

12th Annual National Research Ethics Conference (ANREC)

*“Communities as Partners: Strengthening
Community Engagement in Research”.*

*Research in Traditional and Alternative Medicine: Ethics,
intellectual property & Cultural Relevance/significance”*

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→ **PROMETRA UGANDA** →

- Training - Research - Treatment
- Organic farming - Environment & Culture Conservation

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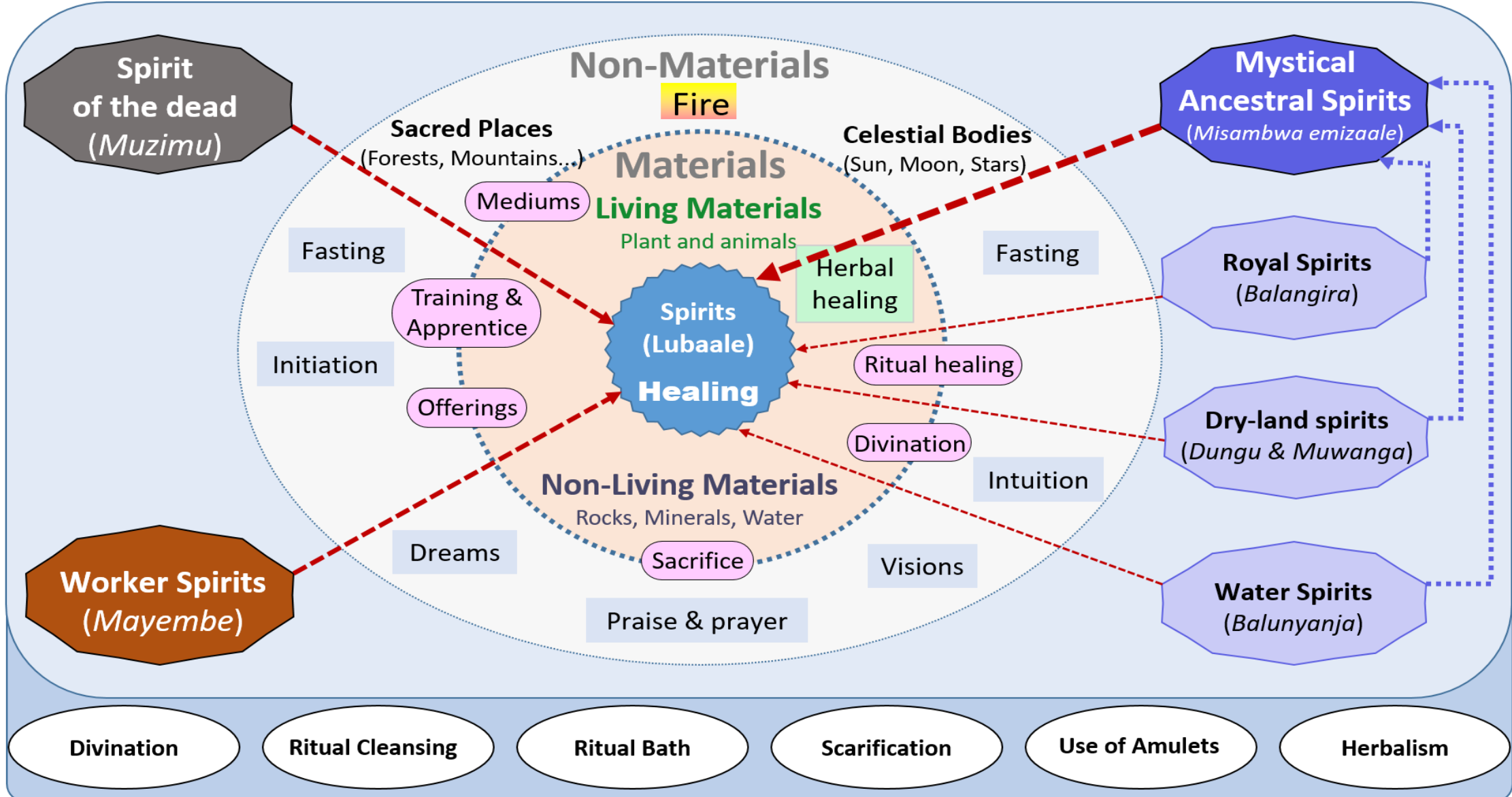
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The Problem – A Western Lens

The Disconnect: When Western Approaches Fall Short

- Western research often prioritizes quantifiable data & standardized interventions.
- Insensitive to spiritual nuances, social context, and healer priorities.
 - Risk of misinterpretation,
 - Ethical compromises, and
 - Limited community benefit.

Galaxy outlay – Spiritual Dimension of illness



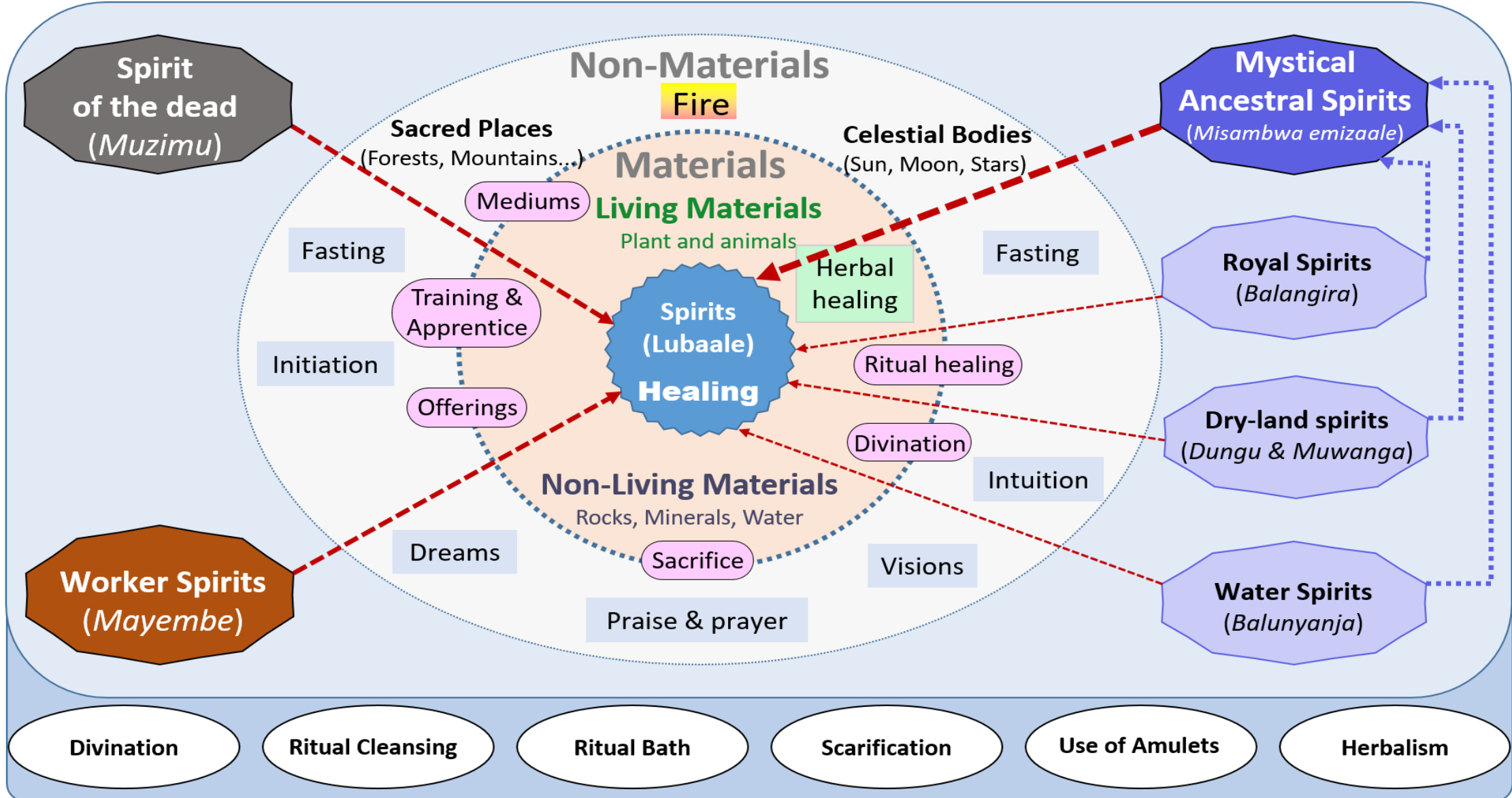
“The Galaxy Outlay” – A New Perspective

- The Galaxy Outlay Framework: (Key elements - Seeing the Whole Picture)
 - Spiritual
 - Social
 - Cosmological forces
- Core principles
 - Interconnectedness of spiritual, social, and cosmological forces.
 - Holistic understanding beyond quantifiable data.
 - A relational view – acknowledging context and interdependence.

Differences between illness and disease

	Illness (<i>Olumbe</i>)	Disease (<i>Bulwadde</i>)
Root causes	• Ancestral Spirits • Cultural issues • Witchcraft	• Organisms • Physiological • Physical Damage
Primary effects	• Soul • Spirit • Morals	• Body structures • Body organs • Body function
Management process	Remove causative agent through use of • Ancestral Spirits • Rituals and Ceremonies • Symbols and Symbolism • Living and non-living things	• Give medicine to kill causing organisms • Surgery to remove damaged body part

Galaxy outlay – Spiritual Dimension of illness



The Ontological Challenge - Differing Worldviews

Understanding Different Ontologies

Western (linear, reductionist)



Western ontology:
Universal scientific principles.

African cosmology (circular, relational)



African cosmology:
Relational ontologies;
interconnectedness of all things.

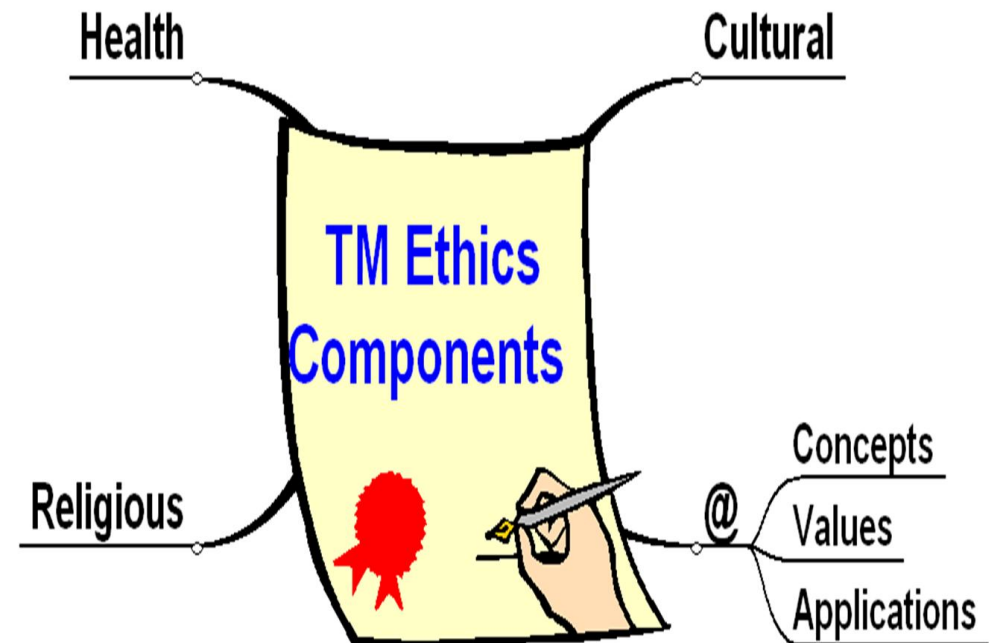
The challenge: Avoiding the imposition of one worldview onto another.

Ethical Concerns & Intellectual Property



Protecting Knowledge, Ensuring Equity

- IPR (Rights) of communities & practitioners.
- Data ownership & equitable benefit-sharing.
- Concerns:
 - Co-option
 - Misrepresentation



A Guiding Principle

Our well-being is linked to the well-being of others

Interconnectedness & Reciprocity

- Shared humanity
- Reciprocal responsibility
- Respectful representation



A New Framework – Community Co-Creation

A Paradigm Shift: Research as Collaborative Partnership

- Prioritize qualitative approaches:
 - Ethnography,
 - Participatory action research,
 - Narrative inquiry.
- Community-driven research questions & methodologies.
- Co-creation of knowledge and dissemination strategies.



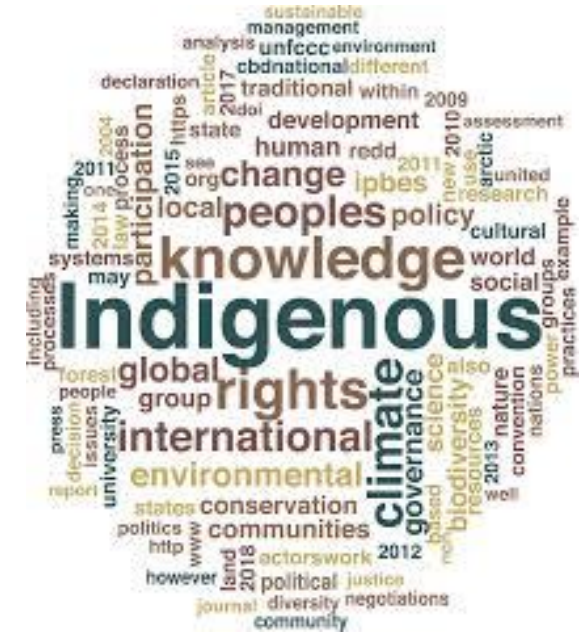
African unknown complex science is hidden in shades of
the known

Weaknesses in research methodologies;

- Divine/Psychic connections,
- African medical language & symbolism
- Ancestral communications & sacrifices
- Diversity & complexity of African **healing**

Indigenous Knowledge Holders on Ethics Committees

- Credible Indigenous Knowledge Holders
- Ensuring and promoting
 - Culturally informed oversight
 - Mitigating risks.
 - Respect for traditional knowledge and its custodians.



Strengthening Indigenous Science & Local Healthcare

Reciprocity – Investing in the Future.

- Support for indigenous science development.
- Strengthening local healthcare systems.
- Empowering communities to safeguard their cultural heritage.

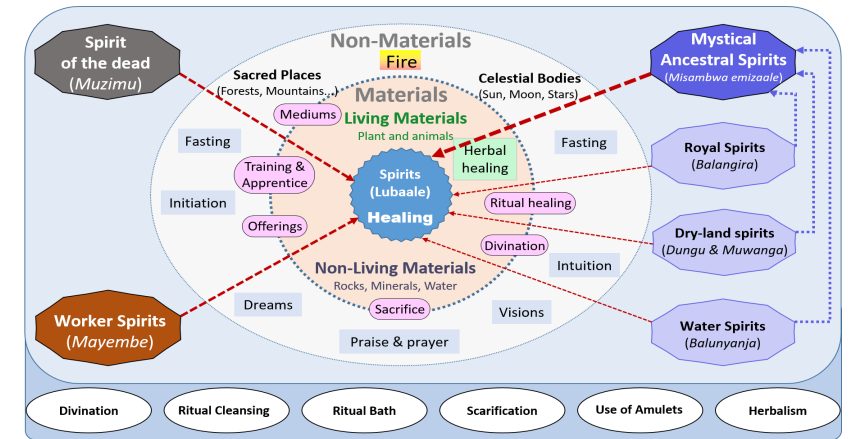


Conclusion

Moving Forward Together

A shared Journey Towards Ethical & Equitable Research

- Community engagement is paramount.
- Culturally sensitive methodologies are essential.
- Reciprocity & respect for traditional knowledge must guide our actions.



Developed by Yahaya Hills Kagali Sekagya, 2024

Traditional Medicine

*Thank
You!*

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Medical Traditions