

*As we heal, we heal seven generations backwards...*

*And seven generations forward.....*

## **Shamanic Ritual and Family Constellations: The Ancestors Speak©**

**John L. Payne**



Shamanism is the oldest spiritual tradition known to humanity and for thousands of years Shamans on each and every inhabited continent have developed an effective and profound system of healing through journeying, soul retrieval, and communication with the Ancestors and others in the spirit world.

So how does Shamanism, an ancient spiritual tradition, fit with Family Constellation work which can be seen as a psychotherapeutic process? At the core of Family Constellation work is inclusion of the Ancestors in assisting us to heal our entanglements and deeper family wounds.

My first experiential introduction to Shamanism came to me when I opened my healing and training centre for Family Constellations in Johannesburg, South Africa. I invited a dear friend along who was a practicing Sangoma, a traditional medicine woman and Shaman in the South African tradition. She brought with her a troop of aspirants and a senior Zulu elder. They danced, they drummed, and they

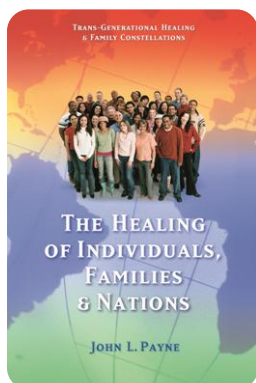


summoned forth the Ancestors and blessed my own work with the Ancestors through Family Constellation work. Since that time my contact with the Ancestors has deepened and not only my interest in Shamanism has grown, I now consider myself a Shaman after having studied and experienced Shamanism with teachers and groups alike.

Blending Shamanistic practice and ritual into my hands on healing and energy healing practice came naturally to me, it was a perfect fit. My power animals would assist, my Shamanic guides would enter the healing space and the Ancestors of my clients would also enter the healing space in order to assist. However, how would this world of shape shifters, medicine men and women, animal spirits fit into Family Constellations?

Over the past decade I have gradually introduced elements of Shamanic practice into my public Family Constellation workshops and always with remarkable results. Over the years I at times encountered family systems that simply were 'too much' to tackle on my own and through the traditional approach of Family Constellation work. No-one has the stamina for a 'heavy' piece of constellation work that may last for well over an hour – at times, we need to learn that something is simply too big and that we need to ask for help! This is where the Shamanic world steps in to help and Grace becomes not only evident, but very present, as present as the sweet smell of jasmine.

Today, I take my rattle, my drum, my music and prayers with me to a workshop, and when called for, we call upon the Ancestors in Shamanic ritual and pray for the healing of an entire family line. Lost souls are retrieved, others redeemed and those burdened by their family history feel the relief as the Ancestors and the presence of Grace lifts their hearts once more.



So many individuals come to us as healers with the most burdened of family histories. Those histories can include murders, the loss of many family members, tragedies so profound that words can barely describe them and the mind and heart can barely comprehend. When we call upon the Ancestors and the medicine men and women of old, souls can be retrieved, shattered family

souls can be repaired and burdens dissolved. They fill the room with their blessings, their power and their energy. As Family Constellators we are honoured to be in this presence for it through the participants of the workshops that the Ancestors can work and each person is touched at a level that words can barely describe. When we drum, we drum for the return of the forgotten and the lost, when we pray, we pray for their redemption, we welcome each and every one home again, into the bosom of our collective love.



[www.johnlpayne.com](http://www.johnlpayne.com) & [www.familyconstellations.net](http://www.familyconstellations.net)