

Recite poetry

Say a prayer

Sing or chant mantras

Try keeping in step with the rhythm of a poem or prayer. Can you repeat the poem so your last step to the goal coincides with the last word? Concentrate only on your steps on the way out. How do you feel? Do you need to repeat the whole process or have you gained some help from the experience? Now sit down with your eyes closed and think about the whole meaning of walking the labyrinth.



Regard a labyrinth walk as a kind of pilgrimage. Carry a token or symbol. This may be a photograph of a friend or loved one or even simply some sort of object that has special significance to the walker like a pocket watch or jewellery that used to belong to a grandparent. Religious symbols might be images, icons, sacred texts, or crucifixes. Some people believe crystals and other materials have special properties.

Consider the world



Reflect on the harm we cause to the whole world, its countries and seas and how we can help. Realise that although we are only one person, just as a stone thrown into the water forms many ripples so our own tiny actions influence the wider world. If we use less power in our home, recycle more, smile at one more person or do one more good turn then our actions help the planet and all of humanity. Ponder these things as you enter the labyrinth. At the goal, decide what you could do personally. On the way out make a vow to do one new thing each day. Notice how daily changes in your life affect the prospects of other people.

3. Labyrinths of meditation and spiritual experience for individuals

Walking a labyrinth can be a form of meditation that allows you to clear your mind of irrelevant or negative thoughts and to focus on what is important. Find a form of meditation that works for you personally. It can be religious, for example thinking about Jesus' teachings from the Bible, or secular.



For more information visit
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**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

Walking a spiritual journey

Many people find that meditation works best when thinking of a journey in three stages. As you journey towards the goal, think about why you are there. As you enter, become quiet and think about what is on your mind. There is plenty of time – it's a long walk. Perhaps pause and reflect on the path as you walk. At the goal, you stop and think about yourself, about the real **you** that people don't see. You have time to work out how **you** want to deal with it. On the return journey decide what you are going to do differently when you are back in the real world. You don't need to be religious to make the trip, but it can be a spiritual experience.



A labyrinth can be used as an outdoor place of worship and reflection and is therefore suitable for any religious or secular use. Do you find yourself grappling with fundamental religious, spiritual or philosophical questions? Contemplation while walking a labyrinth provides solutions or pointers as to the direction to take. You may simply wish to ponder the meaning of life, "Why are we here?" "Where do we fit into the grand scheme of things?"

Giving thanks

Solving a problem

Seeking guidance

Walking a labyrinth gives plenty of time to think and ponder. The bigger the concern the more slowly the pathway can be walked, thus giving more thinking time to provide an answer. Often a solution or pointer comes in the first circuit but sometimes it takes several walks. Persist and walk the labyrinth often.



A labyrinth walk can also be used to express thanks after recovery from an illness, either one's own or that of a friend or relative. Or it can simply be a way of expressing gratitude for a contented and fulfilling life. Some people do the walk simply because they enjoy walking.



Releasing a fear

Grieving a loss

Resolving a conflict

When anxious or stressed, for whatever reason, a labyrinth walk can be the ideal way to release pent-up emotions. Worries about an impending job interview, exam results, a forthcoming driving test or going into hospital for major surgery are all things that can result in a great deal of stress and sleepless nights. Instead of reaching for tranquilisers, a labyrinth walk can be a beneficial, drug free way of combating stress, anxiety, or persistent worries. For this reason, it may also be helpful for those trying give up smoking and other habits.

