

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Study on Reported Contact with Non-Human Intelligence Associated with Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

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Abstract—This study, conducted by the Dr. Edgar Mitchell Foundation for Research into Extraterrestrial and Extraordinary Experiences (FREE), represents the first comprehensive investigation on individuals ($N = 3,256$) who have reported various forms of contact experience (CE) with a non-human intelligent being (NHI) associated with or without an unidentified aerial phenomenon (UAP). Our research methodology utilized two comprehensive quantitative surveys totaling 554 questions administered to subjects with reported non-hypnotic memory recall of their CE. This survey addressed a diverse range of physical, psychological, perceptual, and paranormal aspects of reported non-hypnotic-based recall of both physical and/or non-physical interactions with an NHI. The results revealed complex reported CEs that involve both physical and non-physical events (psychological outcomes, non-ordinary states of consciousness, and paranormal experiences). What may be the most significant aspect of the interim results is that approximately 70% ($N = 2,279$) of the study population claimed that their CE changed their life in a “positive way.” In contrast, only 15–20% reported a “negative” impact from their CE. Further, the majority of subjects did not report events typically associated with the traditionally held beliefs regarding the “alien-abduction” phenomena. That is, the results suggest that the reported CE with an NHI is largely non-physical and can occur via telepathy, during an out-of-body experience, being floated into a “matrix-like” reality, as well as through physical interaction on board a craft. Consequently, the results suggest that a non-physical (“contactee”) CE is distinctly different from a physical (“abduction”) CE and should be studied as separate but interrelated anomalous

events. In fact, the CE associated with a UAP is not the predominant form of CE, and sighting a UAP is not necessarily associated with a CE. Consequently, future studies should not focus exclusively on the analysis of UAP sightings and traces alone which, based on decades of research, have not advanced our understanding of the possible force that governs and regulates this complex phenomenon. This is an important consideration since the FREE study dispels the notion that contact with NHIs must always entail either a physical abduction or a landed craft with beings interacting with humans. This study may serve as a needed foundation for researchers to build upon for validation purposes to better understand a unique and diverse range of reported physical and non-physical type CEs with an NHI associated with or without a UAP.

Introduction

A major contributing factor to the lack of scientific research has been an apparent reluctance on the part of the general scientific community to conduct unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP) research or to take it seriously, possibly due to fear of ridicule, limited interest, or the negative reputation of “ufology.” This is a field felt to be filled with hoaxers, deceived or possibly disturbed individuals, and New Age seekers, and many academicians regard publishing in this field to be a “career-ending” event, fearing potential scorn and ridicule from colleagues. Moreover, the fact remains that leading UAP researchers have failed to convince the scientific community that even their best cases represent adequate evidence to stimulate either the interest of granting agencies or institutional support. The UAP-related phenomenon of “alien abduction” has been likewise dismissed as an illusory byproduct of “false memory syndrome” or “sleep paralysis” (Clancy 2005, McNally 2012). Some notable exceptions in applying scientific methods have been individuals such as J. Allen Hynek, James E. McDonald, and Jacques Vallee; although known as authors and speakers, scientists of their stature have for the most part communicated their ideas and findings about UAP to lay audiences, rather than to scientists via refereed professional journals.

Existing research on the nature and essence of the interaction and subsequent behavioral outcomes for those who report contact experiences (CEs), with or without the associated UAP, are virtually absent. Most studies have focused exclusively on personality and cultural factors associated with CE reports to help formulate theories (e.g. psycho-cultural, psychological, physiological, atmospheric, extraterrestrial, and intra-dimensional, etc.) to account for the phenomena. To date, however, no testable theories of what may govern and regulate either the UAP or CE have been proposed or empirically confirmed. And while some theories may sound more plausible

than others, theories alone do not provide sufficient proof to explain the variables that control or regulate this phenomenon. Consequently, any existing theories of the alien abduction phenomena (AAP) or, more generally, the CE, should be regarded as tenuous at best.

The so-called “alien abduction” narratives have inspired much theoretical speculation, but experimental research has been scarce. This phenomenon is grounded in personal human experiences deemed extraordinary by witnesses themselves. Historically, several academics took the study of UAPs seriously and regularly engaged with ufologists, including astronomers and astrophysicists William Hartmann, J. Allen Hynek, Donald Menzel, Carl Sagan, Rudy Schild, and William Powers, physicists James McDonald and Peter Sturrock, computer scientist Jacques Vallee, psychologists David Saunders and Leo Sprinkle, and sociologist Ron Westrum. Among these individuals, however, opinions about the phenomenon differed sharply: McDonald, for instance, firmly believed evidence pointed to the extraterrestrial origins of unidentified flying objects (UFOs); Hynek considered that UAPs warranted serious scientific investigation, but questioned alien abductions; Vallee emphasized the psychosocial dimensions of UAP sightings; and Sagan considered “alien” visitation improbable, but communication with extraterrestrials possible.

Given this brief historical context, the primary objectives of the present study by the Dr. Edgar Mitchell Foundation for Research into Extraterrestrial and Extraordinary Encounters (FREE) pertain to the reported physical, psychological, paranormal, and perceptual effects and/or outcomes associated with the CE. This study includes a large sample of subjects ($N = 3,256$) who report having physical- and non-physical-based CEs with one or more forms of non-human intelligence (NHI) associated with or without a UAP. More specifically, this study represents the first quantitative analysis of a large population that is both multi-language and cross-cultural, which addresses numerous topic areas associated with the CE. According to FREE’s co-founder Dr. Edgar Mitchell (2014), FREE is

concerned with how consciousness works and its relation to the origin of life and its current condition, the codependency and interconnectedness of all life with itself and its environment, including the past, present, and future evolution of our Universe and everything in it.

The FREE considers that The Quantum Hologram Theory of Consciousness (QHTC), which explains the nature of our reality and non-ordinary states of consciousness, may provide a foundation for understanding the interrelationship among the various “contact modalities” (e.g., CE, near-death experiences (NDE), out-of-body experiences (OBE), mystical

meditation travel, channeling, remote viewing, among other reported human encounters with NHI) which appear to represent non-ordinary states of consciousness. Consequently, all of these “contact modalities” are not regarded as separate phenomena but instead may represent an interrelated phenomenon with multiple consistencies that affect consciousness (Swanson 2003, 2010, Hernandez 2013, Guiley 2013, Schild 2014, Davis 2015, 2017).

Given this context, the FREE study attempted to capture the essence of the reported CE from thousands of individuals as a means to explore the possible nature of “consciousness.” That is, a comparative research analysis of the role and impact of the CE on one’s reported spiritual and behavioral transformations may provide insight into the significance of consciousness within the context of the CE. This paper, therefore, represents an analysis of both physical and non-physical (perceptual, psychological, and paranormal) interactions and outcomes facilitated by the CE in CEs. The possible theories that may govern and regulate the CE will be addressed in future papers developed by FREE.

Overview

The CE has inspired much theoretical speculation, but experimental research has been scarce. Interestingly, interactions reported with NHI beings have been described in various contexts throughout history (e.g., people from the heavens or stars, often called gods, angels, or spirits), and there exist parallels to such events as described within folklore, religion, and anthropology. Similarities between this experience and shamanic journeys and stories of fairies also suggest that modern accounts of interaction with NHI may be related to the history of such unexplainable encounters. John Keel (2013), who was one of the first to recognize this, and others, including Vallee (1977) and Steiger (1999), have also indicated the similarities between modern UAP reports of so-called “alien abductions” and the ancient traditions. Even astronomer Carl Sagan (1963) theorized that such stories of contact that are common throughout history share remarkable similarities with the “alien abduction experience.”

The interpretation that UAPs are extraterrestrial or extradimensional in origin provides a foundation for understanding the CE. If UAPs are non-earthly craft, the CE becomes remotely plausible, but if they are nothing more than natural or man-made phenomena, then the CE may be explained by one or more “non-alien” theories such as the false-memory syndrome, sleep paralysis, psychological disorders, and/or psycho-cultural factors, among others. But even if NHI beings are not interacting with humans, the CE is still an extraordinary mystery worthy of further study by psychologists and sociologists, in addition to meteorologists, physicists, and other natural

scientists. If NHI beings are interacting with humans, how can it be proven?

The absence of irrefutable evidence to support the belief by many UAP researchers that an alien intelligence has visited Earth also applies to the CE. The strongest evidence to support the CE is the consistency of the experience by those claiming to have been abducted, by Hopkins (1987), Jacobs (2000), and Mack (1999). This anecdotal evidence, concomitant with the controversial physiological effects that may accompany the AAP such as scars and implants, and the absence from expected locations at the time of abduction, verified independently in a few cases by Mack (1999), provide the primary evidence to support the CE. Researchers also report that “alien abductions” occur in different members of the same families at different stages of their lives. But since the scientific community considers the UAP phenomenon highly unlikely, the CE, by default is also considered a remote possibility. This is based, in large part, on the absence of compelling physical evidence to validate that UAPs are extraterrestrial craft. The lack of objective evidence in the form of corroborating physical evidence for first-hand accounts of alien abductions also serves to invalidate “alien abduction” claims, and provides support for one or more “non-alien”-related theories. The scientific community has also dismissed the CE on the basis of research-supported psychological explanations, which include biased or inaccurate memory, unreliable perception, social pressures motivating lies, and hypnotists influencing highly suggestible witnesses.

Several investigations have concluded that approximately 90–95% of all reported UAPs are explainable, with the remainder being of unknown origin (Project Blue Book 1969). Since a very small percentage cannot be reliably identified as “known” objects or events, the key question is whether or not the collective evidence of the 5–10% unexplained UAPs represents a non-earth physical craft governed by a form of NHI. While controversial, those who contend that UAPs are intelligently controlled believe sufficient evidence exists in many forms to support their position. This includes the similarity of anecdotal testimony by both credible and multiple UAP witnesses, simultaneous radar and visual sightings, declassified government/military documents, and inexplicable UAP maneuvers, among others. An all-encompassing theory, however, has to be proposed to describe this small percentage of UAPs.

It is important to note that the FREE does not claim to provide a definitive explanation of this phenomenon. The research objective is to simply present the study results to facilitate discussion and continued multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research in this arena. This research is just an initial step in a long process to better understand what governs and regulates the CE. It is also hoped that this paper will help others to better

understand a unique and profound personal event that may have facilitated pronounced behavioral and psycho-spiritual (i.e. states of awareness and values such as ethical, aesthetic, humanitarian, and altruistic) outcomes in CErS. At the very least, the FREE hopes to stimulate the thinking of the general population as well as enlist support of some of the world's leading academicians and researchers. The quantitative results developed from a large database of CErS may provide a more comprehensive and informative representation of this phenomenon to gain greater understanding of a unique and transformative experience shared by many thousands if not millions of individuals worldwide who are yearning for an answer.

Methodology

Objective

This study incorporated a comprehensive quantitative survey totaling 554 questions completed by subjects ($N = 3,256$) from more than 100 countries via the online program Survey Monkey. The interim analysis presented in this article represents the outcomes of our ongoing study as of April 10, 2017. It is important to note that a specific subset (i.e. CErS) of the general population was targeted for inclusion to accomplish the objective of this study. That is, to better understand the essence and impact of the type of CE on the individual's personal viewpoints and values, a recruitment strategy was developed to generate a large database of CErS who reported physical ("Abductees") and non-physical ("Contactees") type CE(s) with an NHI associated with or without a UAP.

Subject Recruitment

Since only a few studies (Ring 1984, Marden & Stoner 2012) with small sample sizes have examined the relationship between the type of CE (abduction vs. contactee) and behavioral outcomes in CErS, an attempt was made to generate a large database of CErS for study. Consequently, this subsection of the population was purposely targeted from sources where CErS were expected to be found. Unlike previous studies that focused solely on "abductions," our subject recruitment process centered on informing individuals, organizations (ufology, parapsychology, psychology, physics, consciousness, and near-death and out-of body experiences, among others), researchers, authors, radio stations, and websites that might facilitate a diversity of CErS (abductees and contactees) to visit our website to complete the survey. This resulted in a large subject population comprising CErS who reported having had one or more CEs with an NHI being associated with or without physical interaction with a UAP. Thus, the study conclusions apply only to this specific subsection of the general population.

Study Survey

The survey questions were modeled after those applied by psychologist Kenneth Ring (1984) in his study with subjects who reported having either interacted with a UAP or having had an NDE. These questions were modified by members of FREE who have had research experience with survey design and knowledge of the UAP literature. The survey was divided into two phases (Phase 1, $N = 3,256$, and Phase 2, $N = 1,919$). The analysis of responses obtained in Phase 1 helped to inform us of additional questions for the Phase 2 survey. All subjects who participated in Phase 2 completed Phase 1. That is, only those subjects who completed Phase 1 were invited to participate in Phase 2. The qualitative information received from subjects in Phase 3, composed of written responses to 70 open-ended questions administered to those who completed both Phase 1 and 2, will be analyzed and addressed in another study. All subjects provided consent to participate in this study, and all responses were anonymous except for their email addresses.

While few studies have focused on limited survey questions pertaining to a UAP “abduction” (fewer than 50), the FREE study explored areas that have never been comprehensively addressed in this arena. More specifically, 554 questions made up our survey which addressed six major topic areas. The topic areas addressed in Phase 1 and 2 of the survey are as follows:

Phase 1: a) Family history of contact, b) Contact experience, and c) Nature of non-human intelligence.

Phase 2: a) Information received from non-human intelligence, b) The physical experiences resulting from non-human intelligence contact, and c) Psychological aspects of the contact experience.

The wide range of attributes covered is the biggest difference between the FREE research study and the few studies in this field, most of which focus exclusively on the psychological profile of the “abductee” as reported by Bullard (1987), Hopkins (1987), Jacobs (2000), and Mack (1999), among others. It is important to note that none of the subjects in the FREE study responded to the survey while under hypnosis, i.e. they were asked to respond to the questions only if they had “conscious” recall of their CE(s) not with hypnosis.

Assessment of Potential Response Bias

One potential source of bias in any survey occurs when respondents are undermotivated to complete the survey and hurry through the survey task, checking responses in a haphazard way. These respondents are often referred to as “speeders.” In order to assess the integrity of responses by completion time, respondents were divided into four groups, based upon time spent on

the survey. Start time and date and completion time and date were logged by Survey Monkey for each respondent, such that a duration (time spent on survey) could be calculated for each respondent. Based upon this duration score, four groups were constructed for the Phase 1 survey: less than 10 minutes ($n = 434$), 10–20 minutes ($n = 511$), 21–30 minutes ($n = 575$), and more than 30 minutes ($n = 1,736$). The Phase 1 survey consisted of 102 response items, although some items permitted multiple responses (“Check any that apply . . .”), resulting in a total of 166 “response opportunities.” On average, respondents endorsed 48% of these opportunities. Respondents spending less than 10 minutes skipped many items, endorsing only 9% of these response blanks, while the 10–20 minute group endorsed 43%, and the remaining two groups (21–30 minutes and >30 minutes) averaged 55% of response blanks completed.

There was some tendency for “speeders”, those spending less than 21 minutes, to skip more items and to be somewhat more negative in evaluating the impact of their contact experience in “changing your life in a Negative or Positive way” ($F = 4.24, p < .006$). However, given that the positivity question was near the end of the Phase 1 survey, only a small fraction of “speeders” remained to rate this item (3% of the <10 minutes group, 33% of the 10–20 minute group), so “speeders” tended to have a relatively small influence on the majority of response items. A visual inspection of “speeder” responses to both rating and fill-in/verbatim items did not reveal any obvious attempts at frivolous or insincere responses—their reported occupations and descriptions of experiences appeared similar to those of other respondents. Thus, a decision was made to include their responses in the Phase 1 analysis.

For the Phase 2 survey, “speeders” constituted less of a concern, despite the survey length (434 response items), since respondents continuing into Phase 2 were a subset of Phase 1 and thus appeared to be motivated to continue with the survey process. For Phase 2, the same four duration categories established and analyzed for Phase 1 were constructed: <10 minutes ($n = 133$), 10–20 minutes ($n = 64$), 21–30 minutes ($n = 49$), and >30 minutes ($n = 1,645$). Of the 1,891 respondents who started the Phase 2 questionnaire, 71% ($n = 1,335$) completed the last 10 questions on the survey, which was identical to the completion rate for Phase 1 (71%). What is most surprising about the Phase 1 and Phase 2 surveys is that almost three-quarters of the large respondent samples for each Phase were motivated to complete these lengthy questionnaires in the absence of any incentive or reward.

Another potential source of bias on surveys results from “acquiescence” (i.e. the tendency to agree with any and all statements). In the Phase 1

survey, directionality of response scales for individual items was mixed, so that in some cases endorsing a “5” on a five-point Likert scale was the most positive option, and in other cases, a “1” on the scale was most positive. Similarly, on the Phase 2 questionnaire, for some attitude change items, selecting a “Strongly Increased” on a 5-point Likert response scale represented a favorable attitude change, whereas on other response items, the same response option would represent an unfavorable attitude change. Changing directionality of item wordings should therefore have mitigated any response biases toward response scale position or acquiescence.

Social desirability bias, or the tendency for survey participants to respond in ways consistent with societal norms or beliefs and to ascribe positive traits to themselves, is more difficult to evaluate for the FREE survey. Endorsing response items indicating very frequent interaction with NHI, telepathic communication with NHIs, or decreased interest in organized religion, would all appear to be admitting to things that are socially undesirable, or in some cases could be regarded as an admission of psychopathology. Yet, the majority of survey respondents checked response options consistent with these experiences. Consequently, if participants were attempting to conform to prescribed societal norms and expectations, for the majority of respondents a different set of norms or group identifications must have been operating.

The Psychology of Contact Experiencers

All subjects in the FREE study reported that they had “never been diagnosed with a mental illness by a licensed mental health professional.” The application of a standardized psychological test, however, could not be applied due to the significant time and cost involved. Consequently, the lack of an objective evaluation of the psychological/personality state of the subjects is an acknowledged confounding variable of this study. Despite this limitation, however, indirect evidence from prior studies has shown that the personality characteristics of those who report having been “abducted” may not be different from the general population.

Several researchers, for example, have emphasized that since abductees “do not suffer from psychopathology,” there is no a priori reason to reject their reports because their personality characteristics make them less reliable than other reporters of phenomena (Appelle 1995, Jacobs 2000, Parnell & Sprinkle 1990, Mack, McLeod, & Corbisier 1996, Mack 1999, and Hopkins 1987). In one study, Appelle (1995) confirmed that “assessment by both clinical examination and standardized tests has shown that, as a group, abductees are not different from the general population in terms of psychopathology prevalence.” In a study of more than 800 alleged abductees,

Mack, McLeod, & Corbisier (1996) also concluded that neurophysiological explanations such as sleep paralysis and temporal lobe epilepsy, proposed as a basis for the “alien abduction phenomenon,” have “either failed to find such pathology among abduction experiencers or have chosen to overlook important aspects of the phenomenon.” Based on this study, the researchers concluded that “the majority of abductees do not appear to be deluded, confabulating, lying, self-dramatizing, or suffering from a clear mental illness.” Baumeister (1989) also ruled out psychological interpretations such as lies, attention-seeking behavior, mental illness, and desire for victim status as possible causes for abduction reports. In a study by Parnell and Sprinkle (1990) on 225 subjects (ranging from those who made no claim of observing a UAP to those who reported observing a UAP craft or occupants, having been taken aboard a craft, or having communicated with UAP occupants) who completed the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, the researchers concluded that even those who reported occupant sightings and communication with NHIs performed within the normal range on items such as mood stability, psychomotor excitement, bohemian behavior, and flight of ideas.

It appears that the scientific community, which is unable to explain the unusual consistencies of the AAP, dismiss it on the basis of psychological explanations such as biased or inaccurate memory, unreliable perception, social pressures motivating lies, and hypnotists influencing highly suggestible witnesses. Forrest (2008), for example, concluded that several predisposing factors such as sleep paralysis, a history of being hypnotized, and preoccupation with the paranormal and extraterrestrial, are largely responsible for the belief held by those who feel they were abducted by aliens. In a study of 18 abductees, French et al. (2008) concluded that abductees show higher levels of dissociativity, absorption, paranormal belief, paranormal experience, self-reported psychic ability, fantasy proneness, tendency to hallucinate, and self-reported incidence of sleep paralysis. Additionally, Newman and Baumeister (1996) explained the AAP on a cognitive basis which involves the “integration and elaborations of hallucinations” aided by hypnosis. Thus the “pitfalls” of hypnosis are believed to contribute to the AAP. However, since about 30% of abduction reports are obtained without hypnosis (Mack, McLeod, & Corbisier 1996), a non-hypnotic explanation must be made to account for their reports. Based on a literature review of psychological studies of “abduction experiencers,” Marden (2017) concluded that

fantasy-prone persons with thin boundaries; individuals who experience dissociative states high on the multiple personality disorder scale; and those who experience certain sleep anomalies (narcolepsy); might believe they have been abducted by aliens, when they have not.

This conflicting evidence makes it difficult to adequately explain the role of the abductee's psychological state and associated report of his/her CE. However, it would seem highly unlikely that the vast majority of subjects in our study suffer from a mental illness that would contribute to their reported CE. The evidence that abductees are not different from the general population in terms of psychopathology, however, does not exclude the possibility that a certain percentage of our subject population may have, for whatever reason(s) (e.g., false memory, hoax, and/or psychological disorder, etc.), provided inaccurate information in their survey responses. Nevertheless, the large subject population in our study likely mitigates any significant contribution of this questionable subject population on the overall results reported in this study. Added support for this position is represented by the finding that approximately 70% of our large study sample contend to have had "positive" behavioral outcomes resulting from their CE, which is not consistent with many symptoms typically associated with common psychological disorders (e.g., fantasy-prone personality, dissociative states, boundary deficit disorder, and delusional behavior, and schizophrenia). Ideally, future research should compare predisposing, consequent, and/or resultant personality attributes of CEs of this kind.

Results

The Demographic Breakdown of the Study Population and Consistency of Reported Contact Experiences

Critics who challenge the validity of reported CE with NHI often claim that CEs are simply recounting cultural stories, and myths from their own culture as depicted in movies, books, and legends prevalent in their culture. If this were the case, we would expect to see noticeable variations across different nationalities and ethnic groups in the types of NHI beings encountered, the positivity or negativity of the reported experiences, frequency of experience, and types of craft observed, and nature of paranormal phenomena perceived in connection with the contact. The findings presented in this study, however, argue against the notion that CEs are some kind of aberrant experience that has simply been filtered through cultural myths, since it is unlikely that the cultures, myths, and memes would be so consistent across the countries and ethnic/racial backgrounds represented in the survey results. The results presented indicate that when samples sizes are sufficiently large for reliable reporting, they tend to be consistent across national and racial/ethnic boundaries as follows: 1) The features associated with sighting a UAP craft, 2) Conscious recollection of being on board a UAP craft, 3) The types of NHI beings encountered, 4) The types of paranormal phenomena

TABLE 1
The Racial and Ethnic Breakdown of the Study Population

	Percent of Sample	Number of Subjects
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.6%	52
Asian	1.2%	38
Black or African American	1.0%	34
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	6
White/Caucasian	70.7%	2,303
American Indian/Alaska Native and Another Race Code, not Hispanic/Latino	4.0%	131
Multiple race code without American Indian or Alaska Native or Hispanic/Latino	1.1%	35
Hispanic or Latino	2.5%	83
Hispanic or Latino and another race code, not American Indian or Alaska Native	4.8%	157
Hispanic or Latino and American Indian or Alaska Native	1.3%	43
Missing	11.5%	374
Total	100.0%	3,256

experienced, 5) The frequency of reported encounters with NHI, and 6) The positivity of impact of CE upon respondents.

The comparison of Phase 1 ($N = 3,256$) and Phase 2 ($N = 1,919$) by age and gender are shown in Table 1. The Phase 1 and Phase 2 data were merged using the only identifier for each survey record, which was their email address. After eliminating 233 different surveys where two or more people used the same email address, 1,686 Phase 2 survey records remained that were aligned with Phase 1 demographic questions. This permitted a comparison of Phase 1 and Phase 2 age and gender demographics, which

were remarkably similar. More specifically, of the 3,256 subjects in Phase 1, 57% were female and 43% male. Similarly, of the 1,686 subjects in Phase 2, 58% were female and 42% male. The majority of subjects (55% in Phase 1, and 57% in Phase 2) were between the ages of 45 and 64 years. The mean age of the subjects at the time of the study was 49.5 years ($SD = 13.6$, range 18–86 years) for each sample in Phase 1 and 2.

The racial and ethnic breakdown of the study population in Table 1 indicates that the study population is overwhelmingly White/Caucasian (70.7%), with less than 5% constituting other population categories. Since the percentage of African Americans, Hispanic and Latino Americans, and Asians in the U.S. were 13.3%, 17.8%, and 5.8%, respectively, as of July 2016 (U.S. Census Bureau 2016), the results are not necessarily generalizable to the population distribution in the United States, or to African American, Hispanic, or Asian populations of CERS.

Table 2 illustrates that the majority of subjects were from the U.S. (64.1%), Canada (8.4%), Australia (8.3%), and the United Kingdom (7.2%). These four countries constitute more than 88% of the respondent sample. The subjects from the remaining 84 countries each represented less than 1% of the study population (8.1% of the total sample; range of 16 to 30 individuals) and are not as reliable for demographic analyses. Since the U.S. sample comprised almost two-thirds of all Phase 1 respondents, the total sample average of all countries would be little different from the U.S. average. Thus, a decision was made to weight each country equally when calculating averages across countries shown in Tables 2–4.

An analysis of CERS by country of origin was remarkably consistent across several topic areas and associated sub-questions as shown in Table 3 (Experience of Intelligently Controlled Craft—Not Man-Made), and Table 4 (Anomalous Experiences in the Home). Of the four countries with the largest sample sizes (United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom), approximately two-thirds (62–73%) reported seeing an intelligently controlled craft. And of this group, 44–52% reported that it hovered, made impossible maneuvers (30–39%), and disappeared quickly (33–42%). Additionally, more than one-third (36–47%) were reportedly seen by multiple observers of sightings of assumed non-man-made craft in these four countries. For the larger samples from these four countries, the characteristics of sightings of craft were also remarkably similar, with no country varying by more than 11% from the average; and in most cases by less than 10%. This implies that the experience of sighting these different craft is remarkably consistent across countries with larger sample sizes. Additionally, 64% ($N = 993$) of 1,556 subjects responded “yes” to the question: “Was there some kind of craft/ship

TABLE 2
The Number and Percent of Subjects by Country of Origin

Country	Number of Respondents	Percent of Sample*
United States	2,088	64.1%
Canada	273	8.4%
Australia	271	8.3%
United Kingdom	235	7.2%
New Zealand	30	0.9%
Germany	25	0.8%
Ireland	22	0.7%
Denmark	16	0.5%
Mexico	16	0.5%
Netherlands	16	0.5%
Other countries (<i>n</i> = 84)	264	8.1%
Total	3,256	100.0%

* The country sample sizes were used as a baseline in calculating percent answering "Yes."

associated with the CE?" From this sample, the most common UAP shape reported was "circular" (70%), followed by "triangle" (36%), "oval" (34%), "cylindrical/cigar" (28%), and "cloud-like" (22%).

The occurrence of reported anomalous experiences showed that for the four largest country samples, the greatest difference of any country from the country average for a given type of phenomenon experienced is only about 10% (Table 4). For example, telepathic messages (52–58%), electrical appliance malfunctions (45–55%), "missing time" (40–48%), and strange lights in their home (36–48%) were the most frequently reported anomalous experiences. The results from the remaining countries were also very similar to those reported by subjects from the four countries with the

TABLE 3**The Percent Responding “Yes” to Various Experiences with Intelligently Controlled Craft (“Not Man-Made”) Reported by Subject Country of Origin**

Country	See intelligently controlled craft?	Did it stay still and/or hover?	Did it make impossible maneuvers?	Did it disappear quickly?	None of the above	Multiple witnesses?	Number in country
United States	73%	52%	39%	42%	9%	47%	2088
Canada	62%	44%	32%	33%	11%	36%	273
Australia	68%	45%	38%	42%	5%	41%	271
United Kingdom	65%	46%	30%	35%	9%	38%	235
New Zealand	70%	47%	27%	47%	10%	20%	30
Germany	40%	16%	4%	8%	16%	24%	25
Ireland	68%	23%	18%	23%	32%	41%	22
Denmark	69%	38%	50%	44%	13%	56%	16
Mexico	75%	44%	38%	38%	6%	69%	16
Netherlands	75%	63%	31%	44%	0%	38%	16
Other countries (<i>n</i> = 84)	57%	37%	30%	33%	11%	36%	264
Average of Countries (Average of Rows above)	66%	41%	31%	35%	11%	40%	

TABLE 4
Anomalous Experiences in the Home Reported by Subject’s Country of Origin
(Percent Reporting “Yes”)

	Do watches mal- function or stop when you wear them?	Have electrical appliances such as computers mal- functioned around you?	Have you experi- enced any “missing time”?	Have you experi- enced any “extra time”?	Have you awakened in a different location?	Have you awakened in a strange position in your bed?	Were you fully awake and suddenly found yourself in a new location?	Have you awakened to find clothing missing or arranged differently?	Have you heard telepathic messages?	Have you seen strange lights in your home with no known source?
United States	30%	54%	48%	29%	22%	35%	18%	17%	58%	48%
Canada	22%	45%	40%	24%	16%	27%	11%	10%	52%	36%
Australia	30%	55%	45%	27%	13%	38%	15%	14%	58%	47%
United Kingdom	24%	53%	44%	27%	16%	34%	14%	14%	55%	46%
New Zealand	27%	47%	43%	27%	10%	20%	17%	17%	53%	57%
Germany	20%	32%	32%	8%	8%	16%	4%	0%	48%	24%
Ireland	27%	36%	27%	32%	18%	36%	23%	9%	41%	32%
Denmark	25%	63%	56%	31%	13%	44%	19%	19%	31%	50%
Mexico	38%	50%	56%	31%	19%	44%	6%	19%	63%	56%
Netherland	31%	44%	44%	25%	25%	31%	19%	31%	63%	50%
Other countries (n = 84)	29%	50%	44%	34%	20%	34%	18%	12%	53%	41%
Average of countries (average of rows above)	28%	48%	44%	27%	16%	33%	15%	15%	52%	44%

largest sample sizes. Again, this implies a very small difference if cultures were influencing the kinds of experiences people have.

Figure 1 indicates that slightly more than half (53–61% of $N = 2,430$) of the subjects from the four largest country samples believe they observed an NHI being. Approximately one-fourth were “not sure” and less than 15–17% did not observe an NHI being. The percent of people who reported having seen an NHI, were not sure, or did not see an NHI, varied by no more than 8% across the largest country samples. The reported frequency of subjects who reported having seen or interacted with the NHI entity was also remarkably consistent across the four larger country samples. Approximately one-half of this sample ($N = 1,316$), and of the total population ($N = 1,670$) who reported the number of interactions with an NHI, claimed to have interacted 11 or more times, ~15% between 5–10 times, and ~30% just once. Similar results were also found in response to the question “How many times have you interacted with this [non visible] non-human intelligent entity?” The percentage of subjects who reported having interacted “more than 20 times” with an NHI being by age was approximately 50% for each decade between 25 to 74 years. The youngest age group (18–24 years) reported the least (27%) and those 75 and older the most (78%).

The number and percent of subjects who reported having conscious memories of being on board a UAP craft by country of origin was also remarkably consistent across respondents among the four countries with the largest samples. More specifically, approximately one-fourth (range of 20–29%) of the sample from these countries ($N = 2,368$ or 88.9% of total population) reported conscious recall of being on board a UAP craft, whereas a slight majority (53–62%) of subjects reported “not” having conscious memories of this experience.

The results for conscious memories of being on board a UAP craft were also similar for race/ethnicity and gender. Conscious memory of being on board a UAP craft fell within a relatively small range of 20–32% for all racial/ethnic categories and combinations except those who checked both Hispanic/Latino and American Indian/Alaska Native. Of all ethnic/racial categories, about one-fourth (24%) of the White/Caucasian group ($N = 2,097$; 79.9% of all respondents) reported having conscious memories of being on board a UAP craft. Approximately one-half to two-thirds (range = 48–68%) of subjects across all ethnic categories did not have conscious recall of this event. Further, about one-fourth of females (27% or $N = 1,512$) and males (23% or $N = 1,152$) reported having conscious memories of being on board a UAP craft.

The “type of being” most commonly reported by subjects claiming to have conscious recall of being on board a UAP craft is shown in Figure 2

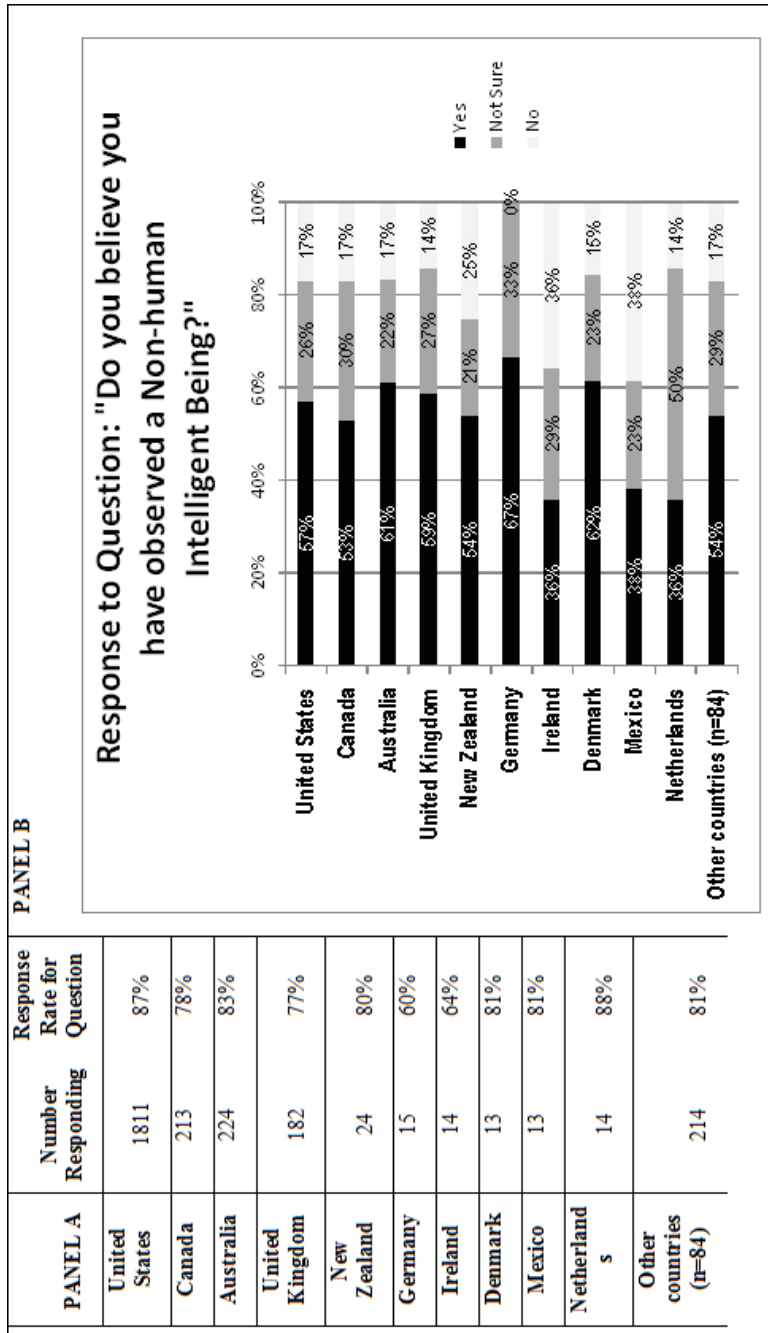


Figure 1. A breakdown of subject's country of origin response to the question: "Do you believe you have observed a non-human intelligent entity"? (A) illustrates the number and percent of subjects responding, and (B) represents the actual response ("yes," "not sure," and "no,") by country of origin to this question.

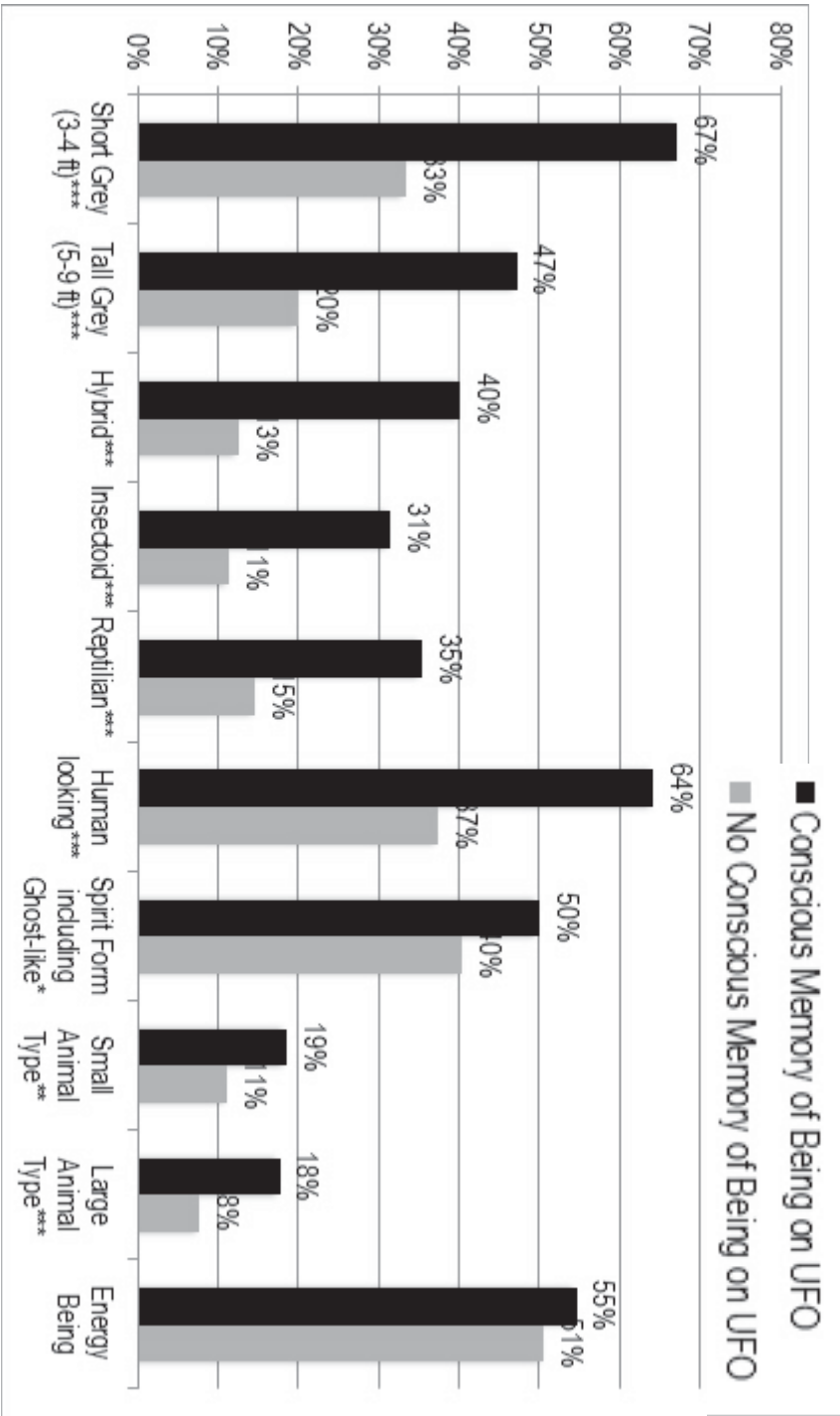


Figure 2. Types of beings encountered by those with conscious recall (N = 604) of being on board a UAP craft versus those with no recall (N = 668). ***Chi-square for difference is significant, $p < .001$, **Chi-square for difference is significant $p < .003$, *Chi-square for difference is significant, $p < .007$.

as follows: 1) short grey (67%), 2) human-looking (64%), 3) energy being (55%), 4) spirit form including ghost-like (50%), 4) tall grey (47%), and 5) hybrid (40%). Subjects reporting having had “conscious memory of being on board a UAP craft,” as opposed to those who had “no conscious memories” of such an experience, were more likely to report seeing one of many different types of beings. What is especially interesting is that the non-physical being in the form of a “spirit” or “energy being” was relatively more common (~50%) and similar (4–10%) between those who report either a conscious or non-conscious recall of their CE with an NHI on board a UAP craft. This finding supports the unique attribute of the CE being associated more often with a non-physical NHI regardless of one’s conscious state.

The Behavioral Outcomes Resulting from a Reported Contact Experience with Non-Human Intelligent Beings

A key finding of the FREE study was that the contact experience for most people, contrary to popular movie accounts of unpleasant “abductions” and medical experiments, was predominantly positive (Figure 3). This finding is consistent across almost all country samples, with roughly two-thirds of respondents of the four largest country samples reporting “Highly Positive” or “Slightly Positive” life changes resulting from contact. The number and percentage of subjects by race/ethnicity responding to this same question indicated that for all racial/ethnic categories and combinations, all were in the range of 61–86% positive in their rating of the positivity of impact of CE upon their life.

Approximately one-half to three-quarters (50–84%) of the subjects for each age category shown reported their CE as “Mainly Positive” as a function of age. There was a slight increase in reported positivity as age increased from 18 to 24 (50%, $N = 66$), 25 to 54 (61%, $N = 942$), to 55 and older (78%, $N = 669$). The reported CE also had a similar effect on changing one’s life by gender. For instance, 66% ($N = 1,016$) of females and 62% ($N = 729$) males claimed to have been changed in a “positive” way, whereas only 13% females and 12% males considered their CE as changing their life in a “negative way.” The increase in positivity in older CEs may be associated with the finding that this age group reported having had more frequent CEs than younger groups. This possibility is evidenced in Figure 4 which illustrates the significant relationship ($F = 9.03$, $p < .000$) between the frequency of reported interactions with an NHI and the subjects’ ($N = 1,670$) responses to the impact of their CEs on “changing their life in a negative, neutral, or positive way.” This result indicates a significant positive impact upon positivity of life changes with approximately one-

PANEL A		Response Rate for Question
	Number Reporting	
United States	1,186	57%
Canada	125	46%
Australia	131	48%
United Kingdom	107	46%
New Zealand	13	43%
Germany	7	28%
Ireland	7	32%
Denmark	3	19%
Mexico	10	63%
Netherlands	9	56%
Other countries (n=84)	143	54%
Total	1,741	53%

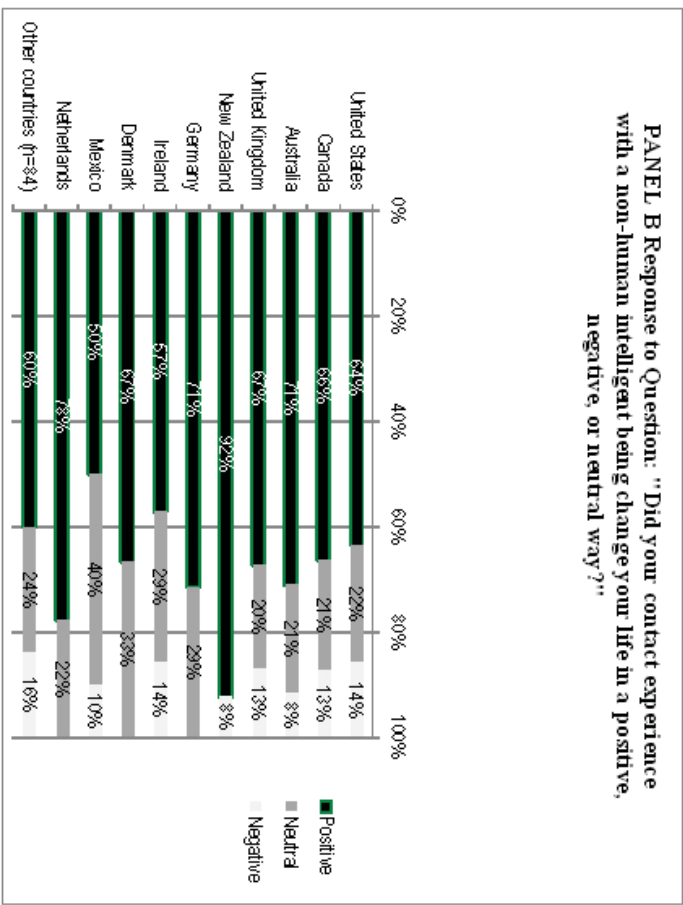


Figure 3. The type, number, and percentage of subjects by country of origin responding to the question "Did your contact experience with a non-human intelligent being change your life in a positive, negative, or neutral way?" Positive Effect = Percent responding "Highly Positive" or "Slightly Positive;" Neutral Effect = Percent responding "Neutral;" Negative Effect = Percent responding "Highly Negative" or "Slightly Negative;" (A) illustrates # and % rate for subjects responding by country of origin, (B) represents the type of response to the question by subject country of origin.

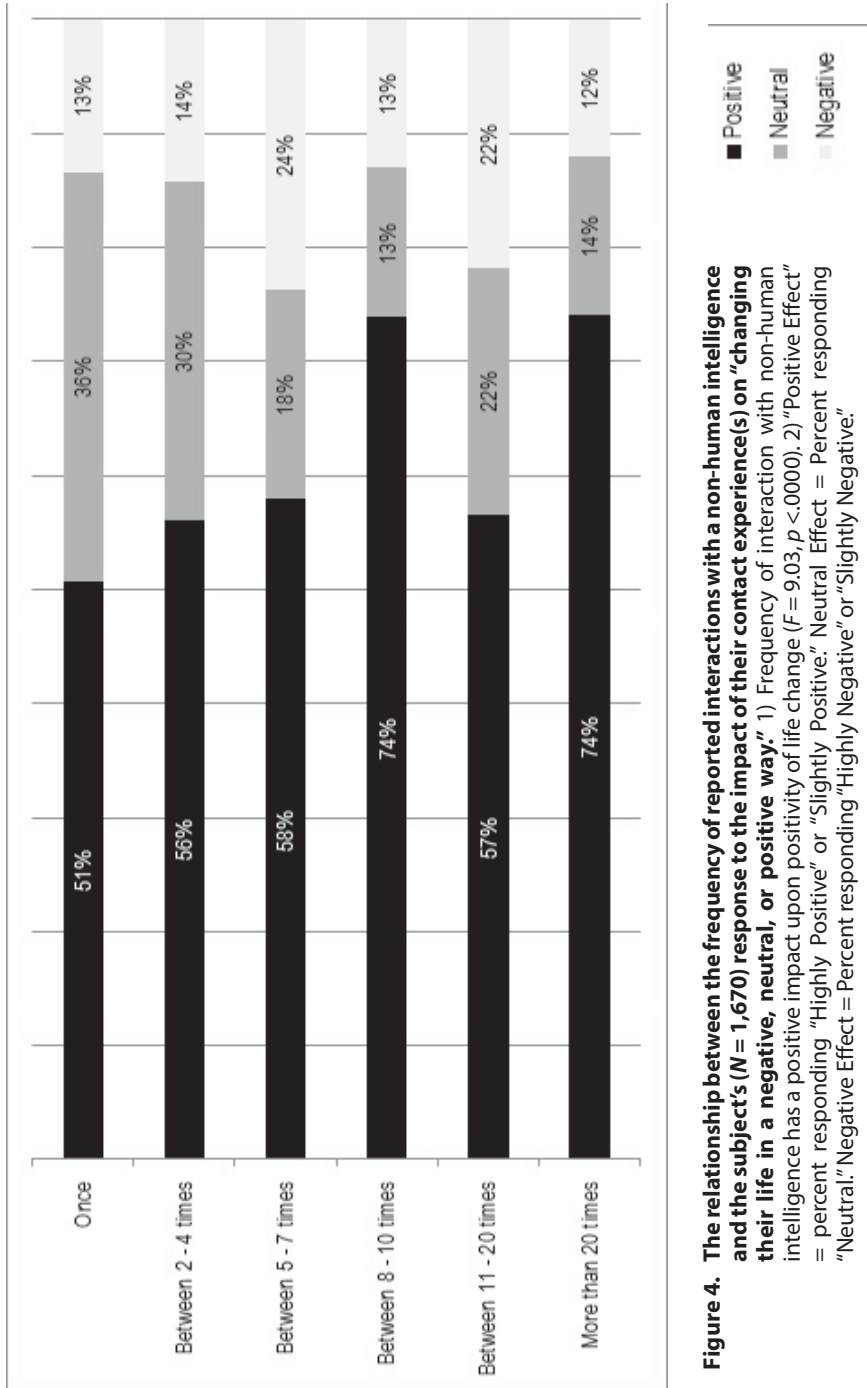


Figure 4. The relationship between the frequency of reported interactions with a non-human intelligence and the subject's (N = 1,670) response to the impact of their contact experience(s) on "changing their life in a negative, neutral, or positive way." 1) Frequency of interaction with non-human intelligence has a positive impact upon positivity of life change ($F = 9.03, p < .0000$). 2) "Positive Effect" = percent responding "Highly Positive" or "Slightly Positive;" Neutral Effect = Percent responding "Neutral;" Negative Effect = Percent responding "Highly Negative" or "Slightly Negative."

half to three-fourths of the subjects reporting that their interaction(s) with an NHI had a “positive impact” and only 15–20% reporting a “negative impact.” Those groups reporting more frequent interactions (e.g., 8–10 and more than 20 times) were more likely (~15–20%) to report a “positive impact” than for those reporting fewer interactions (e.g., once, and between two to seven times). About half (50.4%) of the respondents indicated that they had interacted more than 20 times with an NHI, and of this group 53% ($N = 1,001$) were female and 46% ($N = 669$) male.

The impact of those who report conscious ($N = 455$) and no conscious ($N = 1,012$) memories (total $N = 1,725$) of being on board a UAP and changes in their life showed some tendency for conscious recall (71%, $N = 455$), as opposed to no conscious (61%, $N = 1,012$) recall, and the result of greater positivity about their CEs ($F = 4.58, p = .0103$). In contrast, only approximately 15% of the subjects who had either conscious or no conscious recall of their CE reported having their life changed in a negative way.

The results in Figure 5 represent a comparison of the type of reported first and last few CEs associated with being on board a UAP craft [i.e. a) “More egalitarian”—being treated as more of an equal; b) “Abduction with permission and compassion”; and c) “More negative-like abduction”] as a function of those who claimed to have had either a “conscious” or “no conscious” memory recall of being on board a UAP craft. During the first few encounters, the CE group with conscious recall of being on board a UAP fell into two distinct categories: a) those with more positive, egalitarian experiences (47%, $N = 209$), and b) those with more negative, abduction-like encounters (42%, $N = 186$). In contrast, the CE group with no conscious recall of being on board a craft had significantly more positive, egalitarian experiences during their first few encounters ($t = 2.8503, p = .004$) than the CE group with conscious recall. However, both groups reported similar positive, egalitarian experiences ($N = 71\%$) in their last few encounters ($t = .871, p = .383$). Interestingly, the percentage of subjects with conscious recall of their “abduction” on board a UAP craft reported a more positive, egalitarian experience in their last few (71%) than first few (47%) CEs. This finding suggests a type of integrated adaptation of their CE which manifests in a reported increase (24%) in their positive viewpoint of their CE over time. Collectively, therefore, it appears that approximately three-quarters of those who have had a CE consider themselves “contactees” (“more egalitarian”—being treated as more of an “equal”). In contrast, ~10% of those who report having had a CE considered it an “abduction with permission and compassion” and ~20% felt it to be a “more negative-like abduction.” Despite traditionally held beliefs, these results suggest that even individuals who report having been “abducted” consider themselves “contactees.”

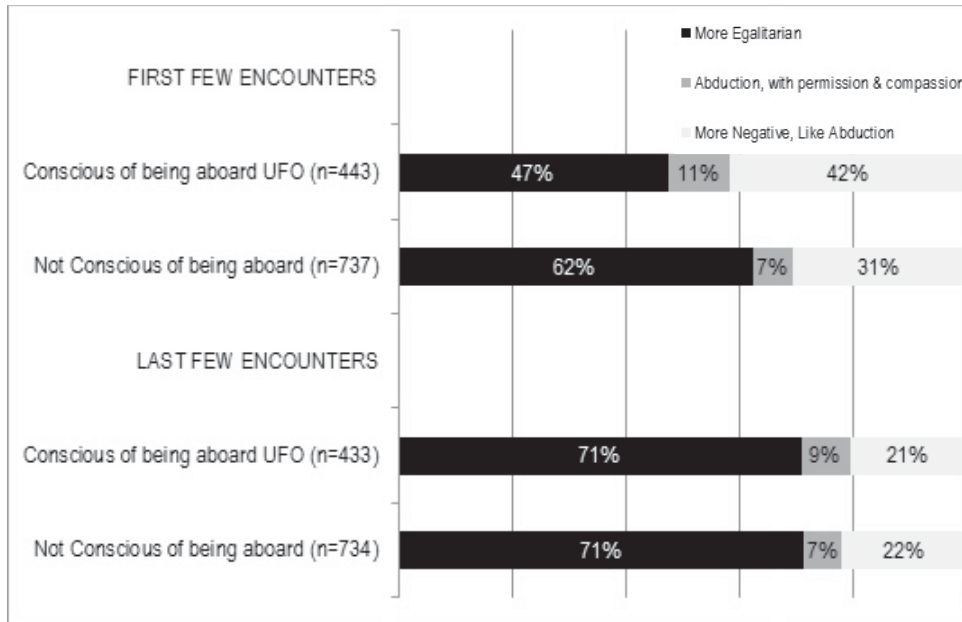


Figure 5. The difference in encounter experience between those with conscious (N = 443) and no conscious (N = 737) memories of being on board a UAP craft for the first and last few encounters. Subjects were asked to identify their type of experience among different types of encounter experiences included in the following: 1) “More Egalitarian” = percent responding “Being a “Contactee” or “Experiencer” (treating you as more of an equal) plus percent responding “Being a conscious contactee”; “conscious, cooperative, egalitarian and collegial”; 2) “Abduction with permission and compassion” = percent responding “Case of Abduction”: seeking permission, explaining, more compassionate,” and 3) “More Negative-Like Abduction” = percent responding “Case of Abduction”; “Milder, slightly more caring” plus percent responding “Case of Abduction,” most negative kind.” The difference for Conscious versus Non-Conscious groups was significant for First Few Encounters ($t = 2.8503; p = .004$), but not for the Last Few Encounters ($t = .871; p = .383$).

An analysis of the CEr’s responses to the question, “How would you describe your experiences with these entities?” indicated that the type of NHI being most likely to facilitate a “positive” response was the “Human Looking” ($N = 903$, 60% positive and 5% negative) and “Hybrid” ($N = 669$, 43% positive and 6% negative). In contrast, the “Reptilian” was considered the least positive and most negative ($N = 554$, 16% positive and 23% negative) of all NHI beings experienced. This outcome may be related to the physical appearance of the being encountered.

The Comparison of Out-of-Body and Near-Death Experiencers in Terms of Their Overall Emotional Evaluative Response (Positivity Index) Resulting from Contact Experiences

Since an OBE and an NDE have been documented to facilitate positive after-effects on personal viewpoints and values (Ring 1984, Long 2011, Morse & Perry 1994), we attempted to minimize potential sampling bias of such outcomes on positivity-related attributes in our study. It should be noted, however, that since the criteria for an OBE and an NDE were not fully delineated in our survey, their incidence and analyses may not be accurate since each are difficult to verify solely on the basis of their “yes” response. Despite this limitation, a measure of positivity of the subject’s “overall emotional evaluative response” resulting from their CEs in those who also have had an OBE or NDE is shown in Figure 6A and Figure 6B, respectively. This overall measure of positivity (Positivity Index) was constructed for use in correlational analyses using four Phase 2 response items (Alpha = .805) as follows:

1. Did your Contact Experience change your life in a Negative or a Positive way? How much?
2. Please provide an overall emotional evaluative response to your Contact Experience.
3. How would you characterize your first few initial Extraterrestrial Encounter Experiences? What were your initial beliefs about your experiences?
4. How would you characterize your last few Extraterrestrial Encounter Experiences? What are your beliefs now about your experiences?

Since the question “Please provide an overall emotional evaluative response to your Contact Experience” had the highest item-scale correlation ($r = .679$), this item was used as a surrogate for the Positivity Index in subsequent analyses for simplicity sake. As such, approximately two-thirds of the subjects reported having had a positive effect in terms of their overall emotional evaluative response resulting from their CE. Approximately 15% or less reported that their CE, with or without an OBE or an NDE, had a negative effect in this regard. A small 9% increase in positivity was seen for subjects who had both an OBE and a CE (71% of $N = 1,103$) versus a CE and no OBE (62% of $N = 268$). In contrast, there was no difference in the overall emotional evaluative response for subjects who had both an NDE and a CE (70% of $N = 505$) versus a CE without an NDE (70% of $N = 822$). Most respondents were positive about their CE whether or not

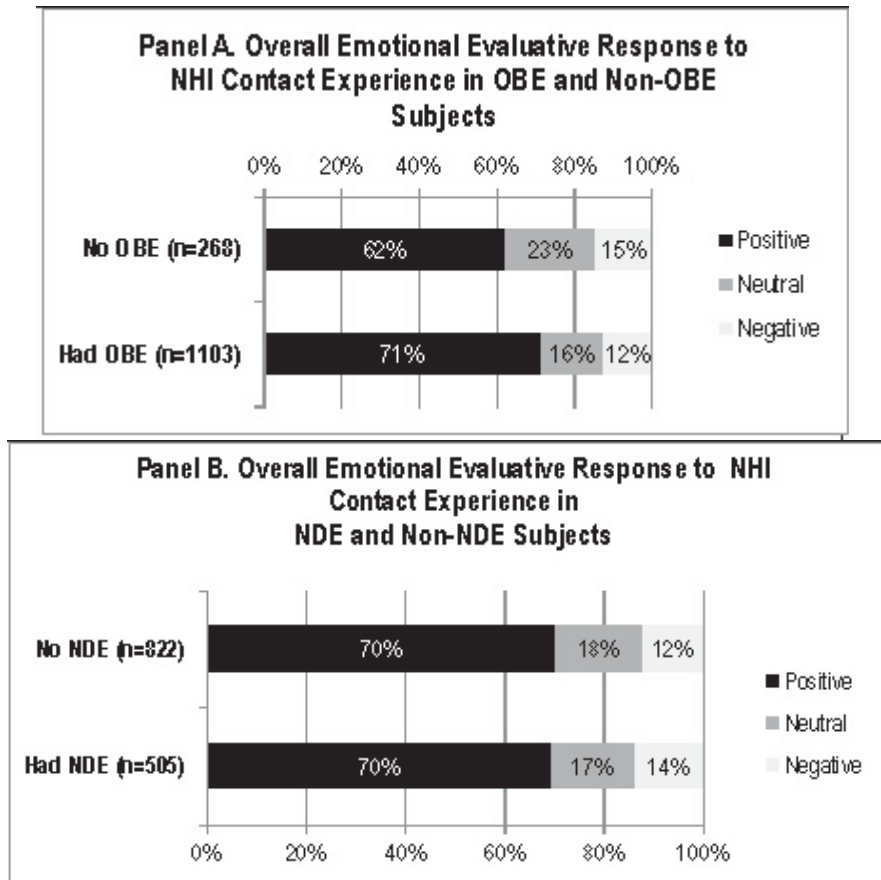


Figure 6. Comparison of OBE (A) and NDE (B) experiencers in terms of their overall emotional evaluative response resulting from contact experience. Positive = percent responding “Most positive emotional experiences in your life” or “Mostly positive emotional experiences,” Neutral = percent responding “Average emotional experiences,” and Negative = percent responding “Most negative emotional experiences in your life” or “Mostly negative.” The questions asking about positivity of experience used a 5-point scale (i.e. a rating of 4 and 5 are combined as “Positive,” a rating of 3 is considered “Neutral,” and a rating of 1 or 2 is scored as “Negative”).

they had an OBE or an NDE. Consequently, the effect of an OBE or an NDE in those reporting a CE had a minimal effect, if any, on positivity of their emotional evaluative response. Further, the presence of a prior OBE or NDE had little if any potentiation effect on the positivity results. The increase in positivity resulting from having an OBE or NDE plus a CE versus just a CE alone did not exceed 9% for the OBE and 7% for the NDE

TABLE 5
Items Showing Largest Attitude Change among Those Who Responded
“More Than 10 Times” to the Question: How many times have you had this type
of contact without a non-human intelligent being physically present?

	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	Number Responding	Response Rate
My understanding of myself	90%	9%	1%	500	85%
My understanding of “What is Life all about”	87%	10%	2%	500	85%
My interest in self-understanding	87%	13%	0%	503	86%
My concern with the welfare of the planet Earth	87%	12%	1%	502	86%
My desire to achieve a higher consciousness	86%	13%	0%	502	86%
My concern with spiritual matters	86%	13%	1%	501	86%
My Spiritual feelings	85%	13%	2%	500	85%
My insight into the problems of others	84%	15%	1%	499	85%
My appreciation of nature	84%	16%	0%	502	86%
My understanding of others	83%	16%	2%	502	86%
My personal sense of “Purpose in Life”	83%	14%	3%	499	85%
My sense that there is some inner meaning to my life	82%	16%	2%	501	86%
My interest in psychic phenomena	82%	17%	1%	500	85%
My interest in the possibility of Extraterrestrial life	82%	18%	1%	502	86%
My compassion for others	82%	16%	2%	499	85%
My sense of the sacred aspect of life	80%	18%	2%	499	85%
My concern with Ecological matters	80%	18%	2%	503	86%

Percent Favorable = percent responding “Strongly Increased” or “Increased Somewhat”

Percent Neutral = percent responding “Had Not Changed”

Percent Unfavorable = percent responding “Decreased Somewhat” or “Strongly Decreased.”

TABLE 6
Items Showing Largest Attitude Change Among Those Who Responded “More Than 10 Times” to the Question: How many times have you had this type of contact with an NHI Physically Present?

	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	Number Responding	Response Rate
My interest in self-understanding	86%	14%	1%	200	85%
My appreciation of nature	85%	15%	0%	202	86%
My concern with the welfare of the planet Earth	85%	14%	1%	200	85%
My understanding of myself	84%	13%	3%	198	84%
My interest in the possibility of Extraterrestrial life	83%	17%	1%	200	85%
My sense that there is some inner meaning to my life	81%	17%	2%	199	84%
My understanding of “What is Life all about”	81%	15%	4%	198	84%
My interest in psychic phenomena	81%	19%	0%	201	85%
My Spiritual feelings	80%	16%	4%	202	86%
My concern with spiritual matters	80%	17%	3%	201	85%
My desire to achieve a higher consciousness	80%	19%	1%	201	85%

Favorable = percent responding “Strongly Increased” or “Increased Somewhat”

Neutral = percent responding “Had Not Changed”

Unfavorable = percent responding “Decreased Somewhat” or “Strongly Decreased”

group comparisons. Consequently, the CE alone, which resulted in a largely positive impact in the majority of subjects in this study, suggests that the CE is generally positive for those who either have had or not had an OBE or NDE. Consequently, an NDE or OBE makes virtually no difference on positivity measures.

What is especially interesting is that a very large percentage of the study sample (80.4% of $N = 1,381$) reported having had an OBE as part of the CE. Given that only about 10% of all people in the U.S. report having had at least one OBE in their lifetime, this unusually high incidence of OBEs associated with a CE provokes further questions of the phenomenon's influence on the psychological state of the individual, and the potential nature of the phenomenon itself (Terhune 2009).

Analysis of Reported Attitude Change Resulting from Contact Experience

The positive attitude analyses for items showing the greatest increase (>80%; $N = 499-503$) in respondents with "More than 10" CEs of both a nonphysical (without an NHI present) and physical (with an NHI present) nature are represented in Table 5 and Table 6, respectively. The specific attitudes showing reported positive change ("strongly increased" or "increased somewhat") were similar for both the nonphysical and physical CEs. This included matters of insights associated with understanding oneself and others, life, concern for the planet, spiritual concerns, psychic phenomena, and achieving a higher consciousness, among others.

Response items correlating (Pearson) most highly with an increase in positivity (average N for correlations = 1,490) to the four-item "positivity index" (Alpha = 0.805) included an increase in feelings of "self-worth;" sense of "purpose and meaning of life;" and ability to love others in an impersonal way, among others. This outcome was reinforced in a stepwise regression of attitude-change items with the positivity index as the dependent variable. More specifically, the item "My feeling of self-worth" was found to both best predict the positivity index (12.2% of variance explained) and to correlate most highly with the positivity index ($r = 0.383$). The similarity of these statistical results reinforces the finding that the CEs have a distinct and largely positive outcome in their perception of themselves and others.

Using the positivity index, a comparison of "positive" outcomes indicated that a non-physical (without an NHI physically present) CE facilitates a more positive outcome than the physical kind (NHI physically present) for those reporting more than 10 CEs. Moreover, this increased sense of "positivity" was reflected in the comparatively larger percentage of subjects who reported more than 10 CEs with a non-physical (81%: $N = 485$) than a physical 68% ($N = 196$) NHI. Apparently, frequent CEs with either a physical or non-physical NHI facilitates a dramatic increase in many attributes and viewpoints that seem to alter one's perspectives on life and oneself. Based on such reported psycho-spiritual outcomes, the question remains as to what specific characteristic of the CE serves to trigger an increase in one's appreciation of life and concern for the welfare of others.

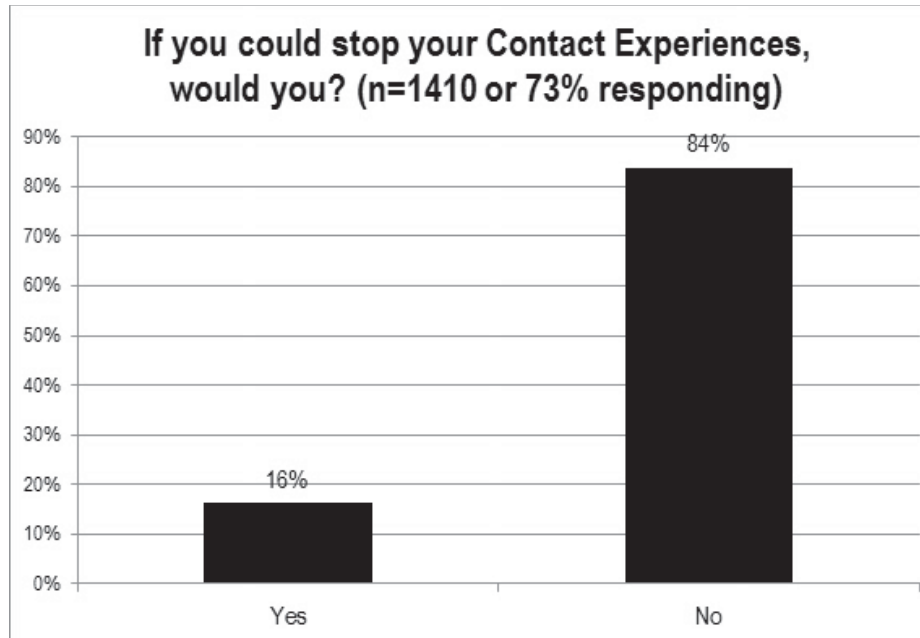


Figure 7. Subject responses ($N = 1,410$ or 73% responding) to the survey question: "If you could stop your contact experience, would you?"

The positive outcomes measured using the "positivity index" (Table 5) likely contributed to the result in Figure 7 that indicated that of 1,919 subjects, 84% reported that they did "Not" want their CEs to end. This dramatic outcome was reinforced by the result that the majority of subjects (60%, $N = 609$) who claimed to have been "taken and relocated to another location" also did not want their CE to end. This result was supported in another study ($N = 10$) by McNally (2012) who concluded that "on balance" 90% of his study sample reported that they were "glad to have been abducted." Despite the large difference in sample sizes, McNally's conclusion is consistent with the FREE result that 84% of a large population sample did not want their CE to end.

Contact Experience in a Matrix Reality

An analysis of CE in a "matrix reality" (MR) shown in Table 7 was performed since a much larger population of CEs reported a positive attitude change resulting from a non-physical ($N = \sim 500$) rather than from a physical ($N = \sim 100$) nature experience. An MR was defined for the respondents as follows:

TABLE 7

The Subject Responses for Individuals Who Reported to Have: 1) "Met an NHI Being in a Matrix Reality", 2) More than Ten Contact Experiences of a Non-Physical Nature, and for Whom, 3) the Matrix Reality Was as "Real as Talking with a Family Member". 34% (N = 655) of Phase 2 Respondents Met These Criteria

				Responded
Did this NHI contact experience happen when you were physically in your body?	Yes, 53%	No, 47%		612
Was your consciousness separated from your body at the time of the NHI contact experience?	Yes, 79%	No, 21%		615
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, were your thoughts sped up?	No, 39%	Faster than usual, 32%	Incredibly fast, 29%	609
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, were your senses more vivid than usual?	No, 18%	More vivid, 40%	Incredibly more vivid, 42%	614
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you feel separated from your body? For example, I lost awareness of my body, I clearly left my body and existed outside it.	Yes, 60%	No, 16%	Not sure, 24%	637
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you have a feeling of peace or pleasantness?	No, 22%	Relief or calmness, 29%	Incredible peace or pleasantness, 49%	631
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you see or feel surrounded by a brilliant light?	No, 45%	An unusually bright light, 13%	A light clearly of mystical or other-worldly origin, 42%	618
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you seem to encounter a mystical being or presence, or hear an unidentifiable voice?	No, 16%	I sensed their presence, 37%	I actually saw this being, 47%	634
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you see deceased or religious spirits?	No, 61%	I sensed their presence, 12%	I actually saw this being or beings, 27%	630
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you seem to enter some other, unearthly world?	No, 23%	Some unfamiliar and strange place, 31%	A clearly mystical or unearthly realm, 47%	625
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did time seem to speed up or slow down?	Time seemed to go faster or slower than usual, 10%	Everything seemed to be happening at once, 15%	Time stopped or lost all meaning, 55%	625
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you feel a sense of harmony or unity with the universe?	No, 25%	I felt no longer in conflict with nature, 14%	I felt united or one with the world, 61%	619
While in this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you suddenly seem to understand everything?	No, 35%	Everything about myself or others, 22%	Everything about the universe, 43%	622
In this "Matrix"-like type of reality, did you perceive that Time did not exist?	Yes, 79%	No, 21%		621

Not in a 3-Dimensional reality, i.e. you were not in a perceived physical location such as on earth, on a planet, or ship, etc., but instead you perceived yourself in a "Matrix" type of reality (a reality with no boundaries, similar to like you are in the middle of outer space).

Additional criteria for subject inclusion comprised the following: 1) frequent CEs (>10 times) whose responses were considered more reliable than those who had fewer CEs; 2) CEs who responded "yes" to the questions: a) "Did you ever have an NHI CE not in a 3-dimensional reality, and b) for whom the matrix reality was as "real as talking with a family member."

Of the 35% ($N = 655$) of Phase 2 respondents who met these criteria, approximately three-quarters to two-thirds of the subjects responded "yes" to the diverse range of the following: 1) an altered sense of reality (e.g., consciousness leaving the body; losing body awareness; entering an "unearthly world", a feeling of "harmony with the universe"; and "understood everything"), and 2) perception (senses more vivid; absence of time, or that time sped up or slowed down, and thoughts sped up). Approximately one-half to one-quarter reported seeing a bright light; encountering a mystical being or presence or hearing an unidentifiable voice; seeing deceased or religious spirits; and an incredible feeling of peace or pleasantness. Approximately 80% also claimed that their consciousness was separated from their body and 72% experienced a sense of "expanded consciousness" in the presence of the NHI at the time of the CE. What is especially interesting is the finding that reports of perceptions of alternate realities/dimensions, OBEs, perceived dimensions/alternate realities, and past-life experiences, were more frequent in occurrence than reports of having been physically "abducted" and brought to a craft. In fact, only approximately one-fourth or fewer of the subjects claimed to have conscious recall of being on board a UAP craft and physically interacting with an NHI.

Subjects who reported having had an OBE or NDE were also much more likely to have had CEs in an MR. There was a significant effect (chi-square $p < .0001$), for example, for those having an OBE and meeting an NHI in an MR (68%; $N = 702$) than meeting an NHI in a non-MR (24%; $N = 611$). A similar result was observed for those having had an NDE and meeting an NHI in an MR (44%; $N = 732$) than meeting an NHI in a non-MR (30%; $N = 701$). While the likelihood of reporting an NHI was significantly greater for those who reported either an OBE or an NDE in an MR than in a non-MR, the percent difference was much greater for the OBE (44%) than for the NDE (14%) group.

TABLE 8
Information Reported Received during a Contact Experience. Items Ranked by
Percent for Subjects (N = 1,184) Answering "Yes" to the Question:
"Did you receive any type of communication from a non-human intelligence?"

	Percent Responded "Yes"	Percent Responded "No"	Missing	Number Responding
Can the NHIs travel to other dimensions?	97%	3%	208	976
Can the NHIs travel to the future?	85%	15%	377	807
Can the NHIs travel to both the past and also to the future?	84%	16%	373	811
Can the NHIs travel to the past?	83%	17%	377	807
Did the NHIs impart reassuring messages to you?	67%	33%	113	1071
Did the NHIs provide you with a spiritual message?	59%	41%	111	1073
Did the NHIs give you a message of Love or of Oneness?	59%	41%	96	1088
Did the NHIs ever tell you about the concept of Parallel Universes (many universes)?	36%	64%	128	1056
Did you ever call down a UAP craft?	35%	65%	112	1072
Did the NHIs ever tell you about the concept of "Time"?	35%	65%	113	1071
Did the NHIs give you any message about God or a Creator?	34%	66%	113	1071
Did the NHIs tell you of your mission here on Earth?	34%	66%	110	1074

Communication Received During Contact Experience

An often-ignored aspect of the CE pertains to reported communications with NHI beings. Table 8 illustrates, for instance, that an overwhelming majority of the subjects (>83%: $N = 1,184$) who responded “yes” to the question: “Did you receive any type of communication from an NHI?” claimed that the NHI had the ability to travel to another dimension and/or time (past or future), and more than half reported having received “reassuring messages” (67%), a “spiritual message” (59%), and/or a “message of Love or of Oneness” (59%). Additionally, approximately one-third contend to have received information regarding parallel universes, the concept of time, and messages about God or a Creator. Of this group, 37% ($N = 438$) claimed that the communication was “two-way using telepathy” (NHI present) and 34% ($N = 402$) reported it as “non-physical thought/voice downloaded from an NHI to a human” (NHI not present). Sixty percent ($N = 710$) also reported having received telepathic messages on more than five occasions.

The positivity index was also found to correlate most strongly with the message of “Love or of Oneness” incurred during their CE. This result was further reinforced by a stepwise regression which indicated that this message accounted for the greatest percent of variance ($N = 1,014$: 14.9%) in positivity. It is important to note, however, that much of the unaccounted variance in positivity (69.4%) is likely related to personality traits and environment-related factors not specifically addressed in this survey.

Physical Aspects of Being “Abducted” by a Non-Human Intelligence

The incidence of the reported physical characteristics associated with NHI interactions shown in Figure 8 indicate that the majority of subjects (>65%) did not report events and/or experiences typically associated with traditionally held beliefs of the “alien-abduction phenomenon.” More specifically, only approximately one-fourth or fewer of the subjects claimed to have conscious recall of the following CEs: 1) subjected to biological examinations while lying on a table, 2) being told about the implantation of a device, and 3) having a fetus removed from their body. The most common (53%) physically related experience reported was the presence of wounds on their skin following their CE.

What may be the most significant type of physical CE outcome was the finding that 50% of 1,465 CEs responded “yes” to the question: “Do you believe that any of these NHIs have performed a medical healing on either you or another member of your family?” This medical outcome was consistent with the findings by Dennett (1996) who reported more than 100 accounts of healings of injuries, illnesses, and diseases performed by an

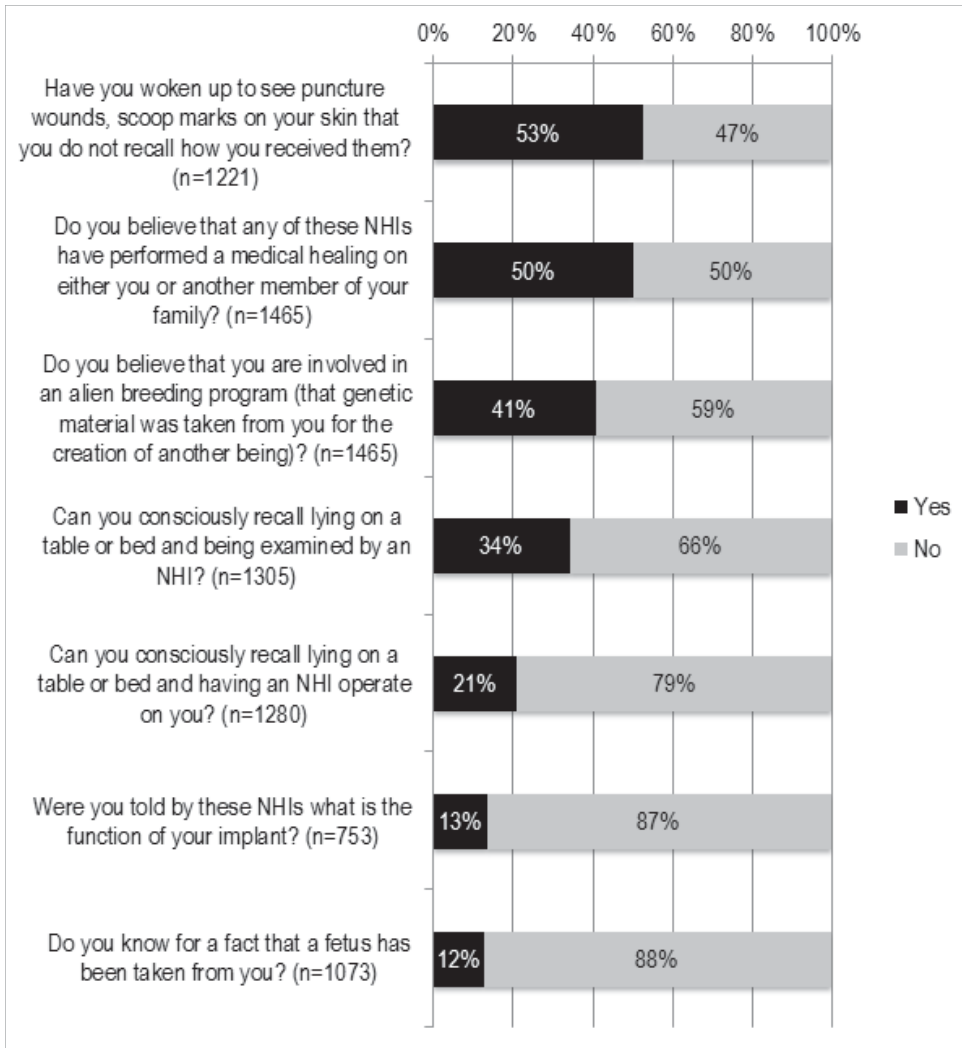


Figure 8. Responses to questions related to physical aspects of being abducted by a non-human intelligent being.

NHI associated with or without a UAP craft. Another surprising outcome was that 41% ($N = 1,141$) of respondents believed they were “part of an alien breeding program” which included “genetic material being taken” for the “creation of another being.” In fact, approximately three-quarters (79%, $N = 533$) of those participating in this kind of program claimed to have had an alien hybrid child or children.

Comparison of the FREE Study to Prior Investigations

The lack of CE-related research in the literature mitigates any reliable comparative analyses between the FREE and other studies on those who report having had an “alien abduction experience.” Comparisons with the few studies in this area by Ring (1984, 1992), Clancy (2005), Marden and Stoner (2012, 2013), and Friedman and Marden (2016) also are not straightforward given the associated methodological differences as follows: 1) the number of subjects (FREE study: $N = 3,256$ vs. $< N = 100$); 2) the type, wording, and number of survey questions asked (more than 500 in the FREE study vs. ~ 50); 3) the state of memory recall (hypnotic regression, lucid dreaming, conscious, and not-conscious, etc.) during the CE; 4) the incidence and type of CEs (“abduction” or “contactee”); and 5) the impact of pre-existing OBE/NDE on the positivity of CEs. Consequently, the comparisons made among the FREE and other study results must be regarded as tenuous and interpreted with caution.

While prior studies have focused on physical-type “Abductions” or individuals who have been taken and relocated on board a UAP craft by so-called “extraterrestrials,” the FREE study analyzed those who reported either a physical (abductee) or non-physical (contactee) type CE that may or may not relate to sightings of a UAP. This is represented, in part, by the finding that the majority ($\sim 75\%$) of the FREE study population reported “not” having conscious memories of being on board a UAP craft. Prior studies which have not made this distinction, therefore, may have excluded a certain percentage of CEs who were “contactees” and not “abductees.” That is, all prior studies have focused on those who claim to have been physically abducted, whereas the FREE study included subjects who have reported having had both abduction and contactee CEs. Moreover, while most studies have understandably focused on the psychological profile of the CEer noted before the events, very few studies have examined the outcomes facilitated by the CE on their personal viewpoints and values, and characteristics of altered perceptions incurred during their CE.

The most significant comparative psychologically based study of behavioral outcomes facilitated by the CE, to that of the FREE study, was that obtained by psychologist Ring (1992) in CEers who reported either an NDE or UAP. In the Ring study, both the UAP encounter ($N = 97$) and NDE ($N = 74$) subject groups manifested very similar behavioral transformations despite their uniquely different experiences. Remarkably, the behavioral outcomes reported by CEers in the FREE study, which showed an increase in social concern, spirituality, appreciation of life, self-worth, compassion toward others, telepathy, and belief in life after death, were similar to those reported in the UAP and NDE groups in the Ring (1992) study. The

reported consistency between the FREE and Ring study subjects support the conclusion by Ring (1992) of a “pervasive pattern of wide-ranging and powerful psychophysical changes following either a UAP abduction or NDE experience.” The overarching question is whether or not such insights and beliefs actually represent a greater understanding and true perspective of these extraordinary experiences.

In a questionnaire study to determine common characteristics of the abduction experience, for example, Marden and Stoner (2012) analyzed 50 questions from abduction experiencer (AE) ($N = 50$) and control non-abduction experiencer (NAE) ($N = 25$) groups that pertained to the subjects’ demographics, memories, and emotional and physiological responses. This study indicated that the vast majority of the AE group was revisited (some more than 10 times) and taken from their homes to an alien craft. In contrast, the FREE study also revealed that it is not uncommon for subjects to report frequent CEs (approximately one-half of the sample of 1,316 subjects interacted 11 or more times). In the Marden and Stoner study, 62% of the AE group stated that they consciously recalled the observation of an NHI immediately prior to an abduction while they were outside their home, and 67% consciously recalled the observation of an “unconventional craft.” Similarly, in the FREE study subjects, slightly more than half (53–61% of $N = 2,430$) claimed to have observed an NHI being, and approximately two-thirds reported seeing an “intelligently controlled craft” which “hovered” (44–52%), made “impossible maneuvers” (30–39%), and “disappeared quickly” (33–42%).

Other similar results reported in both the Marden and Stoner (2012) and FREE study included the following: 1) Forty-three percent ($N = 21$) of the AE group in the Marden and Stoner (2012) study stated that “witnesses reported the observation of a UAP prior to or during their abduction.” In contrast, 41% ($N = 2,368$) of the FREE subjects reported that the UAP was “not a man-made craft” and seen by multiple observers; 2) Fifty-three percent (21 of 40 subjects) of the AE group believed they felt an alien implant in their body, and 83% stated that they had awoken with unexplained marks on their bodies. Similarly, 52% ($N = 1,302$) of the FREE subjects believed that an NHI placed a permanent foreign object in their body, and 53% reported having awakened to see puncture wounds or scoop marks on their skin that they could not recall how they received; and 3) The reported experience of telepathic communication associated with the CE was a common result in the Marden and Stoner study (88% of AE group) and the FREE study (55% of $N = 2,368$).

The most commonly reported types of paranormal anomalous activity associated with the CE in the FREE study (receiving telepathic messages;

malfunctioning electrical appliances; sightings of orbs, ghosts and/or poltergeists; “missing time”; and observing “strange lights in their house with no known source”) were surprisingly consistent with Vallee’s (1977, 2008) description of the UAP in his “Layer V: Psychic Effects” model:

Impressions of communication without a direct sensory channel, poltergeist phenomena: motions and sounds without a specific cause, outside the observed presence of a UFO, etc.

Other studies also have reported increased paranormal abilities in the aftermath of an “alien abduction” (Bullard 1994, Ring 1984, 1992), and many report long histories of ostensibly paranormal events preceding their “abduction” experience (Bullard 1987, Randle, Estes, & Cone 1999, Ring 1992). Similarly, 88% (AE Group; $N = 43$) of the subjects in the Marden and Stoner (2012) study reported paranormal activity in their homes (light orbs that dart or float through the air, poltergeist activity such as household items flying through the air, and pictures flying off walls, etc.). This activity was also noted by Hopkins, Jacobs, and Westrum (1992) of CEs associated with a sense of a “strange figure(s) present, missing time, seeing strange balls of light in one’s room, and unexplained scars on their body.” In fact, one of the major findings in the FREE study was the frequent report by CEs of sightings of orbs, ghosts, and/or poltergeists.

The traditionally held belief that an “abduction”-related CE commonly involves sexual and biological examinations, which may include the removal of a fetus, was evidenced to a lesser extent in the FREE study. That is, approximately one-fourth and fewer of the sample population ($N = 1,224$) reported being subjected to biological examinations (28%), sex (12%), and to “know for a fact that a fetus was taken” from them (12%). Interestingly, however, 41% ($N = 1,141$) of respondents believed they were “part of an alien breeding program” that included “genetic material being taken” for the “creation of another being.” Although these physical experiences do seem to occur, their reported incidence appears to be less than that suggested by those who have described a typical abduction as follows: 1) Jacobs (2000) with hypnotized “abductees,” described a typical abduction experience as being associated with “harvesting” by which the “alien” causes sexual stimulation prior to an internal procedure to recover an egg or sperm; 2) Newman and Baumeister (1996) reported women having “sexual intercourse with aliens,” with some women reporting having had offspring resulting from this act; and 3) Based on an analysis of a sample of 270 abduction reports, Bullard (1987) described the most common features of an “abduction experience” as “capture” (caught and taken aboard a UFO) and “examination” (subjected to physical, sexual, mental, and/or spiritual examinations).

Spiritual, Mystical, and Extraordinary Experiences

Spiritual, mystical, and extraordinary experiences (SMEE), which represent various types of non-ordinary or altered states of consciousness (ASC), and associated encounters with a so-called “supernatural world,” have been widely reported throughout human history across cultures. These experiences are often characterized by perceptions of oneness/interconnectedness with the universe, positive emotions, alterations of spatial and temporal awareness, insight and wisdom, a sense of spirituality, the absence of physical and mental objects of ordinary consciousness, and the compelling sense that the experience feels “real” (Griffiths et al. 2008, Beauregard 2012).

SMEE, which has the potential to dramatically trigger a fragmented self-identity and transcendent experience that can be life-changing, has been elicited in retreat settings (Hood 1975), through meditation (Newberg et al. 2001), under conditions of sensory isolation, with psychedelic drugs (Griffiths et al. 2006, 2008, Hood 2014), and even by non-invasive brain stimulation (Yaden et al. 2015, 2016). These experiences have been shown to occur spontaneously, resulting from brain injuries, exposure to awe-inspiring situations, NDE/OBEs, and even in CEs with or without a UAP interaction. What is especially interesting is that SMEEs also appear to correlate with positive changes in family life, reduced fear of death, and a greater sense of purpose (Koenig, King, & Carson 2012). In fact, the analysis of the diverse range of CEs in the FREE study, which appeared to facilitate similar positive behavioral outcomes in the majority of the population sample, may actually represent a type of SMEE. If such outcomes are indeed valid, then one may speculate that an aspect of consciousness may serve as the fundamental characteristic associated with a diverse range of SMEEs, of which the CE associated with or without a UAP may be a part.

Given this context, a key question pertains to how one can explain aspects of physical and non-physical interactions with NHI beings as reported by CEs in the FREE study, as well as by those who report NDEs and OBEs, among other SMEEs. Many researchers have demonstrated, for instance, that both NDEs (Atwater 2017, Long 2011, Morse 1994, Ring 1984, 1992, 1994) and OBEs (Alegretti 2004, Buhlman 2013, Minero 2012, Monroe 1977) involve contact experiences with NHI beings. Studies have also documented individuals who reported contact with NHI beings while remote viewing (Adams & Luke 2013, Targ 2012) and during hallucinogenic experiences using Dimethyltryptamine (DMT) (Harner 1990, Adams & Luke 2013, Strassman 2001). The behavioral outcomes of subjects in these studies, however, have not been sufficiently analyzed to determine the

similarities and differences, if any, incurred from different SMEEs. When mystical experiences have occurred in experimental settings, whether facilitated by hallucinogenic drugs (Grof 1980, Pahnke & Richards 1966), hypnosis (Cardeña & Beard 1996), meditation, or sensory modification (Masters & Houston 1973), there has been a strong consistency of such experiences on behavioral outcomes which also appear to be similar to those reported in the FREE study population.

Collectively, these studies suggest that an aspect of consciousness may actually represent the key unifying characteristic that explains each distinct CE (i.e. SMEE). In fact, consciousness, which has been acknowledged to affect quantum systems (Dunne & Jahn 1992, Jahn et al. 2000, Radin 2002, 2006, 2008) is largely ignored as a contributing variable for such CEs, despite the fact that many are directly aligned with ASC. The component of consciousness, for instance, was represented in the FREE study as follows: 1) Sixty-seven percent reported that their “consciousness separated from their body” at the time of the CE, and 2) Seventy percent believed they felt a “sense of expanded consciousness” in the presence of NHIs, among others illustrated in Table 7. Alterations in perception, emotion, and attitudes/viewpoints were also a major component of the CE as indicated in Tables 5–7, and Figures 4–7. Interestingly, such changed perceptions and perspectives reported by CEs in this study have also been documented in other studies associated with different types of SMEEs (CEs, NDE, OBE, and DMT, etc.) noted earlier.

Within this context, the consistency of reported CEs, OBE/NDEs, and SMEEs may be critical for understanding a unique aspect of human perception and ASC. Although our current medical and scientific concepts are inadequate to explain all aspects of reported CEs, certain features appear to correspond with some of the basic principles from quantum mechanics, such as non-locality, coherence or interconnectedness, knowledge of existence in another dimension without a body, the perception of time as if the past, present, and future exist simultaneously and instantaneously, and the instantaneous information exchange in a timeless and placeless dimension. This concept may be indirectly supported by the results in this paper and from the broad discipline of SMEEs of subjective reports that “time and space no longer existed,” and that it is possible to “see everything at once” and “through any obstacle and in every detail as a holographic view.” Consequently, a key question emerges as to whether or not the similarity of such ASC helps facilitate changes in one’s personal viewpoints and philosophical values. This notion should be addressed in future studies of CEs with NHI and UAP.

Future Directions

A major goal for researchers should be to establish agreed-upon principles and theories to be tested by recognized scholars among different scientific disciplines, and supported by independent studies to verify research outcomes in the study of CErS associated with and without the UAP. This research mission, however, is impeded by the following: 1) intangible personal accounts serve as the primary source of the CE evidence for study with a paucity of tangible, objective UAP evidence available for study, 2) it lacks a widely accepted theory of its phenomena, 3) research cannot be performed and replicated upon demand or be controlled in a laboratory setting, 4) according to the general scientific community, extraordinary claims made by many UAP researchers have not been sufficiently supported by empirical evidence, and 5) limited progress has been made in understanding the nature and origin of the phenomenon despite many decades of UAP investigations that have focused almost exclusively on the psychology of so-called “alien abductees” and the physical aspects of the phenomenon.

It is very difficult to either reject or confirm any hypothesis since the scientific method and principles routinely applied in research do not easily conform to the anecdotal testimony of reported CEs. Consequently, the FREE study results cannot be sufficiently explained and confirmed at the present time. Despite this lack of validation, the similarity of reported psycho-spiritual outcomes engendered by CEs warrant the need to further study aspects of these results within the physical, behavioral, and social sciences. The difficulty for researchers in this arena, however, is that one can't control for when such transformational experiences specifically occur. This makes studying them directly nearly impossible. In spite of this, it is clear that such behaviorally transformative outcomes may result from either the reported CE by subjects in this study, a psychological aberration, or possibly something else which cannot be conceptualized at the present time. Consequently, the CE catalyst, which appears to alter aspects of consciousness and personal attitudes and viewpoints, is very difficult, if not impossible, to research (e.g., psychological and physiological) since the CE and associated effects spontaneously emerge in the CEr.

Based on the FREE study findings, future research in this arena should focus on experienced individuals (CErS) who report: 1) being “frequent interactors” (more than 10 CEs), 2) having conscious recall of their CE, and 3) having not reported a prior SMEE. This homogeneous population should be developed as part of a multidisciplinary study to address the following questions and methodological considerations:

1. Construct a reliable and valid psychological instrument to identify “true CErS” in order to assess the psychological outcomes of their CE. This instrument should be capable of measuring the extent and progression of an individual’s CE, and distinguishing among different SMEEs (e.g., physical/sensory CE, non-physical/extrasensory CE, OBE, NDE, and DMT, etc.). The next step should be to assess via both quantitative and qualitative questionnaire measures, the features, attributes, and other dimensions of the CE that appear to influence or predict the extent of personal change that occurs in the CErS. For example, what role do such things as the content of communications with NHI beings, the modality of contact, and the reported sense of one’s consciousness separating from the body, among other factors, play in eliciting changes in CEr attitudes, motivation, personality, and/or sense of well-being? Future studies should, therefore, begin to isolate the relative contribution of personal and situational variables, and related interactions, to observed changes in experiencers.

2. Future research should focus on frequent interactors whose responses may be more accurate and representative of characteristics associated with the CE. More specifically, how does a group of “frequent interactors” compare with the normal adult population and/or a control group on both standard psychological inventories, and on Positive Psychology measures? And how have the behavioral effects resulting from CE influenced their lives, social interactions, and family over time?

3. Collectively, the FREE study results, which suggest that the CE appears to be more a non-physical than physical type event, imply that future research may be more productive by incorporating both non-physical and physical CE populations to better understand the similarities of how each are described and experienced, and determining what factors may contribute to them in CErS.

It is critical to these research considerations that researchers cease studying the phenomenon as a separate science and to apply a multidisciplinary research-based approach. That is, to better understand the complex aspects of the apparent physical and non-physical characteristics of the CE and their associated impact on human behavior, research with CErS should be conducted using different approaches unique to several fields of study (psychology, physics, sociology, and biology, etc.). Consequently, a research plan supported by sufficient fiscal resources should contain appropriate goals as part of a protocol to help attract and assemble a multidisciplinary team of scientists to develop methodological approaches

to test agreed-upon hypotheses to study the phenomenon, and to publish their research in established refereed journals.

Discussion

Overview

While most UAP studies have focused on the psychological profile of the abductee/contactee, only a few studies with small sample sizes have examined the essence and impact of the CE on the individual's personal viewpoints and values, perceptions, and emotions. This is an important consideration for future research, especially since the FREE study indicates that approximately 70% ($N = 3,256$) of the study population claimed to have had very similar positive behavioral transformations as a direct outcome of their CE. In contrast, only 15–20% reported a “negative” impact resulting from their CE. In fact, the reported altered patterns of behavior and associated positive psycho-spiritual transformative outcomes in one or more forms of personal growth, attitudes, philosophical values, and an awareness and knowledge of other realities, represent the most significant outcomes of the FREE study. In addition, this study suggests that the CE with an NHI is largely non-physical and can occur via telepathy, during an OBE, being floated into a “matrix-like” reality, as well as through physical interaction on board a craft. Consequently, the non-physical (“contactee”) CE, which appears to be distinctly different from the physical (“abduction”) CE, suggests that they should be studied as separate but interrelated anomalous events.

Summary of Study Results

In summary, the study results incorporate a diverse and complex range of physical, psychological, perceptual, and paranormal activity that involve both perceived physical and non-physical type CEs, as follows: 1) The altered patterns of behavior, perceptions, and associated positive behavioral transformative outcomes were reported by approximately 70% of our study population ($N = 3,256$). In fact, 84% of a study sample of 1,919 subjects reported that they “did not want their CE to end.” 2) The majority (71%, $N = 455$) of those who reported having had “conscious recall of being on board a UAP craft” claimed that their CE changed their life in a “positive way.” In contrast, only 15–20% reported a “negative” impact from their CE; 3) The majority (71%, $N = 433$) of those who reported more frequent CEs (>10 times) were more likely to report that the CEs had a “positive impact” on “changing their life” (fewer than 25% reported a “negative impact”); 4) The majority of subjects (56%, $N = 1,560$) reported having been “contacted” in

a non-physical way and not physically “abducted”; 5) Approximately three-quarters of those who have had a CE consider themselves as “contactees” (“more egalitarian”—being treated as more of an “equal”) and not “abductees” (physically taken and relocated on board a UAP craft); 6) A large percentage of the study sample (80.4% of $N = 1,381$) reported having had an OBE as part of the CE; 7) The majority of subjects (>65%, $N = 1,224$) did not report events and/or experiences typically associated with the traditionally held beliefs regarding the “alien-abduction” phenomenon. In fact, the UAP (physical craft) is only one characteristic of the CE which does not seem to be associated with most CEs; 8) The incidence of unusual experiences, such as reported observation of paranormal phenomena, NHI beings, and the positivity of the subjects’ responses to these experiences, were remarkably consistent across countries and racial/ethnic groups with sufficient sample size to permit comparison. This argues against the notion that these experiences are simply an expression of cultural myths, archetypes, or memes; and 9) The reported positive behavioral outcomes facilitated by the CE manifest in one or more forms of personal growth, attitudes, spiritual and philosophical values. This is represented by their conviction of having become more open-minded with a more expanded worldview and understanding of themselves and what life is all about, and an awareness and knowledge of other realities.

Given this context, the overarching question remains as to whether or not the changes in one’s insights and beliefs, as facilitated by their CE, actually represent a greater understanding and true perspective of one’s self and life, or are instead induced in the CER by some unexplained means. Collectively, the unique similarity of the physical and non-physical characteristics of the CE, and the associated behavioral outcomes reported by CERs, are certainly a matter of speculation.

Conclusion

In summary, the FREE study results raise considerably more questions than answers. One obvious question pertains to whether or not NHI beings are actually interacting with humans. Another concerns the nature of the specific characteristic(s) of the diverse range of both physical and non-physical aspects of the CE that may be responsible for facilitating the reported attitude changes reported by CERs. Within this context, it is worth noting the similarity of the physical and non-physical characteristics of the FREE study CE results with the general conclusions by noted researchers. Astrophysicist J. Allen Hynek (1978), for example, who acted as scientific advisor to UAP studies undertaken by the U.S. Air Force (Project Sign, Project Grudge, and Project Blue Book), concluded that:

I hold it entirely possible that a technology exists which encompasses both the physical and the psychic, the material and the mental. . . . The UFO phenomenon is “so strange and foreign to our daily terrestrial mode of thought”.

Similarly, computer scientist and astronomer Jacques Vallée (2003) stated:

My personal contention is that the phenomenon is the result of an intelligence, that is technology directed by an intelligence, and that this intelligence is capable of manipulating space and time in ways that we don't understand. . . . The essential conclusion I'm tending to is that the origin of the phenomenon of the intelligence is not necessarily extraterrestrial. . . . I think we are dealing with something that is both technological and psychic, and seems to be able to manipulate other dimensions. This is neither wishful thinking nor personal speculation on my part. It's a conclusion that comes from interviewing critical witnesses, and then listening to what they have to say.

The similar conclusions by both Hynek (1978) and Vallee (2003), based upon decades of investigative research of UAP, are supported by the FREE study which indicates that an apparent intelligence or force of some type seems to take control of the individual and induces altered patterns of behavior, telepathic communication, and/or perceptions of space and time, among other complex symptoms during one's CE. In some cases, people also report receiving messages that contain personal counseling and guidance, religious–spiritual and scientific/technological information (Table 8). Such experiences may have contributed to the positive behavioral transformations reported by the majority of our study population.

While subject to interpretation and debate, CER's dramatic change in personal and philosophical viewpoints (it is tempting to speculate) may support Vallee's hypothesis that the messages they report receiving, and their new transformative outlook on life, may contribute to what he called a “new cosmic behavior” or belief system facilitated by some form of intelligence to influence our society (i.e. altering old belief systems and enacting new ones). This concept, however, cannot be either firmly dismissed or supported since we have yet to determine the individual's own contribution to their overall experience of a unique constellation of physical and non-physical phenomena. Consequently, the only thing that can be said with certainty is that the reported atypical and extraordinary CEs, which represent a diverse range of psychological, physiological, and paranormal attributes, cannot be easily rationalized and scientifically validated but are perceived as “real” to those who experience them.

While it is premature to develop any firm conclusion from the FREE study, the results imply that the study population may actually characterize two or more types of CEs and associated phenomena. That is, a physical-based CE may be associated directly with the observation of a UAP and/or interaction with an NHI being on board a craft (e.g., approximately two-thirds (62–73% of $N = 2,430$) of the subjects reported seeing an “intelligently controlled craft” not “man-made,” and slightly more than half (53–61%) observed an NHI being). More specifically, approximately one-fourth of the subjects who reported having had visual contact and communication with NHI beings, believe they have had physical experiences on board a physical craft. This included reported medical examinations and healings, and/or the implantation of a device, among other types of physical experiences with NHI mentioned previously. In contrast, a non-physical CE may be more symptomatic of a OBE-like state as described by Minero (2012) and Monroe (1977). This notion is based, in part, on the findings that: 1) the majority of subjects (56%, $N = 1,560$) reported having been “contacted” in a non-physical way (e.g., telepathic communication) and not physically “abducted”; and 2) the majority of subjects (53–62%, $N = 2,368$) reported “not” having conscious memories of being on board a UAP craft. These results are reinforced by the concomitant reports of experiencing telepathic communication with NHI beings; perceived change in time and space; a sense of “oneness” or “interconnectedness” with the universe, experiencing an “expanded consciousness,” and the belief that their consciousness left their body during the CE, among other non-physical type CEs noted prior to the event.

Taken together, the results from the FREE study suggest that contact and interaction in the form of sensing, visualizing, and/or communicating with NHIs occurs frequently and only occasionally in connection with a UAP sighting. In fact, more than 75% of the CEs view themselves as “contactees” and not “abductees.” It appears, therefore, that the CE associated with a UAP is not the predominant form of CE and that sighting a UAP is not necessarily associated with a CE. Consequently, it is not surprising that the traditional methodological approach of recording and investigating UAP sightings and traces has failed to advance our understanding of the essence/meaning of the phenomenon and the possible force which governs and regulates its behavior. This is an important consideration since the FREE study dispels the notion that contact with an NHI must entail either a physical abduction or a landed craft with beings exiting to interact with humans.

There is certainly no easy way to explain the results of the FREE study within a reductionistic standard model since current scientific principles are inconsistent with the diverse aspects of the reported CE. Consequently,

alternative theoretical perspectives and associated methodological approaches are needed to better understand unique experiences which incorporate feelings of altered perceptions, and of one's "consciousness separating from the body," often perceived as "very real" in nature by individuals who report a CE and OBE/NDE, among other SMEEs. Consequently, a new paradigm for viewing the role of consciousness, which appears to be an essential component of the CE, should attempt to determine if various SMEEs actually cause one to "see a different world," or instead, to "see the world differently" in a non-spatial/non-temporal context. It is also important for there to be independent replication of this study to help determine the validity of the reported results, which may serve as a foundation for others to build upon. At the very least, this study should serve to facilitate greater research interest on the part of psychologists and sociologists because of the CE's role and impact in the person's life, the association between the similarity among subjective reports and memory processes, and possible psycho-cultural influences. Thus, using a multidisciplinary approach that includes comprehensive psychological assessments, both the physical and non-physical characteristics of the CE must be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to note unique similarities/differences facilitated among different SMEEs, of which the CE with or without a UAP appears to be a part. This approach may help determine if a yet-to-be-defined aspect of consciousness serves as the unifying characteristic among different SMEEs.

The FREE study suggests that the CE can occur in a non-physical manner via telepathy, during an OBE, or being floated into a "Matrix-like" reality, as well as via physical interaction aboard a craft. But since we do not yet understand how to define an OBE or matrix-like realities reportedly acknowledged by a large percentage of our study population, it is likely that the survey respondents could not do so either, other than perhaps knowing that their state of consciousness was something different, yet "as real or normal as speaking with a family member." At this point, we can only measure distinctions to the level of precision described by the wording of the survey questions, and the meanings that "most people" would ascribe to concepts like OBE, Matrix-like reality, and conscious memory.

This study, which indicates that contact and interaction with an NHI happens very frequently via different altered states of consciousness (SMEEs), and only occasionally in connection with a UAP sighting, reinforces the notion that researching the physical characteristics of the UAP alone will likely not reveal the actual nature of what governs and regulates the CE and associated phenomena. In particular, research is needed to help refine the definition of such various altered states of consciousness to better determine

the causal forces (personal, environmental, and personal environmental interaction effects) that are influencing our subjects' reported experiences with NHI associated both with and without UAP. This objective should be facilitated using newly developed principles and associated methodologies, unique to the physical and social sciences, to test hypotheses on the role(s) that consciousness, and changes in CEr viewpoints and values, might play in explaining a poorly understood complex and elusive phenomenon.

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