

Mindful Eating:

Welcome to mindful eating. Today, we will be eating an orange slice mindfully, in order to experience life more fully. Most of the time, people are not aware of the food they are eating, and eat on autopilot. But once you take your awareness to the food you are eating, you begin to notice things that you'd never notice before. You begin to use your five senses fully. Note: You can use a different food for this activity if you wish to.

Let's begin.

First, pick up the orange slice between your index finger and thumb. Now, close your eyes. Rely purely on your sense of touch. What do you feel? Is the orange slice slightly bumpy? Squishy? Can you feel the pulp lying under the thin layer of skin?

Remember, you've never met this orange slice before. Every one of them is different. Every one of them feels different. What do you notice about this one that you've never noticed or registered before? Take a child's perspective on this food. It's a completely new experience each time. Hold no expectations on what it *should* be like. Just accept it as it is.

Get to know this orange slice. Very gently, raise your hand so that the orange slice is at eye level. Now, open your eyes. Can you connect anything that you felt about the slice with what you observe with your sense of sight right now? Do you see the bumpy texture, along with your sense of touch? Compare the sides of the orange slice. Are they the same, or different? Does the color of this orange change at all? Is it a darker orange in some places, or is the color uniform? Look at it as if you've never seen an orange before. You've never seen this orange slice before. And you won't see one identical to it ever again. Savor the moment you have with this orange slice.

Close your eyes, and gently, hold it to your nose and inhale. What do you smell? Have you ever smelled this before? Is it any different from that of which you remember? Do you notice anything new? Try to find words to describe this scent. Is it faintly spicy, perhaps sweet, or tangy?

And now a sense that you never usually use for food: your sense of hearing. Bring the orange slice to your ear gently, your eyes still closed, and roll it between your fingers. Do you notice anything at all - even a small sound - that you've never observed before? Finally, lower your hand and the orange slice into your lap.

Now don't open your eyes while you bring the orange slice to your mouth. Let it hover there, your lips slightly parted. Do you feel anything happening inside your mouth? Do you notice any change? Salvation, maybe? Anticipation? Sometimes, people are already tasting the food before it passes their lips, because they think they know the food inside out. But in reality, that isn't the case. Remember, you've never seen, heard, tasted, felt, or smelled this food before. It's entirely new to you.

Now, you can eat the orange slice. Place it in between your teeth, and bite down gently. Do you notice anything else happening in your mouth? How about the juices from the orange? Are they sweet, or sour, maybe? Do you notice anything different about it this time around? Do you feel the pulp sliding around? What is your tongue doing? Pay full attention to what your body and mind are doing. Swallow the piece of orange.

Now you can take another bite of the orange, if there is any left. Notice the same things with all five senses, chewing slowly and being aware of everything that is happening within your body. Notice the taste, the texture, and the slight chewing sounds you make as you swallow.

Notice any after taste of the orange. Do you still smell something? Do your fingers smell like orange?

As you finish the last bite of the orange, thank yourself for doing this guided meditation. We will end this meditation with a single sound of the bell, to bring you back to awareness of the outside world.