

Your Basic Food Source

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When you're meditating, you're creating food for the mind. And it's good nourishing food. This is your basic food. These are the main meals of your day.

As for the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations you encounter during the day: Those are snacks. And you know what snacks are like: Some of them are good for you and some are bad for you. But you really can't take them as your basic food.

Your basic food has to come from within—in other words, the good qualities you develop in the mind.

Because we live in this world, we have to encounter all kinds of sounds, sights, smells, tastes, tactile sensations. There are some good ones, some bad ones. You can never really depend on them.

So if you want to go someplace and know that you'll be okay, that you're not going to suffer from anything, you have to take your own food with you. And this is the kind of food you can take with you: the food you develop inside as you meditate, the good qualities you develop in the mind.

So remember: This is your basic food. As for things outside, those are just snacks. Make sure you don't eat too many snacks. Make sure you're spending your time developing the good food inside: the food of mindfulness, the food of alertness—in other words, the strengths that you develop in the mind itself.

These will enable you to feel well nourished no matter what's happening outside. The mind has its inner strength, and that's all that really matters because everything comes out of this.