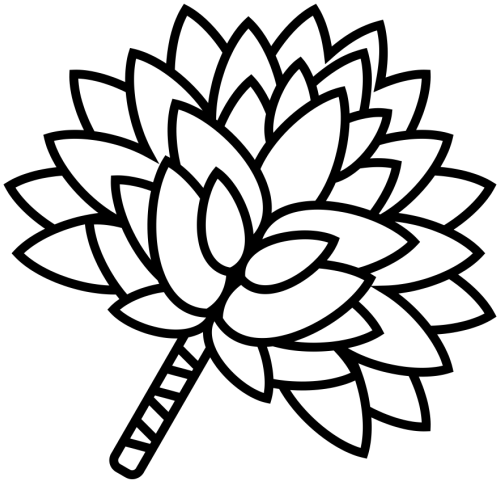
Ayahuasca Integration Journal



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Introduction.

This Integration guide was created to help guide our Ayahuasca retreat visitors through the healing process and to maximize the benefits of the retreat. Most of the content in this integration guide comes from hundreds of hours of one on one and group integration sessions.

This guide is both informational and functional. It will prepare you for your ayahuasca experience as well as lead you through the series of steps that will enhance integration and recall of important information.

There will be space to integrate three ayahuasca ceremonies. In case if you run out of space you can use the free flow journal which begins right after the end of the guide.

My wish is that every participant will pick up a habit of journaling which can be extremely helpful on the healing journey. This is why the guided part is followed by a free flow journal!

What is Yage - Ayahuasca?

When I first came to Colombia I was already curious about Ayahuasca, but like many I simply assumed that it is a tradition reserved to Peru. Even when I first heard about Yage I assumed it was something totally different.
I could not be more wrong. Not only is Ayahuasca as much Colombian as it is Peruvian, but it is often times stronger than its Peruvian cousin.

Thanks to Colombia being largely overlooked by Psychedelic tourism, more of the older and wiser vines were preserved oftentimes resulting in deeper experiences.

But what is the difference?

Ayahuasca or Yage is a brew made of 2 plants - Ayahuasca vine (Banisteriopsis caapi) and a DMT shrub. The vine is the same in both Ayahuasca and Yage, but the DMT shrub used is different. In Ayahuasca they use Chacruna (Psychotria viridis) and in Yage they use Chagro (Diplopterys cabrerana)
Ayahuasca vine serves as monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI—which makes the DMT orally active). And chagro or chacruna serves as the source of DMT.

But in the end the difference between Ayahuasca and Yage is negligible, kind of like you have Cabernet or Merlot, but both are the types of a red wine.
There are many names for the medicine. We work predominantly with Taitas from the Inga tribe and for them it is called Ambiwaska. In Colombia and Ecuador it is mostly known as Yage and in Peru and Brazil - Ayahuasca.
No matter what you call this medicine, expect it to be life changing.

What is it for and what to expect.

Ayahuasca is a psychedelic medicine that can be healing both physically and mentally. You can resolve trauma, overcome depression, meet your true self, connect to higher consciousness and more. Every experience is different, but nevertheless always healing. It appears that the plant knows exactly what to work on and goes to the problematic area directly, be it an organ or an emotion.

If it is your first time drinking Ayahuasca there is a 50/50 chance you will feel something on your first night, but your sensitivity to the medicine will increase every night, so be patient, and don't force it.

Types of ayahuasca experiences.

Every Ayahuasca experience is unique. Medicine seems to know exactly what you need at any given ceremony and lead you where you need to go.
Your experience can be: Biographical, auditory, visual, sensory, physical or spiritual.

Some experiences are full of knowledge, some show you worlds in other galaxies, some feel like a warm hug from the universe, some will have powerful and wise entities show you what your gift is, some are confusing and even painful. But whichever you experience it is going to heal you and make you a better version of yourself.

Few things are very common, you are likely to purge. Vomiting in local culture is instead called alleviating. Because together with vomit sometimes negative emotions and thoughts leave your body and after that you feel alleviated.

How to get the best results from the ceremony - right mindset.

Before the ceremony it is helpful to set an intention. Something you want to fix in your life or learn about yourself. Focus on it. But after you drink your first cup it is better to let go, and trust the medicine.

If your original intention is exactly what medicine wants to show you, you will go there, but sometimes other things are more important so just let go and follow the medicine. Go with the flow.

If you will feel lost in your journey or will be having a rough time, your intention will serve as your guiding light.

Once you start feeling effects of the medicine in your body say “Welcome to my body, nice to meet you, show me everything I need to see” or if this is not your first time say “Welcome back”
If you talk to the medicine it will talk back, and the more you respect it the better will be your healing.

If you are having a difficult experience it is important to remember to breathe. Tell yourself - I am drinking the medicine, this is normal.

The most important phrases to keep in your mind during the ceremonies are

“Surrender”, “Let go”, “Trust the medicine”, “Be Curious”.

If you are shown something that does not make sense or scares you, don’t run away, go towards it and ask why am I seeing this? What is my lesson here?
If you truly adopt the right mindset you will get so much more out of the medicine.

The worst thing you can do is try and escape the experience, this is the sure way to have a “bad trip”. Remember:

“The only way out is through”

Sometimes you might feel that you are going crazy and this is going to last forever, but don’t worry every experience comes to an end.

We focus on the difficult experiences, because this is where most guidance is necessary, but don’t be scared - **most Ayahuasca experiences are very positive**. You can expect seeing beauty, feeling loved and meeting the divine!

Psychedelic integration.

Integration is taking the experience and information you collected during your ayahuasca Journey and transforming them into valuable insight.

I see psychedelic integration is an ongoing process which begins immediately after your first ceremony.

It is a process of making sense of your experience, internalizing and gradually processing your insights into a list of **actionable** steps to make a long lasting positive change in your life.

If you just drink ayahuasca and see pretty images in your mind, but do nothing about it, there will still be healing, but much less. It is important not only to have the experience, but also **remember** it and understand it. Otherwise just like after waking up from a dream you will slowly forget your experience and will only be able to say it was interesting or meaningful, but without being able to recall the details.

So think about integration this way. You will go through the process of taking a giant amount of chaotic and ineffable insight and transforming it into a list of actionable items. Not to take away and belittle the experience, but to prepare you for life after the retreat. Come out of it all a better person.

Your integration journal will help you recall the information and process it, and even years later you can pick the journal up and get something out of it.

For the integration at our retreats we will use a combination of word circles and written integration. Sharing in the group will allow you to translate the experience you just had into words and allow for feedback and interpretation ideas from other members in the group. Then writing down everything will allow you to keep the information and insights for future self work.

Integration journal:

What follows is the integration journal. Go through it step by step. The instructions will guide you and allow you to remember more. Don't be overwhelmed by the task, you also don't have to write a lot. If you have no answers for some of the questions, skip them. In the end you are writing it for you and you only.

If you run out of space you can follow the same structure in the free flow journal or simply do it the way it feels good to you. Writing is one of the best ways to integrate!

Integration steps:

Step 1: Recall
Step 2: Reflection
Step 3: Reconnecting
Step 4: Moving on, finding actionable steps

First ceremony
Step one: Recall

What was your intention for this ceremony?

Did the medicine respond or did it take you somewhere else? Try and remember as much as you can about your last ceremony. How did it go? Write everything down freely, beginning with what comes up first. What did you feel and see?

How did your body feel through the experience? Did you feel tension or relaxation, pleasure or pain? Where exactly did you feel it?

Step Two: Reflecting and finding meaning

Your subconscious speaks in symbols and analogies, and oftentimes only you can know the meaning of your visions? Did you get any insight? Can you make sense or decode your experience? Write it down.

What changes do you notice in yourself and in your attitude?

What did you learn about yourself?

Step 3: Reconnecting

It is likely that during this ceremony the medicine helped you to connect to your true self, to see the world as an abundant place and to feel positive emotions.

You are now on a path of spiritual growth!

However it is easy to forget that feeling. In this step I want you to write down for your future self how it felt, so that you can always go back to this part and reconnect again.

What did it feel like to be connected?

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In this new world of limitless possibilities you have discovered what do you feel inspired about?

What new habits and practices would you like to pick up to prolong and enhance this state of being? What feels right to you? Meditation, journaling, breathing exercises, drawing, yoga, walking in nature or maybe something else you feel called to do?

Step 4: Moving on, finding actionable steps

With a good productive healing process there is a possibility to overcome trauma and discover new you. New you, new life, new plans for life.

Imagine new possibilities, explore new callings, new career and relationship possibilities.

Perhaps for the first time in your life you can see things clearly and say this is not working for me anymore. This needs to be changed. Be it your career or personal life.

(Write everything down, but I recommend you dwell on these thought for at least a month, before you make serious changes to make sure you don’t come to regret anything)

What needs to be changed in the way you interact with other people?

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What needs to go from your life? What is missing in your life? Where in life do you need to find balance?

How do you see yourself living differently after the end of this retreat? What's possible now, that wasn't possible before?

Make a list of newly discovered or rediscovered truths. Things you understood during this retreat that you know now are absolutely true and would like to never forget.

Second ceremony
Step one: Recall

What was your intention for this ceremony?

Did the medicine respond or did it take you somewhere else? Try and remember as much as you can about your last ceremony. How did it go? Write everything down freely, beginning with what comes up first. What did you feel and see?

How did your body feel through the experience? Did you feel tension or relaxation, pleasure or pain? Where exactly did you feel it?

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Third ceremony
Step one: Recall

What was your intention for this ceremony?

Did the medicine respond or did it take you somewhere else?
Try and remember as much as you can about your last ceremony. How did it go? Write everything down freely, beginning with what comes up first. What did you feel and see?

How did your body feel through the experience? Did you feel tension or relaxation, pleasure or pain? Where exactly did you feel it?

Step Two: Reflecting and finding meaning

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Summary

This is the end of the integration guide. At this page I want you to collect all the most important insights and actionable items from all the ceremonies you have done. After you are done if need be, rip this page out and put it on the wall at home or in your office, anywhere you can see it daily. Act on this insight and your life will be transformed.

Congratulations!!!

I salute you on completing this guide. You are amazing.

During the retreat you have participated in many world circles, one for every ceremony. You became good at telling your story and sharing important insight. For your journaling practice I recommend you imagine that you are in a word circle again and instead of speaking out you write your thoughts down.

It has been a pleasure hosting you and I thank you for trusting us with your Ayahuasca experience!

When the time is right and if necessary I am hoping to see you back at our retreat, and if you have a friend or a family member who might benefit from this life changing experience please tell him about us!