



Siletz Community

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Siletz CARE Program

Trauma Support Group

A safe-space support group that addresses trauma, safety, loss, emotions and the future while incorporating culturally specific topics and activities
Community members welcome ~ age 18 and up



Questions?
Call the CARE Program
541-444-9680

Wednesdays • 5:30-7pm • Siletz Health Clinic • Behavioral Health Room

Tobacco as Tradition

Traditional Tobacco is tobacco and/or other plant mixtures grown or harvested and used by American Indians and Alaska Natives for ceremonial or medicinal purposes.

Traditional tobacco has been used by American Indian nations for centuries as a medicine with cultural and spiritual importance. Many Tribes maintain teachings and stories on the origin of tobacco. These teachings address tobacco in its purest form, today known as the tobacco plant *Nicotiana rustica*, and may include mixtures of other native plants.

One common teaching involves the importance of having good attitudes and thoughts while working with traditional tobacco.

Traditional tobacco is a medicine, which can be used in a prescribed way to promote physical, spiritual, emotional, and community well-being. It may be used as an offering to the Creator or to another person, place, or being. A gift of traditional tobacco is a sign of respect and may be offered when asking for help, guidance, or protection. Traditional tobacco is sometimes used directly for healing in traditional medicine. It may be burned in a fire or smoked in a pipe, yet the smoke is generally not inhaled.

In many teachings, the smoke from burned tobacco has a purpose of carrying thoughts and prayers to the spirit world or to the Creator. When used appropriately, traditional tobacco is not associated with addiction and adverse health impacts.

Here are a few other examples of how tobacco was/is used for traditional purposes:

For our Hunters, traditional tobacco would be used when our people would kill an elk or deer or when we would catch a salmon or trout. Tobacco would be placed at the location or close by so we can communicate with the creator and give our thanks and appreciation "thank you for this elk or salmon as we will use it to feed our family".



For our Gatherers, traditional tobacco would be used when our people would gather supplies so that we may use them to make our baskets, or gather traditional medicines as we use it to heal. Tobacco would be placed at the location or close by so that we can communicate to the creator and give our thanks and appreciation "thank you creator for these sticks or medicines that we may use them for our baskets or medicines to help us heal".



Tobacco is a powerful medicine, keep it traditional.