

SPIRITUAL BATH: ITZ KU

The Healing Nature of Water

*The earth laughs
in flowers.*

– E. E. CUMMINGS

*Water touched by
the spirit of God is
the best medicine
because God is the
best doctor.*

– INDIAN MANTRA

Dispenser of Life, water is the manifestation of the divine spirit itself. The bliss within you will purify the water that flows through your cells. The words that make beautiful crystals from the water that flows through your body are the words that fill you with a gentle feeling of peace.

I feel like I am being guided by the Spirit of Water. I feel like I can see and even talk to this spirit which I see as droplets of water shining brightly in the air.

—ALL BY MASARU EMOTO, *THE SECRET LIFE OF WATER* (2005)

Reading all of Dr. Emoto's books is highly recommended for understanding the spiritual healing nature of water. Water is manifest *chu'lel* and a manifestation of divine energy. It is a physical and spiritual elixir. Herbal baths for spiritual healing combine the power of the spirit of water with love, faith, prayer, plants, and light energy. Spiritual baths absorb and wash away jealousy, grief, sadness, resentment, fear, and anxiety, leaving us lighter, cleansed, and renewed at a deep, energetic level. This combination of prayers, water, plants, love, and faith excites molecular particles in the cells of the body to vibrate to an oscillation in tune with the harmonies of heaven. Spiritual baths open channels for the High Self within each person to guide, comfort, and advise according to their highest good and may be charged by the sun or the moon depending on what intuitive guidance you receive.

Spiritual baths are an excellent way to celebrate rites of passage for puberty, menopause, marriage, birth, and death. Post-surgical clients need baths to rid them of surgical room *sustos*, often mixed with grief.

Maya Spiritual Healing for One's Self

It is not important to know specifically which spiritual ailment you have. Whatever the illness, the treatment is the same. Proceed with faith in the prayers, love, plants, water, incense, and the Divine Higher Power and set your intention.

- ▶ Center and ground yourself with a prayer, roots to the earth.
- ▶ Collect plants with the Herb Collector's Prayer with focus on your spiritual number: four, seven, nine (whichever number you have chosen).
- ▶ Fill the bucket, giving thanks and gratitude to the spirit of water.
- ▶ Mash all the plants and flowers with your hands in the bucket of water until all parts are well crushed. Pray nonstop, avoiding all negative thoughts. If negative thoughts return, simply pray until they leave you.
- ▶ Let the plants soak in the sun (or moonlight) for at least an hour.
- ▶ Prepare your setting for the spiritual bath inside or outside. You will need a bowl, a chair, a sarong or bathing suit, a towel, plants for the pulse prayers, and a comfortable place to meditate.
- ▶ Prepare charcoal and incense (copal, sage, cedar, frankincense, etc.).
- ▶ Center and ground yourself again with light from above.

- ▶ Pass incense over and around your body in a cross pattern several times while praying.
- ▶ Placing two sprigs of plants in a cross, say nine prayers in a whisper: three at right radial pulse, three at left radial pulse, and three over forehead.
- ▶ Make nine crosses on your body with your pulse plants.
- ▶ Pass incense over and around your body several times while praying, then place copal burner in a place where it will not get wet from the bath.
- ▶ Scoop water from the bucket into the air nine times, allowing it to fall back into the bucket each time.
- ▶ Take a sip.
- ▶ Sprinkle yourself freely and vigorously in a three-foot radius around your body, leaving one-fourth of the bath in the bucket to soak your feet.
- ▶ Burn more copal around yourself.
- ▶ Wrap yourself up to keep warm. Soak your feet in the rest of the lustral water for as long as you desire, at least ten minutes.
- ▶ Take time to rest and meditate and even take a nap.
- ▶ Dispose of the water in a sacred, respectful way: under a tree or nearby bush, or if no other options, down the drain with prayer.
- ▶ Give thanks for this healing.

Maya Spiritual Healing for Others

- ▶ Center and ground yourself with a prayer.
- ▶ Perform La Platica: heart-to-heart conversation, consultation, chat.
- ▶ How long have you been feeling this way?
- ▶ When did the symptoms start?
- ▶ Was there a traumatic emotional event that occurred at the same time?
- ▶ Explain your assessment and the procedure. Ensure the willingness to proceed of your client, friend, or family member.
- ▶ Collect plants with the Herb Collector's Prayer with focus on your spiritual number: four, seven, nine (whichever number you have chosen).
- ▶ Fill the bucket of plants with water, continually praying and giving thanks to the spirit of water.
- ▶ Mash all the plants and flowers with your hands in the bucket of water until all parts are well crushed. Continually pray with intention for healing your client, friend, or relative.
- ▶ Let the plants soak in the sun (or moonlight) for at least an hour.
- ▶ Prepare your setting for the spiritual bath inside or outside. You will need a bowl, a chair, a sarong or bathing suit, a towel, plants for pulse prayers, a comfortable place to meditate.
- ▶ Center and ground yourself with a prayer.
- ▶ Check pulse of person on radial pulse. You may also want to check their auric field.

*With pure waters
will I purify you and
you will be pure.
A new heart will
I give you and a
new spirit will I put
within you.
I will guide you in
my teachings and
you shall follow my
mitzvoth.
You shall be my
people and I will be
your God.*

– EZEKIEL 36

- ▶ Pass incense in a cross pattern over and around the person's body and auric field several times while praying, then place copal burner in a place where it will not get wet from bath.
- ▶ Place plants on the pulse in a cross pattern and say nine prayers in a whisper: three at right radial pulse, three at left radial pulse, and three over forehead. For children: two at right radial, two at left ankle, two at left radial, two at right ankle, and last over forehead.
- ▶ Have the person hold crushed plants and smell them.
- ▶ Scoop water from the bucket nine times.
- ▶ Have the person take a sip of the water.
- ▶ Sprinkle person freely and vigorously in a three-foot radius around their body leaving one-fourth of the bath in the bucket to soak their feet.
- ▶ Wrap them up to keep them warm. Soak their feet in the rest of the lustral water.
- ▶ Pass copal around the body and check the pulse again.
- ▶ If pulse has not calmed down, say the prayers again and burn more copal.
- ▶ Give time to rest and meditate, ensuring they are comfortable.
- ▶ Pray and ground yourself again. Stay close to the person and "hold space."
- ▶ Tune into your intuition. Be prepared to do more smudging and prayers if necessary.
- ▶ Dispose of the water in a sacred, respectful way.
- ▶ Give thanks for this healing.

Contraindications for Receiving a Spiritual Bath

- ▶ If you feel insecure or unsafe with the person who is performing the spiritual bath
- ▶ If the person performing the spiritual bath has been using (or just taken) drugs or alcohol
- ▶ A one-on-one spiritual bath may be received during all stages of pregnancy. It is not recommended to do spiritual bathing in a group while pregnant.

Contraindications for Giving a Spiritual Bath

- ▶ If you, or your client, are using drugs or alcohol
- ▶ If you are feeling sick or depleted
- ▶ If you are upset or just received bad news
- ▶ If you are pregnant
- ▶ If client is pregnant, proceed gently; do not encourage strong emotional releases
- ▶ If, for any reason, you can't ground yourself and be present
- ▶ Refer person out if you feel you cannot handle what came up in the session.

NOTE: Attending a class in Maya Spiritual Healing is contraindicated in all stages of pregnancy.

Plants Used in Spiritual Bathing

Almost any plant anywhere on the Earth could be used as long as you know it is not toxic or does not cause skin reactions, with the best being aromatic herbs and plants. A partial list follows:

Rosemary	Marigold	Rue*
Calendula	Roses	Basil
Hibiscus flowers	Thyme	Plantain
Oregano	Motherwort	Pine
Lilac flowers	Comfrey	Linden
Lavender	Sage	St. John's wort
Cedar	Mint	Lemon balm

***CAUTION:** While rue is a powerful spiritual ally and used for healing, many people are allergic to direct topical use due to its phytophototoxic properties. At right is a photograph of a dermatologic reaction to rue used in the sun.



Contact dermatitis from rue

Types of Baths

There are many variations on Spiritual Bathing that are used and highly effective.

Lustrations: a full, forceful splashing into all layers of the auric field, about a three-foot radius

Aspersion: sprinkling lightly when lustration is not possible

Ablution: ritual washing of hands, feet

Libation: to sprinkle or pour lustral water or wine onto the Earth or over an image of a deity or to imbibe ritually

Variations of Lustrations

It is not always possible to do a full lustration or even aspersion. Here are some ideas that can be equally powerful but take less time and space.

NOTE: Remember that these quicker rituals work only when there is absolutely no chance that you could do a full lustration. They are not effective if you are just in a hurry and do not want to take the time. No matter which one you choose, be clear in your mind of your intention.

Spritz: Prepare a bowl of lustral water, strain well, and put in a spray bottle. Spritz the auric field several times while praying.

Chrism is anointing with any oil that has been charged with prayer that you can carry with you. Simply make nine crosses over the person's body with nine prayers.

Light skin bath is very good for those in hospitals or nursing homes. Prepare a cup of lustral water. With your fingertips spread the water lightly over the person's physical body while reciting prayers constantly.

Ocean baths: Pray either in the salty water while making a great big splash or by crushing fresh plants in your hands and rubbing their juices (mixed with sea water) all over your body while you are in the shallow surf.

Just like you have to clean your house more than once a month, you have to do a spiritual bath more than once a month.

—ROSITA ARVIGO

*May the rain-maker
water the Earth
Mother that she may
be made beautiful to
look upon.*

– ZUNI PRAYER

*I sought my God
when I could not see.
I sought my soul and
it eluded me.
I sought to help
my brother and found
all three.*

– ANONYMOUS

Salt and water: When nothing else is available, a bath can be made with only water, kitchen salt, and prayer. You can also soak hands and feet in a bath of one cup of Epsom salt and one-half cup of baking soda.

Shower stalls: If you have to do a bath indoors in a shower stall, have two buckets handy. Strain the plants into one of them to avoid clogging the drain.

Home care: After performing whatever spiritual bath was appropriate, send some of the water home with the client in a covered jar to use as a concentrate by adding to another bucket of water. This is a good way to use strained plants.

Stones and crystals: You may add your favorite—amethyst, jadeite, rose quartz, or any crystal—to soak in your bath. To cleanse your stones, take out a bowl of lustral water and soak the stones in the sun for two to three hours or in the moonlight overnight. Dispose of this water in a respectful way. Do not use uncleansed or uncharged stones in your baths.

Foot and hand baths: Prepare a bucket of lustral water with plants. Pour into two bowls to soak hands and feet for twenty minutes. This should be a quiet, meditative time.

Amulets over pulses: When it is not at all possible to do bathing in any form, hold your amulet over the pulses and repeat the nine prayers.

Frotación: While saying prayers, you can crush herbs between your hands all around the body in the auric field and/or brush the whole body with a bunch of herbs.

SASTUN

The Mayan word *sas* means light, unblemished, and mirror. *Tun* means stone or age. Together they form the word *sastun* (sas-toon), which can mean light of the ages, mirror of the ages, stone of the ages, and stone of light; all names for this cherished ancient tool of divination, enchantment, and spiritual power. A *sastun* can be any semiprecious stone of a luminescent quality.

Only Maya h'mens have a *sastun*, and not all of them do. They appear into a healer's life at unexpected times and places. When Don Elijio first learned to be a healer, he performed eighteen *Primicia* ceremonies, each time asking to be given a *sastun*. Then, one day after the last ceremony, he came home from the milpa and his wife handed him a *sastun* she had found that day in his hammock. The *sastun* is a super conduit of *chu'lel* and is used to communicate directly with the Maya spirits. The *sastun* helps to diagnose spiritual diseases and to divine the answer to questions that can have a yes or no answer. Traditionally, people seek out the keeper of the *sastun* to *saccar la suerte*—check their luck—to see if they have good or bad luck or to ask about other matters, such as who stole their horse or will they get promoted at work.

RITUAL

Every aspect of Maya spiritual healing is a ritual. Prayer, bathing, and incense can seem close to miraculous. Ceremonies like the Maya *Primicia*—the ancient corn ceremony that honors the Nine Maya Spirits, the Four Directions, and the Center of the Cosmos—have tremendous power. H'mens perform the *Primicia* to request assistance from

the spirits and to bring offerings to their gods, especially the Nine Maya Spirits and Ix Chel, the Maya goddess of medicine.

The Maya Primicia ceremony, which dates back to ancient times, is a spiritual rite dedicated to the Nine Maya Spirits who are the Oversoul of the Maya people, according to Don Eljio Panti. The purpose is thanksgiving, supplication, and worship. For centuries shamans and healers have laid out their four cornered altars in homes and in cornfields to honor and to give thanks for the harvest, to request a fruitful planting, and to ask for help in times of crisis or sickness. Nine gourd bowls of sweetened corn *atole* (*sak'a*) are placed on the altar. Amidst flowers, fruits, and a gift of water to the spirits, four white candles light each of the four directions. The Primicia *cantico*, or chant—which is now combined with Christian references—is repeated nine times: twice to each of the four directions and once to the earth. In order to partake of the spiritual essence of the visit from the Nine Maya Spirits, it is tradition to drink of the corn cereal after the ceremony.

DREAM VISIONS

Maya Spirits use dream visions as a tool to guide and educate the fortunate healers they have chosen to work with them. In dreams the physical and spiritual worlds can meet on the astral plane. Healers tell enchanting tales of nocturnal visits from spirits who appear in various forms and use clever methods to instruct. *L'ilol* means “he or she who sees in dreams.” Both Miss Hortence and Don Eljio had the gift of *l'ilol*.

When confronted with a patient who had confusing symptoms, Don Eljio or Miss Hortence would have said: “I don’t really understand your sickness, but I will pray for a dream to help me. You must wait for the answer.” Most of the time, the dream vision comes within a few days, often that very night. Sometimes healers receive a dream before they realize that they haven’t completely understood the ailment.

AMULETS

Known as *protecciones*, or guards, amulets protect the wearer against envy, bad luck, and negative energies, and they attract good energy, healing, and spiritual guidance. They have protective power because the physical objects of which they are made absorb and hold spiritual energies and prayers. Amulets can take many forms or be made of an endless variety of objects: Don Eljio made them with copal, balsam bark, a sacred white stone mined from a mountain in Guatemala, *Piedra de Esquipulas*, and fresh rue leaves. He sewed these ingredients together in a piece of black cloth. When blessed by a *h'men* or placed on the Primicia altar, the Maya amulet protects the one who carries it.

You will make amulets whose charm will last one year. If you are unable to return to have it blessed and charged again, do a grounding exercise: Hold the amulet in your two hands, blow on it three times, and say nine prayers over it, holding it close to your mouth. It may stay charged for much longer if you place it in front of the Primicia candle you will carry home to burn each full moon while you say prayers for everyone in our circle and you receive prayers from them. Powerful and awesome!

HERBAL TEAS

Occasionally, a client will request “something to take” which feels important to them, so we do it, but it is not specifically a necessary aspect of spiritual healing, unless you feel it is needed. When requested, we can recommend that they drink two cups of rosemary or basil tea daily.

*The most beautiful
things in the world
cannot be seen or
even touched.
They must be felt
with the heart.*

– HELEN KELLER