

# Lasting Labyrinths

Custom designed labyrinths and workshops for environments and experiences that will last a lifetime...

## The First Labyrinth Lesson

Materials: grass mat or other work mat, small dish of four pieces of yarn cut to prepared lengths (lesson shown has yarn 5", 14", 25", and 42" in length), small dish of felt pieces cut into the shape of a plus sign or cross and four dots, tray to carry small items. For extensions add a small bowl of rocks, shells, dried beans, or other small objects.

### Procedure:

1. Invite a child or a few children to watch the labyrinth lesson.
2. Take the mat or rug to the work space and smooth in place.
3. Take the tray of materials to the work space.
4. Set the tray of materials to the left of the mat.
5. Pick up the small dish of felt pieces and place it closer to you.
6. Choose the cross, show it, and place it on the mat close to the bottom, approximately centered.
7. Take one of the four dots, show it, and place it in the upper right hand "corner" of the space around the cross.
8. Take each of the remaining three dots in turn and place them in the lower right hand corner, the lower left hand corner, and the upper left hand corner in the space around the cross.
9. Set the dish back on the tray.
10. Say, "This is the *seed* of the *3-circuit classical labyrinth*."
11. Pick up the small dish of yarn and place it closer to you.
12. Take each of the pieces of yarn and lay them out at the top of the mat, emphasizing the varying lengths. Pause.
13. Set the dish back on the tray.
14. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and then point to the top of the cross, touching it. Keep one finger at the top of the cross, and move the other finger in an arc up and over to the first dot in the upper right hand corner. Pause, and repeat this motion.
15. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and point to the beginning of the shortest piece of yarn. Keep one finger at the beginning of the yarn, and drag the other finger to the other end. Pause, then pinch both ends of the yarn and pick it up.
16. Place one end of the yarn at the top of the cross, and carefully guide the yarn in place, gently lowering it until it ends at the dot. Pause.
17. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and then point to the dot in the upper left hand corner and touch it. Keep one finger on the dot, and move the other finger in an arc up and over and around the first yarn and end at the arm of the cross on the right. Pause, and repeat this motion.
18. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and point to the beginning of the next shortest piece of yarn. Keep one finger at the beginning of the yarn, and drag the other finger to the other end. Pause, then pinch both ends of the yarn and pick it up.
19. Place one end of the yarn at the dot, and carefully guide the yarn in place, gently lowering it until it ends at the arm of the cross. Pause.
20. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and then point to the arm of the cross on the left, touching it. Keep one finger at the arm of the cross, and move the other finger in an arc up and over and around the first two pieces of yarn and end at the dot in the lower right hand corner. Pause, and repeat this motion.

21. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and point to the beginning of the next to longest piece of yarn. Keep one finger at the beginning of the yarn, and drag the other finger to the other end. Pause, then pinch both ends of the yarn and pick it up.
22. Place one end of the yarn at the arm of the cross on the left, and carefully guide the yarn in place, gently lowering it until it ends at the dot. Pause.
23. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and then point to the dot in the lower left hand corner and touch it. Keep one finger on the dot, and move the other finger in an arc up and over and around the first three pieces of yarn and end at the bottom of the cross. Pause, and repeat this motion.
24. Touch the tips of the index fingers together, and point to the beginning of the last piece of yarn. Keep one finger at the beginning of the yarn, and drag the other finger to the other end. Pause, then pinch both ends of the yarn and pick it up.
25. Place one end of the yarn at the dot, and carefully guide the yarn in place, gently lowering it until it ends at the bottom of the cross. Pause.
26. Examine the construction, and make minor adjustments to improve the form.
27. Say, "This is a labyrinth." Place your index finger at the *mouth* of the labyrinth, breathe deeply then say, "There is one way in..." move your finger sliding it across the grass mat, listening to the sound, "...to the center of the labyrinth, the heart of the labyrinth..." pause your finger at the center, breathe deeply..."and one way out, back to the *mouth* of the labyrinth." Say, "The beginning is also the end." Pause. Breathe deeply.

You may end the lesson here, and dismantle the labyrinth, preparing it for the next person, and replace the mat and materials to the place on the peace shelf or table where the labyrinth lesson's "home" will be. Or you may continue with the following extension:

28. Now, say, "I will build the labyrinth again, with these rocks," and pick up the bowl of rocks. Place a few rocks on top of the seed, on the cross and dots, and several on each piece of yarn.
29. At this point, finish the labyrinth or invite the watching child or children to help finish building the labyrinth with rocks.
30. When finished, finger walk the labyrinth again, obviously breathing at the beginning, center, and again at the end.
31. Place the rocks back in the bowl, the yarn and felt back on the plates. Take the tray of materials and the grass mat to the peace table or shelf where it will be kept.
32. Inform the child or group that it will be a lesson for one or two people, at your discretion.
33. Invite the child to choose the work, or dismiss the group or circle to choose work in the usual manner.

Variation: Use lima beans, shells, small twigs, or other small objects for the rocks.

Extensions:

1. Build the labyrinth without the felt and yarn, using the rocks to first form the cross and dots, then the lines.
2. Show other seeds to make a five circuit or seven circuit classical labyrinth.
3. Show additional seeds for other forms of labyrinths.
4. Suggest constructing the labyrinth and walking it with a purpose such as thinking about thankfulness, being a good friend, or problem solving.

Ages: 3 and up.

Control of error: the labyrinth is one continuous path to the center.

Point of interest: connecting the points, walking the labyrinth, deep breathing.

Aim: increasing concentration and focus, fine motor skills.

Goal: to provide a calming exercise that is interesting and offers opportunities for introspection and concentration, group work, and peacemaking skills enhancement.