

APPLE MEDITATION FROM THICH NHAT HANH

First thing is to give your undivided attention to eating the apple. When you eat the apple, just concentrate on eating the apple. Don't think of anything else. And most important, be still. Don't eat the apple while you are driving. Don't eat it while you are walking. Don't eat it while you are reading. Just be still. Being focused and slowing down will allow you to truly savor all the qualities the apple offers: its sweetness, aroma, freshness, juiciness, and crispness.

Next, pick up the apple from the palm of your hand and take a moment to look at it again. Breathe in awareness a few times to help you focus and become more in touch with how you feel about the apple. Most of the time, we barely look at the apple we are eating. We grab it, take a bite, chew it quickly and then swallow. This time, take note: What kind of apple is it? What color is it? How does it feel in your hand? What does it smell like? Going through these thoughts, you will begin to realize the apple is not simply a quick snack to quiet a grumbling stomach. It is something more complex, something part of a greater whole.

Then, give the apple a smile and slowly, mindfully take a bite, and chew it. Be aware of your in-breath and out-breath a few times to help you concentrate solely on eating the apple: what it feels like in your mouth; what it tastes like; what it's like to chew and swallow it. There is nothing else filling your mind as you chew—no projects, no deadlines, no worries, no "to do" list, no fears, no sorrow, no anger, no past, and no future. There is just the apple.

When you chew, know what you are chewing. Chew slowly and completely. Chew consciously, savoring the taste of the apple and its nourishment, immersing yourself in the process one hundred percent. This way, you really appreciate the apple as it is. And as you become fully aware of eating the apple, you also become fully aware of the present moment. You become fully engaged in the here and now. Living in the moment, you can really experience what the apple offers you, and you become more alive.