

# GONGFU TEA TIPS

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In previous issues, we've discussed the importance water has on making fine gongfu tea. A cup of tea is ninety-five percent water, after all. Learning to taste water is learning to taste tea, and an important part of any gongfu practice. It is also important to repeat experiments every so often, even after we have experienced them, as new and deeper levels will continue to unfold on our journeys. This helps keep us humble, learning and growing in sensitivity no matter how long we've been practicing or how far we've travelled.

Good water is like good tea in many ways: it splashes up to the upper palate, coats the mouth for a long time (try counting how long you can feel it in the mouth), slides down smoothly with little to no swallowing sensation and no pinch in the throat. Great water will also absorb into the body differently. It takes little to quench the thirst and the Qi spreads further and more evenly throughout the body. When we hike up the stairs in the mountains to get our water we are often sweating, hot and thirsty. But even a small cup of the great spring water can quench your thirst and leave you cool and refreshed.

Water for tea should not be too acidic or alkaline. Usually a pH of around 7 will do. You should also not use overly-filtered water as it is nice to have some minerals in the water (called "TDS" or "Total Dissolved Solids"). Too much, however, is also a bad thing, as the water will be heavy and may have a flavor. Also, certain minerals will solidify when the water is boiled, leaving a white residue on your teaware.

Beyond experimenting with different waters, alone and for tea, we also recommend trying different energetic influences on your water. You can use a water quartz crystal, charging it in the sun or full moon. One amazing experiment is to drink a tea you are familiar with and leave such a crystal out in the full moon and return to the same tea the next morning, only this time with water that has had the crystal in it for an hour or so. You will be amazed at how different the tea will be. You can also experiment with putting a jar of water itself out in the full moon and see what happens. You may want to use a glass jar to maximize the effect.

Dr. Eomoto's seminal book (essential for tea lovers) *Hidden Messages in Water* is a great place to read about the effects energetics have on water. In it, he demonstrates that words and symbols placed on one's water jar will change the vibration of the water and thereby affect our tea. You can experiment with stickers that have positive words, symbols, etc., on them. We have found that the flower of life symbol has a particularly strong influence on water for tea. If you can find a sticker made of real gold, and put it on your water

storage vessel, you will notice a significant change in the water. Sound and prayers also have an incredible effect on the frequency and structure of water. Try experimenting with some positive music near your water storage jar. We also put our hands on the jar and give the water gratitude and prayers before ladling it into the kettle to start a tea session. We've found this practice improves the water and the way in which we receive it.

Improving our water for tea is also improving ourselves, for like tea we are also made up mostly of water...

*Think of it in terms of vibration. It's easy to understand that language—the spoken word—has a vibration. Well, written words also have a vibration. Anything in existence has a vibration.*

*Beautiful words have beautiful, clear vibrations. But negative words put out ugly, incoherent vibrations which do not form clusters. Language is not something artificial, but rather is something that exists naturally. I believe that language is created by nature.*

*No one particular religion has been able to secure the exclusive rights for the power of prayer. No matter who you are, we all have the ability to take advantage of this amazing and wonderful power. Once you realize this, you will then be filled with the desire to help others realize this as well. More and more people are resonating with this understanding, and this could result in a more wonderful future for mankind.*

— Masaru Emoto



*Hopi Shaman and Wu*

