



10° Congresso Nazionale ROI

BOLOGNA 20-21 GIUGNO 2025

L'OSTEOPATIA TRA LE PROFESSIONI SANITARIE
Prospettive di Prevenzione e Promozione della Salute

The evolution of the concept of 'Spirit' in osteopathy

Rafael Zegarra-Paodi, DO (UK), MEd

Conflicts of interests



- **Clinician since 1997**
 - Registered osteopath in France (ARS d'Île-de-France) and in the UK (#3418)
- **Researcher (35 peer-reviewed papers, h index = 11)**
 - A.T. Still Research Institute (USA), *research affiliate*
 - DO-Touch.NET (USA), *member of the executive committee*
- **CPD Course Director & Lecturer since 2019**
 - BMS Formation (France), *cofounder & director*



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI





THE BMS
podcast



A.T. STILL UNIVERSITY | **ATSU** | SUPPORT ATSU SEARCH

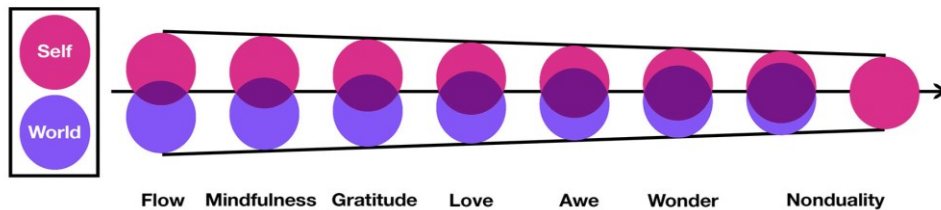
FIRST IN WHOLE PERSON HEALTHCARE EDUCATION

ABOUT | PROGRAMS OF STUDY | ADMISSIONS | ALUMNI | DEPARTMENTS | QUICK LINKS

A.T. STILL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
A.T. STILL UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Home
About the Institute
Research Centers
Institute Members
Browse Trials

CURRENT RESEARCH



By the end of this presentation, the participants will be able to

1. Contextualize the concept of ‘Spirit’ within osteopathy’s historical foundations

Critically analyze the emergence of osteopathy’s integrative foundations at the convergence of Western biomedical knowledge and Indigenous worldviews, emphasizing A.T. Still’s interactions with Native American traditions.

2. Examine contemporary scientific frameworks related to the concept of ‘Spirit’

Investigate how body awareness, touch, contextual factors, and placebo responses intersect with culturally mediated representations of the body, informed by insights from medical anthropology and neuroscience.

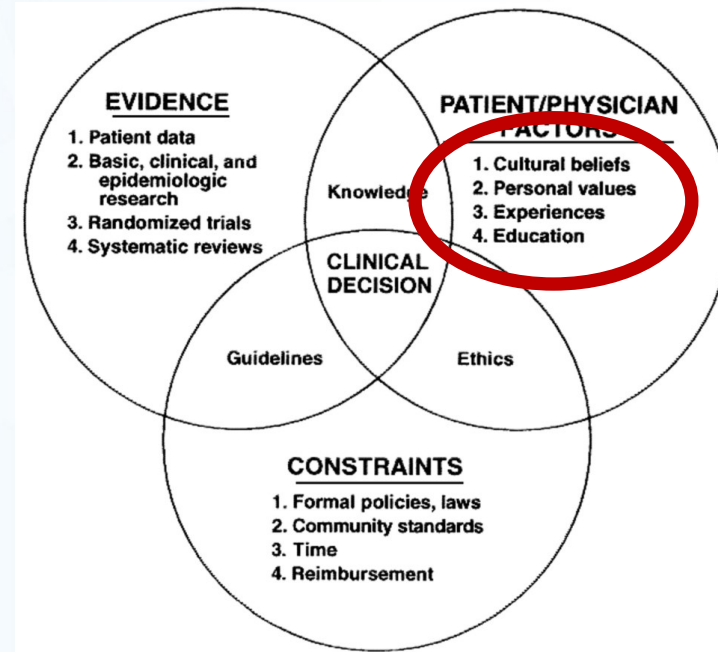
3. Integrate the concept of ‘Spirit’ into person-centered clinical practice ?

Promote a flexible, evidence-informed approach that responds to both materialist and non-materialist patient worldviews, encouraging meaningful therapeutic alliances across sociocultural contexts.



Evolution of osteopathic principles, disease models, pain models, and osteopathic care models toward person-centered care

- Role of tradition
- Clinical authority
- Practitioner's intuition
- Experience-based trial and error
- Evidence-based practice (EBP)



Understanding the 'Person'

Materialistic vs. non-materialistic worldviews

Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology 190 (2024) 26-108

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/mbmb

A landscape of consciousness: Toward a taxonomy of explanations and implications

Robert Lawrence Kuhn
doi:10.1016/j.pmb.2024.100000

A LANDSCAPE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Robert Lawrence Kuhn

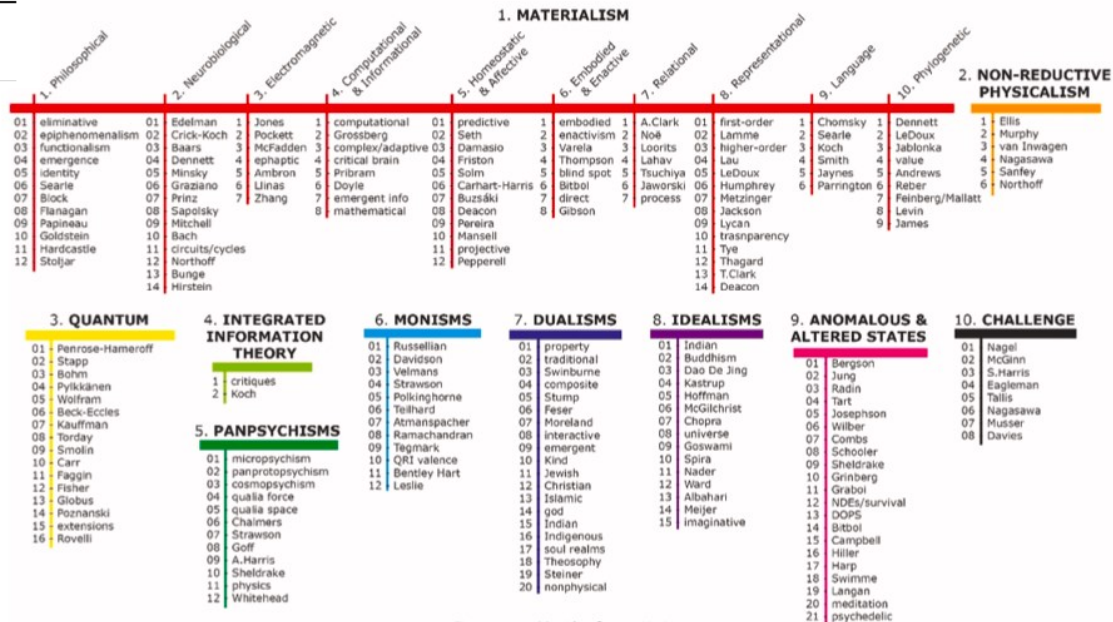


Figure created by Alex Gomez-Marin

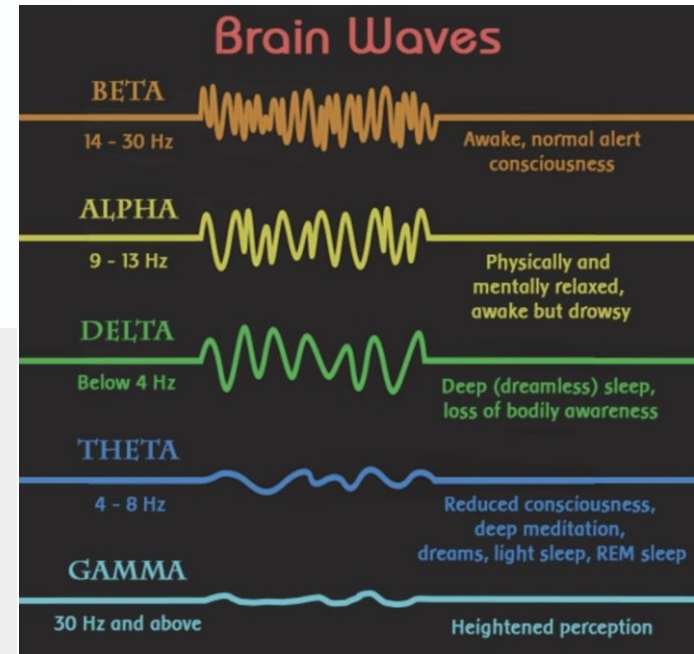
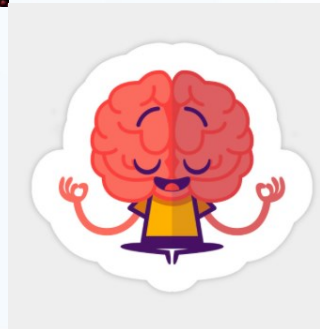
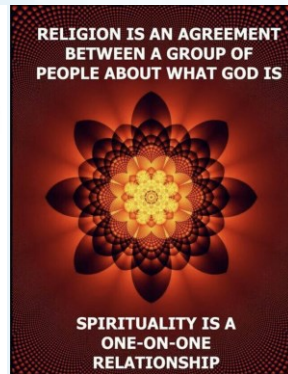
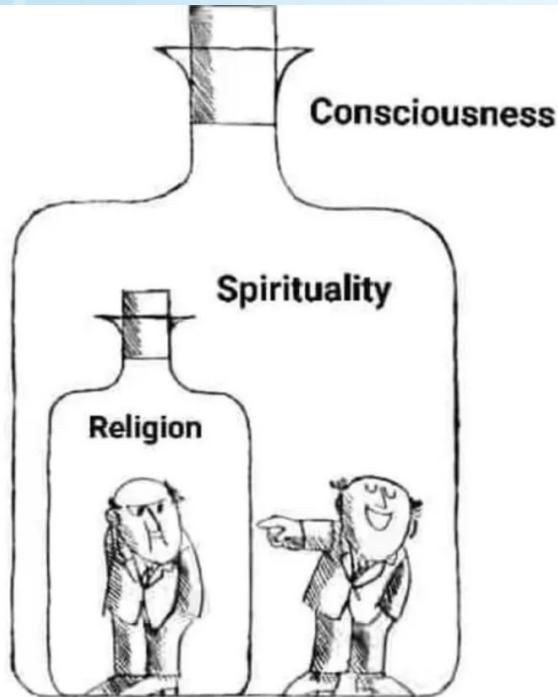


10° Congresso Nazionale ROI



Understanding the 'Spirit'

Materialistic versus non-materialistic worldviews



Understanding the 'Body'

Rethinking clinical practice through diverse worldviews



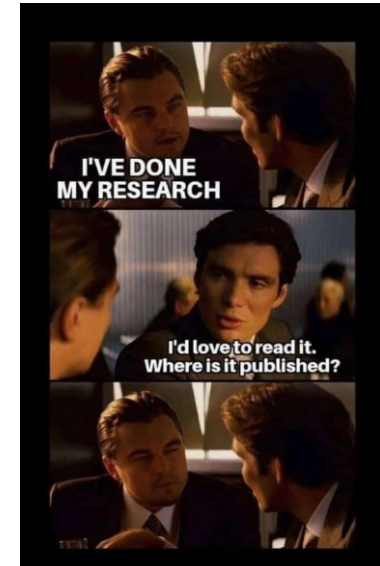
Arthur Kleinman, M.D., M.A.
Leon Eisenberg, M.D.
Byron Good



Fairbank
Center
for Chinese
Studies

費正清中國研究中心

**Culture, Illness,
and Care:**
Clinical Lessons From
Anthropologic and Cross-Cultural Research



- *Medical anthropology : each culture has its own traditions, rituals, and belief systems that shape how the body is perceived, treated, and healed.*
- *By embracing this diversity, we broaden our horizons and enrich our understanding of health as a whole.*



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

Medical anthropology : socio-cultural influences on body representations in health and illness (Zegarra-Parodi et al.; 2023, 2024, 2025)



Essay

Historical Osteopathic Principles and Practices in Contemporary Care: An Anthropological Perspective to Foster Evidence-Informed and Culturally Sensitive Patient-Centered Care: A Commentary

Rafael Zegarra-Parodi ^{1,2,3,*}, Francesca Baroni ^{2,3,4}, Christian Lunghi ^{2,3,4} and David Dupuis ⁵

¹ A.T. Still Research Institute, A.T. Still University, Kirksville, MO 63501, USA



Perspective

Indigenous Epistemological Frameworks and Evidence-Informed Approaches to Consciousness and Body Representations in Osteopathic Care: A Call for Academic Engagement

Rafael Zegarra-Parodi, Francesca Baroni, Christian Lunghi, David Dupuis, Francesca Baroni, Christian Lunghi, David Dupuis, Francesca Baroni, Christian Lunghi, David Dupuis

Topic: Collection
Osteopathic and Allied Health Professions: Research, Health, Society and the Evidence

Keywords:
Osteopathy



https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11112149

Perspective

Tradition-Dismissive vs. Tradition Reconceptualized Approaches in Musculoskeletal Care: The Example of Osteopathic Care

Francesca Baroni, Christian Lunghi, David Dupuis, Francesca Baroni, Christian Lunghi, David Dupuis

Special Issue
Allied Health Professions: Research, Health, Society and the Evidence

Keywords:
Osteopathy



https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11112149

Review

Patient-Practitioner-Environment Synchronization: Four-Step Process for Integrating Interprofessional and Distinctive Competencies in Osteopathic Practice—A Scoping Review with Integrative Hypothesis

Christian Lunghi, Francesca Baroni, David Dupuis, Francesca Baroni, Christian Lunghi, David Dupuis

Topic: Collection
Osteopathic and Allied Health Professions: Research, Health, Society and the Evidence

Keywords:
Osteopathy



https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11112149

Video Abstract of our paper titled:

Epistemological Flexibility in Person-Centered Care: The Cynefin Framework for (Re)Integrating Indigenous Body Representations in Manual Therapy

Healthcare (Basel). 2024 Jun 5;12(11):1149.



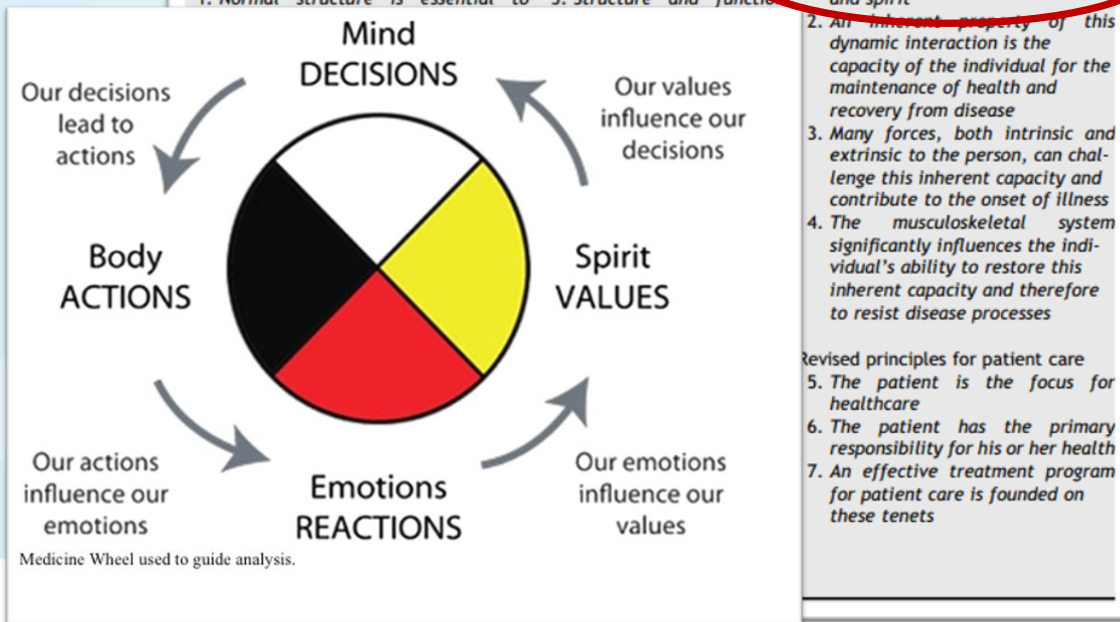
10° Congresso Nazionale ROI



Current osteopathic principles (Rogers et al., 2002)

Table 1 The three consensus borne 'sets' of osteopathic principles.

1922 principles ²	1953 principles ³	2002 principles ⁴
The osteopathic view of the cell, whether as a unit or as one of the millions making up the human body, is largely covered by the following statements: 1. Normal structure is essential to	1. The body is a unit 2. The body possesses self-regulatory mechanisms 3. Structure and function	Revised tenets of osteopathic medicine 1. A person is the product of dynamic interaction between body, mind, and spirit



2. An inherent property of this dynamic interaction is the capacity of the individual for the maintenance of health and recovery from disease

3. Many forces, both intrinsic and extrinsic to the person, can challenge this inherent capacity and contribute to the onset of illness

4. The musculoskeletal system significantly influences the individual's ability to restore this inherent capacity and therefore to resist disease processes

Revised principles for patient care

5. The patient is the focus for healthcare

6. The patient has the primary responsibility for his or her health

7. An effective treatment program for patient care is founded on these tenets



The 2002 Body-Mind-Spirit osteopathic tenet Historical perspectives with Dr. A.T. Still, MD, DO



Rafael Zegarra-Parodi at the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine in Kirksville, MO (USA) with the picture of A.T. Still showing his handwritten note of "Hocouethowa", the Shawnee word for doctor



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijosm



The Native American heritage of the body-mind-spirit paradigm in osteopathic principles and practices

Rafael Zegarra-Parodi^{a,b,c,*}, Jerry Draper-Rodi^d, Jason Haxton^e, Francesco Cerritelli^b

^a A.T. Still Research Institute, A.T. Still University, 800 W. Jefferson St., Kirksville, MO, 63501, USA

^b Clinical-Human Research Department, Non-profit Foundation COME Collaboration, Via A. Vespucci 188, 65126, Pescara, Italy

^c BMS Formation, 7 rue Georges Ville, 75116, Paris, France

^d Research Centre, University College of Osteopathy, 275 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1JE, UK

^e Museum of Osteopathic Medicine, A.T. Still University, 800 W. Jefferson St., Kirksville, MO, 63501, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Altered state of consciousness
Body-mind-spirit
Native american healing
Osteopathic principles
Shamanism

ABSTRACT

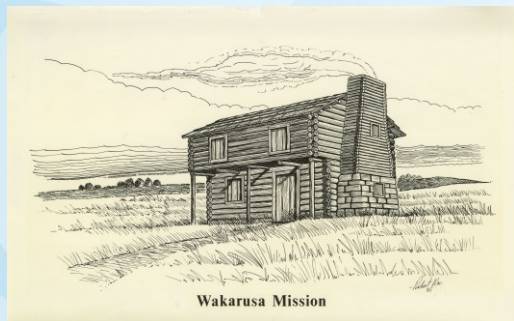
The purpose of the current commentary was to document how Native American healing traditions may have influenced A.T. Still in the development of osteopathic principles and how current neuroscience models describing shamanic healing practices of Native American healers may have applicability for osteopathic manipulative practices. Recent materials from the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine document when Still was living among the Shawnee and suggest he was familiar with their healing traditions. Although he introduced the body-mind-spirit paradigm, derived from a key Native American healing concept, into Western medicine, this paradigm still lacks scientific grounding. Neuroscience models may offer a theoretical framework for the 'spiritual' component of the body-mind-spirit paradigm with brain predictive processing models that describe spiritual experiences of patients in altered states of consciousness. With its traditional medicine heritage and current evidence-based approach, the osteopathic profession is in a unique position to promote the scientific model of holistic care.



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI



« In May, 1853, my wife and I moved to the Wakarusa Mission, Kans., occupied by the Shawnee tribe. It was all Indian there. » Dr. A.T. Still MD, DO



« Hoconethowa » the Shawnee word for doctor



MUSEUM OF
OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE 
A.T. Still University

Article

Indigenous roots of osteopathy

Lewis Mehl-Madrona^{1,2,3} , Josie A Conte^{1,2,4}
and Barbara Mainguy²

ALTER AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF OSTEOPATHY
NATIVE

AlterNative
1-10
© The Author(s) 2023
Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/11771801231197417
journals.sagepub.com/home/alan

 Sage



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

With permission from the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine, Kirksville, MO (USA)


REGISTRO DEGLI
OSTEOPATI D'ITALIA

Body representations among Indigenous peoples ?

1. The Body as an Integrated Whole

Holistic view: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health are interconnected.

2. Connection with Nature

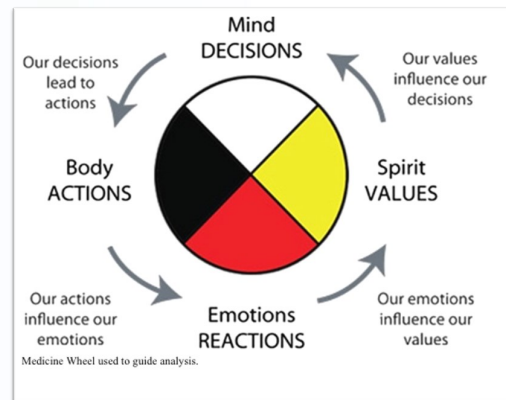
Health is linked to the natural environment and its rhythms.

3. Traditional Healing Practices

Use of medicinal plants, spiritual rituals, chants, and dances for restoration and well-being.

4. Spirituality and the Sacred

Body considered sacred; body care intertwined with spirituality and religious rituals.



Blessing from the Medicine Man, Howard Terpning®, 2011
© Howard Terpning Courtesy of The Greenwich Workshop, Inc.



Cosmogony of Indigenous peoples



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

Body representations in osteopathic care : Exploring lived bodily experiences across different levels *beyond intellectual processes*

Comparative framework of Indigenous narratives and body representations versus Western biomedical perspectives (Zegarra-Parodi et al., 2025)

Level	Indigenous Narratives and Body Representations	Western Biomedical-Focused Perspectives
Personal Level	Emphasis on subjective experience, self-awareness, and personal growth	Focus on individual biology and physiology (e.g., genetic makeup, physical health)
	Explores questions of identity, personal history, emotions, values, and purpose	Investigates the brain-body connection, mental health, and individual behavior
	Importance of emotions and internal states in shaping one's interaction with the world	Psychological and neurological factors are viewed as separate from spiritual or emotional aspects
Collective Level	Shared cultural values, roles, and group identity are central	Focus on social biology, social behaviors, and collective systems (e.g., group dynamics, norms)
	Interactions within communities shape identity and the experience of owning a body	Emphasis on societal structures and cultural influences on individual behavior
	Highlights collective rituals, traditions, and intergenerational knowledge	Less emphasis on ritualistic or spiritual practices; more focus on social norms and group behaviors
Transpersonal Level	Connection to spiritual, cosmic, or transcendent dimensions of existence	Typically, minimal focus on transcendent or spiritual aspects of the body
	Interconnectedness with all living beings, the environment, and the universe	Focus on the material world, often ignoring spiritual/existential dimensions
	Exploration of universal principles, collective unconscious, and spiritual experiences	Biological determinism and empirical science often exclude spiritual/existential perspectives

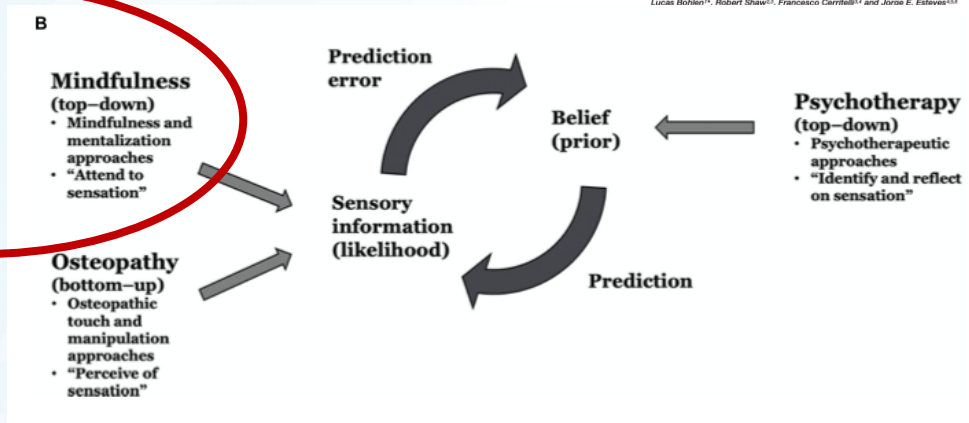
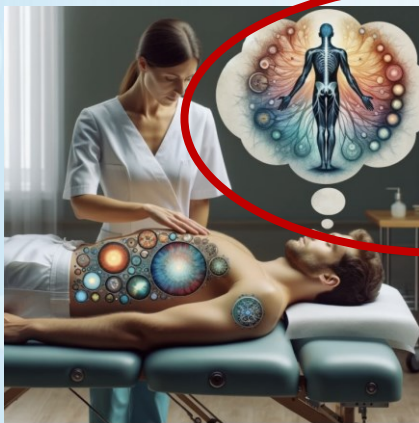
This table contrasts Indigenous perspectives on the body, which encompass personal, collective, and transpersonal dimensions, with Western biomedical models that focus primarily on individual biology and material aspects. It outlines how Indigenous worldviews emphasize interconnectedness, spirituality, and community, while Western perspectives prioritize physiological health, social.



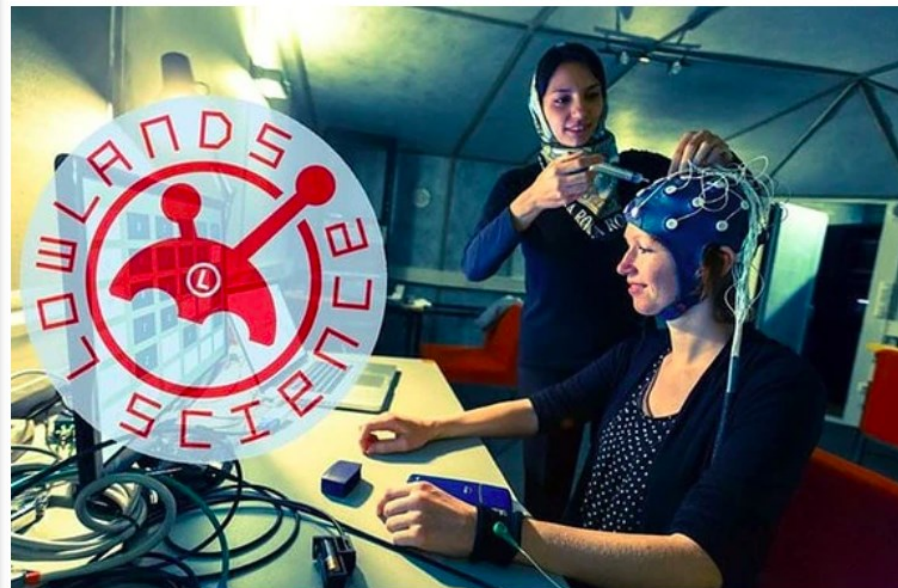
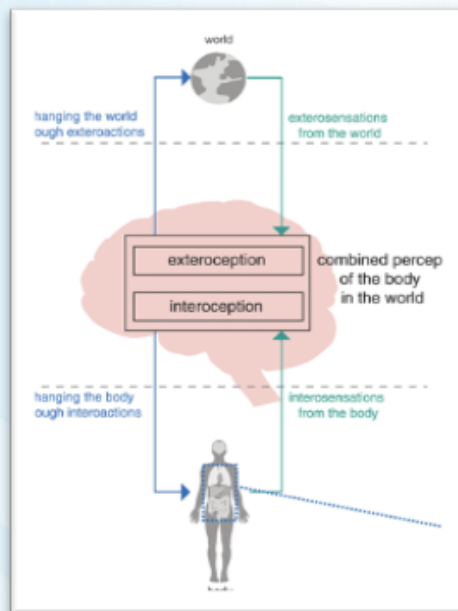
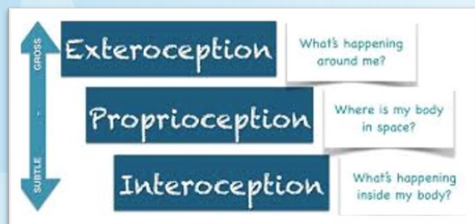
Diverse body representations

Rethinking models of clinical practice ?

Recent scientific research has investigated aspects of human experience traditionally linked to spirituality and philosophy in Western contexts, which have long been central to Indigenous healing systems and their non-materialistic views of the body.



Body awareness, « spiritual experiences », and placebo (van Elk and Aleman, 2017)



An image from an advertisement used to recruit participants at Lowlands music festival. (Photo credit: Lowlands.nl)



Neuroenchantment and the Power of Placebo | Michiel van Elk | TEDxAUCollege
TEDx Talks
25.4 M de suscritores
2.7 K vistas hace 5 años



10° Congresso Nazionale ROI



“Interoceptive” manual approaches to make visible the *invisible* (prolonged light touch without inducing joint movements)

 **frontiers**
in Human Neuroscience

ORIGINAL RESEARCH
published: 20 July 2017
doi: 10.3389/fnhum.2017.00368



Effect of Continuous Touch on Brain Functional Connectivity Is Modified by the Operator's Tactile Attention

Francesco Cerritelli^{1,2,3}, Piero Chiacchiaretta^{1,2*}, Francesco Gambi^{1,2}
and Antonio Ferretti^{1,2}

¹Department of Neuroscience, Imaging and Clinical Sciences, "G. D'Annunzio" University of Chieti-Pescara, Chieti, Italy,

²ITAB-Institute for Advanced Biomedical Technologies, "G. D'Annunzio" University of Chieti-Pescara, Chieti, Italy,

³Clinical-Based Human Research Department—C.O.M.E. Collaboration ONLUS, Pescara, Italy



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

Roi
REGISTRO DEGLI
OSTEOPATI D'ITALIA

Diverse views of the body

Rethinking models of clinical practice ?

Kraml M., Besse J-P. - European Journal of Osteopathic Research
www.ejor.org

EJOR.org
OPEN ACCESS

European Journal of Osteopathic Research

RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS



The Role of Mental Imagery in Osteopathic Palpation:
A qualitative study

Mario M. Kraml¹, MSc D.O.; Jean-Pierre Besse D.O.²



CHANGE YOUR MIND
BY CHANGING YOUR **PERCEPTION**

- **Mental and visual imagery combined with senses from embodied cognition**
- Enables both analytical and intuitive diagnostic strategies
- Guides the practitioner's decision-making strategies

International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine 28 (2018) 30–41



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/ijos



Osteopathic clinical reasoning: An ethnographic study of perceptual diagnostic judgments, and metacognition

Cindy McIntyre ^{a, *}, Judith Lathlean ^b, Jorge E. Esteves ^c

^a University College of Osteopathy, 275 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1JE, UK

^b Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southampton, UK

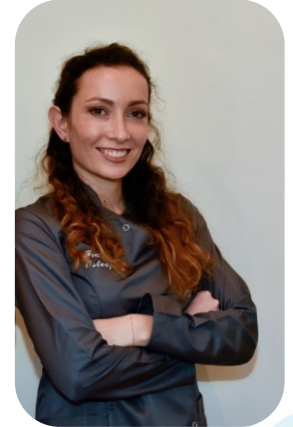
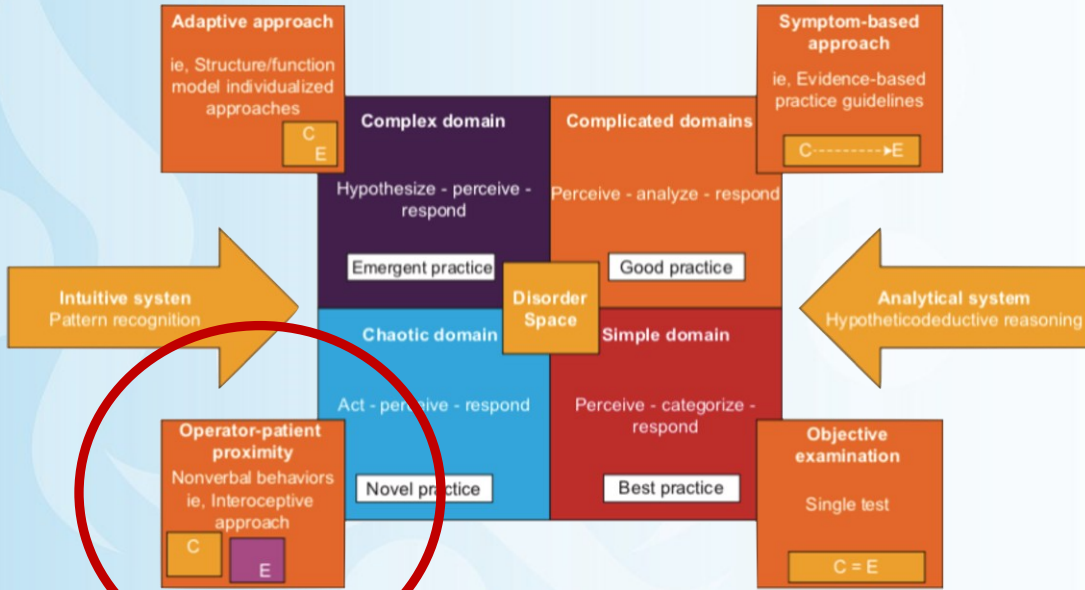
^c Instituto Piaget, Portugal



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

ROI
REGISTRO DEGLI
OSTEOPATI D'ITALIA

Making sense with the hands : using a person-centered framework in osteopathic care with interoceptive manual approaches (Lunghi and Baroni, 2019)



prolonged light touch without inducing joint movements



10° Congresso Nazionale ROI



The Cynefin Framework

The ability to integrate diverse worldviews and associated body representations

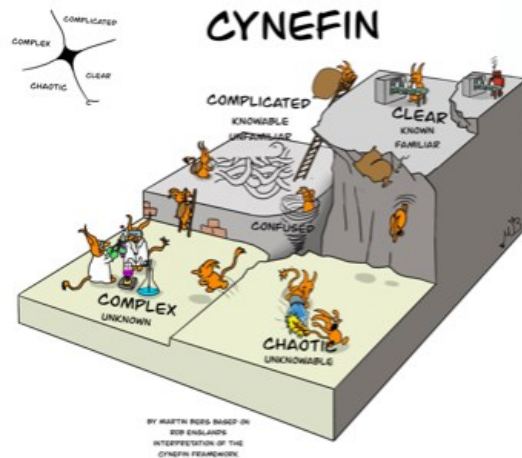
- **Materialistic worldview:** Focus on the physical body and pathophysiology; prevalent in Western medicine.
- **Non-materialistic worldview:** Emphasizes body-mind-spirit integration; common in Indigenous and holistic health systems.
- **Sociocultural health influences:** Varying experiences shape patient perceptions and responses to treatment, influencing both the complexity and approaches to care.
- **Adapting clinical reasoning:** The Cynefin framework encourages practitioners to assess each patient's worldview and beliefs to decide on the most appropriate therapeutic approach.

 Open Access Published by De Gruyter May 1, 2019

Cynefin Framework for Evidence-Informed Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making

Christian Lunghi and Francesca Baroni

From the journal *Journal of Osteopathic Medicine*
<https://doi.org/10.7556/jaoa.2019.053>



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

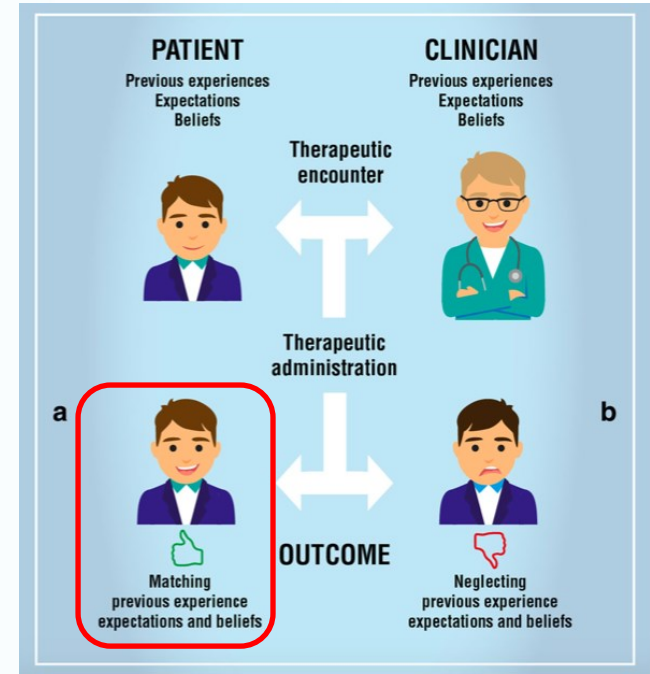
Take home message (1/3)

The concept of 'Spirit' in contemporary clinical care

Scope of practice

The Cynefin framework for person-centered care that embrace different worldviews

- **Symptom-oriented:** Focused on resolving specific symptoms (e.g., pain, stiffness) through targeted interventions.
- **Non-symptomatic (holistic) approach:** Focuses on the overall balance and well-being of the individual, including **prevention**, emotional health, and spiritual/existential considerations.



Take home message (2/3)

The concept of 'Spirit' in contemporary clinical care

Specific professional skills

- **Therapeutic alliance:** Giving meaning to the lived experience of illness
- **Manual approaches:** Enhancing body awareness with interoceptive manual techniques
- Embracing the diversity of sociocultural influences on body representations in health and disease
- **Integrative, holistic approach:** Epistemological flexibility



General
Osteopathic
Council

Osteopathic
Practice
Standards

Osteopathic Practice Standards

B1

You must have and be able to apply sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skills to support your work as an osteopath.

1. These should include:
 - 1.1 an understanding of osteopathic philosophy, principles and concepts of health, illness and disease and the ability to apply this knowledge critically, in the care of patients
 - 1.2 a knowledge of human structure and function sufficient to inform appropriate care
 - 1.3 a knowledge of pathophysiological processes sufficient to inform clinical judgement and to identify where patients may require additional or alternative investigation or treatment from another healthcare professional
 - 1.4 an understanding of the psychological and social influences on health sufficient to inform clinical decision-making and patient care
 - 1.5 an awareness of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry and the ability to critically evaluate scientific information and data to inform osteopathic care
 - 1.6 an understanding of the principles of biomechanics sufficient to apply osteopathic treatment safely and effectively
 - 1.7 well-developed palpatory skills
 - 1.8 an understanding of the characteristics of the normal and abnormal functioning of different body tissues and systems to inform the interpretation of clinical findings
 - 1.9 the ability to determine changes in health and function by the appropriate use of observation, palpation, motion and clinical evaluation
 - 1.10 problem-solving and thinking skills in order to inform and guide the interpretation of clinical and other data and to justify clinical reasoning and decision-making
 - 1.11 the ability to protect yourself physically and psychologically during interactions with patients to maintain your own health
 - 1.12 the ability to critically appraise your own osteopathic practice. For example, this could be achieved through:
 - 1.12.1 self-reflection
 - 1.12.2 feedback from patients
 - 1.12.3 feedback from colleagues
 - 1.12.4 case analysis or clinical audit.



10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI

ROI
REGISTRO DEGLI
OSTEOPATI D'ITALIA

Take home message (3/3)

The concept of 'Spirit' in contemporary clinical care

New paradigms available for osteopathic research : describing patients' and practitioners' experiences during osteopathic care

Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine
Volume 19, Issue 4, October 2014, Pages 235-246
© The Author(s) 2014. Article Reuse Guidelines
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2156587214534263>

SAGE
journals

Original Article

Sensations Experienced and Patients' Perceptions of Osteopathy in the Cranial Field Treatment

Jane Mulcahy, PhD and Brett Vaughan, MHLthSc (Osteo)

Mulcahy and Vaughan *Chiropractic & Manual Therapies* (2015) 23:6
DOI 10.1186/s12998-015-0055-x

RESEARCH Open Access

Exploring the construct validity of the Patient Perception Measure – Osteopathy (PPM-O) using classical test theory and Rasch analysis

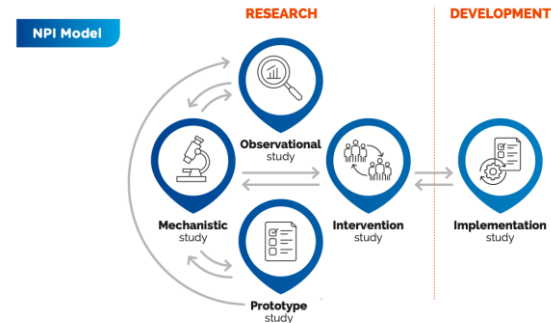
Jane Mulcahy^{1*} and Brett Vaughan^{1,2,3*}

CHIROPRATIC & MANUAL THERAPIES

The NPIS Model: A Standardized, Consensus-Based Framework for Evaluating Non-Pharmacological Interventions

Gregory Ninot, Emeline Descamps, Ghislaine Achalid, Sébastien Abad, Fabrice Berna, Christine Belhomme, François Carbonnel, Patrizia Carrieri, Patricia Dargent-Molina, Frederic Fiteni, Aude-Marie Foucaut, Alice Guyon, Arnaud Legout, Beatrice Lognos, Nicolas Molinari, Julien Nizard, Michel Nogues, François Paille, Pierrick Poisbeau, Lise Rochaix, Bruno Falissard

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2025.04.04.25325250>



Non-Pharmacological Intervention Society (2023)



10° Congresso Nazionale ROI



The concept of 'Spirit' within the 'Body-Mind-Spirit' osteopathic principle in contemporary clinical care

(Zegarra-Parodi et al., 2025)

Non-materialistic worldviews in osteopathic care

Pain Neurosciences Concepts :

Allow for diverse body representations in person-centered care, encompassing personal, collective, and transpersonal levels in the understanding of health and wellness.

Body Awareness in Manual Therapy :

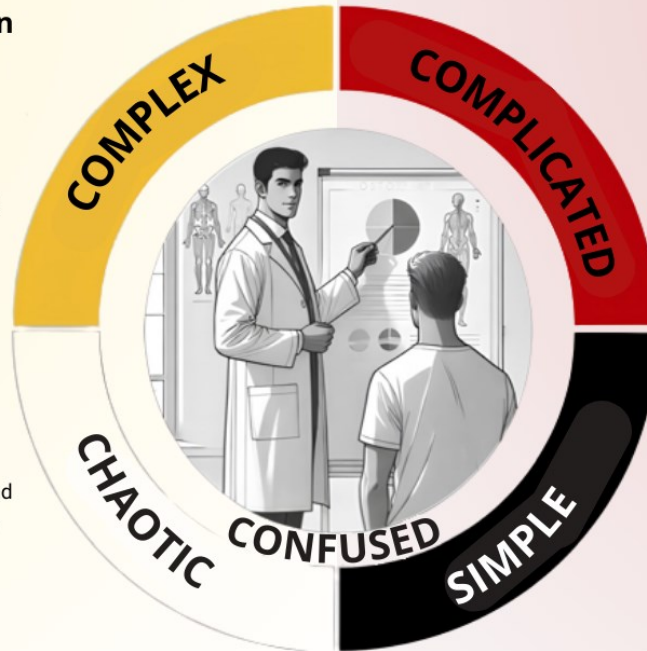
An approach focusing on the non-physical components of the body to initiate and facilitate systemic interactions.

Spiritual/Existential Dimension in Healthcare :

May be included to support patients' narratives and sense-making regarding their physical symptoms.

Bottom-up Influences :

May involve mindfulness-based practices to reinforce narratives during manual interoceptive techniques.



Materialistic worldviews in osteopathic care

Pain Neurosciences Concepts :

Applied within a biopsychosocial framework in person-centered care, encompassing personal and collective levels in the understanding of pain and physical symptoms.

Body Awareness in Manual Therapy :

An approach focusing on the physical components of the body to initiate and facilitate systemic interactions.

Spiritual/Existential Dimension in Healthcare :

Considered irrelevant for supporting patients' narratives and sense-making regarding their physical symptoms.

Top-down Influences :

May involve mindfulness-based practices for pain reduction and stress management.



***Thank you for your attention and for walking this path together
—may our steps honor the wisdom of different traditions.***



rafael@bms-formation.com

www.bms-formation.com



**10° Congresso
Nazionale ROI**



Roi
REGISTRO DEGLI
OSTEOPATI D'ITALIA



10° Congresso Nazionale ROI

BOLOGNA 20-21 GIUGNO 2025

Grazie per l'attenzione