

What Does a Family Constellations Facilitator Look For?

CONVIVIUM Constellations

By Leslie Nipps

There are five people in the circle. Representatives are saying things about sensations in their bodies, what they are feeling emotionally, what they are looking at, and what they notice about the others in the circle. It all looks a bit chaotic or random. How does a facilitator make ANY sense of what she is looking at?

A good constellation facilitator needs to remain open and without an agenda, allowing the Field to reveal in its own time the structure of the client's family soul. But that same facilitator also brings to her gaze a few key principles that guide her through the work.

- 1. Belonging is inevitable:** Once you are born into a family, you always belong. Therefore, if any family member looks like they don't belong—they are facing away, they have stepped out of the circle, they say that they feel like none of this has anything to do with them—the facilitator immediately notices something is out of order. Anything out of order draws her interest and attention.
- 2. There is seniority in a family:** Parents and ancestors give life to those who follow. This establishes a kind of seniority. So, again, a facilitator notices any violation of this order. If a child is standing over a sitting parent, for instance, this gets the facilitator's notice.

Any other violations of good order also draw attention:

- A living family member lies motionless on the ground, while a dead member stands strong and animated.
- A child and parent stand next to each other like a couple, while the other parent stands on the edge of the circle, away from the other two.
- A representative stares fixedly at a spot or space, and perhaps even points, saying "There's something missing there" or "I don't know why, but that's important."
- A child acts inappropriately senior by insisting that he is there to fix what's going on, or blaming the parental representatives for all the problems. Or a parent can act inappropriately small by saying "I don't have anything to do with this" or "It's not my fault."

Besides paying attention to order, another principle guides a facilitator. When someone in a family is suffering we will often, as an act of love, seek to fix the problem of that family member, including members who may have died later members of the family can do nothing to help the earlier ones. Support and strength flow only from senior to younger.

Efforts to fix the problems of those who come before us result in entanglements, and a facilitator is always on the lookout for them. She does this based upon her knowledge of the client's issues and family gained from a pre-constellation interview. During the interview, she notices issues or events in the family history that mirror the problem the client is bringing to the constellation. If a client talks about a persistent and inexplicable experience of depression and loss, for instance, the facilitator will look for concrete incidents of loss that have gone unacknowledged in the family. If the client reports two children who died in the Spanish Flu of 1918, the facilitator will consider looking at that side of the family.

Also, when the client talks about the problem he is bringing to the constellation, the facilitator pays keen attention to all the feelings and overall stance of the client. She wants to remember what that is like, because when it comes time for the constellation, she will look for it

asking the question: Where in this family are there exactly the same kind of feelings and stance? This suggests to the facilitator where in the system the client has gotten himself entangled.

So, for instance, if a client is really angry as he describes his problem during the interview, unconsciously clenching his fists and squinting his eyes, and then a representative for the client's father's mother displays the same behavior, the facilitator will suspect the client may be entangled with his grandmother. The constellation, as it goes on, will confirm this or not, but most likely the facilitator will be working to get the client unentangled from the grandmother and her suffering, and get everyone back in proper relationship.

Finally, the facilitator simply looks for energy. If a new representative is brought in, for instance, and all the other representatives report no changes, the facilitator will probably assume the new one is not a significant person in the constellation. On the other hand, if they all fix their eyes on the new one, or someone immediately falls down (or stands up), the facilitator assumes this is an important new addition, and will continue to work actively with the new representative.

Thank goodness for these principles; without them, a constellation would indeed feel chaotic and random. Nonetheless, they are merely guidelines. A good facilitator needs to be comfortable with extended periods of not knowing, and allowing the constellation to manifest without much guidance so that the Field itself can communicate and work on the client's issue, provided his family soul is ready.

One of my Family Constellation teachers, Michelle Masters, said: “When I begin a constellation, I turn to the client's family and internally say ‘If you want it, it would be my honor to be of use to you.’ That is a facilitator's proper stance as she proceeds with any constellation work. Ultimately, the work belongs to the family soul, and to whatever great energy—spirit, God, Life Itself—that commands Love as the path of our human lives.

Leslie Nipps, M.Div.

Family Constellations Organizer, Trainer & Practitioner

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