, Oh, yeah, they just mean it as a joke or something.

**Interviewer** 1:05:00

So is that so the thing that you sort of just describing there is that what when you mentioned previously, this idea of sort of interpreting or the metrics, how you judge yourself and other people, so when someone would say something nice to you, you would interpret it in a way, that would make it as negative as it could be, even if, even if it just made it neutral. So, if someone said, really good job, and you're like, awww they're just saying that it's not true.

**Participant** 1:05:29

I think it was like, really, really strong when I'm looking back and I'm thinking about how it would be, if you know, it's just closes you so much, then even if someone wants to help you, you just really can't accept it, because you think, oh, my god, they're just going to make fun of me and it makes all like, even if you wanted to, like get better, even in that state, you don't believe you can get better and that you can just, you are the worst person in all time but, like no one in when you are in that state can really help you and I think psychedelics are a really good tool to sort of like open yourself too.

**Q9. Interviewer** 1:06:34

So, there's a similar question, which is, have psychedelics change how you view yourself? And I guess you have spoken to this when talking about the self-image, looking at yourself in the mirror? But I wonder, is there any, is there any changes in if you were to sort of abstractly think about yourself in a third person? How would you, how would you describe yourself now compared to how you were before using psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:07:06

I would be more fair to towards myself, really and I don't know, I would also like, consider what possibilities I have because I didn't really see any of those before.

**Q10. Interviewer** 1:07:43

Have psychedelics provided insights into how to live life well?

**Participant** 1:07:50

Yeah, definitely because before then, I just spent a lot of my most of my time just wasting it and just, you know, doing something, so I would spend time and could go to sleep and yeah, it was sort of, like it didn't have any like, point and, you know, I just realised that I can choose to, I don't know, be nice to myself, go on walks, do nice things for other people.

**Q11. Interviewer** 1:08:46

Have psychedelics shaped your worldview?

**Participant** 1:08:54

Well, I think maybe with the, like, the spiritual beliefs, then I can. Like I think the nature is a big part of it for me, because not that I'm some like hippie right now but I would really like to, I don't know preserve nature before we kill it all.

**Interviewer** 1:09:31

Would be nice if we just kept a little bit, you know.

**Participant** 1:09:34

Yeah and also, I can be sort of more objective towards the information you get, and how it really is because I don't want to just talk about the media stuff that's really like mainstream and everyone talks about it but right now you can just really see that, you know, the information you see is the one that gets the most clicks and the most attention. So, when people like want to feel scared and anxious, then the, the information they get will be more like that. So, I can just separate a bit this, like, the media image that I get from how it actually is, and maybe get less stress or panic about it. Though, right now it in my country, it's really terrible.

**Interviewer** 1:10:55

What's going on there that's so terrible?

**Participant** 1:10:58

The COVID situation is that we have like, more dead people per million than the USA does, which, you know, it's kind of a lot, and.

**Interviewer** 1:11:11

Maybe you just have a lot of old people?

**Participant** 1:11:15

It's more that the government can't really manage it.

**Interviewer** 1:11:22

that as well.

**Participant** 1:11:23

Well, you know, a few. I think a week ago, the health minister said, we don't have like enough hospitals and stuff and Germany was offering us some, like places in the hospitals for the people and he said, Well, we can't send those people to Germany for symbolic reasons and, it was like, what the fuck?

**Interviewer** 1:11:53

For symbolic reasons, makes them weak or something?

**Participant** 1:11:58

Yes. So, the people would have the idea that Czech Republic do not really care for them, which I think after what he said they must have

**Interviewer** 1:12:10

Just reinforces the idea.

**Participant** 1:12:12

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:12:13

Yeah. Like we don't we care about you so much. We won't send you to get help from somebody else.

**Participant** 1:12:17

Yeah yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:12:18

That's how much we care.

**Participant** 1:12:20

Yeah. Yeah, it was really like gross

**Interviewer** 1:12:24

Yeah. Yes. Well, no, I don't think anyone said the world isn't fucked. I've definitely have asked this question but maybe there's more you'd like to or we've definitely covered a lot of aspects related to this question. Should I there's probably a more accurate description, but I'm going to ask it in case there you'd like to maybe summarise it or kind of add something to it.

**Participant** 1:12:57

Okay.

**Q12. Interviewer** 1:12:58

Which is have psychedelics changed your relationship with nature?

**Participant** 1:13:04

Oh, I think I just see it in everything right now, mostly that I don't really view it as a separate thing from like, all of us and the separate thing from the things we make, but you know, like everything around you comes from it.

**Interviewer** 1:13:29

Oh, I know exactly what you mean. With yeah, I basically just everything is nature.

**Participant** 1:13:38

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:13:38

Yeah. Yeah. What am yes, no, I fully get that. That's sort of my own same opinion, as well. We, we do make an artificial distinction or a natural distinction, that there's an artificial distinction between us and the rest of the world.

**Participant** 1:13:57

And also, I just don't see such a distinction between how I see the world and how, I don't know a bird sees it. When I talk to a friend, he was like, oh, do you think those have consciousness? And I was just like what the hell? Like, maybe for some people this isn't really natural, but like, I realised that I probably like could feel like a lot of empathy for the dog and just really know what's going through his head.

**Interviewer** 1:14:50

Is empathy, something that has come up during your psychedelic use, is that something that's changed in your life?

**Participant** 1:15:02

Oh, I think yes because, maybe when you have, when you really hate yourself, then you also don't have much empathy as a result, I think, and when that changes, then you can, you know, really, like, get what that person is feeling and in a way, I think that's kind of not ideal self-view really makes you a sort of an asshole, I think because you just think you're, you are bad at everything, and you can't really improve yourself so you, so you don't really try and maybe when somebody invites you somewhere, and you're like, hey, of course not, then you just know that you just said it because you're, you think about yourself this thing, but the person could understand it as that you don't really want to be with them, because you don't like them and so I think changing that makes you more aware, like how other people are feeling and that it's not all about you.

**Interviewer** 1:16:42

Is that a good thing in the sense of being more aware of how other people feel, is that a positive aspect of positive change in your experience?

**Participant** 1:16:56

Yeah definitely, but it's not like all positive, because, you know, it kind of hurts a bit when you realise that you didn't act the best that you could, but usually the other person was hurt more than you were by really realising you hurt them.

**Q13. Interviewer** 1:17:23

Or, as you said, self-development, you know, everyone makes mistakes, and we're all learning. So, the next couple of questions are going we're swapping the sort of topic here and we're going to be looking at your psychedelic use, like how you go about using psychedelics. So, the first question is, how do you prepare yourself for a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:17:54

It usually depends on the circumstances because when I get like, really sad or depressed, I can't, I can't really like spend, like, give all I can to the preparation but I usually, like clean my place, so there wouldn't be any mess, I clean the dishes and stuff. I yeah, I prepare my physical space. So, because I think that really factors into how you feel. Before that, I try to eat well and I usually follow like, similar thing to Ayahuasca diet, whatever I take because I'm just eating fresh fruit and not having any cheese can't really like hurt you. I usually meditate before and sometimes I do exercise but every time I just try to take more walks so I wouldn't be all caught up in my head before that. Sometimes I write down what I feel and what I think about for a few days because that it makes it easier to work with.

**Interviewer** 1:20:17

How long would you do you fast when you're going to be using something like Ayahuasca?

**Participant** 1:20:26

Well, not really. I try to have an empty stomach before that, but I always eat breakfast and a bit of lunch but I try to eat something that doesn't like clash with it. Like something like fruit or maybe oatmeal that's like, neutral, maybe.

**Interviewer** 1:20:49

So, it's sort of a light meal?

**Participant** 1:20:52

Oh, yeah, nothing that would make me and I think like to light that wouldn't, wouldn't like, save me but.

**Interviewer** 1:21:06

So, a moderate meal?

**Participant** 1:21:08

Yes.

**Interviewer** 1:21:09

Do you have things like meat, for example, heavy fatty foods?

**Participant** 1:21:14

And not really, maybe like chicken meat for lunch.

**Q14. Interviewer** 1:21:24

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

**Participant** 1:21:31

Usually in my room when people aren't there. Sometimes I take mushrooms in nature but I would have to be really prepared for that because when we just have to climb some hill, then it's a lot of like, it's a lot of physical exercise and when you have the body load, then it's you know, you should like really prepare yourself.

**Interviewer** 1:22:14

So, is it you use it in your room, is that because that's sort of the only available private space that you have?

**Participant** 1:22:23

Yeah, basically, if I had a like garden, I would definitely go there.

**Q15. Interviewer** 1:22:47

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

**Participant** 1:22:53

Not really. I usually like to have some food around and water but that's not really an item.

**Interviewer** 1:23:06

Yeah, well, just normal.

**Participant** 1:23:08

Yeah and I like to listen to music. So, something that plays music is nice.

**Q16. Interviewer** 1:23:23

How do you prepare the space where you take psychedelics?

**Participant** 1:23:31

Well, I clean it and with Ayahuasca I also like burn something. I had some worm wood that I grew myself. So, it smells nice and

**Interviewer** 1:23:51

do you burn, sorry, go ahead.

**Participant** 1:23:54

Yeah, people who use them a lot to say that you should like smudge the space around you. I do it.

**Interviewer** 1:24:04

Smudge the spaces or like putting it on the furniture on the walls or something or just burning it and letting the smoke sort of?

**Participant** 1:24:11

Oh, yeah, but I don't keep the smoke inside. So, I wouldn't like be smoked out. So, I opened the window.

**Interviewer** 1:24:21

And what do you what's the point of burning, is it just the smell that you want in the space? So why would you burn the wood there? What's the purpose of that?

**Participant** 1:24:34

Well, a lot of people say to keep the spirits out, but I think it could also like influence how you feel that you know, just that you did something.

**Interviewer** 1:24:52

So, whether or not it actually does keep the spirits out. It's just something that makes it nice for you essentially kind of gets you ready?

**Participant** 1:25:02

Yeah definitely. I can't really say whether, like it keeps the spirits out or not but it's sort of excess if it did.

**Interviewer** 1:25:15

keeps the keeps the scary thoughts away, maybe?

**Participant** 1:25:19

Yeah.

**Q17. Interviewer** 1:25:21

Are there any other preparations you make prior to taking a psychedelic that we haven't covered?

**Participant** 1:25:28

Well, I think I try to not spend too much time on the computer and I try to be mindful of what I do.

**Interviewer** 1:25:41

Is this directly before the taking the psychedelic, during that day or is this like in the days leading up to it?

**Participant** 1:25:51

In the days leading up, but I, you know, try to be more mindful of the day I'm taking it.

**Interviewer** 1:26:10

And then in terms of planning, how, how far in advance are you sort of deciding, or, or yet, I guess, deciding, okay, I'm going to take a psychedelic on this day, for example and do you give yourself time, what do you, for that day, do you give yourself the whole day to have the experience do you have, do you have the day after or a few days after to deal with it?

**Participant** 1:26:36

Oh, yeah, I try to, like, try to give myself the day but like, not that I wouldn't be doing anything, but maybe read a book or take a walk, but don't do any, like work or something and I usually plan it like two weeks before, and if something comes up, which does very often, I just postpone it. So

**Interviewer** 1:27:18

And what about in terms of do you have the following day free as well or is it?

**Participant** 1:27:25

Yeah, definitely. I think if I had something planned, then you know, it could make me really afraid that you know, I'm, I'm in this state and I have like a work meeting in 12 hours, Jesus Christ, will I do? So, I think that's can make it better.

**Q18. Interviewer** 1:28:01

What do you normally doing physically during a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:28:07

I usually sit down or when it's like, too strong, I can lie down and when I'm outside, I usually sit or when I'm feeling like it, I walk around.

**Interviewer** 1:28:31

Is there anything else that you might be doing during a trip?

**Participant** 1:28:37

Well, I don't know. If it just seems like I'm not doing much, but that's maybe all.

**Interviewer** 1:28:45

Okay. I think don't worry. I understand why. I'm just wondering if there's, you know, if there's any other things that come to mind. Yeah, I think is hard enough just to lie down.

**Participant** 1:29:00

Yes, sometimes. Yeah.

**Q19. Interviewer** 1:29:03

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

**Participant** 1:29:10

Well, I don't like to really go like, somewhere where there's other people. I know some people just go around the streets and yeah, I don't really do that and I used to have a candle lit but then I decided it could be a bit dangerous if that got like knocked down so

**Interviewer** 1:29:43

You used to use candles or a candle?

**Participant** 1:29:47

One candle usually. So, I think I prepare my room or the place I'm in just if I had to, like take care of a four-year-old maybe.

**Interviewer** 1:30:36

When you're having a psychedelic trip, are you normally by yourself or as for example, your girlfriend there? Are you doing it with her? Are you doing it with other people?

**Participant** 1:30:47

I'm usually by myself, I only trip with a friend a friend once and yeah it was nice, but I think right now it's just I'd like to be alone, but I think in the future I might consider and the beginning it was that I don't think I was even able to tolerate other people because I was like afraid or ashamed or stuff like that.

**Q20. Interviewer** 1:31:48

Is there anything special you do after a psychedelic trip?

**Participant** 1:31:52

Oh, well, it's not really special to me, but I just go outside.

**Interviewer** 1:32:06

And as this during the afterglow sort of a come down period, or is this

**Participant** 1:32:13

it's the next day usually. So, like after I've had some sleep.

**Interviewer** 1:32:26

And how long do you how long does that afterglow period typically last for you?

**Participant** 1:32:32

I think for Ayahuasca, it's about a month. It's really it's a really long time and it usually depends on the experience I had or maybe the amount that I had.

**Interviewer** 1:32:54

And what is can you describe what's the afterglow? What's that feeling like? Like, what's, what's the difference between being in this afterglow state and being normal?

**Participant** 1:33:05

Oh, it's sort of fixes my sleep. So, I just, I just usually wake up at like, 6am with the birds and it's really nice feeling just being awake in the morning and going outside to look at the sunrise and I'm way more able to meditate and to um, I have like more motivation to do what I want to do and I'm more in the present and like everything is sort of easier and also, I can't really tolerate caffeine because I don't know my head would explode. So, I usually avoid it.

**Interviewer** 1:34:23

Can you, do you drink coffee or can you do you normally drink coffee when you're not in that sort of afterglow state?

**Participant** 1:34:33

Well, I used to drink it a lot, but I sort of stopped because I just noticed it makes me more anxious and when I stopped for a month then I don't really need it to get awake in the morning.

**Interviewer** 1:34:55

And what about social relationships and during this afterglow, period, how is it like interacting with other people?

**Participant** 1:35:03

It's sort of better, and I think they can feel it on me. Like, I think I'm more honest and open and I think people just can sense when you're nervous and when you're not. So, it just goes better usually.

**Interviewer** 1:35:37

Well, I think you're sort of saying it doesn't last very, very long that that sort of afterglow period, a month seems like a very long time to me, it sounds like a really like, just means you have to do Ayahuasca once a month, and then you can be in the afterglow period the whole time.

**Participant** 1:35:56

Oh, yeah. You know, I just when I [???] that, I just plan it that I will drink and then I will drink again in a week or two weeks, but I couldn't really do it because it was like, it would be too much I think.

**Q21. Interviewer** 1:36:19

Are there any helpful techniques that you use to navigate difficult or challenging moments during your psychedelic experiences?

**Participant** 1:36:31

Well, I usually try to maybe sort of remember the last time I was in such a state and I feel that, you know, as time goes on, then I get less afraid to, I don't know, explore what's in me and what's around me. So, it's kind of like I sort of get better at it as time goes, and I usually like, consciously try to be nice to myself and treat myself like, I would treat a friend and I say something nice to myself, maybe like, so I wouldn't be afraid. Sometimes when I get scared, I open my eyes and usually when I close them, it's a bit different. Or maybe I can walk around and it can also help. Yeah, sometimes I talk to people online. There's the trip sitting chat and I've made some friends there.

**Interviewer** 1:38:10

Is that that tripsitters.com or something?

**Participant** 1:38:16

It's like chat.tripsit.me and it's some like Dutch people I think made it.

**Interviewer** 1:38:24

Trip sit. Yeah, this might be the

**Participant** 1:38:28

it's like IRC the like old school kind of style.

**Interviewer** 1:38:36

And you find that Is that helpful?

**Participant** 1:38:39

Yeah.

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

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

**Participant** 1:39:01

I try to write down what happened and only like writing down whatever I think is, sort of I feel it's integrative. I sometimes listen to similar music. Usually when I feel like I could be like forgetting what happened or something. So, listening to the same music makes me like remember it and then I can like, usually write it down.

**Interviewer** 1:39:41

And is this when you're writing things down, is this during the trip or is this after you've sort of come back down?

**Participant** 1:39:48

Usually I during the trip, I write stuff down usually to orient myself in time.

**Interviewer** 1:39:57

Okay, can you describe a little bit what you mean by that like orientating yourself in time.

**Participant** 1:40:02

Well, well, the first time, it was like way too much, and I didn't really have a sense that time was passing. So, I just did what the person who did it for the first time would do that I took a watch and I was writing the time down and how I'm feeling and when I was seeing that, you know, there's like earlier time at the top of the page, then time is passing. So, that's nice, it was kind of nice, because I had, I don't have an electric watch, I have a watch that you have to wind up and if I forgot to wind it up

**Interviewer** 1:40:08

Oh no, the same time.

**Participant** 1:40:47

Yeah, that would be kind of interesting.

**Interviewer** 1:40:51

Yeah.

**Participant** 1:40:53

But I think this fear completely disappeared with time. So, right now I usually, I'm sometimes afraid that I might lose the thought that I have or that in might like escape me, so I write it down. Sometimes it's just nice to hear the pen scratching on a paper.

**Interviewer** 1:41:39

Is there any other type of integration or self-reflective practices that you, you engage in?

**Participant** 1:41:47

I sometimes try to talk about it with people usually from the chat because like, my girlfriend has never tried them. So, I also try to, like read what happened to other people. So, sometimes it's really similar and sometimes there was like, interesting differences.

**Interviewer** 1:42:30

And how is your girlfriend? How does she feel about your psychedelic use and have you discussed it with her at all?

**Participant** 1:42:38

Yeah, well, oh, she's not really interested in them at the moment but she's not, she's pretty open and she just asked me how it feels like and stuff like that. I was kind of afraid, because I feel like this is a really, you know, this can be such a relationship breaker. When you have like, conflicting opinions about stuff like that.

**Interviewer** 1:43:04

Yeah. Especially because like it's illegal. So, very concerned.

**Participant** 1:43:13

And it's also like, very weird, and it doesn't have to be safe all the time.

**Interviewer** 1:43:20

Yeah. Yes. Well, what's good, I'm glad to hear that she, you. You guys are happy with that and it's not causing issues and how she, has your, has she commented on like, how long have you been together with your girlfriend?

**Participant** 1:43:37

Right now, It's three months, so it's not that long. Well, not three months. It's like, five I don't know Jesus.

**Interviewer** 1:43:48

If she was listening now.

**Participant** 1:43:50

Yeah, but I'm really bad with numbers. I, one time my little sister had a birthday and she had a cake with a really big six with an on it and I was like, Oh my god, [sister]. You are six already and she was like [name], I'm nine \*laughs\*.

**Interviewer** 1:44:14

\*laughs\* So yeah, one of the questions I was going to ask was just whether she had noted any changes, but like, noticing from the beginning of use, but you've been together, shorter than you have been using psychedelics. So, it's not really something that she would be able to talk to, I guess.

**Participant** 1:44:37

I'm sort of, well, she's, she talked to me about being sort of depressed. So, of course, I like offered her and I thought Jesus Christ if she doesn't want then she's going to be really, really mad, but she was like, Okay, I don't really want that.

**Q24. Interviewer** 1:45:04

Yes no, we've covered that one. Have, sorry, has how you use psychedelics changed over time?

**Participant** 1:45:19

What do you mean as how?

**Interviewer** 1:45:22

Like the how, like the how, like the how to questions I was asking before, like the ways in which you use psychedelics. So, did you, for example, did you use to use them in different settings? You didn't have as much preparation or you had more preparation? You did different things?

**Participant** 1:45:40

Well as I like learn about Ayahuasca, it just sort of changed that. I learned that there's like different rituals, that you know, people like usually sort of meditate and listen to music, and they I don't know don't, that there's darkness that before then I usually had the lights on and stuff like that and right now I started, like, switching the light off and see how it how it changes the experience.

**Interviewer** 1:46:23

Is there any noticeable differences with lights on verse lights off?

**Participant** 1:46:29

Oh, well, when the lights are off you can more focus on what's going on in you and I was afraid that you might be more scared but I think it's actually the opposite. That there is no, like everyday stuff that might be making you scared that you might just notice and be like, Oh my god, I'm a living person.

**Interviewer** 1:47:07

Do you mean sort of in the sense, like if you saw everyday objects, and now they look distorted to less or more degree that that could kind of concern you?

**Participant** 1:47:19

Well I sort of sort of mean that's when you are sort of like, half dissolved in a way that you can just look at everyday objects and be like, oh my god, I actually go to work Jesus Christ, what will I do? And that's in some ways that could be helpful as well, I think.

**Interviewer** 1:47:47

So, would so does the lights off? In a sort of short description, it helps you disconnect from external reality?

**Participant** 1:47:58

Oh, yeah because I think with the lights on, what can happen is that you can just, you know, look at the patterns and stuff and just don't go any deeper beyond that.

**Interviewer** 1:48:13

So maybe distracted by external things?

**Participant** 1:48:16

Yeah but when you are outdoors, and there's the nature around you, then that's kind of different.

**Interviewer** 1:48:41

Sometimes the distractions are really beautiful, as well. So, it's not

**Participant** 1:48:45

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:48:45

it's, you know, I think it's, personally, I think it's important to have both aspects, you know, sometimes you need to go in and sometimes you need to go into nature, you know, we're both there's an inside and outside and they're both important.

**Participant** 1:49:07

Yeah.

**Q25. Interviewer** 1:49:08

So, we're changing the focus of the questions. Now. That's all the how tos, that's all sort of related to the how you use it, we're going to be the next couple of questions are looking at your, some specific psychedelic experiences you've had and so if you would like if you're able to or you feel comfortable to, if you can go into some detail about the, the types of visual imagery that you had or saw the emotional content, the feelings that were coming up the different sensations and if you have a some sense of like the chronological order of that, that would be, that's what I'm sort of looking for and so two of the questions so one is going to be asking about, I frame it like this, so I'll read you the two questions before we get into them. So, the first one is like can you describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience? And then the following question is, can you describe your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience? So, for some people, your most memorable and life changing experience is also the most challenging and difficult one you've had. So, I, these questions aren't meant to be limiting in the sense that you're only allowed to tell me about two different experiences. If you have a few that you feel are important that you'd oh I'd like to talk about this because it had this aspect to it, which was really, I found useful or important or meaningful. I'd love to hear about it. It's not about sort of limiting it. It's just I focused the question was like, can you tell me about your most to emphasise the sense of like, I'm looking for kind of the, the less mundane, necessary psychedelic experience. Once you've had enough, like you even, I think you can even kind of start ranking your psychedelic experiences, like some are a bit like, Ah, yeah, it was alright, it was so and then I've had that that really like whoa, experience. So, that's just the emphasis that it's coming from but it doesn't mean it has to be a singular experience, necessarily. So, there's one question that I ask before those, and it is what? So, for you personally, not like stories, you've read about other people's experiences, but based on your own psychedelic experiences, what do you think is the core psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:51:33

I'm sorry I had a lag right now or the audio skipped. Could you repeat that?

**Interviewer** 1:51:38

Yep. So, the question is related to what your personal psychedelic experiences, not the ones that you've read. So, yeah. And the question is, what do you think is the core psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:51:56

Like the essence of them all or some?

**Interviewer** 1:51:59

Yeah, exactly.

**Participant** 1:52:01

I think it's just feeling like you are waking up and maybe that you're losing your mind a little and you are encountering something, really, not like, well, really weird to you in a bad way but also in a good way.

**Interviewer** 1:52:45

Only you're only losing your mind just a little?

**Participant** 1:52:49

While sometimes a lot but the core is that. Like the lowest common denominator is.

**Interviewer** 1:52:59

just a little.

**Participant** 1:53:00

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:53:01

Okay. Can you tell me about this, this, you said, a feeling like you're waking up? Can you go, can you elaborate a bit more on what you mean by that?

**Participant** 1:53:11

I think it's on one hand, it's could be about the depression, that it sort of lifts, and the thoughts that you've been having, like for a long time, and that are just basically the same all the time that they change, and it's really different and also that you get sort of more mindful, more aware of what you're thinking, or aware of your body or the stuff around you. But when it's really strong, it can feel like you know, like, this is your first day on earth and Jesus Christ what was before, what was I even doing Jesus?

**Interviewer** 1:54:10

Is that once you come back down or during the peak,

**Participant** 1:54:14

I think during the peak because, like sometimes it's like, I don't know, it was my first moment here and I think also, what I feel is that I can't really imagine how I could go back into this like every day being

**Interviewer** 1:54:59

Can you just describe that a bit more, what do you mean there?

**Participant** 1:55:10

I think, Hmm, this would be a bit harder, but you know, just all the time being distracted and caring about, like different things that you that you care about on a psychedelic trip and then you look back, and you just can't imagine being in that state and that's really like, interesting for me, because, you know, it's just a short time and even after the, even in the like, I don't know, six hours that it takes, it's just you can't like, imagine yourself back here, sort of when I just it's not really like, completely like that, but I sort of exaggerated.

**Interviewer** 1:56:07

So is there's an are you, so you're just sort of saying there. Tell me if I'm sort of understanding you correctly here, that during the psychedelic experience or a psychedelic experience, you have a sense of not maybe understanding or caring about the same things that you do when you're in a normal state of mind?

**Participant** 1:56:37

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 1:56:44

Is that is some sense of are you, do you care about different things at that point or do you have sort of a lack of cares?

**Participant** 1:56:57

I think it's not really about caring, but well, I can see, you know, when you see like, the, the big picture, then you can just imagine yourself just being like back there. When you know, that's the things. Yeah, the things you care about. So, seems sort of illogical. So, I care about like different things, I would say.

**Q26. Interviewer** 1:57:58

Okay, so can you describe your most challenging or negative psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 1:58:07

I think it wasn't like, like that bad, but it was sort of, I, I can't really make judgments about it, because I think I would just it wouldn't make me see it completely but one time on Ayahuasca I wasn't really and it wasn't my first time it was I think, the fourth or the fifth. I think I wasn't really in the mood, but it wasn't, I didn't have really such bad feelings before. It was kind of normal, but I just, I feel like I sort of wanted to go beyond that. So, I kind of fought it out. You know, like, I didn't really want to accept it in some way.

**Interviewer** 1:59:16

The experience?

**Participant** 1:59:17

Yeah. So, I sort of got myself in a place that I was kind of scared and I was kind of fighting not only the fear, but everything. So, I wasn't really like seeing anything or my mind was like it would be like normally but also not like in an everyday state and, but at the same time, it just made me maybe more courageous because I was actually able to fight it in a way and I think I may have like worked with the fear and in a way it kind of allowed me to feel that I can. Like, I don't have to be afraid and I think it made me stronger, even though it's not really the idea of what you should do on a trip.

**Interviewer** 2:00:53

Yeah, there is a lot of advice, I think out there that says, you know, let go and accept the experience.

**Participant** 2:00:58

Yes, I did the exact opposite and I felt like, I don't know a warrior with the sword and just, you know.

**Interviewer** 2:01:07

\*laughs\* Sometimes you've got to say no.

**Interviewer** 2:01:11

Yeah, I think there's benefits in both ways. Certainly seems, you know, there's a lot of advantage to just being able to let go of things and accept an experience but I guess sometimes people just have to resist that you just, there's, that's the that's your state of mind at that moment and you're working through other stuff, which is like I just, this is a no time and say battering down the walls until you just have no resistance.

**Participant** 2:01:48

And also, I think it's weird when you just follow someone's advice. Even if it was the best that it could be, like, you always have to had, you only can learn by experience, I think. So, if I didn't have it then, then I would have it on some like different occasion.

**Interviewer** 2:02:10

And so how have your other Ayahuasca experiences been? Was it was that sort of the only time you had such a high level of resistance or?

**Participant** 2:02:21

I was like really angry. I was like, incredibly angry, and

**Interviewer** 2:02:26

at what?

**Participant** 2:02:28

I don't know, it's like everything.

**Interviewer** 2:02:32

During the experience, you were incredibly angry?

**Participant** 2:02:35

Yeah, but I think there's like more kinds of anger. Like there's the kind of where you just angry for angers sake and this was kind of like, when you are angry, I don't know, not about justice, but in sort of a creative way that you know, like sometimes like destroying something or stuff like that can like actually be creative be like good and needed.

**Interviewer** 2:03:16

So, do you feel looking back on that experience, it was a good experience. It had positive outcome or you learn something from it?

**Participant** 2:03:26

I mean, looking back at it, it's kind of funny that you know, but yeah, I think overall it was positive.

**Interviewer** 2:03:42

And have you had in a similar trip like that since then or is that the only time?

**Participant** 2:03:46

No, no, no, that's the only time I think.

**Q27. Interviewer** 2:03:54

Okay, so can you describe your most memorable or life changing psychedelic experience?

**Participant** 2:04:07

I think I can't really pick one and just say that's the most life changing I think like the whole way was like that, but there was one that wasn't really even a strong one or anything. It was like I don't know beginners dose that but it was a real like, visual and, well it led me through a lot of like environments some, like really natural scenes. At first and all the kinds of entities and stuff that is really common and at times, it was like, I could go wherever I wanted, and do whatever I want doing it and in the end, it was kind of like, I was just thinking about something really mundane and I had a sort of like realisation and is this like, really, like spiritual, maybe almost like Christian idea. That, like, the most valuable things are the ones that we give the, like, lowest value to. You know, the, like, things we wouldn't rather see, like illness and death and you know, decay is what gives what makes life you know, even like looking at that and which is like decaying plants and that's actually where life comes from and then I think I didn't really, like, read it like this, or her hear about this in this way before, so.

**Interviewer** 2:06:51

And was that insight, has it stuck with you since then?

**Participant** 2:06:59

Yeah and also, it was like, I think I could really use in my art because at the time, I was working on a project, making books, actual, like book binding, not writing anything in them. So, I made one just in dirt and in just some materials that I found in the trash or on the side of the road and it actually turned out pretty well and I think I think about that a lot since then and just, like, try to see where it takes me.

**Interviewer** 2:07:48

And where's it taking you so far?

**Participant** 2:08:02

I'm way less materialistic and, like when I make something, I try to, like, focus on that and I'm sort of showing that and it always turns out pretty good.

**Interviewer** 2:08:49

Do you think that this, so what comes to mind for me when you when you talked about how sort of illness death or decay. So, actually, back up one step. There's one question I want to ask prior to that. So, it felt somewhat like an incomplete thought. When you said so you said illness, death and decay gives life? And then you sort of I don't think you've finished it. What do you think, the recognition that if you value illness, death, and decay more, what is it? What does that do to life? What does it give it? Or your understanding of it.

**Participant** 2:09:22

it's what like makes life you know, that's what makes it possible.

**Interviewer** 2:09:28

so makes life.

**Participant** 2:09:39

and sort of like when you look at the world that you see when you're tripping, then it's always like colourful and you know, then when you think about it as like a high world, then what would be most valuable there wouldn't be those like, I don't know what we have. like gold and stuff and shiny things, but the things that are in like a process of becoming or unbecoming. Which is those.

**Interviewer** 2:10:46

Oh yeah, and the thought that came to mind for me was it seemed somewhat analogous to sort of our conversation, where you've, you've talked a little bit about, or maybe more than a little bit of your difficulties and challenges that you had when you were younger, sort of being having feeling suicidal, being depressed, having a not so awesome dad or family that you have to deal with and to me, that, that that sense that you said, like illness, death and decay makes life, I almost in my head, it seems like it's like the, the suffering gives the good meaning. Or it gives it sort of the opposite of the things we value.

**Participant** 2:11:38

I think it was kind of like, kind of like completely implied in that and, yeah,

**Interviewer** 2:11:46

that's just what came to me, I was just thinking sort of, yeah, maybe in a few more years, and you've had, you know, a number more psychedelic experiences under your belt the difficulties of suffering you've endured might even really make the highs of your life much better, because you'll have that viewpoint from how far you've come.

**Participant** 2:12:11

Yeah, yeah and also a kind of that idea is when you it's this is like completely different and maybe not, like meaningful, but when there's like fairy tales, and people go to the world of fairies and usually when they bring like money in there in turns into leaves and something like completely that doesn't have any value and so it seems sort of similar to that

**Interviewer** 2:12:41

The things that we value now, you mean, as a culture?

**Participant** 2:12:48

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:12:49

Yeah, I can see sort of, yeah. Okay, well, I don't want to hold you up too much longer. So, we'll try and get through the last couple of questions.

**Participant** 2:13:07

I'm not as tired. So, if you want, if you just have some that you wanted to skip, you can just, we can go over them if you want.

**Interviewer** 2:13:16

Okay. You're finding it interesting. That's good.

**Participant** 2:13:20

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:13:22

Okay. Is there anything? So maybe if I jump back one step on that you just sort of described for you, you're one of the memorable experience that you had was quite highly visual trip on a relatively low dose of

**Participant** 2:13:43

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:13:43

Was it Ayahuasca this?

**Participant** 2:13:44

Yeah

**Interviewer** 2:13:44

or some other?

**Interviewer** 2:13:45

Okay. What was particularly, is it just that it's memorable? Because you said there was that one sense that you that realisation of like illness, death, and decay. Was there anything else about that experience that stands out to you as being sort of important?

**Participant** 2:14:05

I think also the feelings associated with the whole thing that it was it was really like, euphoric, and it had such a real and nice and almost holy feeling to it, even though it like wasn't so or shouldn't be like so strong.

**Interviewer** 2:14:42

Was this trip, had you, because you said a little while ago that you originally were quite sort of scientific and you're thinking quite atheistic, scientific and now you've sort of shifted to towards some Increase in sort of spirituality. Although you you've sort of alluded that you don't hold on to any particular, like idea of what it should be, to be there kind of like the true idea.

**Participant** 2:15:13

Yeah. I think it wasn't the turning point. It just happens sometimes before that.

**Interviewer** 2:15:20

Okay. Was there in regards to the spirituality? Was there a turning point of that or is that been more of a gradual change?

**Participant** 2:15:26

I think, I think the turning point was reading, like, a book from Erich Fromm that's called you shall be as gods and he sort of explains why people believe and the like history on of why people first started believing in one God and even though I don't share like, this exact, like view as him then it was really like helpful. Just like, asking myself those questions, and just even finding out those questions exist.

**Interviewer** 2:16:11

So, the has your move, or shift into spirituality or not into necessarily, but being more open to it? Has it was, this is actually not as related to as much to psychedelics as it is to that book or would you? Is it sort of a combination of a number things?

**Participant** 2:16:30

I think it's sort of a combination because like, psychedelics made me more open, so I could even, like, read that book, and try to understand.

**Interviewer** 2:16:45

Is that is that a type of book you wouldn't have read if you had not taken psychedelics?

**Participant** 2:16:52

Oh, I think I think yes, not because it's like, too spiritual, but because it's like historical, and I was like, more curious. Like, after I took them I was like, more curious and things about, around me.

**Interviewer** 2:17:12

Okay. So, just on that have psychedelics increased your curiosity of life or your experiences or is that again, something unrelated?

**Participant** 2:17:27

Oh yeah I think they did, and even like, right after I just am more open to things that I've never really thought about or cared about being interested in.

**Q28. Interviewer** 2:18:15

So, the next question is, if you have ever experienced ego death, could you describe, sorry, could you describe what it is like?

**Participant** 2:18:27

I don't really think what it's like I experienced something that I think it could be but I wouldn’t like call it death. I was more like really connected to others and to the world and it was sort of like I was melting into it and a part of it that couldn’t be taken out but I don't know if that's what the people who talk about ego death talk about.

**Interviewer** 2:19:08

So, can you go into more of that experience? And tell me what was happening there?

**Participant** 2:19:15

Oh, yeah, sorry. I will need a bit more time to collect my thoughts

**Interviewer** 2:19:27

Yeah, when you connect with everything, it's hard to bring it in.

**Participant** 2:19:31

Yeah. I think it's it cannot even like you know, a big part of the memory is like stored in the past that I right now, I don't have. Yeah, but.

**Interviewer** 2:19:57

You mentioned we You first just said it. You see, you said you had this feeling of being really connected with others and I think, potentially the world as well. Yeah but you also said there was this part of it that didn't change. There was something I don't like a core to it or a thing that was is that am I get? Am I understanding you correctly that you were saying something like that?

**Participant** 2:20:23

I think it may be wasn't like as strong as I've heard other people describe it but it was like, I don't know. Like, it's a bit far from it but as if you, like, felt yourself to be a part of like a web or mat or mycelium or something that's like this whole living thing and you are, like one with it, and also at the same time a part of it.

**Interviewer** 2:21:46

So, was there in in that description, there is both a sense of being connected with it, but also having some level of autonomy or independence of it?

**Participant** 2:21:59

Yeah, like not the complete thing that people talk about.

**Interviewer** 2:22:08

So, I have that question is kind of geared. It's got actually another sort of follow up, which is, if you don't think you've experienced, so one of the that question there is, what I'm trying to do a little bit is actually get some a number of people's perspectives on what collectively people think ego death is to sort of help define it a bit better, so that we sort of can be like, okay, these are the common ideas related to this, this theme, and to see, maybe just to get a give a bit more clarity to like, when people are talking about it, like, are you actually talking about the same phenomenon or are talking about something different? Because I think it is a bit confusing. So, the question I have for people who don't necessarily either think they know what it is, or have had that experience is, what do you what, from your readings and from your understanding about it. What do you think ego death or ego dissolution is?

**Participant** 2:23:06

I think maybe there's more a stereotype than maybe the real thing but like being one with the entire universe, and maybe not being separate from it as you talk about.

**Q29. Interviewer** 2:23:51

So, we've definitely touched on this, but maybe we can go into a little detail about it and you can, you can describe to me how it's changed. So, the question is, have your experiences with psychedelics affected your spiritual or religious beliefs? And if so, how have they been affected?

**Participant** 2:24:13

Hmm. I need a bit of time to think about this too. I think they more connect you to the reality of things that are there and I think I don't want to talk about death all the time, but people really sort of disassociate from it and, you know, when you really consider it a possibility, I think it just makes me it makes you want to give your life some meaning and not to waste it away and I think that's what makes you more spiritual and also like being connected to people to nature, to see yourself as a part of the world and thinking about what you can give to other things, people and animals, like sort of knowing that it's not about you and that it also is but in a different way than you thought.

**Interviewer** 2:26:59

What is this sort of overall feeling? The sort of your adoption of or more openness to spiritual type experiences or thinking? How does that come into your life so to speak? How does it, does it affect your, your happiness? Does it affect your day to day interactions with other people like what, I wonder, sort of, is it just more an abstract idea?

**Participant** 2:27:40

I think when I'm in this, like, every day being and I started getting depressive, then it's sort of an abstract thing but I try to, like see it, and behave according to it in interactions with people even when I'm not really feeling like spiritual, like, sometimes you. Like, have this feeling that you want to help people and stuff, but you have to do it even if you don't have that feeling and it also made me sort of more responsible for myself, when you sort of know that you have some maybe power to help people but also to hurt them and to, like, help yourself grow or to be dismissive or mean to yourself.

**Interviewer** 2:28:58

Is there some overall ethic or change in sort of your, your values based on your sort of change in spiritual? I don't know your sense of at least even being open to the idea of spiritual or spiritual things.

**Participant** 2:29:22

Yeah, I think I've, the feeling that I get from it changes, I think, according to where I am in time but right now, it's sort of about responsibility a lot. That, you know, you can't just act according to how you feel but you have to sort of go beyond that and I think like a spiritually even when you aren't feeling that way. Yeah and it sort of makes me feel better too, because a lot of times when you will feel bad, and then you just forget about, like being nice to yourself and other people and it just goes downhill from there because it makes you feel worse and it's hard to get out of it.

**Interviewer** 2:30:33

I wonder, are you able to describe? Like, do you have a have a type of spiritual framework or understanding? Like, how would you define what you mean by spirituality? If you if you're able to?

**Participant** 2:30:52

I think I'm really, I'm really, reluctant to really define what I mean, because I think it really often leads you to paint a picture of what you believe in and just make like a strawman out of it but I think the base of it is that there's like something that's maybe might be changing, but it's in everything, and it's always there and it might be an idea or whatever and you can't really say what it is. I think in a way, when I read about Taoism, it's sort of, yeah, it's sort of like, sounded true, even though I'm not familiar with the religion as it is now, only the book.

**Interviewer** 2:32:25

Okay, well, that's what thank you for at least sort of explaining to me this sort of indefinability of it, then at least sort of clarifies.

**Participant** 2:32:36

Yeah, I'm sorry.

**Interviewer** 2:32:37

No, that No, not at all. I,

**Participant** 2:32:39

I sort of sort of try to like, keep myself from, you know, when you think you know what God is, then it's your creation.

**Interviewer** 2:32:50

Yeah.

**Participant** 2:32:51

And so you're like, you know, then you just become this person who tells other people what to do and

**Interviewer** 2:33:06

Yeah, no, I definitely wasn't trying to sort of pigeonhole you into. Here's exactly what I believe in.

**Participant** 2:33:12

No, no, it's, it's, it's okay. I just, you know, for your purposes, it's really sort of hard to explain.

**Interviewer** 2:33:22

Yeah. No, that's okay. Thank you. Well, that's, I think that gives a I'm trying to generate a sense of what it is. So, rather than particularly needing to have like, hard boundaries about like, this is how I think about it and this is the, you know, the limitations of this idea and here's what explains these things, it's, it's just as sort of, by getting more of a sense, I can sort of feel it out a bit more than necessarily can intellectualise it.

**Participant** 2:33:52

I think on one trip, I had such a feeling that there's going to be probably, this going to take me a bit longer to formulate right now but as if, when you are trying to when you convince yourself, you know so much and you know, what's the purpose of life is and what everything is, then it just sort of leads you to feeling depressed because you know, it all you've seen it all and you have it all in your hands, so and you aren't able to do anything with it. So

**Interviewer** 2:34:47

Yes, I've heard a saying, one of the meaning of life is to live.

**Participant** 2:34:53

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:34:53

Oh, like very helpful. Thank you. You're welcome.

**Participant** 2:34:57

Yeah, this is the best thing about spirit. You're related. When you tell it to other people, it sounds really, really arrogant and so

**Interviewer** 2:35:05

Or just kind of in something it could be sound very dumb as well just like, oh it's to live is it? Thanks. Problem solved then.

**Participant** 2:35:16

Yeah. Oh, like the only truth is that there isn't any objective truth and it's like, Okay.

**Interviewer** 2:35:28

Yeah. So, that's actually self-contradictory. The only truth is that there's no truth.

**Participant** 2:35:37

I think it's for the people is like, supposed to be like that but when you come to it from the outside, it's like, yeah.

**Q30. Interviewer** 2:35:50

You touched on this a little bit but so you, you might have felt like you've answered it, but have psychedelics changed how you think about death, or the process of dying?

**Participant** 2:35:59

I think they made me less sure to be able to say what it is because sometimes I might feel like I'm, like, in a state that's close to what could happen after that but you know, as it, it's sort of, like, you can't really know. So, like, you might feel dead, but also at the same time, you might feel like some something completely different that you never encountered in your life, which is sort of actually, Hmm. Like, more probable, because

**Interviewer** 2:37:12

Sorry, were you carrying on talking or was, were you just thinking?

**Participant** 2:37:17

Yeah, I'm sort of just thinking and you know, the point of death is like not living. So, if you want to compare it to something that you experienced while living, it's.

**Interviewer** 2:37:35

Yes. Yeah. So, you said before, that you are less sure about what death is or maybe what happens After death.

**Participant** 2:37:50

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:37:50

So, what did you have a more, stronger opinion, or idea about what happened, what death was and what happened?

**Participant** 2:38:02

I didn't really much care about it but I think a thought that it could be like, there's some blackness and that's forever, and it's your life or your death now and also, so at first, I think all kids have this idea of heaven and stuff like that.

**Interviewer** 2:38:32

So, one of the things you said earlier that you had for a long time, been thinking about killing yourself.

**Participant** 2:38:41

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:38:42

So, I wonder, thinking back on that what, what was your expectations about, Like, if you went through with it, what did you expect was going to happen? Because it was like, it was a reason behind why you wanted do that.

**Participant** 2:38:59

Yeah, I think like, if you asked me then that then I would tell you that like literally anything would be preferable. In a way I sort of thought that you could be like born again, maybe like not in like reincarnation sense, but like even the child's idea of like heaven or hell means that you are sort of born again in a different place or maybe like sleeping for a long time.

**Interviewer** 2:39:46

But was the was the motivation related to the what might happen or just more about getting out of your life getting out of the experiences in your life at that moment for more like an escape than towards something?

**Participant** 2:40:03

It was completely about just escaping because I sort of thought that if someone offered me to do what they do in like witness protection that they just put the person into completely another life that might be a solution to at that time.

**Interviewer** 2:40:27

Would you say then, like through your through using psychedelics, have you kind of gotten that in a different way?

**Participant** 2:40:39

This escape, you mean?

**Interviewer** 2:40:41

Yes. So, you sort of, like, my understanding. I mean, I haven't personally had any serious struggles with suicidality, but it seems like a lot of people it is about life is so terrible that it's, it would be preferable to either experience nothing, or anything, as you say anything else other than this is going to be better. So, it's this, as you say, or have kind of agreed with, I guess, this idea of trying to get out of that experience and having the psychedelic going through psychedelic trips. Have you, is it has it felt like you've escaped from that or is it as a different type of transformation?

**Participant** 2:41:24

I mean, in a, in a way, but it's mostly about that the things that were affecting me so much, and that were making me unable to continue living. It's, they sort of lost their power I think, because a lot of it is what you are making, like in your mind, and not that it wasn't like really true because it was at the time the truest thing, but it's sort of, like lost its power or its reality. Also, it was that I felt that my parents were like really so terrible that if I like kill myself that this will make people understand how, how they so, it was sort of like fucked up looking back at it but that's the idea that I had.

**Interviewer** 2:42:48

Well, I'm glad to hear you're out of that. I think that's a It must be a pretty immense relief to not have to deal with that kind of shit day in and day out.

**Participant** 2:43:00

Yeah, I mean, I, I'm sort of forgetting like the thoughts about Jesus Christ. I'm, you know, I'm doing I'm here I'm doing well, and everyone thinks that sort of, like the, like, that my parents were so great. That's, I do well, it's school and stuff like that, but I just can feel it that it's getting less and less strong.

**Interviewer** 2:43:29

Sorry, what's getting less and less strong?

**Participant** 2:43:32

Oh, the, the feeling that I should like kill myself to do some kind of like justice.

**Interviewer** 2:43:57

Sorry. Go ahead.

**Participant** 2:43:58

I think a big part of what I had to learn on psychedelics trips was that I can't really, I can't really like snap my fingers and make it or escape. That's like I could do it but it would just make the life that I had completely pointless because it would be like cutting a string. So, I will have to deal with like feelings like this for some time and it also actually made them like less stronger and it's made me feel stronger when I just accept that I would feel like shit for some time and it's normal, and it's not my fault.

**Interviewer** 2:44:49

Was there a lot of self-blame in regards to how you felt before?

**Participant** 2:45:01

What do you mean? If I was now so blaming myself for how I felt before.

**Interviewer** 2:45:11

No, no, not now back then was the when you're when you were suicidal, was there was the feelings that were making you feel like that would were you blaming yourself for the way you're feeling and now because now you've sort of just said that you can accept them?

**Participant** 2:45:34

Yeah, I was sort of I was sort of blaming myself and a big part of it was that I sort of thought that I'm making it up for attention, even though I didn't, didn't ever say to another person but it was yeah you thinking you are so sad to feel interesting, but I think it's just, I don't know. Usually what your mind does when you feeling like that.

**Interviewer** 2:46:04

that sounds like a real crap trap to get stuck. It's like, you feel suicidal, you then criticise yourself, because now you're just saying, oh, you're just making it up. So, you get attention, even though you're not trying to get attention.

**Participant** 2:46:20

So, you can't really work with it and you can't get better because you don't accept that you feel that way. Even though you do.

**Interviewer** 2:46:29

Well, you feel it, but you don't accept it.

**Participant** 2:46:34

You're sort of like, like, there was some other person who hates you talking to you and being like, Oh, Jesus, this again?

**Interviewer** 2:46:47

How is the internal dialogue? So, we have in our heads, for example, you know, we talk to ourselves a bit, maybe, or we think, you know, we can hear the kind of voice inside our heads when we're thinking about things verbally. Is that, was that before quite negative towards you? Self-judgments and whatnot and has that shifted in terms of how it talks?

**Participant** 2:47:11

Yeah definitely. It's, I don't know, I, it's more that I try to, like, be more aware of it and like, every once in a while, ask myself if something some thought really hurt me, then If that's really true, and if, yeah, if basically, that's true but also, I think, before I was even, like, almost like, it's weird, but like, harming myself with them. Like, in a way, I just deliberately brought myself into a really, like, bad state of mind because of something, so that's mostly stopped.

**Interviewer** 2:48:12

Well, I'm glad to hear it.

**Participant** 2:48:14

Thank you.

**Interviewer** 2:48:15

Sounds like you're doing better and obviously, here we are having a conversation. So, you know, you're telling me about very personal things, as I said, at the beginning of the conversation, you know, we do touch on quite important aspects of you and so

**Participant** 2:48:35

But like getting over it is really like, going through the same cycle over and over and, you know, when people talk about how psychedelics cured their depression, or something that they like took acid two times and then they were completely like, free of it. This wasn't the case for me at all and it's like, you know, it's always gets kind of, like worse and, but it's like, I know, I've had this and I have quite more resources to go through it. So, yeah it's like working on the same thing over and over and you can just feel that you are getting a bit better, but you are not becoming a master in like, one hour.

**Interviewer** 2:49:34

Yeah, well, good things take time. It's a cliche but it's true.

**Participant** 2:49:43

But it feels to me like in the mainstream view people they take psychedelics, some, like magical pill, and I've heard like people ask about someone who take, who took Ayahuasca. Like 20 times, and they were like, Oh, I think by, like three times I think all their bad stuff would be, like gone.

**Interviewer** 2:50:12

And they're still going.

**Participant** 2:50:13

Yeah.

**Q32. Interviewer** 2:50:14

Yeah. Have psychedelics changed your outlook on life?

**Participant** 2:50:31

Yeah, I think I'm, I can allow myself to be more positive. Yeah, as I said, different things are important to me but I think your outlook on life also changes when you just get older. So, it's not like it was the only influence.

**Interviewer** 2:51:26

Yes, well, the difficulty with asking questions related to you know, how psychedelics have affected a person's self, and their life is that you can't do psychedelics without time passing. So,

**Participant** 2:51:45

Yeah, yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:51:46

At same time you have the other things going on in people's lives, you know, so.

**Participant** 2:51:55

And also, they just make you peak more interest and stuff like that. So

**Interviewer** 2:52:02

yeah, well, that well, exactly, as you sort of were mentioning before, it sort of increased your curiosity, which sort of opened you up to reading books.

**Participant** 2:52:12

And even like the nature thing. That's, I just, you know, I wasn't taking anything in the summer and it was really great, but in a way, it was like, caused by psychedelics, because they made me more open to being outside.

**Interviewer** 2:52:31

But yeah, and that's and that's where that that cycle or the difficulty in being like, well, okay, are you better because of psychedelics or did you just need that little kind of crack in the door open, us put your, your foot through, and then you'd started gaining positive benefits doing other things.

**Participant** 2:52:47

And do you have to, do you have to separate this this things? Like, you know,

**Interviewer** 2:52:54

Do you mean, Is that a question? Or just like,

**Participant** 2:52:56

yeah, yeah, that's, that's a question.

**Interviewer** 2:52:59

Umm, No, not necessarily, I would, I will speak to it in the, in the write up of the things like, because it has come up a number of times the difficulty in people separating out whether it was particularly the psychedelic that had the, say, the major impact and caused a significant change, or whether it was, you know, the psychedelic combined with following experiences, and then another, you know, sort of like layered on top of each other so that you've got a little bit of psychedelic, and then you and then you deviate and have a couple new experiences, which you meet new people, you find out new things, you learn new stuff, which changes who you are, which, you know, slowly over time moves you in a direction rather than just like, one, one experience, which was just life changing but you get, I think, a mix, there is a mix of people who can really say like this experience, or these few experiences were massive, like, and it was in a day or night level kind of change but for other people, it's more incremental, it's, it's harder to tease out and say, like, Ah, yes, this, these, specifically, in this situation made this, this particular change to me, which was really important, because people are doing those these over a number of years, sometimes or over a year or two years. There's, there's other things going on, like they might be seeing a therapist, or they might be travelling, or they might be young, you know, in their early 20s and you just, that's a very formative time, as well. So, it's hard to you know, say that. For example, if you if you are taking psychedelics at the same time, where you move away from your family, and you start going to university and college and you make new friends, and try new things, like, was it the psychedelic or was it the fact that you changed your entire environment as well, at the same time, so I will speak to it, and there's no way that I can. There's no way you can say this here 100% guaranteed and this not like these weren't a factor, because life is just messy but just to acknowledge it and to, to point out the areas, specifically where people have said this was really hard for me to distinguish and vs the areas where people have very clearly have a sense that psychedelics were a major impact.

**Participant** 2:55:34

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 2:55:35

So, there will be an attempt, but there will be by no means a clear-cut delineation of psychedelics, not psychedelics.

**Participant** 2:55:44

Okay.

**Q33. Interviewer** 2:55:45

Yeah. Yes, if psychedelics have a role, or roles to play in society, what do you think they are?

**Participant** 2:56:06

I don't think I understood the question completely. Like if they have roads.

**Interviewer** 2:56:12

No, no, a role a role.

**Participant** 2:56:14

Oh, Okay, okay.

**Participant** 2:56:15

Yeah. Like in society and like changing it or in?

**Interviewer** 2:56:22

Yes. could be it could be related to like changing society, it could just be related to where do you see, like psychedelics being potentially used, like in what ways they could be used where, like, it's sort of meant to be quite broad, so that people have people have a sense of like, Oh, I'd like to see psychedelics being used in this way or I'd like to see them be legalised. Or I want them to stay criminalised, or I think they are really good to help people do something specific, such as this thing. You know, it's just for people to give an opportunity of where they see the potential uses of these substances.

**Participant** 2:57:06

I think definitely with depression, because, you know, it's really terrible when you feel that way and the antidepressants that I've tried, had really bad side effects and the feeling that I got from them wasn't really, it was like, I was kind of a bit stupid. So, I didn't think about the things and it's different for everyone and there's people who get help that those who the pills don't work for, then, I think they can benefit a lot and I think I'd like to see them decriminalise because, you know, right now, it's kind of unfair when you have like Elon Musk and shit tonne of rich people openly talking about using psychedelics, and then somebody gets arrested for even having them. So, it could make me make it a bit more, like equal for people and if they were completely legalised, I think it would improve the, the quality, that's if they were sold, sold legally, then you would be able to know what you are buying if you are buying them but also it puts, I think, make it a bits. Like would make them a bit more available to some people who shouldn't be taking them who have like who are susceptible to psychosis or something. I don't know which, what makes it really like bad for people but yeah and I heard, like stories of abusive people using it on their partners or whatever. So, if they were illegal, that's that, then they could just get them wherever, they really could be used as a way to manipulate someone, I think

**Q34. Interviewer** 3:00:15

Have psychedelics shaped your view of humanity's future?

**Participant** 3:00:22

Well, right now, I don't think so because I'm still a bit pessimistic looking at the, like political situation and stuff. Like, I'm open to the idea that it could be good, but ehhhh maybe they made me more aware of how, like, even normal people who don't have that much political power can influence it and to know that a lot of like political options and even like, stuff that changes the world can be written by someone on a blog, or someone can just go and nail some paper to some door and start the evangelic church and stuff like that.

**Interviewer** 3:01:43

Are you thinking of specific examples you've read about?

**Participant** 3:01:47

Yeah, I think Martin Luther.

**Interviewer** 3:01:52

That's a while ago, I don't know if that strategy works anymore.

**Participant** 3:01:57

But I think something like that could work because, you know, just making something is. A lot of people just don't do it. You know, people have ideas, but don't put them on paper or tell them to anyone. So, even just by like doing it and putting your craziest idea on paper, you can but you can, you can, but don't have to change the world. I mean, in computers, there's this. I think there's a part that displays images and it's developed by one guy in his garage and it's what all like, it's the reason why your computer can display anything graphic. So, and all the commercial like image, software's use it and if he stopped developing it, it would just destroy all computer's.

**Interviewer** 3:03:08

Just one, okay. I haven't heard of that.

**Participant** 3:03:11

Yeah, I don't know how it's called but yeah.

**Interviewer** 3:03:16

I'm sure they would get someone on to that pretty quickly. If he's decided to stop.

**Participant** 3:03:22

Yeah but he's still doing it. He doesn't have any money from it.

**Q35. Interviewer** 3:03:26

Ahh boo, he should have, he should have patented that shit. What advice would you give to people who are interested in using psychedelics?

**Participant** 3:03:42

I think I would tell them to maybe start slow and just test them because on the trip sitting forums, I met some people who took something that lasted 72 hours instead of ecstasy and it was really weird going there and, you know, it's, you hear the number 72 but you maybe only I because of my number problems. Don't really imagine that, you know, I just came there and they were there and then I slept went to work and in the evening, they were still tripping, and the next day too and it was like Jesus Christ.

**Interviewer** 3:04:32

Yeah. Yes, well, that's, 72 hours, LSD at 12 hours is long enough.

**Participant** 3:04:40

Yeah.

**Interviewer** 3:04:47

\*yawns\* Sounds exhausting.

**Participant** 3:04:49

Yeah, it's is it night where you are or?

**Interviewer** 3:04:52

No, sorry. It's morning. I got up at like, I don't know like eight, eight o'clock. I'm not a morning person.

**Participant** 3:05:01

Yeah, me too.

**Q36. Interviewer** 3:05:07

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

**Participant** 3:05:17

Oh, well, I think not really.

**Interviewer** 3:05:23

That's okay. It's just there.

**Participant** 3:05:25

I'd like to ask, if you if you publish the paper, like publicly or if there will be a way to access it?

**Interviewer** 3:05:34

Yeah, I'll, for one, I will definitely send the published thesis when I'm done to all the people I've interviewed and I'll put it up online on the different forums and stuff where I sort of advertised on and I'm pretty sure it's open access. I think but I definitely can because it will be I retain the copyright or whatever. So, I'll just put it up online for people read.

**Participant** 3:06:03

Okay okay.

**Interviewer** 3:06:03

Because I want people to be able to read it. I'm not writing to like hide it in a little vault somewhere and be like it's mine don't read it.

**Participant** 3:06:11

A lot of people do.

**Interviewer** 3:06:12

Yeah, no, I definitely put it up online. So, you'll definitely have a chance to have a read and I welcome if you are have any feedback on it, you know, you read it and you have thoughts on it. Just email me or we can set up another call if you'd like to talk about it. I'm really, hopefully people will have you know, find it useful, but also they might be have some valid critiques of what I my final thing and I'd love to hear those as well.

**Participant** 3:06:40

Okay.

**Interviewer** 3:06:40

Yeah. Okay, um, let me just pop that off.