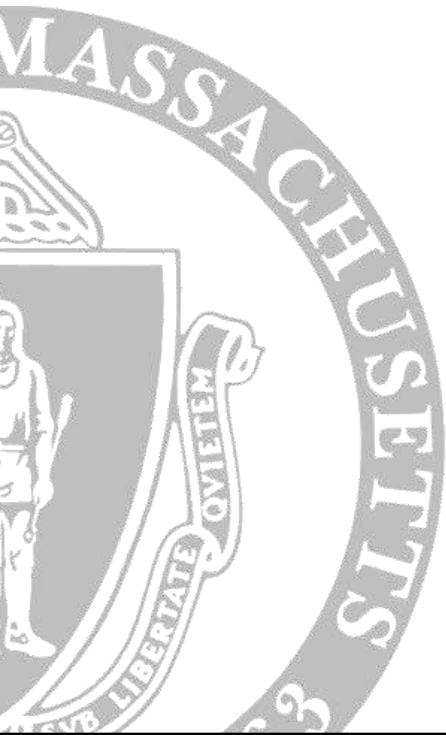


The Use of Labyrinth Walking to Reduce Stress

Donna M. Zucker RN, PhD, FAAN
University of Massachusetts Amherst

October 30, 2014
NEAETC- HIV Care in Corrections



Purpose

- To emphasize the negative impacts of stress on health
 - To outline current uses of mindfulness and labyrinth walking to reduce stress
 - To illustrate innovative programs in use in Western MA
 - To describe a curriculum and its application in a variety of settings
-

Labyrinth Walking

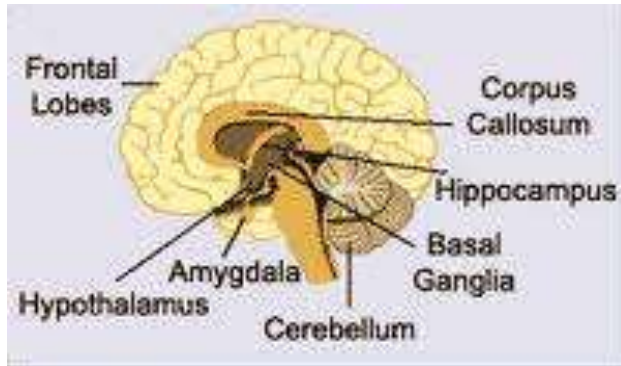
- **The labyrinth dates back to ancient times in Southern Europe around 4,000 BCE.**
- **Labyrinths became popular during the crusades as an alternative to pilgrimage**



Courtesy Veritidas.org

Meditation Labyrinths

Meditation labyrinths have been demonstrated to be relaxing, provide a “pause” in a busy day and can increase memory in general.



In particular, labyrinth walking increases spatial memory helping to grow the hippocampus.

Shifting the paradigm ...



“Meditation and Mindfulness are the New Rage in Silicon Valley”



Aug. 2013 WIRED.CO.UK

Examples from the Field

- Changes in Medical Care and Treatment
- Changes in Correctional Rehabilitation

Fight or Flight?



Do we experience the same response in day to day life?

Is it be acute or chronic? or both?

The Stress Epidemic

- "The Connection"
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=1rw3QwfoBAw

Discuss

- Do you think the evidence for integrating Mindfulness is now being accepted as a component of health care?

Research Projects

- August 2008. International Nurses Society on Addictions - *Labyrinth Walking to Enhance Wellness*
 - March 2010. University of Massachusetts Research Support Fund: *Labyrinth Walking to Enhance Wellness in Incarcerated Substance Abusers*
 - December, 2011. Intramural School of Nursing Scholarship Fund. *Wrist Monitoring of BP in Offenders Walking the Labyrinth*
 - March, 2014. IRB Approved study: *The Effect of Labyrinth Walking on Health and Wellness*. W.E.B. DuBois Library
-

Green Labyrinth Project May 2011



Jail Labyrinth Project

Discuss

- What features do you see in this project that might also impact the “average” population?

Environmental Change



Labyrinth Curriculum

- Merging the sacred and the scientific
 - Structured classes to accompany the learned walking meditation
 - Requires a relationship-centered approach to treatment
 - This starts with the labyrinth facilitator
-
- UMassAmherst

The Labyrinth Facilitator

- Labyrinth trainings are available from Veriditas and are held internationally around the calendar
- Trainings are 3 days long and include a workshop day (boot camp)for returning facilitators
- Final certification follows three supervised class sessions across a specified timeframe

The Curriculum-Getting Started

- Insure your program is acknowledged as beneficial
 - Work with a contact person who can facilitate your presentation to the administrator(s)
 - Establish an advisory committee made up of professionals, consumers and community members
 - Meet regularly and set goals to initiate and maintain the program
 - Create a staff manual; offer a presentation to staff and set up a Q&A
-

Curriculum Development (for prisons)

- Create an introductory demonstration with selected inmates
 - Have inmates generate a list of themes they would like to address
 - Create a teaching plan and objectives
 - Formative and summative evaluation
-
-

Class Themes

Six Week Curriculum

1. What is a Labyrinth and How Does it Work?
2. Relaxation
3. Positive Thinking
4. Forgiveness
5. Inner Peace
6. Self-Esteem

(2005)

Twelve Week Curriculum

1. Sarcasm
2. Humor and Laughter
3. Moral Development
4. Problem Solving and Decision Making
5. Mindfulness and Meditation
6. Spirituality and Prayer

(2012)

Class Process

- We allow two hours for each class.
 - Handouts are given with a copy of the lesson taught during class.
 - Inmates are free to review the handouts or to journal and draw about their experience.
 - We come together again at the end of the workshop for comments and discussion.
 - Class is completed with a final blessing at the center of the labyrinth.
-

Evaluation

- Satisfaction survey and open ended questions
- Areas for improvement reviewed and changes made

Selected Thematic Quotes

Positive Emotions/Thoughts: “I felt like a weight was lifted off my shoulders.”

Self-Improvement: “Thinking about things before reacting is a beautiful thing.”

Positive Actions/Intentions: “It helped me focus on what matters to me and what I have to do to keep that in my life.”

Reflective Thoughts/Self-Awareness: “I began to watch my thoughts become my actions.”

Self-Esteem: “As I walked the labyrinth, I can forgive myself.”

Resources

Books, DVD and manuals available at the *Labyrinth Connection of Western Massachusetts* Website

<http://www.labyrinthconnection.org/resources.html>



Labyrinth Books and DVD

The Labyrinth Experience, An Educator's Resource is a creative and unique book that provides a broad scope of information, lessons and celebrations for labyrinth walks in multiple settings. Its unique features encompass themes that are integrated into academic subjects: Music, Art, Arts, Science, Biology, Math, History, Social Studies, Poetry, Earth Science, Health Education, Mythology and Writing Skills. This text is a must in schools, prisons, parks, hospitals, retreat centers, organizations and churches of all denominations. 132 pages, \$20



The Labyrinth: An Educational Model for Transformation is a twelve-week curriculum program with the following themes: Introduction to the Labyrinth, Relaxation, Self-Esteem, Positive Thinking, Forgiveness, Inner Peace, The Labyrinth as a Path For Transformation, Moral Development, Problem Solving and Decision Making, Mindfulness and Meditation, Sarcasm, Humor and Laughter and Spirituality and Prayer. The program can be used in any program that fosters personal transformation. Each theme is integrated with a labyrinth walk. Participants are given an opportunity to listen to what is happening in their lives and reflect on how they may change attitudes and perspectives. 150 pages, \$20



Pathway to Change: Jail Labyrinth Project DVD, documents the six-year odyssey of a formal labyrinth program at the Hampshire County House of Correction in Northampton, MA. This film highlights construction of an outdoor labyrinth within the secure perimeter of the jail. Interviews with facility staff, volunteers and incarcerated men who worked on the project are included, along with aerial views of the jail and surrounding community. 23 minutes, \$15 (includes postage)

Contact author Sister Lorry Villemain: 413-532-6134 or villemain341@verizon.net

LABYRINTH BOOKS AND DVD ORDER FORM

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____
Street, City, State, Zip

The Labyrinth Experience: An Educator's Resource (\$20, plus \$3.00 postage) _____

The Labyrinth: An Educational Model for Transformation (\$20, plus \$3.00 postage) _____

Pathway to Change: Jail Labyrinth Project (\$15 includes postage) _____

Make check payable to: Lorraine Villemain
32 Lower Westfield Rd. Apt. 210
Holyoke, MA 01040

Let's Practice- Self care!

<http://elishagoldstein.com/videos/3-minute-body-scan/>



Questions?



Skinner Hall College of Nursing

donna@acad.umass.edu