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GUEST: Dr. John Mack, MD, Harvard University

MATHESON: We are wrapping up UFO Week on the program. We've talked about sightings this week, we've talked about the conspiracy theories, but you can't talk about UFOs without talking about alien abduction.

Dr. John Mack is a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. He has carried out hundreds of interviews with people who claim that they were abducted. And he joins us now from Boston.

Good morning, Dr. Mark.

MACK: Good morning, Dan.

MATHESON: Can you tell us what attracted you to this field of study in the first place?

MACK: I had no particular interest in this matter when I first ran across it a little over ten years ago and then became familiar with it through Bud Hopkins, a pioneer researcher. And I began to hear from him and then later on through seeing my own cases about people who were reporting consistent stories of encountering strange beings, being taken against their will, at least initially, into some kind of enclosure and then a variety of procedures done on their bodies or given messages about the fate of the Earth. And this was totally outside of anything I had ever considered possible. I was raised thinking that there was no intelligence in the universe smarter than us and there was no intelligence that could reach us. So that I was then forced to reconsider my whole view of reality.

MATHESON: Did they talk to you quite willingly? Because, obviously, you're a psychiatrist and these people must have faced a great deal of skepticism everywhere they turned.

MACK: Well, that's one of the ways that psychiatrists, or someone like me, assesses that the person is not suffering from sort of mental illness because they were appropriately

skeptical about their own experiences. They would know that I might think that was crazy and they were either afraid that I would find them crazy or they would prefer that than that this be a reality.

So their whole attitude towards their experience was quite appropriate, the way somebody talks about something that's happened to them. The only difficulty is that what they say has happened to them isn't supposed to be possible, according to our world view.

MATHESON: So what is your sense then of what happened with these people?

MACK: My sense is that some intelligence which may not take the physical forms that we're familiar with is showing up looking something like humans so that they can appear before us and make sense and not completely terrify us, reaching us, communicating with us, having some kind of intimate relationship with us, possibly even producing some sort of at least what seems like hybrid offspring. And they're also communicating to us some messages about the fate of the Earth, what we're doing to it, the danger of all life being destroyed on the Earth and telling us that we can't go on doing this. And also the people that have these experiences when they move through the terror reach a place where they become much closer to what they call Source, or God or a sense of the divine.

So the difficulty that we have in our culture is if we can't prove it in a purely physical way, then we dismiss it altogether. There is physical evidence but it's not robust enough to satisfy scientists. But that doesn't make it any less important. Some kind of intelligence is communicating with us.

MATHESON: Dr. John Mack, thank you for that.

MACK: Thank you, Dan.