

PORTALS, PATTERNS AND PARADIGM SHIFTS: BEING PRESENCE IN ACTION

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It's not what you do, it's what you notice that does you!

We make meaning and tell stories every day, in every situation in our lives. Our meaning-making and our meaning-making of meaning-making drives everything we do and say - as it does with our clients! Often we are unaware about how all-pervasive this never-ending cycle is. None of us are immune to it. Until we notice and understand it for what it is, we can do little about it. Approaches for 'how to' are awash in coaching, management and organisational development realms; theories abound in psychical arenas. Advances in neuroscience and the cognitive sciences offer explanations. Yet few of these truly help us navigate our in-the-moment reflexive practice. How can we sharpen our acuity, agility, fluency and artistry, moment-to-moment? Is it possible to do this simply AND in a way that reflects (rather than resists), honours (rather than denies) and works with (rather than against) the immense complexity that plays out within and between us?



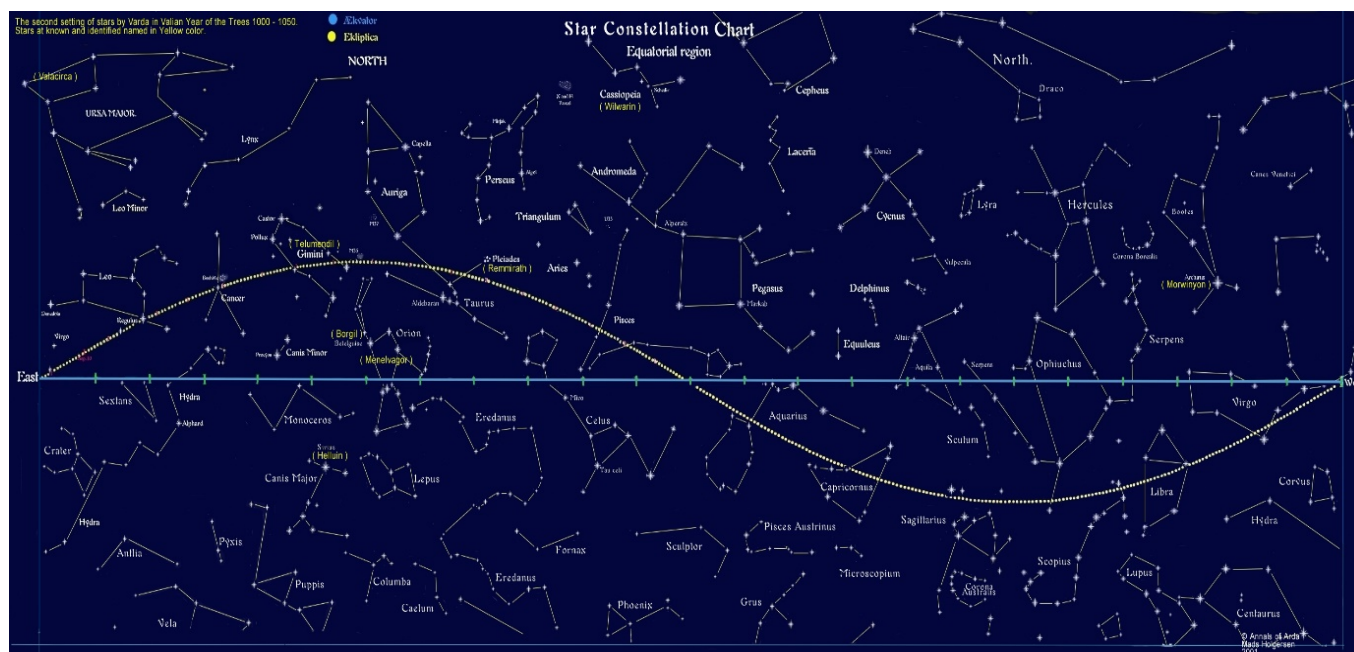
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As practitioners using the P6 Constellation, we exercise power through our intention, attention and curiosity. The potency of our interventions are amplified by what we notice and illuminate. What we notice is shaped by how we see and understand ourselves and the world around us. The P6 Constellation - in structure, process and content - embodies a complexity attuned **paradigm**. Through it, we experience a radically different way of working with people that breaks through limitations pervading much current thinking and practice. Interweaving theory and practice, we work experientially using the **portals** of the P6 Constellation to reveal the constituents that drive every behavioural pattern that manifests in and through each of us. In so doing, we begin to see, feel and appreciate that it is less about what we do that effects transformation and more about our capacity to illuminate what is present in each moment. We discover ingredients that shape our own personal **patterns** and find ourselves better equipped to enable others to discover theirs. It is this simple act of illumination that catalyses cascades of personal and systemic transformation – with nothing more to do, fix or ditch!

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Is it real? Is it true? Does it matter?



Constellations in the heavens are patterns of stars/planets visible to us here on earth. In ancient times, human beings noticed certain stars and conceived patterns which were given names. They connected these configurations to seasons and what was unfolding in the living world around them. When trans-global navigation became possible, travellers noticed that some star patterns showed up differently in different parts of the world. Some were more/less visible. In making such connections – seeing relationships and patterns across time and space – our ancestors became able to anticipate seasonal activity; and to use the stars to navigate across the globe.

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The stars that make up these 2-dimensional patterns, in our mind's eye, appear to be connected. They are however, not directly connected in 3-dimensional space. These constellations therefore are, paradoxically, both real and not real. Real or not – as patterns they are useful! So much so, that in 1929 the International Astronomical Union formally agreed 88 constellations (IAU, 2016). This formalisation – this normative agreement - enabled astronomers across the world to communicate efficiently and reliably about “their” universe.

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As human beings, we conceive patterns everywhere – in every aspect and dimension of our lives. This is how we make sense of the world, others, ourselves. It is far easier to do this as observers looking onto that which is outside ourselves. We can see, hear, touch, taste, move. It is far harder to detect, perceive, notice that which goes on inside us. The interplay between the outside and what goes on inside us, is the “universe” of the P6 Constellation.

Like constellations in the night sky, the P6 Constellation is a pattern - real enough to reliably and consistently be applied across time and space, on oneself and in support of others. Unlike astral constellations which help us move from place to place (changing places), deployment of the P6 Constellation invokes internal state-changes of the person using it – but only under certain conditions over which we have no ultimate control.

The P6 Constellation as a framework, simultaneously guides and expands our capacity to notice what we are (not) noticing and what meanings we are making about what we notice. Through the simple act of illuminating what shows up when it shows up – in nonlinear fashion – we find ourselves subject to unpredictable, surprising cascades of insights/ revelations. Oftentimes these will be small shifts which build over time, reaching a kind of threshold. At some indeterminable moment, one of these small shifts may catalyse a cascade that activates medium and then bigger shifts. This amounts to a significant transformation or inner state-change. When this happens, something in us is irrevocably altered and we may experience greater ease/coherence/resolution in relation to some previously intractable situation/dimension of ourselves. This cannot be made to happen on command. Rather it is by repeatedly expanding and sharpening our acuity that we ultimately develop artistry in following and navigating an otherwise uncontrollable, self-organising, sense-making process. Through its use, we do not change ourselves; we find ourselves changed.

The metaphor of astral constellations is helpful in several ways. Firstly, it shows we can conceive patterns across time and space that have universal application. Secondly, it shows that perceived connections can be incredibly useful even if they are not real in any objective sense.

“Cybernetic information theory works with differences in a dualistic system. Information is a difference that makes a difference, was Bateson’s definition. But differences only make a difference in a system that somebody has coded from some sort of individual, social or species interest. A code only gives meaning to differences or information in certain contexts. A code is a set of processes, rules, or habits that connects elements in one area with elements



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in another area in a systematic way in a specific meaning context. The correspondence is not a universal natural law, but is local and motivated from a living signifying system" (Eicher-Catt, 2008:250).

Thus cosmic constellations are coded by us and have meaning and efficacy in specific contexts. They are not pointing to a universal natural law. The same may be true of the P6 Constellation. With it, I am not claiming a universal law. I am simply pointing to a configuration – a constellation – of types of internally-accessed data which I have noticed always seem to be present/implicated in the patterns that play in and through individuals and groups of individuals. These are represented by the six outlying portals of the P6 Constellation.

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The distinctions/differentiation between the portals matter – Facts, Feelings, Fictions, Purpose, Outcomes, Decisions. When held in relationship, they help us to reveal non-conscious contents actively playing out in our observed/experienced personal, relational and collective patterns. It does not serve us to conflate or muddy the differentiation between portals because the differences have significance amidst the whole. When we become sufficiently artful in their discernment, we discover contents that have been out of view and out of reach.



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Insight/revelation is a sign of inner shift that may or may not be obvious to an external observer. In other words, our transformational state-change does not always (immediately or ever) manifest in a behavioural shift. It may simply be that our sense-making of the situation and our relationship to it suddenly changes. Something in us settles because we come to recognise that our reactive behaviour (e.g. angrily complaining when someone else does not wash the dishes), is driven by our own non-conscious meaning-making tied to our past experiences and future imaginings. When we realise what is ours to attend to, we find ourselves relinquishing attachment to 'our partial perspective', and responding differently when similar situations subsequently arise. The potency of the P6 Constellation is afforded by its simple, nonlinear, representational framework which enables us to become aware of what is present and playing us. In noticing what we did not notice before (i.e. new material/contents implicated in our personal patterns) we equip ourselves to become more aware, active players in influencing how we show up and engage. We become artful players in changing the only thing we can change – ourselves, from within.

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