

WEBSITES

The Labyrinth Society, www.labyrinthsociety.org, is a premier source of reliable information worldwide, including a labyrinth locator and a section on labyrinth research.

Veriditas, www.veriditas.org, was founded by Lauren Artress, who is largely responsible for the current labyrinth renewal in the Western Hemisphere. Its vision is to activate and facilitate the transformation of the human spirit.

TKF Foundation, www.tkffdn.org, facilitated the creation of "Open Spaces, Sacred Places." Click on the Partners icon to see pictures, stories and labyrinth information.

To purchase labyrinth products, try www.relax4life.com, www.labyrinthonline.com and www.paxworks.com.

This handout was modified from one created by Karen Rowe, a national labyrinth expert who came to The University of Tampa on Feb. 2, 2011 and shared her expertise and love of the labyrinth with our community. She can be reached at ksrowe@mindspring.com.

INFORMATION

For more information, please contact The University of Tampa Dickey Health and Wellness Center at (813) 287-1877 or wellness@ut.edu.



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T A M P A

Experience the LABYRINTH

A knowledge guide provided by The University of Tampa Dickey Health and Wellness Center and The Resource Team for Faith, Values and Spirituality



WELCOME TO THE LABYRINTH

Labyrinths are used in many cultures, spiritual traditions and settings, although they are independent of religion or belief system and have existed for thousands of years. It does not have any particular religious affiliation or connotations. Rather, it is seen as what some traditions call a "sacrament", i.e., an outward sign of an inner movement of growth.

Labyrinth walks can serve many purposes: walking meditation, comfort in crisis, building community, healing, growth, intuitive problem solving, creativity, commemoration, celebration and rituals of all kinds. The ancient design offers a walking meditation to people seeking insight and wholeness, vitality and peace. From the entrance the path twists and turns to the center. You return from the center by the same path.

No matter what our religious tradition or affiliation, including no tradition or affiliation, walking the labyrinth is a mirror for our lifelong journey, our walk on the path to our center where wisdom, growth and healing reside.

HOW TO WALK THE LABYRINTH

The labyrinth is not a maze. There is only one path, the same way in and out. There are no tricks, no dead-ends, no puzzles to solve. There is no right or wrong way to walk the labyrinth. The experience is different for each person each time. Do what feels natural to you. You are always on your path, exactly where you're supposed to be. You can trust that you are never lost. With that in mind:

- Take a few moments before you start just to quiet your mind and relax.
- Walk into the labyrinth and follow the path. Find a pace that's comfortable for you, then just walk at that pace.
- Let your mind be at ease. Let go of distractions, cares and worries.
- When you reach the center, walk in and stay as long as you like. This is a place for reflection, prayer or contemplative silence.
- When you are ready, follow the path back out again, bringing whatever gift you have been given back into your world.

SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR WALK

- Try to maintain silence throughout your walk, for your own and for others' reflection.
- Move through the labyrinth at your own pace. If you encounter someone ahead of you, it is OK to pass him or her. Don't let someone else's walk dictate your own.
- You can walk with a focus — a question or a problem, a person or situation. You can also repeat a word, phrase, mantra or prayer.
- Notice everything as you walk. What do you see? What do you hear? How might your God or your own inner wisdom be speaking to you in this silence?
- Be aware of your breathing and take each step deliberately.
- Pay attention to colors, scents, sounds, the life around you.
- When you reach the center, you may stand, sit, kneel — whatever you are drawn to do. There may be more than one person in the center at one time. Share the sacred space there with others on the journey.
- When you are ready, return by the same path. Let whatever gifts you have received refresh and empower. Express your gratitude.
- Give yourself about 5–10 minutes after leaving the labyrinth just to be alone with your thoughts and reflections. You can journal if you'd like. Try to refrain from conversation immediately after completing your walk. You may want to circle the perimeter of the labyrinth at this time.