

A BLESSING SANDWICH

by Janet Maika'i Rudolph

Blessings and greetings:

I think it can be fairly said that the world is in upheaval. I've been asking myself questions that many others have as well: How can we maintain our center, a positive outlook, and increase our influence in healing ourselves and others?

I've always loved Serge's teaching about using a *ku* sandwich when you want to make suggestions or comments that could be perceived and received as criticism. The *ku* sandwich is basically a compliment, suggestion, compliment (or a criticism surrounded by two compliments). It not only makes it easier for the person to receive the comments but for the speaker to say what needs to be said in a stance of loving and nonjudgmental kindness. Serge's discusses this in *Urban Shaman* (pg 94) using the following example to comment on a painting that from the viewer's POV needs a correction. His *ku* sandwich example is: "That's a really beautiful painting, although it has too much red in the sky, but I really like the way you did the waves."

This same concept works for a blessing sandwich in a slightly different context. After spending more than a year doing *haipule* and *kokua* groups, I have begun adding in this element. It was always there in the format of the group, but by making it more conscious and deliberate, I find that it gives us all a wonderful practice of skill building with the benefit of a freer flow of energy. When we are constantly asking for help, even healing and good help in service to others, we place ourselves in the position of supplicant. If we add the blessing sandwich, it helps us become more active co-creators in manifesting. Following the *ku* sandwich template, a blessing sandwich is a prayer (or many in the *haipule* format) surrounded by blessings.

Here is an example of how a blessing sandwich would work: I am asking for healing for myself for, say, bronchitis. I first thank my body for its ability to breathe the luscious air that circulates throughout my body. Then I do prayers for healing the bronchitis. And I close by praising and thanking the energies that are sure to come to my aid. I can also close by once again thanking my body for its wonderful healing capacity.

If I am doing a haipule healing where there are many people asking for healing prayers, I do it a bit differently. I begin by blessing some part of my life, of the world, or of nature. The purpose is to put myself in a posture of gratitude. An example would be – “I bless and thank the tree outside my window which is giving shelter to the birds that I watch flying in and out of its leaves.” Then I do the haipule. And I close as before, by praising and thanking the energies and spirits who are sure to be attentive. I also do the closing prayer we were taught my Serge which is a blessing in and of itself.

*Aumakua, mai ka po wai ola,
Ho'ikea mai i ke ola
Amama ua noa
Lele wale aku la*

(Higher Self, bring forth the water of life from out of the realm of spirit,
And manifest these blessings.
So be it without limit,
Let them fly off and manifest.)

A blessing sandwich is a wonderful training of skills. When we practice it daily and in “normal” times, then it becomes more of a patterned response so that when times get tough or challenging things happen, we are attuned to looking for the blessings. When I introduce this concept to people who are new to Huna, they tend to find it alluring and easy to remember.

And the concept is expansive. Blessing is one of the 7 shamanic talents that Serge discusses in *Urban Shaman* (80-81). It is primarily connected with the 5th principle – To Love Is To Be Happy With. Serge writes that even to “acknowledge beauty, admire skill or appreciate kindness, you are giving a blessing. What the shaman does that’s extra is to bless potential.” I love that we can thank and bless an experience, a person, a tree, the intake and outflow of our breath, the moment, and wishes and prayers for the future.

****Amama ua noa* and aloha blessings***