

# Jaggery

Jaggery is an unrefined sugar made from the sap of palm trees that is popular throughout Southern Asia. Jaggery is also the main ingredient used in traps to catch monkeys. To set up the trap, the hunter picks a coconut, removes the husk, punctures a hole in the bottom, and drinks the sweet coconut milk. Once empty, the top section of the coconut is chopped off (a narrow section that is a bit larger than the circumference of a monkey's hand, allowing it to barely slide its hand inside).

A rope is fed from the outside bottom hole through the coconut cavity, exiting at the top opening. A knot is tied (removing any rope above the knot). The opposite end of the rope is pulled until the knot rests tightly against the inside bottom of the coconut shell. A wood stake is then pounded securely into the ground. The exposed end of the rope is tied to the stake with about ten or twenty feet of "play." The stake and rope is then covered with fallen leaves and foliage. The sweet-smelling jaggery is placed inside the coconut along with rice and nuts. The hunter then finds a hiding place to wait for the monkey to take the bait.

Soon, the monkey will smell the jaggery and make its way over to the trap. It will place its mouth into the opening of the coconut and attempt to eat the tantalizing jaggery! However, unable to reach the jaggery with its mouth or tongue, the monkey will then place its hand into the coconut and grab as much of the jaggery mixture as possible.

When the monkey tries to remove his handful of jaggery, he can't. The opening at the top of the coconut is smaller than the expanded size of the monkey's hand.

No matter how desperately the monkey pulls, jumps, screams, somersaults, and wrestles, his hand remains trapped. Ironically, all the monkey needs to do is to let go of the jaggery and pull his hand back out of the coconut to be set free. But, the monkey is fixated on the jaggery and won't let go. As the hunter emerges, the terrified monkey continues to refuse to let go of the jaggery. The hunter simply walks up, throws a gunny-sack over the monkey and makes his capture. He then frees the monkey's hand by breaking the coconut open to see the monkey continuing to hold the jaggery!

We may think the monkey is foolish, realizing how easy it could save itself if it would just let go of the jaggery. However, how often do we hold onto our own form of jaggery, just like a monkey? And once we have a hold of the jaggery and are unwilling to let go, we end up allowing ourselves to be captured, limiting our options in life. However, once we learn how to let go of the jaggery and free ourselves, we realize opportunities we never knew existed.

Identify the jaggery in your life, and then let it go! Free yourself today!

