

LABYRINTH AS SPIRITUAL TOOL



Nurturing ourselves spiritually is not an easy thing to do in a culture that disconnects us from our depths. The simple act of walking the labyrinth invites us back into the center of our being.

~Lauren Artress

LABYRINTH AS DIVINE CONTAINER: The labyrinth is an archetype of wholeness, a sacred place that helps us discover the depths of our souls. The labyrinth provides sacred space, a divine container to slow down and listen. The intention of a labyrinth walk is to deepen inner stillness so that one can commune with oneself and with God. The labyrinth is an archetype of the 'way' of unity and wholeness.

LABYRINTH ACTIVATES MANY LEVELS OF OUR BEING: Walking a labyrinth activates many levels of our being-conscious awareness, emotions, body, thinking, intuition, imagination. All are unified and flow together in the labyrinth experience. One is invited to come into the present moment of mind, heart, and feet connecting to the path. Labyrinth walking provides many spiritual and psychological benefits. Quieting of mind, relaxing of body, relief from stress, peace, inspiration, illumination. The labyrinth has a cumulative effect, deepening healing, peace, and transformation.

LABYRINTH INVITES US TO ENCOUNTER LIFE AS JOURNEY: Labyrinths have one single, winding, unobstructed path from outside to the center, unlike maze which has many dead ends. The Labyrinth supports a sense of natural flow in life, organic unfolding, not force. The Labyrinth invites us to encounter life as journey, pilgrimage. The journey does not unfold in linear way; it has many twists and turns, yet no dead ends. The Path is wide and gracious. We can trust the journey. God's embrace holds us all along the way and each step of the journey takes us deeper into the heart of God.

LABYRINTH SERVES AS REFLECTIVE MIRROR: The labyrinth can serve as a reflective mirror, reflecting back to us what we carry inside. With quiet and attentive minds and hearts, we can reflect on behaviors and patterns that hinder our relationship with others and God-critical voices, judgments, projections, unmanaged expectations. Encircled in love, we can look honestly at where we are and where the Spirit might be calling forth healing, integration, and life. It is instructive to experience everything that occurs on the labyrinth as metaphor for one's own life.

LABYRINTH REMINDS US WE DO LIFE TOGETHER IN COMMUNITY: Walking the labyrinth we see that we are all on the same path, but at different places in the journey. We are not alone. We journey together and need to make space for each other, developing compassion, patience, acceptance, respect, honor of differences. Everyone's journey to the Divine is unique. The labyrinth supports growing in ways of walking together in harmony.

Resources: *Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Practice*, Lauren Artress
The Sacred Path Companion; A Guide to Walking the Labyrinth to Heal and Transform, Lauren Artress

Developed by Julie Stegelmann for Labyrinth Presentation, 2007