

## \*\*\*BENEFICIAL CULTURAL BELIEFS\*\*\*

In the West, there has been stark little attempt to draw from other cultural models of community-based care. This, despite evidence that community based healing technologies in other countries are associated with notably favorable results in both the course and outcome of schizophrenia. For example, in an important series of multi-national studies conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) over the last three decades, consistent evidence using rigorous methods suggests that the course and outcome of schizophrenia is especially favorable in developing countries, particularly in rural India and Africa – areas which regularly use community healing technologies, and rely very little on psychotropic medication. This provides a sharp contrast to technologies of the West, which hold psychotropic medication as the most reliable and efficacious treatment available.

[One reason may be...] The meaning of psychosis among the indigenous: [There is a] ...deep sense of cultural respect for those in psychological crisis. Some, a native West African of the Dagara tribe who received a traditional Western Education writes:

**“In African Indigenous culture, just as there is high respect for artists and healers, there is a similar respect for the person who is experiencing a psychological crisis. This crisis is seen as the result of an intense interaction with the Other World, making the person think and act crazily. Resolving that crisis, in an indigenous community, results in releasing that person’s gifts to the community – the very gifts won through the person’s intense dealings with the Spirit. Every time I encounter a modern person who is in crisis, a person whom other people refer to as crazy, I wonder what gifts are being lost to the community.”**

“Improving Community-Based Care for the Treatment of Schizophrenia”