

# What are Family Constellations?

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Family Constellations were developed by Bert Hellinger, a German psychotherapist, who wanted to understand how many of the problems we suffer from were coming from our family system. He developed a process where these hidden family dynamics could be seen and healed, primarily by having volunteers represent what was being concealed.

Family Constellation can help us understand how we often share the suffering of family members and/or ancestors with whom we are entangled. These entanglements (or identifications) within family systems is a source of illness, emotional distress, anxiety, depression, trauma and problems in relationships, work and career. With Family Constellations we can discover how to acknowledge this suffering differently and separate ourselves from it. When we can see family members or ancestors as distinct from us, we don't need to share their fate. We can begin to live our own unique lives freed from burdens that were never ours.

Family Constellations can also help resolve issues around our birth and attachment style with our biological parents. Often family system issues interfere with the natural process of connecting and belonging with our parents and later separating and individuating from them to form our own adult lives. Our ability to take life from them and feel enough to have our own life is often compromised. Family Constellations can help to resolve issues around attachment and taking life.

Hellinger found that every family system has natural laws which govern the health of the system. He called these the Orders of Love. When the Orders of Love are violated in some way love and relationships are damaged leading to generational trauma, suffering and fragmentation. Family Constellations can see where this order is broken and use these natural laws to repair the source of suffering and restore the natural flow of love and relationship.

Often, we also learn to let go of what cannot be healed, what is not our business, and find alternative sources of love and connection so that we can go on well with our own unique lives to thrive, grow and mature.