

# WHAT IS A TEA TRADITION?

## WHAT IS THIS TRADITION ABOUT?



Many people will ask us what a Tea tradition looks like, and what our tradition is about. We should be able to articulate a simple, cogent and powerful answer—one that offers greater depth should we wish to explain more. We realize that ambiguity about our common goals frustrates our ability to achieve them together. As a result, we are able to state clearly what our organization is founded upon as well as our future together. This will also be the legacy we leave behind for future Tea lovers with the same interests.

Before expressing the foundation of our work together, it should be made clear that we are an open tradition. We are non-sectarian, and do not promote any worldview, philosophy or religious views—only our approach to Tea. Our community is global, and includes people from all walks of life, each with different ideas about the world and how to live in it. We have realized that a brighter future for this planet is dependent on more cooperation between all the different peoples, recognizing our common truths and ways we can work towards the mutual happiness of our species: both those who are alive now, as well as the unborn who will inherit the world we leave them. We all love kindness and believe in a healthy, happier earth. We work towards connecting people in heart space rather than dividing them in their minds. Rather than changing minds, we seek to open hearts. We appreciate that our circle is connected to all the other circles, small and large, hoping to have a positive effect on the entire web. Ultimately, our tradition is like a department in one large company called “Earth”, and our goals should not just further the happiness and prosperity of our members, but help promote a brighter world for everyone now and in the future.

Similarly, we do not endorse any particular insights that arise from drinking Tea. We recognize that the alchemy that occurs between Tea and any given individual is unique, and that the lessons and insights that help guide them are their own truths, to be held up as such. You might say that we provide the space to meet the great ambassador from Nature to humans, Tea, and a bit of the etiquette you’ll need to spend time together, but the topics you’ll discuss and what you will learn will be entirely up to you.

We are dedicated to promoting, cultivating and expressing an awakening of harmony through Tea. We believe that Tea wisdom which has no connection to any financial motivation, good or bad, is very necessary in this modern world and therefore strive to build schools, centers and other

Tea spaces in the true, ancient spirit of Tea—leaves, water and wisdom shared out of love and towards connection with Mother Earth, ourselves and each other.

We see this tradition very simply, as three easy to understand principals. Each one can be expressed in a sentence, or expanded upon for hours given the circumstances. Understanding the principles that bind us as a community will make us stronger, and bring form to our current and future goals:

1) ***This tradition is our brewing methods.*** We have these ways of preparing Tea and the reasons that we use them. Our aim is not to compare them to other ways of preparing Tea or to declare them the best. They are ours, and they work. That they work for us is enough. We realize that many people in the world brew Tea in many different ways, and that there is power in them all. We don’t take pride in our brewing methods because they are better than others, but because they are *ours*—the ones handed down to us—and because they work. They are each worth a lifetime of study and practice, and each suits a particular aspect of Tea: gongfu for grace and finer Tea, bowl Tea for meditation, simplicity, in offering friendship, as well as mindfulness.

2) ***This tradition is in our approach to Tea, as Nature, plant medicine and self-cultivation.*** Our approach to Tea is also what binds us together as a community. Realizing that Tea is a leaf grown in the mountains, we see that it is Nature and are full of respect and love. Recognizing that Tea is plant medicine, we see that Tea can heal people, body and soul. And we also approach Tea as an aspect of self-cultivation. Tea can help us to cultivate ourselves, and then amazingly be a means of expressing our insights to others nonverbally. Without words or concepts, there is no agreement or disagreement, only heart space. We do not learn to *make* Tea, but rather to *serve* it. There are many approaches to Tea in the world—some people drink Tea as a beverage, some for pure enjoyment. We acknowledge these aspects of Tea as well, and are happy to just enjoy some tea now and again, though our primary approach is one of Nature, plant medicine, self-cultivation as well as sharing heart space with our fellows.

3) ***This tradition is a community.*** Most importantly, this tradition is a group of people, each with their own lives, their own relationship to Tea, truth and insights, and each one with a unique value. As these methods of brewing and approach to Tea were handed down to us, this tradition connects us to previous Tea lovers, Tea sages and teachers; and as we hand it down, we will travel with it to future



generations as well. We are, therefore, a group of people who practice these brewing methods, along with the approach mentioned above, and do so together. We create Tea family: bonds of support and love to help each other in our Tea journey and in our lives. Our communities should have no “us” and “them”, no “inner” and “outer” as we hope to foster connection amongst all people towards common goals of loving-kindness, and a greener, happier world. We aim

to build Tea communities, centers and schools that train people in our brewing methods, our approach to Tea and to serve Tea in a heart space to their greater, surrounding societies.

