

3: Should I get therapy for my ET contact experiences?

Not necessarily. While all human-ET contact events share similarities, each experience is as individual as the person who experiences it. Human-ET contact can manifest in a multitude of ways only once or over and over throughout the course of a lifetime. Some experiencers respond to these occurrences with joy and a feeling of blessing and privilege, even eagerly anticipating the next occurrence; while many others react with fear and frustration, maybe even doubting their sanity. Most individuals have only vague partial recollections of their contact experiences or dreams they don't understand that fill them with confusion and dread. They may realize they need help, but not know where to turn or who to turn to. If they are then faced with skepticism or ridicule from their peers or the condemnation of family, friends or religious authorities, their situation can become even more difficult and their search for help more desperate. Therapy can be very helpful in working through issues that arise from contact, but it may not always be necessary.

Occasionally, memories of contact events return on their own over a period of time, but when they do, they are frequently too confusing and frightening for an individual to deal with alone. At that point, many experiencers realize the value of consulting a therapist who has the tools to help them sift through emerging memories and gain an understanding and clear perspective on them.

Therapy

Serious medical or psychological issues resulting from contact with extraterrestrial beings should always be referred to medical or mental health professionals. But for experiencers who are not suffering that level of trauma, but are having some difficulty, Experiencer Therapy may be effective. Depending on their experience and training, the therapist may utilize a variety of counseling and therapeutic techniques, including hypnotherapy, depending on what is needed for a particular individual. However, it's not the only tool available to help experiencers.

For the last one hundred years, hypnosis has proved safe and beneficial in a variety of applications, including mental and behavioral issues, childbirth, preparation for and recovery from surgery, pain control and the palliative care of cancer patients to reduce the symptoms associated with radiation and chemotherapy, in addition to experiencer therapy. But there is still confusion and misunderstanding about it.

We all go in and out of natural hypnotic states of mind all the time. Common examples are daydreaming or losing track of time while you're deeply focused on a work project, reading a book or watching a movie, or driving somewhere and suddenly realizing that you have arrived, but not recalling the details of the drive. A hypnotherapy session is similar, but with a structure and a specific purpose.

Are there problems with hypnosis?

Like all therapeutic techniques, hypnosis is limited to what it can accomplish. While it has proven effective in recovering memories of ET contact and working through issues that may arise as a result of contact, it doesn't work for everyone, and in some cases of mental illness, it can make the

condition worse. And the argument that hypnosis can encourage the creation of fantasies and inaccurate memories is not completely false. It can happen, which is why it's important to consult a qualified, experienced therapist who knows what they're doing.

Some people are concerned that if they undergo hypnosis to recall a contact event, they will somehow be placing themselves under the control of the therapist or will end up brainwashed. That is not true. The fact is that under hypnosis alone, it's impossible for an individual to be coerced into doing anything that is not ethically acceptable to them, such as committing a crime or harming themselves or someone else. Brainwashing requires a tremendous amount of specialized skill, time and effort to accomplish - separating the subject from their daily environment and subjecting them to abnormal, continuous psychological pressure, physical torture, deprivation and often the use of powerful drugs. Thankfully, hypnosis alone is simply not strong enough to brainwash someone.

Therapists

Most experienter therapists are licensed and/or certified professionals trained in various counseling and therapeutic techniques, who use hypnosis in a therapeutic manner. Regression therapy is well-known in the UFO field, however in most cases, it is used in a cookie-cutter form not customized to meet the individual's needs, and is also not always the best or most effective therapy in the circumstances.

A hypnotherapist should, at the very least, be certified in basic hypnosis and therapeutic techniques with additional training in psychology and counseling. An experienter therapist who intends to utilize hypnosis should be a certified hypnotherapist and, additionally, be knowledgeable in the UFO/ET phenomenon. If they have experience in investigations and research, that's a plus. Even if someone is a medical professional, he or she should be knowledgeable in the UFO/ET field. Experiencers have the right to expect that their therapist is a qualified and experienced professional with a thorough understanding of the contact phenomenon as well.

Experienter therapy can consist of a few sessions of therapy and counseling or up to several weeks or months, with support group follow-up, depending on the individual's needs. When it comes to effective therapy, there is no ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL. Many therapists offer a free consultation to explain the type of therapy they do and determine if they can help you. But keep in mind that everyone is different and it's impossible to say up front exactly how long it will take to get you where you want to go.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it

Many people ask me if they should get therapy to recover memories of their ET contact experiences or help them deal with the experiences they already remember, and I always ask this question, "Are your experiences causing problems for you?" If the answer is No, I tell them they probably don't need therapy. On the other hand, if the answer is Yes, I suggest that they speak with a therapist or counselor and consider therapy. Some individuals who don't have problems with their contact experiences, but who want to explore them further, may also find therapy helpful.

What it boils down to is this: just because someone is an experienter, doesn't mean they need therapy.

Pros and cons

Experiencer therapy and counseling have been shown to help lessen chronic anxiety caused by dreams and intrusive thoughts that often follow ET experiences, and enable an individual to gain new insight into years of possible misunderstood or unexplained behavior rooted in those experiences. Troublesome issues such as phobias and obsessive-compulsive behaviors that may stem from ET contact often decrease or disappear completely when such experiences are carefully and competently explored and reconciled. Many experiencers report that after working through their disturbing contact memories, confusion and fear in therapy, they are finally able to get on with their lives with newly found confidence in themselves and their abilities to deal with adversity. Coming to terms with any issue is the first step to overcoming it, and therapy can bring abduction/contact memories into normal recall, where an experiencer can ultimately come terms with them. Research has shown that people who have chosen to work with a qualified counselor or experiencer therapist to explore their ET experiences are almost always satisfied with the decision.

If you are an experiencer, or think you may be, and you are considering therapy, you should look carefully at a few facts before going ahead with it.

1. Know that your decision to explore your possible ET contact experiences will be one of the most important decisions you ever make. If you discover that you are an experiencer and come to understand the ramifications, there will be no turning back. Your life will never be the same. It may be positive or negative, but whichever it is, it will be a turning point in your life. Are you ready for that?
2. Timing is an important consideration. Are there things going on in your life - family or work problems, health issues, etc. - that might make you more vulnerable at a particular time? Exploration of abduction/contact memories can be traumatic and take a long time to work through, and problems or instability in your work or personal life may not provide a secure foundation for what comes up. So it might be better to wait until a more stable period in your life before proceeding.
3. Hypnosis is a natural function of the mind that we all experience every day, but when it comes to hypnosis with specific goals, most people need more than one session to see significant results. Of course, everyone is different, but keep in mind that an exploration of your contact experiences may be time-consuming and costly. This type of work cannot be rushed. Will your budget of time and money permit such expenditures?
4. Keep in mind that memories often do not reflect reality, so you should always strive to retain a healthy skepticism of them. A good therapist will do the same. The human mind is very complex and memories are notoriously undependable. People sometimes remember events incorrectly, create imaginary scenarios (consciously or unconsciously) and remember things that didn't happen or that happened differently, and the more traumatic the experience, the more undependable the memories are likely to be. This is especially true with memories of abduction/contact events. Further muddling things, some experiencers report that ETs are adept at mental manipulation, causing a person to see things that are not there or to see things differently from what they actually are. It's important to seek the help of a competent, experienced therapist who can help you recover valid memories and assist you in navigating through them.

5. There are no guarantees. As effective as hypnosis and therapy can be, they are not appropriate for everyone. As I said before, the human mind is very complex, with lots of twists and turns that sometimes cannot be charted to our satisfaction, and if your mind doesn't want to share its secrets, there is nothing an ethical therapist or counselor can do to make that happen. A therapist cannot make you remember anything, and you will not be able to remember anything on your own that your mind is not ready to give up. That said, if you and your mind are open, much can be accomplished.
6. Freshly recalled abduction/contact events can cause unexpected revelations and bring up other issues. Such revelations can alter relationships with family and friends, who might not be able to handle the implications that arise or who may doubt your veracity or sanity. While some experiencers have patient, compassionate back-up systems, sadly, they are in the minority. Are you prepared for the possibility of having to make this journey without the support of your family and friends?
7. If you are comfortable sharing your experiences with other people and are willing to listen to theirs, you might benefit from an experiencer support group rather than private therapy which are often free-of-charge or donation-based. A group can be a good place to start and may be all you need, and you can meet people you share a lot with and who won't think you're nuts - at least no more than they are.

There are a variety of support group types that you may find helpful and enjoyable.

Therapist-facilitated groups are led by a therapist or counselor, they may be open or by referral, and meetings may or may not include therapy as a regular component.

Peer-facilitated groups, meet-ups or UFO and paranormal interest groups are usually informal get-togethers that advertise online or in local magazines or newspapers and don't include therapy.

Experiencer groups and workshops at conferences are informal meetings facilitated by qualified therapists or counselors who may also be conference speakers. They are usually offered at least once a day and may or may not charge admission.

Experiencer groups can be helpful in recalling and working through abduction/contact experiences on a lighter level and are less expensive than private therapy. They can help you develop friendships and feel less isolated. However, they may not be as effective as private therapy, you won't get the individual guidance and personal support you may need, and you'll need to exercise judgment about the group's motives and intentions. In addition, support groups should be temporary and supportive, and not be relied on as mechanisms to enable or mask issues that result from contact experiences.

Self therapy

As mentioned elsewhere in this book, memories of abduction/contact events can return on their own, gradually over time or in chunks or floods if they receive the correct stimulus, and often the stimulus doesn't need to be much more than a sight, sound or even a fragrance. The problem with that type of remembering, though, is that it is often haphazard and frightening, and doesn't make sense. One avenue of help at that point can be therapy or counseling, as we've discussed, but

it may also be possible to recall experiences - ET and non-ET - through certain kinds of self-therapies or techniques.

Meditation

While meditation is a wonderful way to relax and de-stress, it is also a very powerful way of harnessing the power of the mind to acquire new knowledge and skills. The phrase "mind over matter" is not a joke. Not only can the mind be used to acquire knowledge from outside itself, it can also reach inward for hidden, misplaced or forgotten information in the form of memories.

Meditation to recall a contact event can be as simple as finding a quiet, comfortable place to be alone, relaxing, making an intention that you will recall whatever you want to recall, safely and without trauma, going over what you already remember of the event, and letting your mind do the rest. It may take several attempts to achieve anything, and it might not work at all. There are no guarantees. But if nothing comes back to you during the meditation session, you may find that things begin to come back to you later, or things you knew before but didn't understand, may now begin to make sense. Memories are not dangerous and they can't hurt you, but they may have emotions attached to them that are difficult to deal with, and in that case you may find it best to seek help from a therapist or counselor rather than going it alone.

Self-hypnosis may also be helpful for recovering your contact memories on your own. Like meditation, there are many variations on basic techniques that are available and can be very effective.

Journaling

Whether you decide to work with a therapist, in a group or on your own, keeping a journal of what you remember about your contact events may be a good idea. Not only can it help clarify memories of recent events, it can also serve as a basis for other memories that you may recall in the future and prevent details from being lost over time. If you are diligent about writing down details as you remember them - even small bits and pieces - after a while, things can begin to come together and form a complete picture. If you want to journal:

1. You can either write, type or record your journal entries, whichever you prefer, but it's imperative that you do so as soon as possible after the contact happens. The longer you wait, the less you'll remember.
2. Include as many descriptions of the experience as you can remember, including smells, sounds and emotions.
3. Accuracy is not as important as making a record of the information. Just write down or record as much as you can remember at the time and try not to make judgments about anything. Then take a look at your journal after a few months.
4. For some experiencers, it may be easier and more natural to recreate what they remember of their contact events by drawing, painting or sculpting, instead of writing - or even a combination of different methods.

Despite the pros and cons, many experiencers report that they wouldn't trade anything for what they discovered when the veil was lifted from their contact memories with the help of therapy or counseling. Many have come to a new understanding of themselves and found a fresh perspective on their lives and the universe as a whole.

But remember that any exploration of memories can lead to both positive and negative revelations and developments, and such a decision should be your choice, based on careful consideration of all the pros and cons. Don't let anyone push you into it if you aren't ready and, if you do decide to make that journey, be sure to choose a qualified, competent and ethical counselor or therapist to be your guide.

"Some of my memories will never return. They are lost – along with the crippling feeling of defeat and hopelessness. Not a tremendous price to pay." Carrie Fisher