

Supplemental PDF

ANCESTRAL MEDICINE

*Rituals for Personal
and Family Healing*

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Includes:

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- Prayers for Healing 6–8
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- Color Plates 31–46



Bear & Company
Rochester, Vermont

You can include birth, marriage, and death dates and locations, if possible.

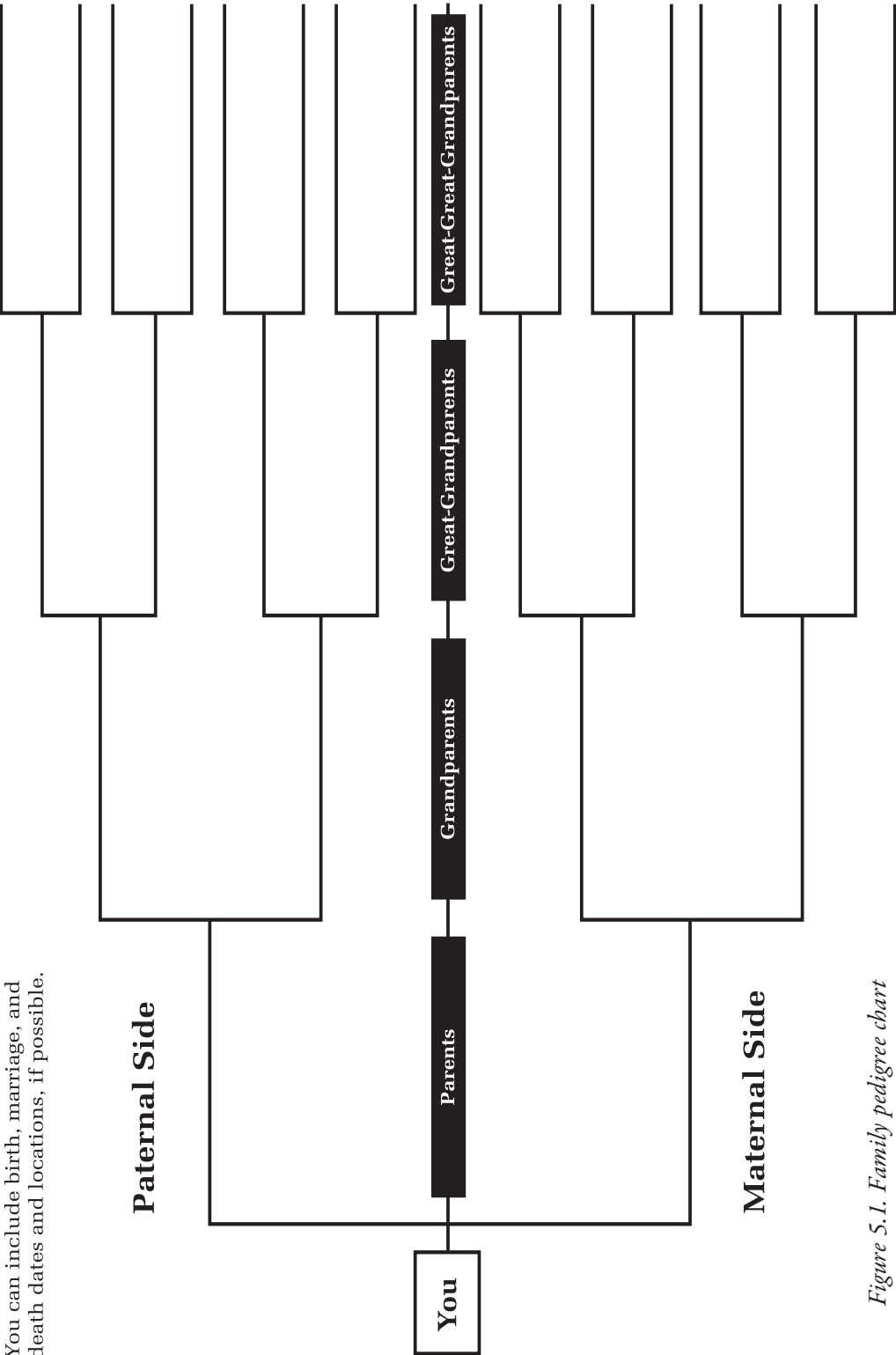


Figure 5.1. Family pedigree chart

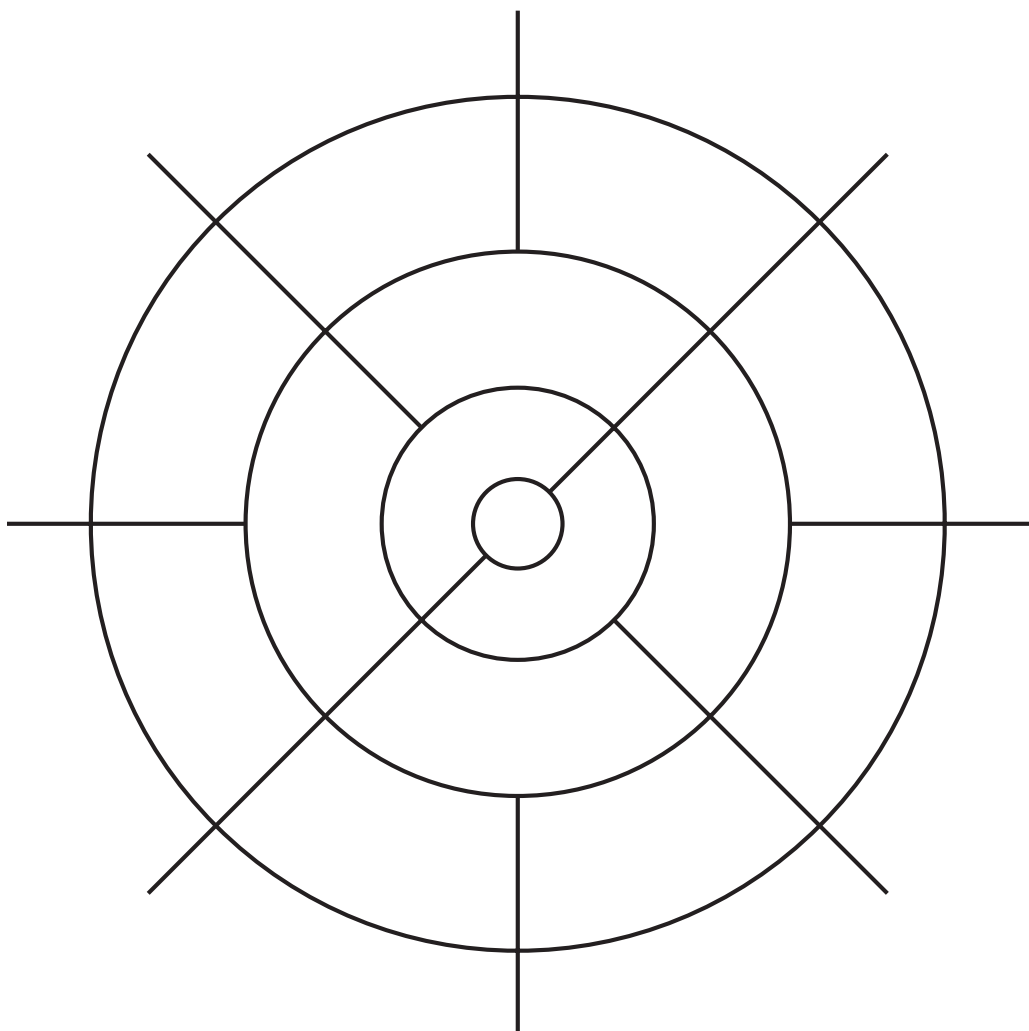


Figure 5.2. Family pedigree mandala

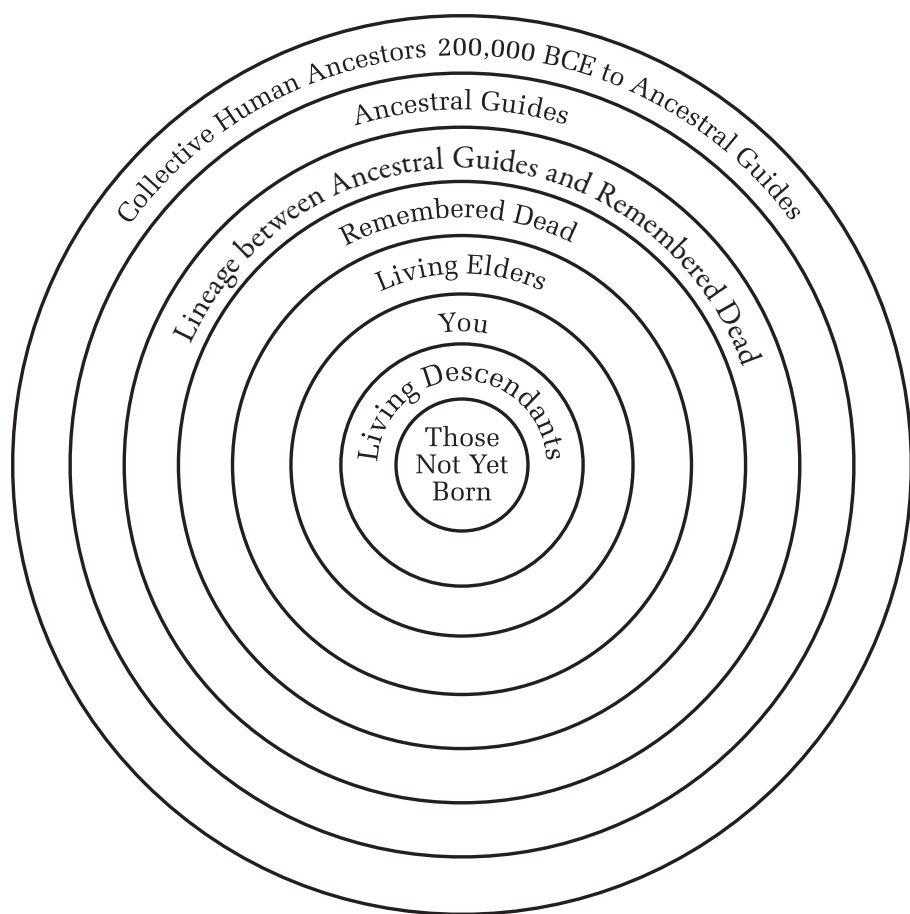


Figure 7.1. Layers of lineage through time

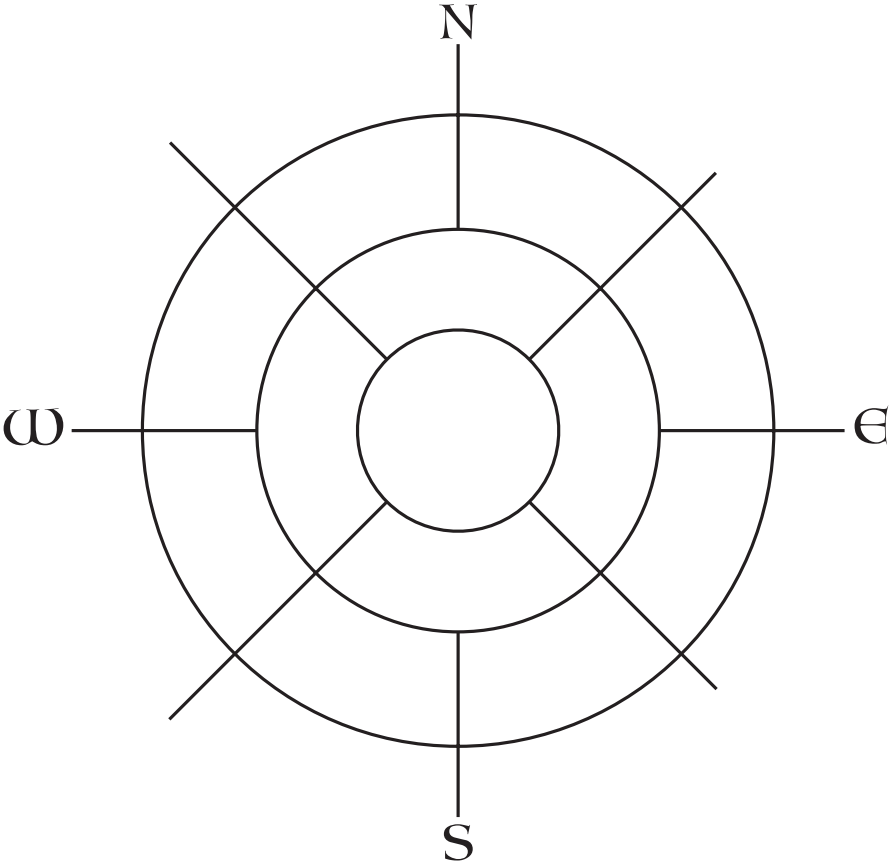


Figure 9.1. Ancestral mandala

PRAYER FOR FAMILY HEALING

May all my ancestors be happy and at peace.

May my living family be happy and at peace.

May I be happy and at peace.

*May all future generations of my family receive only blessings
and love from our ancestors.*

*May my ancestors guide me on my path of destiny and purpose,
and may I embody their love and wisdom for the benefit of
all my relations.*

May all my ancestors and all my family be happy and at peace.

دعاء لشفاء العائلة

أسأل الله أن يكون أجدادي سعداء وأن يكونوا بسلام

أسأل أن تعيش عائلتي بسعادة و سلام

أسأل أن أعيش بسعادة و سلام

أسأل أن تتلقى جميع الأجيال القادمة من عائلتي البركات و السلام و الحب من أجدادنا

أسأل أن يرشدني أجدادي في حياتي ، و أسأل أن أجسد حبهم و حكمتهم لخير جميع الكائنات

أسأل أن يكون أجدادي و كل أقاربي و عائلتي سعداء و أن يكونوا بخير و سلام.

緬懷祖先

祈求祖先平安喜樂

祈求家人平安喜樂

祈求我心平安喜樂

祈求世代子孫承襲先人之福祉及庇蔭

祈求祖先引領我人生的道路及歸宿

闡揚先人福祉及智慧以造福人群

祈求祖先及家人都平安喜樂

PRIÈRE POUR L'APAISEMENT AU SEIN DE LA FAMILLE

Je prie que tous mes ancêtres soient heureux et en paix.

Que ma famille soit heureuse et en paix.

Que je sois, moi-même, heureux et en paix.

*Que toutes nos générations futures ne reçoivent qu'amour et
bénédiction de nos ancêtres.*

*Que mes ancêtres guident mes pas, vers ma destinée et ma raison
d'être, et que je puisse personnifier leur amour et leur sagesse,
et en faire bénéficier tous mes proches.*

*Je prie que tous mes ancêtres et toute ma famille soient heureux et
en paix.*

Молитва о благополучии семьи

Пусть все мои предки будут счастливы и пребывают в мире и спокойствии.

Пусть моя семья живет в мире и согласии.

Пусть я буду счастлив и спокоен.

Пусть все будущие поколения моей семьи получат только благословение и любовь от наших предков.

Пусть мои предки ведут меня по моей судьбе к исполнению жизненной цели, чтобы я мог обратить их любовь и мудрость во благо всех окружающих меня.

Пусть все мои предки и вся моя семья пребудут в мире и согласии.

ORACIÓN DE SANACION PARA LA FAMILIA

Oro para que todos mis ancestros estén felices y en paz.

Oro para que toda mi familia en vida este feliz y en paz.

Oro para que yo este feliz y en paz.

Oro para que todas la generaciones futuras de mi familia reciban bendiciones y amor de los ancestros.

Para que los ancestros guíen mi camino, destino y propósito en esta vida, y para que yo pueda vivir su amor y sabiduría por el beneficio de todos los seres.

Que todos mis ancestros y familia estén felices y en paz. Que así sea!



EXERCISE FOUR

ATTUNING TO YOUR FOUR PRIMARY BLOODLINES

INTENT: Greet your four primary lineages and decide where to focus the ancestral repair process

WHAT YOU NEED: A quiet space and whatever helps you connect with your ancestors

For this exercise, you will first record your own voice (or a friend's) reading the guided visualization below. Alternatively, you could ask a friend to read it aloud for you while you listen. Speak slowly and clearly, incorporating pauses as suggested below. Once you have done this, find a space conducive to ritual work. When you are there, do whatever helps you **establish sacred space and ritual intent** (e.g., light a candle, offer incense, make prayers). If possible, identify the cardinal directions (east, west, north, south) and comfortably settle in near the center of the space. Play back the recording, or ask your friend to begin to narrate.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Start by taking a few minutes to **get grounded and centered** in your body. Let your eyes close or settle into a soft gaze, and let your soul's light fill and shine forth from your body, knowing that you will stay present in your body for this entire visualization and will remember afterward whatever you perceive. Bring your breath to your belly center. Feel your bones, your heart and blood pumping. (*Brief pause.*) When you feel present in your body, **call in any supportive guides** with whom you already enjoy relationship. If you're not sure who your guides are in spirit, simply call on divine love, light, and positivity. When the guides or the felt sense of divine support are present, **reaffirm your intent** to better understand the condition of your four primary ancestral lineages. (*Brief pause.*)
2. Centered in your body, with your spirit helpers present, **ask your guides to establish a layer of protection around your personal space.**

You might picture this as a protective sphere or circular house with walls or windows like a two-way mirror, from which you can see out, but those outside can't see in. Remember your intent to merely observe, not to connect with your ancestors or to change anything. See if it's possible throughout the exercise to observe without calling attention to your presence. Reconfirm that your guides are with you and that the protection is in place. (*Brief pause.*)

3. In your circle of protection, with your awareness anchored in your body, and with the support of the guides, **turn your attention to the east.** You may remain still in body and visualize the east, or you may physically turn your body to face that direction. (*Brief pause.*) In the east, see your father's father, if he has passed, and the lineage of men before him back through time. Form first impressions of these ancestors, *as they exist in the present*, without judgment or need to change anything. (*Pause for one minute.*) Is the energy here bright or dark, present or absent, peaceful or conflicted? Are there colors, symbols, or images that appear? Even if ancestors appear who seem well in spirit, for now just observe. Allowing for differences between the recent dead and older ancestors along the lineage, try to rank the overall level of wellness of your father's father's lineage on the 1–10 scale. (*Pause for one minute.*) Now be curious about the impact of this lineage on you and others in your living family. If heavy energies are present, how strongly do they affect you or other relatives? (*Pause for one minute.*) When you feel complete, **thoroughly clear any heavy or disruptive energies from your personal space, shift your attention away from your paternal grandfather's people, and bring your attention back to a neutral state.** (*Pause for one minute.*)
4. In your circle of protection, and with the support of the guides, **turn your attention to the south** and notice your father's mother and the lineage of women before her. Form first impressions of these ancestors, *as they exist in the present*, without judgment or need to change anything. (*Pause for one minute.*) Is the energy here bright or dark, present or absent, peaceful or conflicted? Are there colors, symbols, or images that

appear? Even if ancestors appear who seem well in spirit, for now just observe. Allowing for differences between the recent dead and older ancestors along the lineage, try to rank the overall level of wellness of your father's mother's lineage on the 1–10 scale. *(Pause for one minute.)* Now be curious about the impact of this lineage on you and others in your living family. If heavy energies are present, how strongly do they affect you or other relatives? *(Pause for one minute.)* When you feel complete, **thoroughly clear any heavy or disruptive energies from your personal space, shift your attention away from your paternal grandmother's people, and bring your attention back to a neutral state.** *(Pause for one minute.)*

5. In your circle of protection, and with the support of the guides, **turn your attention to the west** and notice your mother's mother and the lineage of women before her. Form first impressions of these ancestors, *as they exist in the present*, without judgment or need to change anything. *(Pause for one minute.)* Is the energy here bright or dark, present or absent, peaceful or conflicted? Are there colors, symbols, or images that appear? Even if ancestors appear who seem well in spirit, for now just observe. Allowing for differences between the recent dead and older ancestors along the lineage, try to rank the overall level of wellness of your mother's mother's lineage on the 1–10 scale. *(Pause for one minute.)* Now be curious about the impact of this lineage on you and others in your living family. If heavy energies are present, how strongly do they affect you or other relatives? *(Pause for one minute.)* When you feel complete, **thoroughly clear any heavy or disruptive energies from your personal space, shift your attention away from your maternal grandmother's people, and bring your attention back to a neutral state.** *(Pause for one minute.)*
6. In your circle of protection, and with the support of the guides, **turn your attention to the north** and notice your mother's father and the lineage of men before him. Form first impressions of these ancestors, *as they exist in the present*, without judgment or need to change anything. *(Pause for one minute.)* Is the energy here bright or dark, present or

absent, peaceful or conflicted? Are there colors, symbols, or images that appear? Even if ancestors appear who seem well in spirit, for now just observe. Allowing for differences between the recent dead and older ancestors along the lineage, try to rank the overall level of wellness of your mother's father's lineage on the 1–10 scale. (*Pause for one minute.*) Now be curious about the impact of this lineage on you and others in your living family. If heavy energies are present, how strongly do they affect you or other relatives? (*Pause for one minute.*) When you feel complete, **thoroughly clear any heavy or disruptive energies from your personal space, shift your attention away from your maternal grandfather's people, and bring your attention back to a neutral state.** (*Pause for one minute.*)

7. Before bringing your attention fully back, take an extra moment to be certain that your personal energy is in the clear and that all pathways of curiosity that may have been opened with the ancestors are now closed. Also, pause to give thanks to any supportive guides. (*Brief pause.*) When you are ready, open your eyes and anchor your attention in your physical body and your surroundings. To ensure that you recall all that you were shown, consider making notes about what you observed. (*End recording.*)



EXERCISE FIVE

SEEKING AN ANCESTRAL GUIDE

INTENT: Connect with a bright and supportive ancestral guide along the lineage of focus

WHAT YOU NEED: A quiet space and whatever helps you connect with your ancestors

As with exercise 4, you will first record your own voice (or a friend's) reading the following guided visualization and then play it back. Or you could ask a friend to read it aloud for you while you listen. Once you have made these arrangements, find a space conducive to ritual work. When you are there, do whatever helps you **establish sacred space and ritual intent** (e.g., light a candle, offer incense, make prayers). If possible, identify the cardinal directions and consider sitting near the center of the ritual space. Play back the recording, or ask your friend to begin to narrate. If needed, repeat the process, typically on different days, until you feel you're able to make a solid connection.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Start by taking a few minutes to **get physically and emotionally centered**. This may include some meditation or breathing, personal centering prayer, unstructured movement, or just a pause to remember your intent for the ritual. Do what you need to do to calm your mind and connect with your heart. (*Pause for one minute.*)
2. **If you have any supportive guide(s) with whom you already work, call on them now.** Invite the support and feel the loving presence of your guide or guides. They will be your main source of spiritual support—your allies. Some people call on angels, deities, or animal or plant spirit helpers; others may simply envision themselves surrounded in spiritual light. (*Pause for one minute.*)
3. When you feel centered and well supported in spirit, **bring your awareness to the specific lineage you decided to work with and set your intent for this ritual:** to connect with a guide along

your chosen lineage who is both willing and capable of helping you with ancestor repair work. Confirm that your spirit guides support you in this work before proceeding. (*Brief pause.*)

4. To connect with a bright and available ancestor guide, **track back along your chosen lineage**. Maybe you envision following this specific bloodline along a path, a river, or a thread of connection back through time. Use your intuition here as you picture this particular family line, and see how it shows itself. As you go back, be sure to bypass (in whatever way is easiest) any heaviness that may be present along the more recent span of the lineage. You will likely need to travel back before remembered names, sometimes back a thousand or more years. Keep going as far back as is needed and only **stop when you sense or see a clear, bright, and loving guide**. (*Pause for about three minutes.*)
5. **When contact begins, check in with your intuition about this guide**. On the 1–10 scale (ten being the brightest, safest, and most helpful guide), how would you rate this particular ancestor? Seek an eight or above—a big, bright, and vibrant energy. If you meet a guide who is helpful but not too bright in spirit, go back farther to connect with one who is in better shape. Make certain that you are clear about your guide. Trust your gut and your heart here, and if you're unsure, ask your supportive guides to cross-check your choice. Go further back along the lineage if needed. (*Pause for one minute.*)
6. When you get a clear and positive impression from the ancestral guide, approach him or her with deference and humility, knowing that you are greeting a respected elder. Introduce yourself and let this one know why you've come. Confirm that this is an ancestral guide along your lineage of choice and that this one is willing and able to assist in the repair work. If not, respectfully part ways and take your vision farther back. If so, there is no need to rush or drive this process—let the guide lead this initial encounter. **Take some time to simply be in each other's presence and get acquainted**. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*)
7. Consider asking about the guide's relationship with ancestors who came before. Think of this guide as embodying the last time the lineage itself

was in excellent condition. (*Brief pause.*) Be open to any information about what it was like when this guide was alive on Earth. Be curious about what his or her life was like, and about any particular medicines or blessings or qualities that this guide brings. Again, don't rush it. Relax, and take in the quality of the connection. **If it feels right, you might ask the guide for a blessing from the lineage and be sure to truly receive that blessing.** (*Pause for about three minutes.*)

8. You might also ask: **what simple offering or gesture of respect can I make to acknowledge this connection?** This might be a physical offering—water, wine, food, flowers, fire, incense—or it may be a song, some drumming, or just spending more quality time. Listen to what, if anything, comes through. (*Pause for one minute.*)
9. Before you shift your attention back, take a moment to **see these bright and well ancestral guides between you and any recent lineage ancestors who are not yet at peace.** In this way the healed ancestors can function as an ongoing buffer between you and more recent ancestors who are not yet well in spirit. Invite the support of the guides in maintaining your healthy energetic boundaries as needed until the entire lineage is deeply at peace. (*Brief pause.*) Take a final moment to thank these ancestors and any other guides who helped you to make connection. (*Brief pause.*)
10. **Bring your attention all the way back to your body and surroundings.** (*Brief pause.*) When your attention is fully present in your body and your immediate surroundings and your eyes are open, take a moment to notice the energy of the guide you have just contacted. Know that this connection is available to you anytime, even when you are not in a ritual space. To ensure that you recall all that you have been shown, often it's helpful to make some notes immediately after the visualization. (*End recording.*)



EXERCISE SIX

GETTING TO KNOW THE LINEAGE

INTENT: Get to know the lineage between your ancestral guides and the present

WHAT YOU NEED: A quiet space and whatever helps you connect with your ancestors

For this exercise, you will again record your own reading of the following guided visualization and then play it back. Alternatively, you could ask a friend to read it aloud for you while you listen. Once you have recorded the visualization or found a friend to narrate, find a space conducive to ritual work. When you are there, do whatever helps you **establish sacred space and ritual intent** (e.g., light a candle, offer incense, make prayers). If possible, identify the cardinal directions and consider sitting near the center of the ritual space. Play back the recording, or ask your friend to begin to narrate.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Start by taking a few minutes to **get physically and emotionally centered**. This may include some meditation or breathing, personal centering prayer, unstructured movement, or just a pause to remember your intent for the ritual. Do what you need to do to calm your mind and connect with your heart. (*Pause for one minute.*)
2. When you feel centered, **call in the supportive ancestral guide along this lineage with whom you connected in exercise 5**. Confirm that this guide is both willing and able to guide the work (i.e., is an eight or above in the 1–10 scale). If there are recently deceased ancestors along this lineage who are also well and with whom you already work, you may invite them to join this process. Share with these guides about your intent to better understand this lineage as a whole. Confirm that you have their support before proceeding. (*Pause for one minute.*)
3. **Respectfully invite the guide to show you the condition of the lineage as a whole**. Seek to understand what has happened in the lineage, to learn where any repairs are needed between the life

of the guide and the present, and to receive this information in a safe way. Perhaps the lineage appears as a thread, a river, a rope, a cord of light, a series of fires, or something else entirely. See the lineage as a collective energy. How does it look as a system? Notice the bright spots, the blockages, and where the energy has gotten tangled. Ask the guide to show you and to drive the process. Again, you are just here to observe; resist the urge to intervene, make contact with more ancestors along this lineage, or change anything at this time. (*Pause for three to four minutes.*)

4. **Once you have observed the lineage as a whole**, you may ask the guide to show you the stories of some defining individual lives along it. Looking at the line overall, ask the guide: Where are the individual lives that are *not* well (if any)? Also inquire about the recent dead along this bloodline. You can ask the guide about a particular ancestor (e.g., a great-grandparent, grandparent, or parent). Are they basically well? In between? Not so well? Again, be clear that your intent is only to understand, not to fix, heal, or change anything at this time. (*Pause for three to four minutes.*)
5. **Finally, inquire about the blessings and burdens of the lineage.** (*This may also be done as a distinct visioning process.*) Ask your guide: What are three blessings that come through this lineage? They might take the form of gifts, medicines, natural talents, or positive attributes. Identify three of them. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*) Next, ask the guide: What are three burdens that come through this lineage? They might take the form of challenges, addictions, health ailments, poisons, or negative attributes. Identify these burdens. Again, remember that you aren't trying to fix anything, just seeking to understand. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*)
6. After you have some clarity on blessings and burdens, **visualize stepping back from your focus on the lineage and returning to the presence of your guides alone.** If needed, ask the guides to help you clear your space and energy from any residual heaviness. (*Brief pause.*) Invite any final communications before thanking your ancestral guide and any others who accompanied you. When you are done, return your attention to your physical body and surroundings. (*Brief pause.*)

7. Before opening your eyes, gently scan your space and surroundings a final time to **be sure that you are truly complete** and clear from any ancestors or other heaviness you may have witnessed. (*Brief pause.*) When you are ready, open your eyes and bring your attention fully back to your physical body and your surroundings. If grief or other strong feelings arise at any point while bearing witness to the lineage, honor those feelings, but make sure to keep your personal energy clear and your link intact with the ancestral guides overseeing the process. To ensure that you recall all that you have been shown, often it's helpful to make some notes immediately afterward. (*End recording.*)



EXERCISE SEVEN

RITUAL TO ASSIST LINEAGE ANCESTORS

INTENT: Offer ritual for the well-being, healing, and elevation of older lineage ancestors

WHAT YOU NEED: A quiet space and whatever helps you connect with your ancestors

In this exercise, the repair work on your chosen bloodline begins in earnest. There are two important points to remember as you are preparing for this ritual: (1) focus on repair work for one section of your lineage or an individual ancestor at a time, and don't try to take on too much at once; and (2) expect to repeat this ritual as many times as you need until it feels complete. You might focus on this ritual once a week or once monthly until the lineage feels bright and strong. Remember to read the entirety of part 2 before engaging in ritual, just to be sure you have sufficient context for the things you may encounter. Also, while I provide one structure for the ritual below, your work might appear quite different, depending on the guidance you receive from your ancestors. Trust your instinct and let the ancestral guides do their guiding.

As with the exercises that came before, you may record yourself reading the following progression for playback or ask a friend to read it aloud for you during your visioning. Once you have made the recording or found a friend to narrate, find a space conducive to ritual work. When you are there, do what helps you **establish sacred space and ritual intent**.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Take a few minutes to **get physically and emotionally centered**. This may include some meditation or breathing, personal centering prayer, unstructured movement, or just a pause to remember your intent for the ritual. (*Brief pause.*) When you feel centered, **call in any supportive guides** with whom you already enjoy a relationship. Be sure to connect with the ancestral guide you met with earlier along the specific lineage you are working in. Share with the guides your intent to support healing and repairs on behalf of your lineage ancestors.

Confirm that you have their support before proceeding. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*)

2. You are now ready to do the ritual. Remembering your assessment of the lineage as a whole (see exercise 6), begin by focusing on the part of the lineage that is closest to the lifetime of the ancestral guide. (*Brief pause.*) Following the lead of the well ancestors, bring your attention to the generations directly following the guide. Look for areas in need of healing, and invite the guides to draw forward the healing to those places with the intent to welcome the ancestors there into the lineage. Remember to be patient and to focus the repairs on one span or point along the lineage at a time. This may be limited to a single lifetime, or it may include themes that arose along a span of several centuries. In either case, tend to one section or joint in the overall lineage. Go to that place now and, following the lead of the guides, make intent that healing love and care arrive for these ancestors in your bloodline. Continue to focus here until you feel some kind of movement or improvement in the energy. (*Pause for five minutes.*)
3. When the guides are complete for the time being with that spot in the lineage, **consolidate the repairs** up to that point so that the work itself is likely to “stick.” Picture a river of ancestral blessings from the elevated guides. You are widening the channel from the past to the present, making sure that all is well up to the spot you are working with. Once the current cycle of tending feels complete for the moment, ask your guides: “What is a simple way I can reinforce the healing?” This may include physical offerings, an action to be taken now in ritual space, or something to be done later. Be open to the guidance you receive and only commit to doing what you are certain to fulfill. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*)
4. Once you have consolidated your repairs, **double-check the lineage up to that point**. If something still feels troubled along the line up to the spot you are working with, stay with it until it shifts. If it feels complete, either move to the next area of healing focus along the lineage or complete the overall visioning for now. In any event, don’t proceed to another area along the lineage until the span you’ve been working on

is an eight or above on the 1–10 scale. Be patient with the work as you gradually move the new “well point” closer toward the present. Take a moment to assess whether or not you are ready to progress to another span of the lineage. *(Brief pause. If you are recording and you wish to allow for a second round of tending, go back to step 2. Begin with “Go to that place now . . .” and record through the end of step 4 again.)*

5. As you finish for now, **step back from the lineage repair work to focus only on the ancestral guides**. From this place ask them to help you **clear your space and energy from any residual heaviness you may have encountered during the repairs**. Be open to any final messages they have for you. *(Pause for one minute.)* When they indicate that the process complete and you’re in the clear, thank them and return your attention fully to your physical body and surroundings. *(End recording.)*



EXERCISE NINE

SOUL GUIDANCE FOR THE REMEMBERED DEAD

INTENT: Assist the soul of a deceased family member to join the ancestors

WHAT YOU NEED: A recording device, quiet space, offerings, and any other support for your visioning (e.g., drum, song, prayer)

First confirm that all of the ancestors are well in spirit along the span of the lineage between the guide and the most distant person remembered by name. When this is the case, the guides may give permission for you to approach the eldest named ancestor, but remember that soul guidance work is on an “as-needed” basis. If these types of repairs are called for along the lineage, address the remembered dead one at a time, from the more distant past toward the present. This may entail a separate process for each, making sure at each generation that the blessings of the entire lineage are flowing closer to you in the present. If you have a strong emotional attachment to the person you are attempting to help, consider first doing some form of exercise 8, involving forgiveness (page 145). If the recent, remembered ancestors are already well in spirit, modify the exercise below to focus on extending the blessings of the older guides and lineage to the recent ancestors. Envision the remembered dead as being well connected to the more ancient lineage. Remember to take it slow and reinforce shifts as you go.

As in previous exercises, you will first record your own voice (or a friend’s) reading the following guided visualization, and then play it back. Or you could ask a friend to read it aloud for you while you listen. Once you have made these arrangements, find a space conducive to ritual work. When there, do whatever helps you to **establish sacred space and ritual intent** (e.g., light a candle, offer incense, make prayers). If possible, identify the cardinal directions and consider sitting near the center of the ritual space. Play back the recording, or ask your friend to begin to narrate.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Take time to **get physically and emotionally centered**. This may include some meditation or breathing, centering prayer, unstructured movement, or just a pause to remember your intent

for the ritual. You might let your eyes close or settle into a soft gaze. Bring your breath to your belly center. Feel your bones, and feel your heart and blood pumping. Let your soul's light fill and shine forth from your body. Set the intent to stay present in your body for the entire visualization. *(Pause for one to two minutes.)*

2. When you feel centered, **call in any supportive guides** with whom you already enjoy relationship. Connect with your ancestral guide in the specific lineage you are working in. Share your intent with any guides present: to help the soul of a more recent ancestor join the well lineage before them. Confirm that you have the support of the guides before proceeding. *(Brief pause.)* With the support of your guides, **scan the earlier lineage** up to the named individual you intend to help. Double- or even triple-check that the lineage up to this point is well and integrated. (If the answer is no, stop here and return to the lineage repair work in exercise 7, page 135). Confirm that you have the blessing of your guides and the entire lineage before the ancestor in focus before proceeding. *(Pause for two to three minutes.)*
3. If you secure the blessing to proceed, letting the guides lead the process, **start by addressing any heavy, difficult, or conflicting energy** in the space around the individual you intend to help. Let the ancestral guides do whatever is needed to disentangle the soul of this more recent ancestor from any problematic energies so that all that is left is the one you are intending to help. *(Pause for two to three minutes.)*
4. With the support of your guide, take some time to be in the presence of this deceased individual. If appropriate, introduce yourself and let the soul know why you're here, but don't be attached to direct involvement. Then, either by interacting with this individual or through holding presence while the guides take the lead, **help the one transitioning to gain a greater level of brightness, wholeness, and wellness** in their energy body. (There is no right or wrong way to do this, and it may be different each time you experience it. Again, let the guides drive this process.) Continue until you can rank this one a six or above in terms of wellness, knowing that this is a process that may proceed in

stages and may take some time. (*Pause for two to three minutes.*)

5. When you feel this soul has reached a six or above in wellness, **check with your guide to see if this individual is ready to be welcomed and received by the ancestors.** (*Pause for one minute.*) If not, ask your guide what else needs to happen. It's possible that the work may require multiple rounds of ritual engagement for the same individual. If so, respect that; stop for now and come back later to do a little at a time. It's also possible this ancestor-to-be has a certain request or wishes to communicate something to the living—something that needs to happen before he or she is ready to step across. If so, try to find out what this is. Listen and consider their request, without making any promises you can't keep. (*Pause for one minute.*)
6. When this soul is ready to join the ancestors, they will do it. Much like a drop of water dissolving into the ocean, the soul is absorbed into the collective energy. You may sense or see elements of this rite of passage—the death of a ghost, the birth of an ancestor—but there is little left for you to do at this time. **Take a moment to bear witness and to gently reinforce the new equilibrium.** See this individual welcomed into the ancestral realm. Don't follow them; simply observe from a distance and make sure they are finding their way. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*) You might ask your guides if there is **any simple action you can take to celebrate or acknowledge the change in status** of this new ancestor. (*Pause for one minute.*)
7. When you are complete, **shift focus away from the lineage as a whole and back to being in the presence of your guide alone.** With the support of the guide, clear any residual heavy energy from you or your space. (*Brief pause.*) Thank your guides and say goodbye for now. (*Brief pause.*)
8. Gently scan your space and surroundings a final time to **be sure you are truly complete** and clear of any unhelpful energy. (*Brief pause.*) When you are ready, open your eyes and turn your attention fully back to your physical body and your surroundings. If it's helpful, you might make some notes about what you observed. (*End recording.*)



EXERCISE TEN

EMBODY THE LINEAGE AND OFFER PRAYER FOR THE LIVING

INTENT: Embody guides and lineage ancestors while praying for the living

WHAT YOU NEED: A recording device, quiet space, offerings, and any other support for your visioning (e.g., drum, song, prayer)

At this point, all the ancestors along the lineage should be well in spirit. If you have any doubt that this the case, return to exercises 7 through 9 and tend the lineage patiently, until all the dead are clearly settled as bright and healthy ancestors.

As in previous exercises, you will first record your own voice (or a friend's) reading the following guided visualization, and then play it back. Or you could ask a friend to read it aloud for you while you listen. Once you have made these arrangements, find a space conducive to ritual work. When there, do whatever helps you to **establish sacred space and ritual intent** (e.g., light a candle, offer incense, make prayers). If possible, identify the cardinal directions and consider sitting near the center of the ritual space. Play back the recording, or ask your friend to begin to narrate.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Take a few minutes to **get physically and emotionally centered**. This may include some meditation or breathing, personal centering prayer, unstructured movement, or just a pause to remember your intent for the ritual. You might let your eyes close or settle into a soft gaze. Bring your breath down to your belly center. Feel your bones, and feel your heart and blood pumping. Let your soul's light fill and shine forth from your body. Set the intent to stay present in your body for the entire visualization. (*Pause for two to three minutes.*)
2. When you feel centered, **call in any supportive guides** with whom you already enjoy relationship. Connect with the bright ancestral guide in the lineage you are working in. Share with any guides present your intent to gently embody this lineage of ancestors while praying for the living

family members. Confirm that you have their support before proceeding. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*)

3. **Call in the experience and awareness—outside your body—of the overall lineage** you are working with, including the most recent ancestor (likely a parent or a grandparent). Take a moment to confirm that everyone along that lineage is truly well in spirit. (*Pause for one minute.*) If you find that this is not the case, shift your focus for this ritual to making repairs wherever they are needed.
4. If the lineage is well in spirit, **invite partial embodiment of the lineage**. First, notice the concentrated light or presence near to you but still outside your body. (*Brief pause.*) When you are ready, allow this energy to gently share the space of your physical body—to merge with you on literal and spiritual levels. In doing so, you are personally embodying the light and blessings from this ancestral lineage, further assuming your place in the line. (*Brief pause.*) Only invite this merging as much as is right for you, and allow time to sink into the experience. (*Brief pause.*) Notice how it feels to incorporate these ancestors and to know that you are part of this lineage. (*Pause for one to two minutes.*)
5. Once you are merged with the lineage and ancestral guides, **hold a prayer with them for the living family**. You might begin with a prayer for living elders—parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles, elder siblings, and any others who are older than you and connected by blood to these ancestors. (*Pause for two minutes.*) Next, offer a prayer for yourself and for anyone in your generation—siblings and cousins. Envision those relatives taking in a blessing of health and happiness from these ancestors. (*Pause for two minutes.*) Finally, extend a prayer to younger generations who are alive right now—your children, nephews, nieces, and grandchildren. Try to maintain a state of being lightly merged with the lineage, allowing their blessings for the living to flow through you. (*Pause for two minutes.*)
6. Notice your energy level and see if you still feel comfortably merged with the lineage. (*Brief pause.*) If you are, **proceed to make prayers for**

all future descendants of the family lineages—all of those who are not yet born. See these ones who are to come being blessed by the ancestors. (*Pause for two minutes.*)

7. When you have completed these prayers, **visualize your personal energy gently separating from the greater presence of the lineage and ancestral guides.** (*Brief pause.*) Now that they are outside your physical body, affirm that you commit to embodying their blessings in your life—that you will let in their support and that you want to embody what is good from them. (*Brief pause.*) Inquire if there is anything else that they want you to know. (*Pause for one minute.*)
8. Before finishing, pause to **be sure the ancestors and guides are relatively distinct from your personal energy and space** (with respect for the unbreakable ancestral link that also exists). (*Brief pause.*) **Thank your ancestral guides** and any others who accompanied you, and say goodbye for now. (*Brief pause.*)
9. Gently scan your space and surroundings a final time to **be sure you are truly complete** and clear from any residual energy. (*Brief pause.*) When you are ready, open your eyes and bring your attention fully back to your surroundings. If it's helpful, make some notes about what you experienced or were shown. (*End recording.*)



EXERCISE ELEVEN

HARMONIZING YOUR FOUR PRIMARY LINEAGES

INTENT: Offer ritual seeking a more integrated experience of the four primary ancestral bloodlines

WHAT YOU NEED: A recording device, quiet space, offerings, and any other support for your visioning (e.g., drum, song, prayer)

What follows is really three rituals presented as one: experience of your mother's people, your father's people, and then both lineages as a harmonized collective. Err on the side of going slow and being thorough. Over time you may consider combining elements of ancestral embodiment as presented in exercise 10 with the experience of them as a harmonized collective.

As in previous exercises, you will first record your own voice (or a friend's) reading the following guided visualization, and then play it back. Or you could ask a friend to read it aloud for you while you listen. Once you have made these arrangements, find a space conducive to ritual work. When there, do whatever helps you to **establish sacred space and ritual intent** (e.g., light a candle, offer incense, make prayers). If possible, identify the cardinal directions and consider sitting near the center of the ritual space. Play back the recording, or ask your friend to begin to narrate.

1. (*Begin recording.*) Take a few minutes to **get physically and emotionally centered**. This may include some meditation, personal centering prayer, unstructured movement, or a pause to remember your intent for the ritual. You might let your eyes close or settle into a soft gaze. Bring your breath to your belly center. Feel your bones, and feel your heart and blood pumping. Let your soul's light fill your body. Set the intent to stay present in your body for the entire visualization. (*Pause for two to three minutes.*)
2. When you feel centered, **call in any supportive guides** with whom you already enjoy a relationship. Connect with the bright ancestral guides in the four lineages you have been working with. Confirm along each of these four lineages that the ancestors are well and at peace. If you have

the impression that further work is needed with any lineage, shift the ritual focus to address that. Share with the guides your intent to harmonize your four primary lineages, and seek their blessing before proceeding. *(Pause for two to three minutes.)*

3. **On your mother's side, invite the lineages of your maternal and paternal grandparents to blend and weave into a single river or current of ancestral consciousness.** If there are any obstacles to this merger, seek to understand and address them. See these two lineages become one in a way that flows through the spirit of your mother (especially if she is an ancestor) or both around and through her (if she is still alive). As some traditions say, you might sense that the mother's side is on the left side of your body. See which side feels right to you. *(Pause for two to three minutes.)*
4. **On your father's side, invite the lineages of your maternal and paternal grandparents to blend and weave into a single river or current of ancestral consciousness.** If there are any obstacles to this merger, seek to understand and address them. See these two lineages become one in a way that flows through the spirit of your father (especially if he is an ancestor) or both around and through him (if he is still alive). The traditions I have studied associate the right side of the body with ancestors on the father's side. See what feels right to you. *(Pause for two to three minutes.)*
5. **Once the four primary lineages appear as two integrated lineages, notice how these two currents of energy feel outside your body**—your father's combined lineage on your right side, and your mother's combined lineage on your left. Notice and appreciate these two complex and vibrant sources of ancestral energy, and practice feeling the support of both lineages at your back and sides. *(Pause for two to three minutes.)*
6. Confirm with your guides and your own instinct that you are ready to go to the next step. What you've done may be enough for now. If so, move toward completion. *(Brief pause.)* If you get a yes to proceed, **invite the two ancestral rivers from your father and mother's side to blend and weave outside your body** into a single energetic current,

signature, or vibration. You may visualize or feel this in front of your physical body as a blended light or energy. Notice the distinct quality and character of this blend of ancestral and family consciousness. (*Pause for two to three minutes.*)

7. Once you perceive the harmonized light of your blood ancestors outside your body, **gently invite at least some of this ancestral light into your core**—your heart or belly center. (*Brief pause.*) Keep this practice grounded and manageable, rather than entering deeply into states of trance and embodiment. Invite their light, which is also *your* light, to gently infuse your cells and physical form with ancestral love, healing, and blessings. Only take in as much as is comfortable. Rest in this condition for as long as you are comfortable. (*Pause for five minutes.*)
8. **Before finishing, notice this same ancestral light in your siblings, and as one part of the ancestral fingerprint of any children or grandchildren.** See how these ancestors express themselves in similar or different ways through the lives of other relatives. Notice if you see this light in any living relatives with the same bloodlines as you. Perhaps offer a prayer with the ancestors for the happiness and well-being of these other living family members. (*Pause for two to three minutes.*)
9. **Ask if there is ongoing work to be done or anything your ancestors want you to know before you finish.** (*Brief pause.*)
10. **When you are ready, thank the ancestors, and return focus to your personal center.** Ask that the intensity of ancestral consciousness diminish enough for you to function normally. If you need to, you can formally separate from the ancestral light; however, this light is also you, and any disengagement is more a question of regulating intensity than of full separation. (*Pause for one minute.*)
11. Gently scan your space and surroundings a final time to **be sure you are truly complete** and clear from any residual energy. (*Brief pause.*) When you are ready, open your eyes and bring your attention fully back to your physical body and your surroundings. If it's helpful, you might make some notes about what happened. (*End recording.*)



Plate I. *Tumuli* or burial mounds, such as those at the Viking sacred site of Uppsala in Sweden, are one ancient form of monument to the dead and can be found throughout Europe, the Americas, Asia, and parts of Africa.



Plate 2. The despacho is a ceremonial form shared by Quechua-speaking peoples of the Andes that can be adapted for various ritual intentions. This ancestor-focused despacho made in Nederland, Colorado, made use of aspen for *kintus* (leaves used to carry participants' prayers).



Plate 3. This despacho to feed the ancestors was crafted in Asheville, North Carolina, by participants in an ancestral healing practitioner training. The entire offering bundle is typically burned in a sacred fire as a ritual completion.



Plate 4. Despacho ceremonies for the ancestors may include local plants, offerings familiar to the lineages being honored, and traditional ingredients from the ritual's homeland in the Andes. At this ancestors training in Berkeley, California, some participants of diverse East Asian lineages were moved to include offerings of citrus and joss paper.



Plate 5. Jewish traditions of ancestor reverence include ritualized grieving, reciting Kaddish, lighting a *yahrzeit* memorial candle, and pilgrimage to the graves of beloved dead. This offering and prayer used only ingredients known to Jewish traditions.



Plate 6. Known as *egúngún* in Yorùbá-speaking West Africa and neighboring cultures, ancestor mediums must be covered from head to toe. They provide one way for the dead to continue to relate in the affairs of the living.

Plate 7 (right). *Egúngún* ancestral mediums in Òdè Rẹmọ, Nigeria.





Plate 8. Grave visits, such as this one at a Chinese cemetery in Ratchaburi, Thailand, may include offerings, heartfelt dialogue, and quality time with the ancestors.

Plate 9. Ancestor offerings at Da Jiu Festival in Shek O, Hong Kong.





Plate 10. The tomb of Muhammad, located in Medina, Saudi Arabia, is part of the larger Mosque of the Prophet (al-Masjid an-Nabawi) and one of the holiest sites for the world's 1.6 billion Muslims.

Plate 11. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C., uses the remains of several unidentified soldiers as a focal point to memorialize thousands of unknown ancestors of war. Tomb Guards preside over this sacred site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.





Plate 12. The Mexican holiday of Día de los Muertos or Day of the Dead combines pre-Christian traditions of ancestor reverence with the Catholic holiday of All Saint's Day and may include establishing an ancestor altar, making offerings, and visiting the graves of loved ones.



Plate 13. Over eight hundred thousand Rwandans were killed in a one-hundred-day period in 1994.
The Ntarama Catholic Church was the site of the massacre of five thousand people.



Plate 14. During the Balinese cremation ceremony (Ngaben), the deceased is placed inside a sarcophagus, typically shaped like a buffalo or temple, before being burned.



Plate 15. The Merry Cemetery in Sapanta, Romania, illustrates one way that beauty and artistry can play a role in memorializing the dead.

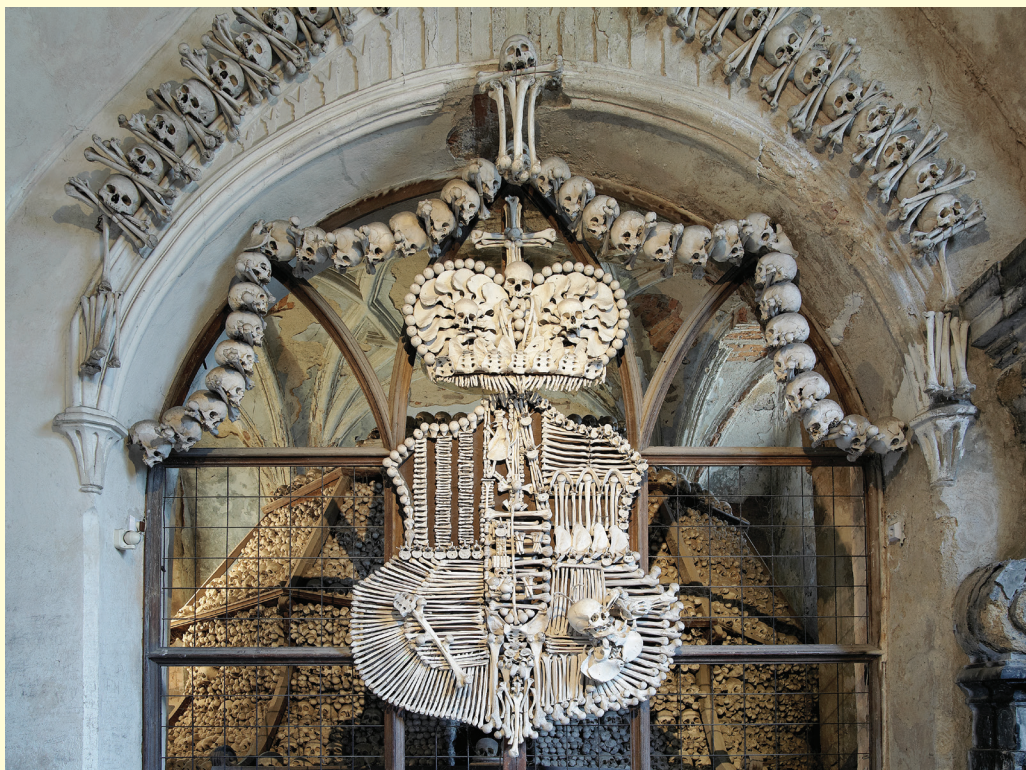


Plate 16. Many cultures identify certain trees as places of heightened connection with the spirit world and the ancestors. This sacred tree stands near the shores of Lake Baikal, Siberia.



Plate 17. During the midsummer Mitama Festival at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo over thirty thousand lanterns are lit to honor the ancestors. Over two million kami (spirits or deities in

Shinto tradition) are enshrined at Yasukuni, including the nearly four thousand kamikaze pilots who died during World War II. (Photo by Takashi Ueki via Wikimedia Commons.)



Plates 18 and 19. Sedlec Ossuary near the town of Kutná Hora, Czech Republic, houses the remains of forty thousand to seventy thousand people. Common where burial places are scarce, some ossuaries were established in Europe to address the many thousands of unidentified dead on the battlefields of World War I.