

Medicine Lodge Ceremony Information

Dear Friends, this document is an introduction to those who haven't done a Medicine Lodge before. I hope it is useful for you.

Ya'Acov and Susannah were trained to run lodges by the Deer Tribe in the 1980's and have been running them ever since. Sweat lodges are by no means exclusively a Native American ceremony and though we learnt a lot from the Deer Tribe, the ceremony we run is not a Native American ceremony. In many parts of the world, including Europe, our ancestors came together to sweat, sing, and pray for themselves, their loved ones and communities and for the community of life on earth. The ceremony that we run has evolved over these past 20 years and is based very firmly in the Movement Medicine mandala through which we work.

What's it for?

- The ceremony is a purification for body, heart and mind
- It is a healing ceremony
- It supports us to connect with the elements in a very direct way
- It provides an opportunity to find more strength and clarity in who we are
- It provides a context for us to connect more deeply with our love for life

What happens?

- We build the lodge together
- We learn songs
- We set up a super safe space
- We heat rocks on a beautiful fire with everything being done in a ceremonial way that is heartfelt but not precious
- We enter the lodge, which represents our willingness to come back to the womb of the earth to find healing, nourishment and balance
- Rocks are brought in and water is poured with prayers
- Everyone has the opportunity to pray for themselves, their loved ones, their ancestors, for life on earth, and to ask for support for their own journey and dreams
- People can leave if they need to and there is always someone around to support
- The ceremony happens in 5 'rounds' or sections. Each begins with prayers and songs and the focus of the round is brought to everyone's attention
- Between the rounds, the door is opened and fresh air and water are brought in

Are there contra-indications?

- If you have low or high blood pressure, it is best to sit close to the door
- Heart problems and medicine lodges do not mix well
- Women on their moon cycle are welcome

- If you are concerned about any health issues, it is best to consult a qualified medical practitioner and ask them if it is OK to participate in an outdoor sauna

If I need to leave, will I be allowed back in?

- Yes, the door is opened at the beginning of the next round

If I am unable to enter inside the lodge, can I participate in other ways?

- Yes. Doing the lodge from outside is perfectly acceptable and can be a very beautiful experience
- You can also work with the fire if you feel grounded and strong

After the ceremony

- You may feel quite open and refreshed or a little vulnerable
- It is important to eat a little and to drink plenty of water after the ceremony
- We will take time on the Sunday in the dance to embody what we have experienced and to consider how to share and integrate our experiences into our day to day lives

All in all, a medicine lodge is a perfectly safe and very strong, healing, community ceremony. In all the years we have offered this, we have never had any serious injuries or problems. We offer this ceremony because of what we have gained from it over the years. We hope that it will bring a great deal of benefit into your life too. Please feel free to offer feedback or ask more questions.

Ya'Acov Darling Khan
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