

Think back to our ancestors, hunter gatherers, living in caves. Imagine being back in that time, waking up in the cave, surrounded by your tribe. As a team you decide what needs doing that day. Maybe some people go off hunting, some decide to go off foraging for berries and your job for the day is to mind the cave, look after any infants and tend the fire.

Imagine you've had a lovely relaxed day when you start to hear the sounds of the gatherers returning, they seem happy, you can hear cheerful voices, some laughter so you can guess that they've been successful. You are looking forward to their food....and you see them emerging from the bushes, happy relaxed carrying their harvest of juicy berries; maybe their mouths are stained red from berry juice.

'Look what we have brought you, delicious berries, we've got plenty, and we've been eating them on the way back. They're so sweet...'

Delighted, you grab some; pop them in your mouth....and someone says

'Ooh, I don't feel so good...I feel a bit sick...' another tribe member agrees...

Now you start to feel sick too, the berries don't taste so good now, you spit them out. Someone throws up....you start to retch too, everyone does.

You have an amazing survival response! Your mind recognises the danger and stops you eating any more berries, and does its best to stop you absorbing the ones you've just eaten because it quickly works out that the berries are the problem. Your mind also knows that your tribe is very important to your survival; it makes sure you stay well because you're going to be needed to take care of your tribe while they recover from the poisonous berries.

The next time you see those berries, they won't look delicious. You'll probably shudder as you get a fleeting reminder of the nausea, and stay away from them. Imagine what messages your mind would send you if you decided to try override this response and eat them anyway!