



At the SOLworld conference 2025 in Mechelen, Belgium, I offered a workshop called **"SF and the Body of Knowledge"**, combining (up to) three brief exercises plus time for reflection and Q&A. The three practical exercises are described below. The first one is done in pairs, the other two can be done alone (or with an observing partner).

**the body of knowledge**

1

in-side → out-side

2

**Clean** ← **Tapas Menu**

- Language 2000  
James Lawley + Penny Tompkins

- Space 2016  
James Lawley + Marian Way  
(→ Phil Marland '61)

3

**Feeling Path** 2004  
Joe Shirley, 2012

Systemic

(A) **Constellations** < '97  
John Wittington, 2012

(A) **Pesso** '61  
**Boyer**  
**System** (2019)  
**Psychomotor**

PBSP.com

**Insights in Space**  
How to use Clean Space to solve problems, generate ideas and spark creativity  
James Lawley and Marian Way

**The Feeling Path**  
Restoring the Natural Wisdom of the Feeling Mind  
A practical guide  
Joe Shirley

Klaus Schenck: doc.ks@web.de  
+49 - 173 - 6696562

☑/☎



---

## "Mini problem constellation"

### When / where to use?

Even in problem or conflict situations, where no solution at all could be found, there always remains at least one option to consider: the way we cope with this fact. That there are options for action here can - like many other cognitive functions - often be better experienced "whole-body" and in movement than by merely sitting and thinking. ("Embodiment" is the modern buzzword for the inseparable connection between mental and physical processes, which influence each other - in both directions!)

### How does it work?

Matthias Varga von Kibéd states (1995, p. 23): "Problem and solution are often only properties of the structure; they both arise from different ways of relating the same elements to each other." This can be directly experienced through a small "warm-up exercise" in constellation work, which at the same time helps to focus on solvable problems instead of fighting unsolvable ones.

The steps of the exercise are:

- Participants form pairs (persons A and B). Each person takes one turn in each of the two roles. One role is the case giver ("CG") the person who currently has a - so far unsolvable - problem or conflict. The other role is: to stand for this "problem" ("P").
- CG places P somewhere in the room. From then on, P doesn't have to change or do anything further, but just stands there for "the problem" (and can perhaps make sure that s/he enjoys this ...). CG then looks for himself a place relative to P to which this description fits: "This is how I stand in relation to the problem, when the problem is a problem for me". Both persons now pay attention for some time to what is perceptible in this constellation.
- Subsequently, CG looks for a different place - if necessary trying it out several times - "where the problem is a little less of a problem for me". Again, both persons pay attention for some time to what can now be perceived (possibly differently) in this new, changed constellation.
- After that, both switch roles and go through the same sequence again.
- Afterwards, there is time to reflect on the experience.

Often participants report after this exercise how impressive it was to experience that such a small change can make such a big difference - without having to change the "problem" even the smallest bit or to solve any conflict ....

### Where to continue learning?

Whittington, John: "Systemic Coaching & Constellations". An introduction to the principles, practices and application", Kogan Page, London (et al.) 2012

**Source:** Chapter 32 in my own book: "Konflikte in Projekten" ("Conflicts in Projects", in German language) Freiburg 2021, pp. 155ff



---

## And where did **Clean Space** come from? For me, it all started 15 years ago!

Back in 2002 I came across “Clean Language”<sup>1</sup>, and it fascinated me so much that I printed out the whole [www.cleanlanguage.co.uk](http://www.cleanlanguage.co.uk) website content – a thick binder full of material already then. Two British NLP practitioners James Lawley and Penny Thompkin had “modeled” the approach of a therapist from New Zealand named David Grove. “Modelling” here means: They observed him at work, and then thoroughly described his approach step by step in some articles and a book, such that any skilled therapist might try and apply the described steps in his own work and reach similar results. Still, despite my initial enthusiasm, “Clean” took a slow start from there for me, with many interruptions, as I had other topics I was at least as curious about. “Systemic” and “SF” ideas for example, where I also was part of some active communities already. After reading a Clean Language book “Metaphors in Mind” (Lawley & Thompkin, 2000) in 2004 it took a full ten years to return to the topic with the next two books (Grove & Panzer, 1989; Cooper & Castellino, 2012).

But somehow I had landed on the Clean Language newsletter’s distribution list, and in spring 2017 this offered an irresistibly big discount for a new book on – “Clean Space” (Lawley & Way, 2017). It arrived, and I read it, in August, just before the SF World Conference. I was fascinated by this new combination of selected Clean Language questions and stepping into different places around a room, as if to embody different perspectives and learn from each one, as well as from their interconnections. The approach reminded me of “constellation work” (Whittington, 2012), which I had first experienced in a Family Constellation in 1997 and been practicing myself as a “systemic constellator” since 2008. And I could see links to “embodied experience”, which kept challenging my understanding since my attending a conference on embodiment in 2012.

So, it happened that I had the description of a brief starter exercise in CS with me when the SF conference invited workshop offerings for their afternoon in “Open Space” format. CS seemed like a good extension to SF – so I offered an ad hoc one-hour workshop, based on the exercise description below, and around ten people joined in.

---

<sup>1</sup> Clean Language is a technique that is used especially in psychotherapy and coaching, and more recently as a research interview technique. Clean Language helps clients to discover and develop symbols and metaphors without any content introduced by the therapist/coach/interviewer. (Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clean\\_Language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clean_Language), accessed 20/01/2019)



---

The original sequence of steps (Lawley & Way, 2017; 229) was:

Find an Inner Space ...

- Before you begin, take a minute or two to write, draw or simply think of a topic.
- And when you have done that, place your topic where it needs to be and yourself where you would like to do this activity.
- And close your eyes and bring your topic to mind.
- And what do you know here about that topic?
- And is there anything else you know here?
- This is Place 1.
- And, in your mind, go to a place that knows something else about that topic.
- And what do you know in this place about that topic?
- And what do you know in this place about Place 1?
- And is there anything else you know in this place?
- This is Place 2.
- And, in your mind, go to a place that knows something else about that topic.
- And what do you know in this place about that topic?
- And what do you know in this place about Place 1?
- And what do you know in this place about Place 2?
- And is there anything else you know in this place?
- This is Place 3.
- And now, come back to Place 1 in this room.
- And consider all you now know about the topic and Place 1 & Place 2 and Place 3.
- And take a deep breath and open your eyes.
- And what difference does knowing all this make?
- And what difference does knowing that make?
- And what difference does knowing that make?

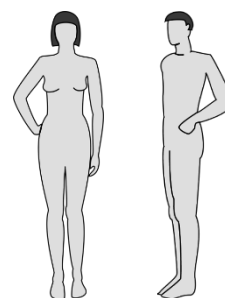
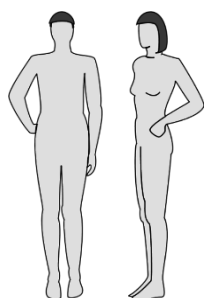
I took the liberty to vary the questions/suggestions slightly to make them fit more seamlessly to what SF people are familiar with already, and I invited people to really go to different places in the room, not only in their minds, to make it more of an “embodied”, experience. I framed the exercise with a little intro about how Clean Space had crossed my path in the beginning, and some time for sharing what people thought about it after the exercise itself. And that was that.

*(extract from: Dierolf et al.: “SF practice around the world”, 2017, pp 102 – 104)*



## “Feeling Path” - submodalities

Modality	Past / Present	Scaling for “Future Perfect”	‘max. Opposite
Location		]-----[	
Substance		]-----[	
Movement		]-----[	
Temperature		]-----[	
Sound		]-----[	
Belief, Inner Dialogue		]-----[	



Much inspired by: Joe Shirley: „The Feeling Path”, 2011 (<http://joeshirley.com>)





---

## Instructions for using “The Feeling Path”:

1. **Select a feeling** (or experience or behavior) you would like to explore (and maybe change ...)

2. **Identify** the following aspects (aka “**sub-modalities**”), and make notes (in the *first* column of the table on the previous page):

- **Location:** Where in your body do you most feel it? (head, stomach, ...?)
- **Substance:** What kind of consistence does it have? (rock solid, liquid, ...?)
- **Movement:** How does it move? (slow, fast, circular, linear, not at all, ...?)
- **Temperature:** What's its temperature? (icy cold, lukewarm, hot, ...?)
- **Sound:** Does it make any sound? (high or low pitch, high or low volume, ...?)
- **Belief, Inner Dialogue:** Do you hear any inner comment? (confirmation, critique, ...?)

3. Now shift any submodality's setting to its **maximum opposite**, and make notes again (this time in the *last* column of the table on the previous page).

- Notice how your experience or feeling changes, when you change these submodalities!
- Notice that the combination maximal opposites of an unwanted feeling does not necessarily result in a positive experience or feeling ...

4. Now, like on an equalizer or mixing board for music, shift each submodality to some **balance between first column and last column** (you can indicate the balance in the middle column's scales!) such that some maximally positive overall experience (“presence perfect”) results.

5. **Enjoy** this experience!

6. Then imagine how this might inspire your **next small step(s)** ...

You can iterate the exercise with these 4 guiding questions:

1. **What else do you feel?**
2. Which **new choices** now to make in your life?
3. Which **daily practices** to nourish the new?
4. Which **new actions** arise naturally now?