

"It left me very confused."

It also left her unable to write. Kar says she was so frightened by the experience that for two years, she published nothing. She suffered nausea and dizziness. She withdrew to her study and withdrew from her family.

"I wanted to be alone but I wanted to know people were near me," she says.

Her husband's initial reaction to the experience was "totally negative," Karen says. "He's a sub-and-bolts man. I guess he wanted to protect me ... but now he knows I'm serious."

She didn't tell her children — she still hasn't — and very rarely does she speak of it to others.

"Telling people is like learning how to walk through a field of flowers," Karen explains. "Some you can talk to and touch. Others have thorns and bristles."

"It's like when the explorers told people about all the fascinating animals. Why believe them if you haven't seen them yourself?"

Alone in a cabin

Working with a psychiatrist and a university professor, both recognized experts on the UFO phenomenon, Karen says she has evaluated her experience. She's read dozens of books on the subject, and last summer, she returned to Colorado where she spent six months alone in a cabin.

"I didn't think I was going to have a nervous breakdown ... but your mind whirrs with thoughts," Karen says. "I wanted to test myself. And if I came through that, I could come through anything."

She "came through" Colorado without incident and Karen happily says the hiatus lowered her stress. Although she still can't say she developed a "triplined" air sickness soon after the abduction, Karen is publishing again and studying more. The electrical disturbances continue, however. And a small ball of light often appears in her study, she says.

"I feel I'm a better, more aware person," she says. "My character has become stronger and my work has taken on a lot more depth. Even my education has extended. I'm studying physics and chemistry and I've become very involved in the environment."

Although she concludes her experience was "basically positive," Karen isn't eager to repeat it. "You don't know if you're opening a can of tuna or a can of worms."

"But if the answers come, it's been worth all the hell and misery."

Leonard Farrell

For Leonard Farrell, a 48-year-old businessman from Fort Myers, the answers haven't come yet — and it's been almost 20 years.

In Canada in 1970, while sitting in a circle of friends discussing various forms of psychotherapy, Farrell says he suddenly left the room. He found himself aboard a flying craft inhabited by four, short creatures wearing silver clothing.

Their faces, says Farrell, were very long and their craniums were huge. Their eyes were large, but their noses and mouths were small.

The interior of the craft was oval, and Farrell says he was stand-

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— Leonard Farrell, who says he was abducted by aliens

ing on the bridge looking into the bowels of the ship. There were numerous, flashing consoles below, and octagon-shaped windows surrounded the craft.

The propulsion of the ship was generated from the center. Although the aliens attempted to explain how the ship functioned, Farrell says he understood little of their conversation.

"Still, I felt very comfortable and I didn't have any fears," he adds.

As suddenly as he was in the craft, Farrell explains, he was out of it. He estimates he was gone for at least an hour before returning to his friends.

And whether his body ever actually left the room, Farrell doesn't know.

"I think it was more of a psychic experience. Astral projection, to me, is valid," says Farrell, who has had numerous experiences with the phenomenon, all of them spontaneous.

Astral projection, synonymous with "out-of-body experience," is a psychic technique used to consciously project a person's mind or soul out of their body.

Nevertheless, Farrell says, "It was too real to be a dream."

He rarely thought about the event until 1985 when he ran across a book on UFOs authored by a Miami resident. This inspired a "major compulsion" to devour any and all UFO literature.

'A distant light'

In addition, Farrell says he recently experienced a "missing time" episode. And he can't understand why.

Driving west from Vero Beach along State Road 60, Farrell and his family were returning from dinner when he saw "a distant light come straight down out of the sky and it didn't look like a shooting star," he says.

He dropped his family off at its destination, then got back in his car and returned to the spot along State Road 60 where he'd seen the light. Farrell says he pulled to the side of the road and got out, but "the bugs were eating me alive so I sat back in the car." It was about 10:30 p.m.

The next thing Farrell remem-

bers is looking at the clock in his car. It glowed 1:35 a.m.

"I didn't feel any different physically. I wasn't asleep. I just felt like I had to go home and go to bed. I don't know whether something happened or didn't happen," he says.

Farrell is plagued by his curiosity. Similar strange experiences, he says, began when he was young and "I always felt like I had people visiting me in the night."

Although he pushed those memories aside for years, Farrell says he now remembers "going to different places but not knowing where. There was always this strange taste in my mouth the next day. When I came back, I got into a habit — I wanted to lick a rock."

"I didn't tell people about it," he says. "It was just a normal thing."

In fact, Farrell's entire attitude is one of normalcy and nonchalance. He says, "People only believe what personal experience tells us to believe and that is usually very limited in scope."

He says he doesn't pretend to understand what has happened to him — only to speculate with an open mind.

"I haven't made any conclusions at all ... but I'd like to find out why me. What's the significance in my situation?"

"There is validity in what we don't touch and can't see," Farrell explains. "I mean, people fail to realize that there are microwaves and electrical waves that we cannot see, but they do exist. And even if we do come up with some kind of bona fide proof (for UFOs), it isn't going to be enough proof for everyone."

"Now ... it just screws up your family life because of some skeptic saying you have to be crazy."

Farrell, however, says he's never questioned his sanity. And he disagrees with critics who describe his experiences as some sort of mass hallucination.

"That's just too far-fetched," he says. "Maybe there really is something we're supposed to know, something that's going to happen."