

Mindful Tea Drinking

1. Pay attention to the sound of the water heating and boiling in the kettle. Hear its bubbling and gurgling. Can you see the steam coming from the spout? Does the kettle subtly shake from the movement of the water inside? Be open to your senses, don't analyse.

2. Notice the feeling of being in your environment: your contact with the chair or the floor, if you're sitting down; the weight of your feet on the ground, if you're standing.

3. Pouring the tea, watch the colour of the water change as it meets the teabag. Be interested in the transformation from clear water to tea. When your mind wanders into thought, as it probably will, gently return your attention to sensing.

4. Lifting the teabag out with a spoon, feel the touch of the handle against your fingers, and the weight of the bag dropping away as you tip it into the bin. Let yourself hear any related sounds, such as the opening and closing of the bin lid. Notice any tendency to do this on autopilot and come back to present moment sensing when you find you've drifted to distraction.

5. If you take milk and sugar, be interested in how you feel as you reach for and add these ingredients. Do you really want them? How do you know?

6. Notice the warming of the cup that contains the hot liquid. How do your hands feel as you hold it?

7. Now, bring the cup to your lips. Be interested in how your hand and arm know how to move in this direction without you having to tell them consciously what to do.

8. Take a sip of tea. Rather than gulping it down, see if you can let the taste tickle your tongue. Perhaps gently move the liquid around your mouth. Savour the taste—is it pleasant? Or perhaps you'd prefer it stronger or weaker? You don't have to do anything about it (unless you choose to). Just be aware of your sensations and the liking or disliking of them. If there are thoughts, let them enter into and then pass through your mind without following them. Try to stay with the tasting. Notice without judgement any desire to rush the drinking, and any impatience that comes.