

Kintsugi Metaphor: "Mending Broken Pottery With Gold" What Can We Learn From a Broken Ceramic Vessel?

Kintsugi, as the practice is known, gives new life to damaged or aging ceramic objects by celebrating their frailty and history. One can consider how we might live a kintsugi life, finding value in the cracks, missing pieces, and chips - whether it's the scars showing how we have lived, finding new purpose through aging and loss, seeing the beauty of 'imperfection' and love ourselves, family and friends despite flaws.



The translation from Japanese of *kintsugi* means "golden joinery" or, "to patch with gold". This technique transforms broken ceramic or china vessels into beautiful works of art. Using real gold powder with lacquer or epoxy to enhance breaks, sometimes attaching contrasting shards from different ceramic items, glass, or gemstones, gives new life in an aesthetically pleasing way and is a unique method to repair broken pottery.

The Kintsugi Art you have received has been created with 23.5 Karat gold

Kintsugi is said to have originated in the 15th century when a Japanese shogun broke a favorite tea bowl and sent it back to be fixed. But the repair job, which was done with metal staples, the standard for repair at that time, detracted from the beauty of the bowl. The shogun enlisted Japanese craftsmen to come up with a more aesthetically pleasing solution and *Kintsugi* was born.



The original Kintsugi process was a form of lacquer art. Broken pieces were glued back together using Urushi adhesive, derived from the sap of the Chinese lacquer tree, and the final layer of Urushi lacquer was covered with fine gold powder. There was a "toxic" part to the ancient process from the Urushi sap oil, which is the ingredient that is responsible for forming the dense and highly durable lacquer once dried. Once the Urushi dried and hardened, the toxic effects of the Urushi oil were nullified, making the lacquerware safe to handle. Today, thanks to modern polymer technology, *Kintsugi* repair can be accomplished with state-of-the-art materials.



How to maintain the Kintsugi repaired item

Your Kintsugi art was restored with "cold" materials, not re-fired in a kiln. To keep the restoration quality intact for years, it is recommended to not wash, not use for liquids, and not use with food – the restored item is for display only. If cleaning is required, you can use a damp soft cloth applied gently without scrubbing. Avoid temperatures above 150 degrees Fahrenheit and sunlight to prevent colors from fading.