



Shamanic Reiki Master Teacher and Life Empowerment ALTAR CREATION

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CREATING PERSONAL AND OTHER ALTARS

Altars are focal points from which we can gain inspiration, healing, clarity, and support. We can also ask an Altar to offer these qualities to others, or to the Earth. An Altar is a physical reference point for spiritual forces and it is an energetic vortex. Thus, we keep it clean and un-cluttered, so the energy stays strong and clear, and continuously generates transformative forces. We relate with an Altar regularly to keep the energy active and the spirits engaged. When we feel too busy, we can relate simply such as in lighting a candle and incense, offering a sprinkling of tobacco and saying hello to our spirit guides. This can take all of three minutes. It's our intention and presence as we engage our Altar that matters.

Working with an Altar is about creating "relationship" — with it and with the talismans and sacred items, physical representations of real spiritual beings and energies, including the elements, that live on your Altar. Speak with them. Offer them your love and reverence, as they are alive and sentient. Offer them cornmeal, coconut oil, and flower petals. Or tobacco, bread, or sesame seeds. There's no need to be overly 'spiritual' or serious, in fact you can be humorous, but do regard them with respect.

We can send healing at a distance through an Altar and likewise, place problems and concerns (can be a written prayer slip) we have not found resolve for, or areas of social and environmental turmoil we feel helpless to shift, upon an Altar, just as we can also 'give these over' to the Earth. As we 'give it to the Altar', we set worry aside, trusting that the spirits and elements will work for the highest good. It's not up to us to determine this.

Whatever their purpose, beautiful Altars generate tangible energy for us and those people, spirits and nature beings beyond us. They inspire us, and keep us connected with spirit and nature, and our higher intentions on a regular basis.

There is no "right" way to create an Altar; there are no rules. They can be multi-faceted, yet it helps to be clear about intentions.

You may have one, or many Altars. They can be inside, outside, or both. They can be temporary or permanent. Any clean surface like a nightstand, a side table, or a windowsill, or any protected spot outside in your yard, or on your land can house an Altar. Your Altar can be large or small. It may be simple or ornate and complex. It can change daily, seasonally, or with the moon's phases. You may work with your Altar in a specific ceremonial way, then completely shift how you relate with it and even re-program its intention.

Many people like to have sacred items, physical huacas, all over the house. Altars are different in that they provide an opportunity to concentrate energy and focus intention. Your Altar is a protective force that energizes intentions, a conduit through which you can harmonize with nature and spirit, invite your sacred essence to daily life, and generate good forces for those nature beings, people, and spirits beyond you. Imagine that the spiraling vortex energies travel deeply into the Earth on the descending spiral and extend upward to the limitless vast heavens via the ascending spiral.

Vortices amplify energy so do not underestimate the transformative effects your Altar will have upon your land or neighborhood, your home or work or healing environment, on what you "bring" to it, on you and your life, and in realms or circumstances that you may never become aware of. Just as we send energy out through our Shamanic Reiki Spiral, we can do so through our Altars. You can also direct energy out from your Altar, as is described in the Land Blessing Ceremony. And/or you can simply set this intention and let the Altar take care of this. Or, do nothing but ensure your Altar is vibrant. A 'well-related with' Altar naturally radiates benefit to those nature beings, people, and spirits beyond us.

PERSONAL ALTARS

A personal Altar is for connecting with and deepening our relationship with (and honoring and working with) our spirit guides and the Earth, and for prayer, meditation, seeking guidance, etc. This Altar is very individual and personal – a sacred representation of our internal world that bonds us with nature, and our spirit guides. Thus, the items we choose, or those that find us to be included in our personal Altar reflect how we personally relate with spirit. This is a very creative, folksy, and intimate process.

We can work with our personal Altar for everything that comes up in our lives, or we can create temporary Altars to generate energy for specific personal events. As an example, we can create a small, specified Altar to feel supported in doing a job interview, speaking publically, or in beginning a new life passage.

Some people like to create separate Altars dedicated to specific purposes like these – and program these intentions into the Altars as they create them. Some people like to engage a shamanic journey to ask where the Altar wants to be, what it wants to look like, and what sacred items and spirit guides desire to be included. Some people construct the Altar and sacred items in relationship with the four, or six or seven directions, and some invite the Altar to reveal itself through a night dream or through auspicious happenstance – set the intention and then see what they dream, or what appears in daily life. Most Altars have representations of the elements, Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and Spirit (or Ether or Space).

COMMUNITY AND NATURE ALTARS

There are also community and nature Altars. Examples of a community Altar are those we may create for our clients and students and family or other groups such as the stone circle Altars many of us have created for our SRMT program. Our stone circle Altars are in place solely for the purpose of supporting, energizing, and connecting our circle. This will be true of the Altars you create for students, clients, your family, or others – you will not connect with these Altars for other purposes. We use stones for our SRMT circle, but you can use twigs, statues, shells, or items that call to you. As with all Altars, these community Altars can be inside or outside. They can be simple or elaborate.

An example of a nature Altar is to create one outside or to create an Altar programmed to offer good energy to and communicate and connect with tree beings – or any other part of nature. When you do construct an Altar of any purpose outside or on the land, you may do so very simply. Or you may engage some of the suggestions that are outlined in the Land Blessing Ceremony, and practices such as Aimless Wandering and Huaca Retrieval presented in the required reading books on your reading list.

Most importantly, open your heart to the land. Be playful and also reverent.

When feeling the desire to create a nature Altar, please approach this very consciously. Nature is sacred and beautiful and a powerful generator of good forces, as it is. We need to be very mindful of how we co-create with her. Humanity has imposed enough upon the Earth. Regardless of how beautiful or ‘sacred’ our Altars and other creations can be, or what good intentions we may bring in constructing them – many of our land areas should simply be left untouched. It’s extremely powerful to focus in a relaxed way to invite nature to show us the sacredness that is already there. We can co-create without adding anything to the Earth, allowing her to show us her natural vortices.

It can be incredibly powerful to find on your land or in your backyard (or even in a city park) a natural area that feels like a shrine or Altar to you. It may just feel special in some intangible way, be particularly beautiful, or you may be drawn here for no other reason than that you feel called. You can set the intention and do some Aimless Wandering and see what draws you. Or, recognize that you already know what Altar areas are there on the lands where you live, as these are the places you like to visit and appreciate, or sit and spend time here to pray, rejuvenate and/or reflect.

Make offerings of love, song, prayer, sleep, movement, and only simple physical offerings that will be composted and absorbed by the Earth, such as cornmeal, tobacco, flower petals, milk, sacred water, etc. Open your eyes to the many sacred Altars the Earth has already created. We live in an amazing world! As with our created Altars, the more time you spend with these, the deeper and more profound your connection with them will be.

ALTAR ITEMS

Always freshen your Altar plants, flowers or branches or other living Earth items, and offer the plant back to the Earth with gratitude when it dries or wilts. We always ask permission when we take from nature, and we leave an offering in its place. When asking for the small end of a tree branch, or a plant sprig, you can hold the branch with your Reiki hands above where you will make a cut. Ask the tree or plant to pull its energy in above where you will cut. Invoke the Reiki symbols and hum, whistle, utter a word of gratitude, or simply open your heart.

Although you may already use the following items for your Altars, you may find some on the below list that you haven't have thought of, yet – or have others that you recommend to be included.

Basic Altar

Altar Spread (Cloth or Tapestry or Textile or Rug)

Matches

Offerings (Tobacco or Cornmeal or Bread, etc.)

Five Elements: Earth-Stone, Air-Incense, Water-Shell, Fire-Candle, Spirit-Drawing of Reiki Power Symbol or Shamanic Reiki Symbols. All are examples.

Bring a bowl and/or stand for the candle and smudge or incense to safely rest. Add your drum and/or rattle to this list, as well as anything else that feels essential to you.

Portable Altar

Everything that is noted above plus special small pouches for your sacred items and a special satchel whose sole purpose is to carry the items that comprise your portable Altar.

If you are traveling and have forgotten your Portable Altar, you can easily gather new or temporary Altar items, whether you are in a city or in nature.

Altar Options

EARTH

Fresh Flowers, Tree Branches, Herbs, Vegetables or Plants

Stone or Crystal Huacas

Wood or Driftwood

Animal Statue or Carving or Picture

FIRE

Candles

Pipe

Wood

Picture of the Sun

AIR

Palo Santo, Juniper, Sage, Incense

Feathers

Bird Statue or Carving or Picture

WATER

Shells

Sea Salt

Moon, Starlight and/or Sun Water

Dolphin, Whale or Other Sea Animal Statue, Carving or Picture

SPIRIT

Talismans or Representations of Your Spirit Guides

Images of the Reiki Symbols

Medicine Cards

Rattle(s)

Drum(s)

Prayer Slips

Photographs and Pictures

Statues

Poems and Songs

Symbolic or Spiritual Jewelry

OFFERINGS

Imbuing the Altar with the Reiki Power Symbol and Others

Your Reiki Hands on the Sacred Items and/or Earth

Cornmeal

Tobacco

Bread, Salami, Chicken or Other Food

Vodka, Rum, Milk, Tea or Other Alcohol or Sacred Waters

Coins

Chalimars (Prayer Ties)

Poems and Songs