

Raisin Meditation (transcript)

Before beginning this meditation, **have two raisins and a glass of water handy. If you don't have them yet, pause the videotape while you get them.**

We'll start with a short **breath meditation**. Noticing how it is to be here, what it feels like physically – noticing feet on the floor, weight on chair, etc... breath where it's most vivid... there may be thoughts, thoughts of the day, unfinished business at work or home, wondering about this practice, and as you'll see later, in this kind of meditation, there's nothing wrong with thinking, it's actually part of the meditation.

When you notice there's thinking, just coming back gently but firmly to sensations of breathing... ...
...If your eyes have been closed, allowing them to open, and **bringing awareness to the raisins in front of you...**

Picking one of them up, and pretending for a moment that just landed from Jupiter, exploring this raisin like you'd never seen one ever before... You **may already know you like or don't like raisins**, just letting that go, and letting your experience be your experience, whatever it is...
seeing... feeling... smelling... hearing(!)...

Now moving it toward your mouth, noticing how you're doing this...
Placing it in mouth, tactile sensations, softness, texture...,
(**distinguish between sensation/perception and thought**)
Breaking skin, tasting from different parts of mouth/tongue
Chewing slowly, noticing it breaking up into smaller parts
Soon it has disappeared and noticing how that feels (you are now 1 raisin heavier)

When you're ready, take a sip of water, feel the coolness of the water as you swish it in your mouth and the sensations of swallowing. Now, picking up the second raisin

As you hold this raisin, notice anything you didn't notice with the first, but this time **reflecting on where this raisin came from**. It was originally **hanging from a grape vine**, receiving sunlight, moisture, nutrients. See if you can find the stem, which is actually it's umbilical cord, its connection to the nutrients of the soil, the moisture from the sky.

In a way, in this raisin is the **Sun, the rain or irrigation that nurtured it**, nutrients from the **soil, which itself came from rock and volcanic materials, and hundreds of years of organic matter deposited** into the soil. This raisin **IS the sun, the clouds, the volcanoes from thousands of years ago, organic material left by other organisms**. **It's also the farmer** who cared for the vineyard, **the laborer** who picked the grapes and placed them between the rows on cardboard to dry, then the **trucker** who drove it to a processing plant where it was separated, cleaned, sorted, and put onto another truck to go to a packaging plant, and then to the grocery store, where a store **employee** placed this container on the shelf to be picked up and brought to you. **All of this is IN the grape, sun, water, soil, ancient volcanoes, farmers, laborers, truckers, miles of highway between here and there**. It took **ALL of this to make this one small raisin** – without the farmer, without the sun, without the sky from which the rain fell, this raisin could not exist...

This is one of the *lessons of mindfulness – everything, absolutely everything, is connected*. Now you can eat your raisin!

Over the next week, see if you can bring mindfulness into your daily activities, washing dishes, walking the dog, brushing teeth, in the shower, walking to the car. This will be your informal practice for the week.

For the 30 minutes of formal practice, which for this week is the body scan, see if you can bring this same sense of curiosity and exploration to your experience as you did with the raisin...

This week and beyond, with this as well as the other practices, be gentle with yourself, see if you can drop expectations that you should feel a certain way, and just let your experience be your experience.