



Ancestral Healing

Practitioner Training Manual



ancestralmedicine.org





Dedication

This manual is dedicated to all the current and future practitioners of this approach to ancestral healing and to the elders in spirit who guide us in these repairs. We collectively give thanks to the ancestors for bringing forward these ways of coming back into relationship and we commit to practice these ways with love, humility, and integrity.

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Publication Notes & Credits

Written by Dr. Daniel Foor, Founder of Ancestral Medicine

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Introduction

This training manual aims to fulfill three intentions: to welcome and orient trainees to the organization and Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network; to provide a reference for the facilitation of ancestral healing sessions, talks, and circles; and to detail ethical standards and organizational policies in ways that provide a sturdy and professional container for this work in the world.

This manual was written by Dr. Daniel Foor in 2018 with substantive inputs from Seyta Selter and other practitioners of Ancestral Lineage Healing. Revisions were made in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 in advance of cohorts four through seven respectively. As the work evolves and the network of practitioners expands in the coming years, this manual will continue to go through iterations and refinements.

Ancestral Medicine leadership reserves the right to modify and update this manual and the organizational policies detailed herein at any time. When such changes are made they will become effective as soon as the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network is notified. This final authority to make changes to any and all policy governing the professional practice of this approach to ancestral healing is balanced by genuine regard for impact on and ongoing openness to feedback from those already in the practitioner network.

The manual is a companion to the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training and intended only for people in Ancestral Medicine's ancestral healing practitioner network; please do not share or distribute this material with others outside the network of practitioners. Most importantly, this resource is intended to support you, the trainee or practitioner, to more effectively serve the people, incarnate and otherwise.

Part One: The Practice, Training, and Network

Ancestral Medicine Organizational Structure

To reference our mission statement, "Ancestral Medicine encourages the embodiment of animist values and practices in ways that are culturally healing, non-dogmatic, and accessible to people of diverse means, ancestries, and geographies. We seek to honor each person's unique goodness and to fulfill our mission in partnership with the ancestors and the old ones who are the Earth." Our six core values are: animist, anti-supremacist, international, courageous, accessible, and kind.

Ancestral Medicine (Inc.) is a for-profit corporation. Dr. Daniel Foor is the founder, director, and CEO. As of April 2023, there are four full-time staff and many other part-time contractors and volunteers, many of whom are also practitioners and trainees in the collegial network. For more on our staff, core values, or other FAQ, please see the public-facing information on the website.

Ancestral Medicine is *not* a non-profit, spiritual community, or any other kind of consensus-based or democratic organization with respect to direction, policy, and operations, but rather a business that aims to be sustainable, ethical, and uplifting to all employees, practitioners, and participants in our offerings.

Ancestral Lineage Healing

Ancestral Lineage Healing refers to the methodology and body of ancestor-focused teachings articulated by Dr. Daniel Foor to support personal, family, and cultural healing. This process is a central focus of the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training as well as Chapters Five to Nine of the book *Ancestral Medicine: Rituals for Personal and Family Healing*. The expression "ancestral lineage healing" rather than "ancestral healing" places emphasis on relating with the ancestors as lineages or groups rather than individuals only.

With respect to the origins of this practice, ancestor reverence is a cross-cultural human inheritance, and this approach does not claim that any given element is unique. This specific methodology also does not source from or presume to represent any specific Indigenous or other-than-Indigenous system. The key elements of this method were inspired in part from a day of ritual in Southeastern Ohio in 1999 with European-ancestored Pagan teachers (see Chapter One of the book) and further consolidated by 2002. Guiding ancestor-focused sessions and group ritual from 2004 to present led to ongoing refinement and elaboration. Training others to guide this approach to ancestral healing from 2016 to present has further catalyzed this process of refinement. Although Dr. Foor is an initiate in West African Orisha tradition, the work does not source from Yoruba culture nor presume to represent West African cultures. When specific influence is drawn from an intact system, credit is given.

Insofar as this approach includes a type of repair with the ancestors, this reflects the context of cultural wounding that gives rise to this need. The repair emphasis may be unnecessary or only partially relevant in other times or places with different histories and intact traditions.

Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training

The Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training is one offering of the larger Ancestral Medicine organization. Organizational leadership and staff are committed to guiding the practitioner training and resourcing the practitioners network in professional, sustainable, and culturally healing ways.

The Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training certifies participants to guide the Ancestral Lineage Healing method developed by Dr. Daniel Foor in the form of individual ancestral healing sessions, introductory talks, and ancestor circles for those with the skills needed to guide group ritual (see Part Two). Ancestral Lineage Healing may be utilized as a stand-alone practice or blended and integrated with other practices in ways that still honor core principles. See Part Three for more on this as well as post-certification teaching and the scope of the training. Practitioners are required to adhere to the practitioner code of ethics and related guidelines (e.g., Cultural Competencies, Scope of Practice) detailed in Part Four.

The training has two basic stages with three gateways or thresholds. After being accepted to the training trainees pass through the first gateway by learning foundational skills to guide sessions within the space of the cohort and larger collegial network. After some months, provided all criteria are met, trainees pass through the second threshold by receiving organizational backing to offer ancestral healing work for the public. This is contingent upon also engaging the required supervision for this second stage of the training. Upon completion of the documented sessions and other requirements of this second stage, the trainee becomes certified as a practitioner. This second stage of the training is not possible to define in duration as it will depend on how quickly the trainee completes their sessions and other requirements.

Brief History of the Training. The first three practitioner trainings from 2016 to 2018 began and ended with five-day in-person retreats and between these two retreats included mentorship sessions with Daniel, practice sessions with other trainees, and group video conferences. In each year the second retreat was followed by a certification phase with documented client sessions and a supervision with Dr. Foor or other established practitioners.

In March of 2020, two weeks before trainees from eight nations were set to gather in-person for the start of the fourth cohort, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic. Ancestral Medicine staff and thirty-three participants pivoted to hold the fourth cohort online, and we learned that the distance format is both effective and in some important ways more accessible.

Ancestral Medicine leadership has made slight refinements after each training cycle, and modest revisions will continue as we incorporate feedback each cycle and optimize an international, online training in the years ahead. Despite the advantages of gathering in person, the online format supports three important goals of the organization: international reach and cross-cultural exchange, physical and financial accessibility, and reduction in adverse ecological impact.

Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network

The Network consists of those currently in the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training as well as those who have completed the training in previous years and now maintain professional association with Ancestral Medicine. Technically the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner (and Trainee) Network, this is often shortened to the practitioner network or just the network. "Practitioners" are those who have completed their certification as well as any continuing education or other organizational requirements to maintain certification. "Trainees" refer to those currently enrolled in the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training as well as those who have completed the first phase of the training but not the requirements for certification.

There is no financial cost for ongoing participation in the network; however, as with other certifications or licensures, practitioners are expected to maintain basic professional standards by observing the minimal requirements for annual reporting and for continuing education (see Part Three) even if ancestral healing or involvement with Ancestral Medicine is not a personal focus. Benefits of network membership include access to free ongoing trainings that support the quality and maturation of ancestral healing work, participation in a robust international network of ritualist colleagues, referrals through the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Directory, eligibility for paid teaching and course support work through Ancestral Medicine, and enjoyment of interpersonal support and opportunities for community.

Practitioners and trainees in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network agree that Ancestral Medicine may disclose upon request whether any given practitioner or trainee is currently in the training program, has completed certification, and/or has had their certification suspended or revoked.

Ancestral Medicine leadership is focused on the quality of the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training, vitality of the practitioner network, and expansion of this approach to ancestral healing in the world. Although opt-in community may arise from the collegial network, the organizational policy is neither to push for nor to discourage the emergence of community per se. With the knowledge that some practitioners may relate with the network as a source of meaningful community, ritual kinship, and support, and with respect to our core values and ethics, any offerings that focus on network-as-community must meet the following criteria:

- Optional/opt-in, meaning there is no pressure or expectation to participate
- Open to the full network except when for specific practitioners (e.g., BIPOC, Jewish, LGBTQ+)
- Largely or completely self-organized by practitioners and trainees (rather than AM staff)
- Directly or indirectly supports the health of the collegial network
- Pathways of communication stay open as needed with Ancestral Medicine leadership

As the network grows in the coming years, the desire among some practitioners and trainees may give rise to in-person retreats or gatherings, online gatherings or public-facing conferences, regional or topical-based working groups, along with many other possibilities. Provided the above criteria are honored, Ancestral Medicine leadership is likely to either passively or proactively support such efforts.

Communication Guidelines and Policies

Clear communication pathways and expectations support organizational and relational health and help to keep the focus on the heart of what brings us together. These guidelines aim to support collegial connection while honoring the reality of tech-saturation and differing levels of interest in ongoing connection after the training process completes.

Group communication from Ancestral Medicine both during the first phase of the training and beyond will occur both via email and participation in the internal organizational portal / connection space. This includes details relevant during phase one of the training, information on supervision and certification, and invitation to ongoing network events (e.g., continuing education, ancestor circles, community meet-ups). Our staff maintains a calendar of all network events and may email practitioners and trainees directly if needed for the sake of organizational requirements or other logistical concerns.

When communicating with Ancestral Medicine staff, mentors, or supervisors, unless that individual has explicitly welcomed a different approach, please honor the following:

- Email is the default mode of communication (not text, Facebook or Instagram IM, Whatsapp, or phone). One exception is anything actively conflictual or ‘charged’. In those cases, consider using email sparingly and favor live interaction unless both parties agree to seek resolution by email.
- Allow up to 72 hours reply time (not including weekends). If you haven’t received a reply after several days from any Ancestral Medicine staff, mentor, or supervisor, please circle back.
- Indicate clearly in the subject line if any communications are time-sensitive and prioritize a faster reply when receiving a time-sensitive message.
- If any Ancestral Medicine staff or mentors know that you will be non-responsive for longer than 72 hours (not including weekends), please indicate this with an auto-responder.
- When scheduling mentorship or supervision sessions, use the practitioner's available scheduling technology and try to schedule at least a week in advance (more is ideal). If you need to reschedule or cancel, provide at least 48 hours notice.

Ancestral Medicine staff, mentors, and supervisors also agree to these communication guidelines when relating with one another in a professional capacity and when relating with practitioners and trainees.

With respect to communication among practitioners and trainees, Ancestral Medicine will not share emails with others in the Network and AM prohibits the use of practitioner and trainee emails for any promotional or other non-training-related purpose (e.g., adding people to a newsletter, messaging groups of people within the network about any subject). This policy allows for the reality that individuals may message other individuals for a variety of collegial, networking, or friendship-driven reasons. Failure to honor the policy around misuse of emails may result in removal from the network. Please honor others by using established pathways of communication or reach out to Ancestral Medicine staff with any questions, including if you believe you have a group-relevant communication.

Part Two: Ancestral Healing Sessions, Talks, and Circles

Part Two proceeds step-by-step through the process of Ancestral Lineage Healing. This parallels Chapter Five through Nine in the book; however, there are important elements here that are not present in the book and vice versa. Each section below first clarifies the intent and objectives of the step and where this may be referenced in the book. A basic sequence is then presented, followed by specific skills that are important to cultivate when practicing that specific stage of the process. The section concludes with details on guiding ancestral healing talks and circles and weaving in ancestral elements to rites of passage.

Practical Aspects of Holding Sessions

These guidelines outline the standard container and framework for ancestral healing sessions. When your practice of this work varies in major ways from this framework, please communicate with the Ancestral Medicine team to ensure that adaptations are congruent with the ethics and approach to the work.

Duration. Sessions are typically 60 or 90 minutes. There is no reason that, should circumstances warrant it, sessions could not be shorter or longer although 90-minute sessions tend to be at the upper limit of clients' ability to focus on guided spirit contact. Importantly, as the practitioner, it's important to honor pre-established time agreements by starting and ending on time, or if you need to make a change to the time to do so with clear communication and consent from the client.

Notes. Providing a record of the session for the client is an important service. This can help the client to be able to drop more deeply into ancestral engagement, knowing that any messages that come through will be remembered. Notes should also include the date of the session and any homework for the client. If they are handwritten they need to be legible. Ideally, as the practitioner, you retain a copy of the notes to resource and inform any future sessions. In light of this, be mindful of whether or not you need to record any sensitive information and consider a personal way to encode the client's name.

There are different ways to make notes. If you hand write notes during the session (the least disruptive for the client) and the session is in person, you'll ideally make a copy or even take a photo of the notes to have a record for yourself. If circumstances require, you could give the client the original. In these cases, you could take an image with your phone or use smartphone apps to turn an image into a PDF.

If the client prefers, making an audio or video recording of the session is also possible. Providing a client with a recording of the session is typically best done by giving them permission to record the session from their side. This also eliminates the downside of the practitioner storing sensitive client information. If this is the primary way of providing the client with a record of the session, the practitioner will likely want to make basic notes for themselves after the session to maintain a personal record to support future sessions.

If you are not in-person for the session you may still hand write the notes but you'll need to have a scanner or other way to send them by email. It's also possible to type notes during the session. This is efficient and obviously legible but the sound of typing could be distracting; be sure to ask about this and

make sure that typing doesn't detract from your own presence. Muting during pauses in the session can reduce sound distraction. This format allows people to have a record of the work in electronic form. Although time-intensive, some also write notes during the session and then type them up to send to the client after. This is one solution for practitioners with highly expressive handwriting. Whatever the form, a basic record from the session is important; figure out a system that works for both you and your clients.

Payment. Payment can occur before or after sessions and by whatever form is practical. Trades between trusted friends and colleagues may be possible. Be sure to communicate clearly and proactively around issues of payment to ensure that these concerns don't interfere with the nature of the work itself. In rare cases when a client asks for a refund for a session that they did not feel met by, consider granting this to support a clean break, and such choices are ultimately left to the discretion of the practitioner.

Setting. If sessions occur by video conference, make certain you have arranged for both the quality of the internet connection and a reasonable background (e.g., clean area with no bed, no other humans, and no personal items). If sessions occur in person, an office is preferable to a home setting and a home office is preferable to a communal living space. Tend to the safety, accessibility, energetic/ritual positivity, cultural mindfulness, and professionalism of the space as you would for any modality of healing arts.

Homework. Give the client homework every session. Instead of homework, you may call it ways to follow up, invitations to deepen, integration steps, or whatever serves, but empower the client to take personal action to embody the work. Typically these ways to continue the work will be confirmed at the end of sessions to be sure the client is clear on the invitations and invested. Consider asking how these invitations are proceeding when meeting again.

Prayer and Establishing the Ritual Container

The ancestors guide the work, and this fundamental value is conveyed from the outset by explicitly welcoming the ancestors through spoken prayer. Opening prayers aim to establish an ancestrally resourced ritual container for whatever may arise, a safe and sacred vessel for the work. Chapter Four of the book speaks to the importance of ritual intent and container, and Chapter Nine also touches on prayer.

This step begins at or near the start of the session and perhaps also before the client arrives if the practitioner chooses to do preliminary centering prayers on their own. Favor the prayer happening as early as possible in the session so that what follows then occurs in the vessel of ritual. This step completes when the practitioner finishes the opening prayer/invocation.

The Step-by-Step.

1. After initial greetings and possibly a moment of conversation, let the client know you would like to offer a prayer for the time ahead.
2. Especially in a first session, be sure that you know how to accurately speak aloud your client's name, including their pronoun, so that your prayer is connective when you name the client.

3. Pray aloud from the heart for not longer than two minutes (less can be fine), calling on the well ones of both you and the client to work well together. Consider naming the client aloud.
4. Seek during this ritual opening to notice the ancestors and the container being established. Try to stay sensitive in the moment to the underlying energies present at the start of the session.
5. Whether or not you have a specific completion word (e.g., amen), be clear when you're done.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Begin the prayer sooner rather than later, otherwise your client may start sharing what's really happening and slide into cracked open ritual space before the ancestors have been invited.
- Avoid letting your prayer become too rote or formulaic; keep it lively, heart-aware, and intuitive.
- Consider incorporating ancestrally meaningful, other-than-English elements into your prayer.
- Don't pray for a long time unless it's a potent and decisively connected process for your client. More is not better; it can become awkward for the client, and it's best to not lose the connection.
- Appreciate how important these few opening minutes can be for all that follows. Notice how it feels for you personally to call in the ancestors and stay sensitive to that shift.
- Stay open if needed to calling in your own ancestors and doing other ritual preparations before the session begins so you're already in a resourced and dropped-in place before the client arrives.

Intake and Initial Conversation

Although certain elements are likely to be included only in a first session, this conversational check-in time is important for the human connection, for help with integrating whatever is happening with the work, and for continuity of practitioner support from session to session. The first half of Chapter Five of the book speaks to this somewhat in that the client may be in a process of making sense of their family story, including genealogical and historical information.

This step begins when opening prayers finish and at times may begin earlier through initial emails and pre-session conversations. The step completes when the session shifts to direct ancestral connection.

The Step-by-Step.

1. After the prayer, consider managing time expectations by saying something like, “let’s talk for a few before we focus on direct connection with the ancestors.” Help people new to the work know that you’re not going to talk for 30 minutes or else they may share at length when it’s not needed.
2. There are three key questions that need to be included (in some form) in any initial session. The first is: ***What’s your best sense about where your (blood) ancestors are from?*** In order to focus the answer, consider first briefly presenting the frame of focusing on the four primary bloodlines. Be culturally mindful how you ask the question, especially if the client has little knowledge of their people or has experienced discrimination because of their ancestry.
3. The second question is about the client’s position relative to any living family. For example: ***Are any of your parents or grandparents still alive? Do you have any siblings or children?*** This can inform who you later inquire about during the assessment step and the question implicitly reflects how we think about people in the context of their larger ancestral lineage and network.
4. The third question is something like: ***Are there any prior experiences with the ancestors or work with traditions of ancestor-focused rituals that feel important to name before we begin?*** When asking this, you’re not inviting a lengthy story of why they care about the work or every encounter with the dead, because it will detract from the time to drop in with the ancestors. This is more about making a space for anything important that could have bearing on the work itself.
5. Often it can be helpful to add a fourth question something like: ***Anything else you’d like me to know or to make sure we address in this work?*** Sometimes asking this may feel redundant as clients may have already shared what they want to address in a previous email or during the earlier questions. If they communicated this in previous communications, consider reflecting some of this back during the initial conversation to confirm that you’re listening closely.
6. Once you feel that you have the information you need, prepare to drop into direct ancestral engagement. Try to get through this intake process in ten minutes or less, and sometimes other things will need to happen or be expressed. Remember that clients are following your lead with respect to session flow, especially in the first meeting.
7. In subsequent sessions, ask how it’s been going since the last session, no matter if it’s been months or even years. Try to reference your notes from previous sessions before you meet so you know where to pick up and can also show that you’ve been paying close attention.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Remember that after you make the opening prayer, you’re in ritual space. This can include discreetly listening for guidance from your own ancestors and staying open to synchronicities.

- Navigating the ritual work hinges upon a reasonable level of connectivity and goodwill between client and practitioner. The time before direct ancestral connection is in part to establish this.
- You may need to contain some clients' tendency to share at length while also allowing for their authentic expression and integration when related in some way to the ancestral healing work.
- Occasionally the client may show up to a session so cracked open that the time needs to play out in another way. Stay open to that, yield to necessity, and also track for any red flags that would contraindicate proceeding to more experiential aspects of the work.
- Don't ask questions if you don't have an idea of how you may make use of the response. Be focused, relaxed, and at ease, but also purposeful. Avoid being chatty for the sake of it as it's always the case that this may be your only or last session with this client.

Step One: Assessment of the Lineages

This is the most structured, layered, and demanding step in the repair process and may include both bearing witness to troubled energies, sometimes from the recent dead, and reestablishing boundaries at times where there have been none for years. This material corresponds to the second half of Chapter Five.

This step begins when the practitioner first provides a brief overview of Step One for the client. This then leads into the assessment itself. Step one completes when, after the assessment, the decision has been made about which lineage to focus on in the subsequent lineage repair work.

The Step-by-Step.

1. Without flooding the client with information or delivering a non-connective monologue, provide them with a very basic overview of the process (several minutes max), and see if they have questions. Make sure they know that you'll guide them and the intent isn't to connect with the ancestors at this time. Introduce but don't be attached to them using the number/ranking system.
2. Guide client through the four-step "entry sequence" encouraged before most kinds of ritual work: shift awareness into the lower/full body to inhabit one's personal space, call in already known and trusted guides/allies/protectors, invite with them any clearing of personal space, and finally ask those same powers to establish a layer of protection around the client's overall space. If the client is not accustomed to working with spirit helpers/guides, they may draw on their connection with the Earth, with Love, with God/dess (make space and follow their lead). This four-step entry sequence may happen quickly or it may take more time, especially at first; it's important that it actually happen in an embodied way for ritual safety and coherence.

3. Encourage the client to stay grounded and anchored in their body, in the center of their circle of protection the entire time. If needed for any reason during the process, ask the client to bring awareness to the known and trusted guides they called in at the start of the process and to reconnect with ritual safety and protection.
4. Unless there is a reason to do otherwise, begin by guiding the client to assess their father's lineage in either cardinal east or to their right, functionally naming their right side as ritual east as if they're facing north. Either approach is fine, just know the difference between cardinal and ritual use of directions and decide in advance how you wish to proceed. For the other associations favor: south - father's mother's lineage, west - mother's mother's lineage, and north - mother's father's lineage. Don't make a big deal out of the directions or make it confusing; the important part is that the lineages are spatially around the client so they each have their space. If you believe one of their lineages is especially troubled, you may start the sequence in a way that positions that lineage later in the process, for example, starting in the west with their mother's mother's lineage if their father's father's lineage seems troubled based on their self-reporting.
5. For each of the four lineages, assess for three basic concerns in this order: Actual condition of this lineage of ancestors in the present, the impact of this lineage on living family, and the need for reestablishing boundaries with this lineage. When guiding the client through this sequence for each lineage, come to a clear completion at center with each direction of inquiry and make sure the client is feeling safe, well, and ready to proceed to the next lineage. Don't suggest fear or lack of safety by asking clients over and over if they feel safe, and also account for safety.
6. With respect to the present-time condition of the ancestors, introduce the 1-10 scale before the assessment but don't be attached to clients using it. If needed, simplify to three categories of very unwell (1-3), in-between (4-6), and vibrant, safe, well ancestors (7-10). Or even more simply those who are decisively well (7-10) and those who are anything other than that (1-6).

Unless circumstances call for something different, ask clients to assess three spans of the lineage: the recent dead, those between the recent ones and the older ancestors, and the much older ancestors. The recent may be considered as those remembered by name or the most recent three generations. Do include at least three generations.

For the intermediate span, consider the last 4-10 generations, or more generally the ones who lived in the several centuries before the recent ones. The contours of this intermediate span will vary with the client's histories and remembered names do not typically extend beyond this span of the lineages. Remember you're asking the client to assess the lineage as an overall system, not each individual ancestor.

For the much older ones, consider asking something like, "When you try to sense even farther in the distance toward the much older ancestors, can you perceive a time when the lineage seems more healed or not so much?" Remember the intent is still only to observe.

If they are using the number system and rate each span of the lineage, you don't also need an overall number as you have all the info you need. For this part of the assessment, the critical information is whether the lineage is vibrant from the ancients through the recent dead (therefore safe to relate with) or is the lineage anything other than that (not yet advisable to relate with).

7. When starting the second part of any given lineage assessment, first ask about the impact of the lineage on the life of the client (high – medium – low). If the impact is medium or high, seek to also understand if it's indirect only (the default, more systemic) or also direct in nature. Direct interference from the troubled dead will call for extra care and attention to resolve in the subsequent step of reestablishing boundaries. Don't explore the nature or effect of the impact at length as the intent is still just to gather information.

Ideally you will have introduced during the brief overview the distinction between “direct” and “indirect” impact and clarified that either may be strong in nature. These terms are imprecise and risk being jargony, so be sure you understand the spirit and relevance of the distinction and find your own words and ways to convey this nuance in a way that makes sense for the client. If it's not easily landing for the client, you may opt to omit this second aspect of the impact question.

In some cases, you may want to also ask about the impact of this lineage on other living relatives. If you do this, remember what you already know about the client's family position. If time permits, consider asking about the impact on children or other close family who the client mentioned as important for them during their intake. If the client perceives that their children are being strongly and directly impacted by ghosts, be calm and reassure them that it can be handled.

8. With respect to reestablishing boundaries (the third of three considerations with each lineage), there are several aspects to this step, only some of which will occur in most cases. To illustrate a less common scenario, consider the following example: A client with young children who lives with their elderly father reports feeling that their father's mother's lineage is especially toxic. You begin the assessment with the mother's mother's lineage and circle around to the likely troubled lineage last. After considering the other lineages and reestablishing boundaries as needed, the client confirms their initial impression that their father's mother's lineage is directly and harmfully impacting their father, the client's children, and the client. The boundaries that would ideally be in place have never really been there. How to proceed and keep the work contained in the allotted space of your first session including time for debriefing after the assessment?

First address the breach of the client's boundaries and personal space. Ask them to call strongly upon their trusted guides that they welcomed at the start of the session and, from a place of embodiment and feeling in contact with their inner authority, request that any who are not decisively well be outside their circle of protection. This does not include negotiating with any in their space; this is more of an “alright, everybody out” kind of moment. Most of the time this will be sufficient even if the shift takes a moment. In more complicated cases you may add your own focused prayers and the support of whatever powers you walk with to the intent of helping them to reestablish the boundary. In rare cases where all this is not sufficient, improve the situation as

much as possible and determine what further steps are needed to help the client with reclaiming their sovereignty as this remains the focus of the work until boundaries have been reestablished.

Second, after any unwelcome ghosts or others are securely outside the client's circle of protection, take a moment and ask the client's trusted guides and helpers to cleanse their energy body and space. This is analogous to disinfecting a wound after removing a foreign body or perhaps to showering and changing clothes after an unsettling interaction; you acknowledge, without necessarily needing to use these words, that a boundary violation has occurred. Bring awareness to both ritual safety and also to the need for kindness and compassion. Only proceed when the client reports feeling clear in their space and that the basic cleansing is complete.

Finally, consider if there is a need to reestablish boundaries with the troubled dead and other unwelcome energies as they impact the client's immediate family. Establishing boundaries on behalf of others can be more challenging and raise questions of consent. With children, ritual protection is absolutely within bounds for care-providers; consider routinely including the request that the guides of the client help clear ghost interference from the space of the client's children. With respect to living adult family members, you may decide to soften the invitation to something like, "See if the guides/supporting powers wish to also help clear any interference from the space of your father." These clearings and shifts may require reinforcement and will ideally be accompanied by and ultimately resolved by the healing of the lineages.

In less demanding cases reestablishing boundaries may seem more like closing a curtain and shifting attention. If there was no substantive interference along the lineage consider a directive something like, "Ask that any energies associated with this lineage that are not decisively well be outside your space, and when that's the case clearly reaffirm your circle of protection."

9. When all four primary lineages under consideration have been assessed, consider pausing for a moment to ask the client to make sure their personal space is clear and perhaps to notice how this clarity feels, especially if there have been new boundaries established during the assessment.
10. Upon shifting out, ask something like, "How was that? / How's it going? / How are you? / Any surprises from all that?" Allow some unstructured space for decompression and early integration.
11. The decision about where to focus can include numerous factors. Focusing on the lineage that is already most well is a sound choice and a solid default. Often but not always the father's father's and mother's mother's lineage have slightly more influence and within that the mother line for women and father line for men (respect to the complexities of gender). Sometimes the client may feel a strong draw to one line or has been contacted by those ancestors already. Sometimes a parent or grandparent is close to death and this creates urgency to heal the line and clear the way for their journey. Don't begin with the least well lineage unless there is a compelling need and/or the older ancestors of that lineage seem quite available during the assessment.

12. Especially at this first step consider encouraging in the client's homework to further reinforce the newly established energetic boundaries (unless that was not a prominent theme). Consider also inviting the client to extend their knowledge of the lineage of choice including both the recent history and family, when possible, and the older roots cultures of this lineage.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Remember to utilize the call and response or “echolocation” style to keep pace with the client.
- Although it's largely implied by the fact you're doing the session, consider once the client connects with their guides/helpers and is in a protected, safe space doing a consent double-check where you can ask the client to confirm with their guides that the guides support proceeding.
- Pacing is important. If they're moving quickly, you can expand into the process a little to gather a bit more info. More commonly, if they're moving slowly make sure to keep it high level to not get bogged down in story or troubled energies and to make it through the overall assessment. This may require nicely interrupting the client and being more direct in your approach.
- Know at least a half-dozen different strategies to assist people with their intuitive abilities and confidence. This is an important stand-alone skill, especially in the earlier steps.
- Know how to shorten and modify this step for subsequent sessions in order to reconfirm prior repair work already completed and reinforce any boundaries needed.
- Be able in relatively rare cases of strong, smart, problematic styles of direct interference to carefully address only as much as is possible in the context of the assessment and to give homework that supports further reclaiming of personal space and energetic boundaries.

Step Two: Connecting with Ancestral Guides

Everything prior builds to this point and everything that follows hinges upon this step going well. The healed and well ancestors guide the work, and this step is about securing and sinking into that connection to lay the groundwork for subsequent lineage repairs. This corresponds to Chapter Six of the book.

This step begins when the client seeks to make a direct connection with ancestral guides on their lineage of focus and completes when this link is strongly established and the guides have secured the lineage between the guides and the living in a container of prayer or healing intent.

The Step-by-Step.

1. After determining the lineage of focus, succinctly make sure the client understands the intent and plan for this step. Introduce the four ‘test questions’ (see below), but don't over-explain. When

they're ready, either initiate the four-step entry sequence or confirm they are already centered, resourced, in a clear space, and protected. Consider also confirming that the client's already known and trusted guides/helpers give their blessing to proceed.

2. Invite the client to completely bypass any troubles on the lineage between them and the guides in order to make a direct connection with a deeply well and healed ancestral guide on the lineage of focus. For some this will happen without even having to give instructions, so keep your words sparse and remember to invite them to tell you when something's happening. For others, this may not happen easily, right away, or on their first attempt.
3. If after inviting direct connection with the ancestral guide the client reports that nothing is happening there are many possible things to consider. This type of facilitation will come with practice. Often one of the following directives can help, depending on what the client reports:
 - Be sure the client is relaxed, dropped into their body/belly awareness and in a relatively conducive space for spirit work. If not, take steps to support that.
 - If they report feeling nervous or unsettled, pause to increase energetic protection as this may allow for intuition to engage more fully.
 - Make sure the client is truly bypassing the recent dead rather than only going to the edge of memory or feeling like they need to move through the troubled zone to get to the guides.
 - Encourage the client to engage in this process along with their already known and trusted guides and helpers as bringing them along can extend intuition and increase felt safety.
 - Remember you can ask the client to go to meet with a well one or you may call that one to the client (at the edge of their sphere of protection). If one way isn't working, try the other.
 - Sometimes it's helpful to ask the client to get in touch with their heart-level desire to make a connection, to wear that on their sleeve, as the ancestors tend to respond well to vulnerability.
 - If needed, encourage them by reminding them that ancestral reconnection is a kind of cultural repair, a decolonizing act that shifts the original moment/time of disconnection.
 - Invite them to first see the landscape, elements, plants, and animals before being shown or taken to a human ancestral guide. This can be an inviting bridge for human-wary folks.
 - Remind them that every person perceives differently and this may not be visual for them; just focus on the sense of contact.
 - If the ones presenting along the lineage are less than vibrant, remember it's possible and often important to go further back.
 - Make sure the directive and intention for the visioning process itself are clear for the client.
 - Invite a relaxation of the client's intuitive faculty by encouraging them to imagine, to risk 'making it up' to get possibilities flowing. This can create space for easier contact at times.
 - If nothing is happening despite all efforts, be curious about what spirit connections are available for the client and be exceedingly kind and reassuring about the process being set in motion despite no felt connection at the moment. Fall back to a combination of historical inquiry, offering practice, inner work and exploration of possible emotional blocks, dream tracking, and returning to the practice in a different moment.

4. Once the client reports a connection, introduce in sequence the four test questions: Are you an ancestor on this lineage? Are you able and willing to assist with any healing needed on this line? Are you well with the lineage of ancestors before you? And finally a question for the client: Do you instinctively feel good about this ancestor who is presenting to you? If the answer is yes to all of the above, invite the client to receive a blessing from this ancestor. Encourage the client to take as much time as is needed to receive this blessing and to allow that process of attunement and greeting to unfold. The collaborative work ahead will hinge upon this attunement.
5. After the spacious moment of the initial greeting, find at least one way to expand into this connection. These and other ways to expand into the connection can be introduced at any point throughout the overall five-step process, especially when a moment arises for rest and integration. Consider one of the following as a way to expand into the initial connection:
 - What's one gift, blessing, or beautiful quality about this guide and older lineage?
 - What's one way to honor this connection? (e.g., a physical offering, an act of reverence)
 - When and where on Earth did these ones live? Remember some folks acutely lack knowledge of history and geography. If the client has no reference point, nicely back away from this question. If you're able to gently offer support based on your knowledge, that's possible provided it doesn't become too heady. This can also be helpful afterward.
 - Where in the natural world do they find affinity or source their power from?
 - What are some of the spirits of affinity (find less jargony language) along this lineage?
 - How did/does this lineage approach the sacred? What were their customs around the ancestors like during their lives on Earth?
 - Most importantly, invite the client to rest in the field of support and blessings and to just listen from that place. Often various kinds of information may flow from that state.
6. Throughout this time between first connection and turning attention to the lineage between, track for attunement between the client and the guides. For many, working in partnership with the ancestors is a new skill and you'll need to encourage them repeatedly to sustain this quality of contact, to learn to track for this on their own. Also encourage them to experience the guide as the collective face or embodiment of the healed and whole lineage before the guide, that they are also engaging with a collective/group energy, even if the guide may present as an individual.
7. Eventually, invite the client to ask the guide/s if they are willing to turn attention to the lineage between them (the guides) and the living. If so, very briefly describe to the client what you're going to invite to happen. Make sure they understand that the guides do the work, that living family are not inside the container, and that the intent is not for a major intervention, only to encircle the area still in need of healing with a web, net, cocoon, or container of prayer. Throughout this process use the language that the client gives you for how this unfolds (e.g., "they're wrapping the lineage in honey", "there is a circle of moss and stones with gentle rain inside", "there's a latticework of purple light"). Work in partnership with the client's ancestors.

8. As this begins, at some point ask the client to invite their guides to be between the client and the most recently deceased on the lineage. This supports ritual safety and the boundary between the client and those still in need. This also reinforces that it's the guides doing the work. Ask that the guides and those before the guides act as a collective to encircle the lineage between with healing intent. Favor they/them plural grammar for the guide and those before the guide. Once the process is underway the client may ask the guides if there is anything they can do to assist. During the process, one thing the client can always envision those in the cocoon/container eventually being profoundly healed and well. With any client actions to help, remember they are supporting the guides who are in turn supporting the dead still in need.
9. When transitioning out of session space you may optionally invite the client to maintain awareness of the guide while shifting to a more conversational awareness. This emphasizes that the client can draw on ancestral connections in everyday life and ordinary states of awareness.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Assist the client with any challenges in connecting with the ancestral guides by knowing and kindly implementing one of at least a dozen suggestions and adjustments. Be empathic without joining their discouragement if they struggle.
- Include the three questions to the (potential) guide and a fourth to the client in a way that doesn't interrupt the flow of what's happening.
- Facilitate the client receiving a spacious, non-rushed, connective blessing from the guides.
- Support the client to engage their well ancestors with curiosity, humility, and good attunement. Maintain emphasis on attunement throughout, probably without using that technical term.
- Nicely course-correct if/when the historical timeline is way off, recognize personal limits of historical knowledge, and seek to fill in those gaps after the session if needed.
- Share ways to expand into the connection (e.g., make requested offerings, work with affinity spirits, ask what their life/times were like, return to open-ended listening).
- Help the client to draw on the collective energy of healed, vibrant ancestors and let them carry the work. Maintain ritual safety throughout the process by aligning strongly with the well ones.

Step Three: Healing Among the Older Dead

After making a connection with the guide and bringing containment and healing intention to the lineage between, this step emphasizes understanding the blessings and burdens of the lineage as a whole and then bringing healing to the lineage from the guides to the recent or remembered dead. In practice these are

two distinct steps. During in-person ancestral healing intensives (2005-2020) they were sometimes presented as Step 3A and 3B. They are addressed in sequence below and in Chapter Seven of the book.

This step begins when the prayer container is well established and completes when the lineage from the ancients to the recent dead is ancestralized and well with one another. Often this step takes the longest for the client to work through which is understandable considering the historical scope of the healing.

The Step-by-Step.

1. After the client has established a strong connection with profoundly well ancestors and invited them to establish and maintain a container of prayer around the lineage between, begin by explaining the intent of this step to seek understanding about important themes along the lineage. Be clear that they're not yet seeking to enact further healing and that you're not asking them to directly contact lineage ancestors aside from the guides. The information on "what happened" and "blessings and burdens" may come from the guides or from directly perceiving troubles but not from asking the troubled ones directly. The ones in need stay in the cocoon of healing and prayer, and the client remains out of that space. This distinction is important to understand as a practitioner and if needed to correct during the session for ritual safety.
2. Don't feel the need to share this level of detail with the client, and keep in mind as the practitioner that there are three generalized ways that people will tend to receive greater understanding about the lineage between:

One is in terms of subtle energy or patterns (e.g., "I see a river that was poisoned, dammed and then dried up", "I see signal fires and most have gone out or are burning very low", "I see a staircase in disrepair with some stairs missing"). This mode of perception has the advantage of not being overly activating or upsetting as the symbolic tempers the direct witnessing of trauma.

A second is a narrative that encapsulates the important themes or events of the lineage in story form. Clients inclined to perceive in this mode will typically continue to get information as the direct healing begins, but even at this stage of seeking understanding, the stories may begin to flow. Remember to make sure they're not directly connecting with the not-yet-ancestors in the process and that the boundary of the prayer cocoon is honored.

Third, and this is the encouraged default, clients can ask the guides to identify themes, both helpful and troubled, along the lineage. These may be referred to as "blessings and burdens" and it's fine to substitute terms like gifts and challenges. Consider asking clients to understand three blessings/gifts and three burdens/challenges along their lineage of focus. As this approach emphasizes building on resources and blessings, it's fine to give greater emphasis to the blessings/gifts although greater awareness of the burdens/challenges may at times be important.

3. When enacting this directive to better understand the lineage between, remember to let the guides oversee the process. Often the client will feel emotionally and/or energetically pulled into what they are witnessing, and, as the practitioner, your role includes ensuring ritual safety. Refer back to the cocoon/net/container of prayer as needed.
4. This is a step that can be shortened or at times omitted during session work. Sometimes the burdens are obvious and information on the blessings also comes through during the second step or throughout the subsequent healing. Part of the function of this step is to prepare the client for what healing will be needed along the lineage and to notice any areas of particularly hazardous dysfunction. The need for that type of pre-healing groundwork will vary from case to case.
5. After the information has come through, confirm that the client is well and the net/cocoon of healing prayer is intact. Be curious how any new perspective lands for the client, and, if needed, allow time for integration and discussion before proceeding. Either at this time or in a future session, invite the client to commit to embodying one or more the blessings of the lineage. Embodiment of the blessings is an antidote for ancestral burdens and intergenerational trouble and one intent of the overall repair work.
6. Before proceeding from exploring burdens and blessings and into direct healing for the older span of the lineage between, first make sure the client understands the basics of the actual ancestralization process. Without using spiritual jargon, be able to draw from the key concepts on psychopomp, elevations, and ancestralizations in Chapter Eight of the book (pp. 148-155). As the practitioner you may help the client to be aware of a few key principles:
 - The guides and well lineage do the work (unless they ask the client to be involved).
 - “One step forward, two steps of integration” encourages a steady, systematic and safer approach. For each individual or group/segment of the line that’s ancestralized, invite the client to be with their personal process and perhaps to envision the homecoming of those becoming ancestors. These pause points may coincide with important historical changes along the line. If as the practitioner you know the history, gently weaving in this knowledge can be validating for the client and a source of witnessing for the ancestors.
 - Maintain focus on the lineage as a whole, not individual ancestors (and both may occur).

When both the client is clear in a basic way about the nature of the work and the ancestral guides give their blessing, have the client invite the guides to start to work with the ones on the line that came after the guide, the oldest ones in time along the lineage between the client and the guide.

7. So many things can happen next. The roles of the practitioner are to track for ritual safety (without hovering anxiously), help move things along if the work feels stalled (e.g., calling on the guides more strongly, helping the client to be dropped in, remembering the longing for healing), to pace or titrate if things are moving too intensely (e.g., more talking/describing, pausing if the client is unhelpfully flooded, regulating distance), and supporting the client to make sense of what they’re experiencing to the degree that this seems helpful. This last directive to help the client to

make meaning from their experience will often be enhanced by a bit of historical context, even if this is not stated outright.

This step is one of trusting the process while course-correcting as needed to keep the healing work of the older ancestors proceeding at a good pace. Note that the client may drop into longer periods of silence. Carefully inquire as needed to make sure all is proceeding well.

8. Eventually, there will be a pause in the work, a shift in momentum where the “one step forward” (be it an individual or 1,000 years of the lineage) gives way to “two steps of integration.” Help the client to track for these shifts and to then invite the guides to reset the cocoon/net of healing around all those who have yet to be welcomed in. Once that is secure, shift attention to further healing, welcoming, and celebrating the ones now joining the healed lineage of ancestors.

Be curious if there are requests from the guides to reinforce this integration and new equilibrium (e.g., offerings, ritual actions). Invite the client to see/feel that there are now fewer inside the cocoon and more in the collective energy of the well lineage. If time permits, this cycle of direct intervention followed by integration may play out more than once during the same session.

9. This process of gradually ancestralizing lineage ancestors after the guides and before the recent dead continues until the lineage is fully well and healed until the most recent generations. Ask the client to pause before arriving at the last few generations and to be sure that they are surrounded by the healing cocoon/net before addressing the recent dead. Work with the recent dead may be smooth and joyful or hazardous when troubled forces become corralled around the last few generations of not-yet-ancestors. Err on the side of over rather than under-emphasis of ritual safety until the lineage is fully well, including the recent dead.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Able to clearly and succinctly present a jargon-free framework for intergenerational impact and help the client to make sense of the specific themes along their lineage of focus.
- Able to present clearly and succinctly a framework for soul guidance/psychopomp, elevation, and ancestralization without unnecessary inclusion of spiritual jargon.
- Track throughout that the guides are driving the process and bringing the healing, not the client. Make sure to support the client to stay attuned specifically to the guides throughout.
- Encourage one span/segment/portion of the lineage being tended at a time and reinforce the “one step forward, two steps of integration/reinforcement” principle to support ritual safety.

- Anticipate and bring attention to obvious historical breaks (e.g., forced migration/dislocation, pressured conversion, war, food scarcity). Be willing to support the client in a different moment to make some sense of the historical timeline as it relates to the visioning.
- Help the client to regulate the intensity of grief, anger, or other strong experiences in safe, kind, and connective ways.
- Allot time toward the end of the session to make certain that the container/cocoon of prayer is reinforced/sealed and the client is personally well.

Step Four: Healing with the Recent Dead

This step may be truly easeful or the most ritually hazardous and emotionally intense. Lineage troubles tend to accumulate and compound from one generation to the next, and emotional intensity may be heightened because the intervention now reaches deceased grandparents, parents, and children, and the client may be asked to bear witness to their healing and transformation as well as experience ongoing grief and heartache. This step may also call for the client to be more directly involved than previously while still fully maintaining ritual safety throughout the process.

Step Four begins when the lineage is deeply well up to but not yet including the recent or remembered dead (functionally defined as least the last three deceased generations). This step completes when those on the direct lineage of focus, including any deceased children of the client, are ancestralized and the client accepts the new and healed state of these ancestors. This corresponds to Chapter Eight of the book.

The Step-by-Step.

1. When the lineage is well until the recent ones and the recent ones are themselves held in healing containment in the cocoon/net of prayer, ask the ancestral guides and the well lineage to begin to receive the recent dead. Functionally defining the recent dead as the last three generations of deceased encourages slowing down to allow for any troubles in this final, important span of the lineage to be safely metabolized. If the client has a lot of names or historical knowledge, it's up to them how thorough they wish to be with respect to individually ancestralizing each of the older named ancestors (e.g., 4 or more generations). Consider briefly talking through any concerns with the client before setting this step in motion. At times there may not be much distinction between work with the older lineage and the recent dead. Track the following factors closely:
 - Invite the work to move slowly and deliberately in part because the recent ones often have more form and attachment to their life on Earth.
 - Make lots of space for the emotions of the client as they may contact strong grief, anger, etc.
 - Allow for the possibility of client projections onto the dead and/or a tendency to freeze perceptions of the recent dead based on their condition during life. This may call for some type of grieving and/or forgiveness process. If so, make certain this is held by the guides.

- Know that lineage troubles often become most concentrated in the recent generations and in that way quietly prepare for the worst while embracing easeful, joyful outcomes.

As with previous steps outlined, the progression below assumes a more challenging situation; all steps will not be needed in every situation.

2. Ask the client to ask their guides to receive the oldest/most distant of the recent dead into the lineage and allow for this to unfold. If this goes well, follow the same pattern of “one step forward, two steps of integration” and when this ancestor is truly well and received then proceed to the next generation until all have been woven into the lineage. Unless the work is proceeding especially smoothly, reset the cocoon of prayer around those who remain after each individual ancestor is transitioned into the well lineage. This helps to ensure safety throughout the process.
3. If any type of extraordinary trouble presents along the lineage, fall back on the protocol outlined in pages 162–172 of the book on *Work with the Very Troubled Dead and Related Spirits*. In brief: reinforce all the work along the lineage before the trouble, address any sources of interference that need to be disentangled from the lineage, cleanse those in focus from those previous sources of interference, call back any aspects of the lineage or ancestors in focus that are missing or fragmented (a.k.a. post-mortem soul retrieval), and integrate newly returning energies. At that point, you should be able to proceed with a more usual approach to ancestralization.
4. Occasionally when working with the recent dead (and more rarely when working with the older lineage), the flow of the work will proceed around a particular area of trouble. For example, if the client’s deceased parent is somewhat troubled but their grandparent is very troubled, the older ancestors may wish to welcome in the client’s parent before ancestralizing the grandparent. Although this departs from the linear progression, if the guides are steering the process, trust that. In these cases, the newly ancestralized child of the very troubled dead may play an active role along with the rest of the lineage in welcoming the more troubled one.
5. When a lineage ancestor begins in a very troubled state sometimes they are not able to transition to join the well ancestors at that time. Layered healing may include shifts from the 1-3 range into the 4-6 range, possession by hateful spirits into a regular unhappy ghost, or rageful and belligerent into repentant and grieving. Whatever the specifics, allow for the possibility that the healing of very troubled ones among the recent dead may need more than one round of engagement. Heal and elevate the lineage surrounding them, ask the guides what kinds of offerings or rituals the client can safely do between sessions, make sure the client is ready for the positive shift, and trust in the steady, systematic pace of the work.
6. When you believe all of the ancestors in the lineage before the client to be healed, consider asking the guide and the most recently deceased to share the same space. The most recently deceased is ideally able to relate well with the guide, even if the guide is still more vibrant. Over time, intend that the most recent one can wear the face of the lineage and effectively transmit the blessings of

the old ones even if the client still experiences the lineage through the face of the guide. Any bee can speak for the hive, even if one could say that the guides are the queen bees.

7. Consider any lineage descendants (e.g., children or grandchildren) who have preceded the client in death. You may or may not wish to ask the client (of whatever gender) if they have had any abortions, miscarriages, stillbirths, or children who died young as it's a pointed question; however, if the client has named children or grandchildren who preceded them in death, offer to include these ones in the ancestralization process. You could include an invitation such as, "If there are any children or grandchildren on this lineage who have preceded you in death, now would be the time to also weave them in." In a way that is relaxed about gender identities, often male children settle with their paternal lineage and vice versa unless there is a reason to proceed differently. You can always ask the well ancestors to extend healing and help to receive those who preceded the client in death even if those ancestors are not directly in the lineage of focus.
8. Once all ancestors directly in the lineage of focus are well and received, consider introducing the practice of blessing the bones and other remains of the lineage. In this practice, ask the well lineage to extend this quality of wellness to their remains (bone, ash, or belongings). You may ask the ancestors to bless any inherited objects or heirlooms in a way that resets old energies and reflects the new healed energy. In practice, this rarely takes a long time as a ritual step, but the quality is often integrative and honoring in ways that are both meaningful for the client and tangible for stabilizing the new healed energy.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Reinforce lineage healing prior to the recent ones before engaging the more recent dead.
- Kindly make space for old sorrow, anger, heart pain, and unresolved grievances. Invite the guides to safely and lovingly resource any strong emotion arising for the client.
- Work gradually, often one ancestor at a time, reinforcing the shift at each stage/generation.
- Safely and effectively rely on the well ancestors of the client to untangle and resolve any hazardous spirit interference without frightening the client or getting too directly involved.
- Call for the guides to bless the bones/remains of the entire lineage after the ancestralization is complete. Help the client to understand the relevance of this inclusion.
- Help the client to soften old stories, invite forgiveness, and allow for lasting healing and change, including among the recent dead who were harmful during life.

Step Five: Work with Living & Extended Family

This step completes the five-step healing progression by anchoring the restored lineage blessings in the extended and living family as well as in the body and psyche of the client. This may include a celebratory quality as well as the client assuming their place in the lineage in a new and healed way.

This step begins when all the deceased on the immediate lineage of focus have been ancestralized. The step completes when the client is able to experience the love, kindness, and specific blessings of this lineage passing both around and through them to the extended family and beyond.

The Step-by-Step.

1. As with each previous step, follow a basic progression of explaining what is going to happen, doing that, and then talking about how that went with intent to support ritual and client integration. There are three basic aspects or stages to Step Five and they proceed in sequence:
 - A. Extend lineage blessings to the recent generations (both living and deceased)
 - B. Personally anchor this new healed energy on a blood/bone/DNA/body level
 - C. Allow lineage blessings to move through the client as a prism/channel of ancestral goodness

As each is a potentially involved process, you may introduce them one at a time or all at once.

2. When extending blessings to the recent generations, begin with the generation of the client's grandparent. Ask the client to ask the guides and well lineage to bless all siblings, living and deceased, of the grandparent along with their partners, children, and grandchildren forward through time. The client may have a lot of information about these individuals or none at all. Consider offering the image of the ancestral river widening and fanning out to become a delta.

If the client notices that a deceased sibling of their grandparent is not yet an ancestor, the client may either slow down to address that or make note and circle back at a later time. Typically the process is somewhat high level in contrast to individually ancestralizing each great aunt and great uncle; however care for family is encouraged. Complete this blessing of the grandparent generation by focusing on the immediate lineage ancestor (grandparent) of the client and ask that they remain blessed and able to stand in the flow of lineage goodness.

After the grandparent generation, proceed to the parent of the client and if they have died reconfirm that they are able to receive and participate in transmitting the blessings of this lineage. In either case, ask that the well lineage as a whole extend a blessing to the siblings of the client's parent and any of their partners or children forward through time. Again, allow for the ways in

which this blessing can also serve as a diagnostic about who among the dead (e.g., uncles, aunts, cousins) may benefit from further care either now or at another time. If the client's parent has passed, return to notice their place in the lineage as a completion of the focus on this generation.

Third in sequence, ask the well lineage to extend blessings to any siblings of the client, living or deceased, and to their partners and children. Allow for strong feelings and new insights on the part of the client, and make sure they are inviting the well lineage to bring the goodness without getting too personally involved. You can then briefly invite the client to also stand in the current of the well lineage and welcome the same blessing; however, this will be the focus of the second part of Step Five so it's best to defer that briefly.

Finally, invite the client to ask the ancestors to bless the client's children and any of their partners and children forward through time. Throughout this process be sure to encourage the client to let the ancestors work their magic; this blessing is not something achieved by effort but through relationship and by request. If the client has concerns about who can be included (e.g., step-family, adoptive children), err on the side of including whoever is family. When the blessings have been extended through the recent generations, allow for a moment of integration and possibly discussion before asking the client if they wish to proceed to the next stage.

3. After the generational "fanning out" of the blessings, invite the client to ask their well ancestors to heal/update/upgrade their body/blood/bones/DNA at a level of intensity that is right for them at this time. The framing of this invitation is important and what lands well may vary from client to client. The intent is for the client, who is a face of the lineage, to also reflect the new healed energy that now characterizes the lineage. The focus here is more explicitly somatic than previous steps, and there should no longer be the same need for a boundary with the lineage. Keep it down to Earth and consider very briefly speaking on epigenetics if you feel able to navigate that topic and you believe that scientific context on genetic plasticity will be useful.

Upon entering into the practice, hold a supportive space while the client makes this ask of their ancestors. This practice can also be framed as the client assuming their place in the lineage, and in this sense it's the culmination of this cycle of lineage repair work. Be willing if needed to down-regulate the intensity for the client by asking the ancestors to be more gentle. Kindly welcome strong emotion and encourage the client to embrace this alignment of body and psyche as an extension of this ancestral lineage. Occasionally the ancestors will wish to thank the client for their service; that's welcome if it organically arises. Overall this is a time to bask in the new normal and invite that shift on a cellular level.

4. The third of three stages of Step Five follows naturally from the practice above. Once the client seems to comfortably rest in the energy of the healed lineage, ask them to invite the blessings of the lineage to also pass through them. One possible image is that of a cup overflowing. This is similar enough to previous steps that you may decide in the moment to omit the explanation or keep it very brief and explain as you go. Despite the conceptual simplicity, you are inviting the client to consciously allow the ancestors to work through them by extending lineage goodness

through their body and psyche into this dimension. This stance can soften the individuality of the client and serve as a gateway to states of partial merging and positive possession or embodiment.

When you invite the client to allow the love and blessings of this lineage of ancestors to move through them, consider starting with extension of these blessings to the living family. If the client has living parents or children, begin there unless you have reason to do otherwise. Work outward to include other living family members, and make sure the client is not efforting but rather allowing the ancestors to gently work through them. Let the exploration be enjoyable and nourishing. Often this way of working comes as a relief for people used to drawing on their personal energy. The practice may expand beyond living family, and err on the side of not needing to bless the entire universe and each fish in the sea and star in the night sky; blessing what is close at hand is often quite intimate. Be curious how this stance feels for the client and notice how this practice can support beneficial shifts in the client's personal energy. When the practice feels complete, invite the client to disengage somewhat from the lineage or just downshift the intensity as the client and the lineage, in reality, are only somewhat distinct.

5. After the client has extended blessings to recent generations, assumed their place in the healed lineage, and allowed that healed energy to move through their body and psyche as a blessing to the living family, they're likely complete with the repair aspect of the work along that specific lineage. Ask the ancestors if there is anything that remains to be done as part of the repair cycle on this lineage and if not, if they wish for any celebration before proceeding to tend with other lineages. When the time is right, without rush, invite the client to discern, in partnership with these and any other well ancestors, which of their four primary lineages would be best to focus on next. Once all four lineages are well and healed, proceed to the step of harmonizing the lineages.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Confirm that all ancestors in the lineage before the client are decisively well before proceeding, including any deceased children or grandchildren.
- Communicate clearly and succinctly how to extend lineage blessings to siblings of the grandparents (and their partners and children), siblings of the parent (and their partners and children), siblings of the client (and their partners and children), and grand/children of the client.
- Regulate intensity for the client when asking for the body-level blessing and also when they are functioning as a channel for ancestral blessings here on Earth.
- Amplify the energy of celebration and gratitude from the ancestors. Invite sympathetic joy and sincere happiness for the client and their ancestors. Don't rush to more healing work right away.
- Assist the client to identify next steps with the process including the next best lineage of focus.

Harmonizing the Lineages

Seeking to harmonize lineages who are well unto themselves supports psychological integration in the life of the client, makes possible a complex symphonic experience of blood and bone mysteries, and encourages a more integrated and settled quality of energy among the ancestors themselves. This step corresponds to Chapter Nine and also to aspects of Chapter Eleven.

This step becomes possible when two or more lineages are well and healed from the ancients through to the present. Harmonizing the lineages with one another as they become well can be a beneficial choice when slow steady pacing is important for the client, as it further integrates and consolidates blessings and goodness. Consult with the client, your own intuition, and the guides as to whether harmonization is a good practice to engage in along the way, or if it's better to wait until all four lineages are healed first. The steps below assume this harmonization step has not been done yet and all four lineages are now well.

Harmonizing occurs both between the lineages as they exist outside the clients and also within the psyche and body of the client. This same process can be extended to include more than four lineages and/or ancestors of place, spiritual lineage, etc. provided those other groupings of ancestors are willing to participate and the approach is relational. This section speaks to harmonizing four blood lineages. See Chapter Eleven for other aspects of this practice.

The Step-by-Step.

1. After the client is in ritual attention and you have the blessing from their guides to engage in a harmonization process, proceed with two lineages at a time. Bring attention to the first lineage and reconfirm they are deeply well throughout and that the client is well attuned with them. Then bring the client's attention to the other lineage in question and again confirm that the lineage is deeply well all the way through to the most recently deceased and that the client is well attuned to their blessings and support. This is the necessary foundation for the harmonization step.
2. Invite the two ancestral lineages to even more consciously engage with one another outside the body and psychic space of the client. Word this invitation a relational way, not like you're asking complex ancestors to merge or combine into a singular thing. If the client experiences the lineages as energy patterns, images like weaving or braiding are one common way this may occur. If they appear more like personalities, cooperative images like locking hands, sharing food or drink, or laughing together may occur. This step may flow easily or there may be a lot in the larger historical and ancestral field that needs to be slowly addressed as a kind of negotiation among the guides and big spirits of each lineage. Patiently allow space for all this.
3. When you have the clear impression that these two lineages are well-harmonized with one another outside the space of the client, then invite them to extend a combined/woven/braided blessing to the client. Invite the client to notice how it feels to receive the support of both lineages

at the same time, to experience the combined blessing. This is analogous to the ‘DNA upgrade’ stage of Step Five; attuning deeply to the now harmonized lineage blessings.

4. When the client has comfortably received this woven/combined blessing, invite them to extend this blessing in the form of prayer for their living and extended family, and perhaps beyond. In this way, the sequence again mirrors the three parts of Step Five.
5. If time allows for a similar process on the other side of the client’s ancestry or between another two lineages, follow steps one through four above to arrive at a place where the client is now embodying the woven/harmonized blessings of these other two lineages. Although the most common weaving is both mother’s side lineages or both father’s side lineages, it’s also possible to explore different combinations (e.g., both grandmother lineages).
6. After each of the four lineages have been experientially woven into two larger combined lineages, you can move a third time through steps one to four above with intent to harmonize the clients mother’s side and their father’s side lineages, treating each combined/harmonized lineage as a single current or lineage. The image of two rivers becoming a larger river and then those two rivers joining again to become an even larger river can apply.
7. Completion may be a simple and easy-flowing shift of attention or may call for an intentional uncoupling of the client’s energy from the larger current of lineage. Although the client is inseparable from their people, it’s also possible to down regulate the intensity if needed.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- Harmonizing does not imply combining in a way that erases or minimizes individuality. Don’t make the lineages into symbols to be arranged; this is relational work. Think more like introducing complete guests at a dinner, hives of bees, pods of dolphins, or herds of elk.
- Don’t confuse completion of a cycle of healing and repair with ‘completion’ of the relationship with the ancestors. Avoid language like being ‘done with this lineage’ and favor the language of shifting from a repair/healing orientation to celebration and ongoing communion.
- Proceed at a mindful pace for the client. This process can be intense if there are historic troubles between different lineages (e.g., one is African-African and another European-American, one is Chinese and another Japanese). Regulating intensity as the healed, well guides drive the process.

Thematic Work With the Lineages

In one sense, Ancestral Lineage Healing is, to a larger degree, already thematic work. And understanding difficult legacies and restoring blessings doesn’t always require an emphasis on cultural implications (e.g.,

food scarcity rather than food scarcity from occupation and oppressive conditions, sorrowful partnerships rather than unhappy marriages due to patriarchy). There are times when the work calls for emphasis on individual or lineage themes along a lineage without larger cultural framing, often earlier in the process in order to arrive at basic wellness, and there are times to expand into cultural implications of lineage troubles, often once there is a baseline of wellness from which to open this type of inquiry.

This aspect of the practice is not in the book per se but corresponds closely in form to the blessings and burdens work of Chapter Seven. When working with cultural troubles and resiliencies/antidotes there is no distinct start or end point for these explorations and healing endeavors.

The Step-by-Step.

1. Frame the specific presenting concern of the client (e.g., physical illness, poverty, impacts of colonialism, rigid gender roles, or racism) in an open way with as few assumptions as possible.
2. Connect with the already known guides (ancestral and otherwise) of the client in a general way, confirm that they support the inquiry, and start by listening to anything they wish to share.
3. Discern with these guides and already well ancestors where to bring the concern more specifically. This is often but not always to the guides/elders of one lineage in particular.
4. Connect with the well ancestors of wherever you have been guided. Ask to better understand the healed and whole energy that is the antidote to the concern, and ask the ancestors to support the client in embodying that energy likely by receiving a blessing/healing/empowerment from the ancestors. First seeking to understand the antidote externally before inviting embodiment of that quality functions to regulate the intensity, and either sequence may serve.
5. When the client feels reasonably well seated with the healed/whole energy, see if the ancestors wish to then extend these blessings to the lineage between the guides and the client. Utilize what you know about Step Three and Four of the ancestralization process when asking the ancestors to bring this specific blessing/healed energy forward along the line from the old ones to the present.
6. Similar to the three parts of Step Five in the lineage healing process, invite this quality of blessing to be extended to the recent generations, more strongly anchored in the client's body, and transmitted through the client as prayer for the living/recent ones and the world.
7. Depending on the nature of the theme being worked with, consider asking if there are any unpaid debts, acts of repair, or other changes that would be beneficial for the client to make to anchor the work in the present. This can be especially relevant with respect to themes of cultural healing to ensure that the work also recognizes the need for fundamental structural/societal/policy changes.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- The thematic approach assumes the lineage is already basically well. Otherwise, refer to the usual approach of working with blessings and burdens in Step Three and Chapter Seven of the book. If the dead are not yet fully ancestralized, their foundational healing is the focus of the repair work.
- Your ability to navigate nuanced cultural themes well hinges upon you having embodied understanding or at least great care and humility surrounding such troubles. This includes, for example, empathic facilitation and knowing the history of the client's lineages well enough to support them, if desired, in making meaning from what they're experiencing.
- Knowing about cultural healing or history can create a problem of assuming you know what you'll find in any given case. Don't assume what the ancestors will say or how those legacies affect the client. Don't come with an agenda or activist-mind-only to ancestor-driven spirit work.
- Respect the potential potency of some of the cultural healing themes in the life of the client. Invite the client to ask their ancestors what homework and integration will help, and be attentive to regulation of intensity as needed.

Work with Other-than-Blood Ancestors

This is a major topic with many possible expressions. This corresponds in the book to Chapters Six (other-than-human ancestors), Nine (extended family), Ten (ancestors of place) and Eleven (ancestors of spiritual lineage, vocation, and affinity). Typically this kind of work is ancillary to repair work with blood lineage ancestors or happens after four of the client's lineages are deeply well; however, it's also possible that the need to work with other-than-blood ancestors arises through the course of the repair work or is even more pressing at the start of client contact. This section provides some basic guidelines. A full treatment of each of these domains of practice is beyond the scope of this manual.

Other-than-Human Ancestors. Many cultures speak of the other-than-humans or not-only-humans (e.g., animal and plant spirits, deities, places) as also being ancestors of a sort. Aside from the risk that this can be used to bypass the important grappling with a human form and the specific mysteries of family and blood lineage, this is a very legitimate and mystical subject that may arise in session. Favor the approach of helping the client to first become well-anchored with human blood ancestors and if those relationships include a strong sense of relatedness with other powers, that's welcome provided it doesn't totally eclipse or exclude the role of the human ancestors. Including the human ancestors with a both/and approach has to do with helping the client to also see the sacred in human form and in themselves.

If clients have an established cultural framework for these intersections (e.g., intact Indigenous cultures or animist teachings), respect that framework. The other-than-human ancestors may be part of a team of spiritual guidance and support; just make sure there are also human ancestors in the mix. If the sense of a

more complex deity or archetypal force/pattern emerges that includes both human and other-than-human forms, allow for that veering into mystical aspects of the topic that blur the human/other-than-human binary. Stay inclusive and track for nervous system regulation and psychological integration.

Extended Family and Friends. The three most common types of family who are not in the framework of direct blood lineage are: extended family who are still connected by blood (e.g., uncles/aunts, nieces/nephews, cousins), created or chosen family who are still recognized by the culture and/or client as family (e.g., spouses and in-laws, stepfamily, adoptive family), and created or chosen family recognized neither by the culture nor client as family (e.g., close friends and community, lovers, mentors, cultural inspirations, the family of dear friends).

Although there are many possible circumstances and any given case may be the exception, in general consider these three groupings on a spectrum from more to less ancestral proximity or inherent access. Assisting an aunt or uncle will typically be an easier request to your shared ancestors than assisting a spouse's recently deceased parent, at least with respect to lineage and ancestralization. And assisting the parent of a spouse will typically be easier than assisting a recently deceased friend (all other factors being equal). Ancestral proximity is one important factor in ritual safety when working with extended family.

When seeking to assist extended family who are directly connected to the client by blood lineage start by helping the client to anchor strongly in their connection with their blood lineage ancestors and other trusted guides. Most likely the needed work will be carried out by those ancestors shared by the client and the extended family member who is the focus of the concern. With respect to the mysteries of gender, often the transitioning dead who are men tend to join their father's father's lineage and women their mother's mother's lineage. In keeping with this trend, ancestralization of a male sibling of the client's father (a paternal uncle) would ideally include the client's father's father's lineage and assisting a female sibling of the client's father (a paternal aunt) would ideally involve the client's father's mother's lineage. As usual, ask the well ancestors to guide the intervention and if there are requests of the living client (e.g., offerings, family tending). The principle of ancestral proximity informs the approach and the high degree of proximity means the approach is essentially the same as with direct lineage ancestors.

After dropping in with the shared ancestors, you may determine that the heart of the trouble that needs to be addressed is more related to a lineage not shared by the client and the extended family member of concern. For example, a half-sister of a client (they share a mother and have different fathers) dies suddenly and the client wishes to bring relief and assistance to her transition. When connecting with the lineage shared by the client and half-sister these well ancestors indicate that there is major interference from the half-sister's father's ancestors, a lineage not shared by the client. This shifts the approach into the second general category of 'created or chosen family who are still recognized by the culture as family' because the heart of the work is with a lineage more recently woven into the fabric of the client's family. The work to address the influence of the half-sister's father's lineage can proceed with more caution.

With extended family with whom the client doesn't share a blood lineage or when the heart of the work isn't along their shared lineage, the general approach is for the well ancestors of the client to appeal to the well ancestors of the person in question. This doesn't have to be an involved process, and especially

in times of acute need it's possible to just directly intervene. For example, if I was working on behalf of my sister's husband because he was in an acute crisis, I would first pray for him directly with my ancestors and the other powers that I relate with in a way that didn't necessarily include trying to reach his ancestors. If he had died, I would additionally ask my ancestors to appeal to his well and loving ancestors and ask them to step forward to receive him. If the nature of the work is about ancestralization, err on the side of trying to include the well ancestors of the person of concern and if that isn't clicking also stay open to the possibility that direct prayer may be best.

A common example of this degree of ancestral proximity is a parent wishing to address unhelpful ancestral influence in the lives of their children in cases where the other parent is not able or not inclined to participate in ancestral healing. The client-parent is obviously family in some sense to the ancestors of the other parent but it's also not their personal bloodline. In this case, there are clear reasons to get involved and the well ancestors of the other biological parent are likely to be receptive. Less ancestral proximity means proceeding with greater caution and deliberation; however, don't take this to mean that you need to ancestralize the entire lineage; the well ancestors of both lineages will determine what's best in a practical way. In cases of interventions for the well-being of children, consent can often be implied provided you're working with humility and in partnership with the well ancestors.

The third category includes those with whom the client is neither connected by blood nor family (as defined by the client and perhaps also by the surrounding culture). In addition to the importance of employing greater caution due to a lower degree of ancestral proximity, a second consideration is consent. Begin by guiding the client to ask their own ancestors how much to get involved. If their support is welcome, seek to coordinate this with the well ancestors or guiding intelligence surrounding the person of concern. People without a framework for ancestor reverence will sometimes rush to assist before considering permission to get involved or the possible risks. As the practitioner, honor their impulse to be helpful while also attending to safety and issues of consent.

Ancestors of Place. Treated at some depth in Chapter Ten of the book, this type of ancestral engagement tends to arise more often when doing land-specific workings or when giving care to difficult histories and themes of belonging. As a basic progression, support the client in getting well with four of their lineages and from that foundation of ancestral wellness, you may ask if they then wish to make a respectful offering or introduction to ancestors of place (assuming they are different from the client's blood ancestors). The dead who speak through the land in any given place may themselves be subject to all the same types of disturbance, complexity, and hazard as any other kind of ancestor, only without the affinity that comes with a recent blood connection to the client.

Ancestors of Vocation and Spiritual Lineage. By practicing various trades, vocations, or spiritual traditions, the client may already be in touch with those ancestors. As the client becomes more at peace with ancestors of blood it may be beneficial to facilitate a conversation between these other types of ancestors and ancestral influence. Adapt the basic approach used in harmonizing the lineages or directly reference Chapter Eleven of the book. Be sure that if you invite the client to engage in this terrain of practice that you've also explored connection with these other types of ancestors yourself first.

Important Proficiencies and Considerations at this Stage:

- One risk in this terrain is that the client would wish to engage other-than-blood ancestors as a way to avoid the transformative work with ancestors of blood, bone, and body. Consider a both/and approach that is spirit-driven and honors cultural differences without enabling avoidance.
- Focus on other-than-blood ancestors can at times arise from a motivation of rescuing or helping those among the troubled dead who come into the field of awareness of the client. As the practitioner, seek to strike the balance between helping your client to genuinely be of service in a safe and effective way while also tempering, when needed, the client's impulse to rescue.
- Remember as an overall principle in this terrain that the client will tend to have less inherent energetic protection when engaging ancestors not connected to them by lineage and therefore a greater level of humility, etiquette, transparent motivations, and ritual precautions are warranted.

Introductory Talks

The intent of introductory talks is to present an overall framework for ancestral engagement and the Ancestral Lineage Healing. There are examples of these types of talks guided by Dr. Foor in the public-facing resources through ancestralmedicine.org and the Ancestral Lineage Healing Online Course. Chapter Two of the book also covers much of this foundational material.

Guiding a clear and connective introductory talk takes practice and also calls for a sense of gravitas. In nearly every introductory teaching someone present will decide whether or not to engage their ancestors based on their experience of the talk, and that choice may bring intergenerational repercussions. Unless organizational permission is requested and granted, please wait until completing the second retreat of the training before guiding introductory talks.

Favor an hour to 90-minute duration for introductory talks and establish a basic ritual container. When guiding a 90-minute teaching, consider 45 minutes as an upper limit of presenting before taking questions; 20-30 minutes is typically a better duration.

Of the several hundred intro talks Dr. Foor has guided since 2004, about two thirds have been at no cost and another third as some version of 'donations accepted' or a very modest contribution without turning anyone away. Descriptive titles such as "Introduction to Ancestral Lineage Healing" or "Introduction to Ancestral and Family Healing" work well, and this is up to the discretion of the person guiding the talk.

Consider some version of the follow this progression:

- Brief greeting followed by an opening prayer and optionally a very brief guided practice
- Self-introduction and how you came to this work including attribution to teachers

- Animism as the larger framework that includes ancestor reverence and ritual
- Who are the ancestors including benefits and risks of focusing on blood ancestors
- Cross-cultural assumptions about ancestor reverence and ritual
- Five stages of the lineage repair work and overall intent of Ancestral Lineage Healing
- Possibly additional teaching on the familial and cultural implications of the work
- Time for questions and possibly more substantive embodied practice

Be prepared to give examples from your own journey or from the experiences of people you've worked with while still honoring their confidentiality. Be prepared to respond calmly and kindly to unusual questions, challenges, stories that could derail your focus, and folks who may be emotionally turbulent. If you struggle with a question or don't have a clear answer, remember you can thank them and let them know you'd like to speak with your colleagues and offer to follow-up with them at a later time.

Make sure you set the ritual container even though you're not diving deep in a 90-minute teaching. It's possible to include a guided ritual/visualization that affirms distinctions among the dead by inviting those who are well, wise, and kind among the ancestors to step forward and those who are otherwise to yield that space. Other types of prayers, song, offerings, and honoring may also find a place in an introductory event; however, do not assume that those present wish to engage their ancestors simply because they're present or set in motion more than can be responsibly addressed in the time.

If you guide an introductory talk online, mostly everything is the same, just be certain in advance that your technology is reliable and remember to still establish the ritual container.

Ancestral Healing Circles

Ancestral healing circles provide a supportive group ritual space for participants to move forward the healing with their lineages. Dr. Foor guided a monthly ancestor circle from 2006 – 2017, first in the San Francisco Bay Area or California and then in Western North Carolina, and all participants were asked to have either done one personal session that included the lineage assessment or to have attended an in-person Ancestral Lineage Healing Intensive (offered 2005-2020). The online course can also serve as this prerequisite; however, ancestor circles are not designed to include a guided assessment at each gathering. Asking participants to complete an assessment beforehand also serves as a form of screening and prevents the facilitator from having to explain the basics at each circle.

In more than a decade guiding ancestral healing circles, the following observations may be helpful:

- Monthly is likely the least often to sustain connection and weekly is likely the most frequent to avoid overwhelm. Duration is best at 90 minutes to 2.5 hours.
- When interest reaches 8-14 participants, consider asking for a quarterly commitment and closing the group. This can allow for slow participant rotation within a cohesive group. If interest is less than 8, consider keeping the circle open to new people. The upper limit for this type of offering to function well is around 14 participants.

- From 2006-2017 the cost ranged from \$20-40 USD per person per circle and cost is determined by the circle leader.
- Ask participants to arrive on time and stay for the duration as the tenuous cohesion can easily erode if people arrive late.

There are two critical skills when guiding an ancestral healing circle: time management and tracking each person's experience and process. For time management consider something like this progression:

1. Settle everyone on time
2. Opening prayer/invocation
3. Optional recap of the five basic steps if needed (everyone should be on step two or beyond)
4. Check-in where each person will focus during first visioning
5. Trance work / direct visioning with the ancestors for 10-15 minutes
6. Optional time for making notes (this can happen during the time for sharing)
7. Chance for each person to share in circle (favor those in need, balance of time management)
8. Possible bio break at mid-way point (this may be combined with optional time for notes)
9. Set individual intentions for second visioning (this may occur at the end of the first share)
10. Trance work / direct visioning with the ancestors again for 10-15 minutes
11. Chance for each person to share in circle (option to weave in homework directives)
12. Completion process/prayer

Tracking each person's experience and process is a bit like guiding eight to fourteen sessions at a time. This requires a combination of knowing the steps, listening closely for what's essential, and effectively tracking both group and individual processes. The facilitator needs to get to the heart of the matter and give useful, specific suggestions to each person during the few minutes in which they share. Those suggestions may take the form of heart-felt mirroring and appreciation, ideas for what to now focus on in the second visioning, or invitations to deepen after circle. If you have a circle of 14 people consider allowing 25-30 minutes for each of the two shares (2 minutes or so per person). If the circle is ritually effective, folks will likely want to speak at length; hence the need for time management.

Trainees are asked to complete the three foundational retreats in the training before guiding an ancestral healing circle. In some cases even after the third retreat, a trainee may still need to acquire additional skills or experience relevant to guiding small-group rituals. In those cases, Ancestral Medicine leadership is happy to help identify those needs and support the trainee to develop those capacities.

Ancestral Elements in Rites of Passage

Rites of passage that lend themselves to the incorporation of ancestor-focused elements include but are not limited to rituals surrounding birth, coming of age, weddings/unions/separations, and death. The inclusion of ancestor reverence in rites of passages is quite cross-cultural; however, the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training does not emphasize this skill set as not all trainees are drawn to officiant work.

If you are not already rooted in officiant skills and/or you are not yet certified, consider scheduling a supervision session with a practitioner who is also a seasoned officiant to get support on including ancestral elements in the ritual you're leading. If you are already confident in your officiant skills and you've completed your certification, you likely have the capacities to effectively integrate ancestor reverence into your officiant work, and remember that additional supervision is available upon request.

Consider the following guidelines as a starting point:

- Assess for ancestrally intact traditions in the lives of those for whom you are guiding ritual. If there are ritual forms that are a match, assess your ability to responsibly inhabit or at least to support and blend with those forms.
- When at all possible, allow the ancestors, both yours and those of the people who you're serving, to proactively participate in the ritual planning.
- Invite blessing, protection, and whatever other qualities are needed from the elevated ancestors of the living people you are serving. Consider your own ancestors as liaisons in this process.
- In ways that don't distract from the heart of the ritual or convey exclusion, gently but firmly maintain the distinction between the ancestors and the not-yet-ancestors.
- Find culturally and intensity-appropriate ways to gently acknowledge or even involve the ancestors of others present in the ritual space.
- Name, honor, and in some cases appease or respectfully involve ancestors of place.

The potential exists for practitioners who are so moved to coordinate and further articulate intersections of ancestor-focused ritual and officiant services, including in the form of ritual templates and guidelines.

Part Three: Teaching and Ongoing Requirements

This section details organizational guidelines for teaching this approach to ancestral healing beyond the scope of talks and circles; ongoing requirements for annual reporting, continuing education, and renewal of trainee status; and the option to place one's certification in inactive status.

Post-Certification Ritual Work and Teaching

The Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training focuses on participants learning to skillfully guide Ancestral Lineage Healing and related practices in the context of individual sessions, introductory talks, and ancestral healing circles. All three of these formats, sessions, intro talks, and circles, may occur in-person or online and may organically include elements of teaching.

The Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training does not prepare participants to guide more involved group workings such as in-person day-long teachings, multi-day intensives, or other kinds of involved ancestor-focused group ritual. These call for a different set of skills that not all people have or wish to develop, and guiding ancestral healing processes at depth in a group format is not held by Ancestral Medicine leadership as a goal or natural progression of the practitioner training. That said, some are called to teaching and guiding more involved group rituals focused on ancestral healing. This can play out along one of two pathways or a combination of both, each with a specific set of requirements.

Offerings through Ancestral Medicine. Prior to the global pandemic starting in early 2020, Ancestral Medicine offered in-person events including three-day Ancestral Lineage Healing Intensives in seven countries, some of which were led and supported by network practitioners. The pandemic catalyzed a shift to online engagement in ways that will have repercussions beyond the duration of the pandemic.

The primary ways in which practitioners and trainees are now invited to offer their services as a representative of Ancestral Medicine are: supporting online courses through small breakout groups and additional calls; guiding Ancestor Circles, guiding teachings and other events for the practitioner network; and offering mentorship, supervision, and support of trainees in the Practitioner Training.

Requirements to offer these services through Ancestral Medicine include:

- Complete and maintain practitioner certification (or trainee guidelines if not yet certified)
- Follow the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Code of Ethics
- Receive an invitation from Ancestral Medicine to guide or support the offering in question
- Adhere to the agreements and expectations specific to the capacity in which you are serving

If you are a certified practitioner and wish to be considered for guiding offerings through the organization please communicate this to the Ancestral Medicine Leadership. This may be communicated during the annual opt-in/survey or at any other time.

All opportunities for paid ritual support and leadership through Ancestral Medicine are entirely optional; there is no expectation that practitioners or trainees will or ought to serve in these ways. Likewise, Ancestral Medicine is under no obligation to extend these invitations to any given practitioner or trainee or to the practitioner network as a whole.

Offerings not through Ancestral Medicine. Ancestral Medicine does not have the organizational capacity to monitor all practitioner-led events that draw on this approach to ancestral healing. By articulating guidelines for practitioner and trainee-led events not through Ancestral Medicine, we seek to balance care for the quality of teaching with our sincere desire for the work to expand and adapt.

Examples of possible types of practitioner-led offerings not through Ancestral Medicine include:

- Events that include ancestral healing teachings and practices for participants of specific demographics and/or life experiences (e.g., LGBTQ+, BIPOC, practitioners of specific traditions, speakers of other-than-English languages)
- Offerings that present the material in a different mode or setting (e.g., movement or song focus, ancestor-focused ritual in nature, pilgrimage to sacred sites)
- Online courses that incorporate elements of Ancestral Lineage Healing beyond the scope of an introductory talk or ancestral healing circle
- One-day or greater in-person offerings that primarily teaching Ancestral Lineage Healing

When teaching or guiding events that utilize this approach beyond an introductory talk or an ancestral healing circle, practitioners are required to complete and maintain practitioner certification and to follow the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Code of Ethics. Additionally, practitioners are required to:

- **Give Basic Attribution.** When teaching this approach to ancestral healing, include some form of attribution. This may consist of mentioning Ancestral Medicine, Dr. Foor, or both. The attribution does not need to be excessive, only in some easy-to-encounter place and at normal standards of cultural respect for any other body of teaching.
- **Represent the Offering Clearly.** State clearly that the event is not directly sponsored or carried out by Ancestral Medicine. Although Ancestral Medicine sincerely wishes well for all practitioner offerings, because there is currently no process by which to know or evaluate what practitioners are teaching, Ancestral Medicine is not able to extend formal endorsement for the event or to any given teacher when not directly through the organization. This includes being explicit that Ancestral Medicine is not liable in any way for these offerings.
- **Avoid Replicating Ancestral Medicine Offerings.** Practitioners are asked to not duplicate events already offered directly by Ancestral Medicine. This includes the online courses, especially Ancestral Lineage Healing, and the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training. If you have concerns

about your intended offering replicating what is already offered or imagine it could potentially be perceived in that way, please err on the side of proactively communicating with Ancestral Medicine leadership.

- **Respect the Spirit of the Work.** If teaching the work, either stand-alone, blended with, or alongside other material, stay true to the fundamentals when presenting these teachings. If you wish to teach an approach to ancestral healing other than the material learned in this training, simply represent that as something other than this approach to avoid confusion.
- **Seek Mentorship if Needed.** For the most part mentorship is optional if events are not directly through Ancestral Medicine; however, if your event centers the Ancestral Lineage Healing method and you intend to teach this in the day-long or three-day format as was previously done for years through Ancestral Medicine, in these cases we request that you first have a mentorship session with a senior practitioner to ensure continuity of teaching approach and quality of the offering. If you have previously guided a one-day or three-day intensive, this is not required.

Provided the practitioner honors these requirements, there is no expectation of compensation to Ancestral Medicine for teaching the material, no need to seek organizational permission, and no requirement that you inform Ancestral Medicine leadership about your offering. As stated above, the exception is if you intend to primarily teach the Ancestral Lineage Healing method, especially in any way resembling the day-long or three-day format developed from 2005-2019 by Ancestral Medicine, or in the online course format as done for years through Ancestral Medicine as "Ancestral Lineage Healing Online Course". For teaching the foundational ALH process, we ask that you defer to the offerings of the organization and simply open a dialogue with AM Leadership about any concerns or ideas for teaching that material. If you fail to honor these guidelines, Ancestral Medicine leadership may open a generative dialogue with you, initiate an action plan, or revoke certification (see Part Five on Conflict and Resolution).

If you would like support for any type of offering you are envisioning, feel welcome to reach out to Ancestral Medicine leadership as we can likely help connect you with supervision from those in the network with the relevant skills. We wish for all practitioners to be successful in your undertakings.

Recommendations to Develop Teaching Skills. Requirements detailed above are the expected baseline for guiding this approach to ancestral healing either through organizational pathways or otherwise. The following recommendations are intended to give focus and encouragement to those drawn to teaching and guiding group-level process and ritual:

- **Master the Introductory Talk.** These can happen for small or larger groups, in-person or online, stand-alone or woven into other kinds of teaching. Teaching fundamentals is great practice and a necessary element of any more involved offering. Invite trusted allies or hired help to attend and to give you honest, constructive feedback on how to give dynamic, connective introductory talks.

- **Guide an Ancestral Healing Circle.** This is a great form of service that strengthens group facilitation skills critical for more involved teaching. Not all locations have the interest level to support an in-person circle; however, online circles are also viable and can allow for greater accessibility. Invite trusted allies or hired help to attend and to give you honest, constructive feedback on how to guide a dynamic, connective circle.
- **Support the Offerings of Others.** This may include being a supporter at events through Ancestral Medicine (e.g., online courses, Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training), events guided by others in the network, or any offerings by ritualists you believe you can learn from. There is no substitute for the explicit and implicit learning from helping to anchor group ritual as a supporter. This is also a great way to notice what works for effective ritual leadership.
- **Engage in Ongoing Mentorship.** After completion of certification as a practitioner, find ways that are right for you and your people to continue to deepen your ritual leadership skills. This may include identifying a less developed capacity (e.g., leading songs, managing event logistics, historical knowledge) and transforming that into a strength through focused learning. Some of these mentorship needs may be available through others in the practitioner network; feel welcome to inquire with Ancestral Medicine Leadership.
- **Wait at Least a Year After Certification.** Anchoring strongly in your skills as a practitioner provides a stronger foundation from which to then navigate the complexities of group teaching and ritual. Consider giving at least a full year of session work after completing your certification before guiding more involved group ritual and teaching. In that year consider focusing on introductory talks, circles, sessions, and ongoing mentorship to address less developed capacities.

Following these recommendations does not guarantee you will be invited to guide offerings through Ancestral Medicine as opportunities are limited.

Ongoing Network and Certification Requirements

There is no financial cost to maintain your certification and membership in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network; however, there are two annual requirements: annual reporting and either Continuing Education or Renewal of Trainee Status.

Annual Reporting. This is coordinated around the end of the calendar year, and consists of an online annual reporting form that takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and which gives important data on the approximate number of sessions rendered along with other data collection and a chance to provide any feedback. We aim for the completion of the annual reporting to be easeful, and it's important for tracking the needs of the network and for maintaining a line of connection with practitioners and trainees from previous training cycles.

If after months of advance notice, staff reminders, and a month of grace period, practitioners or trainees fail to complete the annual opt-in form, their certification will be moved to inactive status (see below) and, after an additional six months, revoked (see Part Five).

Continuing Education Requirement. All certified practitioners are required to fulfill a Continuing Education (CE) requirement every two years. The use of the CE designation in this context is specific to Ancestral Medicine and does not reference any other organizational body or use of the terms "continuing education".

Practitioners will have until the end of the calendar year to complete their CE requirements in the years when they are due (2022, 2024, 2026, etc). Continuing Education for practitioners requires approximately ten hours and there will be a component that includes honest self-reflection and engagement in some aspect of relevant professional growth and learning. There will be considerable options and flexibility with respect to mode of engagement (e.g., video, audio, written), content (e.g., cultural healing, ritual skills, professional development), and options both through and outside of AM Network teachings to keep the requirement truly supportive of your service as a practitioner rather than perfunctory and bureaucratic.

As with the annual reporting, if after a full year of notice and reminders from staff, and a month of post-deadline grace period, practitioners fail to complete the CE requirement, their certification will be moved to inactive status and, after an additional six months, revoked.

Renewal of Trainee Status. All trainees in the network (meaning those who have not yet completed their certification) are required to participate in an annual Renewal of Trainee Status (RTS). This requirement begins the year after the final group-level gathering associated with your training cohort, and trainees will have the full calendar year to complete the requirements. The RTS will require approximately five hours and there will be a component that includes honest self-reflection and completion of at least one ancestral healing session with a supervising practitioner of your choice.

The RTS applies in all situations where a year or more has passed since a trainee completed the final group portion of their foundational training. When a trainee completes their certification, they may complete their RTS beforehand or their CE requirement after certification but will never be required to fulfill both. As with the CE requirement, there are considerable options and flexibility with respect to the mode of engagement (e.g., video, audio, written), content (e.g., cultural healing, ritual skills, professional development), and options both through and outside of AM Network teachings to keep the RTS requirement supportive of your ongoing learning as a trainee rather than perfunctory and bureaucratic.

If after a year of notice, staff reminders, and a month of post-deadline grace period, trainees fail to complete the RTS requirement, their status will be moved to inactive and, after an additional six months, revoked.

Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Directory

This directory is located at ancestralmedicine.org and facilitates those interested in ancestral healing services to connect with practitioners and trainees in the AM Practitioner Network. There is no cost to be listed in the Directory; however, there are some basic guidelines that are important to be aware of.

Who is Listed. When trainees complete the certification process they are invited to be in the Directory. Trainees who are organizationally cleared to see public clients but who are still in the final certification phase of their training may also be listed as trainees provided they currently offer low-income sessions.

Requirements for Listing. Everyone listed in the Directory is required to submit a 100-word or less bio that includes mention in some way of the origin places of your people along with a high resolution bio pic. Ancestral Medicine reserves the right to accept or decline submitted bios, and we will work with practitioners to address any concerns if they arise. Similarly, we reserve the right to decline inclusion of bios without high resolution images that fit our standard criteria for bio pictures. Everyone listed in the Directory is assumed to be in good standing with the organization with respect to CE or RTS requirements, annual reporting, and any outstanding balance/payment plan. If this is not the case, AM reserves the right not to extend the option to be listed in the Directory until such concerns are resolved.

Options for Not Being Listed. In the event that a certified practitioner wishes, for whatever reason, to be active with their practice but not listed in the Directory, this is a possibility. In such instances the effect will be that this practitioner remains active with their status, must still attend to annual reporting and usual CE requirements, and can fully participate in all Network offerings. They will not, however, be invited to paid work opportunities with Ancestral Medicine, and they will not be able to promote their offerings in the spaces hosted by Ancestral Medicine. We do not wish to create confusion by hiring or promoting practitioners who are not publicly associated with the organization. Additionally, this pathway of “active but not listed” is not our first choice as the Directory also serves as a way in which the public can determine if any given practitioner is certified through the organization. And it’s an option.

Inactive Status

Inactive Status Inactive status means that a practitioner or trainee is part of the network, welcome at network events, and able to access network resources; however, they are no longer listed in the practitioner directory, they are not able to use AM community spaces to promote their events, and they are not eligible for paid work through Ancestral Medicine. This may occur for three reasons:

1. Practitioner is Inactive with their Practice. If a practitioner knows they do not wish to work with ancestral healing clients for the foreseeable future, they may choose to shift their status to "inactive". In addition to no longer being listed in the practitioner directory and not receiving referrals from Ancestral Medicine, this means they are also exempt from the CE requirement so long as their status is inactive. Practitioners who place their certification in inactive status must fulfill CE requirements in order to shift

back to “active” status, and they are still required to participate in annual reporting. Even if trainees are not currently seeing clients they are still required to participate in the annual RTS.

If a practitioner does not wish to work with new clients, they may elect to keep their certification active and ask Ancestral Medicine staff to include a note in the Practitioner Directory stating, "Not currently seeing new clients". This inclusion makes the directory easier for prospective clients to utilize, but does not exempt practitioners from CE requirements and is not the same as having an officially inactive status.

2. Practitioner or Trainee is Delinquent in Network Membership Requirements. In the event that deadlines have passed to fulfill membership requirements (Annual Reporting, CE, and/or RTS), Ancestral Medicine will place the practitioner or trainee in "inactive" status. This is a temporary status that will resolve either through the fulfillment of said requirements or revocation of certification/trainee status.

3. Practitioner or Trainee is Engaged in an Action Plan. Ancestral Medicine may initiate an Action Plan with intent to remedy concerns related to ethical conduct or professional readiness to guide ancestral healing services. During the period of the action plan, practitioners or trainees will functionally be at "inactive" status from an organizational perspective (see Part Five). Details may vary according to the specifics of the action plan, and additional conditions may apply. Fulfillment of the terms of the action plan are typically sufficient to remedy the inactive status.

Part Four: Ethics and Professional Standards

This section establishes the need to practice in ways that are ethical, psychologically and culturally responsible, mindful of local laws and customs, and accountable to both ancestral healing clients and colleagues in the practitioner network. Below are the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Code of Ethics followed by four related elaborations: Power, Consent, and Multiple Relationships; Scope of Practice and Contraindications; Cultural Competencies; and Ongoing Supervision.

In the context of all ethical codes and related guidelines, **practitioners** is used to refer both to ancestral healing practitioners and to practitioners-in-training (trainees). **Clients** refer to anyone for whom a practitioner guides ancestral healing work, whether or not that individual or group is known to the practitioner in other capacities and whether or not the session, talk, or ritual offering is for payment.

Ancestral Healing Practitioner Code of Ethics

The Ancestral Healing Practitioner Code of Ethics seeks to establish a clear container and guidelines for the practice of Ancestral Lineage Healing and is shared in the public practitioner directory. As a condition of acceptance into the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Training, participants are asked to agree to the Code of Ethics as well as the further elaborations in the section below. Practitioners who feel unclear about or unable to fulfill any aspect of the Code of Ethics or the related elaborations are asked to bring such concerns for generative dialogue to Ancestral Medicine leadership. The values and agreements in the Code of Ethics and the related elaborations form the professional backbone of the practice of Ancestral Lineage Healing and also inform any process, if needed, of corrective action (see Part Five).

1. Ancestral healing practitioners prioritize personal well-being in ways that enable them to effectively serve others. This includes being willing to ask for and to receive support.

Ancestral Medicine leadership neither seeks to define nor presumes to require personal well-being for practitioners, and yet being of service tends to call for some combination of physical, mental, emotional, relational, spiritual, and cultural wellness. In the context of the ethics guiding the practice of Ancestral Lineage Healing, this includes living from an stance of self-responsibility by acknowledging when any area of personal imbalance or suffering is impacting one's ability to be of service and then taking steps to account for these impacts by securing relevant support and making necessary changes.

2. Ancestral healing practitioners sustain active and generative relationships with their ancestors and seek to embody the principles of ancestral and family healing.

The ancestors are the collective wisdom of the species and central to the practice of Ancestral Lineage Healing. Practitioners maintain healthy ongoing relationships with their blood lineage ancestors, honor what is wholesome and life-affirming about family, and stay open to growth, change, and new possibilities for their practice and service in the world. They work from an ethic of service and humility

that includes reflection on one's motivations for offering ancestral healing services, and they respect and support both their living clients and the ancestors of those they serve.

3. Ancestral healing practitioners model cultural self-responsibility, fairness, and respect and do not discriminate with regard to ethnicity, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, mental or physical ability, political views, nationality, immigration status, or socio-economic background.

Cultural maturity and skillfulness arise gradually over years of historically honest and vulnerable engagement with one's ancestral legacies, identities, and unresolved traumas as they manifest through body, life circumstance, and society. From this foundation of personal and ancestral healing, practitioners commit to proactively celebrate and honor their clients and their clients' ancestors in ways that call for ongoing study of history and systemic injustice, refinement of multi-cultural facilitation skills, and the courage to recognize and lean into growth edges. See the Cultural Competencies section for more on the specific cultural values that inform the practitioner network and this approach to ancestral healing.

4. Ancestral healing practitioners adhere to the Ancestral Healing Practitioners Code of Ethics and related agreements as well as ethical codes and agreements relevant to their credentials, professional associations, and other forms of service in the world.

Ethical conduct is essential for meaningful service and for the success of ancestral healing as a larger movement. Practitioners agree to proactively tend to matters of consent, power, and healthy boundaries; to work within the scope of practice for ancestral healing practitioners; to utilize ongoing supervision and professional consultation when called for; to practice personal and professional honesty regarding one's sources, credentials, and identities; and to honor the guidelines and agreements of one's organizational role (e.g., supervisor, event leader, course supporter) if also serving in those capacities.

Practitioners also agree to model respectful and reliable conduct with those who seek their support by being punctual and dependable, honoring payment agreements, and presenting with an appearance, demeanor, and sobriety appropriate to their roles and settings. This includes welcoming constructive feedback from clients and colleagues and seeking to foster goodwill and positive outcomes when concerns arise.

5. Ancestral healing practitioners commit to proactive communication, personal responsibility, and regard for impact when navigating relational and structural power differentials with clients, students, practitioners and colleagues, and Ancestral Medicine teachers and staff.

Guiding ancestral healing sessions, talks, circles, or related offerings places practitioners in positions of power and leadership that call for empathy, restraint, awareness of impact, and willingness to patiently and humbly engage concerns. Conversely, when those in the practitioner network inhabit relationships of

less structural power (e.g., mentee, trainee, contractor, guest presenter at another's event) they commit to communicate clearly and to bring vulnerability and openness to learning. With respect to involvement in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network this includes honoring shared agreements and expectations, speaking up in direct and generative ways as needed, and respecting the humanity of colleagues, staff, and organizational leadership.

6. Ancestral healing practitioners maintain and affirm healthy boundaries and practice active consent in sessions and teachings and in discerning when, how, and with whom to offer their services.

Ancestral healing practitioners may choose to offer ancestral healing services for community, students, clients of other services, friends, and family, or they may decline when presented with these opportunities. When choosing to enter into any type of dual or multiple relationships related to ancestral healing, proactively navigate relational complexity, utilize collegial support, make referrals as needed for the well-being of their clients. Entering into these complexities is never an excuse for misuse of power and/or sexual energy by forwarding personal agendas or becoming intimately involved with clients.

Practitioners engage awareness of audience and cultural impact when teaching, guiding group ritual, and promoting their services. Practitioners remember that they may make a referral or decline any request for services at any time, and they do not participate in coercion, obligation, or manipulation surrounding practices of ancestral healing.

7. Ancestral healing practitioners encourage others to relate directly with their supportive ancestors and cultures of origin and foster cooperation and mutual respect among colleagues and practitioners from other traditions.

When serving clients, practitioners work to educate and empower rather than foster dependence. This includes supporting clients to forge direct relationships with their wise and loving ancestors, soul-level gifts, and what is healthy and beautiful about their cultures of origin. Practitioners give appropriate attributions to teachers and other sources, and when relating with others in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network, affirm an ethic of mutual respect and sympathetic joy rather than competition or scarcity. When engaging with other teachers and traditions of ancestor reverence and ritual, they bring a collegial attitude of humility and respect for diverse ways of knowing.

8. Ancestral healing practitioners seek to resolve conflicts in proactive, direct, and generative ways. This includes using established channels for conflict resolution, avoiding gossip, and encouraging good outcomes and repair.

Conflict is inevitable and can be healing and in service to the greater. Conversely, unaddressed conflicts can erode the foundation of mutual trust and goodwill among colleagues and clients. Proactive means of conflict resolution include commitment to self-reflection, an ethic of self-responsibility, the courage to bring concerns directly to those involved in ways that encourage positive resolution, and the willingness

to understand impact and stay open to making repairs. With respect to Ancestral Medicine and the practice of Ancestral Lineage Healing, practitioners agree to utilize established organizational channels for conflict resolution (see Part Five: Conflict and Resolution).

9. Ancestral healing practitioners commit to a path of life-long learning and professional growth. This includes participating in continuing education, inviting feedback, and welcoming support.

Serving others in this approach to ancestral healing calls not only for mastery of the Ancestral Lineage Healing process but also cultural awareness and humility, ritual facilitation skills, emotional intelligence and heart, and the ability to maintain a successful professional practice. Practitioners agree to stay open to feedback on opportunities for growth and refinement and to seek personal and professional support as needed. This includes engaging in introspection and caring for any places of stubbornness, avoidance, cultural bias, or unresolved pain that could impede one's ability to learn and develop as a practitioner.

10. Ancestral healing practitioners practice respect both for diverse types of human ancestors as well as for our other-than-human kin, seen and unseen, terrestrial and beyond.

The human ancestors, like the living, are inseparable from and dependent on networks of kinship that include our Earthly kin and the greater vastness through which we travel. Ancestral healing practitioners seek to interrupt harmful human arrogance, supremacy, and isolation by cultivating an ethic of interrelatedness and respect for others in their personal lives, in their service with clients, and as colleagues furthering the work of ancestral and cultural healing.

Power, Consent, and Multiple Relationships

This section considers work with minors, those unable to give active consent, someone whom a practitioner is, has been, or may be sexually or romantically involved, and other types of non-sexual multiple relationships. Some cases are categorically unethical or not recommended and others are nuanced and depend upon the skill and comfort level of the practitioner. Common themes are consent, right use of power, healthy boundaries, and proactive navigation of relational complexities.

Minors. When determining who is a minor for the purposes of ethical conduct, practitioners honor local laws (including exceptions like emancipated minors in the U.S., Canada, and South Africa). This includes seeking parental consent for legal minors. Age of majority for most of the world is 18 years, and laws range internationally from 16 to 21 years. Unusual exceptions may occur in specific states or provinces.

Guiding ancestral healing sessions or group ritual for minors is not categorically outside the scope of practice for ancestral healing. Some legal adults lack the gravitas and maturity to engage in the practices, and some minors may have both the capacity and authentic calling to effectively and beneficially participate to varying degrees. Any practitioner choosing to support minors in ancestral healing practices, makes an honest account of the readiness of the potential client as well as their own training and capacities as a practitioner to successfully serve the younger person in question.

Anyone Unable to Give Active Consent. This may apply to adults with substantial physical, mental, or emotional challenges, either acute (e.g., in a coma from a recent car accident) or from birth (e.g., severe developmental disabilities). These types of situations may rarely arise when a family member or loved one intends ancestrally-oriented healing for such individuals and asks a practitioner to facilitate this kind of support. In such cases, the practitioner should assess the proximity of the relationship between the client and the living person in question, the motivation of the client, and the balance between being meticulous regarding consent and yielding to necessity. If a determination is made to proceed with mindfulness, seek to negotiate consent to render support between the ancestors and helpful powers of the clients and the ancestors and helpful powers of the other living person in question. Stay open to hearing no, err on the side of being conservative or cautious, and always let the well ancestors guide the process.

Anyone with whom a Practitioner Is, Has Been, or May Be Intimately Involved. As with other healing arts or ritual leadership, initiating romantic or sexual involvement with a client is an abuse of power and unethical. If Ancestral Medicine leadership determines any practitioner or trainee has misused the power implicit in their role by becoming or seeking to become involved with ancestral healing clients, this will likely result in revocation of certification. This ethic applies to practitioners and clients of all bodies and identities (e.g., men, women, gender-queer, trans, sex-positive). This clear boundary also applies to instances of sexual harassment and abuse of any form.

There are also instances that are nuanced. For example, in the case of a spouse or long-term partner with whom the practitioner is already involved, the potential client-partner may feel more trusting toward the practitioner-partner. In these cases the practitioner is requested to encourage the partner to work with a different practitioner. If after making that recommendation the partner still wishes to proceed with the practitioner and the practitioner and their ancestors also feel good about this, one may proceed with care.

Similarly, in the instance of someone with whom a practitioner has been sexually or romantically involved in the past; err on the side of referring them to a different practitioner. A possible exception would be if some years have passed since involvement and there is now an easeful, long-term, non-sexual friendship. If anything about the objectivity and heart of the work becomes compromised, the practitioner should refer to another practitioner and act in ways that prioritize the well-being of the client/partner.

In case of someone who approaches you for ancestral healing sessions and you know that you may want to date or become involved with them, find any acceptable reason to refer them to someone else even if no further contact ensues between you and the individual. If after starting to work with a client, you realize that you may want to date or become involved with them, seek a professional consultation as soon as possible and manage your feelings while engaging with maximum professionalism and clear boundaries. If you feel clear that the feeling is mutual, and you have only done only one session with them, again, seek professional consultation and know that it's your responsibility as the practitioner to hold the boundary, even if they ask you to do otherwise. If you and a client both clearly wish to become involved, please determine the most professional way to end the practitioner-client relationship, engage in consultation, and give maximum care to all power dynamics therein. For reference, in mental health practice, a two-year pause after ending sessions is mandated, and involvement after that is discouraged.

This may not necessarily be the case if you have only seen a client for one session, you did not have prior relational complexity, and you navigate a change with professional support.

You owe it also to your colleagues to manage this well. Please voice in advance any concerns about honoring these requests and seek professional consultation before acting if you find yourself in a situation where you may decide to become sexually involved with a client, a mentee, a circle participant, or any other possibility that blurs these important distinctions.

Ancestral Healing and Dual or Multiple (Non-Sexual) Relationships. There are multiple relationships that can be compatible with guiding ancestral healing sessions. These include situations where power dynamics are minimal and there is little to no psychological projection from either side. These can include trades with colleagues or others in the network as well as sessions with trusted friends. In general, these types of complexity are best minimized if not avoided outright, and in practice each situation will be assessed by those involved on a case-by-case basis. If practitioners do choose to work with clients that they also relate with in other ways, upfront discussion of possible complexities, ongoing openness to discuss concerns, and providing the client with options for other practitioners at any time, can all help to reduce possible turbulence.

Scope of Practice and Contraindications

This section considers additional types of clients and situations that are outside of the scope of practice for Ancestral Lineage Healing sessions or otherwise contraindicated. As with cases related to Power, Consent, and Multiple Relationships (see above), some situations are decisively incompatible with ancestral healing services and others are nuanced. What follows is intended as board guidelines to support discernment. In practice it may also be important to also seek collegial support and/or paid supervision.

Active Psychotic Process. Even if you have no psychological training, it's often possible to recognize when someone is in a psychotic process or experiencing an acute break from consensual reality. Some possible examples include: reporting experiences that seem more like hallucinations/delusions than spirit contact; ascribing strong meaning to seemingly random events; significant disruption in sleep, eating and other daily self-care patterns; reporting that trusted friends and family are expressing serious concern; major or sudden life changes that seem incongruent; disrupted ability to speak, write, or otherwise communicate well; and overall disorientation or lack of ability to navigate everyday life.

Psychosis and things like it can happen with clinically diagnosed conditions like untreated bipolar illness, untreated schizophrenia, dementia, acute withdrawal from certain substances or medicines, temporarily being over one's capacity with psychoactives, life-altering trauma, medical conditions (e.g., brain tumor, some infections, diseases that disrupt cognitive functioning, problems with prescribed medicines), and environmental toxicity/poisoning. If a person contacts you seeking sessions and you have reason to believe they are in an active psychotic process, you may briefly seek to understand what's happening enough to make a referral if they are lucid enough for that type of conversation. And it's not likely a good moment to begin relating with the spirits until they are more anchored and stabilized.

If someone you have already been working with experiences the onset of a psychotic process, encourage them to seek proper medical and psychological support even if you believe it may be indicated to continue supporting them as an ally in some capacity. If you wish to continue assisting them, please get collegial supervision/support from other practitioners who have a mental health background. If something feels off about what the client reports to you, trust your instinct; people experiencing psychosis may not always be able to reliably self-report. In general, avoid guiding ancestral healing work with folks in a psychotic process unless you feel certain and also have professional training in that type of supporter role.

Major Untreated Trauma/PTSD. Trauma in the more general sense in which the word is now used can manifest in many forms including but not limited to symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Horrible life experiences do not necessarily mean that a person will develop trauma symptoms, and conversely, trauma symptoms may develop from experiences that do not seem extreme to an outsider. The point is about the trauma symptoms rather than the level of subjective difficulty of any given person's life experience. A potential client may have lived through serious horror and if they don't process that adversity in ways that manifest as post-traumatic stress, or if they've already undergone successful treatment of post-traumatic stress, that's not a problem as it relates to this work unless they feel it is in which case explore with them their concerns.

As it relates to this work, of greater concern are cases of more pronounced and untreated symptoms of trauma (again, different from past traumatic experiences per se). In these instances, there is a possibility that the work could exacerbate emotional challenges, trigger unhelpful levels of nervous system arousal, enable an impulse to avoid important emotional healing, contribute to insomnia, or just generally be too much. If any given practitioner has substantive training to work skillfully with trauma and feels certain that the severity of trauma symptoms are within your scope of practice, you may pursue a blended approach with your client; however in these cases delegating the ancestral healing sessions to an especially trauma-informed practitioner may be a better combination. Otherwise, encourage the prospective client to connect with and possibly make referrals to a mental health professional with expertise in treating trauma. When making such referrals, another option may be to guide session work in parallel to the client's trauma healing work with a mental health professional once that work has begun. In these instances, be open to consulting with the client's therapist for the sake of coordinated treatment.

Dissociative Disorders. In the language of clinical mental health, dissociation typically refers to a more pronounced and acute state than the more general popular psychology meaning of 'not being very in your body' or being 'a little checked out.' For example, with dissociative identity disorder (DID), formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder, an individual's sense of self is comprised of different alters or semi-autonomous selves that may not be aware of one another and may not always coordinate effectively for the wellbeing of the client. Multiplicity per se is not the problem, as we are all a convergence of multiple selves, souls, or voices; the problem is more about the relationally distressing lack of coordination and harmonization among different selves. This configuration is almost always a result of severe trauma in one's earlier life.

Dissociative disorder (different from DID) is not characterized by multiple selves or alters but includes the often unpredictable onset of states of dissociation that can render a person unaware of present-time surroundings. The concern with either condition is that Ancestral Lineage Healing could function as a trigger for dissociation in a way that is confusing or destabilizing for the client or that the work could open up levels of intensity with spirit contact that function at cross purposes to the energetic safety, steadiness, and grounding that are conducive to healing dissociative conditions. Those conditions may need to be treated first so the client has enough grounding and/or ego strength for other kinds of ritual engagement. An exception might be if a practitioner has a strong proficiency in treating dissociative disorders and is already treating a client under their mental health license and the clients agree to incorporate carefully-paced elements of ancestral repair work. If unsure consult with a practitioner who is also a psychotherapist as ancestral healing practitioners are not trained to treat dissociation.

Sociopathy and Dangerous Personality Traits. Some people are dangerous. Some people are boundary-pushing and uncomfortable but not exactly dangerous in the sense that a stalker is dangerous. As a practitioner you're not likely to change the character of such folks if you encounter them, and to undertake such a project would be a disservice to them and open you and your loved ones to unnecessary risk. You will also not always know when these traits are present until you're working with a client. If you get this sense, double-check or seek consultation to make sure it's not a projection from your side. If you conclude that something is indeed off, consider respectfully completing the interaction or your work with this client and extract yourself from their world. If you have concerns about situations like this, seek supervision from practitioners with this type of experience and make a plan for how to end the practitioner-client relationship.

Actively Suicidal Clients. Your client or potential client may tell you in a more or less direct way that they're thinking of ending their life. In addition to being of concern on a human level, this can be professionally complicated. If you haven't started working with them yet, it's likely best not to do so unless you're also a therapist who works with actively suicidal clients. Attempting to address suicidality with ancestral healing work alone is decisively outside of our scope of practice and expertise.

If you have already been working with a client and they then share with you that they're actively suicidal, that then becomes the focus of the conversation. Don't respond with some version of, "That's too much, please go find a therapist, good-bye..." and on the other hand don't continue working with them without addressing the pressing concern. Do your best to ensure they are not going to act on that idea or possibly plan. Talk with them about what support they're going to get and follow-up soon after to make sure they connect with the right people. Share resources if they're open. Document your interactions, proactively get appropriate support/consultation yourself, and be certain to help them connect with other forms of support. Once they have decisive support from a mental health professional and they are no longer actively suicidal, it may be indicated to continue to work with them. In some cases when a practitioner-client relationship is already established, ongoing work that does not exacerbate client struggles may be indicated provided it doesn't enable avoidance of underlying risks or function as a substitute for other professional help.

Incorporation of Intoxicants and/or Psychoactive Medicines. Ancestral Lineage Healing comes with ritual precautions (e.g., navigating encounters with the troubled dead or worse) and assumes that the practitioner and client are sober. If you as the practitioner are not clear-headed (e.g., on strong pain medicine from a recent surgery), honor that by rescheduling. If you have reason to believe your client may be in an other-than-sober state, start by asking them. If your client is not sober, be willing to decline to proceed with the work at that time. In cases that are borderline for your client, if you already have the time set aside and it feels right, you may decide to still undertake lower risk expressions of the work like tuning in from an embodied place to ancestral blessings and support.

The question arises of mixing this work with the use of consciousness-altering substances such as cannabis, mushrooms, LSD, ketamine, MDMA, ayahuasca, kambo, alcohol, DMT, peyote, san pedro, iboga, etc. With respect to the practitioner connecting personally with their own ancestors while in an altered state themselves, this is up to the discretion of each individual practitioner as in this example you are not guiding the work on behalf of others. In these cases, make sure you have the blessing of your ancestors, any human facilitators, and the medicines themselves beforehand. Set clear intention, err strongly on the side of reinforcing what's already well, and work from a grounded and embodied stance.

With respect to guiding work for others who are under the influence of intoxicants/psychoactive medicines or guiding work when you are also under the influence, this is a much more fraught and complicated approach. To even consider such an integration, the necessary foundations would include solid training and substantial experience in how to guide the ritual process with the intoxicants in question and solid anchoring, including completing practitioner certification. Even with those two foundations in place, it remains the policy of Ancestral Medicine to not blend or endorse the professional blending of ancestral healing work with intoxicants/psychoactive medicines.

Depossession. At times a current or prospective client may be sober, free from major trauma, lacking any elements of psychosis, and in the clear around other mental health concerns, but they just legitimately need effective depossession work to disentangle hazardous spirit forces from their life. In these instances, please honor that depossession is a specific ritual skill or set of skills that are not strongly emphasized in the practitioner training. When the source of the interference is either from the troubled dead or exacerbated by the involvement of the troubled dead, it's possible that the work would fall within the scope of this approach; however, stay open to making a referral to either practitioners in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network or elsewhere who have a proven track record of effective depossession work.

Anyone You Have Projection Onto or Want Things From. If you want something from a potential client or have substantial projections onto them, it's best to refer. For example, avoid guiding sessions for your employer, your therapist, your literary agent, or your children's elementary school teacher. Decline sessions for a person who strongly reminds you of a loved one who passed or of an abusive ex-partner or of all the things you find challenging about a more difficult parent. As a general guideline, refer to practitioners without all the projections as they'll do a better job and you'll be happier.

Anyone You Don't Want to Work With. Potential clients are not entitled to your time and energy, and it's completely acceptable to decline to work with someone. This can include situations where you don't have a reason beyond gut instinct or intuitive sense that to proceed would be a bad choice. There are many competent practitioners in this type of work, and a referral is always an option. If you don't wish to work with someone, please do right by all involved, practice healthy boundaries, and kindly decline.

Cultural Competencies

Cultural competencies can be considered at layers of depth that far exceed the scope of this training manual. Such competencies are not arrived at suddenly nor are they ever complete in a static way. Below are the explicit cultural competencies expected from all practitioners. If you don't feel like you could clearly and kindly share with another person about the following competencies and areas of often unconscious bias, assume that you are still in need of ongoing training. We work at it, make mistakes, stay humble, keep learning, and seek to do better. In practice, if you believe another practitioner may bring a level of cultural expertise that better serves your client, it's possible to make a referral, and this should not be taken lightly or as a substitute for becoming culturally competent in the domain in question.

Animist Ethics and Sensibilities. The larger frame in which this approach to ancestral healing is held is animism or animist. This refers to a way of approaching life that recognizes that incarnate humans are just one kind of person. There are ancestor people, tree people, stone people, deities, rivers, nature spirits, etc. The additional word of 'people' is only to affirm all that personhood implies in English; many with animist values simply relate to trees, animals, stones, wind, etc. Please reference the work of scholar Graham Harvey as one reliable entry point for writing on animism.

This is not about practitioners or clients adopting any specific vocabulary or ideology; most animists, if they have heard the term 'animist,' could care less about that descriptor. The crux is that practitioners respect these other kinds of relationships as legitimate and potentially important in our lives and the lives of our clients. For example, important deities or other-than-human ancestral affinities may speak along your client's lineages. Those other-than-human people are a part of the session. Your client may speak of their connection with the Earth, the death of a companion animal, intimacy with place, etc. As a practitioner, cultural competency looks like validating and affirming these other kinds of relationships.

Pro-Economic Justice. Profound income inequality and exploitative capitalism is pervasive in the modern nation states in which this practice is being developed. This includes the ways in which other cultural challenges in this section (e.g., Earth disconnection, sexism and patriarchy, racism, colonialism) are enabled if not primarily driven by exploitative economic systems.

With respect to guiding sessions, this awareness includes staying mindful of economic accessibility as well as the ways in which poverty/low-income status can be a life-defining experience. Start from the assumption that present-tense challenges with resources may be rooted in systemic oppression and also a continuation of ancestral troubles that began as primarily systemic and about unequal and unfair distribution of resources (rather than as psychological or spiritual problems).

Although Ancestral Medicine holds a strong ethic of accessibility, including with regard to finances, any given practitioner or trainee decides what to charge for their time. Practitioners and trainees are asked to remember the system for low-income sessions referrals and to encourage folks in need to be in contact with the Ancestral Medicine team about scholarship and other forms of accessibility.

A mindful approach rooted in economic justice and fairness as the practitioner can make the difference between beneficial breakthroughs and mediocre or even re-traumatizing outcomes.

Feminist and Consent-Based. Feminism refers here to working from a proactively corrective and healing stance toward ongoing legacies of patriarchy, misogyny, sexism, gender inequality, and violence toward women of diverse ancestries and bodies, genderqueer/non-binary people, and also men. Wounding along the faultlines of sex/gender are very common in this work, and all practitioners are expected to have done their own depth inquiry (ongoing) on how to embody healthy attitudes, energy, speech, and ways of relating. This includes being attuned to the importance of consent throughout the practitioner-client connection, being able to anticipate charged topics and to work skillfully in those terrains, committing to ongoing healing in your own life and lineages, being able to honor the extent of patriarchal violence toward women and others without unnecessarily reinforcing binary frameworks, and being humble enough to get a professional consult and/or refer if needed for the wellbeing of any clients.

Men who are practitioners are asked to continue to refine your ability to show up as an inherently safe and healing presence with respect to the work and to stay clearly committed to learning from uncomfortable feedback. Women and genderqueer folks are asked to not assume you are inherently skillful at holding space for all types of wounding relating to gender simply because you're not a guy, and also to make sure your views and sacred life story don't eclipse the potentially different story and experience of your client.

LGBTQ-Celebrating. Ideally everyone understands that being lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, gender non-binary and/or gender non-conforming is entirely welcome and wholesome. And folks with these identities may come with wariness toward this work insofar as family may be a source of judgment and the blood lineage focus may be seen as supporting cisheteronormativity, the gender binary, and/or biological essentialism. None of these are the intention when honoring blood mysteries. We affirm queer ancestors along all lineages including those not related by blood, and we celebrate diverse bodies, gender identities and expressions, and ways of loving and relating.

Some proficiencies that practitioners are expected to bring with respect to gender include:

- Consistently use the correct pronouns for your client without being awkward or difficult about it.
- Minimize use of gendering language when referring to the ancestors. Check-in as needed to understand if your language supports your client's experience or takes them out of their process.

- Proactively affirm ways in which LGBTQ folks as well as those without biological children (of whatever sexual orientation or gender identity) may be especially called by the ancestors and are in no way peripheral to ancestral considerations.
- Invite the client, without attachment, to see their gender and sexuality as ancestral blessings.
- Affirm that all people descend from lineages that include queer ancestors, and be sure to know this from an embodied place as the practitioner.

Additionally, any practitioner or trainees who offer sessions or guide circles or trainings exclusively for men or women are expected to clearly state something to the effect of "trans, queer, and gender nonconforming (fill in the blank for the correct demographic for the workshop...typically women or men) are warmly welcome." The exact wording may vary, but the organizational policy is one of proactively welcoming anyone who is living that gender without regard for their anatomy or what gender they may have been assigned or misassigned at birth. This prioritizes the inclusivity of trans people over the fear that trans-inclusivity would somehow compromise emotional or physical safety in gender-specific spaces.

Sex and Body Positive, Age Inclusive. For people of whatever sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, there is an additional layer of cultural proficiency that centers around this work being sex and body-positive as well as inclusive of people of all ages.

Although the subject of sex and the erotic may not present as a consideration during session work, when such themes do occur, seek to respond with a spirit of non-judgmental, non-shaming curiosity. For example, the well ancestors may on occasion present in an erotic way that's surprising for the client. The ancestors may wish to bring healing to the client's experience of the erotic or bring teachings on work with sexual energy. Provided there is no implication of sexual energy or exchange between practitioner and client, please bring an explicitly healing and life-affirming spirit to the subject of sex and the erotic.

Please also bring a welcoming attitude toward differently-abled and diversely-bodied clients. Most likely ability would present as a concern if a client needed accommodations for ancestral healing services based on body needs (e.g., sight, hearing, mobility, learning style). In these cases bring a patient, responsive spirit to the request. With respect to body type, please remember that the dominant culture harmfully imposes an idea of the normative/appropriate body, and as the practitioner it's important to counter this poison by bringing kindness, acceptance, and proactive celebration of your client even if they're not also able to find that attitude at all times for themselves.

With respect to age, practitioners are asked to bring awareness to and proactively correct any potential biases toward younger or older participants engaging in ancestral healing. In-person intensives and online courses through Ancestral Medicine have included participants aged 18 to 90 in the same ritual vessel. This span of ages is a blessing and congruent with our ritual work and approach to cultural healing.

Anti-Racist. Of all the cultural troubles, racism is most squarely situated in the realm of ancestral healing insofar as the heart of the problem is toxic ancestral supremacy or favoritism. Racism or ethnic ‘othering’ does not always play out along European models of different races and can refer to any way in which one group of people is viewed or treated as less-than another based on their ancestry, bodies, and blood. Racism tends to accompany colonialism, religious intolerance, exploitative capitalism, and other territorial aggressions, and can also manifest as its own specific kind of poison. Although the ideology of white supremacy that has paralleled and underwritten European colonialism is just one form of racism, it’s the type of racism that most practitioners are likely to encounter in the context of this work.

Some proficiencies that practitioners are expected to bring with respect to race include:

- Closely, empathically, and with humility listen and welcome the experience of your client without asking or expecting them to educate you on the impact of racism in their lineages and life.
- Favor specific origin stories (e.g., German over European over White, Ghanaian over West African over Black, Tamil over Indian over Asian) to help deconstruct the illusion of monolithic races. Balance this with an awareness of white/European-ancestored privilege and the colorism that characterizes much of the racism in 21st century North America, Australia, South Africa, etc.
- Appreciate the ways in which the ancestral healing process may surface potent psychological charge for the client, and be prepared to skillfully assist in helping them to regulate intensity while also welcoming intensity without repression.
- Notice and be open to discussing in a curious spirit any ancestral differences between the practitioner and client and how those can impact the work.
- Increase your personal knowledge in an ongoing way of other-than-European histories and cultures.
- Make the extra effort when at all possible to keep this work culturally if not also financially accessible to people of other-than-European lineages.
- Remember that the history and framing of racism in North America may differ from expressions of racism in other parts of the world; stay open to learning from international perspectives.
- Engage in sustained personal healing with legacies of oppression in your own ancestry, family, and life to increase your ability to support others from an ancestrally embodied presence.

There are some practitioners in the network available to provide professional consultation and support to get more educated on legacies of racism, including as they intersect other harms. All practitioners are expected to cultivate a strong base of understanding of this type of cultural/ancestral harm.

Decolonization Ethic. Colonialism, by whatever name, is an experience present in many if not most lineages at different times in history. In the Americas, the decolonization efforts that most practitioners are likely to encounter arise from the first five hundred years of resistance and resilience of Indigenous and African peoples to European settler-colonialism in the Americas. Similar spirited efforts throughout much of the world have been carried out by other-than-European peoples (e.g., resistance to European occupations and interference throughout Asia, Africa, and Oceania; to the Japanese in Korea and China, to the Chinese in Tibet, to Arabs in South Sudan, to Turkey in Kurdish areas). Colonialism also occurs within Europe (e.g., British toward Irish, Scandinavian nations toward Sami peoples, Spanish and French toward Basque people). Colonialism is inseparable from an understanding of Indigenous peoples, rights, and struggles for sovereignty, and when applied more broadly can refer to historical developments like Roman colonization of Germania or early Arab colonization of North Africa.

With respect to the practice of ancestral healing, an ethic of decolonization can take many forms:

- Stay mindful of the human history of the land we call home or wherever we offer teachings and sessions. Explicitly convey respect, ideally according to local protocols, to earlier human inhabitants and their living descendants.
- Consider the specific ancestral history of the client and, without assuming too much about the client's personal experience, be able to bring informed curiosity about when and how frameworks for ancestor reverence ceased in the client's family history (if they did). Those cultural interruptions are rarely random and often a function of colonialist impositions.
- Reconnecting with older ancestors can be one facet of decolonization and cultural repair insofar as we are reclaiming relationships that have often been interrupted for generations. Bearing this in mind can help frame the potency of what we're asking of clients.
- Honor the relational focus of this work without detracting from the material aspects of decolonization (e.g., repatriation of land, legal autonomy, access to resources) that need to remain foreground when using the language of "decolonization". Consider tangible acts of tithing (e.g., land taxes for Indigenous groups) and advocacy for substantive legal and political changes.
- Profound grief and confusion can at times arise in cultural recovery work. Being a good ally includes helping clients connect with beneficial cultural resources and organizations.
- Make sure you've deeply examined your own ancestral experiences of being the colonizer/colonized as this embodied knowing and subsequent healing will help you to respond with care and humility when serving clients working through their own legacies with colonialism.

There are practitioners in the network able to assist with increasing awareness of legacies of colonialism, and practitioners are expected to gradually increase their knowledge of diverse histories as they inform their work with clients. At a minimum, allow the clients you work with to function as a catalyst for your personal education so as to best serve them and their people.

Non-Dogmatic. This is about an overall spirit in which ancestral healing work is held. Although this is a specific method and approach with defined protocols, practitioners are asked to stay responsive about what actually serves in the moment. Understand the core principles and know there will be times to stick to those principles and protocols and also there will be times to yield to the circumstances or improvise.

This also applies to views on cultural change and healing. Passionate commitment to justice is fantastic and does not require rigidity, arrogance or dogmatism. Devotion to cultural healing in North America does not require everyone on Earth to adopt U.S.-centric ways of framing cultural trouble. There is plenty of dogma and rigidity surrounding spiritual teachings, ideas about ritual, and approaches to cultural change work. Practitioners are asked to not unnecessarily add to this trend.

Ongoing Supervision

Even if you do all the right things, challenges will arise with clients. This could include clients feeling dropped, burned, misunderstood, misled, or harmed by you; disappointed in your services; and/or generally not happy toward you for any other reason. If you're fortunate, they will tell you.

When you get this kind of feedback, what happens next is important. If you can slow down the interaction to get supervision/professional support, that's ideal. Be open to paying a trusted colleague or supervisor for a consultation; it's what many other professionals do, and your reputation and integrity are the backbone of your practice. After seeking neutral, collegial support, including from your wise and loving ancestors, do your best to respond well to the heart of the concern and, when possible, to make repairs.

Also likely are situations where you believe or know you made a mistake even though you never hear from a client again and have no opportunity to directly make repairs. If you worry that you're in a tough situation or have made a substantive mistake with a client, feel encouraged to bring this to Ancestral Medicine leadership so we can bring perspective and ideally be a kind and helpful resource. In these situations you can also seek counsel either within the Ancestral Medicine network of supervisors or in any other way that supports learning well from whatever happened.

In general, when you encounter challenges in the course of rendering ancestral healing services, please do not minimize the problem, defensively shut down the one bringing the concern, bring the problem to others in ways that compromise client confidentiality, or ignore the situation hoping it will go away.

Practitioners and trainees from any year of the training may seek supervision sessions with any of the Ancestral Medicine supervisors at any time, and payment is handled directly between the supervisor and supervisee. Group supervision sessions are also available ongoing at no cost. We intend for everyone in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network to feel well supported and safe to bring matters of concern.

Finally, occasional ongoing supervision sessions are also a great way to refine one's skills as a practitioner. This includes elective observation sessions or seeking out a supervisor who you believe can help with a specific base of knowledge or capacity that you wish to develop.

Part Five: Conflict and Resolution

Conflict is a normal part of life and necessary when undertaking meaningful change in the world. Conflict can be generative, healing, and life-affirming or damaging and retraumatizing in ways that also distract from our shared work. When conflicts arise, we agree to utilize clear and self-responsible means.

Guidelines for Generative Conflict

Introspect. Unless a challenge can be spoken to and remedied in the moment, pausing to introspect and self-regulate supports clear communication and reduces the risk of escalation and personal projection.

Discern Between Conflict and Abuse. Conflict may be unavoidable and often comes with opportunities for learning and growth. Sarah Schulman's excellent book *Conflict is Not Abuse: Overstating Harm, Community Responsibility, and the Duty of Repair* details the importance of distinguishing between normative conflict and abuse, and the importance of finding ways to communicate with rather than dehumanize individuals with whom we are experiencing conflict. This includes, for example, distinguishing between fears and feelings of non-safety and actual threats and danger.

Choose Good Allies. If your introspection includes sharing with friends and allies before bringing concerns to the person with whom you are experiencing conflict, be discerning about what makes for a good ally. Favor communication with trusted people outside the collegial network who can bring neutrality and curiosity rather than loyalty that encourages only escalation or reinforcement of your view. Make sure up front that the person feels able and inclined to support you in those ways.

Welcome Ancestral Support. Before, during, and after conversations about conflict find ways to invite ancestral support and guidance, including staying curious about any ways that your own ancestral experiences may be replicated in the current conflict.

If You Speak Up, Show Up. Conflict can be healing; however this requires participation, which does not guarantee personal comfort. With the exception of legitimate abuse and toxicity, if you raise a concern, you also agree to then show up in some capacity that's within reach for you for what follows. When needed, this may include resourcing with a trusted ally or mediator.

Refrain from Group Communications. Ancestral Medicine leadership, staff, and practitioners do not seek to resolve conflict by group email or by social media but agree instead to communicate directly with the person or people with whom the concern centers. An exception may include when a direct conversation does not yet feel possible or may not be needed, first constructively bringing a concern to a trusted ally outside the network or, if needed, to Ancestral Medicine leadership. In this exception, the pathway of communication is still direct rather than to a group of people who are not personally involved.

Risk Direct Communication. This may require pushing through tendencies to avoid conflict to express to Ancestral Medicine leadership, staff, or a practitioner that you have something you'd like to address. If someone tells you they wish to address something, unless their request feels deeply unreasonable, try to participate. This assumes the nature of the conflict is not extreme or involving matters like physical safety. In those more extreme cases, first take steps to establish safety then reassess.

With respect to different communication styles, favoring live interaction can still allow for introduction or resolution of matters by direct email *if mutually agreed upon*; however, in matters of substantial conflict, Ancestral Medicine leadership and staff will always give those in the network the option for conversation.

Practitioner-Related Conflict and Ethical Concerns

There are three general categories of conflict that may arise with respect to ancestral healing practitioners and trainees. Ancestral Medicine leadership will have a different role with respect to each.

Practitioner - Client. Ancestral Medicine leadership proactively solicits feedback on ways that practitioners may be contracted to serve directly through the organization (e.g., supporting online teaching, supervisory support for trainees, guiding in-person events); however, we do not solicit input on the work of practitioners and the clients they serve through their own practices. Clients of practitioners and trainees may, however, choose to contact Ancestral Medicine with complaints. In the case of minor to medium-sized concerns we will encourage the client to bring concerns directly to the practitioner.

If clients allege more substantial ethical misconduct, we may seek to better understand the nature and veracity of the claims and may become involved in ways that protect the client and also enact fairness and accountability for the practitioner. Options include but are not limited to direct, proactive communication with the practitioner, initiating an action plan, or revocation of certification. If a practitioner is aware of a client experiencing harm from their services, Ancestral Medicine leadership strongly encourages proactive communication with the organization to assess what repairs and learning may be possible.

Practitioner - Practitioner. Ancestral Medicine leadership does not seek to manage the interactions or relationships between the many complex, consenting adults who are colleagues through Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network. There are, however, some instances where a conflict between practitioners may come to the attention of organizational leadership. Examples include: a practitioner alleges ethical misconduct on the part of another in the network, a practitioner poorly inhabits a power differential (e.g., co-teaching, supervisory relationship) with another in the network, a practitioner feels substantially harmed by the actions of another in the network in ways that relate to the practice of ancestral healing and do not lend themselves to direct resolution between the two parties.

In instances of conflict between practitioners, Ancestral Medicine leadership will encourage direct resolution between those parties when at all possible and may provide referrals for mediation services if requested. Organizational leadership will be guided by our code of ethics and our commitment to the health of the professional network when assessing when and to what degree to become involved in conflicts between practitioners that come to the attention of leadership. As with conflict centered between

practitioners and clients, options from Ancestral Medicine leadership include encouraging direct communication between practitioners, initiating an action plan, or revocation of certification.

Practitioner - Organization. This category of conflict includes concerns experienced by a practitioner or trainee with organizational decisions and policies or with anyone serving as a representative of Ancestral Medicine (e.g., leadership, staff, supervisors, mentors, teachers, or event supporters). Conversely this includes the concerns with a practitioner or trainee that are raised by anyone serving as a representative of the organization as well as concerns that relate to a practitioner or trainee's ethical conduct or ability to responsibly offer ancestral healing services.

If a practitioner or trainee experiences a concern with any representative of Ancestral Medicine, they are encouraged to speak clearly and directly to the nature of the concerns with the individual or individuals involved in ways that honor the Guidelines for Generative Conflict. In exceptional cases where the individual does not feel personally or professionally safe to directly address the individual of concern, the recourse is to speak with senior Ancestral Medicine staff to determine next steps.

If any representative of Ancestral Medicine experiences a concern with an individual or individuals in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network, the process is the same: Seek direct resolution when at all possible and, if needed, enlist the support of Ancestral Medicine leadership. When serving as representatives of Ancestral Medicine, practitioners or staff are asked to proactively account for real or imagined power differentials between themselves and others in the network and to adhere to any agreements relevant to the capacity in which they are serving (e.g., supervisor, course supporter).

Ethical and Professional Concerns. The following are examples of concerns that may prompt Ancestral Medicine leadership to reach out to practitioners for discussion and possible further action:

- Ancestral Medicine receives a serious complaint about the conduct of a practitioner or trainee and determines that this complaint is backed by reasonable evidence.
- A legal, professional, or ethics oversight body rules against, initiates an investigation of, or acts to limit or revoke another type of license or credential held by a practitioner or trainee.
- A practitioner or trainee is convicted of a crime that is also unethical. This excludes convictions such as minor traffic offenses, possession of marijuana, nonviolent protest arrests, etc.
- A practitioner or trainee is found to condone, practice, collaborate with, or receive financial gain from any form of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, mental or physical ability, political views, nationality, immigration status, or socio-economic background.
- A practitioner or trainee, after reasonable attempts and accommodations from Ancestral Medicine, fails to honor the requirements for annual reporting and continuing education. Note: Continuing education requirements includes the option to place one's certification in "inactive" status.

- A practitioner or trainee, after reasonable attempts and accommodations from Ancestral Medicine leadership, fails to uphold any financial commitments to Ancestral Medicine.
- A practitioner or trainee fails to uphold any aspect of the code of ethics as detailed in Part Four of the Ancestral Healing Practitioner Manual.

As with other categories of conflict, options from Ancestral Medicine leadership include encouraging direct, generative communication between the parties involved, initiating an action plan, or revocation of certification. Concerns between practitioners and trainees and representatives of Ancestral Medicine may also include enlisting the support of professional mediation.

Action Plan

If Ancestral Medicine teachers, supervisors, staff, colleagues, or clients express substantive concerns regarding an ancestral healing practitioner or trainee's ethical conduct or professional readiness to guide others in practices of ancestral healing (as detailed in Part Four of this manual), Ancestral Medicine leadership may determine that an action plan is called for to seek to address concerns.

This determination may proceed from direct communication with the practitioner or trainee, or may be made independent of prior communication. Ancestral Medicine will only initiate an action plan in circumstances where the organization holds an investment in positive resolution and ongoing professional affiliation as well as a belief that this is possible. Ancestral Medicine reserves the right to revoke certification and association with anyone in the network at any time without the step of an action plan.

If Ancestral Medicine leadership determines that an action plan is warranted, the practitioner or trainee will then be informed. In most circumstances this will occur by succinct email stating the need to address concerns and a request to schedule a time to speak directly. This time may include generative discussion of the concerns and/or review of the draft of the action plan. In most cases this will include communication with the individual in question before formalizing an action plan.

When an action plan is initiated, the practitioner or trainee will typically be removed from the public Ancestral Medicine practitioner directory, no longer receive client referrals through Ancestral Medicine, and not be invited to guide offerings through the organization (e.g., online course supporting, teachings for the network) until the terms of the action plan are resolved in a satisfactory way. Unless their action plan indicates otherwise, they may continue to offer this method of ancestral healing through their personal practice. If an action plan requires a practitioner to engage in mentorship or professional consultation with others, reasonable options will be given to fulfill this requirement; however, the costs for this additional training and support will be assumed by the practitioner or trainee.

Ancestral Medicine is under no obligation to keep confidential the contents of one's action plan and may disclose information to ethics oversight bodies, mediators, relevant Ancestral Medicine leadership, or

other relevant third parties with the intent of seeking positive outcomes and safeguarding the wellbeing of the organization, of clients served, and of others involved.

If the practitioner fails to fulfill the outcomes detailed and agreed to in the action plan, Ancestral Medicine leadership will revoke certification and professional affiliation.

Honorable Completions

Ancestral Medicine leadership or any practitioner or trainee may initiate completion with the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network at any time. Revocation of certification, termination of professional association, and leaving or being asked to leave the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network are functionally interchangeable. If a practitioner leaves the network they are also choosing to relinquish their certification in and the organizational backing to guide this approach to ancestral healing work.

Any ancestral healing practitioner or trainee who leaves the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network agrees to immediately cease referring to oneself as a practitioner of this approach to ancestral healing and to cease implying any organizational backing from Ancestral Medicine. This includes removal of references to themselves as a practitioner of this approach to ancestral healing from their website, social media, marketing materials, resume, etc.

When this occurs, the practitioner or trainee will be unsubscribed from any collegial spaces, events, and resources that they previously had access to through the network. If listed as a practitioner in the public directory, they will be removed from the website. Unless the departure was highly acrimonious, they will still receive the regular newsletter, which they may self-unsubscribe from at any time, and will retain access to any previous online course subscriptions.

Practitioners who are no longer a part of the professional network may not facilitate or teach Ancestral Medicine material. Similarly, active practitioners in the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network are not permitted to co-teach or otherwise guide public events in this approach to ancestral healing with previous members of the Ancestral Medicine Practitioner Network.

If individuals who were previously part of the network express an interest in re-engagement and possible return to the network, Ancestral Medicine leadership will make a case-by-case determination on whether this is a possibility and, if so, what types of dialogue or repairs may be needed.

Conclusion

At the time of this manual revision in May of 2021, there are currently 67 practitioners and trainees in the professional network. In the coming years, Ancestral Medicine is planning to respond to the need for ancestral healing with substantial growth of this training both in numbers and international reach.

As this approach to ancestral healing becomes an international modality and movement and new practitioners are welcomed from diverse lands, languages, and cultures, we will inevitably counter new

opportunities for growth, inclusivity, and refinement of both the practice and this professional container and organization. We intend that this growth be collaborative, kind, and resourced by the ancestors, and we welcome your feedback on what could be improved in future editions of this manual.

May the blessings of our differently beautiful people return as rain after a long drought. May there be cultural healing and catalytic change in our relations with the Earth. May what is life-giving about these ways be sustained through the challenges ahead. And may our service continue beyond this life.

