



## **Ritual**

It is very important that we bring ritual and ceremony back into our lives, without healthy ritual and ceremony we will become consumed by unhealthy ritual and ceremony. There is a ritual to drinking alcohol and consuming drugs, and unhealthy ritual but nonetheless it is a way one fills the void if their life is lacking healthy ritual and ceremony. Ritual is any action, undertaken with intention and belief that grows powerful through repetition and connection. The repetition can be personal, through this lifetime or many life times. It can be cultural, such as tooth brushing after every meal. Or it can be ancestral, such as the autumn dances held throughout California by the Indians who have lived here for thousands of years.

Finding ones own personal ritual is a very healing experience. All rituals have a beginning point. Many traditional rituals began as dreams or visions. Often the ritual evolved out of the enactment of the dream or vision. Direct instruction for ritual sometimes came from Spirit helpers. This still happens today. It is possible that Spirit will instruct you through dreams or visions if you ask and open your heart.

Another way ritual evolves is by paying attention to ones feelings as one makes or attempts to make Sacred or Healing actions. The right actions feel good. A sense of well-being and connection, of magic creeps into ones soul. Some people experience this quickly, but for others it evolves slowly. Patience and commitment are required as with any new endeavor.

Personal herbal rituals can evolve out of brewing tea or burning herbs. You can research how your genetic or spiritual ancestors used herbs. You can ask your family elders about various practices used in the past. You can read or take classes, using information while watching your feelings. I gather herbs in a Sacred Way. With my intention made known to the plant, or following the plant's instruction to me. This act alone weaves me into the web of life and the universe. It connects me to both my ancestors and to all people and beings who have lived in a Sacred Way.

The ritual of gathering herbs in a Sacred Way is powerful healing for my soul. the time I spend in ritual with the Plant People sustains me through computer time and cement jungle time. When you find your right and perfect ritual, I know it will sustain you too. Let the searching flow through your heart; let it be spontaneous. There is no exact recipe for your personal healing rituals, but with patience and commitment I know you will find them.

Please be aware that during pregnancy, it is not a good time to begin experimenting with smudge. Many of the herbs can cause miscarriage in people whose bodies are not familiar with their use. If you become pregnant, moderate or stop your use of smudge. Avoid inhaling it directly or avoid it entirely. If you are having trouble getting pregnant, you might want to avoid smudging for a few months just in case it may help.