

## The Yellow Tilted Tea Bowl

This drawing of a yellow tilted tea bowl, intentionally imperfect, is an attempt to visualize ideas related to [consciousness](#). Mainly it shows the interconnectedness and dependent nature of the components.

- The Tea bowl is an old metaphor for consciousness. Its volume of emptiness serves its purpose by being spacious enough to hold and let go, letting thoughts arise and pass.
- The bowl itself and the living tree as part of it represent the observer (the vessel).
- Within its “empty” space, the slightly tilted bowl, is holding a [yin-yang](#). Its two parts need to be held together by the frame, the container, and the bowl.

**They all three together created a unity.**

- The lower blue part of the yin-yang (the ocean) is alive with water and waves. Water (thoughts) rises temporarily from the ocean as waves. The white circle is head of a meditating person, creating waves of serenity.
- The upper white part of the yin-yang is the sky, clouds, mountains and rivers. Thoughts and feelings Clouds are often compared to clouds, storms (weather) which pass through. They gather into a winding river (flow) and eventually return to the sea. The blue circle is dropping off a wave, creating a rainbow of lights.
- The bowl is tilted just enough to allow a little water to spill over its edge. The overflow, letting-go to the universe, is major to Zen philosophy. Awareness does not imprison experience. It holds it lightly, allowing movement, release, and renewal.
- The background is the universe in which we all live. We are in constant exchange of content with the universe: matter, energy and information. Matter (such as water for example), Energy as visible light and non-visual electromagnetic waves, as well as living Information (represented by the tree canopy and the vertical inscription **ΔTeaBOWL**). These are in constant tension and relief with [entropy](#) (commonly symbolized **S**).
- The blue-and-white [yin-yang](#) is representing the cosmic principles or forces that are opposite but complementary, which interact, interconnect, support and perpetuate each other ([consciousness](#) and [entropy](#)).
- The ocean offers another metaphor to the nature of thoughts and feelings: waves emerge, change, and disappear, while the ocean itself stays. Water flows, evaporates, falls as rain, becomes river, and returns.
- The bowl’s right edge is a tree which grows from rocky foundation, grounded awareness. Its roots remain embedded in this stable base while its branches reach upward into open space (universe). Fresh green growth suggests vitality, transformation, and renewal.
- The bowl’s left edge, in contrast, is solid clay vessel, holding everything together.



- Rainbow-like rays emerging above weather are exchanging energy. Together, these elements express a balance that is not static but alive: rooted enough to remain grounded, yet open enough to let emotions, energy, and life flow freely, change form, and return. The impermanent nature of everything.
- There is no shadow beneath the bowl. It floats in open space, suspended in the infinite universe. Its tilt gives it direction without fixing it in place, stability without stillness.
- The composition therefore holds a gentle tension between containment and flow. The bowl contains the yin-yang, yet the water spills beyond its edge. The ocean forms waves without ceasing to be the ocean; water rises into the sky and returns again. What first appears to be a yin-yang held inside a bowl becomes something more: **a circulation of awareness.**



- On the left appears the vertical inscription  $\Delta T_{ea}$  BOWL. The  $\Delta T$  refers to the constant tension with entropy, and the relief. Small intervals between inhaling and exhaling, moments of present, when movement briefly gives way to stillness. These moments of stillness are a friction of awareness, made of constant “remembering” to anchor with breath, flow with the current.
- Awareness is like this too: **not a fixed thing, but a combination of the vessel and a flow, a momentary form within a continuing cycle.** The bowl is not merely *containing* awareness; its tilt means awareness can never be completely sealed off. Something is always entering, changing, flowing, and leaving.