



RANDALL BEACH

Indiana woman learning to deal with alienation

LISTEN: This housewife from the Midwest has a very strange story to tell. You probably won't believe her, but she's learning to deal with that.

Her life seems to be the stuff of science fiction. She firmly believes she has been abducted by space aliens many times since her childhood and used for an interspecies breeding experiment. She says the child that resulted was taken from her and raised by these aliens.

Last weekend, she got up for the first time and gave her account to more than 100 people attending "The UFO Experience" conference in the Ramada Inn in North Haven.

"I was scared to death," she said later, recalling her feelings about going public. "But I needed to do it."

Fear and anxiety have dominated much of her life. Things improved after she called author and UFO investigator Budd Hopkins, who made her the central figure in his best-selling book "Intruders" (soon to be a movie).

Hopkins agreed to protect her privacy and give her a pseudonym, Kathie Davis. But Saturday, she "came out of the closet," revealing her name.

Meet Debra Tomey of Indianapolis. A very average-appearing, bespectacled woman, 29, shy, perhaps timid, vulnerable. Sad eyes that say, "I've seen it all, but nobody believes me."

Why did she finally disclose her true identity? "It was therapy for me," she said Sunday during a break in the conference. "I have to try to accept this, stop being ashamed of it, stop being embarrassed so I can move on."

"Maybe I can help somebody else by admitting it, talking about it. Maybe they will not feel so alone; maybe they'll talk about it too."

Indeed, Hopkins, who also spoke at the conference, said there are "hundreds of thousands of (alien) abduction cases all over the world. And nobody is abducted just once."

Hopkins believes many of these accounts because consistent patterns recur that he says cannot be just coincidence. For example, the aliens are virtually always described as having high-domed, hairless heads, large cat-like eyes and grey, leathery skin. They are never intentionally cruel but are very, very curious about us.

Hopkins also notes that the "abductees" have similar scars that their doctors cannot explain. Tomey believes her scars resulted from aliens' experimenting on her.

But she has learned not to talk about this with most people. "They smile at you and say, 'I think you're lying. I think you're crazy.' A writer said I made everything up because I have a boring and lonely life. I resent being called a liar."

She spent years in a state of intermittent high anxiety. "I think it was triggered by my subconscious when I recognized a certain sound or smell.

"This can leave you feeling vulnerable, helpless. That out-of-control feeling is not pleasant. I've always had to fight with that. I'm fortunate to have support from my family and friends. Otherwise, I don't think I would've made it." (She is divorced, living with her two children.)

Now, Tomey is trying to return to a normal life. "I'm a mother and a housewife. I take care of my kids, I clean the house, cook, shop. I do the things everybody else does.

"I'm so much better since I got in touch with Budd. For the first time in my life, I feel like I'm living it, not just existing. I'm getting on pretty good."

How has all this affected her life? "I'm more mature; I've grown. It's given me an increased awareness of what goes on around me. I'm not so wrapped up in my own little world."

In spite of herself, she watches the sky. "All the time," she sighs. "I'll be looking up and then I say, 'What am I looking at?' It's an automatic thing."

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