



Mindful Eating of Chocolate Exercise

Welcome. Today, we'll be practicing with chocolate, using principles from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. This practice helps us cultivate awareness and appreciation for the present moment. Ensure you're seated comfortably, with a piece of chocolate/chocolate in front of you. Let's begin by taking a moment to centre ourselves.

1. **Grounding:** Sit comfortably with both feet flat on the floor and your hands resting in your lap or on the table. Close your eyes if you're comfortable, and take a few deep breaths. Inhale deeply through your nose, hold for a moment, and exhale slowly through your mouth. Let your body relax and your mind settle.

2. **Setting Intention:** Set a simple intention for this practice. It could be to fully experience the chocolate or to simply stay present. Hold this intention lightly in your mind.

3. **Observation:** Open your eyes and look at the piece of chocolate. Take a moment to unwrap the chocolate. Listen for the sounds of the wrapper tearing. Notice the movement of your hand, fingers, and arm muscles as you open the chocolate. You may hear other people or other noises in the room. Notice the sounds and bring your attention back to the chocolate. Once unwrapped, observe its shape, colour, and texture. Notice any markings or reflections on its surface. Really see the chocolate, as if for the first time.

4. **Touch:** Pick up the chocolate and feel it in your hand. Notice its weight and temperature. Is it cool or warm? Smooth or textured? Run your fingers over it, fully experiencing its tactile qualities.

5. **Smell:** Bring the chocolate to your nose and take a deep breath. Notice the aroma. Is it sweet, bitter, or both? Observe any sensations or memories the smell evokes. Allow the aroma to fill your awareness.

6. **Listening to the Mind:** Notice any thoughts or judgments that arise as you hold and smell the chocolate. Acknowledge these thoughts without trying to change them. Let them come and go like leaves floating down a stream.

7. **Anticipation and Awareness:** Bring the chocolate to your lips. Notice any anticipation or urge to eat it right away. Observe any physical reactions, like an increase in saliva. Allow yourself to feel this anticipation without immediately satisfying it.

8. **Tasting:** Place the chocolate in your mouth, but don't chew yet. Let it sit on your tongue. Notice the initial sensations. How does it start to melt? What flavours emerge? Be fully present with the experience.

9. **Chewing:** Slowly start to chew the chocolate. Pay attention to how the texture changes and how the flavours evolve. Is it sweet, bitter, or creamy? Chew slowly and mindfully, savouring each bite.

10. **Swallowing:** When ready, swallow the chocolate. Notice the sensations as it moves down your throat. Pay attention to the lingering taste in your mouth. Fully experience and appreciate the aftertaste.

Conclusion: Take a few deep breaths. Reflect on how it felt to eat the chocolate mindfully. Notice what you experienced that you might not have otherwise. Slowly bring your awareness back to the room. Wiggle your fingers and toes, stretch if needed, and gently open your eyes if they are closed.

Thank you for participating in this mindful eating exercise. Recognise that you've taken this time to be fully present, which is a gift to yourself. Carry this sense of mindfulness and presence with you as you continue your day.

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