Does the Process

Of

Family Constellations

Improve

Relationships

and

Wellbeing?

Contents

Acknowledgements	pg 3
Abstract	pg4
Introduction	pg 5
Literature Review	pg 5
Method	pg 10
Results	pg 11
Discussion	pg 15
Conclusion	pg 16
Author.	Pg 20
Appendix A	
Appendix B	
Appendix C	
Appendix D	

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Dr Roslyn Smart in the knowledge, support and encouragement she has generously offered to me as my supervisor.
I would also like to acknowledge the generosity of the volunteer participants from the workshops and private sessions in taking the time to fill out the survey questionnaires.
In addition I am in gratitude to the innovator of the theory and practice of Family Constellations, Bert Hellinger and my first trainer in this practice Svagito Liebermeister and also all the authors of Family Constellation literature around the world, who are continuing to add to the knowledge and development of this modality.

Abstract

The aim of this study is to evaluate the brief, experiential, solution focused, phenomenological, Family Constellations process experienced in workshops or private sessions on relationships and well-being, by volunteer participants of the study, over an 8 week period, in light of very little research having been done in this area so far. A total of 30 participants ranging from 22-59 years, male and female, were surveyed in a mixed survey research methodology consisting of 3 sets of questionnaires to collect data at three stages of the process, to evaluate the quality of relationships and well-being. These stages being, immediately Before, immediately After and One week after the Family Constellation process, to provide some progressive quantitative data for analysis. The results suggest that there was an improvement in relationships and well-being, that appeared to be on-going up to one week after the process. A discussion of some of the limitations of the study is included along with recommendations for further research.

Does the Process Of Family Constellations Improve Relationships and Wellbeing?

Family Constellations is a relatively new modality in the area of brief, solution focused experiential therapy that appears to be difficult to define. In this paper the writer who is also the researcher has conducted a research to explore the research question ,“Does the Family Constellations process improve relationships and well being?” This paper has provided a review of relevant literature exploring the theory and practice of Family Constellations as a modality and some information about the debate between practitioners of the modality and also how it is attempting to fit into the world of counselling and psychotherapy. The research project has sought to provide data from participants of the process from workshops and private sessions through questionnaires in order to provide quantitative and qualitative data.

A Family Constellation process is facilitated by a counsellor or psychotherapist who is trained in this process that traditionally takes place in a workshop forum and shows the order, entanglements or alliances of a client and their issue, visually through representatives of people in their lives. On a practical level Ulsamer, (2003) explained that a constellation is formed when people are set up spatially, to represent an inner image of the people in a client’s life, while they observe the process as it unfolds. The representatives of the people in the client’s life, usually know very little or nothing of the client or their history prior to the process. However, when placed by the client in a constellation, the representatives start to feel sensations in their body that may provide important information of the client’s and their family’s experience. The constellation process proceeds until something has been revealed or resolved, with the client very often taking their place in the process, usually towards the end, in order to possibly experience a new perspective.

Finding a description that most facilitators and writers of the process agree with is problematic in this modality, as Family Constellations appears to span both the psychotherapeutic and the personal development worlds. Schneider (2007), made the point that the modality of Family Constellations is based in phenomenology and in an attitude of not knowing. In addition, Schneider views Constellation work as a tool for raising awareness, rather than being a form of psychotherapy in itself. Another view by Verschuren and Molenaar (2005) is Constellation work being basically body-orientated, in allowing facilitators to use the body feeling states of the client, or the representatives, as fairly reliable indicators of the flow of the process. Maddelung and Innerken (2005) highlighted the importance of the visual, in the use of spatial placements in raising alternative perspectives as a valuable aspect of the therapeutic process. While Peterson (2006) raised some thought provoking, philosophical, questions about the nature of consciousness and the Constellation process, suggesting the Family Constellations process to be much more than and quite different to other psychological modalities, as it rellies heavily on the intuition of the facilitator and the participants. The Constellation process according to Ulsamer (2003) discussed the concept of the morphogenic or *Knowing field*, as named by Mahr (2005). The knowing field is often experienced by the participants of a constellation process as body and emotional sensations while being guided by the facilitator to a resolution or suitable end point according to Liebermeister (2006). In working

with presenting emotions, the mind, visual, audio and also generational patterns that individuals bring with them into the present, Liebermeister suggested, that Constellation theory and practice may be useful in personal development and also improving relationships.

Family Constellations and Psychotherapy.

The founder of Family Constellations Bert Hellinger (2006) explained that the nature of the phenomenological, experiential approach of Family Constellations has the capacity to open up new perspectives and possible solutions and is substantially different to the more traditional psychotherapeutic approach's of counselling and psychotherapy, which he perceived as being generally problem-focused rather than solution focused. Hellinger (2003) appeared to view most counselling and psychological processes as being too restrictive of the client's realities and possibilities and limiting potential growth. In short, Hellinger along with many of the followers of this method, Ulsamer (2004), Liebermeister(2007), Franke (2003), Mahr (2005) and others, agreed that Constellation work involves change on many levels, starting with the senses, creating new perspectives, revealing or releasing emotions and connecting the personal, family and ancestral energy, for deep personal resolutions and continuing growth and assimilation.

Hellinger went further in stating that psychotherapy has an agenda, with a desire to "repair" or "fix", as well as a need for "closure" at the end of the therapy, whereas the process of Constellations, "sets an impulse in motion" (Hellinger 2006 p186) for a client, towards expansion and growth with no time limit and no need to be in therapy. According to Hellinger this is a brief intervention from which the facilitator withdraws once the process has taken place and generally does not follow up. The Constellation practitioner, having facilitated as best they can, rellies on the client's personal and family energy as Hellinger (1999) put it, to make meaning of their experience, find autonomy, homeostasis and the choice to move on in their own way. Mahr adopts a similar attitude of not following up, but leaves his workshops allowing clients to email him once, when they have something to report. While Ursula Franke who also appears not to follow up her clients actively, believed that the effects of a constellation are always present and may continue to grow, up to two or more years after the process, although she provides no evidence for this, other than case studies and some longitudinal studies in her books. She expressed the view that the process is such that it is bound to have an impression on many levels.

Hellinger (2003) explained that intentions or agenda of the therapist and also curiosity and rational thinking on the part of the client, into the process they have experienced, especially immediately afterwards, may stop the natural flow of the impulse that has been set in motion at the level of the emotions, unconscious mind and the personal or family energy. Interestingly, it is likely that this view of Hellinger has had the effect of restricting valuable research into the effectiveness of the Constellation process. The researcher as a Family Constellation facilitator has also wondered if the process of filling in questionnaires in this research was in the best interest of the participants, as it may encourage analysis and interfere with their natural processing, whilst also being aware that without research, it is not possible to reliably verify

whether the Constellation process is effective in improving relationships and wellbeing or not.

Problems of Psychological research

Perhaps the reasons so little research has been done on phenomenological forms of counselling or therapy is that it has been perceived that the experiences are difficult to quantify reliably according to West (2002). For this reason qualitative methods focusing on case studies or longitudinal studies have been favoured in the research of experiential methodologies generally in most of the available literature according to Blaxter, Hughes. and Tight (2008). Schneider (2007) suggested that in trying to understand or explain the phenomenon of Family Constellations, we are operating at the cutting edge of our current understanding, available language and at the for-front of a new field of knowledge and experience. This research project collected both quantitative and qualitative data in order to begin to fill the gap in this area of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of the Family Constellation process in relationships and wellbeing. It is interesting to note that research into the Constellation process in Organisational, and Business Strategies such as that done by Roevans and Van Der Berg (2007) has occurred more often than research of Constellations in the therapeutic fields, perhaps because business groups insist on valid, quantifiable results, in order to be persuaded of the validity and usefulness of a methodology.

Some of the challenges of using Family Constellation theory and practice is the technique of exploring issues and relationships through representatives with little or no information from the client, while holding a space from which new information or perspective may emerge explains Liebermeister (2006). The idea of having, no intention of the process from the facilitator's perspective, when working with a client, which may be fraught with possible conflict according to Ulsamer (2003). From a Hellinger (1999) perspective working without a client's "story", is realising that a story is simply one interpretation only of events, is highly valuable in allowing a new possible perspective to arise, which might be akin to writing a new script as he explains in Hellinger (2002). It is acknowledged by all writers of Constellation work that high levels of professional and personal development are required of a Constellation facilitator, as Gruen (2007) discussed at length in his article about the possibility of the facilitator's shadow infiltrating the process. From the researcher's perspective these are some of issues that require exploration of Family Constellation theory and practice, producing research and reliable quantifiable results of the process, so that the Family Constellation modality may be accepted into the wider psychotherapeutic world.

The position of Family Constellations in the present therapeutic world. Constellation work, Schneider (2007) explained is both constructivist and also phenomenological in nature, primarily concerned with the way we construct our reality through our experiences and our feelings, with the client being central to the process of change and growth. Maddelung and Ernerkin.(2006) suggested that from the phenomenological perspective where we cannot know what ultimate reality is, it is more effective, respectful and appropriate to help clients from within their own experience of emotions, perspectives, body sensations and symbols, than to attempt to analyse them, with the intention of

helping client's to alter thoughts or behaviour, so as to fit into pre-determined models or norms.

Franke (2003) explained that Family Constellations itself is actually an amalgamation of many different approaches combined with the original insight philosophy and unique insights and techniques of Bert Hellinger (2003) primarily. Constellation theory and practice has taken elements from many innovators in therapy according to Franke (2003) such as, Virginia Satir's "sculpting", Pearle's Gestalt therapy, Primal therapy, Psychoanalysis (Freud), Psychodynamic (Jung and Adler), Transactional Analysis (Berne), Hypnotherapy (Erickson 1989) and systemic family therapies such as Bowen. Further, Franke explained that Hellinger was also highly influenced by his experiences as a catholic priest and teacher with the Zulu people, where he noticed an apparent archaic Primal Order as explained in Hellinger (1999) that appear to be operating between family members and generations, which he perceived promoted respect, order and health. Another important influence for Hellinger was the work of Ivan Boszormenyi Nagy sited by Franke in contributing insights into the effects of invisible loyalties operating within and between generations, which have given rise to much of the basic principles of Family Constellation theory and practice.

Presently Family Constellations is a theory and practice, which is still in the process of integrating and developing and continuing to defining itself either as a tool according to Schneider (2007), a brief therapeutic intervention according Hellinger (1999) or as part of a larger therapeutic process, according to Maddelung and Innerken (2003). In addition the principles of Family Constellations have formed a philosophy that may be adapted to many areas of human experience beyond the counselling and therapeutic process such as education, sociology, medical, and organisational as suggested by Tucker (2008) and the range of articles regularly published in the Knowing Field journal.

In assessing the effectiveness of Family Constellations in terms of relationships and wellbeing, Hellinger (2006) suggested that the whole family may benefit from one of its number taking part in a Constellation process. This is supported by many other writers such as Schneider (2007), Ulsamer (2005), who have had their clients report significant changes in themselves, others and their system following the process. Family Constellation books and journals are full of case studies and longitudinal studies, but few have been verified by academic research and reporting. Generally Hellinger (2003) and many other facilitators receive follow up information on the effects of their work by chance meetings or random emails.

However even Ursula Franke who is a psychologist with a PhD, who is trained in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Body orientated therapy, Hypnotherapy and Family Constellation and is a facilitator, trainer, writer and major innovator and developer of Constellations as individual therapy, has not published quantifiable evidence of the Constellation process. The problem of finding valid non invasive ways of measuring the effectiveness of the Constellation process is on going as acknowledged by Boulton (2006). One of the few people who is undertaking research in the area of Morphogenic fields is Sheldrake (2007) who is the leading scientific researcher in this field, however few people have conducted research on the effectiveness of the process on relationships and well being so far.

Individual and workshop Constellations.

In looking at the groups focused on in this study, workshop and private sessions, it has been the writers challenge to find a way of evaluating and comparing the two approaches of delivering the Constellation experience and measure the response equitably. Franke (2003) has been a pioneer of individual Constellation work and been at the forefront of developing the theory and practice of private sessions in at least three formats, visualisation, dolls and floor anchors. While Madelung and Innecken (2004) have also developed a therapeutic process for private sessions there has been little research into the effectiveness of private individual sessions so far.

It is in this context that the present research study fits into this body of knowledge, as very little quantitative or qualitative studies have been undertaken to provide evidence for the effectiveness or otherwise of this process on relationships and wellbeing. It is acknowledged that such a study may not be welcomed by some areas of the Constellation world for the reasons already given here, in terms of interfering with the Constellation process itself. The intention of this research project is to provide some quantitative and qualitative evidence of the process that may be the beginning of ongoing research by others in this area.

Method

Participants.

A total of 30 participants ranging in age from 22-59 years male and female, were surveyed in this research. The participants were involved in either workshop or private sessions. Workshops - 23 participants- consisting of 15 females and 8 males. Private sessions 7 –Consisting of 4 females and 3 males.

Methodology.

A mixed survey research methodology was selected to explore whether the Family Constellations process improved relationships and wellbeing. The data was collected through the self-completion of three questionnaires by each participant, immediately before (see Appendix B) and after the process (see Appendix C) and one week later (see Appendix D). The intention was to collect progressive quantitative and qualitative data of their experience and its effects on relationships and wellbeing up to one week after the process. Voluntary participants from 2, 3-day and 1, 2-day Family Constellations workshops and 7 private sessions over an 8 week period, were invited to take part in completing the survey after signing the research proposal consent form (see Appendix A).

Recruitment to the research.

Participants for the workshop and private sessions came forward voluntarily through referrals from previous clients or through the researchers private practice, website and monthly email newsletter.

Workshop.

The researcher allowed time at the beginning of the workshop for participants to fill out the first questionnaire (see Appendix B) and at the end of each day to fill out the second questionnaire (see Appendix C) and left the participants to post the third questionnaire (see Appendix D) in a pre paid envelope, one week later.

Private sessions.

In the private sessions the researcher allowed time at the beginning of the session for the client to sign the research proposal (Appendix A) and if choosing to take part, fill out the before questionnaire (Appendix B) and also the after questionnaire (Appendix C) at the end of the session and left the participant to post the third questionnaire (Appendix D) in a pre paid envelope one week later.

Questions

The questions on the questionnaires were developed for the specific purpose of the study and were a mixture of open, closed and multiple choice responses using a Likert scale, in order to provide a mixture of easy to complete quantitative data and also some qualitative data to provide some reflective, in depth, experiential feed back.

The questions were designed to gain progressive information on quality of relationships, physical health, wellbeing as well as satisfaction with the process of Family Constellations and the quality of facilitation and whether the process changed awareness or perspectives of the respondents.

Results

Quantitative Responses.

For the purpose of the present study only the results that were directly related to the research question were used, omitting questions related to satisfaction with the process, the quality of facilitation and whether issues were dealt with fully are reported in this paper.
Participants multiple choice responses ranging from values 1-5 or 0-4 rating, with 4 or 5 being the optimum response were averaged for each question. The number of responses for each question varied due to participants not always completing each part of the questionnaires.
The workshop and private session responses have been grouped separately and averaged in the same manner.

Table 1

Rating the quality of the following relationships 1, 2, 3. Rating 1-5

Workshop	**Before Question 2.**	Number of responses	**After Question 6**	Number of responses	**One week later Question 3**	Number of responses
1. Family of origin	3,38	21	3.54	21	4.45	20
2. Present Family	3.36	21	3.4	20	3.5	20
3. Spouse/partner	3.85	14	4.4	12	4.25	11
Private Sessions						
1. Family of origin	2.42	7	3.14	7	3.28	7
2. Present Family	2.28	6	2.42	6	3.16	6
3. Spouse/partner	2.57	6	2.83	6	3.16	6

In table one the results show that for all three categories Family of origin, Present family and Relationship with spouse or partner, that the quality of relationships improved from before to immediately after and one week after the constellation process.

Table 1 reported the quality of relationships showing a consistent improvement from before and immediately after the process, however, the results from after, to one week later, are not so consistent in the Workshop group spouse/partner results. It is interesting to note that in this section of results for spouse/partner after and one week later, that the sample numbers were less than for the other two workshop results Family of Origin and Present Family, which may indicate that spousal relationships may be harder to evaluate accurately in this manner. From the data reported in Table 1 we may deduce that for some people the most change in terms of improvements in relationships took place either during or immediately after the process.

Table 2

Rating the quality of their physical health. 1-5

Workshops	**Before Question 4**	Number of responses.	**After Question 8**	Number of responses	**One week later Question 2**	Number of responses
Health and wellbeing.	3.78	21	3.875	20	4.00	17
Private Sessions						
Health and wellbeing	3.28	7	3.57	7	3.57	7

In Table 2 rating the quality of physical health, the workshop showed a slight progressive improvement, whereas the private sessions showed a small improvement only, between the Before and After and no further improvement in One week later.

Table 3

Appendix C After-Question 7

Did their Wellbeing improve? Yes/No

Workshop Yes	100% stated	13 responses
Private sessions Yes	100% stated	5 responses

In Table 3 the data from a simple Yes/No response reported that 100% of respondents felt that their wellbeing had improved in the After questionnaire for workshop and private session respondents.

Table 4

Appendix C. After. Question 4

Did any unexpected awareness's or perspectives emerge from the engagement in the Family Constellation process? Yes/No

Workshop	100% Yes	17 Responses
Private sessions	100% Yes	6 responses

In Table 4 all respondents said they had new perspectives emerge immediately after the process through the simple Yes/ No responses in the After.

Appendix C. After. Quantitative Question 4.
Qualitative comments.

Random sample of responses from workshop and private sessions in three of the most recurrent themes.

“I had not thought about other people’s perspective on this issue.”

The common theme from this sample was an understanding of others perspectives.

“I had very little awareness that the issues with my parents were so enmeshed with their grief at leaving their homeland. I have a greater understanding of my ancestors.”

The theme is of gaining an understanding of historical implications may still be having an impact on the present.

“I know now that I was denying my link to my aboriginal heritage because I had not connected to my birth father. My birth mother gave me up because she didn’t want to go into an unhappy marriage, but my birth father didn’t want to give me up.”

The theme here is of perspectives coming to light that impact self worth.

These responses were supported by qualitative data following Tables 4 with more in depth, reflective, qualitative responses, which demonstrate that new awareness, insights and perspectives were continuing to emerge up to one week after the Family Constellation process. These results were consistent with both the workshop and private session respondents.

Table 5

Appendix D. One week later Question 6

Have there been any new awareness’s one week later. Yes/No

Workshop 100% Yes	16 Responses
Private sessions 100% Yes	5 responses

Table 5 present data confirmed that awareness was continuing to evolve up to One week later reporting 100% positive responses for respondents of both Private sessions and workshops.

Qualitative comments. Appendix C. After quantitative question 6
Random sample of responses from workshop and private sessions in three of the most recurrent themes.

“More insight to the fact that I may have actually been wanted.”

“I have a sense of light and breeze coming into areas of my life that were previously shut away in darkness. I have a great explanatory model for my family history that takes the cutting edge of blame, regret that turns to a gentler understanding and acceptance.”

“Just continuing awareness of my partner’s true feelings re the abortions.”

In each of these themes there appears to new awareness’s raised.

Table 5 report qualitative, more in depth, reflective, responses, which support the quantitative responses, that new awareness, insights and perspectives are continuing to emerge up to one week after the Family Constellation process. These results were consistent with both the workshop and private session respondents.

Table 6

Appendix C. After. Question 10

To what extent has the experience been beneficial? rating 0-4

Average	Responses
Workshop 3.55	18
Private. 3.6	5

In Table 6 the respondents considered the process to have been very beneficial.

Appendix C. After. Question 11

Qualitative comments after question 10.

Random sample of responses from workshop and private sessions in three of the most recurrent themes.

“Peace of mind and heart. Ability to “let go” of the whole experience.”

In this theme a sense of resolution is shown.

“A better understanding of the relationship issues. It is bigger and reaches far deeper into history than I thought was possible.”

Awareness of larger perspectives is shown here.

“Understanding and the right tools to make positive changes in my life.”

A realization of the tools for change are realized.

In Table 6 data reports that participants found the experience of Family Constellations to have been highly beneficial which is further supported by a

range of rich qualitative data in both the workshop and private session respondents.

Discussion

In terms of the process of Family Constellations improving relationships and well being, Table 1, 2 and 3 provide some support for this statement in both the workshop and private session as evidenced by the progressive quantitative data.

Results reported in Table 2 and Table 3 consisting of multiple choice response, progressive questions and also Yes/No responses, appears to confirm for workshop and private session respondents, that up to one week after the Constellation process, that wellbeing improved. In the simple yes no responses in table 3 the results showed a 100% improvement in wellbeing in all participants.

From these research findings, the process of Family Constellations appeared to have a favourable effect on relationships, wellbeing and raising awareness generally. This research supported Jacob Schneider's (2007) suggestion that Constellation work is a useful tool for raising awareness and also supported many Family Constellation facilitators' and writers' view, such as Hellinger (2006), Liebermeister (2006), Ulsamer (2003) and Mahr (2005) just to mention a few, that the Family Constellations process does improve relationships, in providing some evidence that supported their case studies in books and teachings.

One of the main limitations of this research was the time constraint of 8 weeks. This was too short a period in which to collect a larger sample of participant volunteers from workshops and private practice. In future research it would be useful to have many more participants from a series of workshops from one facilitator as one possibility. However another limitation is the loss of perceived objectivity, in the researcher also being the facilitator as discussed by West (2002) which may be addressed in surveying a series of workshops from several facilitators using an agreed methodology and questionnaires or interview technique. It would be interesting to find what effect facilitator personality or effectiveness had on client experience, compared to results from a group of facilitators using the same method. A further recommendation, in order to maintain perceived objectivity and balance, may also be the use of a researcher who is not also the facilitator collecting and collating the data.

In addition, in the area of private sessions the researcher experienced several limitations. The first of which was the difficulty in gaining larger sample sizes from individual sessions. The researcher's private practice consists of Counselling, Hypnotherapy and Family Constellations with the researcher/counsellor often not knowing before the session which of those modalities would be appropriate. The researcher may use one, or a combination of approaches within one session and often found that it wasn't in the client's best interests, in terms of their process, to be presented with a research proposal in the middle of a session, if the process of Family Constellations emerged as being the most appropriate path for part of, or the rest of a session. For this reason the sample number of private sessions was significantly lower than had been proposed in the research proposal. Therefore, it is recommended for future research that a larger sample be collected so as to determine the effectiveness of private sessions. It would also be interesting to see if similar results are found with a larger sample of private sessions, either with one facilitator or a group of facilitators who are

experienced in facilitating private sessions, to find what effect facilitator personality, skills or style had on the process. It is interesting to note that even though the sample number of private sessions is lower than that of workshop process's, the size of the improvements, in all areas for private sessions were higher overall than those in the workshop participants. It would be interesting to explore if these results are maintained if the sample size of each group (private and workshop) and also to explore what if any other factors were involved in the difference in results. For example it is not clear if this is because the facilitator here is more effective in private sessions than workshop sessions or that the private setting is more confidential or comfortable for the client. It could also be the case that one week after the session is too soon to measure differences and that progressive monitoring one month, three months, six months or one to two years later might would be a more realistic set of time frames, in order to measure improvements.

Another area that might be considered in further studies is the effects of the first Family Constellation covering *family of origin*, compared to later constellations. Also a comparison of the effects of *family of origin* constellations compared to present day relationship constellations could be explored. It could be that the biggest shift takes place during or after the first *family of origin* constellation and further constellations have less effect following that. Much Family Constellation theory suggests that once family of origin issues are in order, present relationships are unavoidably influenced anyway, as the choices or attractions of present relationships generally stem from the entanglement of the individual in their family of origin system. However, it could also be the case that the present day family situation may cause the larger shifts for some individuals, as these include personal choices and responsibilities which may be challenging to acknowledge or accept. All of the private sessions in the study were first experiences of the constellation process and were a mixture of family of origin and present family issues, whereas the workshop participants were a mixture of people who had never experienced constellations before and others who had. In addition in the workshop group who had experienced constellations before there was a mixture of original family and present situations.

This research was successful in collecting quantitative data that indicated improvements in relationships and well being in one session only of a Family Constellation process. However the quantitative data is limited in being able to express the range of experiences which are richly expressed through the qualitative data, involving the senses, bodily sensations, emotions, perspectives, awareness and spiritual experiences. It is fortunate that the value of qualitative research is becoming more accepted as a valid method to measure or observe human experiences that may be severely limited by analysis of purely quantitative data. However the researcher does also appreciate the value of quantitative data as a starting point to gain acceptance of the relatively new methodology of Family Constellations into the psychotherapeutic world, whilst also being a valid framework for other areas of human experience, such as education, community, mental health, environment, healing nations and raising awareness.

In short the researcher suggests larger sample participant numbers for future studies with a view to see if the results of this study are upheld. Also research including several facilitators, rather than one facilitator researcher,

using an agreed method of collecting data, to check the consistency across a range of facilitation styles, personalities and experience would be useful. In addition, research that takes place over longer periods of time in order for longitudinal studies to take place, to assess Ursula Franke's (2005) suggestion that awareness may continue to grow up to two years after a Family Constellation process, would be useful to explore. Also a study between the similarities, differences and effectiveness between Family Constellations workshop process's and private sessions may give valuable information to aid further Family Constellation developments. From this study it appears that the research method used here did not interfere with the process of Family Constellations for the participants involved, however further studies exploring a range of effective research methods for this modality would also be useful.

In conclusion the mixed survey research methodology has provided valuable qualitative and quantitative findings indicating that the Family Constellation process does improve relationships and well being and also may provide a framework for other researchers or groups of practitioners of Family Constellations to do further research in many specific areas of the developing theory and practice of this modality. The more humanistic modalities of counselling and psychotherapy in general of which Family Constellations is a relatively new addition, are faced at this time with the challenge of providing viable evidence of their effectiveness (often with little or no funding) if they are to gain acceptance of individuals, families, community and mental health services in terms of recognition of their value for relationships and wellbeing.

The author.

Yildiz Sethi.
Research done in 2009 in Masters study. Masters of Applied Social Science specialising in Counselling with Australian College of Applied Psychology.

Yildiz is a clinical registered counsellor, clinical registered hypnotherapist, NLP practitioner, Family Constellation facilitator and trainer. Educator part time at Australian College of Applied Psychology.
yildiz@familyconstellations.com.au
www.familyconstellations.com.au
+61 7 32686016
Brisbane, Australia.
Member of ISCA and DGfS.

References

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. & Tight, M (2008) How to Research. Maidenhead. Open University Press.

Boulton, J. (2006) Towards Understanding of the Why of Constellations. *The Knowing Field. International Constellations Journal* (8) p8-15

Erickson, M (1989) *Evolving Consciousness and identity in hypnotherapy*. Kentucky USA. Routledge

Franke, U. (2003) *The River Never Looks Back*. *Historical and Practical Foundations of Bert Hellinger's Family Constellations.* Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag

Franke, U. (2003) *In My Minds Eye. Family Constellations in Individual Therapy and Counselling.* Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag.

Franke, U. (2005) Constellation Work in South Africa. *The Knowing Field. International Constellations Journal* (6) p28-30

Gruen, H. (2007) The Return of the Shadow. The Knowing Field, International Constellations Journal. (10) p42-49

Hellinger,B. (1999) *Acknowledging What Is.* Phoenix. Zeig, Tucker &Co., Inc.

Hellinger,B. (2002) *Insights Lectures and Stories.* Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag.

Hellinger,B. (2003) *To The Heart of the Matter. Brief Therapies.* Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag.

Hellinger,B. (2006) *No Waves Without the Ocean.* Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag.

Liebermeister, S. (2006) The Roots of Love. Cambridge. Perfect Publishing.

Maddelung, E. (2008) The Role of the Feminine and Women in Constellation work.*The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal.* (8) p 38-42

Maddelung, E.& Innerken,B (2006) The Role of the Feminine & Women in Constellation Work. *The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal.* (6) p38-43

Mahr, A (2005) How the Living and the Dead can Heal Each Other*. The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal* (6) p4-9

Peterson, J. (2006) Asking the hard questions. *The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal.* (8) p58-61

Roevans, J & Van Den Berg Systemic Sets in Organisations. (2007) *The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal* (7) p31-37

Schneider, J (2006) Family Constellations and Couples Therapy. *The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal* (8) p32-36

Schneider, J (2007) *Family Constellations Basic Principles*. Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag.

Sheldrake, W. (2007) Energy Fields retrieved 7.7.2009 http://www.sheldrake.org/homepage.html sited

Tucker, S (2008) The Infinate Container. *The Knowing Field. International Constellations Journal* (6) p8-9

Tilley,A.J. (2004) Report Writing. In An Introduction to Research Methodlogy and Report Writing in Psychology (2nd edition) Brisbane: Pineapple Press p 409-428.

Ulsamer, B (2003) *The Art and Practice of Family Constellations.* Heidelberg. Carl-Auer-Systeme Verlag.

Ulsamer, B. (2004) Trauma Work. *Systemic Systems Bulletin The Knowing*

Field International Constellations Journal. (5) 20-28.

Ulsamer, B. (2007). Constellations in Hong Kong. *The Knowing Field International Constellations Journal.* (10) p12-14

Verschuren, A, H & Molenaar B, M (2005) Body Orientated Interventions in Family Constellations. *The Knowing Field. International Constellations Journal* (6) p28-30

West, W (2002) Some ethical dilemmas in counselling and counselling research. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling.* (30, No 3)