

Essay II | Flavor as Sensory Attention

第二篇 | 味觉是一种注意力训练：如何通过品尝重建专注

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Abstract

The HanFlow Food Culture Series emphasizes flavor as a form of sensory attention. This essay explores how focusing on taste—the sweetness of carrots, the bitterness of greens—trains the nervous system and recovers attention from digital overload. Flavor is framed not as pleasure alone, but as a language the body speaks, guiding awareness. Simple practices, like the one-bite meditation, cultivate gustatory attention, enhancing focus, listening, and presence in daily life. By bringing full awareness to taste, ordinary meals become moments of embodied engagement, connecting the eater to body and moment.

摘要

HanFlow 美食系列强调味道作为感官注意力的体现。本文探讨关注味道——胡萝卜的甜、绿叶菜的苦——如何训练神经系统，并从数字过载中收回注意力。味道不仅是愉悦，更是身体的语言，引导觉察。通过简单练习，如“一口冥想”，可培养味觉注意力，增强日常生活中的专注、倾听与临在感。全然觉察味道，使普通餐食成为具身参与的瞬间，将食者连接到身体与当下。

Introduction

引言

You sit down to eat. The plate is in front of you — steam rising, colors warm, aromas beginning to reach you. Before the first bite, your hand moves. Not toward the food. Toward the phone. You unlock it. You scroll. The meal becomes background. The food cools. The moment passes.

你坐下来准备吃饭。盘子就在面前——热气升腾，色泽温暖，香气开始飘来。在第一口之前，你的手动了一下。不是伸向食物。是伸向手机。你解锁屏幕。你开始滑动。餐食变成了背景。食物变凉。那一刻过去了。

We live in an attention economy. Our focus is harvested, packaged, and sold. Notifications compete for milliseconds. Platforms optimize for user engagement. The average person now spends over six hours per day consuming digital content — much of it with a meal in hand.

我们生活在一个注意力经济时代。我们的专注力被收割、打包、出售。通知争夺着每一毫秒。平台为用户参与度而优化。现在，普通人每天花费超过六小时消费数字内容——其中很大一部分是边吃边看。

We speak of attention as a resource — something we have, something we lose, something we need to protect. But we rarely ask: what is attention for? And what happens when we train it exclusively on screens, while letting it atrophy everywhere else?

我们把注意力当作一种资源——我们拥有它，失去它，需要保护它。但我们很少问：注意力是为了什么？当我们只把它训练给屏幕，而让它在其他地方萎缩时，会发生什么？

This is where flavor enters.

这就是味觉进入的地方。

Taste is not just about pleasure. It is not just about nutrition. **Taste is a form of sensory attention** — a channel through which we receive information about the world and our place in it. When we eat without tasting, we are not just missing flavor. We are missing an opportunity to train attention itself.

味觉不只是关于愉悦。也不只是关于营养。**味觉是一种感官注意力**——一个我们接收关于世界和自身位置的信息的通道。当我们吃东西却不品尝时，我们错过的不仅是味道。我们错过了一个训练注意力本身的机会。

Section I | Attention as Resource — Why It Matters

第一节 | 注意力作为资源——为什么它很重要

Modern science describes attention as a finite resource. We have a limited capacity to focus, to filter, to choose what we notice. When that capacity is depleted — by constant switching, by information overload, by the low-grade vigilance of modern life — we experience what

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researchers call **attentional fatigue**.

现代科学将注意力描述为一种有限资源。我们专注、过滤、选择注意对象的能力是有限的。当这种能力被耗尽——被不断的切换、信息过载、现代生活的低度警觉所耗尽——我们会经历研究者所称的**注意力疲劳**。

The symptoms are familiar: difficulty concentrating, irritability, a sense of being scattered. We reach for our phones without thinking. We struggle to read more than a few pages. We sit down to eat and immediately pull up a video.

这些症状我们都很熟悉：难以集中注意力、易怒、一种散乱的感觉。我们不假思索地伸手拿手机。我们很难读完几页书。我们坐下来吃饭，立刻打开一个视频。

We treat these as personal failings. But they are not. They are the predictable outcome of a life in which attention is constantly demanded and rarely restored.

我们把这些当作个人的失败。但它们不是。它们是一种生活的可预见结果——在这种生活中，注意力不断被索取，却很少被恢复。

Modern productivity culture asks: How can I focus better? How can I get more done?

现代效率文化问：我如何能更好地专注？我如何能完成更多事？

Chinese food philosophy asks a quieter question: What is worth paying attention to? And what happens when we give our full attention to something as simple as a meal?

中华饮食哲学问的是一个更安静的问题：什么值得投入注意力？当我们把全然的注意力给予像一餐饭这样简单的事物时，会发生什么？

Section II | Sensory Bandwidth — The Forgotten Channel

第二节 | 感官带宽——被遗忘的通道

We have multiple channels of attention. Visual attention is the most obvious — it's what we use to read, to scroll, to navigate the world. Auditory attention follows close behind. But there are other channels, less discussed but equally real: proprioceptive attention (awareness of body position), interoceptive attention (awareness of internal state), and — crucially for this discussion — **gustatory attention**.

我们有多个注意力通道。视觉注意力最明显——我们用它来阅读、滚动、导航世界。听觉注意力紧随其后。但还有其他通道，讨论较少但同样真实：本体感觉注意力（对身体位置的觉察）、内感受注意力（对内在状态的觉察），以及——对本次讨论至关重要的——**味觉注意力**。

Each channel has a **sensory bandwidth** — a capacity to carry information. When one channel is overloaded, others narrow. A life dominated by screens means visual bandwidth is maxed out. There's little left for the others.

每个通道都有**感官带宽**——承载信息的能力。当一个通道过载时，其他通道就会变窄。被屏幕主导的生活意味着视觉带宽被耗尽。留给其他通道的就很少了。

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This is why you can watch a video while eating and feel nothing. Not because your body isn't sending signals, but because your sensory bandwidth is fully allocated elsewhere. The taste is there. The texture is there. The subtle signals of satiety are there. But your attention has no room for them.

这就是为什么你可以边吃饭边看视频却感觉不到什么。不是因为你的身体没有发送信号，而是因为你的感官带宽被完全分配到了别处。味道在那里。质地在那里。饱足的细微信号在那里。但你的注意力没有空间容纳它们。

Modern media asks: How can we capture more of your visual attention for longer?

现代媒体问：我们如何能更长时间地捕获你更多的视觉注意力？

Chinese food philosophy asks: What is it like to fully occupy one channel at a time? To give a meal the same bandwidth you give a screen?

中华饮食哲学问：一次完全占据一个通道是什么感觉？给一顿饭以你给一个屏幕同样的带宽，会是什么样？

Section III | Flavor as Attention Training

第三节 | 味觉作为注意力训练

Here is where tasting becomes more than tasting.

这就是为什么品尝不仅仅是品尝。

When you bring full attention to flavor — to the sweetness of a carrot, the bitterness of greens, the savory depth of broth — you are not just enjoying food. You are **training attention itself**. You are exercising a channel that modern life has let atrophy. You are reclaiming bandwidth that was colonized by screens.

当你把全然的注意力带到味道上——带到胡萝卜的甜、绿叶菜的苦、汤的鲜美——你不仅仅是在享受食物。你是在**训练注意力本身**。你是在锻炼一个被现代生活忽视的通道。你是在收回被屏幕占据的带宽。

This is not mystical. It is neurobiology. Attention is a muscle. The more you use it in one modality, the stronger it becomes in others. Training gustatory attention — really tasting what you eat — strengthens your capacity for focused attention everywhere else.

这不是神秘主义。这是神经生物学。注意力是一块肌肉。你在一种模式中使用它越多，它在其他模式中就变得越强。训练味觉注意力——真正品尝你吃的东西——会增强你在其他所有地方的专注力。

Think of it like learning to listen to a piece of music: at first you hear only the melody, but with practice you begin to notice the bass line, the harmony, the subtle percussion. The ear becomes finer. The same happens with taste. What once was just "food" becomes a landscape of sensation — sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, salty — each note distinct, each contributing to the whole. This is not about becoming a connoisseur. It is about waking up a sense that has been dulled by distraction.

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想象一下学习聆听一首乐曲：起初你只听到旋律，但经过练习，你开始注意到低音线、和声、微妙的打击乐。耳朵变得更敏锐。味觉也是如此。曾经只是“食物”的东西变成了感觉的风景——甜、酸、苦、辣、咸——每个音符都清晰，每个都为整体做出贡献。这不是为了成为品鉴家。这是为了唤醒一种被分心麻木了的感官。

This is why, in **Chinese food philosophy**, a meal is never just a meal. It is an opportunity to practice presence. To bring the same quality of attention you might bring to listening to music, to observing your breath, to a conversation — to the simple act of tasting.

这就是为什么，在**中华饮食哲学**中，一餐饭从来不仅仅是一餐饭。它是一个练习临在的机会。把你可能带给聆听音乐、观察呼吸、与人对话的同样品质的注意力，带到简单的品尝行为中。

Just as painting trains the eye to see light and shadow, tasting trains the palate to perceive flavor. Both are practices of attention.

正如绘画训练眼睛看见光影，品尝训练味蕾感知味道。两者都是注意力的练习。

Section IV | The Nervous System and Flavor

第四节 | 神经系统与味觉

There is another layer to this story.

这个故事还有另一层。

The nervous system has two fundamental modes: sympathetic (often called fight or flight) and parasympathetic (rest and digest). Most of us spend our days in sympathetic overdrive — alert, vigilant, braced. This mode narrows attention. It prioritizes threat detection over sensory richness.

神经系统有两种基本模式：交感神经（常被称为战斗或逃跑）和副交感神经（休息和消化）。我们大多数人每天都处于交感神经过度驱动状态——警觉、戒备、紧绷。这种模式会收窄注意力。它优先考虑威胁检测，而非感官的丰富性。

Flavor, fully attended to, does something remarkable: it invites the nervous system to shift modes. When you truly taste — when you slow down and let flavor unfold — you are signaling safety to the body. You are telling the ancient vigilance system: I am not under threat. I can afford to be here.

被全然关注的味觉，会做一些非凡的事：它邀请神经系统切换模式。当你真正品尝——当你放慢脚步，让味道展开——你是在向身体发出安全信号。你是在告诉古老的警觉系统：我没有受到威胁。我可以安心在这里。

This is why **mindful eating** has measurable physiological effects: reduced cortisol, improved digestion, better regulation of appetite. It is not magic. It is the nervous system responding to the quality of your attention.

这就是为什么**正念饮食**有可测量的生理效应：降低皮质醇，改善消化，更好地调节食欲。这不是魔法。这是神经系统对你注意力品质的回应。

Modern stress management asks: How can I relax? How can I reduce anxiety?

现代压力管理问：我如何能放松？我如何能减少焦虑？

Chinese food philosophy asks: What if relaxation wasn't something you do after life, but something you cultivate during it — during a meal, during a taste, during a single bite?

中华饮食哲学问：如果放松不是你在生活之后做的事情，而是你在生活之中培养的事情——在一餐饭中，在一次品尝中，在一口食物中——会怎样？

Section V | A Simple Practice: Tasting as Attention Exercise

第五节 | 一个简单的练习：品尝作为注意力练习

Here is a practice. It takes two minutes. It requires nothing but something to eat and the willingness to pay attention.

这是一个练习。需要两分钟。只需要一些可吃的东西，以及愿意投入注意力的意愿。

The One-Bite Meditation

一口冥想

Step 1 — Choose one bite

Select a single piece of food — a raisin, a piece of chocolate, a slice of apple, a bite of rice. One bite. That's all.

第一步——选择一口

选择单一的一口食物——一颗葡萄干、一块巧克力、一片苹果、一口米饭。就一口。仅此而已。

Step 2 — Observe before tasting

Look at it as if you've never seen it before. Notice its color, its texture, its surface. Then bring it to your nose. Inhale. What do you smell? Not "good" or "bad" — just what.

第二步——品尝前观察

看着它，仿佛从未见过。注意它的颜色、质地、表面。然后把它放到鼻子前。吸气。你闻到了什么？不是“好”或“坏”，只是什么。

Step 3 — Taste with full attention

Place it in your mouth. Don't chew yet. Just let it rest on your tongue. Notice what happens — saliva, temperature, the first signal of flavor. Then begin to chew. Slowly. Notice how the flavor changes as you chew. Notice the urge to swallow. Notice the swallow itself. Notice what lingers

after.

第三步——用全然的注意力品尝

把它放进嘴里。先不要嚼。就让它停在舌头上。注意发生了什么——唾液、温度、味道的第一个信号。然后开始咀嚼。慢慢地。注意味道如何随着咀嚼而变化。注意吞咽的冲动。注意吞咽本身。注意之后残留的东西。

That's it. One bite. Two minutes. No goal. No judgment. Just attention.

就是这样。一口。两分钟。没有目标。没有评判。只有注意力。

This is not a relaxation technique. It is an **attention exercise** — a way of training gustatory bandwidth, of exercising a neglected channel, of reminding the nervous system that safety is available in the simplest of acts.

这不是放松技巧。它是一种**注意力练习**——一种训练味觉带宽、锻炼被忽视的通道、提醒神经系统在最简单的行为中可以获得安全的方式。

Section VI | From Taste to Attention — The Transfer

第六节 | 从味觉到注意力——迁移

Here is what happens when you practice this regularly.

当你定期练习这个时，会发生这样的事。

The attention you train in tasting begins to **transfer**. Not because you force it, but because attention is a capacity, not a technique. When you strengthen it in one channel, it becomes available in others.

你在品尝中训练的注意力开始**迁移**。不是因为你强迫它，而是因为注意力是一种能力，不是一种技术。当你在一个通道中加强它时，它在其他通道中就变得可用。

You might notice it first in conversation: a greater capacity to really listen, to stay present, to not immediately formulate your response. You might notice it in work: a longer attention span, less need for stimulation, more ease with focus. You might notice it in silence: a comfort with being nowhere else but here.

你可能首先在对话中注意到它：更能够真正倾听，保持临在，不立即构思你的回应。你可能在工作中注意到它：更长的注意力持续时间，更少的刺激需求，更自如地专注。你可能在静默中注意到它：一种安然于无处可去、只在此刻的状态。

This is not productivity. It is not optimization. It is something more fundamental: the recovery of attention as a way of being in the world, not just a tool for getting things done.

这不是效率。这不是优化。这是更根本的东西：恢复注意力作为一种在世界中存在的方式，而不仅仅是完成事情的工具。

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Modern life asks: What can you accomplish with your attention?

现代生活问：你能用你的注意力完成什么？

Chinese food philosophy asks: What can you experience with your attention? What can you receive? What can you become present to?

中华饮食哲学问：你能用你的注意力体验什么？你能接收什么？你能对什么变得临在？

Conclusion | Flavor Is Not a Luxury. It Is a Practice.

结语 | 味觉不是奢侈品。它是一种练习。

We live in a culture that treats flavor as entertainment — something to be consumed quickly, forgotten quickly, replaced quickly. But flavor is not entertainment. It is information. It is relationship. It is a channel through which the world enters and we respond.

我们生活在一个把味觉当作娱乐的文化里——需要快速消费、快速遗忘、快速替代的东西。但味觉不是娱乐。它是信息。它是关系。它是一个世界进入、我们回应的通道。

When you taste with full attention, you are not just enjoying food. You are training the most fundamental human capacity: the capacity to be present. You are reclaiming sensory bandwidth from the screens that colonize it. You are signaling safety to a nervous system accustomed to threat.

当你用全然的注意力品尝时，你不仅仅是在享受食物。你是在训练最基本的人类能力：临在的能力。你是在从占据它的屏幕那里收回感官带宽。你是在向一个习惯于威胁的神经系统发出安全信号。

Just as Tai Chi refines movement, and self-massage refines touch, tasting refines attention. Three practices. One body. One life. One capacity that makes all of it possible: the capacity to be here, fully, now.

正如太极精炼动作，自我推拿精炼触觉，品尝精炼注意力。 三种练习。一个身体。一个生命。一种让这一切成为可能的能力：全然临在于此刻的能力。

The next time you eat, try this: put down the phone. Turn off the video. Just eat. Just taste. Just be here.

下次你吃饭时，试试这个：放下手机。关掉视频。只是吃。只是品尝。只是在这里。

Not for the flavor — though the flavor will be richer.

不是为了味道——尽管味道会更丰富。

For the attention.

为了注意力。

For the return to a channel you forgot you had.

为了回归一个你忘记自己拥有的通道。

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For the quiet practice of being fully alive, one bite at a time.

为了全然活着的安静练习，一口接一口。