

TEA MEDITATION PROGRAM

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MAYDAY TEAS

HAVE TEA WITH US

To describe why meditating with tea can be such a transformative experience, we borrow some wise words from renowned meditation expert, Sam Harris, who has a fantastic meditation app we highly recommend called 'Waking Up'.

The best analogy to persuade you of the value of meditation is one of astronomy. If you live in a city with lots of light pollution, you may see very few stars in the night sky, so you can't notice how beautiful the cosmos is because you can't see it in any detail. This is akin to the untrained mind. On the other hand, when you go out to the country or wilderness where there is no light pollution, you witness the brilliancy of the night sky. Every star is clear and differentiated. This is akin to the trained mind, the meditative mind. To practice meditation is to build a telescope for your mind.

During a tea meditation session with Mayday Teas, you will be practicing a meditation technique called mindfulness. To put it simply, mindfulness is about undistracted attention. It's about your ability to focus in on the big and small sensations of sound, sight, smell, touch and taste. It is also about noticing your thoughts that arise in your consciousness in each moment.

Meditating with tea in particular is one of the best forms of mindfulness meditation for beginners. When a good quality tea inundates all the senses, it holds one's attention for longer. On top of this, the caffeine and L-theanine combination in tea makes your brain alert and relaxed at the same time - a perfect state to be in for meditation.

During each tea meditation session, make sure you have:

- two servings of one type of tea, preferably a tea that has complex flavours and aromas;
- a gaiwan and fairness pitcher, or a teapot with a removable strainer, preferably a glass one;
- a temperature-control kettle, preferably a glass one;
- a glazed tea cup rather than a glass tea cup (as tea aromas tend to cling better to glazes than glass).

You are also welcome to use Mayday Teas' **Periodic Table of Tea Flavours and Aromas**, available for free at www.maydayteas.com. This can help you with pin-pointing the individual flavours and aromas of your tea.

Now let's begin our program. First off, write down how you are feeling right now.

First Steeping

Take the appropriate serving of your meditation tea and place its contents into your tea holder, gaiwan or teapot. Write down what you notice about the scent and appearance of the dry leaves.

Steep your tea in your teapot or gaiwan according to the instructions and then decant the tea liquor into your fairness pitcher or, if using an internal teapot strainer, take out the strainer. Write down what you notice about the scent and appearance of the wet leaves.

Pour the tea liquor into your cup, and smell and taste the liquor. Write down what you notice about the aromas, flavours and appearance.

Second Steeping

Steep and taste your tea again. Write down again what you notice.

Third Steeping

Repeat the previous step.

If the tea made you feel any physical sensations, or any particular thoughts or memories popped into your head as you drank the tea, write those down too.

***** Now for a guided mindfulness meditation *****
After the meditation, write down how you feel.

Now take another serving of the same tea. You will repeat the same process from before the meditation to see if your senses are more finely tuned this time round. You will also be directed to focus your attention on different sensations as you prepare and appreciate the tea.

First Steeping

Place the tea leaves into your tea holder, gaiwan or teapot. Write down what you notice about the scent and appearance of the dry leaves.

Steep your tea in your teapot or gaiwan according to the instructions and then decant the tea liquor into your fairness pitcher or, if using an internal teapot strainer, take out the strainer. Write down what you notice about the scent and appearance of the wet leaves.

Pour the tea liquor into your cup, and smell and taste the liquor. Write down what you notice about the aromas, flavours and appearance.

Second Steeping

Steep and taste your tea again. Write down again what you notice.

Third Steeping

Repeat the previous step.

If the tea made you feel any physical sensations, or any particular thoughts or memories popped into your head as you drank the tea that are different to the pre-meditation experience, write those down too.

*** * * Time for a group discussion * * ***

What were the differences in how you related to your tea pre-meditation and post-meditation?

Go back and read how you felt at the start of the session and compare that to how you feel now. What is different?