

I trained as a Constellations facilitator with Bert Hellinger and Gunthard Weber in New York. Since then, I have often questioned how a single Constellation can truly help bring understanding and relief for difficult problems? Ordinary experience teaches that instant solutions and miraculous healings are illusory. However, my clients' feedback indicates profound, positive effects in 80% of the cases.

According to our scientific-technological culture, we only can know and learn through direct sensory input. The accumulated lessons from Constellations suggest that this model is incomplete. Constellations reveal a dimension of consciousness that is well described by the world's non-electronic cultures, but nearly eradicated in the modern worldview.



In *Love's Hidden Symmetry*, Hellinger, Weber, and Beaumont (1998) named this dimension of consciousness "invisible systemic conscience" and described its functioning through the "orders of love." Though I have seen their observations about conscience, orders and soul confirmed many times, these terms remain nearly incomprehensible for the average person, even for many Constellation facilitators. In response, I have tried to re-language a more accessible Constellation terminology through a phenomenological process of describing reality as it appears.

Imbedded in personal history and learned consciousness, humans contain a continuous history and consciousness. We are not only individuals, but also a nearly immortal life form that survives through sexual reproduction. Imagine nesting dolls where the outer shell is the newest incarnation containing personal history, memory, and personality. Within are the genetic memories of lives that came before, parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. Also resident are traces of traumatic events. The facts and stories may be lost, but the effects echo for many, many generations.

Constellations tap into the memories of this ageless being. This Constellation story illustrates the workings of continuous consciousness. It comes from the Side-by-Side Community Circle a weekly free dinner and support group in Boston. The members are in recovery from drug or alcohol addiction, formerly imprisoned, and struggling to stay drug-free and employed.

An African American woman asked for a Constellation to help with her 21 year-old twin daughters. One is emotionally close, but lives 1,200 kilometers away. The other one lives nearby; she treats her mother with disdain.

When the girls were three years old, the mother was arrested on drug charges. A State social worker recommended the daughters be placed in a foster home. This case worker promised the mother the children would be returned within one year if she successfully completed a treatment program.

The mother met the conditions. However, her daughters remained in foster care for 15 years. To the State, the stigma of being a teen mother, drug addict and convicted felon made her permanently unfit to care for her children. The girls were shuttled between multiple foster homes. They reported being abused. The twin who is estranged calls one foster mother her "real" mother.

Crying as she spoke, the mother said her heart is bursting with love, guilt and unbearable pain. She asked us for a Constellation to melt the barriers that keep her distanced from her children.

The Constellation began with the female line – daughters, mother and grandmother. Each felt the pattern of ill-will, loneliness, and disconnection. The mother recalled family lore that a great-grandmother from slavery days was a bed-woman for a plantation owner. This was a slave who provided on-demand sexual relations for the Master. When she became pregnant and gave birth, the child was given to field hands, making the baby an orphan with neither mother nor father.

Putting in a representative for this ancestral mother and her child energized the representatives. I added a representative for the Master, his white wife and their son. Filling in the white great-grandchildren to the present generation, the descendants of the Master, wife and bed-woman formed two parallel lines, one black, the other white. They were related by common ancestry, but oppositional in their lives and experiences. It became suddenly clear that we were diagramming both the extended family and the foster care system itself.

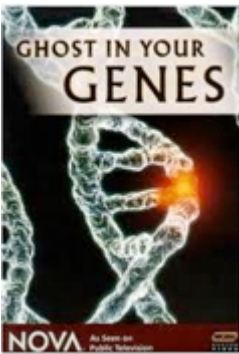
Not necessarily factually, but culturally, the children of the Master and his wife became the judges, legislators, and social workers who ruled that the mothers descended from the bed-woman were unfit. The African American descendants suffered from profound alienation and

loneliness which expressed itself in the inebriation of heroin and alcohol, teen pregnancies, abusive parenting and persistent poverty.



The bed-woman's children, while biologically mixed-race, were seen by all as black. The universal acceptance of this biologically false reality fuels the social insanity that is part of the foster care system. The irresolvable conflict between continuous (genetic) consciousness that remembers the truth and personal consciousness that denies it is the mortar that binds the barrier between daughters and mothers.

The Constellation's last step was to put in representatives for Mother Africa and Father Europe. 21st Century American culture is born from this symbol of kidnapping and rape. American society, from the extreme poverty of broken urban landscapes to the elite wealth of suburban golf courses are owned, built and populated by the children of this couple.



In slow silence, the representatives discovered healing movements that suggested new possibilities for closeness and acceptance between the mother and her twin daughters. When the nested individuals – the bed woman and slave Master – are perceived and their stories are felt in the body, estrangements tend to gradually relax, release, and dissolve. This Constellation left us inspired, sobered and nourished, perfectly fitting for the Community Circle.

All Constellation facilitators encounter information that has no obvious material source. Is it possible to bridge the gap between proponents of collective consciousness and their critics who insist the mind is only brain function? What has become commonplace for me remains highly improbable to many scientifically oriented skeptics.

I recently posed this question to Neil DeGrasse Tyson, a prominent astrophysicist. According to Tyson, the hypothesis that someone's detailed personal data - not resident in my brain - can be perceived or discerned in silence amounts to a claim of supernatural powers. "The laws of physics compellingly argue that we know all the ways that information can move from one point in time and space to another."

In all eras, certain humans have claimed the ability to ascertain

information that is not presented to the five senses. He continued "The history of such claims over the past two thousand years is one of abject failure. People who claimed non-materialist accounts of the natural world have routinely failed in the face of properly conducted experiments."

The lack of credible supportive experimental data along with a well establish set of theoretical laws, lead him to be extremely skeptical that my examples are normal qualities of human perception.

How can subjective personal experience overrule conclusive experimental research? As he notes, "The methods and tools of science have wholly replaced our feeble five senses as tools of inquiry to the natural world. So what something looks like to your senses is no longer the measure of what is true in the physical world."

I reported my exchange to another scientist whose work I respect, [Rupert Sheldrake](#). He responded, "I think it's ridiculous to pin the argument down to the well-understood laws of physics. We have no explanation even of biological morphogenesis in terms of the known laws of physics, and less understanding of consciousness. To assume that all these things will eventually be understood in terms of laws of physics is an example of promissory materialism. It's essentially a faith position and not one you can ever refute by argument."

Ultimately, what counts most is the effect that Constellations have on those who stand in them. For this reason, I am attentive to following up with my clients.

This second story is one of the many that keep inspired despite the obstacles. A 31 year-old Norwegian woman asked for a Constellation via Skype. Since the age of 16, she has suffered from pelvic pain diagnosed as endometriosis. Her pain was disabling. Having tried many treatments, her doctors recommended surgery. Because she was married and wanted children, this was a feared last resort.

The client's mother was from a respected Norwegian family. She was statuesque, blonde, and blue-eyed. Her father was descended from the indigenous Sami people of the North. His build was compact, with darker skin and Native features.

We created a simple Constellation. I began standing in the client's place. We added representatives for the symptom, mother, father, and grandparents. In silence, our perceptive intelligence, intuition, and



bodies opened.

Human minds are loaded with facts. We automatically rummage through them in hopes of solving the mystery of why we suffer. Constellations tune into feelings that were there before the first fact was deposited. They reveal not what we think, but what thinks us. In the interval between each thought, in the emptiness between heartbeats, we can recall what we always knew.

Behind the father was a lineage of Sami women. They were traditional healers who treated diseases with love and plants.

Behind the mother was a lineage of Nordic warriors, Vikings and Christian soldiers. These men wielded sharp metal weapons. To Christian missionaries, the Sami women healers were witches. Their folk medicine and heathen rituals were punishable by death.

The sharp pain in the client's womb symbolized this archaic struggle for supremacy. Her genetic inheritance literally embodied the war between witches and warriors.

The last step was a story whispered in dream-like imagination. The soldiers recognized their daughter and dropped their swords. The Sami women took back their pain and showered their daughter with love and blessings.

Five months later, the client told me, "The pain has greatly decreased. I am convinced that your Constellation had a lot to do with this." Several months after that she reported she was pregnant.