

My Daily Practice of Smudging

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Western medicine is recognized and accepted as the best way to treat physical symptoms and imbalances, and to slow the progression of disease.

That is why the first thing I reach for is my thyroid medication. While this helps correct a physical imbalance in my body, it is another medicine I reach for to help balance the emotional, mental and spiritual demands of a new day.

The second medicine I reach for is sage, and I start each day by stepping out onto my balcony to smudge in the four directions and give thanks to the creator. Sage is one of the Anishinaabe's sacred medicines that also include sweet grass, cedar and tobacco.

For me, smudging is a way to connect with my ancestors who called Turtle Island home for millennia and this act gives me comfort throughout my day. It also gives me time for quiet reflection and to thank the creator for the many gifts he has conferred on me.

The smoke that rises from the burning sage takes away the negativity that I may have absorbed the day before and allows me to start the new day with a fresh, clear perspective. As a result, I can be a better person for myself and for others.

The aroma of the burning sage focuses my attention and swirling smoke focuses my intentions.

I wash my hands in the smoke with the hope that I will touch life today in a gentle and kind way.

As I waft the smoke over my head, my mind becomes clear of negativity.

When the smell of the sage passes before my nose it reminds me to revel in the aromas and fragrances that stimulate my memories.

And when the smoke passes over my eyes and ears it helps me to see and hear the best from people while giving me the visual and auditory acuity to appreciate the splendor of creation.

I can taste the sage as it drifts by my mouth and it gives me the strength to speak kindly of others even when spoken to in an unkind way and to taste the diversity of flavours from the creator's bounty.