



Photo: [Laura Foster Nicholson](#)

Labyrinths Matter Newsletter



Ancestor Spirit Labyrinth

Classic Cretan Design
Modified by Geoff Rodda.

“The labyrinth is a beautiful way to bring the spirit back to the shared land. Congratulations to the builder for the vision”.
Visitors from Uluru.

Reflections Journal 2007

Next Edition: Disabilities

Finger Labyrinths

The history, science, practice, and transformation.



Collage Labyrinth Meditation Video.

Play

“Creativity is a radical necessity not a luxury”
Jean Houston.

[Catherine Anderson Studio](#)

We all need a special place, a kind of inner sanctuary, to slow down and nourish our body, mind and spirit. Take a couple of minutes to watch this video and contemplate the next step in your labyrinth journey.

[Join online collage labyrinth workshop](#)

Note: [\\$US 10 discount for Australian Registrations](#)



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Intuipath® Finger labyrinth and Brain Synchrony.

Neal Harris LCPC, DAPA.s – Relax4Life
Interview by Tina Christensen.



20 years ago Neal Harris was pioneering finger labyrinths in therapeutic settings in the USA.

What did he learn on the way? [Website](#)

About Neal Harris.

Neal Harris is the creator of the Intuipath®, a patented, mirror-image, 2-person, 2-handed labyrinth design.

He is also a licensed clinical professional counsellor and a diplomat of the American Psychotherapy Association with a master's degree in counselling psychology. He has been a counsellor for 31 years as well as a Reiki practitioner for 29 years, 18 of which has also been as a teacher.

Neal has used hand labyrinths in various therapeutic situations for the last 20 years. Whilst working at the Cancer Treatment Centre (where he was helping callers with their cancer treatment options- both traditional and complementary) in a quiet moment, his supervisor tossed a copy of *New Age Magazine* on his desk and said... "it was ok for me to read through it while the phones weren't ringing." Neal came upon an article about labyrinths with particular mention of Lauren Artress and her pioneering work with labyrinths at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

Neal shared how "as I read through the article, I was captivated by what was discussed about labyrinths and I began daydreaming about having one at my home and how wonderful it

would be sitting with folks and discussing their experiences after they'd walked it. A short time later, I had laid out my first walking labyrinth (a 20' Classical/Cretan design) in twine with household bricks laid atop the twine. It reminded me of pictures I'd seen of Stonehenge and I was very proud of this accomplishment and I felt very strongly, that I had only just begun."

Today he still walks the three permanent labyrinths on his property at the Relax4Life Centre. However, he admitted that he uses the finger variety much more often now.

Asking how he first introduced the labyrinth in therapeutic settings, Neal replied that he'd been a mind-body consultant for a local hospital and was asked to lead a workshop series/discussion group, based on Dr. Bernie Siegel's groundbreaking emotional healing work, for patients with terminal cancer.

He decided to introduce a finger labyrinth (Chartres design) drawn on paper to the group. Asking them to take the design home, colour it in as their homework and bring it back the following week.

"Throughout that week, I wondered if I'd made a mistake in giving this assignment (folks with a short time to live spending time colouring). When we gathered together again, I asked the group members to share their creations

and if possible, speak to why they felt drawn to colour the paths and centre the way they did. There were many different reasons offered for why particular colors had been used in different places on the design, but what struck me was that every single person in the group of nine, coloured the centre of the Chartres a bright yellow; the colour of hope. This made a great deal of sense to me as these folks were all considered terminal, yet they came out each week to take part in this group/workshop, which must have meant they were all hopeful that something could be done to heal their lives while they still had time."

After this group experience, Neal became curious and introduced the paper finger labyrinth to other patient populations: Cardiac Rehabilitation, Diabetes, Fibro-myalgia and those suffering from emotional or physical pain. The paper labyrinths worked with all populations (but not all people) to help relax and diminish pain. A further refinement came when he started introducing wooden finger labyrinths.

The progression to developing the Intuipath® labyrinth design came later and has a story to it as well.

"As a founding member of the Labyrinth Society, I became friendly with one of the more experienced founding members, Kay Torrez. She shared with me her vision for a "Labyrinth Pharmacy"

Intuipath® Finger Labyrinth and Brain Synchrony

Cont'd P2

(a concept wherein folks would walk in particular sequences, her 5 desert labyrinths that were each designed for a specific healing purpose). Along these lines, she put, side by side, two Classical/Cretan paper finger labyrinths (whose paths were coloured-in based on the 7 major chakras) on one sheet of paper. The results of moving both hands at the same time through her colored double labyrinths were powerful in helping folks relax. I took her work a step further and decided to offer both Classical/Cretan and Chartres double designs in routed wood so a chosen "walking" finger from each hand would easily rest in the path and not fall out. Of course, the added benefit to having a groove for each finger was that folks could run a finger from both hands through the double finger labyrinth and choose to close their eyes to make the experience even more introspective than when keeping their eyes open to traverse the path; something not easily accomplished when using a walking labyrinth and following the path with one's feet."

Neal has applied this design in private therapy sessions to enhance the trust built between counsellor and client. By both therapist and client using the design together, it breeds a sense of equality between them and in this way, it gently breaks down the barriers to trust. Trust is an essential component to therapeutic progress and without it, weeks and months can go by without much change.

Neal explained how when he went through graduate school in psychology, the thinking was to keep an interpersonal, professional distance between

therapist and client. Yet it has been his experience that this artificial need to keep a strong professional distance from his clients (allowing the therapist to maintain the illusion, when it comes to his clients, that I'm OK, you're not) is partly the reason why it can take so long for clients to trust the counsellor and the therapeutic process in general. In other words, "We as therapists can pretend that we don't have problems in our own lives, and that our clients are the only ones that have problems."

Neal had discovered a very powerful way to show clients that they were not lesser than their therapists, just manifesting different problems or even similar problems, but to a greater degree. This discovery was to have the therapist use half of a double finger labyrinth design at the same time the client was using his half.

According to Neal, "This lets the client know that the therapist isn't asking the client to do anything that the therapist wouldn't do. This simple, symbolic act on the part of the therapist, topples the pedestal and ultimately can lead to a more rapid development of trust, thereby leading to more rapid issue resolution."

"I have also found that when 2 people (client-therapist, husband-wife, brother-sister, boss-employee, etc.) are using a double labyrinth design and thereby connected to each other through the same piece of wood (or plastic), energetically, they begin to entrain to each other's wavelength. This in turn, makes dispute resolution, problem solving, and communication in general a much easier task to engage in as each are more open to seeing the other's point of view." "The act of finger walking his half of the design

is very relaxing, especially since each can engage in the task and simply stay open to listening to one another without making eye contact necessary as they traverse their respective labyrinth pattern."

But it gets better. The idea of conflict resolution becoming easier is in part a symptom of a bigger picture - the healing power of changing brainwave activity which can lead to 'brain synchrony'.

Neal explained how a continuous labyrinth path, where a finger from both hands are moving through their own pattern, is no different than the conclusions made by occupational and physical therapy research from the last century. Research showed how children with developmental delays can lessen these delays when using both sides of their body simultaneously, such as with crawling. The act of crawling (like a double finger labyrinth pattern), causes both sides of the brain to become active; the brain benefits by forming new and healthy pathways, which leads to the body becoming more capable of accomplishing developmental norms (Ayres, 1979).

As an example, in the case of someone who has suffered a stroke, the more healthy side of the brain helps take over the damaged side or portion of the brain, and forms new neural pathways often leading to a return to partial or full function (neuroplasticity) and self-healing.

A double handed labyrinth which has both hands moving simultaneously through the pattern is organically altering brainwaves; from the more active mind - Beta brainwave state, to a more relaxed mind - Alpha brainwave state.

As the Alpha state is achieved, there is a corresponding increase in the balance between left and right hemispheres of the brain. Neal went on to explain that this allows the whole brain greater ability to organize sensory information, leading to greater adaptive responses by the individual. This is called brain synchrony (Fehmi & Fritz, 1980).

BRAIN SYNCHRONY is a state where both sides of the brain are activated and working together. This physiological and neurological state most easily occurs when our brains shift from an active mind state, Beta wave activity, to a more relaxed mind, Alpha wave activity. When this occurs, there is the corresponding increase in balance between left and right hemispheres. Synchrony is frequently seen in those who meditate and it leads to a more balanced way to look at our world and solve issues that arise.

This more balanced outlook comes from the rational side of our brain (left hemisphere), working in tandem with our creative, intuitive side (right hemisphere) to come up with solutions that are truly creative and adaptive and that can be carried out in the real world. Without the right hemisphere involved in decision-making, our solutions are hampered by what we think is logical. Without our left hemisphere involved in decision-making, our solutions have little real world value.

Put the two together and you have a wonderful opportunity to think outside the box, with real world application potential (true innovation).

I then wondered is this specific to the double labyrinth pattern or could any design achieve the same result?

Neal's reply was to reflect on the importance of keeping in mind that brain synchrony can be accomplished in a number of ways, by engaging various mental disciplines, such as meditation.

However, in his experience, the easiest way to create that synchrony is by simply using the Intuipath® pattern with a finger from both hands simultaneously.

In working with labyrinths for the past 20 years, he believes "the simple truth that keeps showing itself is that their paths seem to calm folks down. My guess as to why that is, is that with no blind alleys or dead ends to deal with, the conscious mind gets a bit bored. Through this boredom of having no choices in direction to be made, it gives up the reigns of control and the more creative, intuitive subconscious mind comes out to play. When this occurs, folks become more aware of their inner wisdom and the opportunity then for changing unproductive ways of thinking and being become more reachable as new insights present themselves from deep within the labyrinth user."

When he was asked if a therapist would need to be familiar with labyrinth walking before using an Intuipath® with clients he said not necessarily.

While helpful, it isn't imperative that a practitioner has experience with labyrinth walking before using an Intuipath.® He has written a guide

for using the Intuipath® in a therapeutic setting that would assist both first time and long time users alike.

"I have found that those therapists who have tried out an Intuipath, let's say through a talk I've given at a conference, are much more likely to want to incorporate this tool into their practices.

It comes down to how open the therapist is in trying something new that doesn't fit into a particular mode of therapy or therapeutic school of practice."

When asked how walking the labyrinth impacted his own life, Neal replied: "it has taught me many things. Probably the biggest is to be less judgmental with others. Early on, I was taking a 20' 8" - walled Roman labyrinth design (which I made out of sewn-together, king-sized sheets) to various colleges and hospitals. One time, I was teaching about labyrinths at a college and it was time for the students to walk it. I would typically follow the last student in, and make my way to the centre with all of them. I watched as some students appeared to be going the wrong way and my thought was "those poor folks, they got turned around and will not get to the centre." In the next moment, I found myself right back at the entrance; I got turned around, not they. My reaction was immediate. I became very angry at myself for my judgment of these folks.

The following week, I was with a different group of students and the same thing happened...this time, however, I started laughing at myself and realized that just because someone doesn't appear to be moving in the direction I'm moving in, doesn't mean that their direction is incorrect.

I've since taken that lesson into my everyday life and it has made me a more flexible, less judgmental individual. This is just one example of how the labyrinth journey has truly shown itself to be a metaphor for my life's journey."

Did you find the labyrinth or did it find you?



"That's a chicken or the egg question. When the magazine article showed up on my desk, I wasn't actively looking for another way to help myself and others with relaxation and spiritual connection. I can honestly say (though it sounds arrogant) that I thought I had that aspect of my teaching and my life pretty well nailed down.

However, at a deeper, unconscious level, who's to say whether I drew that magazine and the labyrinth experience to my desk that day or not."

Finally, if you had your time again discovering, walking, creating with the labyrinth, would you do things differently? If so, what?

"My wife and I have taken this journey together. We've had many good ideas and products that we've brought to fruition and the marketplace and we've had many really lousy ideas and products (that seemed really good at the time) that we've brought to fruition that are still gracing our shelves. The trick is to keep moving forward.

In hindsight, every decision, every product has moved the process along. I still have many opportunities to make good and bad choices daily based on my level of energetic and real-world understanding. I have realised that making these decisions is no different than what Lauren Artress wrote many years ago about how the labyrinth journey mirrors life. It, like our journey through life, allows us to always make a new choice or turn (when we hit a perceived brick wall or dead end) without the fear of being stuck there without options. I continue to feel free to make mistakes and learn from them.

The same level of care and customer service I give to my counselling clients is mirrored in my labyrinth business. In this way, whether I'm wearing a teaching hat, providing a counselling or energy work session, donning my retailer's hat with labyrinth customers or helping a couple develop a wedding ceremony, it's all the same. It's an extension of the kind of therapist and person the labyrinth experience has grown me into.

Therefore, I wouldn't change a thing.

Chapains' Global Conference, Bendigo, Victoria.

Digging, Dialogue & Diversity.
For Chaplains in Higher Education
La Trobe University.

Do you have a finger labyrinth that we could borrow, or can you suggest possible sources?

The request for a loan of finger labyrinths comes from Judy Redmand, Chaplaincy/Team Coordinator at the La Trobe and Charles Sturt universities. Judy is part of the organising committee for the global conference of university chaplains to be held 11-15th July 2016.

Cassie Howe, who is running a workshop on labyrinths at the global conference, wishes to provide participants with an opportunity to experience 'walking' a finger labyrinth. Cassie, who is travelling from England, is not keen on adding them to her luggage.

I'm happy to be the point of contact and collection point and ensure the safe return.

Christina Rowntree
Veriditas Certified Facilitator [Email](#).



Videos about finger labyrinths.

- ['Walking' a double handed classic labyrinth.](#)
- ['Walking' a single handed chartres labyrinth.](#)
- [Making a plaster classic finger labyrinth.](#)
- [Join online collage finger labyrinth workshop.](#)



Videos power of music

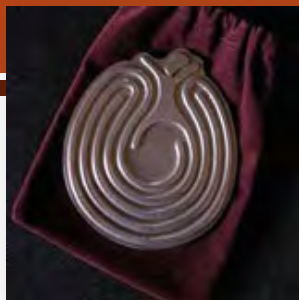
Music on the brain

A Catalyst Program with Dr. Maggie Haertsch. The program illustrates the importance of music in your life and how it can transform both your physical and psychological feelings of well-being.

Chopin, Nocturne in E-flat Major Opus 9, No. 2
by Frederic Chopin, performed by Stephen Malinowsk. This music also has an animated score that can be used for open eyed meditation.

A Labyrinth of Experience.

Lisa Gidlow Moriarty, Paths of Peace.
An Interview by Tina Christensen.



“A benefit of hand labyrinths is the ability to use two side-by-side. One with each hand can offer a wonderful, brain-balancing experience not available walking a single path.”

Lisa Moriarty is a woman working with the labyrinth and successfully weaving her love of fine art and spirituality into the fabric of her daily life and career.

As an advanced Veriditas Facilitator and having trained with Robert Ferre, she leads labyrinth related events and collaborates for and with others.

Lisa's lifelong interest in labyrinths and mazes began as play and games in childhood, transitioning into creativity and spiritual practice in the late 1990s, through artwork and prayer and now as her full-time profession.

Walking a labyrinth is part of her daily spiritual practice.

“I begin each morning tracing a small ceramic labyrinth that I keep in my kitchen. While the coffee is steeping, my spirit is awakening.”

When asked how labyrinth walking has impacted her life personally and professionally, Lisa spoke about a deepened awareness of global connection.

“I am very aware that others around the world are using labyrinths. It also grounds me, especially in walking outdoor labyrinths, as it connects me to the energy of the earth; I have a deepened sense of ancestral connection too as I know labyrinths have been used for thousands of years of human existence, she said, “I have fifteen labyrinths on my home property.”

Professionally, Lisa finds her personal use of labyrinths informs creating labyrinths for others; in designing events, experiences, retreats, and workshops. She said, “I find I must regularly use labyrinths myself for deeper awareness and understanding so I can create and teach about them. Using the labyrinth often opens up new methods and ideas or loosens creative blocks.”

As she uses both hand and foot labyrinths, I asked Lisa if a hand labyrinth was different to walking a labyrinth by foot?

“Yes and no. There is certainly a tactile experience present in using a finger labyrinth that is unlike walking a full-size labyrinth.”



“The nerve endings in our fingers are sensitive to touch, so tracing the pathways is sensual.”

Lisa talks about the slight blemishes or variations in wood grain or fabric weave, etc. being easily detected and noticing them offers the walker a metaphor for what's happening in their life/situation, just as walking by foot can. A benefit of many hand labyrinths is they're designed so that one can close one's eyes while tracing the paths. Using a labyrinth with eyes shut can force a slower, more concentrated pace and direct one's awareness internally,

deepening the experience. Ideally, an eyes closed walk is coupled with using a finger on the non-dominant hand.

Another benefit of hand labyrinths is the ability to use two side by side, one with each hand which can offer a wonderful, brain-balancing experience not available by walking a single path (refer article by Neil Harris on brain synchrony page 4).

She cited the example of her husband recovering from a stroke, which affected the right side of his brain.

“He was initially unable to open his clenched fist or turn his hand over independently. I brought a hand labyrinth to his hospital room and each day he would attempt to trace the paths. At first, he had to use his left hand to grasp the finger of his right hand and direct it along the grooved path, and could only manage a short distance.”

“Using the labyrinth each day helped him to focus, to challenge himself and also mark or demonstrate his progress.”

A Labyrinth of Experience.

Cont'd P6

Over the course of several weeks, he improved his ability to trace the paths with his right hand without assistance, and moved on to use a double labyrinth, tracing with both hands at once. This challenged him to move both hands at the same pace and also had the rehabilitative function of not only re-training the damaged area of the brain but cross-training his brain to function in a new way."

Another application for hand labyrinths is in a school setting, where lots of activity and energy can be difficult to manage for the most relaxed of students, let alone those whose learning style and needs do not match mainstream education.

"I have been recently working with a school designed for and serving children with behavioural/cognitive challenges and autism diagnoses. The initial use of walking labyrinths, both indoor and out, are so beneficial as focus and calming techniques, that the school asked me to paint one on the wall of their calming room. This large wall labyrinth is traced by hand and requires the child to use full circular arm movements, thus embodying the experience and enhancing the calming opportunity.

Additionally, soon each of the 125 students will have or make a table top canvas labyrinth that they can keep in their desk or backpack."

So which is better, a hand or foot labyrinth?

It seems the answer is neither. "Space and ambulation ability can be major factors in determining which kind of labyrinth is most suitable." Lisa suggests that if physical space is lacking, substituting with a hand labyrinth is sensible.

For people challenged in their ability to walk — be it bedridden, wheelchair bound, balance or stamina challenged, etc — a hand labyrinth can be a very welcome and empowering alternative.

There is growing academic interest in how labyrinths can be utilised to manage dementia, attention deficits and autism. Not surprisingly then, they are showing up in hospital and healthcare settings.

They are being added to meditation rooms, libraries, and other spaces where people go for quiet contemplation. **Hand labyrinths offer not only a personal experience but also a private one.**

By contrast, Lisa explains, large walking patterns, whether portable, temporary or permanent, allow more than one person to experience the labyrinth at a time.

This makes them suitable for group experiences, retreats, themed events, and conferences. Walking labyrinths can be lovely additions

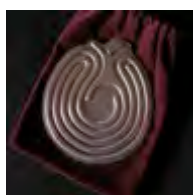
to healing gardens, city parks, school playgrounds, church yards, retreat centres and private gardens. "Each placement can offer a different use and experience, whether walking alone or with others," she says. **"Foot walking size labyrinths, can be adapted for ceremonies, celebrations, conflict resolution, and other activities involving two or more people."**

And on occasions, the two are used simultaneously. "Sometimes people will finger-trace a hand labyrinth to mirror the walk of another who is using a foot labyrinth at the same time. This experience can offer a great connection and bonding between the two persons."

"Regardless of whether the paths are ceramic, cloth, sand, wood, or some other material, what remains common to all is the overall calming effect."

Finally, I ask did you find the labyrinth or did it find you? "I still have the wooden labyrinth game that was the only item on my 12th birthday wish list so, I certainly know I consciously sought out labyrinths for years and now labyrinths will appear for me when I seem to need them the most."

So, I have to say "it is a bit of both."



The story of dancing woman.

About Lisa Gidlow Moriarty

A creative artist/designer
Spiritual Director
Master labyrinth maker
Veriditas Certified Advanced Labyrinth Facilitator
Mediator for Peacekeeping Circle Keeper
Bachelor Fine Arts degree in design.
About Paths of Peace Labyrinth



Kids Intuipath® Corner.

Neal Harris – Relax4Life

Research: This includes a four year study of ADHD.

How the Intuipath® finger labyrinth can be used by children for problem solving.

Kid's Intuipath® Corner
by Neal Harris LCPC, DAPA.

Intuipath® is designed to help you relax and focus your attention on a specific item so you feel better and more relaxed about it. This can sometimes clear a path and open doors to new opportunities or at a minimum, change your thinking about a situation. For example:

If you are nervous:
and scared about a test you have to take, moving your fingers through the Intuipath® beforehand can relax you so that your focus is on answering the questions to the best of your ability rather than worrying about the grade you'll make.

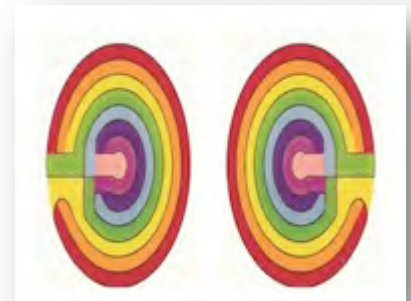


Coordination:

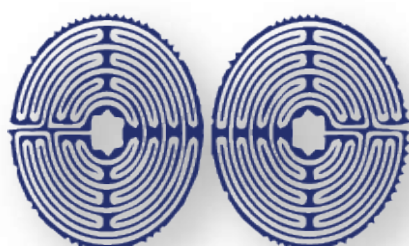
Do you like playing sports but your body doesn't seem able to play them as well as some of the other kids you watch? Try using the Intuipath® - one to several times a day. Using both hands together on the Intuipath® makes both sides of your brain work better together, which can help with how coordinated your body is and feels during sports.

Concentrate:

You have to study or finish homework before playing a game or watching TV, but you find it hard to keep your attention on your studies. Take a break and move a finger from both hands through the Intuipath® for a few minutes. Then go back to studying or doing homework and see how much easier it is to do. The Intuipath® makes both sides of your brain work better together, so concentration becomes easier - try it!



Download and colour your own Chartres Intuipath® double finger labyrinth design.



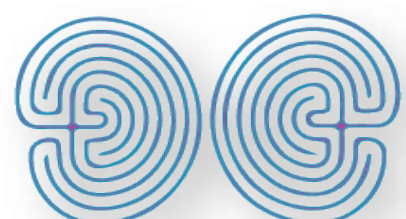
Kid's Intuipath® Corner

Other ways children can use the Intuipath® finger labyrinth include:

- Relaxing when they are studying
- Feeling better when they are sad or scared etc.

Download single handed finger labyrinths

Download and colour your own Classic Cretan Intuipath® double finger labyrinth design.



Little Miracle On The Path.

By Linda Mikell. Secretary to the Veriditas Council.
Linda is NE Regional Representative. [Website](#)



This month's story began as an industrial relations issue, 15 years ago at a mental health organisation no less!

The story is from Lorraine Rodda. Lorraine is the Australian Regional Representative for The Labyrinth Society and Veriditas. The story began when Lorraine was active in the internal audit of a mental health organisation. That audit exposed fraud by the business manager. Unfortunately for Lorraine and others, due to extenuating and personal circumstances, the manager kept her job. Seven years later, when the Director left, that manager took that opportunity to sack the in-house accountant. (He later won an unfair dismissal case against her). The manager's overloading, bullying, belittling, undermining, and vindictiveness increased to such a level that by the end of 2005, Lorraine finally 'cracked'. Incapable of working, the manager directed her to take sick leave. She was devastated. Lorraine enjoyed her job, and now she could no longer work there nor ironically trust her employer with her mental health. A WorkCover claim was made against the manager and the organisation. This is Lorraine's Little Miracle . . .

Developing a relaxed response to anxiety 'Using a dual handed finger labyrinth before attending court'.

As I was taking the WorkCover claim to the office, not only did I feel extremely unsafe; the experience became a living nightmare. The closer I came to the building, the more distressed I became. My body felt weak, I was trembling, my heart was racing. The manager's face filled the entire sky.

Seven years on, at last, my case was being heard in court. The court wanted copies of the labyrinth newsletters I had produced for the past four years. But, why did they want these? **I felt my labyrinth walking, and my considerable efforts doing 'work-like' activity would be unfairly judged.** I became anxious and distressed and was vomiting.

The newsletter was the reason I got up each day. It gave me a focus as well as a challenge. I had developed dyslexia-type problems. I would mean 'review' but type 'revue' or mean 'many' and type 'mane' or write the opposite word to the one intended. Sometimes, I did not even know what letters to use. But, with proofreading support, I got through. All this combined with confusion, short-term memory problems, and difficulties with information retrieval made producing the newsletters both challenging but also rewarding.

On the morning of the court hearing, my anxiety levels rose dramatically. I was tearful, nauseous and fearful I could not cope! My husband suggested I meditate.

'Walking' my 'finger' labyrinth as music played, I began visualising the courtroom. My first thought was, "I'm being penalised – just for doing my job!" As I continued to move around the 'finger' labyrinth physically and around the courtroom in my mind, I realised everyone there would just be doing his or her job. "So what was my job?"

It was an enormous relief when I realised my job was simple. I just needed to say what happened at work, how I felt, and the effect this had on my health, marriage and family life. I knew from that walk, the outcome of the court hearing was in my hands, rather than the filtering of my experiences through doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, lawyers, and 'ready for work assessments. **I felt empowered.**

The impact of that 'walk' was not only immediate, it was also life changing. It was my little miracle! I no longer felt nauseous; I no longer felt vulnerable, and I had nothing to fear from any forensic examination of my labyrinth activities. In fact, as I happily walked towards the court, I discovered I was walking to the rhythm of my meditation music. (See page 11)

This was incredible! I was living the 'relaxed response to my anxiety' that my psychiatrist had tutored me in over the past year. In that meditation walk, I had let go of being the victim; I gained insights about the court experience and also my responsibility

Little Miracle On The Path

Cont'd P9

The Judge got it too! Ironically, my two-hour court appearance started with the judge asking me about labyrinths. When I explained what happened that morning, he 'got it.' In fact, when the WorkCover QC challenged me about the year I had without psychiatric care, the judge answered for me. He said, "That was when you were doing your walking meditation – wasn't it?" "Fantastic!" I thought. The judge had done his homework. However, my elation very quickly dissolved when the Judge asked me to recall a recent experience when I stood outside my former workplace.

Suddenly, I was crying and unable to speak. The contrast was startling. One minute I was confidently responding to the judge and the challenges from the WorkCover QC, and then I was incapable of proceeding. The judge said he 'understood' that the experience was very painful to recall, and he would not question me any further. He then directed the WorkCover QC to settle the case. He said, "Otherwise it will become a civil matter." Thankfully the case was settled the next day. The business manager has since left the organisation - **under escort!**

Lorraine Rodda

Reflection: On my little miracle on the path . . . Taking the next steps to wellness.

It is hard for me to imagine how I would have coped, on that day in court, if my psychiatrist had not included the finger labyrinth in my daily therapy. It was this together with my selection of music, and the walking visualisation that made an enormous difference in how I viewed the situation I was facing.

It is now evident that the judge called for the newsletters because he wanted to understand the labyrinth experience and assess my contributions. Some of my articles not only reflected my journey towards wellness through labyrinth walking, but they clarified how, by understanding the metaphor of labyrinth walking that transformation could occur, and it certainly did that day! What happened that was different from all my other 'relaxation' finger walks, was it guided me to a place where I found myself; it was the deep 'knowing' of metaphor and the ability to ask myself the right questions that led me to a state of readiness and calm.

Some of what I felt that day is reflected in an article in the Huffington's Post . . .

"There is another level of identity that is the real, true, genuine substance of who you are — your authentic self. That is who you are at your absolute core. It is the part of you not defined by your job, function or role. It is the composite of all your skills, talents, and wisdom. It is all of the things that are uniquely yours and need expression, rather than what you believe you are supposed to be and do." [Reference 2104/08/29](#)

Huffington Post's article defining authentic-self 08/29/2014
03:28 am ET | **Updated Feb 14, 2016**

I was delighted that the judge validated the labyrinth experience. The incredible transformation that day demonstrated to me, and others, that finger labyrinths are a valuable tool for people whose lives are being disrupted by anxiety.

The judge's acknowledgement of my recurring trauma was both compassionate and confirmed the need for continuing therapy to resolve issues associated with my former workplace. The steps I needed to take were to be exposed slowly to the building with a photo, parking my car close by, standing in the building's doorway, and entering the building.

My **first step** was a classic avoidance response. I went to sleep in the car, not once, not twice but three times! But, I did manage to park my car near the building. **The next step** was to keep walking towards the building until I felt comfortable. Eventually, I managed to stand near the door and then in the doorway; stressful, but thankfully no panic attack! **The final step** was to go into the building. The reception area, my office, and the boardroom were all confronting but I knew I had to do it. I decided "I did not need to go into the manager's office - because I knew all about that room." Even writing about it now gets my heart racing as I recall what happened there.

The court case over I gained the support of the directors of my former workplace. This was an enormous relief, not only did they arrange for me to have some time in the building, two former work colleagues would greet me there.

**This was such a surprise,
I felt valued and cared about,
and that made a real difference.**

Taking the next steps to wellness. Cont#P10

However, my relief soon dissipated when I went into my office and saw the adjoining door to the manager's office. Now faced with the reality, I knew I needed to leave no stone unturned but as I opened that door, I knew it was not 'just a room'. I was overwhelmed by the hostility I felt going in there. I felt consumed by the manager's

- smiling, self-satisfied look on her face as she was patting my arm saying I am OK but giving me an employment contract for six months instead twelve months. Effectively after she had just sacked the accountant.
- bullying face as she was repeatedly thumping the desk accusing me of errors, then when I detailed the reverse, she just smirked and said nothing.
- angry shouting face with her foot stamping when I asked for help. I was required to take on a lot of the accountant's work and felt overloaded.
- gloating face recounting to me she had told an employee that I was a 'push over'. He was told to take the data processing work that I had not yet authorised.

The feeling in that room was pervasive. I felt raw, and I broke down in a way that was neither from sadness or distress. It was the sheer exhaustion of being in a system that was deeply flawed and how unnecessary it had all been.

Then I saw she had left her 'valued' painting on the wall. It was of a black crow with two heads! 'Exactly, I thought! This was the release I needed. I left that room; ironically with a feeling of resignation as I shut that door.

It is now over ten years since I left work my therapy for anxiety, depression, adjustment and post-traumatic stress type disorders has concluded. My psychiatrist advised me that from time to time I may regress. However, he cautioned me about going back into the building.

Unfortunately writing this article I did open that door and I am experiencing a return of the some flashbacks and nightmares but this time I feel that I can now manage without psychiatric care. I feel I can get on with my life. I have recommitted myself to my daily meditation and have joined a community-based group as well as online activities that enable me to move on. [Self help guide.](#)

Now; when I am walking past the building of my former workplace my stomach doesn't go into a knot, and my heart doesn't race. What does happen?

**I recall those smiling faces of friends
and I smile too.**

Creating a relaxed response to anxiety.

My psychiatrist, knowing I was living near my former workplace wanted me to achieve a relaxed response to anxiety. He 'prescribed' a daily meditation. I was to select a piece of music, visualise a place I enjoyed visiting and combine this with 'walking' my double handed finger labyrinth. This daily meditation broke the cycle of distress and responded to my anxiety in a big way. Incredible!



Chopin, Nocturne in E-flat Major Opus 9, No. 2
Includes animation.

My Daily Mediation

As I sit comfortably with my eyes closed, listening to music then as my thoughts begin to drift, I leave the struggles of my day behind. "In my mind, I am strolling from our beach house to a delightful little cove nearby. I recall the tingly fresh breeze lightly brushing against my face and the smell of the salty seaweed spray drifting in the air. Across the Bay, the majestic Cape Woolami silhouettes against the beautiful evening sky as the seagulls glide over the gently rolling waves, then unfurling and trickle like hundreds of little bubbles creating patterns on the shore.

As the music continues, I lightly rest my pointer fingers at each of the labyrinths entrances. Then, gently breathing in and out relaxing my shoulders with each outward breath, I close my eyes and commence my 'walk'. I start by focussing on my fingers as they move in opposite directions around the labyrinth's sweeping grooved pathways and then ensuring they guide me to reach the paths turns at the same time. As I move through the labyrinth's patterns, the music begins to influence the rhythm of my 'walk'.

I find myself softly smiling as my fingers arrive at the labyrinth's centre; feeling connected and calm. I increase the pressure of my touch there as if to remind me I also need to be centred. Then, repeating the gentle inhaling and exhaling, I visualise being and then feel centred and grounded. I continue there enjoying my stillness before I return to my outer world, drifting to the music's rhythm. I feel relaxed and refreshed.

Lorraine Rodda



Music On The Brain

This video is from the Catalyst Program. It illustrates how music can transform us physically and psychologically.

The Labyrinth Society's Marketplace.

We need your help to create our Australian Marketplace.

- An Australian Marketplace with The Labyrinth Society doing all the work but we can access. Sounds good to me!
- We need just five ads. to create an Australian Marketplace on the Global Map.
- It's easy! The TLS Marketplace website provides advertisers with a low-cost advertising solution.
- The prices are reasonable too. In fact a **Mini advertisements are free** for members. Non - members fee being \$US 6.00 or \$US65 per a year.
- Note: TLS Membership for an individual is just \$US 75.00 per year.

Mini Advertising Includes:

Display your logo.
 Link to your website.
 Link to your email.
 Listed in A-Z.
 Listed in geographic region.
 Listed in one category.
 Text up to 30 words.

Note: TLS's in-house design team can work with you to execute existing artwork, create brand new artwork, or collaborate with you to achieve a blended, cooperative design.
Service fee \$US75.00 per hour

What can you advertise?

Art, books, publications, gifts, clothing, jewellery, labyrinth builders, labyrinths – finger, labyrinths portable, music, software, apps, teachers, facilitators, travel, accommodation, workshops, events.

Need more information?

- [Advertising options and pricing.](#)
- [Examples of current listings.](#)
- [Join TLS Membership](#)
- [How to submit your advertisement](#)

Finger Labyrinths.

Australia SA Labyrinth Link Australia Cedar Prest

A range of single handed labyrinths in traditional and contemporary styles and materials. [Website](#)



Australia TAS. Mark Healy Labyrinths.

A range of double and single handed labyrinths in traditional and contemporary styles and materials. [Website.](#)



Australia TAS Chartres/Classic Jo Cook

These cloth labyrinths are for personal use. They come in an organza bag with a glass bead for tracing the path. Light and easy for travelling. \$A25.00 plus postage. [Jo Cook](#)



America Paths of Peace Lisa Gidlow Moriarty

A range of singlehanded finger labyrinths carved in acrylic or timber. [Website.](#)



America Relax4life Neal Harris

Double and single handed Intuipath (®) finger labyrinths are currently only available in Canada and USA. Neil is looking for an Australian outlet. [Website.](#)



America Veriditas Rev.Dr Lauren Artress

This Sand Labyrinth Kit contains a double sided board with a Classic and Chartres single handed labyrinths. Contains instruction booklet and sand. [Website.](#)





The Labyrinth Society, Inc.

Mission: Dedicated to supporting all those who create, maintain and use labyrinths and to serve the global community by providing education, networking and opportunities to experience transformation.



Walk as ONE at 1pm on the first Saturday in May. Join the rest of the World by [registering your event](#)

Resources:

- [Labyrinths in places](#)
- [Marketplace](#)
- [Media Info Sheet](#)
- [Membership](#)
- [TLS Brochure](#)



Veriditas

Mission: Dedicated to inspiring personal and planetary change and renewal through the labyrinth experience.

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Resources:

- [Facilitator Training.](#)
- [Labyrinth Events](#)
- [Veriditas Products](#)
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New: Word art labyrinth gift. [Click here to order.](#)



Australian Labyrinth Network

This informal network includes members of The Labyrinth Society, Inc. Veriditas trained and certified, labyrinth facilitators, community facilitators, labyrinth builders and labyrinth enthusiasts.

Newsletter Topics 2016

Winter Disabilities.
Spring Myths/ Legends
Summer Children.

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Administrators
Australian Labyrinth Network

[Email](#)

TLS and Veriditas

Australian Region Rep.
Lorraine Rodda

TLS members, Veriditas Facilitators, Community Facilitators are available to answer labyrinth queries.

NSW [Margaret Rainbird](#)

[Heather Middleton](#)

QLD [Richard Zweck](#)

NT Volunteer needed

SA [Cedar Prest](#)

[Jeff Trahair](#)

TAS [Mark Healy](#)

[Jo Cook](#)

VIC [Leonie Brien](#)

[Geoff Rodda](#)

[Christine Rowntree](#)

[Lisa Shortridge](#)

WA [Beth Robertson](#)

[Ned Crossley](#)

Labyrinth Locators

Find a labyrinth to walk.
Please list your labyrinth on both on locators.



[Australian Locator](#)



[World Locator](#)

Resources

- [TLS Market Place](#) – We need five ads to have our own 'Australian Market Place'
[Options and prices for advertising](#) Page 12
- [Robert Ferre's](#) website has extensive information on labyrinth construction, lists of publications and more.
- [Jeff Saward](#) is a World renown Labyrinth historian, with an extensive photo library and also conducts labyrinth tours and more.
- [Sig Lonegren](#) Sacred geometry, astronomy, geomancy, and dowsing.