

## **What is 'Family Constellations'?**

*A day of crying and catharsis.*

Just a heads-up before you dedicate 3 minutes of your day to reading this - there's a very strong chance that you may still not be entirely sure what Family Constellations is by the end of it. Even though I would consider myself to be pretty skilled in being able to simplify the complex - this remains something that's 'hard to describe'.

But where I fail to explain how it works, I'll make up for by explaining how it feels.

Let's start with how the environment and the whole process felt safe and supportive throughout the day. Never scary, or weird, or uncomfortable, but totally profound and emotional. Okay, perhaps it felt a tad weird in places - but that fascinating and captivating kind of weird!

I walked away from the day with a deeper understanding of my feelings, a soft and welcome acceptance of these feelings, and a sense of release - as if I was walking away lighter than I'd arrived.

Because there were a couple of weights I'd been carrying.

Significant weights - firstly, a sense of responsibility for a family member who is having a particularly tough time and has been for a while now. I've carried an anxious feeling of needing to help, needing to intervene and 'fix' in some way. And then a much more deep-rooted sense of weight that spans generations. The kind of family angst that we usually brush off with a flippant "Families, eh?!" along with a slight comical shrug of the shoulders - a costume for the sadness that lingers somewhere deep down.

This is what Family Constellations shakes off, and somehow manages to pull out of you. But rather than it feeling like a long-winded deep dive into the hazy narratives of your family background, it effortlessly and effervescently bubbles to the surface. Somehow, the stuff that needs to come up, comes up and comes out with relative ease.

I almost didn't talk about my family 'stuff' - in an earlier constellation, there was something that sparked my feelings around the miscarriages and babies I'd lost. So, I initially felt I was being pulled in this direction on the day. However, when I was asked what I wanted to look at - the babies seemed safely held and I knew how to honour them perfectly.

But the family stuff... I didn't know where to start.

And so I immersed myself in the process - at one point I watched myself - I watched as a woman stood as my representative and somehow captured how I was feeling. At another point, I stood in a line of people, looking back through the generations behind me, listening to messages coming forward. But none of this involves acting. There's no roleplay. No need to

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think - just to feel. If you're taking part in someone's constellation, you're told what to say and asked how you feel. It's impossible to explain how it works but it does.

I cried a lot. I saw my situation from a different perspective. I was able to step back and gain acceptance of things I can't control, but also feel empowered to move forward as my most creative, authentic, and awesome self.

I'll say that again - I left feeling empowered to move forward as my most creative, authentic and awesome self.

Sometimes you don't need to know how something works... it just does. And there's a magic in that.