



The Simmering Cauldron

A mystical & magical resource from Mid Wales

www.thesimmeringcauldron.co.uk



Smudging

Introduction

Smudging with sacred herbs is a traditional Native American practice. It involves the ritual cleansing of the physical and spiritual bodies. Everything in nature has an auric field and where people and animals are concerned, if negative energies build up in the aura, illness and disease may occur. Illness manifests in the physical body, but many believe that it originates in the spiritual body. We owe it to ourselves to maintain ourselves and our environment in a state of balance.

Smudging can be used to cleanse our living spaces, our bodies and our possessions. When we buy or acquire any object, it may have negative energies attached to it. This is particularly true of crystals or any tool intended for spiritual or magical use.

Herbs used in smudging

White sage

This is the most commonly used herb, which can cleanse people, places and objects of negative energy. It is available in loose leaf form or bound into bundles. Bundles may also contain other herbs such as sweetgrass, lavender, copal, cedar or pinon (pine) to enhance the effect or bring in other positive energies.

Sweetgrass

This may be obtained in a plaited length and used alone or in combination and is considered to attract positive vibrations, especially when burned following a purification with sage.

Cedar

This is sometimes bound within a sage bundle, although cedar chips may be burned alone on charcoal. It has a pleasant, sweet aroma and is traditionally used in Native American House Blessing ceremonies.

Other herbs

It is possible to make smudging bundles from British herbs too. Mixtures of lavender, sage (although our own native sage is not the same as the American version) and rosemary may be tied together and dried for this purpose.

How to use smudge

Bundles may be lit from a candle flame and the flame extinguished by wafting either the bundle or a feather. It will then smoulder and smoke. It is helpful to carry a small dish or shell around to hold underneath the burning smudge to catch any ash that may fall. The bundle may be tamped out in the dish or shell and reused another time.

Loose leaf sage may be burned in a heatproof dish or shell following the same procedure of lighting and then extinguishing the flame so that the herb smoulders. Other herbs may be added if wished.

Smudging Feathers

Just as an abalone shell is traditionally used by Native Americans for burning sage, so the turkey feather is used to direct the smoke when smudging.

Smudging a house or room

It is often beneficial to do this when moving into a new home and the practice can be repeated as often as necessary. Visitors can sometimes leave negative energies or astral entities and these, if ignored may weaken our own energy levels and emotional states. Similarly workplaces are often in need of regular cleansing as fluorescent lights, air conditioning and lack of fresh air can add to the burden of stress. Before beginning, open the windows slightly to allow the negative vibrations to escape. Follow a clockwise path around the room or house. Direct the smoke using your hand or the traditional feather, concentrating on corners where stagnant energy tends to gather. After the cleansing is complete, you may wish to draw in positive energies by burning sweetgrass or a resin such as frankincense or copal.

Smudging a person

Negative energies can initially be swept from the aura using a feather (or your hand). Then the burning sage should be wafted into the aura beginning with the left foot, over the head and down the right hand side to the right foot. You may wish then to concentrate on the Chakras (see our separate leaflet), smudging these both back and front.

Smudging objects

Crystals in particular will need initial cleansing as they will have been mined, transported and will have been handled by many people before reaching you. Any object, especially if it is to be used magically or for spiritual purposes such as tarot decks or other divination tools will serve you better if cleansed. In these cases, it is advisable to place the smudging herbs in a heatproof dish and hold the object in the smoke.

'Ho Mitakuye Oyasin!'

We are all one

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