Systemic Coaching and Constellations
An introduction to the principles, practices and application

John Whittington
CONTENTS

Acknowledgements vi
Foreword by David Clutterbuck viii
Case study credits ix

Orientation 1

PART ONE Principles 3

01 The universal language of systems 5
The order of things 6
From individual and team to system 8
Organizational health 9
System leadership 12
The principle of acknowledgement 13
The hidden forces in systems 16
The organizing principles in action 28
Walking in the field 30

02 Back to the start: Origins and definitions 33
Systems and the forces that sustain them 33
Constellations 34
Systemic coaching 35
The origins of this approach 36
The workshop experience 36
Coaching constellations 38

03 The time is now 43
When to apply this approach and the benefits of doing so 43
Messages from the system 45
Contraindications 50
Constellation time 50
Application in coaching sessions with two people 139
  Application in three-way sessions 142
  Resourcing clients in one-to-one coaching 143
Integrating alongside your existing approach and methods 148
Phone and VOIP coaching 150
Team application 151
  Get out of your head 152
  Who came first 153
  Aligning with team purpose 154
  Finding place 155
Teams and conflict 156
  Illuminating team conflict 157
Workshop application 158
  Open workshops 159
  Closed workshops 162
  Multi-team, large-group workshops 166

08  Sticky moments 173
Strategies to release stuckness 173

09  Extending your practice:
Further practices and applications 177
  Floor markers 177
  The cataleptic hand 178
  A note about representatives 182
  Application in coaching supervision 184

10  Outside in 189
The experience of systemic coaching 189
Beyond constellations 192

FAQs (B) 195

11  The F word: Familiar patterns 207
  Exploring the resource available in the family of origin 207
    Fill your own cup first 208
  Your clients' family system 215
    Resourcing clients through their family of origin 216

An invitation 222
Appendix: Resources and further reading recommendations 223
Index 227