

STAGE 3: LEAVING THE LABYRINTH



On the journey out, allow yourself to feel replenished, balanced, and empowered by your experience. Travel slowly here too, to allow the new energies to take hold. Be absorbed in your self-revelation. In mystical terms, this stage is called "union," which means communing with and being absorbed in God. We consciously bring Truth into our being.

Following your exit from the labyrinth, spend some quiet time in meditation and reflection to integrate the experience. You may want to record your experience and insights in your journal.

Walking the labyrinth is an alchemical process that continues to unfold. Like other forms of inner work, the labyrinth opens one up to new flows of energies. Daily prayer and meditation also augment use of the labyrinth.

The experience of the labyrinth varies and ultimately depends on the openness and willingness of the participant to fully engage in the process. The gifts of the labyrinth may be big or small, but each is profound in its own way.

May your experience of the labyrinth pathway be profoundly enlightening to you. Here are some affirmations from Charles Fillmore's writings

that you might want to hold in mind as you make this spiritual journey.

When there is a concern with the outer world, these words can uplift: *My faith grows greater day by day, because it is planted in Truth, and through it the mountains of mortal error are moved into the sea of nothingness.*

When there is a desire for prosperity this affirmation may be helpful: *My mind is opened anew to the splendor of God's kingdom, and a flood of rich substance now pours itself into my affairs.*

For an experience of communion you might use this affirmation as a starting point: *Through the Spirit of truth I now partake of Christ substance and Christ life in holy communion, and I am made whole.*

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EXPLORING SPIRITUALITY
OUTSIDE THE BOX

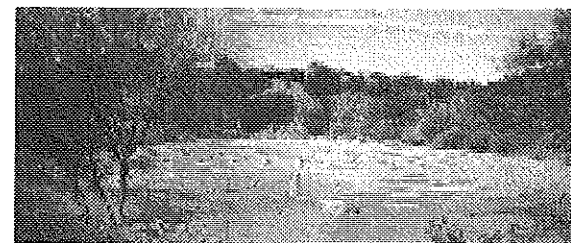
This pamphlet is based on information from *Unity Magazine*, March/April, 2002. *Traversing the Labyrinth* by Toni Boehm and *The Way of the Labyrinth* by Helen Curry.

Reprinted, Unity of Tucson
September 2008; October 2009



UNITY OF TUCSON'S LABYRINTH

LOCATED OFF
THE NORTH PARKING LOT



The **UNITY OF TUCSON LABYRINTH** was constructed in September of 2001 in order to share with our congregation and the community the insights and serenity which can result from a walking meditation.

Nestled in the Northeast foothills of the Catalina Mountains, you breathe in the beauty of the natural desert as you take your labyrinth journey.

Although its origins are mysterious and unknown, the labyrinth has been traced back, in the various forms that it has taken over the past several thousand years, to areas such as Greece (Crete and Knossos), Europe (France), Egypt, Indonesia, Peru, Iceland, and other cultures throughout the world.

Of local interest is the fact that Tohono O'Odham and Pima tribes of Southern Arizona wove baskets with labyrinth images from dried leaves and stems of desert plants.

The labyrinth is entered and walked in a circular fashion to its center and then exited by another circular route. When one fully engages in the walk of the labyrinth a quieting of the mind, an opening of the heart, and an awakening of wholeness ensues.

A labyrinth is not to be confused with a maze. A maze offers many possible paths to choose from in a complicated design. If an incorrect decision is made one may be led to a dead end. This can leave the traveler feeling bewildered, internally chaotic and distracted. The center path leads out. This represents the return to the world, in which the gifts of illumination are brought back to be manifested in life.

With no dead ends or wrong turns one follows the single path of the labyrinth that leads to the center. Thus it represents the mystery of the soul's journey to the mystic center. The path does not go directly to the center, but takes a meandering, circular route that enables the traveler to go through distinct shifts in consciousness along the way.

The labyrinth symbolizes the journey of regeneration and enlightenment found in many religious traditions. In Christianity, this journey is called "union with God." In Buddhism, it is "the path to enlightenment," and in Hinduism, "the path to freedom." In mythology, it is a symbol of humankind's dual nature, for one walks it through the active masculine aspect

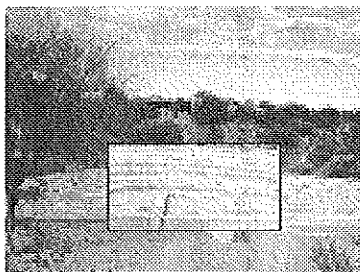
while being guided by one's more passive, intuitive feminine nature.

STAGE 1: ENTERING THE LABYRINTH



As you walk to the center, focus on the releasing, emptying, and quieting of negative thoughts. Relinquish things you have sought to control and worries that control you. Surrender yourself to the journey. If annoying thoughts keep intruding, gently see them being swept away, do not try to resist them or dismiss them. Travel the path slowly. Have no expectations; keep an open mind and an open heart to receive the gifts of the labyrinth. Openness is a powerful tool for generating energy.

In mystical terms, this stage is called "purgation," which is the release of all things that block communication with our higher power. We cannot hear Truth when our minds are busy.



STAGE 2: ENTERING THE CENTER

Many times reaching the center of the labyrinth comes as a surprise because of the winding, circular path. You don't know you're there until you're there, which reflects what oftentimes happens in life. The key to realizing life's potential is to be present to the moment. Most of us spend time dwelling on the past or thinking about the future. While both activities do have their value at appropriate times, they limit our horizon and prevent us from unleashing new transformative energies. Only when we are present to the moment are we in contact with our full creative potential.

Once in the center of the labyrinth, be consciously present to the moment. Do not be in a hurry to leave, for it is here that insight, the "aha" of creativity begins to unfold in order to make itself consciously known to you. These "aha's" may come immediately or they may take several days to unravel.

When you are consciously present, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically, what happens is that you allow the gifts of the labyrinth to begin their journey to conscious awareness. These gifts may include insight into a problem or situation; new perspective; creative ideas; and feelings of empowerment, integration, receptivity, authenticity, and self-confidence.

In mystical terms, this stage is called "illumination," which is the knowing of the sacred self within. We hear Truth.