

BUDDHIST CONCEPT OF FOOD CONSUMPTION

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"All beings subsist on nutriment" (Anguttaranikāya Part VI, 2005). This saying shows the importance of food. All creatures require food for living and everyone searches for food. An infant cries when he is hungry. Adults work hard to get food. No one can neglect the hunger. Animals are driven to action by their hunger. Therefore food is important for all beings. There are many problems regarding the consumption of food in the world. Overconsumption and under consumption of food, is a problem that can be found around the world. Because of poverty many people in the world do not have enough food. Malnutrition is a large problem in many impoverished countries. Issues related to under consumption/malnutrition require more effort to be solved, than the problem of over consumption. Wealthy countries tend to both waste and over consume food. These are the polarized issues with food consumption. Overconsumption of resources has made many problems in the world. The population is continually getting larger and thus, requires more to consume. It should be noted that those that over consume do so due to excess resources, but the contrary can also hold true with the poor in the west and fast food. Overeating leads to diabetes, heart problems and obesity. Some individuals, under the pretext of maintaining body shape, over control food consumption which leads to eating disorders such as Anorexia and bulimia nervosa. But it is easy to control over consumption of food. One needs to be aware of over consuming and waste. In Sri Lanka a lot of food is wasted, and there one needs to put an end to that waste. It is particularly important to do so at events such as weddings, funerals and almsgivings. Also wasting food is especially common in hotels and restaurants. Further, eating behaviors and customs are unique to each society. We have to practice good habits when consuming food. Actions such as licking your finger, making sounds while eating and speaking while having food in mouth are not appreciated behavior. Mainly my focuses are on food consuming disorders, Buddhist views regarding food consumption and what can be done for the poor people who do not have at least a meal a day.