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Trust as a Way of Life...

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CONVIVIUM

Constellations

Give Your Problem Its True Home: A Healing Ancestral Video Meditation

Documentation that accompanies the free video of the same name.

Thank you for requesting this video and accompanying pdf. The meditation is about 15 minutes, and it's pretty self-explanatory. In this pdf you also get:

1. Some background information on Family Constellations and how it works (for those of you who like to "look under the hood" and understand why the meditation does what it does).
2. A few tips if the meditation gets "sticky" or if you run into any roadblocks.
3. More information about me and what I do.

Family (or Systemic) Constellations

Constellation work was developed about thirty years ago by Bert Hellinger, a German family systems therapist who'd been a Roman Catholic priest for many years. He spent 20 years doing mission work amongst the Zulu people of South Africa, and from them he learned that there is much more to our "community" than the living people we meet. Above all, there are the ancestors, who are very much a part of our lives, shaping our experience and providing us with infinite resources, but also non-human elements of our lives, like our businesses, our associations, our dreams and our memories. These are all elements in a very complex system in which we live.

We are constantly influenced by these invisible ancestors and systems. All of us have ancestors who have experienced suffering, betrayals, losses, and violence over the centuries. If these experiences couldn't be integrated or in some way honored and dealt with at the time, the unresolved suffering, guilt, rage or despair can persist, generation to generation. As a result, we can have unconscious patterns in our lives that are expressions of belonging to our larger family soul. Things like depression, troubles with relationships, issues with work, and chronic illness, can all find their source in patterns of belonging to our ancestors and their unresolved suffering. Constellations work gives us the opportunity to reveal that loyalty, and to "give back" the unresolved issues to their rightful owners, our ancestors. In doing so, this work can give us enormous relief.

The meditation video I have shared with you is a creation of mine using the techniques Hellinger pioneered. It allows a representation of you, your problem, and your family, to become present to your consciousness, for the invisible aspects of that relationship to be revealed for you to learn from, and, if it's in order, to put back in balance anything that may be "out of whack" in any way.

Troubleshooting

The problem with any “canned” meditation, no matter how good, is that they can’t address specific issues that arise in the meditator (which is why doing these things live, in a private session, for instance, can be so worthwhile). Although this meditation is intended to make room for a lot of variety in the experience of the meditator, there’s still a chance that some part of it can get “sticky” and make it hard to have full rapport with the exercise and complete it successfully.

Here are a few tips if that happens to you:

- Slow down. Don’t push. If a silence in the meditation isn’t long enough for you to allow a step to manifest fully, hit pause and let it happen. For instance, if the sense of your ancestors’ presence doesn’t come alive fully, give it more time. Make sure each step is secure and strong before moving to the next one.
- Connecting with your ancestors may be new to you, or perhaps you don’t do it very often. It is an incredibly useful practice, and people around the world do it daily as a way to ground and connect with their deepest roots. If this is new to you, or something about it still feels odd, feel free to leave out the part of the meditation about looking at the “problem,” and just use the part that has to do with noticing your ancestors and your connection to them. It’s possible this first step needs to stabilize before looking at other aspects of your family system.
- Maintain curiosity if you can. Even if you are getting some strong feelings (like irritation or sadness), being curious about what’s arising can take us quite a long way.
- Strong feelings are almost certainly expressions of the unconscious of the system you are trying to connect with, and so they are useful information. Sometimes it’s obvious why something like sadness or fear is coming up; others times it can be baffling. Constellations are an x-ray of the system, looking within the more obvious and conscious structures and impressions. Strong negative feelings are not evidence something is “wrong”; it just means that, if they are surprising, there may be things going on in the system that we hadn’t noticed. I invite patience and curiosity to be able to see the deeper meaning of the feelings that may be arising.
- No system is completely self-contained. We are looking at you, your problem, and your family to keep things simple, but we all know there is “leakage” from other systems, especially larger family systems and social systems. You may end up noticing something that is related to your spouse, a business partner, or your personal health that may be impacting the relationship between you and your problem. Be willing to be creative and curious about whether there might be some other systemic element finding its way into your meditation.

Who I Am, and How to Work with Me

I received my initial Family Constellations training from NLP Marin in 2008. Since then I've trained with the founder of Family Constellations work, Bert Hellinger, as well as a wide variety of trainers and experts in related fields: Dan Booth Cohen, Francesca Mason Boring, Jane Peterson, Heinz Stark, William Mannle, Jan Jacob Stam, Sarah Peyton, Gary Stuart, Vlado Ilic, Barbara Morgan, Carol Erickson, and many others.

I have taken a leading role in supporting and developing Family Constellations work nationally and internationally. I've presented at the last three [national constellation conferences](#) (including in 2015 as Co-Director); I've been on the leadership board for the [International Systemic Constellations Association](#) (ISCA); and I am the founding organizer and on the faculty for the [West Coast Constellations Intensive](#).

I have been in private practice since 2009, working with individuals and couples, applying Family Constellations principles and practices in a wide diversity of situations: marital trouble, depression, addiction, fertility issues, food problems, anxiety, employment and money challenges, and much more. I lead a constellations group in Berkeley that has been meeting every 2-3 weeks for seven years. At the same time, I've led many short workshops and longer change work programs and trainings.

I am also an ordained Episcopal minister, and have worked in the tender and personal place where spirituality and day to day life meet for over twenty years.

There are lots of ways to work with me, but the simplest place to start is with a free consultation. This is a chance to share what's going on for you - whether you are interested in personal healing or becoming a constellation facilitator. If you have been moved in any way by this exercise, please contact me at leslie@leslienipps.com, and I'd be delighted to get started with you.