Mindful eating

One small piece of food, eaten as if for the first time.

We eat much of our food without tasting it. This exercise slows the whole thing down. Use a raisin, a segment of orange or a square of chocolate. Take about five minutes.

1. **Look.** Hold it in your palm. Look at it as if you had never seen one before. Colour, shape, surface, the way the light catches it.
2. **Touch.** Feel its weight and texture. Roll it between your fingers.
3. **Smell.** Bring it to your nose. Notice any scent, and anything that happens in your mouth or stomach.
4. **Place.** Put it on your tongue without chewing. Explore it. Notice the urge to bite.
5. **Taste.** Bite once. Notice the flavour released. Chew slowly, and notice how the taste and texture change.
6. **Swallow.** Notice the intention to swallow before you do. Follow it down.
7. **After.** Notice the aftertaste, and how your body feels.

What did I notice that I usually miss?

What was my mind doing?

At ordinary meals

- Sit down to eat, without a screen, for at least one meal a day.
- Give the first three mouthfuls your full attention.
- Put your fork down between bites now and then.
- Check in halfway through: how hungry am I now?

A meal this week I will eat this way

The raisin exercise comes from Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn.

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