



Last updated: June 1, 2018

## Tobacco Offering Protocol

The custom of presenting a tobacco tie is an act of respect and care for invited Indigenous guests. The nature of the invitation matters NOT... It's important to honour their presence with the gift of tobacco. There are many ways of presenting tobacco, but it is most commonly given as a tobacco tie, as pictured below.

This is a guideline on how to make a tobacco tie when making a request to a knowledge keeper, an Elder or Indigenous person.

1. **Acquire Tobacco:** Ideally you use Traditional tobacco (not for commercial smoking usage), organic tobacco, pipe tobacco (i.e. Drum), and, if nothing else is available, commercial loose tobacco. The last suggestion is discouraged as it's laced with chemicals and causes harm to the planet.
2. **Obtain Cloth:** Buy fabric to make your tobacco tie, preferably in colours such as red, yellow, white, green, purple or blue. You can purchase broad cloth from a fabric store.
3. **Preparing the Tobacco Offering:** The person making the request should prepare the tobacco tie or pouch. As you prepare the offering, it is important to think about what you are requesting and to have good thoughts while you prepare the tobacco tie. Here are step-by-step instructions on how to assemble your tobacco tie:



Cut your fabric in a square (4 inches by 4 inches).

Put a small amount of tobacco in the centre of the cloth.

Fold all the ends of the cloth together.

Tie the tobacco with a piece of yarn or twine; you can also cut a strip of the fabric to make a tie.

EACH guest should receive a tie. Explain to the tobacco why its going to be presented and what is expected of the recipient. Hold in your left hand as it's closest to the heart... the residence of spirit.



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4. **Making a Request:** Offer the tobacco tie or pouch when you make your initial request. To make a request, offer the tobacco tie or pouch by holding it in your left hand in front of you, state your request (be specific), and if the person accepts your request, place the tobacco in their hand. An example of what to say when making your request and offering tobacco:

*I am offering you this tobacco for...*

- *...the opening and closing remarks at [name of event].*
- *...the smudging ceremony.*
- *...your guidance with \_\_\_\_\_.*