

Creative Ways to Walk A Labyrinth



Gracious Attention: This approach is to walk with no agenda. The task is to simply allow a gracious sense of attention to flow through you. Quiet the mind and choose to let go of all thoughts when they present themselves in your awareness. Simply follow the path.

Praying a Question: Ask a question at the mouth of the labyrinth, one that is outside the realm of yes or no. Ask it out loud if you feel comfortable doing so. Hear it internally as you consider it. Share it with the Divine. Walk the labyrinth open to whatever comes. Welcome the ways that the question may change as you walk. Upon leaving, make mental or physical notes of all that you have experienced.

Use Repetition: While walking repeat a word, mantra, or meaningful phrase over and over to yourself. Holy Spirit, fill me. Peace within, peace without. Thy will be done. Jesus loves me this I know.

Expressing Your Heart: Simply walk and express to God what is in your heart. You might want to talk to God as if you were writing a letter: "Dear God, I need to speak to you...Pour out your heart to God and ask for what you need.

Set an Intention: A labyrinth walk can be designated to a special purpose. You may prepare for an important meeting by creating a peaceful space inside yourself and imagining a positive outcome. If a friend is going into surgery you may focus on giving the person strength and comfort. You may walk the labyrinth with an intention to reduce your anger about a difficult and challenging situation. The practice of walking the labyrinth invites you to become conscious and awake enough to know what you need in order to live an effective and gracious life.

Remembering: Identify a memory that you would like to explore with God. Ask the Spirit of God to flow through you as you walk. Walk the labyrinth with the memory. Welcome what comes, allowing your perceptions of the memory to be transformed.

Just Listen: Walk the labyrinth and just listen. Listen to your breathing. Listen to the sound of your footsteps on the path. Listen to sounds outside and inside of you. What do you hear?

Thanksgiving or Praise: Find a way or many ways to express your gratitude as you walk the labyrinth. You may choose to involve your body in gestures or movements of thanksgiving and praise.

Explore Images That Appear: If an image or memory floats up to the surface of your mind while walking, explore it. It is like catching a butterfly. Hold it gently and explore it with "soft eyes." Ask yourself what purpose it serves? What can you learn?

When Upset: When it is difficult to disconnect from troubling thoughts, walk the labyrinth. Let the movements of your body and the winding pathway help you find peace. Keep walking until your mind quiets. It may take two or three walks to the center and back out. As you finish your labyrinth experience, give thanks for where your walk has brought you.

Letting Go: Walk towards the center with the intention of releasing something. When you sense you might be ready, shake it out, drop it, or release it in any other way that feels right. If you still have it when you get to the center, offer it to God. As you move out do not take it with you. As needed, ask God for the resolve to resist any impulse to go back and retrieve it. As you cross the threshold of the labyrinth, give thanks for your willingness to leave it there with God.

Marking An Important Life Event: Many people walk the labyrinth to honor a benchmark in time. Birthday, anniversary of a loved one's death, new job, rite of passage, other transition. Walking the labyrinth alone or together with others can help us celebrate, mark, embrace, and move into or through important life events.

Resources: To explore ideas of ceremonial and ritual walks using the labyrinth consult www.veriditas.org.
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.
Living the Labyrinth: 101 Paths to a Deeper Connection with the Sacred, Jill Kimberly Hartwell Geoffrion