

Essay

## On Why I Started to Attend UFO Conferences

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All my life I have been working to evolve my Sagittarian nature out of fundamentalism into relativism. Not the usual “nothing counts, so I can do anything I want” version, but the more difficult relativism of recognizing that the left brain mind cannot access Truth, that all it can do is process information. That Truth, big Sagittarian truth, is accessed through the right brain, and that, in turn, must be linked to the heart for its truth to be meaningful to me and compassionate to others.

The problem for us fundamentalists, is that the right brain isn't logical; nor are its ideas clear and distinct. When I judge the truths of the right brain by the standards of the left, then I think that all my wondering is mere confusion. Dreams, visions, images, synchronicities, vague hunches — all these nourish the right brain, and yet are hard to interpret in a clear and distinct manner, not to mention logically explain or justify.

What helps me is to recognize that the left brain, when it runs unchecked, ends up rigid and sterile, endlessly repeating dogmas which lost their relevance a long time ago. When I allow my beliefs to rule me, they do, automatically filtering out any experience that contradicts the reigning dogma. In this way, I never even have to know what I am missing! Nothing has to change. No matter how much I experience, I never learn.

Though I didn't realize it, this was my position when I decided, seemingly on a whim, to attend the annual Laramie UFO conference in June 2000. I would go as a detached observer, a sociologist. I wanted to see just who these people were who participated in such a gathering. My smugness was short-lived; within hours I was “hooked.” Objectivity flew out the window and I found myself listening with jaw-dropped amazement to the stories of UFO and ET experiencers, contactees and abductees, as they are variously known.

But although my jaw dropped immediately, the rest of me soon began to squirm. For I noticed that the reality implied by many of the stories contradicted each other. This made me uneasy.

Looking at that experience now, I would say that of course it bothered me, since my fundamentalist self couldn't stand contradiction. I wanted to know the truth! Who was telling the truth, who was lying, who was misguided, imagining things, insane, blinded by fear, etc. I was riveted by the stories, and even more riveted by my need to figure out who was who, what was what. My fundamentalist self sought to ferret out one story which was more credible than all the others, latch on to it, i.e., treat it as my new true belief, and then judge all the others as falling off more or less from that one standard.

So that was last year.

One month ago, I attended the 2001 UFO conference in Laramie, and this time, having chewed over the meaning of my response to the first event for a year and especially having dared to take what might be a first really good look at my own fundamentalism, I wanted to see what my own process would be this time around.

And do you know, despite my dogmatic German temperament, I actually appear to have learned something? Not about what is true and what isn't, but rather about how to make room for all the various stories (and their truths or not) inside myself at once without having to know which are true and which are governmental disinformation, illusions, lies, misinterpretations, etc.

And I discovered something very exciting in the process. I discovered that I felt much lighter and more spacious as a result of this new way of working with information, no matter how strange or bizarre, how out of kilter some or most of it might be with my usual world-view.

I discovered that if I truly did hold all these seemingly contradictory stories and beliefs about extraterrestrials and the various dimensions and star systems they occupy, not to mention all the various interpretations of them involving a secret and unaccountable aspect of the US government — that if I really did make room for them all without having to know what was true, what false, that I became “enlightened” — that is, my being became lighter.

That was the revelation I was seeking all along, and I now realize it was what impelled me to attend these particular conferences. For I want to expand my awareness, and that means I need to expose myself to the most “outlandish” (pun intended) views. In order to incorporate these views, I myself expand, and continue to expand.