Mindful Tea Ritual



"The future is not even here yet. Plan for it, but do not waste your time worrying about it."

– Thich Nhat Hanh

Meditation can be the act of focusing on something as seemingly simple as a cup of tea.

Thich Nhat Hanh has a practice of tea meditation, where you pick up your tea, breathe it in, and bring your mind back to your body.

By doing this he says you become fully present in the here and now. He says:

"I don't think of the past anymore, I don't think of the future anymore, I'm free from the past, from the future, and there is a real encounter between me and the tea."

Here is a simple method you can practice around your cup of tea, at any time of day.

Choose your tea cup, and set it down mindfully, ready to be filled.

Select the tea you are going to brew, and boil the kettle.

Whilst the water boils, sit and practice a short breathing meditation, simply observing your in breath, and your out breath, as it rises and falls. Taking even these few moments each time you brew a cup of tea, will calm and refresh you.

Mindfully, with full attention, place the tea in the cup, or teapot, and pour the freshly boiled water over it.

Allow it to steep for 3-4 minutes, again, sitting beside it, simply following your breath.

When the tea is brewed, drink it, mindfully, using the following mindful tea drinking exercise from Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnamese Zen Master and mindfulness expert.

"Drink your tea ***slowly*** *and* ***reverently, as if it is the axis on which the world earth revolves****.*

Slowly, evenly, ***without rushing toward the future****.*

Live the ***actual moment****.*

Only ***this moment is life****.*

You must be completely awake in the present to enjoy the tea.

Only in the awareness of the present, can your hands feel the pleasant warmth of the cup.

Only in the present, can you savor the aroma, taste the sweetness, appreciate the delicacy.

If you are ruminating about the past, or worrying about the future, you will completely miss the experience of enjoying the cup of tea.

You will look down at the cup, and the tea will be gone.

Life is like that.

If you are not fully present, you will look around and it will be gone.

You will have missed the feel, the aroma, the delicacy and beauty of life.

It will seem to be speeding past you. The past is finished.

Learn from it and let it go.

The future is not even here yet. Plan for it, but do not waste your time worrying about it.

Worrying is worthless.

When you stop ruminating about what has already happened, when you stop worrying about what might never happen, then you will be in the present moment.

Then you will begin to experience joy in life*."*