

Sacred Tobacco

March 17-19, 2017
Camp Asbury, Hiram, Ohio

This workshop will focus on tobacco and the various spiritual aspects of it as a plant, as well as how it is used in smoking, offering, and in making prayer ties.



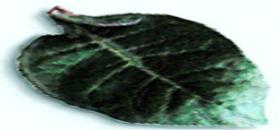
Tobacco (Semah)

Semah, or tobacco, is one of the four sacred plants. It represents the Eastern Direction and the mind. The Anishinaabe use a form of tobacco known as kinikinik, or a red willow mix. Because it opens the door to the creator, When tobacco is used to make smoke, it is one of the most sacred of plants for Native people. Some elders say that tobacco is used to connect the worlds since the plant's roots go deep into the earth, and its smoke rises high into the sky. This plant is highly respected and highly honoured. Giving tobacco is a beautiful way of our people. Ceremonies using tobacco invoke a relationship with the energies of the universe, and ultimately the Creator, and the bond made between earthly and spiritual realms is not to be broken. There are four traditional Tobacco uses: Prayer, Offering, Purification, and Respect. None of them will

harm you.

Prayer

When we put sacred tobacco into our Sacred Pipes, we are also using that tobacco as a communicator to the sky world where all of our ancestors have gone on before us. We do not inhale the sacred smoke that comes from the pipe. When the smoke rises, it is taking our prayers with it up to the Creator and all of our relatives who have gone on before us. Our elders show us that when we finish with prayers, we sprinkle a small amount of tobacco on the drum. This is a way of giving back to and thanking the Creator for all he has given to us. Tobacco can be used on a daily basis as each new day is greeted with prayers of thankfulness. Many elders say to hold it in your prayers of thankfulness. They also add that you are to hold it in your left hand as this is the hand closer to your heart.



Offerings

Traditionals burn tobacco before storms. It is used to pray that powerful storms won't hurt our families. To pray with tobacco in your Native language is very powerful. It can make a difference in the physical world.

When taking something from the Earth, it is best to always explain to the spirit of the plant why it is being done and offer some tobacco in return for the generosity and help of the plant which shared itself so freely.

Purification

Tobacco is used in the offering of prayer to the Creator, acting as a medium for communication. It is either offered to the fire, so the smoke can lift the prayers to the Creator, or it is set on the ground in a nice, clean place. It means we come humbly to our creator. We proclaim our innocence. When you want to speak to the creator, we are told to make an offering of the tobacco plant. An Elder will take tobacco ties and offer them to the fire or offer it back to Mother Earth on behalf of the Sacred Circle.

Purification and working with a clear mind and heart are essential in asking the land to provide for people. This is keeping with the Native belief that if you do things in a good way, good things will follow.

If careful attention is not established, the result will not be as good. Sometimes elders place tobacco on the water. This shows our thanks to the Creator, for the lifeblood of our Mother the earth that is provided to us. At this time we also acknowledge the moon who in her 28-day cycle cleanses the water by filtering it through the sands



Respect

Respecting our tobacco should be taken seriously. Sacred tobacco is used for prayers of gratitude to thank the Creator of Mother Earth for our many blessings, such as good health, great fishing, and good crops. When any plant is picked or any animal is taken, Tobacco and Prayer must be given to show respect. By honouring all our relations we demonstrate that we have not forgotten our place within the web of life. To offer someone tobacco is to ask that you and the person receiving the tobacco be of one heart, one mind and one spirit. Tobacco is offered when you ask someone to do a ceremony for you, such as a name-giving, drumming or singing for someone, to do a smudging ceremony, a sweatlodge or sacred pipe ceremony; any ceremony. This signifies that you and the one doing the ceremony are of one heart, one mind and one spirit, that you have the same purpose.

Another way that is used to bring people together in unity is that it is used to heal rifts between people. If you have a disagreement that causes ill feelings or someone has treated you badly, or if you have treated someone badly, you can bring tobacco and ask to speak to the person. Then of course, you would do your best to heal the rift, not to make things worse, so tobacco assists us in making amends, getting over resentments, healing emotional wounds and in forgiving people. Even a little tobacco can be given if you do not have money for a pouch. It is the sacredness that counts, not the amount. The person can decide to accept your tobacco or reject.

Some of our Elders still offer tobacco to everyone who visits them. Tobacco is given to elders when one is seeking advice. It is always good to offer tobacco when seeking knowledge or advice from an Elder or when a Pipe is present. It shows gratitude and respect for the elder whose advice you are seeking. Tobacco is given when you appreciate a teaching from an elder or even a younger person if you value what that person has told you. It is a way of showing respect and gratitude.

What to expect:

The workshop will do several shamanic journeys over the course of the weekend. A large altar/vortex is created with many stones. This creates a massive energetic field.



Who Should Come:

All interested parties with journey experience.

What to Bring:

Please bring any rocks or moose related items that want to come along. A journal with colored pencils or pens is encouraged as well as any comforts such as blankets, pillows, etc.

Meals

Dinner will be served on Friday night, Saturday- breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch---departure at 3pm

When and Where to Come

Registration will begin at 12:00 noon on Friday, December 2nd at Camp Asbury. The workshop will begin Friday running int the night, Sat-all day and into the evening, and Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The workshop will be held at Camp Asbury, 10776 Asbury Rd., Hiram Ohio 44234

What to Pay

The fee for the workshop is \$425 if paid in full by Febraury1st, 2017. If paid after February 1st, 2017, the fee is \$475. This includes room and six hot meals as listed above. The deposit will not be transferred or refunded. It will be applied to the guaranteed fee of Camp Asbury.

To hold your space, send \$120.00 nonrefundable deposit now.

For further information, kindly call Lauren at 216-272-8438 or e-mail lauren@therockgirls.com to reserve a space in the circle. Please send a check, payable to The Rock Girls inc. Mail the check to White Silent Wisdom PO Box 24455, Cleveland Ohio 44124. Once paid-in-full you will receive info on your stay at Camp Asbury.

Due to the workshop focus and the unique facilities, the attendance will be limited to 26 people.

One White Horse Standing

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