

Mindfulness with Food Exercise

Begin with the Quick Heart Coherence for 3-5 minutes. This will ground and centre you and bring yourself into the present.

In fact, I recommend the Quick Coherence exercise before each and every time you eat any food.

I like to use a single piece of fruit. Strawberries (2 small or one in half) are my favourite as they are very detailed, colourful, and interesting.

You can use anything, really. A piece of fruit is generally neutrally pleasant. A grape or blueberry is fine—bring 2.

Take the halved strawberry or two grapes/blueberries and put them on a small, clean plate or bowl.

Take them to sit in a peaceful place – in a breakfast nook, or by a window, or just anywhere you consider peaceful.

Tune into the awareness or sensation that you have in your body of feeling hungry, thirsty or maybe even feeling full. If you were going to eat or drink something right now, what is your body hungry for? What is it thirsty for? Just pay attention and notice with awareness the sensations that give you this information.

Take a deep breath in for the count of 7, hold for 7, release out of your mouth to the count of 7.

Now, bring your attention to the item in your hand and imagine that you are seeing it for the first time. Observe with curiosity as you pay attention and notice the color, shape, texture, and size. Is there anything else that you notice, sense or feel?

Imagine what it took for this item to get to your hands: sunshine, water, time, processing, and shipping. You may choose to be aware of gratitude for everyone involved in the cultivation and preparation of this item of food. You may choose to bring in your own gratitude or spiritual blessing.

Now place the item between your fingers and feel the texture, temperature and ridges. You may notice smoothness or stickiness. Again, notice if you have any thoughts, sensations or emotions at this time. Continue to breathe and be fully present in this moment.

Take the piece of food and bring it toward your nose and smell with your full awareness. Notice if you have any memories, sensations or reactions in your body. Even before you eat it, you may notice that you begin to have a digestive response in your body just by noticing and smelling.

With full awareness of your hand moving toward your mouth, place the piece of food into your mouth without chewing or swallowing it. Just allow it to be in your mouth, roll it around to different parts of your mouth and tongue. Notice the flavor and texture. Notice the physical

sensations within your body, especially your mouth and your gut. Continue to breathe as you explore the sensation of having this item in your mouth.

Next take just one bite and notice the flavor, notice the change of texture. Then very slowly begin to chew the piece of food. Notice the parts of your mouth that are involved in chewing. Notice the sound and movement of chewing, as you continue to notice the sensations and flavor.

When you are ready, swallow this item and notice the path that it follows from your mouth and throat into your stomach. Notice the sensation and taste that may linger in your mouth. Connect again to your body and your breath and notice your experience in this moment

Next, I invite you to pick up another food item (the other half of the Strawberry or another grape, etc.), and choose to eat it however you wish. Noticing your choice and your experience. Notice how it is similar or different.