

INVOCATION: The First Native American Liquid Smudge

Let me tell you the story of how I created INVOCATION. So that you understand the process that brought this into being, let us first take a look at Native American traditional incense, often called smudge.

Amerindian incenses (sage, Canadian cedar, sweet grass and juniper) are used by all First Nations in North America. The smoke of these herbs purifies and is an offering to Spirit. The Elders say that nature spirits feed on the odor of our offerings. This is the reason why plants and incenses used as offerings by all religions throughout the world give pleasant and inspiring odors.

For Native Americans smoke offerings also have an important role as ritual purification. All First Nations of Great Turtle Island (North America), smudge people and places at the beginning of every important event. We use sage, sweet grass and/or cedar. We prepare the space and the people by cleansing and clearing away any useless or harmful energy or any evil spirits by the means of this ritual. We thus prepare the participants and the environment for the activities we wish to engage in. This is often called creating sacred space.

One of my teachers, OhShinnah Fastwolf, a wonderful and powerful woman warrior, shaman and moon priestess of the Apache people, studied the process of fumigation by means of scientific resources. She tried to understand why all the First Nations, without exception, used these herbs. Together with researchers at the university where she was working, she discovered that the smoke of these plants takes an electrical charge in the air molecule called the positive ion, and carries it away. The

positive ion is a vehicle for pollution by maintaining, for example, the particles of dust in the air.

The negative ion, the opposite charge in the air molecule, is beneficial for our health. We find a high concentration of negative ions by the sea. The movement of the salt water waves favors the presence of negative ions. Thunderstorms also create negative ions. We also find them in high concentrations in pine forests of pines and on Granite Mountains. This is the reason why the air is so vivifying in these places. It is saturated with negative ions.

Today, we find on the market air purifiers that generate negative ions. You may notice when these devices have worked for a while near a wall and are then moved, a ring or outline on the wall, around the purifier. This is due to the fact that the negative ion, when it is emitted, cancels the charge of the first positive ion it meets. The particles of dust held by the positive ion are then going to agglutinate on the closest surface, in this particular case on the wall near the device.

Smudging with cedar, sage and sweet grass works in the same way. According to Native American traditions, the smoke of these plants eliminates evil, heavy and harmful energies and spirits. All the consciousnesses of the universe need a vehicle to move in the physical world. We form the hypothesis that negative spirits and all forms of heavy and evil energies, like particles of dust and pollution, use the positive ion to move. By eliminating the negative ions these harmful energies are no longer able to remain in our environment.

Today numerous therapists and health practitioners on all continents appreciate the effects of smudging because it eliminates from the start many of the electromagnetic obscurations in the aura of the patient. Not only does smudging offer the advantage

of offering a more neutral electromagnetic field in which to work but it also allows an easy elimination of the stagnant energies that may have remained in the environment after the departure of the patient.

First Nations are not the only ones using this technique. All spiritual traditions of the world use incense as an offering as well as to purify and inspire.

Some years ago, I was frequently invited to care for First Nations patients from the far North hospitalized in medical centers in Quebec City. Often, these people were in intensive care after an operation and it was impossible to do the ritual purification with cedar, sage and sweet grass. I was limited by the very dense atmosphere which reigns in hospitals and as a result, could not obtain habitual results even by working harder.

As life would have it, not long after these experiences I met people who were producers of essential oils. As I was talking with them this brilliant idea came to me. Maybe the essential oils of our sacred plants could replace smudging in places where we could not burn them. I immediately spoke of this idea to my friends. We thus tried to extract the essential oil of the sage which we use. The sage that we tried on that occasion is a very special, strong and resistant variety which grows in the American Southwest. With satisfaction, we found that this sage produced a good quantity of very nice-smelling, interesting oil. The essential oils of Canadian cedar, or *thuya occidentalis*, its scientific name, were already available on the market. But a first obstacle appeared when we discovered that sweet grass does not contain enough oil to allow a feasible extraction. It is then that I began to experiment various methods of extraction. Very quickly, thanks to the intuition which guided me through all this research, I found a method of extraction. I then added to this extract the oils of sage

and cedar. The mixture of these three constituents gave a fascinating result; this preparation cleansed fairly adequately the atmosphere and electromagnetic fields of any heaviness or pollution. But another problem appeared; the unpleasant smell which that this first mixture had. I then began research that brought me to France to meet a great perfume artist, whose father was also a renowned perfumer, who graciously shared his methodology with me. With this understanding I undertook a process of research and development on the improvement of the product which ultimately took three years to complete.

To perform the same work as our traditional smudging we also needed to be able to use INVOCATION as an offering. Some specific herbs were added and a ceremonial blessing was included in the manufacturing process. The inclusion of a ritual aspect in the elaboration of INVOCATION did multiply tenfold its therapeutic potential and allowed for its use in traditional ceremonies. The effect was very surprising. It actually carried this traditional purification to new levels of efficiency. The effect was in fact stronger than the traditional method especially inside a house or a building. I understood then that we needed to make INVOCATION available to a maximum of people. That is why I chose to add in the formulation of INVOCATION the essence of a purifying or spiritual plant representative of each of the human races: lavender for the white race, frankincense for the black race and sandalwood for the yellow race. INVOCATION could now travel everywhere on the planet without losing its spiritual and therapeutic properties. I had arrived to the conclusion of this fascinating research.

This extraordinary product, like any high quality perfume, takes two months to prepare. Although most of the preparation is now done by INVOCATION employees, I am the only one to perform the ceremonial blessing, at least for now. We take care

to always create a luminous atmosphere around all aspects of the preparation, making sure the people involved are happy, joyous, in a good ambiance and that there are flowers and beautiful music, especially during the bottling and packaging. We have people and not machines doing the work.

This is the process that gave birth to INVOCATION: the first Native American Liquid Smudge. It was first made available on the Canadian market in 1999. As I am writing this English translation of the book about INVOCATION in 2006 it has been distributed in 10 different countries.

When used inside, INVOCATION is more effective than traditional smudge. Its action is immediate. There are no ashes or matches involved and INVOCATION gives excellent results even when windows remain closed. In traditional smudging the windows need to be open for the process to be effective.

It took me a long time before I understood why we get with this product results superior to those obtained by traditional smudging. Finally, it was a friend who is also a scientist, who suggested a logical answer. When we make burn our sacred herbs, their pleasant smelling molecules are released into the air. However, they have been partly destroyed or altered by combustion. As the liquid incense consists of essential oil and unaltered extracts, their molecules remain intact in the air. That is why, except outside in ceremonial circumstances, I now always use liquid smudge. Numerous Elders and medicine people of several nations and many healers and health practitioners have confirmed the extraordinary efficiency of INVOCATION. We can easily evaluate its effects simply by noticing the sudden improvement of our perception of the light in the rooms where it is used. The negative ions released by the liquid smudge as it transforms the charge in the air molecules produce a

noticeable clarification and purification of the ambiance in any given indoor environment.

INVOCATION cleanses the air and ambient energy promoting harmony and relaxation. We can feel an immediate uplifting quality to the air where it is has been released. When working, if we are tired, our spirits clear after the use of INVOCATION and we are then more capable of concentration. INVOCATION can thus energize during a working period and relax us when the time comes to rest. Our perceptions are clearer and our breathing is easier. Four keywords can define the basic energies INVOCATION may amplify: *purification, protection, healing and inspiration.*

We can use INVOCATION to favor relaxation, rest, concentration and healing. We use it to augment and cleanse our energies, our house and our spiritual tools.

Invocation also has the advantage to be used in the house, at work, in the car and even in an airplane. We use it upon waking, before meditation and prayer, before meetings at work, before offering healing or therapeutic help, prior to sharing love with our beloved, and before sleep. INVOCATION will be used during spiritual events, to prepare interesting activities or to cleanse the air after difficult moments since INVOCATION can transform a mood or the atmosphere of a given situation.

Several testimonials describe improvement of chronic respiratory problems. We have received numerous testimonials of people who have alleviated insomnia by using the liquid smudge. They apply a few drops to their pillow and leave the bottle open on the bedside table. INVOCATION decreases conflict in the work place and favors harmonious domestic relations by creating a bubble of protection for the person who is easily influenced by people at home or at work. As an example we have the written testimonial of a spiritual practitioner whose work in the armed forces

caused many difficult inner conflicts because of the rather violent ambiance at work at odds with the peaceful dispositions created by his spiritual practice. Upon using INVOCATION and thus creating this energetic bubble he reported being able to retain balance and peace throughout the work day. INVOCATION cleanses the atmosphere and the energy around us. It is thus generally beneficial for health. INVOCATION will favor harmony and balance on all levels. We regularly receive testimonies by people experimenting with INVOCATION which describe new surprising applications we never thought of. Refreshing cut flowers and bouquets by bringing hands with several drops of INVOCATION on them, around the flowers when they start to droop after a few days, is one example of such an application. Here are some ways in which you can use INVOCATION:

- To clear up your energies, put a little of INVOCATION in the hollow of your hands and bring them, palms opened and turned towards you, around your body.
- To favor a sound sleep, you can put some drops on your pillow.
- To cleanse a place, put some drops or spray in the four corners of the room. Drops can be put on some bisque ceramic, on a small tissue, on absorbent cotton or directly on the ground. Be careful, some plastics and paints can react to the essential oils present in INVOCATION.
- To cleanse an object, put some drops on this object or on your hands which you then bring around the object.
- You can use a diffuser of essential oils.
- Be careful with the diffusers who use a small candle to warm oil; you must put a small quantity of water before a few drops of INVOCATION are added, because it is inflammable.

- INVOCATION can also be used as a perfume; spray or put a few drops on wrists and behind ears.

Note that being a natural product, without any preservatives, INVOCATION can change color when exposed to the sun. Some minute deposits may sometimes also occur. This does not at all alter its efficiency. INVOCATION will remain effective and stable for many years.

There are sixteen botanical species which compose our formulation. Each of the herbs used in INVOCATION has a particular purpose and meaning. Let us take a moment together to look at certain blessings offered by these plants.

The wild sage or white sage, also called buffalo sage, (*salvia apiana*) is a very masculine plant. It is the strongest of the purifying plants in this blend. Sage dispenses a strong earthy smell. The significance of its English name, sage, also means wise old man. Many sage varieties contain hormones. It is probably one of the reasons Native Americans consider it as a masculine species. In fact herbalists will often use the garden variety to harmonize the hormonal balance in women. This sage is a very sturdy plant. It grows freely in the desert, wild and pungent. Its leaves contain a good percentage of oils, which helps it to survive in the dry hot sand of the desert. These oils also offer excellent combustion when we burn it as incense. Sage is a part of all First Nation ceremonies. The smoke purification that it offers is so powerful that it sometimes causes respiratory discomfort in those who have lung diseases due to excess mucus. We often surround our sacred objects with sage before storing them so that they are constantly protected against any evil or negative influence.

We also add another sage, *artemisia tridentata*, or in English, sagebrush, also called desert herb. This sage is extremely powerful and we use only a very small quantity. It acts to cleanse any unhealthy and evil influence which may have corrupted our spiritual energies. Our Spirit is so powerful. Most devils and demons were created by humans. It is from inside us that they take their force and their very existence. This sage is useful to chase away the thoughts-forms that gave birth to these tendencies in our psyche. It can help us to refine our thoughts, our words and our actions so that we avoid all disharmonies and inappropriate energies.

Sweet grass is the most feminine herb in INVOCATION. We also call sweet grass the hair of the Earth-mother. Like long hair it is most often seen braided in long plaits. Often, medicine people will burn sage to clear the air and then sweet grass to attract beneficial energies. It is used as purification but its energies are more of an inviting, welcoming nature. It calls out the best in people and creates a soothing, comforting ambiance.

Sweet grass has a unique, sweet and very inspiring smell. The braids of sweet grass are often placed over the door of houses, suspended from the rear-view mirror of the automobile or on spiritual objects so that their beneficial energy can protect them.

Sweet grass is often used in the weaving of Native American baskets. We find it on the altars and in sacred spaces of all Indian nations. It is used in numerous rites and ceremonies.

Canadian cedar (*thuya occidentalis*) represents the perfect balance of feminine and male polarities. It is also called the Tree the Peace, because of Deganawidah, a very

important messianic figure in North America.¹ Deganawidah brought the great Law of Peace to the Iroquoian people and formed what is now known as the League of Six Nations, one of the first forms of United Nations to exist on earth. Everywhere he went, Deganawidah planted a cedar as a symbol of Unity and Peace for the people. Cedar brings balance and healing. It's one of the most important medicines of the Native American people. The leaves of thuya, as it is called in Europe, is used in many therapies, in herbal teas, in ritual medicine baths, in the sweat lodge and as an incense or smudge. This tree is among the most important for the First Nations of the Northeast. Many healing ceremonies use cedar. The oil which we use is prepared in a special way. It dominates our formulation. Its influence favors balance, peace and serenity. It cleanses the air and eliminates pollutants and acaroids. It is ***vermifuge, destroying physical and psychic parasites. Cedar enhances physical health and favors longevity. Its blessings are uncountable and we are very grateful for all its gifts.

Juniper is used to cleanse the rooms where we sleep. It will bring beautiful dreams and enhance the ability to remember them. Juniper has an influence on the brain which predisposes to sleep and promotes a enlightened state of consciousness during dreamtime. It's a very spiritual incense which is also used a lot by Tibetan Buddhists. It favors inspiration and will center consciousness on high ideals.

Corn spirits are obtained by the fermentation of corn in water. The fermented liquid obtained is then distilled. This gives a product called ethanol which is used for manufacturing perfume and many other products. We use food grade natural corn spirits that is purified through a special filtering process before being integrated into

¹ Some Indian nations say that the Tree of Peace is white pine. Actually all coniferous trees can be considered to symbolise immortality thus peace.

INVOCATION. Corn spirits allows INVOCATION to deliver an immediate burst of fragrance into the air. This is essential for the purification that we receive when we use INVOCATION.

Corn is a spiritual and material legacy for the Indian people. For many nations it was the main food stable, supporting the people with a nourishing cereal that could be cultivated and was easy to store. Other than being the most important food source for those nations who practiced agriculture it was also a spiritual sacrament. Corn flour and corn pollen are used in countless rituals and ceremonies. All people of the world have a cereal that is considered sacred: the sacred Eucharist of the Christians is made of wheat; the Buddhists have rice, the Africans millet, etc. Corn is the sacred cereal of the Americas. It represents the gifts and countless blessings that we receive from the Earth-mother. It plays the same role here in INVOCATION. It is the support, the vehicle which quickly carries the subtle fragrances through the air. Corn was given to the Amerindians by the *Woman from the Stars also called Sky Woman*. In many Native American myths Sky Woman gives birth to humanity. Upon departing from earth the gift she gives to her children who were to become the Indian nations are four plants; corn, beans, squash and tobacco.

As a rule, when an organic essential oil is available we privilege it, even at a superior cost. So, most of the oils used in INVOCATION are either organic or wild crafted. We continue our research so that we can one day have a 100 % organic product. In the various manufacturing stages of INVOCATION, we have several ways to purify the product which eliminates many disharmonious substances.

Another sacred plant for the Amerindians is tobacco.

The tobacco is a plant which allows special communion and communication with the spiritual world. It is an offering, a medium by which we testify of our gratitude for life and the beauty of the world. Tobacco originally came from the Americas.

Westerners have no idea what they are doing when they light a cigarette. By misusing a sacred sacrament, and tobacco is exactly that for traditional Native Americans, they harm their spirit and body. This is typical of the misuse of all sacred substances. When a teaching plant as we call these special plants that can alter ordinary perception and lead to superior consciousness, is misused, it has an opposite, perverse effect. The spiritual energy which can not release itself because the personal gratification intention with which the tobacco is used will turn against the person and cause a decrease of the vital energy and poisoning which can eventually lead to disease and death. Furthermore, Westerners, by their thirst for profit, have filled tobacco with chemicals and by-products to increase certain cosmetic, addictive and commercial qualities. To traditional philosophy this is blasphemous. If the European invaders of the Americas has spent more time listening to our wisdom, wisdom which persists even today, we would not have this horrible situation where thousands of persons suffer from a plant which properly used could lead them towards a better understanding of spirit, religious community and unity with nature. In fact, tobacco was even sometimes used as a medicine for certain health problems.

In INVOCATION, tobacco sings a small earthy end note which offers our spirit a special inspiration to hear Divine will in us. It pleases the ancestors and allows for the use of INVOCATION as an offering.

Let's explain the notions of top note, heart note and end note in perfumery. A perfume is a little like music which develops a theme in three variations. So, the first

burst of fragrance is called the top note. It is quickly followed by the heart note which then is slowly replaced by the long end note. It is characteristic of a good perfume to hold or last for several hours once applied to the skin. It's the coherence of the various variations of these notes and their beauty that defines a wonderful perfume.

In INVOCATION, we voluntarily emphasized the top note. The heart and end notes are very weak in comparison with the top note. We have here a therapeutic product used by healers and spiritual practitioners for whom purification is the essential reason they use INVOCATION. It is the top note that cleanses and purifies. We voluntarily decreased the impact of the heart and end notes. Indeed, a strong heart or end note would color the olfactive universe of the practitioner or the patient during treatment. This is not the purpose of this specific product. So, INVOCATION acts at once and then dissipates very fast. There is a small imperceptible heart and end note which lives on and which many people find very pleasant, but it's rather weak. We have several ongoing projects which would offer stronger and more balanced perfume products. To be continued!

Mandarin was added to the formula to soften the head note which contains a lot of strong and camphorated essences. Mandarin bestows a beautiful sweet and warm color to the olfactive presentation of INVOCATION. Its antiseptic and tonic qualities also increase the beneficial effects of INVOCATION.

Rosemary is a very purifying essence. Very strong, this essential oil is camphorated and typical of the strong smell of evergreen essences. Some of our customers say there is eucalyptus in our formulation, what is not the case. It's the rosemary that gives this impression. The rosemary is used by some Cherokee spiritual elders to cleanse and purify objects and indoor environments. For example we might add a

few drops of rosemary in the dishwater for dishes and in the water to wash floors and walls. This practice is often used when there are spiritual Elders in gatherings and as guests. Out of respect for our Elders and to protect them from any useless pollution, we wash their dishes as well as the tables and chairs that they will use with water to which rosemary essential oil was added. Now we can also use INVOCATION.

Eastern hemlock is another essence coming from a coniferous tree that grows in the Northeast. The deep natural forest smell so appreciated by the users of INVOCATION, comes partly from this essence. Here is another plant used for its purifying qualities and especially for the psychic protection which it grants to those who use it. Because of this essence INVOCATION confers a special protection, very appreciated by those who have acute psychic sensitivity.

Rose absolute was added to offer a feeling of warmth and love to the heart note. It is the little small touch of rose that favors acceptance of self and openness to healing. It is an essence which helps in the transformation of mood swings and negative feelings.

Lavender is a plant that has been used for a long time for purification by the European people. Lavender is a panacea for a lot of physical disorders. The list of its characteristics is very impressive. She can serve to re-harmonize almost all the organ and energy systems of the body. Amongst those often treated by lavender are: the muscles and joints, the respiratory system, the digestive system, the genital and urinary system, the immune system and the nervous system. Almost all soaps on the market have a lavender smell. Amongst the characteristics lavender has which was of interest to us in INVOCATION, was its antimicrobial, antiseptic, antitoxic, insecticide and stimulating qualities. We chose this essence to represent the

numerous qualities of the white race. In certain Native American philosophies the white race represents the spirit of invention. Indeed, every race on earth comes with a responsibility and a gift. The Native Americans or red race are the guardians of the Earth-mother. The Asiatic or yellow race are builders of the social order and other mechanisms of community welfare. The Africans or black race are guardians of the rhythms of the world. Lavender, besides containing characteristics which are in synergy with the other essences, represents well all that the white race can bring us with its spirit of invention.

Sandalwood is associated with spirituality and represents in INVOCATION the yellow race. As the Asiatic have a long history, sandalwood is also an essence that has been used in perfumery for a very long time. It has been used as incense, perfume and as a cosmetic product throughout the Asian countries for more than 4000 years. Sandalwood brings a feeling of serenity, harmony and peace. It symbolizes well Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist spiritualities.

Frankincense represents, in INVOCATION, the black race. This plant grows in the African Northeast. The essence which we have comes from Somalia. We chose Frankincense because it invokes peace and prayer. Its smell is rich and suggestive. In INVOCATION it symbolizes the complexity of the African rhythms which are so important in our planetary inheritance. We shall speak a little more about the importance of the rhythm in the second part of this volume on music therapy.

Spikenard is a complement to the heart note. It comes to give a very spiritual and very ancient touch to this olfactive harmony. All nations of the Middle East have used this oil since antiquity. It's mentioned on scrolls from ancient Egypt, has been used in the rejuvenation cosmetics of the Empress of Mughal, Nur Jehan, as well as by the

Romans. In the Bible, we find mention of spikenard in the songs of Salomon of the Old Testament, and, in the New Testament, we read that Jesus was perfumed by this oil during the Last Supper. Spikenard thus comes to add a smell which binds together many nations and spiritualities with that of the Native American people.

We can, just like INVOCATION, marry together the uncountable gifts from the people of the world, in peace, unity and beauty! We come today to the time of the rainbow nation where all colors of humanity blend together to bring forth people of all colors. This vision, that comes from First Nation prophecies, illustrates that universal mind that we must all seek today so that humanity may reclaim the peace and harmony that is our natural legacy.

As part of that new blending towards peace and sharing we offer you INVOCATION, the first Native American Liquid Smudge. We offer it with pride, and awe, as the results of this endeavor were a surprise to many and to me. I am very grateful for the wisdom of our ancestors that is the basis of this creation and hope and pray that INVOCATION may help many people.

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