

Eating an orange

In this practice you will be eating an orange in a more present way, paying more attention than you might usually pay an orange! Why? Because it helps to train our brain to become more awake and aware in the moment.

So take an orange or a tangerine and hold it in front of you in the palm of your hand. Breathe in and out slowly to help you come into this moment. Just take a good look at the fruit that you're holding, as if you are looking at it for the first time ever. As you look at it, imagine all that has happened for this orange to eventually get to be here in the palm of your hand.

So the orange growing from seed for example, flowering into the sun that shines upon it, then the orange blossoms that come, the fruit beginning to emerge, changing colours from green, to yellow, then to orange, the orange then picked by a fruit picker and then taken and delivered to the shops for you to go and buy. We can see so many things when we take a minute to just look at the orange.

Now start to look more closely at the orange. What is its skin like? Is it even or bumpy? Is it the same colour all over? Hold it up to your nose now. What does it smell like? Really smell the wonderful scent of the orange.

Now slowly begin to peel your orange and sense the feeling of its skin on your fingers. Is it easy to peel or hard? Once your orange has been peeled, break off a bit of the orange now and put it slowly to your mouth. Notice what happens inside your mouth as you do that. Is your mouth watering - your taste buds waking up? As you put it into your mouth now just see what happens there. As you slowly bite into it, notice the flavour filling into your mouth. What is it like? What does it feel like as your teeth bite and chew into it now?

Can you notice the point where you become aware that it's time to swallow the piece of orange? What does the tongue do to help make this happen? And as you swallow it now see if you can watch how the orange moves down your throat and towards your belly.

Is there any after taste left?

So sitting with what's there happening inside your mouth now, just notice what it is like to not have this orange in your mouth for a moment. Is there a wish for another piece straight away or not?

By all means, have another piece and try to eat that one as mindfully as the first time. Take time to look at the orange, to smell the orange, to feel your inner and outer experience as you prepare to and then eat your orange.

Take a moment to reflect: what have you noticed about this way of eating your orange? Maybe it is more flavoursome, or you've noticed the juiciness more. Maybe it tasted more pleasant, or not.

What is this way of eating an orange like for you? Different? Maybe you became quieter and noticed more about what you were doing. Perhaps there was more appreciation for the orange. Did you like it? Maybe you could practice this mindful eating at your next mealtime, and notice how much more present you are eating your food, and how it helps to slow you down.

Take care until next time.