At this point in my life, I was what I considered to be an experienced psychonaut. I was no stranger to hallucinogenic experiences and I felt comfortable navigating the psychedelic landscape.

Each time I tried Salvia in the past, I always tried it indoors in an extremely controlled environment. Since I had read numerous times that set and setting were of the utmost importance—I can’t stress enough just how important it is in order to have a good experience—I made sure to set up the perfect environment.

However, this time, I wanted the experience to be a little less controlled, but only because I felt like I was experienced enough to handle it at this point. That said, I don’t recommend doing the following.

A friend (my sitter who I’ll call ‘A’) and I went to a local park late one night and walked out to the docks. I laid a blanket down and set up the CD player I brought with me so I could listen to one of my favorite electronic artists while embarking on the journey.

As I laid down on the blanket, I observed my surroundings. The sky was crystal clear, the park was empty, the sound of the water was soothing, and the temperature was pleasantly warm. It seemed like the perfect place to try a Salvia trip outdoors.

Feeling eager to get started, I pushed play, skipped to Orbital’s Lush 3-5 (one of my favorite songs to trip to), and began loading the bowl with enough 20x extract for two decent sized hits. I took the first hit and held it in for as long as I could. As I exhaled, I looked over at A who was smiling serenely at me. I mused that she looked like some sort of spiritual guide, here to aide me on my quest for enlightenment.

As I waited to take the second hit, I felt the familiar tug to the left I always seem to experience while under the influence of Salvia. The familiarity of it was comforting, like it was signifying that I was about to go home.

Feeling confident and 100% ready, I took the second hit and held it in for even longer than the previous one. While I was exhaling, I saw a shooting star go straight past A’s head. I had time enough to exclaim, ‘A shooting star!’ As soon as I was done speaking, everything I knew disappeared and was replaced with a thick forest full of the most beautiful flowers I’ve ever seen.

After I got done marveling at the nature around me, I realized that I was close to a rather large clearing in the forest. I walked out of the forest and peered down a steep hill only to be met with
one of the most magnificent sights.

A large number of people dressed in ceremonial garb danced to drums on either side of a path that led to what I could only describe as an ancient Mesoamerican pyramid. They smiled as they beckoned me to walk toward them.

As I made my way down the hill, I got the distinct feeling that this ceremony was specifically held in celebration of my arrival. Something about the people and landscape felt strangely familiar to me, as if I wasn’t merely arriving, but rather returning.

Once I reached the beginning of the path, two women standing on either side smiled at me warmly and said, ‘Welcome back.’ They seemed bemused by the confused expression on my face. Once one of them finished placing a crown of flowers on my head, they moved to the side, as if to signify that I was supposed to walk down the path toward the pyramid.

While walking down the path, I looked at as many people as I possibly could. All of them exuded an incredible amount of joy. They seemed like they were quite possibly the happiest people alive.

When I reached the foot of the steps of the pyramid, the music and dancing abruptly stopped. Feeling startled, I spun around to look back at them. They were still smiling, but this time they looked expectant, as if they were eagerly waiting for me to climb the steps and enter the pyramid.

Seeing no other option, I climbed the steps and walked inside. The long hallway leading away from the entrance was dark, but I could see torchlight flickering at the end of it. The hallway opened into what seemed like some sort of ceremonial room. Before going any further, I stopped to survey my surroundings.

On the far end of the room, there was a large picture carved into the stone wall. The picture was framed by two torches on either side of it. Standing in front of the picture was an elderly man and woman. To the left, there was another dark hallway that presumably led to another room or another part of the pyramid. To the right was another picture carved into the wall.

After I was done taking everything in, my gaze rested on the two people standing in front of me. There was something about the both of them that felt ancient to me as if they were gods or souls that had been reincarnated thousands of times and knew the inner workings of the universe.

As I was studying them, the man walked up to me and put his hand on my shoulder. Before I could make eye contact, he closed his eyes and bowed his head. When his eyes finally opened and met mine, he stared into them deeply, as if he was peering into my soul. After a while, he smiled, squeezed my shoulder, and walked toward the other dark hallway.

Once he disappeared into the darkness, the woman approached me and said with a welcoming smile, ‘So, you’ve finally returned. We’ve been waiting for you.’

‘Is all of this for me?’ I asked, finally able to speak. She nodded, amused by my confusion. ‘But why?’ I probed further.

She shook her head while continuing to smile in amusement. As she did so, she gestured at the picture at the far end of the room that was framed by the torches. I didn’t feel that it was my
place to continue asking questions, so I walked up to it and studied as many details as I could. From what I could tell, the picture seemed to depict a ceremonial scene. There were two rows of people sitting with their heads bowed and hands together as if in prayer. The row on the left had six men and the row on the right had six women. I gasped as I recognized one of the women. It was A. Even though none of this made sense, it all somehow made complete sense in that moment.

For a brief moment, I was both aware of this world I traveled to via Salvia and the one I had left behind. As I stood there thinking about both worlds, she motioned for me to stand next to her. Once I reached the spot she wanted me to stand in, she embraced me lovingly.

The embrace was a wordless goodbye, but I knew it was a temporary goodbye, since we both planned on seeing each other again. Once we were done hugging, the tile that I was standing on sank into the bottom of the pyramid and I went with it.

For a moment everything was black. Then suddenly, I was emerging from the ground into one of the four pillars that stood behind it. For a few moments in time, I was a stone pillar, which was rather bizarre, but it felt oddly peaceful.

As I began to come back from the trip, I became disembodied and viewed myself as the pillar from somewhere above in the sky. Eventually the scene faded and I found myself back at the docks. When I fully came to, I felt so joyful and at peace that I couldn’t contain it, so I wept with happiness.

Fortunately, A didn’t say a word. She was giving me time to process what I had just experienced. I laid there for a while, mulling the whole thing over. After a while, I had a few incredible realizations.

1. During my first Salvia trip, I felt that an entity was with me the whole time. Toward the end of my trip, it told me, ‘Come back soon.’ I realized that the woman who was waiting for me in the pyramid was the entity from my first trip.

2. Also during my first Salvia trip, I experienced time travel. As I was time traveling, I zipped past/through a pyramid. It’s possible that it was the same one.

After enough time had passed and I felt that I had mulled everything over, I recounted my story to A. She found the whole thing to be just as incredible as I had, but she was particularly shocked by the fact that I saw her in it.

The interesting thing is that each time I’ve done Salvia prior to this one, I’ve had no recollection of any aspect of my life during the trip. It’s always this complete ego death in which I’m simply existing without an identity. The fact that I regained memory during the trip is astounding to me.

To this day, I’m still not sure what that experience means or if it even means anything at all, but it will always be one of the most special and spiritual experiences of my life, which is enough.

Note I: Even if one is experienced with Salvia and other psychoactive substances, it’s probably not the best idea to trip next to a large body of water liked I did. In hindsight, I realize that it could have gone terribly wrong by me falling in the water and drowning. Thankfully, it went as perfect
as something like that can.

Note II: If you’re inexperienced with Salvia, please read as many good and bad trip reports as you can so you have a solid understanding of what it is you’re messing with. Set, setting, and trusted sitters are paramount for having a good trip. Respect the plant.

Note III: I’ve seen people assume that they’ll be able to handle Salvia extract because they had decent experiences with LSD. The thing is, this is nothing like LSD. It’s 1,000x more intense. On a strong LSD trip, I’ll get an intense body high, weird visuals, and a plethora of bizarre thoughts. On Salvia extract, I’m so far gone that I don’t see the world as it is and I have no identity. It is the ultimate hallucination.

Thanks for reading, stay safe, and good luck!