

### *Space and Meaning in a Labyrinth*

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Labyrinths are constructed as paths with many bends meant to be walked as a pilgrimage. Historically, labyrinths represented artistic, entertainment, and devotional ideologies. Today, they are associated with meditation and self-care. In this paper based on ethnographic research, I examine the ways that individuals attach meaning to the experience of walking the labyrinth. How do individuals connect meaning with space and associate this meaning with their lives? Prior experience with meditation, spiritual practices, or walking labyrinths affects how individuals interpret and make use of the labyrinth. It can bring focus or relaxation to those who participate, regardless of prior experience. This research shows that those with meditation experience tend to enter the labyrinth with an intention and leave feeling accomplished, either through reaching a meditative state or a clearer mind. Those with more experience more easily and quickly associate the labyrinth as a meaningful space, whereas other participants are less likely to experience it as such. Looking at a labyrinth in this way provides a different perspective on meditation practice and what defines meaningful space. This project connects the concept of meaningful space to self-care by looking at establishing personal meaningful space for health and spiritual purposes.