



DO IT AT HOME!

**MAKE
YOUR OWN
CEREMONY**

PREPARED BY

**CAT ROSE
THE CREATIVE
INTROVERT**



What are the elements of ceremony?

Even though I'm all for the DIY ceremony approach, I'm also fully aware that there are certain templates or shapes that true ceremonies seem to have. When we have a structure that's rooted in tradition, we're free to play with the individual elements ourselves.

Not all of these ingredients need to be present to make a ceremony, but many occur in ceremonies all over the world.

Preparation

Many ceremonies require a period of preparation prior to the event, such as abstaining from alcohol, sex or certain foods. Some other aspects to consider for preparation:

- Mindfulness/quiet time – a set period before going into ceremony where you are quiet or take some time to prepare mentally.
- Intention – ceremonies are centred around a purpose, and this is often stated by whoever is opening the ceremony. For example, a wedding may begin with the officiant stating “We are gathered here today to witness the joining together of X and Y...”
- Invocation – to prepare the space, traditionally calling corners and/or invoking the spirit/s would happen before the main ceremony could begin.
- Cleansing – many participants in ceremonies undergo some kind of ritual cleansing, whether it's through tobacco smoke, sage, incense or blessed water.

Performance

Many ceremonies involve song, music, dance or other movement, decorative elements such as flags or other symbols, costume. Other aspects of the performance to consider:

- Devotion/worship
- Celebration/appreciation
- Sacrifice
- Divination (e.g. picking a tarot card, casting the I Ching)

Transformation

This could be considered as part of the performance, but I wanted to distinguish this as the real heart of the ceremony: when the transformation itself takes place.

- Altered states of consciousness
- Petition / asking for help
- Sacraments / manipulation of reality
- Healing
- Magic

Closing

Just as the ceremonial space was opened, it too must be closed, before re-entering the outside world.

- Closing circle
- Sharing with others / journalling
- Party / feast

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE CREATING YOUR OWN CEREMONY

- *What's the purpose of my ceremony?*
- *What kind of change do I hope will occur?*
- *What concerns do I (or my ego) have?*
- *What concerns might others attending have?*
- *What are the symbols used in this ceremony?*
- *What symbolic actions will people perform?*
- *What symbolic decoration will there be?*
- *What ceremonial objects will I need?*
- *Do we need an altar or another place of focus?*
- *What will be on the altar? Who will build it?*
- *What music/song/dance/art will be part of the ceremony?*
- *Who will contribute?*
- *Who will attend the ceremony?*
- *How will they be invited?*
- *How are people expected to dress?*
- *Will elders and children be accommodated?*
- *Will there be food? If so, what kind?*
- *What does it symbolise? When will it be eaten? Who will prepare it?*
- *Who is assisting the ceremony? How will they be informed of their roles?*

Note: These are based on directives given in the book *The Power of Ceremony* by Linda Neale.

SYMBOLS OF CEREMONY

These can be helpful for guiding symbolic elements that you might include in your ceremony.

Cutting = Separation, individuation

Fasting = Purification, separation from the material world

Eating = Nourishment, support, dependency on the Earth

Enfolding/wrapping = Protection, union

Dancing = Celebration, release, connection to body

Drinking water = honouring the first medicine, compassion

Touching = Connection, healing

Burying = Releasing to the earth, letting go, hiding

Giving away – Appreciation, release, honouring others

Submerging in water = Cleansing, transition

Going barefoot = Respect for the earth, human suffering

Rising at dawn = Honouring life, appreciating the sun

Being in darkness = returning to the womb, the feminine

Going into the earth/cave = Meditation, returning to the womb

Stepping across a line = Transition to a new status

Cutting hair = Mourning, respect

Teasing/joking = Release, welcoming the trickster

Weaving = Connection

Smudging = Purification, cleansing

Drumming/singing = Honour, joy, union

Being silent = Respect, listening, getting in touch

**MAY YOUR
CEREMONY
BE A
SUCCESS!**

If you have any questions about this
guide, feel free to get in touch:
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