

Introduction

If thou wilt be observant and vigilant, thou wilt see at every moment the response to thy action.

Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi

Family Constellations, as the work was originally called, is the development of Bert Hellinger, a family and group therapist and self-described empiricist and philosopher. Hellinger's childhood and adolescence was against a background of National Socialism and subsequent war in Nazi Germany, which he survived in part as a rebellious teenager, avoiding the Hitler Youth meetings, instead attending the then illegal Catholic Youth organizations, and then as a 17-year old drafted soldier in the German Army, captured by the allies and held in a prisoner of war camp in Belgium for the rest of the war. His later life includes some 16 years as a Catholic priest and committed missionary in South Africa working and living with the Zulu tribes, during which he engaged in an extensive training in interracial and ecumenical group dynamics. During his time with the Zulu peoples he learned from their traditional culture respect for one's ancestors, viewing them as having influence on the present, providing strength, support and wisdom that could be drawn on. He also learned the value of ritual from both the church and the tribal traditions of the Zulus, as providing ways of giving understanding, validation and acceptance. Subsequently he explored psychoanalysis, gestalt therapy, transactional analysis, primal therapy, hypnotherapy, NLP and family therapy, eventually leaving his ministry in the church. In the early '80's Hellinger began to combine his group and family therapy experience with the family re-construction work of Virginia Satir, who at the time was working in Germany and Austria. Satir's method of setting up families using group members seems to have been catalytic in Hellinger's move towards the work he eventually called Family Constellations¹.

In the process of setting up group members as role-play representatives for a person's family (which had also been done by others in the field apart from Satir, most notably Jakob Moreno, who developed Psychodrama, and the German psychiatrist, Thea Schönfelder²), Hellinger seems to have begun listening to what the representatives were saying from a more existential and phenomenological base. By insisting on the representatives having little information about the person they represented, and that they refrain from taking up any sort of pose to indicate a certain attitude, Hellinger demonstrated a different approach from Moreno's Psychodrama, and even Satir's family re-construction work³. Hellinger thought that

¹ From Gunthard Weber's recollections in an interview with Barbara Morgan, *The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal*, 2009.

² Referenced in Sparrer, 2007.

³ According to Sparrer (2007), the German psychiatrist Thea Schönfelder took a formidable step in this process by having representatives stand in their position "without making any statements, gestures or giving any specific details" in her work with psychiatric patients.

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this helped the representatives in the constellation connect with deeper and more hidden dynamics and existential dilemmas. From his close observation of the subtle body and facial movements, impulses and other reported experiences of the representatives, he developed an understanding of what he later called the Orders of Love: that, as in all things, there is a certain order to relationships and living processes, particularly in closely bonded systems such as families, and disturbance to this order, disruption or non-observance of the principles of this order, has effects on system members, sometimes over many generations. This is not dissimilar to our understanding that if we go against the natural order in the environment, there will probably be consequences that may, over time, become devastating. We see this currently in our struggle with global warming, over-use of chemicals, exploitation of the great forests of the world, contamination of water sources and so on.

Along with this understanding of the principles of order in relationships, and the attendant principles of belonging and hierarchy, the constellations procedure developed. In general this involves: the defining of an issue of a particular person, the subsequent setting up of a relational patterning of that person's family system using other people (usually unknown to the person) to represent family members, and then including these representatives' experiences, cognitive, physical and emotional, as having relevance to the issue defined. This provides one of the basic assumptions of constellations work: that the experiences of the representatives provide valid information and can contribute towards some kind of resolution of the original issue for the client.

The advent of Hellinger's approach in Germany in the late 1980's and early 1990's seemed to fulfill a particular need in that country at that time. Many of the issues that would be brought to his groups (and his later large demonstration events) were issues to do with Germany's recent history: participants would often be descendants of the many people who had been persecuted in Germany during the second world war, holocaust survivors and their children and grandchildren, as well as those descended from the perpetrators of these events. The result was that the work of Family Constellations was often very dramatic, involving large numbers of people, often including representatives for people who had long since died, and frequently addressing profound social, political and historical issues along with the directly personal. Because the issues addressed commonly reflected back to the second world war, Hellinger's work very quickly became well-known in Germany, and gained a degree of notoriety in the German media. Hellinger himself tends to take a highly uncompromising stance on many sensitive and controversial issues, causing much controversy. He was particularly outspoken on the subject of Germany's recent past, which, the media in Germany were quick to exploit.

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Hellinger has been invited to take his work to many parts of the world, and currently there are few countries where you will not find someone setting up constellations in some way. In some of these countries the controversy surrounding him has accompanied him and in others it hasn't. As with all new things, one has to take a balanced and informed stance that discriminates and draws healthily on what is good and useful and leaves the rest be.

The Group Setting

Most people first come into contact with constellations work in a group setting, and usually they are astonished at what they see and experience. Generally, the process is as follows:

A client who wishes to work sits with the facilitator and discusses his issue in the presence of the group. The facilitator may ask some questions or she may not. When the facilitator is clear about the issue and what the client wants, she will usually invite the client to choose group members to represent the necessary elements that relate to the issue. The client does so and places them in the room in a configuration that makes sense to him. The representatives then attend to their physical and emotional experience as they stand in their place, and their sense of relationship with the other representatives through distance and direction. Usually the experiences that the representatives report are an acutely accurate portrayal of the person he or she is representing, regardless of the fact that he may not know the actual person or know anything about him. The experiences of the representatives are often very strong, may have an emotional component, and are informative for the client, either confirming what he knows or offering some new insight. Sometimes the representatives will feel a sense of movement in their body and, if invited to by the facilitator, may move, change position or allow their bodies to take up a particular pose, usually slowly and deliberately, as if they are in a trance or have been taken by a greater force. Indeed representatives often report feeling as if they are taken over... as if they could not *not* do what their body wants to do. Depending on the style of the facilitator and the depth at which the constellation is working, the facilitator may leave the constellation to find its own resolution or she may intervene, moving representatives, suggesting words for the representatives to say, re-ordering the structure of the constellation in order to find a good resolution.

At the end of the constellation, the client dismisses the representatives who return to their seats.

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There is, of course, much more than this to the process of constellations and their facilitation. There are many who, having seen a few constellations and read a bit about it think that they can do it. But of course it just is not so easy. Most of the leaders in the field of constellations facilitation have years of prior life and professional experience that support them, together with their willingness for continual deep and challenging self-learning and exploration. This is not easy work no matter how simple it looks. At the same time, a facilitator can gain a perspective that she is not alone in the work; that she is in the presence of many beings, past and present. This can have an interesting effect on her self-opinion as a facilitator, inviting humility and a sense of service, as well as relieving her of the burden of having to be the important person who knows.

Constellations facilitation is an endeavour that challenges one's personal self-concept and one's concept of the Self, requiring a high tolerance of uncertainty, not-knowing, trust in greater forces and collective intelligence, and knowledge of one's own limits. The effectiveness of the constellation seems often to be directly related to the inner state of the facilitator. There are many other factors in the field that affect the success of a constellation, but the limits of the facilitator are perhaps the most crucial. These limits are not limits of knowledge about constellations, they are limits of being. They cannot be extended merely by reading about or even witnessing constellations. These limits can really only be addressed by personal experience as a client and a representative, by being immersed in the constellations process, by practice as a facilitator and a continuing self-learning.

The Individual Session

The constellations process in the individual setting has its own challenges and rewards. The client and facilitator spend some time clarifying the issue, after which the client sets up a simple constellation using figures on a table or floor-markers for the representatives. The facilitator and client then may discuss what they see, finding good ways of connecting with the representational markers in turn and proceed generally in a similar way to the group constellation. Within the context of an on-going professional relationship, such as in psychotherapy, counselling or coaching, this can change the course of the work, providing great insight to the client and to the professional, often with a clearer understanding of where to go next.

Case Example 1: A client came to me for individual psychotherapy with major issues of self-confidence and a diminished sense of self-authority. I asked her to set up her family on the floor, with pieces of felt as floor-markers, so that I could understand the complex web of relationships in her family, which included step-brothers and sisters

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from previous and later parental relationships. When she came to set up her mother as the last piece she sat and looked for a long time at what she had done, holding the piece for her mother in her hand. Finally she screwed the piece of felt that was her mother up and threw it down in the centre saying: "that's what needs to happen to her."

Of course, we know that this will not be the end of this woman's journey of becoming a more self-authorising and effective individual, but for her at this time in her life it was absolutely formidable. It changed entirely her view of herself and her mother, and during the following six months of counselling she repeatedly referred back to this moment as having been defining for her, as having for the first time given her a sense of separateness, enough to see things differently.

Aside from the deeper movements that may affect the client and her experience of her place in her family over time, the immediate change of perspective that constellations offer cannot be under-estimated. Take the instance of a grandmother who died when the client's mother was a small child and became the subject of a story often told in the family, reified into a fixed idea - part of the family mythology. And then to bring the grandmother to life, in a sense, by giving her a place in the room by means of a person or a floor marker, giving her either through the experience of the representative, or the client herself standing on the marker for her grandmother, a voice and feelings, can be momentous for the client. Many times in such an instance I have sat with someone as she let this new lively experience of a grandmother, a mother, uncle or brother, someone she never met, permeate her body and psyche, while she says to me in a voice full of wonder something like: "I never knew her, and now she seems so real." If this were the most that one could expect from an individual constellations consultation, which it is not, then it would be enough. The embodiment of someone lost or never known by this kind of representation, the experience in the client at that moment, can truly startle one into a new state of being with a new perception of her place within the family.

The Facilitator

At the same time, some important distinctions need to be made. To set up something using either people or objects to represent those necessary elements is one thing. To approach what is set up with a broad perception of context, including a multi and trans-generational perspective, an understanding of the power of group and family loyalty, our over-arching need to belong and the price we are often willing to pay for that security, the sometimes devastating effects of trauma and exclusion on the system sometimes over many generations is quite another. Conversely, someone who has developed a personal experience and

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understanding of this complex nature of systems over many generations may never actually set up anything using objects or people, but would still be working within the domain of constellations insofar as this sense and understanding informs his thinking and work. In the end, the work stands by these understandings, which naturally deepen over time; it is never enough to understand intellectually, and yet, paradoxically, one cannot force this deeper understanding. One can only come at it obliquely, in the Taoist sense of the more you try the less is gained: "We do without doing and everything gets done."⁴ Or in the words of Hamlet: "By indirections find directions out."⁵

On the other side of the coin, one cannot teach this work. All one can teach are skills, techniques and cognitive understanding, but this is not the work. One learns skills and understanding while the real work is going on in oneself at a much deeper level. This is the work I cannot make happen, I can only make space and time for it. The constellation facilitator must open himself to all, surrendering personal hypotheses to something bigger, continually moving into spaciousness, anonymity, emptiness and stillness, marvelling at the work, at the client, at the mystery that is the process of facilitator, client, group, constellation and system. He stands with humility in front of the wonder of life and its processes as portrayed in the constellation, where the past, present and future are found in a timeless space, in a place where, when asked: "who made this happen?", he cannot answer.

The most important thing I have learned, and perhaps the most important thing I can convey to you, is that the best way of learning and internalising this work is by participating in constellations groups. The more you have experience of being a representative, the more you will understand the phenomenon of the representative experience, the way we can feel taken by a movement that is not ours, the way we can feel so different after having been chosen and placed as a representative, to how we had been feeling before. With this as a familiar embodied experience, you are more able to attend to such possibilities in the individual session. The client in the individual session may never have experienced constellations before, and my responsibility as the facilitator is not, in my opinion, merely to move the representative markers around to a better sense of order according to my hypothesis of the situation. There may be rare occasions when the facilitator does choose to do this, but in general, this misses the point of the constellation, and is likely to skip over needed processes. We have to find out how to allow movement to be there of its own accord in the individual context, sensed and felt in either the client or myself. This takes skill, experience and practice. Attending many professional learning and personal growth constellations groups and

⁴ The Book of Runes, Ralph Blum, 1993.

⁵ Hamlet, Act 2, Scene 1. William Shakespeare.

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seminars, being a representative in others' constellations as much as you can, being a client, witnessing and being part of the process: these will be your best learning for your individual practice. To start at the individual end and expect to come to a greater understanding of the processes involved puts cart before horse. It is *only* by understanding the representative phenomenon in oneself that one can hope to understand how to recognise and allow it effectively in the individual setting. It is not just cognitive information that is available in the individual setting (some of which may be confused with long-held ideas by the client), but the client can himself experience the physical and emotional urge to movement that we see so often in the group constellation. It is our job as facilitator to enable our client to become aware of these subtle resonances when standing on a marker or during a visualisation, and we do this best by knowing it with great familiarity in ourselves.

At his best Bert Hellinger is an innovator who allows himself to be led by the process, trusting that more than anything; and in turn he makes himself open to the insights offered. It is this that is the aspiration of the constellations facilitator: to allow oneself to be taught by the constellation at hand. I hope that this book holds this aspiration as a constant and central focus.

Complex Systems

Constellations work is rooted in complex systems thinking: an interacting, interrelating and evolutionary web of relationships. Elements can only be properly understood in relation to their context, where the whole is reflected and replicated in the part. The present is consequent on a myriad of scarcely perceived influences, constantly self-organising, evolving and responding to newly emergent information. To extract and isolate the family system level from these larger contexts is illusory; however, in the constellations process, as in any attempt at understanding, a momentary isolation is useful, providing that the boundaries of the system are held lightly and are allowed permeability. Many of the constellations that begin with what one might term 'the family system', during the progression of the work call to our attention the larger contexts of events such as wars, forced migrations, great societal shifts, political and governmental actions; activities such as slavery, national, industrial and technological revolutions; national or racial origin; and the myriad of other historical and present day circumstances that shape and influence our lives. The reality of life is that we are inseparable from each other and from the greater whole and its forces.

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Box 1: A Brief Look at the Similarities with Gestalt Psychotherapy

Box 1: A BRIEF LOOK AT THE SIMILARITIES WITH GESTALT PSYCHOTHERAPY

I am by origin a gestalt psychotherapist, and for those interested I give here a brief digression into the similarities and concurrences of gestalt with constellations thinking. In part this demonstrates that many of the ideas within constellations were already there in the thinking and practice of many therapies and disciplines, and just needed to be let free into a different frame. Gestalt is my discipline, but much of what follows may well apply to other disciplines.

There is so much in the thinking and practice of constellations that concurs with gestalt thinking: holistic notions of completion, wholeness, integration and assimilation; a primarily phenomenological existential approach requiring an empirical primacy, interpretative abstinence and a creative, interested and empathic impartiality; an understanding of the greater context of the individual as addressed in 'field theory' – not in itself that far from the constellations concept of the 'knowing field' and the 'representative experience'.

Gestalt 'field theory' as a contextualising theory is only constrained by the practitioner's and theoretician's perception of the field as confined to the individual, his life and the influence of his parents and maybe his grandparents. In effect, Gestalt 'field theory' can easily expand its perception to include trans-generational phenomena. It is the therapist's perception that makes it what it is. In addition, Gestalt therapy has always had the methodology of the constellation in its two-chair experiment... only constrained by not including the representative experience phenomenon, insisting instead on the interpretation of what happens as a 'projection' of the client's view of things onto the other.

Above all Gestalt fosters the notion of life as a continual experiment, experience as the persistent possibility of engagement with the novel. Most of us spend much of our time repeating, re-hashing and re-living experiences and situations that we already know only too well, in spite of the reality that each and every situation in the present moment offers novelty and possibility. We are exploratory and experimental beings, and yet often we seem precisely the opposite as we tell ourselves the same old stories. The experiment is central to the gestalt process, maintaining an insistence on the present moment as imbued with potential, novelty and emergent possibility. The constellation as a process offers us this same vital possibility of experiment. Each intervention, suggestion and proposal, every movement, contact and touch, whether by facilitator, client or other representative is an experiment, offering information as to the next step. It is the moment when intervention becomes didactic, when the resulting information is dismissed as irrelevant, unimportant or wrong, when inflexible assumptions are made about the meaning or status of the emerging information that the work is in danger and loses its relevance for the client. In the group, and in the individual session, the constellation is an ongoing collaborative experiment between facilitator, client, representatives and the emerging truth of that moment. This notion of experiment allows the facilitator to move into the constellations procedure with an attitude of openness, wonder and humility, to be truly who he is in the face of the experiment of life as given before him right now.

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Family & Organisational Systems

Generally speaking the work of constellations is divided into what is known as 'family constellations' and 'organisational constellations'. By 'family' we are talking about the personal, present day and ancestral domain. By 'organisational' we are talking about the more community, social and work-related domains, involving areas such as coaching and organisational consulting. This domain also includes exploration and intervention in larger systems such as businesses, voluntary, charitable, social and governmental organisations, environmental and ecological systems and so on. We could think of a spectrum of concerns that might look like the diagram below:

Fig. 1:

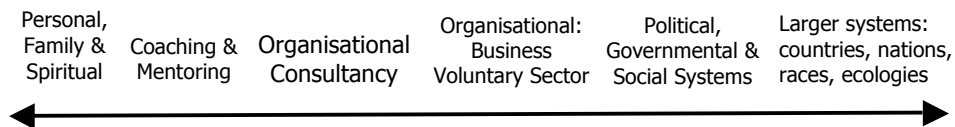
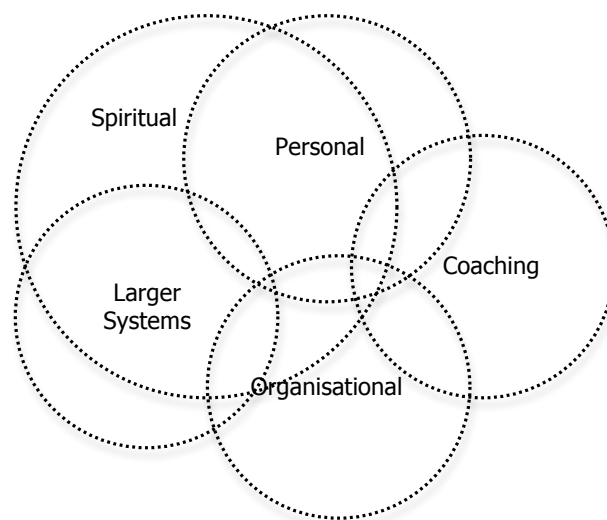


Diagram showing the spectrum of domains which Constellations can address.

However when looking at a diagram like this it is well to remember that the reality is more a matter of what is figure at this moment, everything else being in the ground but, as such, available and informing of what is figure. The personal and spiritual is always present whatever the focus of our interest is at the time; if we are focusing on the more personal, all those other domains that influence our lives are also present in the ground. Many of those who work in the area of organisational consulting and executive coaching may, at times, find themselves inevitably touching on very personal and spiritual concerns. Thus another way of showing these domains as fields of interest and existence might be as follows:

Fig. 2:



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As practitioners of any work it is important to ensure that the contractual boundaries initially agreed between client and facilitator are adhered to, or only modified after careful consultation with the client. In order to respect the privacy of the organisational client the contract usually does not permit explicit transition into the personal domain, and the consultant has the responsibility of safeguarding her client from any such deviation. This could be different in the coaching contract, which may straddle both domains to an extent. There is no such need for such safeguarding in the opposite direction since it is in the personal frame that the contract assumes our willingness to be emotionally expressive and vulnerable. Organisational consultants are rightly sensitive to this issue, even though they are aware that the personal domain is always present; it becomes a matter of where you retain your focus, the nature of the consultant's relationship with her client, the setting and other factors.

I would consider that most of what follows in this book is applicable to all domains of practice, taking specific issues to do with the particular contract and context into consideration. There are constellations facilitators currently working in the field of politics and governmental agencies, in which they find very specific issues pertaining to the best means of practice in those settings. In time we will have more literature informing us of the findings of those who are working in these specific areas.

The ideal approach to 'order'

“... great art is deeply ordered...within the order there may be enormously instinctive and accidental things, nevertheless ... they come out of a desire for ordering...” *Francis Bacon, Painter (1975)*

Life is a tension between order and chaos; Nature's 'order' does certainly at times seem chaotic and yet her particular ordering is always there. It is the 'accidental' within the cradle of order that fosters the emergent novelty of insight, shifts in consciousness and an ability to transcend the known into a new knowing. We tend to yearn for order and fear its opposite; when given a certain framework of order we feel safe and comfortable, whereas chaos, uncertainty and confusion tend to make us feel unsafe and uncomfortable. And yet it is from within confusion and uncertainty that clarity comes.

Over the years of learning how to offer constellations thinking to students, I have found in myself a certain resistance to making rules about anything. The sentence “in most cases this is so, and often it is not” goes some way to illustrating my current approach. And yet, learning requires a certain framework that one can absorb, scrutinise, question and experiment with. So I would encourage the reader to move into this book with a questioning

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attitude, to hold lightly everything I and anyone else tells you about order, principles, systems, constellations and what you are likely to experience; to value your scepticism and doubt, to scrutinise your experience and follow the "authority in your own soul". (Hellinger, 1998) That is the only way you can find the unique constellations facilitator in you. The only truth is in the moment, and each client and each constellation tells a different story. I urge you always to be prepared to be surprised, to stay open and naïve in the face of such mysteries.

"When people hang on my every word, I must be very careful of what I say. On the other hand, when I'm certain that the participants will carefully check everything I say against their own inner experience and not just swallow it uncritically, then I can risk a lot. When the other is my partner in investigating experience, a dialog [sic] between equals can emerge." (Hellinger 1998)

Further Interests

There are some areas of interest that you will not find in other books on Constellations, or which have been addressed only peripherally. I think that this is because, in the newness of the work we have collectively been more interested in getting out there and doing it. It takes time for the more subtle aspects of practice to come under scrutiny. There are a couple of these that I have attempted to make a start with. One area that I have taken a particular interest in is the preferred stance and style of the facilitator (Chapter 12). I have attempted to address differences in style that I have witnessed, experienced and practised, primarily in terms of a spectrum of greater or lesser degrees of directiveness and intervention, with an eye on efficacy and efficiency, and attempting to assess the likely challenges, difficulties and dangers. This chapter may be of interest to experienced facilitators as well as students of this work, and tries to bring this subject to a more central position of consideration. In the excitement and rush of the initial emergence of constellations, the primary focus has been on the work itself, the constellations processes, theories and ideas, and much less focus has been given to the stance and style of the facilitator other than to talk about an inclusive, phenomenological attitude and peripherally some references to good practice. The sensitivity of touch of the facilitator, whether by temperament, attitude, concept or preference, has not been discussed much... except by our clients, and those who fulfil representative roles, who do indeed discuss, analyse and criticise our styles. The subject also has a bearing on the work in the individual context particularly as, in the absence of actual people as representatives, the temptation in the individual session is to veer towards the more directive, didactic style, which has consequences that the facilitator should understand.

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Another area that I find interesting is the relationship between the so-called "traditional" or "classical" constellations notion of entanglement (the unconscious identification with another, earlier system member) as the mechanism of systemic disturbance, and the notion of trauma as underlying all systemic disturbances (Chapter 5). These two views are not that different in themselves: in the traditional view of a present person "identified" with an earlier person in the system who has been "excluded", it is always the case that the earlier person has experienced or been involved in some traumatic event. It is the trauma reactions in the earlier person that is unresolved (excluded) in the system, and picked up by the later person. The sense of identification comes through the replication of the trauma reactions in the later person as their personal experience, in some cases influencing their actions which may also replicate the former events (for example a present-day person who suffers from suicidal ideation identified with a former system member who actually committed suicide or died in tragic and traumatic circumstances). In practice as a facilitator it probably makes no difference which perspective one prefers provided one knows the implications of the presence of trauma reactions in the present client.

A third area that I consider to have been given insufficient attention to date in the current literature is the business of understanding trauma processes sufficiently to be able work with people who have suffered trauma either personally or through inheritance with safety and confidence. Working with trauma, personally experienced or as a systemic legacy, requires an up-to-date understanding of trauma theories and processes, an ability to recognise traumatisation in others (and in ourselves), and an understanding and recognition of re-triggered trauma (re-traumatisation). Even larger systems such as businesses, social service organisations and governments, suffer from unconscious systemic trauma issues; personally inherited traumas of influential individuals (e.g. management) and large scale organisational trauma from events such as criminal acts, redundancies, sackings, mergers and so on, are major factors in systemic disturbance. In my view trauma, its dynamics and processes, and the across-generation nature of post trauma phenomena, will be the important developments of the future. For example, if we really understand the unconscious, multi-generational impact and consequences of war trauma, rape, persecution and revenge, we might discover a strong enough impulse to further our search for other ways of effecting international and global negotiation. In constellations we see not just the effects of trauma on the descendants of victims, but also on those of perpetrators, witnesses and other collaterally traumatised individuals. More than any other method I have come across, the constellations process allows for such inherited trauma effects, sometimes involving countless generations, to be seen and understood, offering the possibility of finding some new way to resolution.

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I do believe that the constellations process and ideas of emergence, self-organisational ordering and a trans-generational perspective are an important and timely contribution to our need to move beyond our late 20th century focus on individualism and modernist, reductionist mechanical perspectives. As we face collective global issues that we struggle to comprehend, the necessity for transcendence of our current consciousness, a next evolutionary step, in order to reach beyond our current limits is inevitable. This must be towards a more connected understanding and embodied experience of our interdependence, not just on each other and everything in our current world, but on our connection with our history, the actions and experiences of our ancestors. The very soil from which we have sprung, everything that we are, is the bedrock from which we must take our next evolutionary step.

The book is in two main sections:

Part 1 covers a basic framework of constellations thinking, the methodology of the constellations process along with other considerations such as understanding and working with trauma, notions of what it means to be a helper, styles and preferences of the facilitator. All of this is broadly applicable to groups and the individual context, while at times I will make a particular reference to one or the other where there is a difference. Part 1 is a mix of established thinking and my reflections on this thinking, sometimes drawing on sources outside of the present constellations consciousness. In order to keep this distinction clear I have occasionally placed particular areas of thought as they are generally presented in separate boxes, while my reflections and discussions remain in the main text.

Part 2 is more practical, and looks specifically at the individual and small group context. I discuss different forms of practice and how one may successfully introduce the work within these different forms. I include many practical suggestions and process interventions to help the starting out facilitator, such as how best to conduct the initial issue-clarifying process, understanding relationship pictures, and detailed consideration of working with floor and table-top markers and visualisations. I specifically attend to ways of helping the client become a useful representative in his own constellation, the essential component in the individual session. Section III in this part discusses some special interest areas such as structured constellations, working with very small groups, couples and supervision issues.

The appendices include details of the official symptomatology for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and a section of further notes on working with trauma, a diagram that shows the pros and cons of two extremes of constellations facilitation, a suggested reading list and a brief look at the historical roots of systemic and transgenerational psychotherapeutic work

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and the methodology of constellations. I also include a brief comparison of the practice of systemic constellations with the established common practice of psychotherapy. This may assist those many psychotherapists who, in their adoption of systemic constellations into their practice, have discovered some discomfort in integrating the two. This discomfort may involve feelings of guilt towards our former group: a deep commitment to systemic constellations may test our loyalty to our prior views and professional paradigm, and present us with a lively challenge as to how to integrate the two.