THE RAISIN EXERCISE

Here's how to practice mindfulness using the raisin exercise:

1. **Hold the raisin**: Take a raisin, or any other food, and hold it in your hand. Notice the weight of it. Notice how strange this activity feels compared with the normally automatic act of eating.
2. **Look at the raisin**: Observe the raisin like you've never seen a raisin before. Really look at it. Take note of each and every crevice and wrinkle in the raisin, and the way the light hits each part of it.
3. **Touch the raisin**: Feel the raisin, running it between your fingers and noticing its texture. How does it feel? How much "give" is there when you touch the raisin? Does it feel dry?
4. **Smell the raisin**: Hold the raisin to your nose, and with purpose and intention, take a deep breath. Notice the scent of the raisin going into your nose. What does it smell like? Let the raisin take up your entire scope of awareness.
5. **Put the raisin in your mouth**: Moving slowly, put the raisin in your mouth. Notice how it feels to place it on your tongue. Don't chew the raisin right away. Move it around on your tongue, noticing how it feels as it travels around your mouth.
6. **Chew the raisin**: Once you're ready, start chewing the raisin (slowly). Take small bites. Notice how it feels to tear the raisin apart, and for the raisin to separate within your mouth. Notice the tastes that are released as the raisin opens, and the different textures present now that you've bitten into it. Notice the saliva released by your mouth.
7. **Swallow the raisin**: Pay attention to the instinct to swallow the raisin, and take a moment before you decide to continue. Then, slowly swallow, noticing as the raisin travels down your throat and into your stomach. Notice how your tongue is behaving, and the movement of your throat.
8. **Pay attention afterwards**: How does your mouth feel after swallowing? Is there an aftertaste? Do you feel an instinct within your mind to have something else to eat, now that you've finished what you were eating?

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