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# Drawing

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# Together

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*Awakening the Artist Within through drawing and painting*

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## Warm-Up Six: Constellations

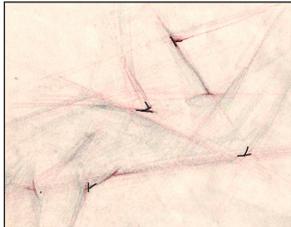
Time involved: 10 minutes

Materials: A piece of paper and a pencil or pen

Now I am going to stretch you a little bit. Instead of looking for one intersection at a time, you will look for two and three at once. To do this, you need to gaze at an area of the world before you and soften your eyes. Sometimes it helps to focus several feet before or beyond your subject. That puts the subject in a kind of haze where you can see a relationship of several intersections. We'll call this relationship a constellation. Just like in the sky at night, a constellation is a group of stars. They create a pattern: The Big Dipper. Seeing the pattern of intersections will help you draw proportionately correctly.

A pattern is a consistent relationship of directions that creates a consistent form. Every leaf grows according to a pattern coded in its cells. For that matter, your skin, hair, organs and tissues grow according to a pattern in your DNA. For thousands of years, sea captains have guided their ships by following the patterns of stars in the night sky.

When you look at the world with ordinary eyes you see things that you can name. Now you are learning to look at the world with your artist's eye. You cannot name the patterns you see. But you can see them and draw them and feel excited by the familiar forms that come alive on your paper.



*Tic marks are tiny and just a little darker than the direction. They allow you to step back and see the group of intersections as a pattern or a constellation. Then you can compare the 3D pattern with the pattern on your paper and make changes if necessary.*

### The Constellations Exercise

1. Find a window through which you see a complex scene of some kind.
2. Sit down with your pencil and paper before this window, close your eyes and take in 3 slow breaths.
3. Open your eyes and gaze softly at the world before you. Notice one edge that feels easy to draw. How about the vertical edge of the window? Draw it on your paper.
4. Look for a direction intersecting it. Draw this new direction and make a tic mark.
5. Look for and draw a third direction that intersects either the first or second direction and make a tic mark (a tiny mark, just a little darker than the direction.)
6. Now you should have three intersections. Compare the actual pattern (in the world before you) with the pattern you have drawn. Are they similar? If not, determine what needs to move. It may be only a slight adjustment that is needed. Do it now.
7. Continue drawing directions and marking the intersections with tiny tic marks. Gaze back and forth from the actual to your paper.

That's it! Come back and do this exercise again and again. See pages 44 - 47 of my book, "Drawing as a Sacred Activity" for more about this exercise.

*Final Note: One further idea that might bear fruit for you is to journal for a few minutes letting one pattern in your life come to mind. Describe how you feel living in this pattern? Is it working for you or do you need to make a little adjustment?*