

Daily Meditation 08-31-22

Walking the Labyrinth: A Spiritual Practice with the Four Paths

Good morning.

In today's meditation we are invited to walk the labyrinth... walk the labyrinth using the four pillars of creation spirituality. Traditionally, the labyrinth has built itself around three paths, paths of reception, and paths of release, and paths of return.

But by bringing the four-path consciousness to the labyrinth, I think we bless that movement in a new way, and the labyrinth blesses us. And I give credit here to Mary Ann Wamhoff, who has made this application of the four paths to the labyrinth.

The first path, which is not usually mentioned in the labyrinth practice, is to pay attention to the whole circle itself. The labyrinth is a circle that spirals within a circle. And so to walk the whole circle -- that is Path One, and to realize that we have here, as you do in any circle, an archetype and an awareness of the curved nature of the universe.

And so by walking the outside of the circle of the labyrinth, you are honoring the whole, the whole universe. And it is a time to take in and celebrate the *via positiva*, therefore, and all that makes the whole possible: the minerals and the fauna, the ancestors, the stars, the original fireball, the angels... all that connect to the whole and make it a path of gratitude... gratitude... because it is the whole that brings us here.

And then in Path Two, now we enter the labyrinth, and we follow the teaching of release and of the *via negativa*, paying attention to the need to let go, whether that be entering into grief and sadness, anger, depression, whatever we are feeling, but to enter into it enough so that we give it the attention it needs so that we can move beyond it.

And then when you arrive at the center of the labyrinth, that is where you stay still for the reception of the spirit, the spirit being the spirit of creativity. This is the *via creativa*, and be there, be there still and receive the spirit of creativity. Remember what Thomas Aquinas says: That the same spirit that hovered over the waters at the beginning of creation (we may say hovered over the fireball in the new creation story) is the same spirit that hovers over the mind of the artist at work, says Thomas Aquinas.

So the center of the labyrinth is especially important. And of course it is also that pivot of creativity.

And then you spiral out again, and spiraling out you are moving along the path of the *via transformativa*: What are the ways that the spirit is telling you you can contribute to creating a more just, more compassionate, or more healed, and a more celebrative world and society? So you call on spirit as you leave the labyrinth, to tell you what the next stages in life are.

So all this is a marvelous way. And I honor Mary Ann for coming up with this, a marvelous way to employ the traditional labyrinth walk within the powerful and archetypal four paths of the Creation Spirituality journey.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.