



Sholom Sacred Path Legacy

The Labyrinth is a Sacred Path stretched out before you and is found in various forms, traditions, and cultures around the world. For some, “the walk into” is for emptying, “the time in the middle” is for centering the spirit and listening, and “the walk out” is for reflection. However, we welcome you to experience it in your own unique way, because we are all unique, just as this Labyrinth is unique.

This Labyrinth has only one path, so there are no tricks to it and no dead ends. The path winds throughout the space and becomes a mirror for where we are in our lives. It can touch our sorrows and release our joys; it invites us into it with an open mind and an open heart.

The Sacred Paths now come in many formats and sizes. Shapes of Labyrinths include spirals, circles, crosses, stars, polygons, roses, and knots. The two most common designs are a seven-circuit and an eleven-circuit circle. A well-known Labyrinth is a replica of a sacred walk designed in the Middle Ages (1220) for the floor of *Chartres Cathedral* in France. It was used to symbolize the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to be a *walking meditation* to reflect on life and to be a sacred space creating order in times of chaos.

They can range as large as this one or small enough to put in one’s lap. They are made out of a variety of materials, among them brick, tile, terrazzo, water, light, and candles. Additionally, the meaning of walking the Labyrinth has changed over time and includes many potential meanings.

Virginia Westbury, in “Labyrinths: From Ancient Paths to Modern Art Forms,” notes that possibly the “enduring truth about Labyrinths – through all the centuries of changes – is that they contain no one truth.” And, “ambiguity, tolerance, acceptance of many beliefs, of variety and change are ironically the messages of a pathway which is not multiple but singular.” Westbury writes that such a “contradiction is the secret of the Labyrinth. In the one is the many and in the many, one.”

Walking the Labyrinth for many thousands over the world has become a peaceful, contemplative symbol and metaphor of living life. Life can be viewed as a Sacred Path, leading us inward for spiritual nurture and outward into service; the Labyrinth symbolizes both these movements.

As one walks along the Labyrinth one moves in and out, often wondering what is accomplished. This feeling of *ambiguity* is not that different from our experience with life because many of us feel that as we move along in life we feel its’ ambiguity. Life is as much about living questions as getting answers, much remains unclear and beyond our comprehension. Secondly, we may experience tolerance. Sholom comes within a diverse community only through respecting all that is respectable in another’s opinions; we do not have to agree but remaining open to “what is”, is the soil for love and peace to flourish. As one walks the Sacred Path here in Sholom Park and as one walks sacredly in America as our Founding Fathers intended, one may experience the *acceptance of many beliefs* – a humble acknowledgement that many ideas reflect the Whole Truth, which we all seek. As one moves through Sholom Park, walks through the Labyrinth, or travels across America and the world, one may also notice variety. All nature manifests a creation rich in *variety* and complexity: we are each a unique and divine expression of that diversity of life. In reflective walking, either of life or a Sacred Path, there is also an abundance of *change*. Everything is undergoing constant and irrepressible change. This can be humbling, but can also be experienced as a very freeing feeling that allows us to grow into all we can be.

The Sacred Path and introflection of noticing nature and bringing its powerful lessons into our

unconscious and conscious beings can provide us a rich, peaceful experience in the noisy confusion of life. We wish you peace, joy, kindness, and love as you move softly through this place that was created in the land, before all the creatures who moved here before us were aware of time. Please return with a friend and share its mystery.

Before Walking

Relax – clear your mind and become aware of your breathing.

Be intentional and notice the quietness.

Give yourself permission to be as you are, as you walk and accept others as they are.

We are all on the same path, but at different turning points.

Wait one minute to enter if someone has just begun his or her journey.

While waiting look around in the trees and notice something you wouldn’t normally notice.

The Journey In

Focus on the pathway and your footsteps.

Give attention to your innermost thoughts.

Listen to your body.

Examine the quality of your stage in life.

Explore your dreams, hopes and expectations.

Notice all the nature around you.

Pause at the posted signs if you like and let some of the questions resonate into your soul.

Stop and rest anytime you like as others may pass along.

Time at the Center

Rest a few minutes. Sit if you wish at all the different views.

Reflect on the experience walking in. What was it like for you to slow down?

Open your body, mind and soul to the extraordinary.

If you like, spend some time with yourself and listen, truly listen to your soul.

The Journey Out

Consider the implications of your renewed thoughts and feelings for your daily life and work.

Listen to the sounds of the brook.

Pause at some of the signs and reflect.

Time at the End

Take a quiet moment to reflect on the meaning of your whole experience.

Write or possibly share your thoughts and feelings with a friend.

Please take some of this feeling with you through the remainder of Sholom Park, Marion County, Florida, America, and wherever life may take you.

Sholom, Dr. J. Daniel Robinson

