

Quiet the mind, open the heart, look within

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The room is dimly lit. Music is softly playing in the background, but drowned out by my concentration. I am focusing on a white path outlined in royal purple. Trying to put one foot in front of the other, to keep my legs moving although I feel wobbly. I am slightly uncomfortable, in a room full of people I have never met or barely know. I try to be small, so as to not intrude into others' space.

The labyrinth I walk on is 30' in diameter and a unicursal (one path) design. There are no tricks, or decisions to make. I just follow the path. I start to get dizzy as I go around a turn. Did I just make a wrong turn? Oh no, am I still on the right path? I keep walking, unsure if I took a wrong step.

I have to be careful when walking by someone on a different part of the pathway. We both slightly turn, politely avoiding each other, and carry on with our walking meditation.

It seems like an eternity, but I soon arrive in the center of the labyrinth. "The six," or petal rosette, is a place for quiet meditation where you can sit, relax and meditate. I then return to the walk.

There is only one pathway towards and away from the center, so I have to step around people who are making their way the opposite direction. Once again I am walking the winding path that is often referred to as a mirror for the twists, turns and passages of life.

Once out of the labyrinth, I put my shoes on and go sit for awhile, observing others and reflecting on my experience.

I was a little apprehensive going on the walk in the first place. First of all, I was joining Social Science Instructor Bill Briare's Honors Comparative Religion

Class, people who had studied the labyrinth and who knew each other. Secondly, as open as I am to spiritual practices, I couldn't see how walking around a giant circle could really do anything for me.

It is amazing what a little reflection can do. People were encouraged after the walk to write; write about what they felt, what they thought about and the whole experience. It was peaceful and relaxing. You are away from outside distractions and are able to look inside your self and focus on you.

I soon figured out why I had gotten so worried about being on the wrong path, about taking the wrong turn on the labyrinth. In my life, I am at a crossroad of decisions where I want to go in my life, and if I am traveling in the right direction. The labyrinth allowed me to see this. I was able to escape from my everyday distractions in life and focus on what has been looking me in the face for quite some time.

The Labyrinth, which was on campus April 13-15, is an ancient spiritual tool that has been used in many cultures and faith traditions around the world.

Briare first brought the Labyrinth to campus last year as a way to allow students and community

members to experience this non-denominational tool powers.

Jan Jonnson, certified labyrinth facilitator and modern dance instructor at Clackamas, has been providing workshops, retreats and seminars and introducing people to this particular *Veriditas* labyrinth for more than three years. One of the 200 facilitators (world wide) trained under the guidance of Dr. Lauren Artress. Jonnson has stayed within Oregon with her "sanctuary for the arts"

cathedral floor at Chartres in Paris, France.

Around 500 years ago, it is speculated the scientific revolution of the time caused the labyrinth to fall out of use. The great Chartes floor was covered with chairs and pews, and the labyrinth was out of sight, and in a way out of mind.

Around ten years ago, Reverend Doctor Lauren Artress brought it back to life. She is the creator of the Labyrinth Project and founder of *Veriditas*, the World Wide Labyrinth Project.

Labyrinths are now found in hospitals, prisons, churches, airports, parks, community spaces, retreats, and seminars; and in people's backyards around the world.

Labyrinths and mazes have often been confused. When people hear the word "labyrinth," they often think of a maze. A labyrinth is not a maze. A maze is like a puzzle to be solved- it has twists, turns and dead ends; the purpose is to trick you. It is a left brain activity that requires logical, analytical, sequential activity to find the correct path. A labyrinth is a right brain task that has only one path. The way in is the way out. It involves intuition, creativity and imagery.

I am glad I walked the labyrinth. It is an experience that I never expected, that I am grateful for, and that I hope others get to experience as well.



labyrinth.

Some of the earliest forms of labyrinths are found in Greece, dating back to 2500-2000 B.C.E. The Chartes design, a classical, eleven-circuit labyrinth (eleven concentric circles), with the twelfth being the center, is the design brought to Clackamas. It originates from the thirteenth century where it was laid into the

LOCAL PUBLIC LABYRINTHS

MARYLHURST COLLEGE
Liturgical Sacred Art Center
17600 Pacific Highway (Hwy. 43)
Marylhurst, OR
800.634.9982 ext. 6259
contact: Melissa Coe
call for availability
type: Canvas, indoor, portable

SOPHIA CENTER
7732 SE 13th Ave.
Portland, OR
503.231.8123
contact: Gloria Chaney
open for scheduled events
type: Canvas, indoor, portable

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
147 NW 19th Ave.
Portland, OR
503.222.9811
contact: Sally Newlands
call for availability
type: Canvas, indoor, portable

To find a labyrinth close to you go to Grace Cathedral's labyrinth locator: www.gracecathedral.org/labyrinth/locator/index.shtml

OTHER RESOURCES

- ◆ Jan Jonnson
inpower@teleport.com
503.635.6402
- ◆ www.gracecathedral.org
- ◆ www.lessons4living.com/labyrinth.htm
- ◆ *Walking a Sacred Path*
by: Lauren Artress
- ◆ *Labyrinth in Culture and Society*
by: Jacques Attali
- ◆ *Exploring the Labyrinth*
by: Mellissa Gayle West
- ◆ *Step by Step, How to Introduce the Labyrinth*
by: Georgiana Lofty

Anne Pardington: making life transitions easier

TAM OLIVER
Staff Writer

Most Clackamas students don't know that there's a class you can take for credit, that comes with a tuition waiver, and that has been considered so valuable by some that they have repeated it a few years down the road.

"I don't think there's anyplace else where you can take a look at your whole life, your personal history, your interests and values in the same way as you do in this class," said Instructor and Counselor Anne Pardington about the Life and Career Options Program.

Pardington knows what she's talking about. As the co-developer of LCOP, as it's fondly called by students and graduates, she knows you can have a job that fits who you are. After all, that is how LCOP was born.

Seventeen years ago, Pardington and another counselor, Carol Strazer, were looking for a job that would enable them to job share because both still had children at

home. As this wasn't the type of arrangement you could find then (or even now) in the help-wanted section of the local newspaper, the two of them started going out to talk to people, looking for ideas.

When they arrived at Clackamas County Women's Center, they were told of federal money available through the Jobs Appropriations Act. They needed to come up with a plan and write a grant. If the grant came through, they would be allowed to run their program out of the Women's Center.

In the early 1970's, there were many women who, through divorce or other circumstances, suddenly found themselves thrust into the job market without any current job skills. They needed a way to become employable. Pardington and Strazer focused on their needs.

When the two women submitted their plan, the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners awarded them the money with which to begin the Displaced Homemakers' Program.

"It's one of those wonderful ex-

amples of what networking can do for you," Pardington stated with a twinkle in her eye.

Between 1983 and 1985, the Displaced Homemakers' Program was the only program available in the state of Oregon for displaced homemakers. Then in 1985, money became available through the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. Ultimately, this led to the development of 17 programs throughout Oregon.

"People starting up new programs would come to us and ask, 'How are you doing this? We need to do it too,'" recalled Pardington.

Today, 15 years after the program moved to Clackamas Community College, networking, or talking to people, is just one of the many techniques taught in what is now the Life and Career Options Program. It has grown from a program designed for displaced homemakers into a program for anyone in a life or career transition. This includes people displaced from their jobs or desiring different careers, students on the verge



MIKE POLLOCK / Clackamas Print

Anne Pardington founded the Life and Career Options program, which has grown from a program for displaced homemakers into a program for anyone in a life or career transition.

of college graduation who want the best shot at the job market, and men as well as women.

Pardington is visibly proud of LCOP and her students, many of whom have turned their lives around after graduating from the program.

"Now we are beginning to see children of people that took the

class in the 80's," she said, laughing.

Life and Career Options is a six or seven-credit class depending on whether you take it during the day or at evening. It is taught on campus at the Family Resource Center (FRC); for more information about this life-changing program, call 657-6958 ext. 2526.