



Spiritual Life Project
meaning · purpose · authenticity
Labyrinth Program

Often confused with a maze, which is a puzzle to be solved, a labyrinth is a winding path that moves in turns toward a center point. At the center of the labyrinth is a space for meditation or reflection. The path is unicursal, meaning the way into and out of the labyrinth are the same. Labyrinths have been used on all continents, and by many different groups of people, for over 3,500 years (Artress, 2006; West, 2000). The labyrinth is a tool that can be used for meditation, prayer, enhancing creativity, solving problems, dealing with grief, or expressing joy (Ferre, 2007).

WALKING THE LABYRINTH

There is no correct way to walk the labyrinth; there are many possibilities for your personal reflective practice. For some people, the path is a metaphor for a journey.

The suggestions and questions for reflection below may be used to guide your walk. Move at your own pace. To pass someone, step to the side and then around them.

Prepare

Take a moment to relax and reflect. Be still and take a deep breath. *What questions or concerns are you pondering currently?* If you wish, set a specific purpose or intention of your walk.

Journey In

Focus on the path. Let go of concerns. *What stresses or worries can you imagine rolling off your shoulders?* If your mind begins to wander to concerns about your day or life, gently bring it back to the path and your steps.

Center

When you arrive at the center, stay as long as you need or want. This space is for reflection and meditation. *What words or thoughts are most salient for you in this moment?* Notice any changes in your awareness of self, time, or place.

Journey Out

As you return along the same path, reflect on insights or connections. *How might you take action on, or let go of concern for, any questions or problems you have been pondering?* Focus on possibilities and insights.

Exit

Think about the questions you asked and the energy you received. Enjoy a moment of gratitude for your experience, regardless of the outcome. *How will you continue to make time for reflection?* Carry this experience into your life.

References and additional resources:

Spiritual Life Project: <http://slp.fsu.edu>

World Wide Labyrinth Locator: <http://labyrinthlocator.com>

Artress, L. (2006). *Walking the sacred path: Rediscovering the labyrinth as a spiritual practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Riverhead Books.

Ferre, R. (2007). *12 reasons to have a labyrinth at your university*. Retrieved from <http://www.labyrinthproject.com/12university.pdf>.

West, M. G. (2000). *Exploring the labyrinth: A guide for healing and spiritual growth*. New York, NY: Broadway Books.