



Smudging



The practice of smudging involves the ceremonial burning of traditional medicines, which are used to **cleanse** the body, mind, and spirit. Smudging is often done in the morning or at the beginning of a meeting or ceremony, to help enter into the rest of the day in a good way.

When introducing students to the practice of smudging, it is important to include an Elder, knowledge keeper, or someone who holds traditional teachings in the process.

Smudges are typically lead and held by those who are knowledgeable about this practice and have received traditional teachings.

When smudging in a group, members typically stand in a **circle** and the smudge is offered one-by-one. It is important to note that no one is required to smudge and an individual may choose to pass when being offered the smudge.



THE PROCESS OF SMUDGING

Individuals may choose to smudge different parts of their body or being, depending on what they need that day.



Some commonly smudged areas include:

- your eyes, to see good things
- your ears, to hear good things
- your mouth, to speak good things that come from kindness
- your head, to welcome good thoughts
- your heart, to feel in a good way
- your feet, to walk on the earth with great respect

MEDICINES COMMONLY USED FOR SMUDGING

The Four Sacred Medicines are **tobacco, sweetgrass, sage, and cedar**. Each of these medicines can be used for smudging.



RELATED ANISHINAABEMOWIN WORDS

- Nookwezhigewin** – Smudging
- Nookwezige** – He/she is smudging medicinally
- Nookwezigna**– A medicine for burning to make a smudge

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do you think the practice of smudging could help one to start their day off in a good way?
2. What are practices from you culture that help you to feel grounded, calm and focused?

