

## ‘Solvitur ambulando – It is solved by walking.’

**Labyrinths create time and space** to reconnect with yourself, environment, and community. With the stress and uncertainty of our day and age, many are turning to this ancient archetype in search of peace, healing and transformation. Individuals and groups use labyrinths to practice mindfulness, navigate life transitions, honor big events, cultivate peace and listen to their own inner wisdom.



**Labyrinths offer a metaphorical journey** for people from all walks of life. The Classical Labyrinth dates back 4,000+ years and is defined by a single pathway that meanders toward a center. Unlike a maze, there are no dead ends, and instead of walls, the path of the labyrinth is usually two-dimensional with the design and destination in full view. There are large walkable labyrinths, handheld finger labyrinths, and small symbolic labyrinths. There are as many uses and approaches to the labyrinth as people.

### Sample guidelines for a labyrinth journey in the practice of mindfulness:

- Set an **intention**. Focus on a question / theme, or simply commit to experiencing your experience.
- Attune to your emotions and **attitude**. Open yourself to feel and respond to what arises on the walk.
- Bring your **awareness** to the present. Quiet your mind and become attuned to your pace and breath.
- Follow the pace your body wants to go. Your stride may change throughout the different stages.
- Feel free to move around others or let others move around you. This is easiest to do on the turns.
- The path is a two-way street: people may be coming out as you go in. Do what feels natural.
- If you are walking as a group, allow a minute for others who are entering or exiting before you start.
- Be respectful of others, it’s an individual and shared experience. Allow for a diversity of approaches.

### Three R’s contemplative framework by Lauren Artress and Veriditas.org:

<b>Release /</b> Entering in	Quiet the mind, let go of background chatter and release your troubles. Open your heart to feel whatever it might feel. Become aware of your breathing. Take slow breaths. Relax and move at your own pace.
<b>Receive /</b> at center	This is a place of reflection. Pause and stay as long as you like. Open yourself to your higher power. Listen to that small inner voice. In the safety of the labyrinth have a heart-to heart talk with yourself.
<b>Return /</b> coming out	When you are ready, begin walking out the same path you followed in. Walking out, integration of your experience happens. Experience the sense of well-being, healing, excitement, calm or peace.

Another approach I sometimes use is adapted from Rob Hardies and Rebecca Parker of All Souls DC:

1. SEE: Be wholly present / Value, trust & cultivate your senses / Engage suffering & embrace joy.
2. SAVOR: Take time, tap into eros / Connect with self & space / Ground yourself in love
3. SAVE: Affirm your commitment / Motivate through love / Cultivate change & community

Handout created by Lars Howlett / [DiscoverLabyrinths.com](http://DiscoverLabyrinths.com) / [FindLars@Gmail.com](mailto:FindLars@Gmail.com) / 415-810-4906