



# *Walking the Labyrinth*

**Welcome to the Labyrinth—an ancient archetypal symbol that has evolved for thousands of years.**

Labyrinths have been traced by finger or foot by millions of people from many cultures. Classical and Medieval designs are the most widely walked and new forms continue to come into consciousness.

The labyrinth creates a sacred time and space for you to look within, pray, meditate, and reflect. The meanders and rhythmic turning empties the mind, relaxes the body and refreshes the spirit. There are many ways to experience the labyrinth. Veriditas founder Lauren Artress offers this map as a guide:

## **Remember**

*At the Threshold of the Labyrinth*

Take time to offer gratitude. You are invited to count your blessings and be thankful for people that support you and places that nourish you. You may choose to focus on a mantra, prayer, or intention. If there's a specific situation challenging you, bring it to mind and form a healing question if possible.

## **Release**

*Entering the Labyrinth*

This is the time to quiet the mind, let go of the mental chatter and release your burdens. Open your heart to feel whatever it might feel. You may want to connect with your breath or your footsteps. Relax and move at your own pace. If you meet someone on the path, do what feels natural. You may move ahead of others, and they may pass you by. Follow your intuition and experience your experience.

## **Receive**

*Pausing in the Center*

This is a place of reflection. Pause and stay for as long as you like. Open yourself to your higher power. Listen to that still, small inner voice. In the safety of the labyrinth have a heart-to-heart talk with yourself.

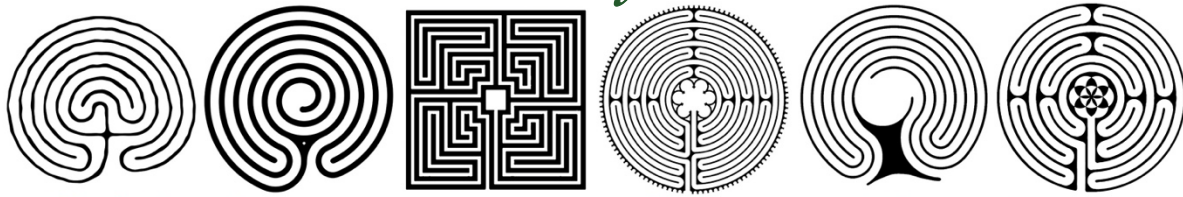
## **Return**

*Outward through the Labyrinth*

When you are ready, retrace your steps (or in a processional design you may follow a separate path out). On the return journey, the integration of your experience happens. You may feel a sense of well-being, healing, excitement, calm or peace. You may also Reclaim, Restore, Renew some aspect of your life.

Each labyrinth experience is different. You may Remember, Release, Receive & Return anywhere and in any order on the labyrinth. You might not notice anything or have an insightful, transformative journey. Whatever occurs, listen to your heart and take your time. See what happens on a different day or at another location. The above description is only a thumbnail sketch. You provide the bigger picture.

# *Veriditas Labyrinth Frequently Asked Questions*



## **What is a labyrinth?**

A labyrinth is a meandering path, often singular (unicursal), leading to a center. Labyrinths are an ancient archetype dating back 4,000 years or more, used symbolically as a walking meditation, path of prayer, or ceremonial site, among other things. Labyrinths are a tool for personal, psychological, and spiritual transformation, also enhancing right and left-brain cohesion. Labyrinths evoke metaphor, sacred geometry, spiritual pilgrimage, religious practice, mindfulness, well-being, and community building.

## **Why should I walk a labyrinth?**

There are many reasons to walk a labyrinth—solace, strength, clarity, celebration, insight, to quiet the mind, or to solve a problem. The labyrinth is a Grail that connects individual destiny to service in the world.

## **How do people use a labyrinth?**

Labyrinths can be experienced alone, with a partner, or a group. They can be walked by foot, navigated with a wheelchair/walker, or traced with a finger on a handheld labyrinth. Archetypal labyrinths are a blueprint for transformation. The labyrinth opens a door to our inner symbolic world. When we touch this fountain of images with a quiet, receptive mind, it restores and energizes us. People are drawn to the labyrinth because it replenishes our imagination and connects us to the rhythms of life in and around us.

Walking the labyrinth is a personal practice that is guided by what you need from the walk. There are three common ways to use the labyrinth: as a walking meditation, as part of a ceremony/ritual, and to heal and transform. For those experiencing the labyrinth for the first time, it is usually best to begin with meditative walking. Many people find daily or weekly walks beneficial as a cumulative experience.

## **When should I walk a labyrinth?**

Use the labyrinth when it calls to you. When you want the benefits of a quiet mind, a prayerful heart, a release from controlling behavior, find your way to a labyrinth. Some people use it casually, others intensely for a period of time to prepare for a specific event such as surgery or to recover from a major life event or identity shift. Find your own rhythm with it, but don't be so loose that it slips out of your life. Some people gain clarity, catharsis, or calm from a single journey and for others it takes multiple walks.

## **What is the purpose of a group walk?**

Walking the labyrinth in groups is an enriching experience. Francois Legaux, dean emeritus of Chartres Cathedral, describes it as a 'lesson in tolerance.' Indeed, it can be, especially if someone is walking erratically or very slowly. Instead of a solitary meditation, seated with closed eyes, walking the labyrinth with others can be interactive. The labyrinth is a reminder that though we may be in different places in our lives, we walk a shared path. Follow your own pace—it's ok to pass others and do what feels natural when you meet someone on the path. There are many ways to explore the labyrinth journey.

## **Where can I experience a labyrinth?**

The [LabyrinthLocator.com](http://LabyrinthLocator.com) allows you to search for public labyrinths near home or on your travels. If one labyrinth design, setting, or material doesn't resonate with you, experiment with another form. You can purchase a handheld labyrinth at [Veriditas.org](http://Veriditas.org) or download a free printable design for a finger walk. Veriditas also offers workshops, webinars, pilgrimages, and facilitator training both online and in-person.