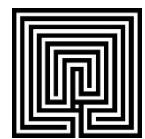


Labyrinths as Problem Solvers

Sig Lonegren



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For the last twenty years I have been looking at the devices our foremothers and fathers used to enhance their intuitive processes - tools like sacred space, dowsing and labyrinths. In my latest book, *Labyrinths: Ancient Myths A Modern Uses* (Gothic Image, 1991), I present a way I've developed to use a classical seven-circuit labyrinth as an excellent wholistic problem solving device.

In figure 1. you can see that the paths of the classical seven-circuit labyrinth can be numbered out-side-in from one to seven - eight represents the goal, or one end of the string, so is not counted as one of the circuits. In the esoteric tradition, there are many different systems that break things in to seven - 7 notes on the musical scale, 7 visible planets as seen from an astrological point of view, the 7 chakras, and so on. For me, it symbolises all of the vibrational possibilities, from slowest to fastest, lowest to highest if you will, and divides it up into seven parts that run from 1 - Physical Earth Reality at one end to 7 - The One, Love - whatever you name your Deity of Choice - at the other. I have given specific names to each of the paths that run in between, but please feel free to use your own names. It's the overall process that I want to convey, not the specific content.

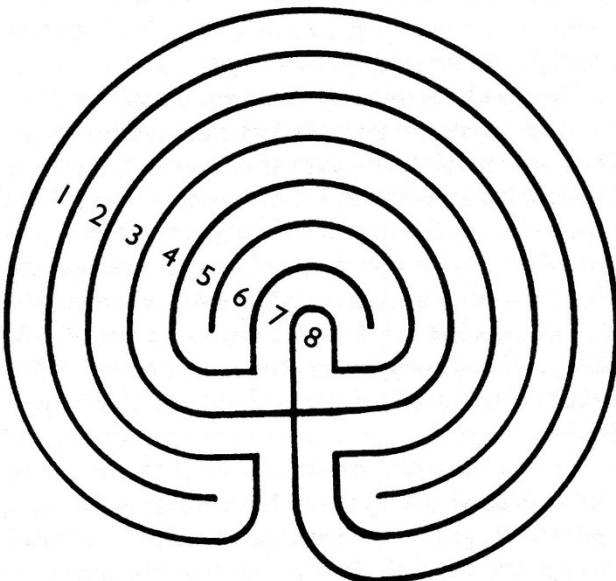


Fig. 1: The Order of Paths 3-2-1-4 / 7-6-5-8

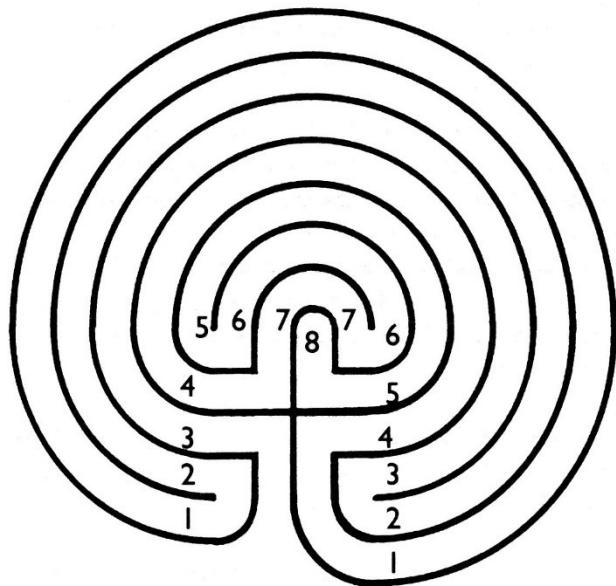
These seven circuits of the labyrinth can be used to look at a question you may have, or for working with a problem or opportunity you may be encountering in your life. As you walk each circuit, you deal with a specific way or level of relating to this issue. From the outermost circuit to the shortest one that surrounds the goal, the circuits run:

- 1 - Physical, day to day, money:
- 2 - Emotional, "Flow do I feel about...?"
- 3 - Mental, "What do I think about...?"
- 4 - Personal Spiritual, "How is my personal spiritual life affected by...?"
- 5 - First Step. "What is the first step I have to take towards resolving...?"
- 6 - Vision. "What is my vision for resolving the issue? What can I sense about resolving the issue?"
- 7 - "Oh, Great Spirit (Deity of Choice) please be with me on this."
- 8 - The Goal, the place of No Thing.

If, starting at the mouth of this labyrinth, you run your finger along the seven circular paths, you will notice that they don't run from 1 to 7. You start on 3, then down to 2, then to the outermost ring, number 1, quickly up to 4 and so on into the goal.

The paths of the labyrinth run 3-2-1-4 / 7-6-5-8.

Let's take a problem and walk it through. You begin by standing (or putting your finger) at the mouth of the labyrinth, and stating - as clearly as you can - your issue. Then walk in onto the third path. Each circuit has a different question for you to ponder as you walk that circuit. 3 - "What do you think about the issue?"; 2 - "How do you feel about the issue?"; 1 - "How does this issue affect you on the physical level? Will it cost you money?"; 4 - "How does it affect your personal spiritual life?"; 7 - "Great Mystery (or Deity of Choice) be with me as I walk these paths."; 6 - "What is the best solution?" This is the critical turn, up until now, your conscious mind has been involved in getting all of the answers to the questions so far. Now that conscious part of you needs to be silent and to allow your more visionary side to come to the fore. It's time for that leap of faith. Let go and let God/dess. As you turn that corner and walk the sixth path, something will come. Go with the initial awareness that comes. 5 - "What is the first thing I have to do to get this to happen?" The first step into manifestation. Again, go with the initial awareness that comes.



State the Question

In

- 3. I think...
- 2. I feel...
- 1. The physical
- 4. Personal spiritual
- 7. God/dess
- 6. The Vision
- 5. The first step
- 8. Breathe

Out

- 5. Envision the first step
- 6. See the Vision
- 7. Thank you God/dess
- 4. Personal spiritual
- 1. The physical
- 2. I feel...
- 3. I think...

Then you come to the centre. 8 - No Thing. Take a few breaths, turn and walk out. 5 - See that first step you have to take. 6 - Thank your Deity of Choice for being with you. 4 - Look at how this resolution will affect your spiritual life. 1 - How much will it cost financially? 2 - How do you feel about this resolution? 3 - What do you think about it? If all of the levels are saying "OK" go with it! Exit the mouth, turn to the centre and give thanks.

Some find the paths a bit confusing at first (mazes usually are), but keep at it. Familiarise yourself with the windings of the labyrinth. Make a crib sheet of the paths on the way in and out. Write the numerical order, and give a key word or phrase to each path. Labyrinths are amazingly balanced sacred tools. They can enhance problem solving; they can take you to your shadow; they can lead you through the convoluted paths into the centre where God/dess awaits. The trick is to ask the right question.

Fig.2: Problem/opportunity solving with the seven-circuit classical labyrinth.



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