



Age + Action

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A labyrinth of total wellness

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Introduction

- Workplace context:
 - Long-term care community in rural PA
 - Christian faith-based CCRC
 - 3 levels of care
 - Participants of the Christian faith tradition
- Mission Statement: to inspire meaningful purpose in the lives of residents by empowering them with continued growth opportunities for wellness in body, mind and spirit.

Our community's goals

- Wellness that honors the whole person
- Collaborative work environments →
Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Resident engagement → Positive outcomes
- Additional opportunities for spiritual wellness

Theory behind our labyrinth

- Everyone can grow
- Meeting people where they are
- Educate and empower residents to realize an optimal quality of life → The Happiness Advantage
- The power of mindset

What is a labyrinth?

- Mazes offer a choice of paths, multiple entrances, exits, and dead ends
- Labyrinths have one entrance, one exit, and a well-defined path between them
- Labyrinths engage our intuitive, pattern-seeking, symbolic mind – removes need to make decisions of paths
- Labyrinths have a long history and are not of one faith

What is a labyrinth?

- A walking meditation tool
- A prayer with our whole being (body, mind, spirit)
- An opportunity to experience peace, quiet and reflection
- A place in which to retreat, commune, celebrate, honor, and remember

What is a labyrinth?

- It is focusing on the journey as well as the destination → intention with each step
- Uniquely personal because each of us is unique.
 - Opportunity for reflection, to ponder a question

Types of labyrinths

- Some are for walking
- Some are for fingers



Dimensions of wellness

- 1. Emotional.** Understanding ourselves, acknowledging and sharing feelings in a productive manner, approaching life with a positive enthusiastic outlook, and coping with the challenges life can bring.
- 2. Intellectual.** Opening our minds to new ideas/experiences and engaging in creative pursuits and life-long learning to sharpen the brain.

Dimensions of wellness

- 3. Physical.** Caring for your body with positive choices to maintain and improve health, strength, flexibility and functional ability.
- 4. Vocational.** Making a positive impact contributing to society and gaining personal satisfaction while maintaining balance in our lives.
- 5. Social.** Relating, connecting and interacting with people of all ages and establishing and maintaining positive relationships.

Dimensions of wellness

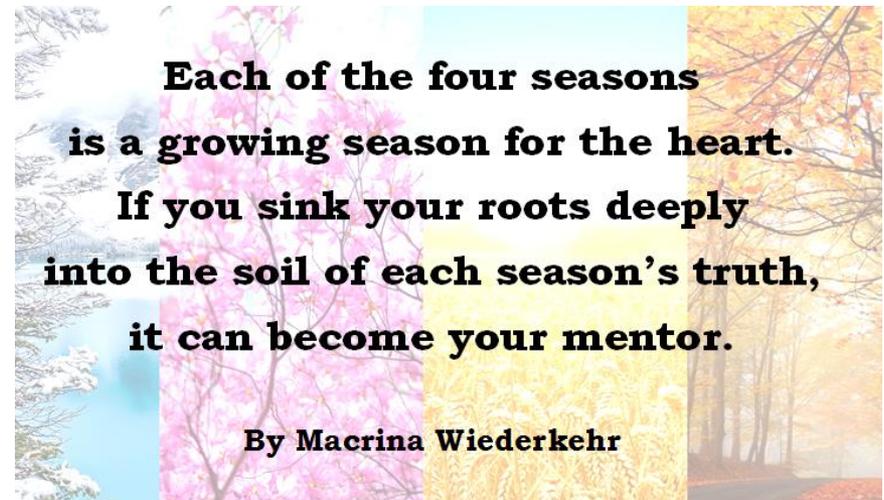
- 6. Spiritual.** Living with peace and harmony to realize a common purpose in our lives.
- 7. Environmental.** Recognizing our own personal responsibility for the quality of air, the water and the land that surrounds us, and making a positive impact on the quality of our surroundings.

Labyrinths and wellness dimensions

- **Physical** – movement = creativity, brain health
- **Intellectual** - a way to clear the mind and focus attention, a place for a healthy ‘time out’
- **Spiritual** - a place to regain balance and perspective
- **Emotional** - reduction of stress, improved outlook, return of hope
- **Environmental** - a calm environment in which to prepare for dealing with challenging situations
- **Social** - sharing time with family and friends

Labyrinth: familiar and unknown

- How to keep a labyrinth familiar:
 - Education session(s)
 - One path → can't get lost
 - Walking meditation → walking prayer
 - Familiar tools → prayer



“The Circle of Life: The Heart’s Journey Through the Seasons”
By Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr

Labyrinth variations:

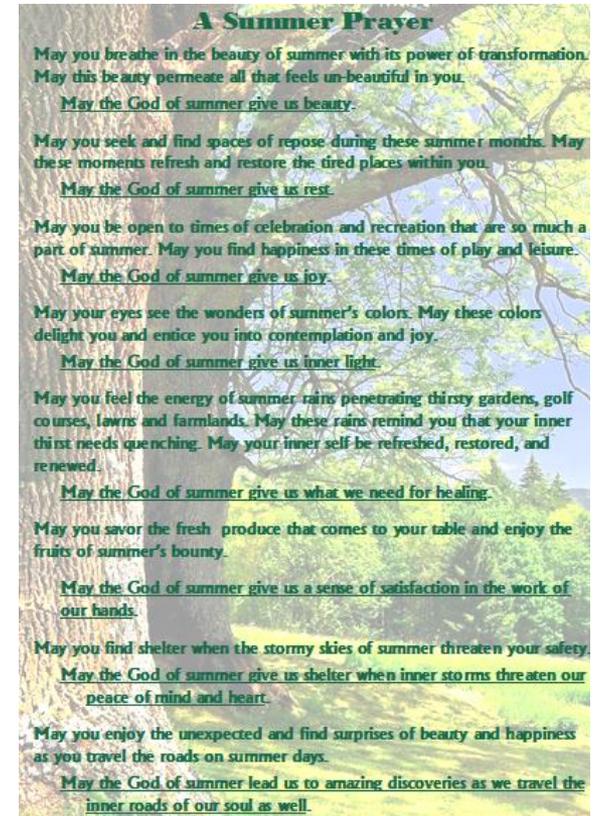
- Walking, finger
- Labyrinth → guided mediation
 - prayers with color
- Moments to break up walking to engage other senses

Ponder these winter questions:

- Where do you find silence in your life?
- When do you feel free from the pressure to produce?
- What are the most challenging aspects of winter for you?
- What have you discovered during your barren seasons?
- If you were to choose a passage from scripture that speaks to you of winter, what would it be?

Event preparation

- Weeks leading up to event
 - Bible study
 - Education session(s)
- Needs
 - Open space
 - Sensory related items (prayer stone, diffuser, food, lighting a candle, etc.)



Motivators and barriers

Participant level

Motivators:

- Spiritual
- Emotional
- Social
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Environmental

Barriers:

- Fear
- Uncertainty
- Dislike of Exercise
- Pain
- Social withdrawal
- Lack of motivation

Motivators and barriers

Facilitator level

Motivators:

- Program flexibility
- Passion for goal of the program
- Opportunities for creativity

Barriers:

- Potentially time consuming set up

Motivators and barriers

Program level

Motivators:

- Focus on possibilities
 - Limitless options
- Celebrate the journey and process
 - Decrease in anxiety
- Environment of acceptance
 - Everyone can grow and learn
 - Diversity is beautiful!

Barriers:

Our labyrinth

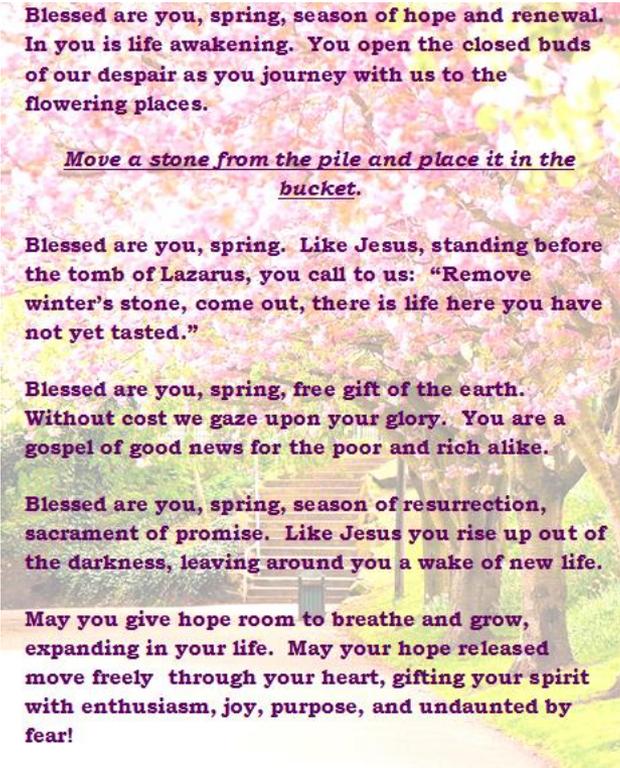


Evolution of a labyrinth

- In a multicultural, interfaith setting
- In a non-religious, secular setting

Program structure

- Event runs for 1 day
 - Lead up programming is multiple weeks
- Allow participants to take their time navigating
- Consider volunteer help as guides



Blessed are you, spring, season of hope and renewal. In you is life awakening. You open the closed buds of our despair as you journey with us to the flowering places.

Move a stone from the pile and place it in the bucket.

Blessed are you, spring. Like Jesus, standing before the tomb of Lazarus, you call to us: “Remove winter’s stone, come out, there is life here you have not yet tasted.”

Blessed are you, spring, free gift of the earth. Without cost we gaze upon your glory. You are a gospel of good news for the poor and rich alike.

Blessed are you, spring, season of resurrection, sacrament of promise. Like Jesus you rise up out of the darkness, leaving around you a wake of new life.

May you give hope room to breathe and grow, expanding in your life. May your hope released move freely through your heart, gifting your spirit with enthusiasm, joy, purpose, and undaunted by fear!

Thank you!

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