

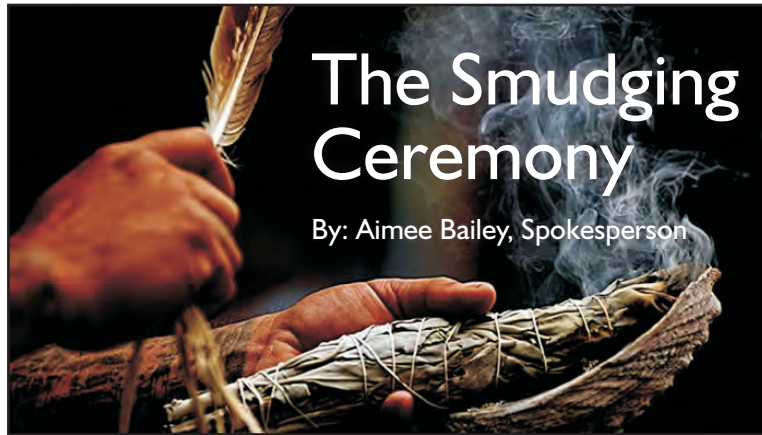
One of the first types of ceremonies that you are likely to encounter in the Indigenous world are those meant to cleanse your Spirit. One of these is the Smudging Ceremony.

Smudging is one of the most fundamental Anishnabe traditions. This ceremony is performed to open most Indigenous activities, whether it be a meeting, a sharing circle, or another activity. Smudging helps transport us from the hustle and bustle of our hectic world into the calm, focused world of a spiritual gathering.

As a note, many Indigenous traditions re-emerged at the same time that the New Age movement began. However, they should not be confused with each other.

Smudge Ingredients

A smudge is made by lighting a match to dried plant medicines so that it smolders. Most often White Buffalo Sage is what is used. This is very different from the sage we cook with, being native to the southwest United States. It is available in local



The Smudging Ceremony

By: Aimee Bailey, Spokesperson

stores, but our local area also has a sage that you can find throughout the Valley: Pearly Everlasting. It might even be growing in your own back yard.

Apart from sage, other plant medicines could be used such as tobacco, cedar, and sweetgrass. Each has its own purpose.

The medicine is usually held using a shell, stone or ceramic bowl as it burns.

How To Smudge

In smudging, we first cleanse our hands with the smoke rising from the smudge bowl as if we were washing them. Then, we

draw the smoke over our hearts, our mouths, eyes and ears; each for a particular reason.

We cleanse our hearts to release resentments and ill-will, and open it to compassion, gentleness, and caring for others. We cleanse our mouths so what we speak will be what we really mean to say, and that it is said in positive and caring way. We cleanse our eyes so they will see what we are meant to see, including the gifts given to us by the Creator. And finally, we cleanse our ears to clearly receive and understand the

intended messages from others, while appreciating the Spiritual Truths of Creation.

When the smudge has burned out, ashes should be respectfully set out on the earth to return to nature.

This article has been adapted from a passage of a book called Anishnabe 101: The basics of what you need to know to begin your journey on the Red Road. This book is available through the Circle of Turtle website.

The Circle of Turtle Lodge was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 1999 to restore Traditional Anishnabe Culture. It became a registered charity in 2015.

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