

GONG FU TEA TIPS

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Do you remember the very first gong fu experiment we ever did? It is an important one, and as we have mentioned many times it is important to repeat all these experiments several times. In our first experiment, we poured tea into a cup and then poured half of that into an identical cup, and half of that into a third. You can actually do this experiment with as many cups as you wish—we have gone as far as the eighth cup. As most anyone who has done this experiment has concluded, the tea gets worse with each successive cup. The aromas and flavors are weaker, and the Qi less predominant. But why?

The first principle of gong fu tea is to maintain temperature from kettle to drinker. This is nigh impossible. These principles, however, are rather deep and operate on several levels. Much of what gongfu tea is about is maintaining the purity of the tea from tree to drinker.

Imagine that you had access to the most pure, healing mountain spring and you wanted to build a channel to bring the water down the mountain so more people could benefit from it. What factors would you consider in building your channel if money was no issue? Of course you would want to use good materials (teaware) like nice copper, silver or even gold piping. Then, the second important factor would be to keep the pipe as smooth and straight as possible, as every turn, twist or bump on the way down would deteriorate the juju of the water. Getting pristine water to the bottom would be impossible, but you could preserve much of the healing power if you followed these and other principles. If you understand this analogy, you understand the first principle of gong fu tea about maintaining temperature (energy/Qi) from kettle to cup...

Any surface that the water/tea liquor touches causes a loss in temperature, Qi and a greater distance from the brewer. This is why the tea from cup to cup loses its essence. You can also repeat this experiment with water as well. And we have another experiment to further clarify this issue: After you are done with a tea session, and ready to get up, pour one last steeping into your teapot and go about your day. Return to your tea space in a few hours, after the last steeping has sat for a while and try drinking the tea directly from the spout of your pot. What is it like? Is it smoother? Is it more flavorful? What is the difference between drinking from the spout and a cup?

This experiment opens up worlds of energy work related to gong fu tea. You can explore the effects resistance has on the water and/or tea liquor. Is the resistance different with different materials? How can we keep this process smoother and more direct? There are so many variables in tea preparation, and mastery is an endless journey. But the road is the happiness, not the destination...



