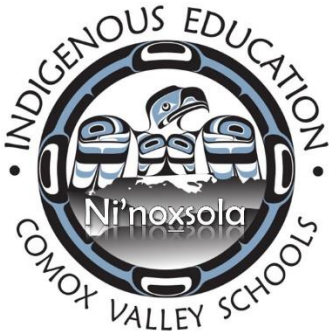


NI'NOXSOLA

Elders in Residence Program
Indigenous Education Comox Valley Schools



Sheila Buchanan
Smudging



Today my story is about some of the healing smudges we use for cleansing.

First we have sweet grass, which grows in lake shores, swamps, and rivers. It is picked and dried. Once it is dried, it is braided and used for smudging.

Sage is another type of smudge that is popular. In Alberta this sage grows in the plains and there is an abundance in certain areas.

When I worked as a Parole Officer, I went to the forest with some of the inmates and guards and we picked sage. Again, this has to be dried before using. It is then mashed up and put into a bowl like container. It is then lit and then passed around for people to cleanse themselves.

These two types of smudging are used as a cleanse and healing. Objects are also smudged, which is the same as a priest blessing an object.

Once smudging has begun, it passed around for everyone to partake. A sense of peace comes over individuals who smudge.

It is used in sweat lodges as well. That is another topic I will write about next week.

Cedar is another type of smudging used, but is not as popular in Alberta as it is in British Columbia. It serves the same purpose.

When these items are removed from the earth, tobacco is buried in the area it was taken from to give thanks to the creator for allowing us to take from mother earth.

This custom has been passed on for generations. Tobacco was considered sacred due to it's growth in the earth like other living plants.

Sheila Buchanan

