

MtM Session – Mindfulness Eating

- Q&A from last week's experiences.
- This week we will focus on slowly observing and tasting a raisin and then an orange segment.
- Before we do mindfulness tasting, let's start with a **10 minute walking meditation**.

MINDFULNESS RAISIN EATING MEDITATION

- This practice is sometimes used as a way to help demystify meditation. When we speak of mindfulness meditation we are talking about an "in the body experience."
- We will learn how we can bring mindfulness to eating and transfer this practice to everything else we do in daily life.

HOW TO DO IT

- **1. Holding:** First, take a raisin and hold it in the palm of your hand or between your finger and thumb.
- **2. Seeing:** Take time to really focus on it; gaze at the raisin with care and full attention—imagine that you've just dropped in from Mars and have never seen an object like this before in your life. Let your eyes explore every part of it, examining the highlights where the light shines, the darker hollows, the folds and ridges, and any asymmetries or unique features.
- **3. Touching:** Turn the raisin over between your fingers and explore its texture.
 - Now, close your eyes and feel the sense of touch with the raisin.
- **4. Smelling:** Hold the raisin beneath your nose. With each inhalation, take in any smell, aroma, or fragrance that may arise. As you do this, notice anything interesting that may be happening in your mouth or stomach.
- **5. Placing:** Now slowly bring the raisin up to your lips, noticing how your hand and arm know exactly how and where to position it. Gently place the raisin in your mouth; without chewing, noticing how it gets into your mouth in the first place. Spend a few moments focusing on the sensations of having it in your mouth, exploring it with your tongue.
- **6. Tasting:** When you are ready, prepare to chew the raisin, noticing how and where it needs to be for chewing. Then, very consciously, take one or two bites into it and notice what happens in the aftermath, experiencing any waves of taste that emanate from it as you continue chewing. Without swallowing yet, notice the bare sensations of taste and texture in your mouth and how these may change over time, moment by moment. Also pay attention to any changes in the object itself.
- **7. Swallowing:** When you feel ready to swallow the raisin, see if you can first detect the intention to swallow as it comes up, so that even this is experienced consciously before you actually swallow the raisin.

- **8. Following:** Finally, see if you can feel what is left of the raisin moving down into your stomach, and sense how your body as a whole is feeling after you have completed this exercise.
- Handout raisins and play Bob Stahl's YouTube "Raisin Meditation" video¹ (5:57 Minutes).
- Q &A

MINDFULNESS ORANGE MEDITATION

- Let's do a mindfulness orange segment meditation, and do the meditation on your own for the next several minutes.
- Q&A

CLOSING

- Homework – Do a mindful eating meditation daily for the coming week. Evidence suggests that mindfulness increases the more you practice it.
- Q&A
- Let's now close with another 10 minute personal MtM meditation.

RESOURCES

- The MtM Eating Meditation session in PDF file format can be read and/or downloaded from www.leafsfoundation.org/projects
- A review of research published between 2000 and 2006 concluded that the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR), an eight-week training program that includes the raisin meditation described above, developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, is an effective treatment for reducing the stress and anxiety that accompanies daily life and chronic illness².

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYDXQQBojk8>

² http://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/raisin_meditation#data-tab-evidence