

Do you have a problem? Let's Constellate it.

Are you always wishing that things were different? Saying “what if?” Criticizing your self? Would you like to be able to communicate with your partner, family members, work colleagues more easily and effectively? Would you like to feel more comfortable with your self?

Imagine a situation where you could look at a personal or business issue by setting it up with representatives, so that you can observe the dynamics visually and experientially. It is like an out of body experience. Even better, you don't have to have the people of your problem present. Now imagine that once your situation is physically represented, that an energy field develops that the representatives can feel and respond to. From this point onwards, the facilitator works sensitively with the representatives to unravel the dynamics of the situation, so that you in particular, are more comfortable and able to experience a new perspective on it. Now imagine that the resolution found, through the representatives, causes a real shift in you emotionally and also at a deep soul (or for those who are more scientific an energy level), so that the situation for you becomes more comfortable and harmonious. Imagine that the resolution filters to those people of your issue that are not present. This process is known as family constellations, as developed by Bert Hellinger in the 1970's and is now being practiced in over 25 countries and more recently Australia. Bert Hellinger is a German psychotherapist who is now eighty-five years old and has spent the last 25-30 years developing, practicing and teaching family constellations. This is a system based on love.

This process might sound hard to believe, a lot of “hokus pokus” or a bit “airy fairy”. However, it's hard to deny family constellation's profound effectiveness in causing healing in family relationships and emotional issues. So much so, that psychiatrists, psychotherapists, psychologists, counsellors and others in the medical or mental health professions have been sufficiently fascinated by the process to have flocked to experience and learn the philosophy and process of family constellations from Bert Hellinger himself, in his workshops and training's. These have been taking place in Europe, America and Asia over the last 25-30 years. Hence this process is spreading rapidly throughout the world.

Family constellations is a very different way of looking at emotional issues, family dynamics, relationship and business issues, that takes into account that a person is an individual as well as a product of their environment, family or group system. In addition, it allows that they may also be affected by generational influences as well. Family constellations does not attempt to blame others for the situation we might find ourselves in, but rather to see the bigger picture of yourself in the group. Hellinger describes it as a phenomenological process.

It is quite different to the more traditional approach of counselling. In personal counselling an individual is normally seen in isolation of their family or environment. According to family constellations, a family is connected by group energy, or a “collective consciousness”, which Hellinger calls family soul energy. According to Hellinger philosophy, it is often the collective consciousness of a family, which has disturbances from individuals of previous generations which is unresolved or un

acknowledged, that is taken on by ourselves or our children in the present. In this way we may have such things as, depression, a range of illnesses, suicides or any other type of deviant behavior or emotional state, being passed down the generations. Family constellations seeks, to allow the present generations to be free of these past influences, by acknowledging their existence and uncovering the love connections. This is done in an intuitive, sensitive and gentle way. This is not psychodrama.

Family constellations is a wholistic therapy, solution focus brief therapy, which is a difficult phenomena to understand at a purely intellectual level, as this cannot explain the radical shifts that take place for people, who do their constellations. Rather, we need to appreciate ourselves as complex, intellectual, emotional and spiritual beings comprised of both physical matter and energy. Energy as Einstein stated in his famous $E=MC^2$ and also as quantum physics is claiming now, is at the source of everything in the universe and is constantly interchangeable with solid and biological matter. Perhaps we should be prepared to acknowledge that our knowledge is still very limited. If some processes work, but as yet the “how” is not clear, then perhaps we should be able to say, “so be it”.

In family constellations, once some fundamental principles are acknowledged such as;

- the natural order of the system allowed to be re established,
- the individuals, that have been excluded are acknowledged,

then basically, an acknowledgment of “what is” and the uncovering of love ties, is often all that is needed for healing and integration to take place. The purpose of family constellation is to uncover the dynamics and allow the person to be in tune with their personal and family soul or group energy.

What goes wrong in families.

Often we are hurt by parents not living up to our expectations. In reaction to this we may choose to remain close to them physically, but find that we cannot let go of resentment, anger or sadness. Alternatively, we may cut ourselves off physically and emotionally from our family, in an attempt to protect ourselves from further disappointment or hurt. This may even result in rejecting our family or judging them as not being good enough for us. This may be fine for our intellectual and rational minds, but at a deeper level, the personal and collective soul or energy of the family group is not comfortable with this. Such a rejection will often come out in our children, in deviant behaviour or illnesses, or in love relationships or business or work situations. Of course, all of this behaviour is an attempt to protect ourselves and to cope in a difficult situation, because we don't know of any other way to cope. For example, your children may find it hard to respect you if you don't respect your own parents, or you find that you keep sabotaging your success or relationships. We are a product of our families. We have their genes. However we also often take on unconsciously unresolved emotions and tensions as well that don't belong to us and restrict us.

Family Constellations seeks to uncover the entanglements and allow us those in the system to be responsible for their own emotions, leaving the rest of the group feeling freer and lighter and more comfortable. It is not about blaming anyone.

It must also be acknowledged that some family situations are terrible and it may not be possible to find a cozy, warm and fuzzy solution through any therapy or family

constellations. However, family constellations is invaluable in these cases allowing, an understanding of the dynamics and an acceptance of “what is,” rather than staying in regret, blame denial and can lead to more peace for you and your family. Much suffering is caused by wanting things to have been different, rather than accepting it for what it is.

Family constellations is a forum where you don't have to go into the emotional story or history of your situation. Only a few factual questions will be asked. The constellation is done with representatives in a workshop while you observe, for the most part.

This process is ideal for improving all love relationships, between partners, parents and children, siblings and also adopted, blended or divorcing families. It is a very powerful way of clearing and resolving old relationships so that you can get on with your life. It is particularly useful for those who are finding it hard to move on after a separation or divorce or coping with the difficult dynamics of blended or adopted families. Family constellations is also an excellent way of looking at business and corporate relationships and what is “holding you back”, or what is going on in a partnerships or working out what is going on at a management or structural level, enabling you to make positive changes.

You can do your constellation in a workshop or a private session. People can choose to come to a workshop as a participant or to do their own constellation. Being a participant can be very powerful, in that you can observe and possibly be a representative in constellations. You will experience, feel and learn a lot about your own situation, as well as others through the process and is an excellent way of finding out about family constellations as a therapeutic tool for yourself or others at a later date. You will find though this experience that we are all indeed connected at some level. Family Constellations are available in Sydney, Melbourne and North NSW.

Doing your own constellation is a wonderful way of nudging you into an awareness of what is going on at a soul level, personally and collectively as a family or relationship group. With this knowledge and experience, you have an opportunity to allow your intellect and emotions to come into line with this, if you choose, resulting in more integration, acceptance and peace in your life. All you need to get the most out of your constellation is a desire for change and a relatively small amount of time and money.

As a counsellor I have been amazed to see and experience the changes that take place in people's lives following their constellations. Normally all you need is one constellation per issue and for deeper issues some follow up sessions and you can stop asking the “what if's” or being self critical and begin to enjoy life.

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