

The Modern Shamanic Guide to Hapé

The Sacred Amazonian Snuff You Blow Up Your Nose

By Lorna Liana

Cover Art by Geenss Archenti Flores

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About Lorna Liana



Lorna Liana is a new media strategist and online business coach to visionary entrepreneurs. With over 25+ years of psychedelic experience, Lorna tracks the developments in the Psychedelic Renaissance and global expansion of ayahuasca with great interest and engaging conversations with thought leaders in the field.

Since 2003, she's attended ayahuasca ceremonies with 30+ different shamans and facilitators, seven indigenous tribes, several Brazilian churches, and a host of neo-shamanic circles, in Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, Europe, the US, and Asia.

Through this widely-varied background, she hopes to shed some perspective on the globalization of ayahuasca and other plant medicines.

About Geenss Archenti Flores



Geenss Archenti Flores was born in the city of Tarapoto department of San Martín, Peru. He is a self-taught artist who works with natural pigments made with resins, saps and fruits extracted from the forest. Inspired by indigenous Amazonian medicine, he calls the paints that he uses "medicinal pigments." It is the high jungle of Peru that gives life to the artistic exuberance in Geenss Archenti's brush strokes that capture the strength and richness of daily indigenous life.

"I draw dreams, shape emotions, paint life ... it sets me free."

Introduction to an Ancient Amazonian Healing Tradition

Ancient indigenous tribal cultures have long-regarded plants as sacred medicines and healers. The art and practice of working with plants for their medicinal, psychoactive, spiritual, and transformative properties has been going on cross-culturally for millennia. One such plant that we don't tend to see as "sacred" or "medicinal" in our modern world, is tobacco. On the contrary, most people believe tobacco to be an addictive, harmful substance that can lead to life-threatening diseases like cancer.



*Huni Kui shamans sharing rapé.
Image Credit: Susan Zurrender*

But long before Marlboro or Camel cigarettes came around, tribal cultures were utilizing tobacco for sacred, ceremonial, shamanic, and medicinal

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purposes. Sadly, this ancient plant medicine, whose beneficial effects on the mind, body, and spirit have long been cherished by indigenous cultures, has become one of the leading causes for cancer in modern society.

Tobacco is now mass-produced, synthesized and imbued with harmful chemicals to create cigarettes; smoking cigarettes has become a widely prevalent vice, coping mechanism and addiction in our modern world.

Tobacco, in all its forms, has long been considered to be one of many sacred medicines by indigenous peoples of the Americas. The indigenous used tobacco in ceremonies, to predict good weather, fishing, or harvest, as well as for spiritual and healing purposes. However, these indigenous tribes rarely used tobacco for smoking.

The preferred method of tobacco consumption by the indigenous tribes of the Amazon region has been to use tubes to insufflate powdered dry tobacco, which is often blended with other medicinal plants. This practice of insufflation is both ancient and highly effective - blowing rapé directly into the nasal passages actually delivers the active ingredients found in these plants to the bloodstream in the most efficient way.

In the Amazon, this dry powdered tobacco snuff is known as “rapé” (pronounced ha-PAY). “Rapé” is the Portuguese word for “snuff,” and “r” in Portuguese sounds like an “h.” You might find it spelled differently by individuals who are uncomfortable with the word’s proximity to the English word of an entirely different meaning. Thus, you will see shamanic snuff referred to as “hapé,” “hapeh,” “hapey,” “rapeh,” “rapey,” and so on.

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Rapé is considered to be a sacred medicine and is consumed ritualistically. Tribal cultures in the Amazonian region have used shamanic snuff for ritual, medicinal and recreational purposes for thousands of years. Even now, shamanic snuff practitioners in South America use rapé to help overcome physical, psychological and emotional blocks as well as gain tremendous insight into other, subtler worlds.

If we wish to adopt this ancient practice in the Global North, it is essential that we understand how to engage properly with these traditional medicines, so that we can obtain maximum benefit from them, by communing with them in a respectful and honoring way as indigenous cultures do.

With the advent of technology and travel, the time has come where these ancient practices and indigenous plant medicines are now accessible to us in a way they never have been before.

We can use these medicines as if they were recreational drugs – as a novel means to get high, with no understanding of the proper context or manner to consume these medicines, let alone share them with other people.

Or we can choose to understand the cultural context of these practices, reconnect to the spirit of the plants, and cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship with them. By understanding the teachings and traditions which have been passed down from the Amazonian tribes, we can learn to use one of their most highly regarded medicines – rapé – to commune with tobacco as a plant spirit ally on a whole new level.

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This guide has been written to help you gain insight into how and why rapé can be a very potent tool used for healing and spiritual exploration in the modern era.

You will learn:

- Exactly what rapé is, and how it's made
- The most commonly available tribal rapé blends
- How to administer rapé properly
- The crucial importance of “set and setting”
- How to care for your applicators and store your snuff
- ... and so much more!

If you are reading this you are probably an enthusiast of sacred medicine, an urban shaman, or an experimenting psychonaut. The goal of this guide is to support you in feeling informed, empowered and educated on the proper use of rapé for healing and spiritual exploration purposes, both for yourself and for the people you might share this medicine with.

What is Amazonian Rapé?

Rapé is a preparation of powdered medicinal herbs, often with a tobacco base. Rapé is typically made with *Nicotiana rustica* – also known as “mapacho” in South America – which contains nine times more nicotine than *Nicotiana tabacum*, the highly-cultivated tobacco that is smoked around the world in cigarettes. Because of its strength, *Nicotiana rustica* elicits a feeling of alertness and elevation that surpasses your average nicotine high from cigarettes.

The effects of rapé are experienced rapidly and intensely, because the powdered snuff is administered through the nose. The practice of consuming powdered plant medicines through the nose is much more ancient than we realized (dating from the pre-Columbian days) and was first observed among the Brazilian indigenous tribes.

In Europe, herbal snuff was introduced by the doctor and botanist Francisco Hernández de Boncalo in 1577 – and the elites of that time often took snuff as a headache treatment. During the XVIII century, inhaling snuff became fashionable among the European aristocracy.

Today, indigenous tribes in the Amazon basin continue to use rapé in all aspects of life, from formal ritual use in rites of puberty, initiation, cashiri drinkings festivals, social gatherings and healing ceremonies, to simply tuning into Nature and the healing power of sacred plant medicines alone or with friends.

The tribes that use have traditionally used rapé – which include but are not limited to the Katukina, Yawanawá, Huni Kui (Kaxinawá), Nukini, Kuntanawa, Apurinã, Ashaninka, and Matses – often produce their own specific kinds of rapé blend and have different ways of preparing the herbal snuff, from techniques to songs that are sung during the rapé rituals.

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From the indigenous point of view, rapé is a sacred shamanic snuff medicine with profound healing effects. Rapé is made from different medicinal plants for different purposes – to induce visions, to have energy, and to enhance the senses with the aromatic fragrance of the plants used in the blend. Given that there are myriad medicinal plants you can blend into rapé, there are many various rapé recipes in existence – and these recipes are often closely guarded by the tribes as secrets.

Sharing rapé – or “passando rapé” – is traditionally a ritualistic practice among Amazonian tribes that may include specific chants to activate the force of the rapé and to confer the healing power of the forest upon the rapé recipient.

The ritual use of rapé is also making its way around the world, introduced to the West through ayahuasca ceremonies by traveling shamans and by visitors who have spent time in the jungle with indigenous communities.

The Sacred Art of Making Rapé

In addition to the years and decades (if not lifetime) of knowledge accumulation, it's an extremely laborious process to make shamanic medicine – whether it is ayahuasca, huachuma, or rapé – because this medicine is made by hand.

Like other sacred medicines, rapé production is typically done in a ceremonial context, from gathering the sacred plants to cooking and processing the medicine. Traditionally, the person making the rapé blend needs to be an experienced shaman with thorough knowledge about the medicinal plants of the forest.

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*Preparing & gathering sacred plants for rapé.
Image Credit: Amir Leron*

In addition to having broad knowledge of the medicinal plants of the Amazon rainforest (which is also one of the most biodiverse regions in the world), the shaman also needs to know precisely which part of each plant can be used. For example, the root bark of a plant can have a different purpose and effect than the leaves or the seeds of the same plant.

This sacred preparation of medicinal rapé is a process that may take weeks. Usually, the shaman of the tribe – the pajé – works under a strict diet and in a trance-state when endlessly pounding and mixing the rapé herbs. The other members of the tribe might be responsible for the collection of rapé plants.

The plants will either be sun dried or toasted under a light bulb and are filtered several times through a fine cloth and then mixed with other ingredients to obtain the final batch.

In earlier times, the pajé used to be the only person considered qualified to make

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*Final stages of preparing a rapé blend.
Image Credit: Amir Leron*

this sacred medicine. Nowadays, the whole tribe might even participate in making rapé in a communal ceremonial event. Only recently have the tribes begun to share their sacred medicine with foreign friends, passing on the knowledge and application of rapé to non-indigenous people.

The sacred art of making rapé is typically an apprenticeship that takes years to master. This is because different rapé blends may involve complex processes as different plants are harvested and prepared. It may also involve extended periods of dieting with the plants in order to receive the teachings of the plant spirits, on top of the ceremonial process of working with them in a “feitio” – medicine-making session.

Mastery not only involves knowledge of the plants and their preparation, but a subtle and precise appreciation for the flavor as well as the effects of the blend, plus the ability to reproduce these qualities batch after batch. Many serious rapé makers consider the art of making rapé to be an apprenticeship – not only with the master shamans, but more importantly, with the plant teachers themselves.

Rapé enthusiasts can now be found all over the Amazon, Brazil, and the world,

and some non-indigenous rapé makers are even evolving the art of making rapé to incorporate new standards in production, storage, and the formulation of new blends. Still, many of the blend compositions remain a secret of the local tribes.

The Healing Properties of Medicinal Rapé

Rapé can also be mixed with other mind altering plants, like coca, jurema, or yopo for unique effects. Rapé is also known to potentiate the healing capacity of other plants, like ayahuasca. Furthermore, rapé is believed to help release emotional, physical, and spiritual illnesses, easing negativity and confusion, and enabling a thorough grounding of the mind.

Likewise, shamans use rapé to re-align with their energy channels, connect with their higher self, and to deepen their connection with the natural world. In addition, rapé paves the way to detoxify the body and cleans out excessive mucus, toxins and bacteria.

Medicinal rapé is also used as a cure for certain diseases, sores, wounds, and as a defense against insects. It is also used as an analgesic and narcotic substance that eases fatigue, pain, hunger, and thirst. There are even special rapé blends that are made to counteract influenza and other diseases.

Because tobacco-based rapé contains nicotine, it increases blood flow to the brain and stimulates the release of several neurotransmitters that heightens alertness and uplifts your mood. The indigenous people believe that rapé can increase your focus, presence, and intuition, spiritually opening up your body and mind to higher communication and holistic thinking.

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One of the curative qualities of rapé is its ability to make you purge, potentially from both ends. Whether or not rapé is purgative depends a lot on the medicinal plants used to make the rapé blend, as well as the quantity of rapé consumed in a session, and how much of it may have passed from your sinuses into your digestive tract.

The desire to vomit may come on immediately or shortly after receiving the rapé. The desire to vacate your bowels may follow a few minutes after that. The “limpeza” is considered to be cleansing and purifying; it is the medicine working to purge your body and mind of anything that is toxic and negative.

Whether or not the rapé elicits vomiting or pooping, it will most definitely clear out your nasal passages and sinuses. Most people will spend a few minutes blowing their nose or hocking loogies after receiving rapé, until all the mucus clears away.

If this happens to you, do not be embarrassed or ashamed. It's cultural.

How to Take Sacred, Medicinal Rapé with the Right Intention

Sharing rapé was traditionally done in a ritualistic way. Because the medicine can have stimulating or psychoactive effects (depending on what plants were used to make it) receiving rapé can bring about a profound experience of the Amazonian jungle. Because the medicine is sacred, the indigenous tribe take rapé as a prayer calling upon the forces of Nature, the blessing of the animals of the forest, and the power of medicinal plants to heal us and give us strength.

Nowadays, medicinal rapé is also making its way all over the world, through increasing cross cultural friendships between the natives and non-indigenous friends, as well as through ayahuasca ceremonies held by traveling shamans. Rapé is also increasingly being consumed in a more social context, in a similar way to how sharing sacred tobacco has shifted to social cigarette smoking.

Tobacco can be addictive, even when consumed through the nose. To prevent from turning your relationship with rapé into an addiction and a personal vice, in the following paragraphs you will discover some proven and efficient tips you can follow to maintain the sacredness of the rapé ritual as a modern shaman.

The Right Way (and Wrong Way) to Consume Rapé

Rapé is administered through two different types of pipes, which are typically made from bamboo or bone. The first type of pipe requires the assistance of another person, who blows the snuff with a powerful blast into each nostril of the partner who is receiving the rapé. For that reason, it is generally referred to as the blow pipe and, in Brazil, the two-person pipe is called a “tepi.”



*Gorgeous tepi embellished with beautiful gemstones.
Image Credit: Carlos HareHaux Neto*

If you don’t have a friend who can help you by blowing the snuff up your nose, don’t worry – you can do it yourself with a self-applicator pipe called a “kuripe.” A kuripe is a small V-shaped pipe that connects your mouth to your nostril.

While it’s always harder to blow yourself than to have a friend blow you, trying to get a non-knowledgeable person to do this is the least desirable option. That is why it is always a good idea to have your own kuripe, and learn how to apply the medicine yourself if you are a “bona fide” rapé enthusiast.

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Modern style kuripes inlaid with stone.

What you don't want to do is to snort rapé off a smooth flat surface with a rolled-up dollar bill or straw. That is a major Amazonian faux pas – it won't score you points with the natives and it might get you arrested by the police mistaking it for public cocaine consumption.

That is why using the appropriate blowing apparatus is necessary, both for the effectiveness of the ritual and for preventing other undesirable effects as well.

The Appropriate Set & Setting for a Rapé Ritual

Because the act of taking rapé is a prayer, the set and setting will impact the experience of your prayer. The best places to take rapé are in the great outdoors - in nature, during an ayahuasca ceremony, or in a quiet sacred space indoors, with high-vibrational music playing.

It is suggested that you avoid taking rapé in common and otherwise “ordinary” situations, such as while waiting at bus stops, in busy commercial areas, in common areas with a lot of movement which are unrelated to spiritual activity, or where you might be interrupted by someone who has no idea what you are doing nor what it means.

An ideal setting allows you to fully experience the effect of the rapé without unwanted distractions and it also offers you the necessary space for quiet contemplation.

Also, depending on the medicinal plants which were used in the rapé blend, you may experience a wide range of sensations after taking your rapé, from emotional upwellings, to vomiting and bowel movements. Here are some timeless tips to set up your space – and yourself – for comfort:

- It's a good idea to have a bottle of water nearby, as well as tissues and/or a roll of toilet paper for blowing your nose.
- If you think you are going to be thirsty, drink water BEFORE snuffing your rapé, because any water you might drink afterwards will taste like rapé which can be an unpleasant experience.

- Don't eat immediately before taking rapé, because it may come right out after. It's a good idea to leave at least an hour between your last meal and rapé session.
- Make sure you have an easily accessible place to vomit in case the urge suddenly descends upon you.
- Make sure you are also close to the toilet in case you get a sudden urge to have a bowel movement.
- Make sure your friends are aware of what you are doing (so nobody interrupts your moment of deep contemplation).

What to Expect from Your Rapé Experience

Your rapé experience will depend a lot on the medicinal rapé blend you are consuming. There is a myriad of medicinal plants that can be used in rapé and thus a wide range of experiences: from a nice blast of fragrance in your nose, to an eye-opening nasal espresso shot - even to a transcendental, wildly psychoactive experience lasting hours, where you want to fly like an eagle.

There are a few common side effects to taking rapé which you should be prepared for (and certainly should not be ashamed of):

- Your nose will start running, and your sinuses will want to clear themselves out. Lean forward – try not to tilt your head back, or your rapé-filled mucus will start back-dripping down your sinuses, which might cause you to gag, and then vomit. Hocking loogies during a rapé session is totally socially acceptable.
- You may want to projectile vomit. This is perfectly OK. Rapé is purifying and you are "getting well." Try to vomit in the bushes or in a more private space.

- You may want to go to the toilet. Bowel movements are good for you. If you have trouble staying regular, try taking rapé in the morning. It is better than coffee.

Rapé Safety Tips for the Modern Shaman

As with any kind of potent medicine, rapé can be abused and consumed in ways which are less sacred, and more recreational. Rapé can be hard on your sinuses, so overuse can create sinus problems and damage to your respiratory system. Also, because the medicinal plants in rapé blends vary, its effects on your system can vary. Misuse can lead to addiction or even send you to the hospital. For this reason, it's important to test your rapé and as with any substance, know where it comes from.

Also, using rapé with other drugs, like MDMA, is not advised as the contraindications may be unknown. Rapé is frequently offered during ayahuasca ceremonies, but you may want to tune in and decide whether rapé is really what your body needs at that moment.

Here's what one unlucky experimenter has to say about mixing other substances with this sacred medicine...

"I took MDMA at a conscious music festival, and afterwards, I did rapé. It was a terrible combination. I felt nauseated, dizzy, and had no energy to walk around. I immediately had to go to the bathroom. Then I threw up. The rapé totally wiped out my MDMA experience. I will never do that again!" ~ Anonymous

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Because rapé is used shamanically, passing rapé can be a means for someone with ill intentions to put an enchantment or curse on you. It's not a good idea to share rapé with people you don't know and trust, or receive rapé from a shaman who you are getting "bad vibes" from.

In fact, in addition to blowing sacred medicine up your nose, it is believed that the person giving you rapé is also giving you their energy. For this reason, it was the most powerful individuals in the tribe - the shamans - who were entrusted to give the community rapé. And for the same reason, you may want to be selective about who you receive the rapé from, even if it is a person you know.

If the individual is ill, unbalanced, an addict or simply doesn't have the harmonious energy you vibe with, it is totally OK to decline receiving rapé from the person, even if you've known them for a while. Preserving the sanctity of your energetic body ranks higher than potential social awkwardness among your medicine tribe.

Hence, you should be very careful who you are consuming this sacred medicine with. This is not "partying" - remember, it is a sacred social context.

Should You Consume Rapé During Medicine Ceremonies?

Depending on the medicine culture and lineage whose ceremony you are participating in, rapé might be offered and be available from the shaman throughout the night. It might also be completely discouraged.

Rapé use is much more common in Brazil, where many tribes like the Huni Kuin, Yawanawá, Katukina normally use rapé during ayahuasca ceremonies. In Peru, rapé is not typically offered in mestizo curanderismo or in Shipibo ceremonies. However, due to the globalization of ayahuasca and evolution of medicine culture, rapé use is increasingly prevalent, especially in neoshamanic circles.

Just because rapé is offered, does not mean that you need to accept it, in order to have your full ceremony experience. Remember - **the consumption of medicine is based on free will and always optional.**

Nobody should force you, pressure you or shame you for declining medicine that is offered, especially one that is mind-altering...and if they do, it's a serious red flag.

That being said, how do you decide if you want to consume rapé in a ceremony or not?

Here are some factors to consider:

When Rapé Might be Beneficial During Ceremony

- **At least an hour or more before the ceremony**, a rapé session can help you cleanse, purge, release, clear any energetic blockages so that you can fully receive the energy of the plant medicine being served in the ceremony. If you feel sleepy, drowsy or hungry just as you are about to go into an all night ceremony, rapé can also help reduce the hunger pangs, while giving you an energetic lift.
- **If you're feeling prolonged nausea during the ceremony**, rapé can help you move this stuck energy very quickly, usually through vomiting or triggering a bowel movement.
- **If you want to boost the effects of the ceremony medicine**, without having to consume a full cup or dose. Rapé can be a great way to top up on the effects of the medicine, especially if the effects are waning and it's already close to the end of the night. Rapé can intensify whatever medicine you are working with, and make them feel stronger.
- **To cleanse and release after ceremony**, especially if you suspect that you picked up entities or someone else's heavy emotional energy during the ceremony.

- **If you need an energetic boost after the ceremony**, because you have to eventually drive a vehicle or simply feel tired and wish to be more alert, rapé can be a great pick-me-up before your journey home.

Rapé can feel very different when combined with different medicines. Some medicines work more synergistically than others, and some rapé blends are more complementary than others. Because rapé is an amplifier, it's always good to exercise caution if you are not yet familiar with how the rapé will interact, to avoid getting overwhelmed and feeling terrible the rest of the ceremony.

Personally, I'm a big fan of fully experiencing medicines on their own, and not mixing medicines, so that I can familiarize myself with the pure essence, energetic signature and personality of the medicine ally I am communing with in ceremony.

So if you have not yet fully become acquainted, it may be useful to hold off on the rapé for a while, until you can clearly identify, energetically, which plant spirit ally is communicating with you.

Sacred Rapé Kit Storage & Care



Modern shaman rapé toolkit
Image Credit: The Arte do Rapé Facebook Group

Taking Care of Your Rapé Applicator

The care you provide for your rapé applicator is going to depend very much on what materials were used to make it (bamboo, bone), hold it together (beeswax, durapox), and adorn it (string, feathers, stones, paint). Rapé applicators are sacred shamanic tools and are typically kept at home on an altar or carried around in a medicine bag.

You may want to keep your feather-adorned tepi at home and have a simpler tepi for travel, because it's really a bummer to discover that your beautiful tepi macaw feathers got crushed and broken in your backpack. Kuripe self-applicators tend to travel better.

Rapé Applicator Hygiene

In the Amazon, sharing rapé has become a common social activity. In indigenous culture, everything is shared, so the natives don't tend to place as much importance on keeping personal use items just for themselves as Westerners typically do.

If you come from an individualistic society, like the United States, your rugged individualism and hangups about your personal stuff is going to stand out. Also, native Amazonians tend to have a strong belief that using a shared object to consume medicine isn't going to get them sick, because the medicine is sacred, powerful, and will prevent that – magically. That being said, what do you do in a situation where you have five people wanting to pass your tepi pipe around, and one of them visibly has a cold or flu?

Here are ideas:

- **Using a Q-Tip, periodically clean your rapé applicator with alcohol or hydrogen peroxide.** Depending on what materials were used to construct your rapé applicator, the drawback to this is that the chemicals can cause bamboo to crack or adhesives holding the two bamboo tubes into a V to dissolve.
- **Use a lighter flame to disinfect the ends of your rapé applicator.** Again, depending on what materials were used to construct your rapé applicator, the flame can cause the ends to blacken, and look unsightly.

The Amazon is a humid place. Using soap and water to clean your rapé applicator can be tricky as moisture can build up deep inside your applicator and grow mold, which is the last thing you want to be inhaling into your nose.

Storing Medicinal Rapé

In the old days, in the Amazonian tribes, rapé was stored in hollowed out gourds or giant snail shells. Nowadays, rapé made in the Amazon is typically stored in used soda bottles. Old plastic may not be the best container for long-term storage of medicinal snuff. A preferred container by non-indigenous Brazilians are glass test tubes with screw tops. Not only are these easy to carry around, it also make pouring rapé into the palm of your hand easier, because the shape of the container minimizes the avalanche effect that bottles with narrow necks can have.

With a container that has a narrow opening, you increase the likelihood of not being able to get all your rapé out, or know what's going on at the very bottom if the container isn't clear.

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*Glass test tubes are a great way to store and carry rapé.
Image Credit: The Rapé Sagrado da Floresta Facebook Group*

Rapé needs to be stored in a cool dry place. Moldy rapé will tend to have a distinct, acrid smell to it. If you find that your rapé is starting to go, you can spread it out in cloth or smooth clean surface and dry it out in the sun.

Do bear in mind that medicinal rapé has a shelf life and loses its effectiveness over time, so holding onto it for as long as it will last is not the best idea.

Use it as soon as possible or lose it.

How to Administer Sacred Amazonian Rapé To Someone Else – Step-by-Step Instructions



Amazonian rapé is consumed in 2 ways:

- As a “soplada” given by a shaman or medicine brother or sister via a blowpipe called a “tepi”
- Self-administered, via a blowpipe called a “kuripe”

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To uphold the sacred practice of sharing rapé, here are some guidelines to follow when administering a rapé soplada to a friend. Before proceeding, I recommend you recall (from the previous chapters) the appropriate context and setting you must have in place before taking this sacred medicine.

When rapé is administered from one person to another via a tepi, an intimate connection is created between the rapé giver and receiver that involves the transfer of energy between the two people. That energy might be positive and healthy, or may be negative and unhealthy. For this reason, it's not advised to receive rapé from just anyone, nor to give rapé to strangers.

The person blowing needs to be an experienced tribe member – like a shaman, or your medicine brother or sister – as the blower sends their intention and spirit to the person inhaling. That takes a strong mind and clear focus.

Hence, the essence of this blowing ritual does not depend on the strength of your blowing, but whether you confer the blessing of the medicine & prayer, and empower the receiving user. These 'blowing rituals' are of great importance in the shamanic tradition, which perceives the healing energy of blow (soplada) as a major tool for healing.

How Much Rapé Should You Serve?

Appropriate dosage really depends on the kind of rapé that is being taken and the individual on the receiving end. In Brazil, the indigenous are used to taking copious amounts of rapé in one session. I'm often astounded at the amount of rapé that gets shoveled into the end of a tepi – and the recipient's ability to take it, without throwing up or passing out. Because rapé is more difficult to procure outside of South America, North American shamans tend to use smaller quantities of rapé.

For buddy-administered rapé – it's important for the person serving the rapé to make an intuitive and ethical assessment on the appropriate amount of rapé to offer the recipient of your *soplada*. Where are they from? What is their experience? How strong is your rapé?

Too much rapé can make your companion projectile vomit – which may be a good thing from the point of view of purification – but not at all from an immediate personal point of view.

It might be wise if you err on the cautious side - you can always have another round afterwards.

Overdosing is less of an issue with self-administered rapé.

Guidelines for the Soplada Blower

Step 1: Find a quiet location where you can sit face to face. Ground down into the present moment.

Step 2: Look at the rapé recipient in the eyes and connect with that person.

Step 3: Give your recipient an orientation of what to expect, instructions on how to receive the rapé, and invite them to set an intention for the ritual.

Step 4: Ask how much rapé they would like to receive and how hard of a soplada they wish to have. If the recipient isn't sure, follow the guidelines below on how to assess the appropriate amount of rapé to serve. If you are unsure of the appropriate quantity, start with a dime-sized portion of rapé. Pour this amount onto the palm of your hand. You may want to flatten out and shape the quantity of rapé for easier scooping.

Step 5: Begin your rapé chant or prayer, connect with the spirit of the Forest, the spirits of the healing plants and ask them to bless the recipient.

Step 6: Staying grounded in the present moment, load half the amount of rapé from your palm into the far end of your tepi, scooping towards you, in the direction of your heart. Then position the end of the Tepi snug against the opening of the recipient's nostril, so no rapé gets blown into the person's eye.

Step 7: Mindfully blow the rapé into one nostril. Stay present with the recipient and tune into where the person is at with their experience.

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Step 8: Check in with the recipient. Did they want a softer *soplada*? Harder? More rapé? Less rapé? Load the remainder of the rapé into the far end of your Tepi, then position the top snug against the opening of the opposite nostril.



*Beautiful Tepis made of bones.
Image Credits: The Rapé Indígena Facebook Group*

Step 9: Mindfully blow the rapé into the other nostril. Stay present with the recipient and tune into where the person is at with their experience.

Step 10: After the second *soplada*, you may want to energetically assist in the removal of any blockages. With your fingers, you may trace the movement of the rapé along the bridge of the nose up towards the crown of the head, as well as along the recipient's temples. You may want to brush with downward strokes along the sides of their heads, and snap your fingers to dispel any negative energy.

Step 11: Close the session with a prayer, *Haux*, or *Aho*.

Guidelines for the Rapé Recipient

Step 1: Find a quiet location where you can sit face to face. Ground down into the present moment.

Step 2: Look in the eyes of the person who will give you a soplada and connect with that person.

Step 3: Check in with yourself on the amount of rapé you would like to receive, give an eye assessment on what feels like the amount you need when the soplada blower pours the medicine into their palm, and let the person know. If you are unsure of the appropriate quantity, start with a dime-sized portion of rapé.

Step 4: Focus on the intention of this ritual. What insight are you seeking? What prayer do you have that you want the spirits of Nature to hear?

Step 5: As the soplada blower begins their blessing, tune into Nature and your Spirit Guides.

Step 6: Inhale deeply. Then assist the soplada blower in positioning the end of the tepi snugly against the opening of one nostril. You may hold the end of the tepi to your nostril with your fingers for support and stability.

Step 7: IMPORTANT - Now contract your throat muscles to close the back of your nasal passage as if you were going to submerge yourself underwater. When you block off the back of your nasal passage, most of the rapé will stay in the front of your nasal passage, and drip forward.

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This is very important because IF YOU DON'T close off the back of your nasal passage, you will get a jetstream of rapé shooting into your sinuses, causing you to cough, gag, and potentially vomit on your friend. If you are feeling a lot of gag-causing back-drip, lean forward.

Step 8: Give yourself a moment to pull it together. Ground into the present moment. Feel free to communicate to the soplada-giver anything you need. More rapé? Less rapé? More force? Less force? Ready for the next nostril?

Step 9: Inhale deeply. Then assist the soplada blower in positioning the end of the tepi snugly against the opening of the opposite nostril. You may hold the end of the tepi to your nostril with your fingers for support and stability.

Step 10: REMEMBER to contract your throat muscles to close the back of your nasal passage as if you were going to submerge yourself under-water. Receive the second blast of rapé.

Step 11: Hold the sacred rapé in your nose as long as possible in order for your sinuses to fully absorb the medicine. Your eyes are probably tearing at this point, and your nose is probably starting to drip. Just hold a wad of tissue paper up against your nostrils. Feel it. Feel the Forest. Open your consciousness. Ground into the present moment.

Step 12: When you feel complete, you can indicate completion to the soplada-giver by moving back or stepping away. Allow the soplada-giver to close the session with a prayer, Haux, or Aho. Close the ritual with your own prayer, “Haux”, or “Aho”.

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Step 13: Find a nice, comfortable place to contemplate Nature.

Once the experience of the rapé has subsided, you may want to clean yourself up to feel more fresh, and to wash off any caked rapé buggers that could be sticking to the outside of your nose. Washing your face and rinsing your nostrils out with cold, clean water is also really nice.

In a similar way to working with master plant teachers like huachuma or ayahuasca, when you take rapé you are also signing up for an apprenticeship with the medicinal plants in your rapé blend, but on a subtler level. As you keep taking your rapé, you enter into a dialogue with the plants. I invite you to listen.

How to Self-Administer Sacred Amazonian Rapé – Step by Step



Gorgeous bone kuripes inlaid with semi-precious stones by Carlito HareHaux Neto

In the following paragraphs, you will learn how to administer rapé on your own, without the use of an assistant. This is important whenever you decide to do a ceremony by yourself or if there is nobody like-minded (and energy-minded) to have a ceremony with.

The most important success factor in self-administering medicinal rapé is finding that perfect-fit kuripe. You are really going to need to test this out first-hand as best you can.

Simply holding the kuripe up to your mouth and nostril, or judging it by appearance, does not necessarily mean it will be effective in sending a strong jet of snuff into your nose. You need to test out its effectiveness.

If you are shopping for a kuripe, you really do want to put one end into your mouth and another into your nostril and blow before choosing which kuripe to purchase. We don't recommend doing this if you are worried about infectious diseases.

If you end up with a kuripe that doesn't snugly connect your mouth with your nose, and you can't just go to the kuripe store and exchange it, don't worry, you have options:

- The best option is to saw down one end until it does fit
- The easy option is to get used to positioning your kuripe at an angle in your mouth. It may feel weird but it works.

Determining Rapé Dosage

Aerodynamically, it's considerably harder to overdose yourself with self-administered rapé via a kuripe. However, if you have a regular practice of consuming rapé on your own, it's good to be mindful so that it does not turn into an addiction or personal vice. When you are receiving a soplada in a ritualistic way, it's easier to treat the experience as a medicine ceremony. Alone, it's easier to treat the rapé as a substance.

Ultimately, to fully experience the intensity of the rapé, it's much better to have a friend blow into your nostrils rather than to blow the medicine yourself. However, if you don't have a friend around who knows how to deliver a rapé soplada, here are step-by-step instructions on how you can self-administer medicinal rapé.

Guidelines for Administering Rapé to Yourself



How to self-administer rapé with a Kuripe

The most important success factor in self-administering medicinal rapé is finding that perfect-fit kuripe (the specific apparatus designed to self-administer rapé by yourself). You are really going to need to test this out first-hand as best you can. Simply holding the kuripe up to your mouth and nostril does not mean it will easily send a strong jet of snuff into your nose once you get down to it.

If you are shopping for a kuripe, you really do want to put one end into your mouth and another into your nostril before choosing which kuripe to purchase. It's a bit like trying a pair of pants before selecting the ones you want to buy. This is a more personal and specific requirement so make sure you invest the necessary preparation in this – otherwise chances increase that you will be disappointed with your kuripe.

Here is the complete guide, step by step, on how to self-administer this sacred medicine.

Step 1: Find an appropriate place to take your rapé.

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Step 2: Ground yourself into the present moment and focus on your intention for this prayer. What information are you hoping to receive from the plant medicine? What guidance are you seeking from the spirits of the forest?

Step 3: Recite your rapé chant of prayer as you measure out the amount of rapé you want to consume on the palm of your hand. You may want to flatten out and shape the quantity of rapé for easier scooping.

Step 4: Load up the nose end of your rapé applicator with half the amount on your palm, scooping towards yourself, in the direction of your heart. Tap the V end on a hard surface to remove any stuck rapé or air pockets.

Step 5: Take a deep breath, place the mouth end of your kuripe into your mouth and fit the nose end snugly into your nostril.

Step 6: Lean forward a little, close your eyes (so you don't blow rapé into them) and forcibly blow the rapé into your nostril.

Step 7: Take a moment to experience the first dosage of rapé. Do you need more, do you need less?

Step 8: When you are ready, load up the nose end of your kuripe with the rest of the rapé on your palm. Tap the V end on a hard surface to remove any stuck rapé or air pockets.

Step 9: Take a deep breath, place the mouth end of your kuripe into your mouth and fit the nose end snugly into the opposite nostril.

Step 10: Lean forward a little, close your eyes (so you don't blow rapé into them) and forcibly blow the rapé into your nostril.

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Step 11: Take a moment to experience the rapé. You can move the force of the rapé through your channels with your fingers. Place your fingers on your middle fingers on the top of the bridge of your nose, move the energy of the rapé up your forehead and and run all your fingers along the top and sides of your heads. Brush the energy down the back of your head, along your shoulders and off into the air. You can snap your fingers to clear any old, stuck or negative energy that is being moved out of your field.

Step 12: Ground into the present moment and allow your consciousness to connect to Nature, to the healing plants in the medicine you just consumed. Lean forward to minimize rapé backdrip. Feel the ground with your hands.

Once the experience of the rapé has subsided, you may want to clean yourself up to feel more fresh, by rinsing your nostrils or patting cold water on your face.

In a similar way to working with master plant teachers like huachuma or ayahuasca, when you take rapé you are also signing up for an apprenticeship with the medicinal plants in your rapé blend, but on a subtler level.

As you keep taking your rapé, you enter into a dialogue with the plants. I invite you to listen.

Brazilian Tribes that Make Rapé

Most of the well-known rapé blends come from Brazil and are named after their tribe, regardless of what's in the blend. In other words, you may have several different rapé blends, each containing different plants (and thus having different effects) all named with the same name.

Imagine a winery that produces several types of red, white and rose wine every year and having all of this wine called by the name of the winery. It's both tragic and nonsensical, but this is where we are. Hopefully, as the international rapé market matures, we will begin to see more discernment among rapé enthusiasts as well as merchants, so that more attention is paid to naming the blends.

Another critical piece of information that is lost in the supply chain is the name of the rapé maker. Within a tribe, you have different people who make rapé, with different levels of skill and knowledge. Some are shamans, some are apprentices, others are enthusiasts. The primary difference between a tribal blend that was amazing and another of the same recipe that was so-so, is typically the skill of the person who made it.

Batches of rapé that are made following the same recipe by the same person might also turn out differently. This is because many different factors affect the potency of the plants used to make each blend - how old the plant was, when it was harvested, the quality of the soil, the amount of rain that year, etc - so that every batch is unique... just like wine.

If you are a rapé enthusiast, here are some of the Brazilian tribes who make rapé and some of the plants you might find included in their blends.

Apurinã



Green rapé from the Apurinã tribe is highly stimulating, but doesn't contain tobacco.

Image Credit: Rapé Indígena Facebook Group

The Apurinã tribe belong to the Aruak linguistic group and consists of approximately 2000 - 4000 members that live in over 27 indigenous territories along the Purus River and its tributaries in the Brazilian Amazon. They are a migratory tribe, which is what accounts for their wide distribution over a large region.

In the world of rapé, the Apurinã are best known for their signature, bright green, tobacco-free rapé, made from the powdered leaves of a plant that they call “Awiry”.

Awiry rapé has an eye-opening effect that elicits a wakefulness that is free of dizziness or purging that some of the stronger tobacco-based blends can bring.

Because Awiry grows close to the river, this rapé can only be made in the dry season when the river is low. Awiry is traditionally inhaled through a straight tube, a unique snuffing style that differs from other snuff varieties that are blown up the nose.

No other tribes make a rapé blend like this. It is a great rapé blend for a beginner or for those who prefer tobacco-free snuffs.

[Click Here to Buy High Quality Apurinã Rapé Online](#)

Huni Kuin

The Huni Kuin, also known as the Kaxinawá, belong to the Pano linguistic group and inhabit a region that spans the tropical forest of eastern Peru, across the Andean foothills and into the states of Acre and southern Amazonas, covering the areas of the Upper Juruá and Purus, and in the Javari Valley. They share territory with three other tribes, the Ashaninka, the Shanenawa, and the Madija.

They place a high value on their extended family structures, while the shaman and the tribal leader share the guidance of the community. Rapé blends made by the Huni Kuin are strong and typically have a tobacco base.

Huni Kuin rapé blends may include ashes of the Murici tree (*Byrsonima crassifolia*), which is a plant used in traditional folk medicine to clear energies that accumulate in the lower abdomen. Another common rapé blend might include Cumaru de Cheiro (*Amburana cearensis*) seeds, and is used as medicine for respiratory problems.

[Click Here to Buy High Quality Huni Kuin Rapé Online](#)

Kuntanawa

The Kuntanawa tribe belong to the Pano linguistic family who live in Acre, Brazil, close to the Peruvian border. The Kuntanawa were assumed to have been exterminated owing to the expansion of rubber production in the upper reaches of Amazonian tributaries. However, in recent years, underwent a process of cultural re-invention and, with the help of a local anthropologist Mariana Pantoja, were able to achieve recognition as a tribal group.

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Haru Kuntanawa blowing rapé into the nose of another shaman.

Image Credit: Lorna Liana

Pedro, the chief, and his son Haru Kuntanawa make beautiful, aromatic tobacco-based rapé blends. Blends might include Chamba or Anador, which is a traditional herbal medicine used to alleviate different pains, such as headaches and muscular pains. Alfavaca da Mata another herb that the Kuntawa use in their rapé, which helps clear 'Panema,' a general negative energy that brings sickness, unease and bad luck in daily life.

[Click Here to Buy High Quality Kuntanawa Rapé Online](#)

Nukini

The Nukini are a tribe of a little over 600 people that belong to the Pano linguistic group and are found in the Juruá Valley of Acre Brazil, close to the Serra do Divisor (Dividing Mountain) national park, in a region flanked by the Peruvian and Bolivian borders. Their small population is a result of a devastating history of dispossession, violence and exploitation since the mid-19th century at the hands of the rubber industry.

Nukini rapé is tobacco-based and believed to contain feminine power, as the majority of the plants that are used for making medicines are gathered, and even formulated by the women of the tribe. The Nukini like to make their rapé with tobacco powder and Parika ashes, which adds strength, and blend in other herbs such as Mulatinha, used for relaxation, or Trevo Cumaru, used to treat respiratory issues.

[Click Here to Buy High Quality Nukini Rapé Online](#)

Yawanawá

The Yawanawá are a tribe of roughly 900 people from the Pano linguistic group, who occupy 8 villages along the Gregoria river, outside of Cruzeiro do Sol, Acre, between Peru and Bolivia. Its community is, in fact, a conjunction of people that includes members from other groups: Shawãdawa (Arara), Iskunawa, Rununawa, Sainawa, and Katukina.

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This configuration is the result of a dynamic common to many Pano groups – alliances through marriage, women captured during warfare conflicts, the migration of families – and a series of historical events, like the arrival of non-Indians (including epidemics and demographic alterations).

The Yawanawá refer to their rapé as “Rume” and their most common rapé blend is made with tobacco powder and ash from the bark of the Tsunú tree. Tsunú is uplifting and strong, and may make your eyes water or cause you to break out in sweat.

While this village staple rapé is ubiquitous among the Yawanawá, the evolving rapé marketplace seems to be inspiring the tribe to produce blends other than tobacco and Tsunú.

[Click Here to Buy High Quality Yawanawa Rapé Online](#)

Does Shamanic Snuff Cause Cancer?

With the expansion of rapé around the world alongside ayahuasca and kambô (sapo) frog medicine, one big question arises in the Western mind around this newfound ancient way of consuming tobacco - does shamanic snuff cause cancer?

With the success of anti-smoking campaigns around the world, most of us are aware of the dangers of smoking cigarettes and how it increases your risk of lung cancer. So naturally, the question arises: Does snorting dry tobacco snuff up your nose also cause nose cancer?

Western Scientific Research on the Risks of Dry Smokeless Snuff Is Lacking

When it comes to assessing the risks of dry nasal snuff use, the oldest population of snuffers – the indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin – has escaped Western scientific scrutiny. Shamanic snuff goes back to pre-Columbian times, and while people in the Amazon continue to insufflate tobacco-based snuffs, in all these hundreds of years, no scientific studies have been made to determine whether the indigenous populations have ever developed nasal or lung cancers from this ancient practice.

Amazonian peoples used and continue to use these snuffs to treat a wide variety of ailments, from general listlessness to digestive issues and respiratory infections. Shamanic snuffs were never a mass market product – they were made in small batches by shamans for specific medicinal purposes. Amazonian

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shamanic snuff is typically produced from organic, wild-crafted ingredients. Most consumers of shamanic snuff in the Amazon do not even smoke cigarettes.

After the indigenous practice of insufflating powdered snuffs was discovered in Brazil, snuff made its way across Europe and was met with popularity:

- In 1566 the Queen of France was convinced that it cured her migraines.
- Napoleon sniffed over seven pounds of snuff a month.
- In 1624 Pope Urban VIII threatened excommunication for snuff users, because sneezing was thought to be too close to sexual ecstasy.

While there was a brief period of time in Western civilization where dry nasal snuff was the rage until the 19th century, this practice eventually died out and was replaced by chewing oral wet tobacco (also referred to as “snuff”) and cigarette smoking. Today, people who regularly consume smokeless tobacco account for less than one per cent of all tobacco users, and those who consume dry nasal snuff are an even smaller subset of snuff users.

Scientific research into the health risks of tobacco use have focused on these two most common forms of consuming tobacco – smoking and chewing. Both these methods of consuming tobacco have been extensively researched and found to cause cancer in the long run. If one were to observe the rate of abuse related to the different ways of consuming tobacco, smoking has the characteristics of a pandemic; the use of smokeless tobacco could be defined as endemic; and that of nasal snuff – sporadic.

For this reason, there are very few clinical reports on the health risks of dry nasal snuff, because of the limited spread of dry nasal tobacco abuse today.

Did Indigenous People Get Cancer from Using Tobacco Snuff?



Matsigenka tribemen using Tepi blow pipe

Not that we know... and it seems highly unlikely given its long-standing use. If consuming tobacco-based shamanic snuff was a cancer-causing practice, the indigenous people surely would have picked up on it hundreds of years ago.

Indigenous people also had a different relationship to tobacco than Westerners. Firstly, they traditionally considered tobacco to be a sacred plant medicine. Secondly, shamanic snuff is consumed ritualistically - usually with one person - say the shaman, administering it to another individual using a blowpipe; it is not really consumed on the sly, as a habitual personal vice in the way cigarettes are typically consumed.

Furthermore, indigenous tribes used a different kind of tobacco to make their medicine, and they rarely smoked it. The tobacco used by indigenous tribes for

healing purposes is *Nicotiana rustica* – also known as mapacho – and while it is considerably stronger than the tobacco used in commercial cigarettes (*Nicotiana tabacum*), mapacho smoke was rarely ever inhaled. If it was smoked, it was typically smoked into the mouth like a cigar or a peace pipe, with the smoke blown over a patient as a blessing.

Tobacco Smoking vs. Tobacco Snuffing

Tobacco taken in the form of snuff is considered far less dangerous than smoking. Tobacco smoking is a widely recognized risk factor for cancer of the lungs, the upper airways and the digestive tract. Few people know this, but the main risks associated with tobacco come from what happens to the chemical constituents when you smoke the tobacco. Be it in the form of cigars, cigarettes, or a pipe, when you smoke tobacco you inhale a broad spectrum of toxic chemicals that cause cardiovascular disease or induce malignancy:

*"From the 2500 to 3000 different chemical substances inhaled when smoking, polycyclic aromatic hydro-carbons, the tobacco-specific nitrosamines nitroso-nor-nicotine (NNN), 4-(methylnitrosoamino)-1-(3-piridyl)-butanone (NNK), carbon monoxide, ana-basine and cotinine are related to higher cardiovascular risk."
(The Journal of Laryngology & Otology, September 2003, Vol. 117, pp. 686–691)*

All of the components of smoking that lead to cardiovascular disease, such as fibrinogen, are all greatly reduced when insufflating dry smokeless tobacco. Snuff has shown no effect on promoting atherosclerosis or myocardial infarction.

The effects of smoking have been widely documented and researched to the point where it is well-known that long-term smoking significantly increases risks for cancer. In smokers, there is a four-fold increase in risk for head and neck related malignant cancers. By contrast, there is no convincing evidence that dry tobacco

snuff increases risk of head and neck cancers. There is strong evidence that the carcinogenic aspects of smoking is created when heat is applied to the tobacco. Obviously, a snuffer of dry nasal tobacco is not exposed to any of these chemicals, which are all induced through burning.

There are, however, some carcinogenic compounds still present in smokeless tobacco, even without the application of heat. Carcinogenic chemicals called “nitrosamines” are still present in dry nasal snuff. In fact, in many cases the concentration of nitrosamines are higher in the form of snuff. However, the existing clinical evidence of nasal snuff as a carcinogenic factor in the nose and the paranasal sinuses is not convincing.

- A 1992 study of the systemic genotoxic effects of tobacco-related nitrosamines following oral and inhalation administration were found to have carcinogenic effects in rats, but the extrapolation of the results to carcinogenesis in humans is difficult, because of tissue and animal specificity.
- A recent study of 63 regular long-term snuff users in England had no signs of malignancy.
- In Africa, an elevated incidence of carcinomas of the maxillary antrum in snuff users was described in South Africa Bantu, and data shows that consumption of Zulu snuff make increase the risk of cancer; in both cases, it's suspected that the addition of charred aloe stems (which gives a higher level of the carcinogenic benzpyrene to the tobacco snuff) is responsible for this effect.

So to summarize, the risks of adverse health outcomes depend on the type of smokeless tobacco used in a specific region of the world – whether it's dry or moist, whether there are any additives, and what those additives are.

What About Nicotine?

Nicotine is the main psychoactive in tobacco. Nicotine is typically considered the main culprit for the addictive tendencies associated with smoking.



While nicotine is addictive, it is not carcinogenic. However, the cigarette industry has manipulated the nicotine content of smoking tobacco to create more dependency... in order to sell more products. Cigarette dependency results in continued exposure to the carcinogenic compounds created when tobacco is burned and the smoke is inhaled.

Because tobacco-based Amazonian shamanic snuff is made with *Nicotiana rustica*, it contains more nicotine than cigarettes, and therefore can be habit forming.

Can Shamanic Snuff Help Ease Your Cigarette Addiction?

The smoking cessation industry is a billion dollar industry touting a wide range of products that help you to “quit smoking”, everything from electronic cigarettes, to patches and pills.

Smokeless tobacco has the benefits of eliminating the smoke-related health risks, proponents of smokeless tobacco advocate for its use as a smoking cessation tool. Though nasal sniffing of dry snuff remains a rare practice, shamanic snuff may actually be one of the safest cigarette alternatives, free from the dangers of synthetic ingredients often included in products designed to help you quit smoking.

Many of the products designed to help people quit smoking utilize nicotine replacement therapies. Though the nicotine is absorbed a little differently, the high associated with smoking is mimicked when you use tobacco snuff. However it's been found that 24 hours later, the concentration of nicotine in the blood is lower than it is with smoking, resulting in lower negative impact on the biomarkers for cardiovascular disease. In other words, you get the nicotine high with lower risk of heart and lung disease.

So What's the Verdict?

The negative health effects of consuming smokeless tobacco depends on:

- The type of smokeless tobacco snuff – oral moist tobacco snuff versus dry nasal tobacco snuff
- What region of the world it comes from – which determines how it is made
- Whether synthetic ingredients have been added to the product

Because shamanic snuff from the Amazon is a dry nasal snuff made from organic, wild-crafted tobacco and medicinal plants, **its cancer risk is extremely low**. While potentially habit forming due to its high nicotine content, there is currently no clinical evidence that this type of dry, smokeless tobacco causes lung cancer, nasal cancer or heart disease.

The Commercialization of Shamanic Medicines



*Products from TERRA Sagrada Xamanismo in Brazil
Image Credit: Rapé Medicine Sagrada Facebook Group*

The expansion of shamanic medicines around the world is a phenomenon that is here to stay, and the sharing of medicinal plants across cultures has been a long-standing practice of humanity. Cannabis, coffee, cacao, opium and sugarcane have been traded across continents for hundreds of years, and in some cases, integral tools used in colonialist pursuits of land, capital and empire that have created many of the third-world countries and Banana Republics of today.

The expansion of ayahuasca, rapé, kambô, huachuma, and iboga into Western commercial markets has created economic dynamics that can be delicate and

difficult to navigate. Sustainability, and ensuring that plant and animal populations can regenerate is a key concern. Product quality is another issue.

Because traditional shamanic medicines can be difficult to source and are often laborious to make, the temptation to cut corners is real, as more suppliers enter the market, and prices come down. Shamanic medicines cannot be mass produced by machines without losing their spiritual power, because their very power rests in the medicine maker's personal relationship with the plants, their ability to identify and harvest wild medicinal plants, and the ceremonial container within which he or she prepares the medicine.

It can also be difficult for the end user to assess the authenticity of the medicine they have procured, unless they know who made it, and procured it directly from the maker. Unless there is utmost trust between the consumer and the supplier, it is really difficult to know what is in the bag of green powder labelled "huachuma" or the glass vial of rapé you purchased from the New Age store in Rio de Janeiro, unless you get the contents analyzed in a lab.

There is way more demand for shamanic medicine than there are shamans to make it, so numerous middlemen are entering the market, and some are unscrupulous. Whether it's substituting egg whites for kambô frog sweat on a bamboo stick, to using ash out of a fire pit, rather than smoked, pounded tree bark that has been meticulously filtered through a sieve, the pressure to capitalize on voracious Western demand is strongly felt by people who live in the poorest regions of the world, who have few economic alternatives.

What Can You Do to Support An Ethical Shamanic Marketplace?

Most shamanic practitioners consider themselves to be on path of spiritual awakening, and genuinely desire a sustainable, equitable and inclusive human presence on this planet.

Unfortunately, some stubborn spiritual bypass also plagues the plant medicine community, which can be attributed to underlying shadows of neocolonialism and cultural appropriation, as well as spiritual and resource extractivism.

These predispositions are so entwined in the fabric of Western society that most of us are unaware of how we perpetuate these tendencies. Here are some suggestions on how you can loosen their grip:

Tip #1: Let Go Of The Idea that Sacred Medicine Should Be Free

There is an erroneous belief in the shamanic community (usually held by spiritual Westerners) that shamanic teachings and shamanic medicine "should be free."

This belief is erroneous because it typically arises from the projection of one cultural paradigm - spiritual teachers in Asia, living in monasteries that receive regular tithing from the surrounding community, who offer donation-based services - onto a different cultural paradigm that is based on doctoring.

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Shamans are the village holistic healers and they were always paid for their services, whether it was in cash, chickens or exchange of labor, as you might do with your neighbors in a village ecosystem.

This erroneous belief also spiritually bypasses basic comprehension of what it takes to make medicine, especially good medicine. The years, decades and lifetime of learning. The hours, days, weeks of gathering and preparation. Indeed the medicine can be free, if you are willing to go into the forest to seek, identify, harvest, and prepare the medicine yourself.

Until then, please consider the time and knowledge it takes to make good medicine, and pay your shamans. Indigenous people do not have many opportunities to earn the hard currency they need to purchase clothing, gasoline, aspirin, parasite medication, boat propellers, and other things they need to survive in the forest. Purchasing fair-trade, indigenous or shaman-made rapé is one of the best ways to support indigenous communities economically.

Insisting that this medicine be free, or cheap, even if it has travelled thousands of miles out of the Amazon to you, and somebody along the way painstakingly measured out the fine powder into little tins and glass vials and put a pretty label on it, is lacking in understanding and appreciation of what it took to get the medicine to you.

Given that Westerners have considerably more privilege and wealth than the indigenous, the idea that medicine should be free is not only entitled... it is, most definitely, not spiritual.

Tip #2: Purchase Shaman-Made, Fair Trade, Wild-Crafted Rapé

Purchasing shamanic medicines at a good price helps the art of making rapé stay alive, thrive, and innovate in new creative ways.

It ensures that those rapé enthusiasts who are dedicated to learning and mastering this laborious art, can be supported in their deepening their apprenticeship with the plants without having to abandon their endeavors to get a menial job. It ensures that shamans will have apprentices, and apprentices will be motivated to become shamans, rather than become loggers, miners, cattle ranch hands, or truck drivers.

Many indigenous shamans who travel around the world holding ayahuasca ceremonies will also have rapé. Purchasing rapé from them not only ensures they can make enough income on an expensive overseas trip to bring back to their communities, it ensures you will have good quality rapé.

Many Western ayahuasca and kambô facilitators who travel to South America often return with rapé that they may have procured from their teachers.

Increasingly rapé is being sold online. A Google search will bring up a number of online stores; however, unless you know the individuals operating these businesses, it may be difficult to determine the quality and the source.

Regardless of whom you are purchasing your rapé from, do make a point to inquire where the rapé came from, what plants are in it, and who made it. Not only will you learn about what you are choosing to put into your body, you give a clear signal to the supplier that customers are interested in these details. And this encourages transparency in the marketplace.

Tip #3: Decolonize Your Mind & Practice Sacred Reciprocity

Have you ever noticed how your beliefs, motivations and day-to-day life is so fundamentally shaped by capitalism?

The fact that you are reading this guide indicates that you are most likely from a modern, industrialized society in the Global North, and most probably a Western culture. Because you got this guide off the Internet (probably using a smartphone) and have the extra time to explore interests beyond your basic need for survival.

Regardless of whether you, personally, believe yourself to be wealthy or poor, the truth is, the privileges and opportunities we have as citizens of the Global North far outstrip the privileges and opportunities of the vast majority of the human population living in the Global South.

Much of this is due to colonialism and the systems of oppression that were established to ensure that certain groups had access to the benefits of society over others.

The Modern Shamanic Guide to Rapé

The North has always had an extractive relationship with the Amazonian South. First it was rubber, then it was oil and timber, and now it's medicine and spirituality.

To the point where now:

- There are more non-indigenous people consuming plant medicines like ayahuasca than indigenous, and
- More non-indigenous facilitators holding ayahuasca ceremony than indigenous shamans.

Much of the wealth of the Global North was built upon colonizing and plundering other countries. Colonialism started before post-industrial modern capitalism. Its legacy continues today with the predatory capitalism that continues to consume the planet's dwindling natural resources, often seizing these commodities by force.

The indigenous of the Amazon continue to be threatened with violence and driven off their land. Racism, violence political oppression and economic marginalization in an ancestral homeland that was stolen from them has given rise to generations of trauma, depression, alcoholism, and suicide.

If you can take the time to learn about medicinal rapé of the Amazon, please consider taking the time to also learn about the history of colonialism, the continued existence of systemic oppression, and how you might use your privilege to become a true ally to the indigenous movement.

How to Establish a Right Relationship with Rapé



*Art inspired by the medicinal rapé
Image Credit: The Arte do Rapé Facebook Group*

Whether you are choosing to administer rapé for yourself using a kuripe, or with others - using a tepi, I hope this guide has provided you with thorough step-by-step instructions on how to consume this sacred medicine and receive optimal results. Mindfulness of the source of your medicine, how it's being administered, dosage, intention setting, and the space in which you use it are all important components for a sustainable, non-addictive relationship to rapé. Context is everything when it comes to using rapé in a sacred, safe, and supportive container.

The Modern Shamanic Guide to Rapé

I invite you to be conscious of the attitude you have towards the ceremony itself, as that attitude or intention will greatly affect the outcome of your experience. I welcome you to take to heart the importance of setting a proper environment with clear intention, and use this book as a reference guide whenever you are feeling disconnected. A calm, tranquil, and meditative environment with an air of sacredness, introspection, and respect towards the process of healing and the medicine itself will all greatly enhance and support your experience. Each individual's intention will be unique; the most important thing is to not treat the consumption of rapé as a social ritual or party drug. It is a sacred medicine to be used with prayerful intent.

An attitude of openness, curiosity and courage is also necessary in order to make the most out of your rapé experience. Be extra-careful when choosing the people with whom you will experience this ceremony. It is very important to do this with people you trust and respect, not with less reputable or suspicious individuals – this includes the shaman, should you choose to work with one. Make sure to trust your gut feeling on this one – it is better to postpone or do a ceremony on your own rather than do it in an improper environment or with inappropriate types of people.

At this exciting juncture in human consciousness and evolution, we can have the opportunity to receive the awakening and transformative power of ancient plant medicines and practices. Sacred medicines are gaining more and more popularity amongst modern shamans and spiritual seekers looking to heal, cleanse, transform, and connect to other realms. With great power comes great responsibility. It is our intention that this guide has helped empower you with the ancient wisdom of how to make use of the powerful medicinal properties of rapé in a responsible, sacred, and ceremonial way.

Medical Disclaimer

EntheoNation is a transformational media company and a web show featuring visionaries pioneering the cutting-edge of awakening through psychedelic science, modern shamanism, & visionary culture.

Our mission is to provide informative content about the therapeutic benefits of psychedelics and visionary plant medicines in a way that integrates science, culture, and spirituality. We are interested in the exploration of other non-ordinary states of consciousness for personal, spiritual and social transformation.

We encourage the responsible use of entheogens for the purposes of self-awareness and self-mastery. We do not explicitly encourage the use of psychedelics for every individual, nor do we endorse activities that may be considered illegal in your locale. We strongly encourage a discerning mind when approaching powerful visionary substances, and respect when participating in the cultures that consider these medicines sacred.

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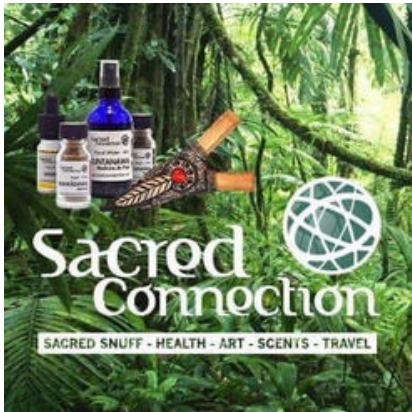
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Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

Where to Purchase High Quality Rapé

Shaman-Made Tribal Rapé from Sacred Snuff



Each indigenous tribe has its own shamanic snuff recipes that we faithfully represent here at Sacred Connection.

All our snuffs are sourced directly from the tribes whose names they carry.

For a truly authentic experience, buy snuff that is crafted in its ancestral home by the people who revere it most.

[VISIT SACRED-SNUFF.COM](https://www.sacred-snuff.com)

Get 10% Your First Order with the Coupon Code ENTHEO

Exclusive Rapé Blends by Chakra Openings

All of our Rapé comes from either Peru, Brazil, or Ecuador, made by the tribes of the rainforest or by shamans that we work with.

All of our products are 100% organic, made with the prayers and intention of humble people wanting to continue living in harmony with Mother Earth.

Having tried, tested, and worked with over 50 different types, we sell only the best, most effective, and our personal favorites, as well as our exclusive blends.



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