

The desert fathers realised the tools God uses to bring about transformation

Abba Poeman said the three guides of the soul are:

Vigilance - *careful observant watchfulness*

Self knowledge - *ruthless honesty with ourselves.*

Discernment - *sensitive enlightenment*

Using labyrinths for contemplation breaks us open to ourselves. The transformative fruit of contemplation is self-knowledge, not self-justification.

Abba Mateos said, “The nearer we draw to God, the more we see ourselves as we really are, and knowing ourselves we cannot condemn the other. We remember all that makes us mortal. We recognise with dismay the private wrongs that twist and turn within us in fear of exposure.

The whole world changes when we know ourselves. We make it gentle. The fruit of self-knowledge is kindness. Broken ourselves, we wrap tenderly the wounds of the other.

For me to be a saint means to be myself. Therefore the problem of sanctity and salvation is in fact the problem of finding out who I am and of discovering my true self.

Thomas Merton

“When I am most quiet and most myself, God’s grace is clear, and then I see nothing else under the sun. What else is there for us but to be tranquil and at peace in the all- enchanting wonder of God’s mercy to us?”

It falls upon this paper more quietly than the morning sun, and then I know that all things, without His love, are useless, and in His love, having nothing, I can possess all things.”

Thomas Merton, Personal Journals

As you hold the labyrinth ball, contemplating and circumnavigate its route, being open, being still, waiting on God you can trace the way. It swirls back and forth, revolving, turning, gyrating over and under, in and out with the twists and turns symbolising the transforming way that the Trinity transforms our routes and our roots. Let Jesus’s truths descend from your head to your heart , from your mind to your body. “Abide in me and I will abide in you and you will bear fruit that will endure. Jesus

Transform Labyrinth Prayer Sphere



We have our beginning in the love of God. God made you. God adores you, God keeps you. The spiritual journey is the slow constant transforming nature of this truth. It’s a journey of becoming the beloved.

We are so preciously loved by God that we cannot even comprehend it. God loved us before we were made, and this love has never diminished and never will.

God's intention for us is transformation, as we journey in this holy hide and seek, to be still, to listen, to ask, knock, touch, walk, look, to trust, to taste and see, our way to the holy hidden heart of God.

It is not merely our own desire but the desire of Jesus that draws us to want to experience God’s transforming love. A desire which is poured out in us by the strong, compassionate, kind living Spirit of God. We are small creatures and our lives are not long, but long enough to learn.

To say that I am made in the image of God is to say that love is the reason for my existence, for God is love. Love is my true identity. Selflessness is my true self. Love is my true character. Love is my name.

Thomas Merton

Journeys of transformation

Peregrination and pilgrimage is both an outer and inner journey. They are vehicles for seeking the mystical and transforming encounter of the risen Jesus Christ, to find the place of our own resurrection, the resurrected self... the true self in Christ. Sharing with others is involved alongside the silence and solitude of contemplation, the acts of self compassion, self kindness, self gentleness and the tacit trusting of God.

The contemplative practice of walking and using labyrinths embodies all these ways of journeying ‘sole to soul ‘with God’s transforming love.

God is with us and around us but we have to go on journeys to find God. Our real journey is interior; growing deepening an even deeper surrender to the creative action of love & grace in our hearts

Thomas Merton

Purple, the colour of transformation,

Purple is the colour of transformation, of metamorphosis, a mixture of the calm stability of the colour blue and the fierce energy of red.

Purple represents spirituality, imagination, mystery, the divine, the supernatural devotion, creativity, peace, honour, wisdom, strength, power, and royalty.

Purple is associated with pain, suffering, mourning and penitence.

Purple is the liturgical colour of Lent, the colour of courage, of resilience.

Purple tends to occur rarely in nature, so viewed as rare and intriguing.

Your purple labyrinth sphere is a symbolic reminder of the characteristics of these meanings.

Metamorphosis in nature

Nature is always transforming, each day and night. Just like we transform food, water, and oxygen into our own bodies, nature is transforming sunlight and soil to plants and plants to animals. Frogs and butterflies are examples of metamorphosis in nature.

Human nature is fascinated by alchemy, the metamorphosis of base metal to Gold, but the meaning is deeper. The alchemy of transformation is a symbolic archetype, a metaphor of the transformation of current nature, metamorphosing into a divine nature.

Transformation in my nature

True inner transformation is to know that God chose you first. The mystery of the spiritual life is to receive a new self a new identity, which depends not on what we achieve but on what we are willing to receive. When Jesus talks about faith he means trusting unreservedly that you are loved so that you can abandon every false way of obtaining love. Trusting that the desire to please God does in fact please God and hoping to have that desire in all you do, and to never do anything apart from that desire. Then you know you're not alone, and will be lead down the right roads and right paths, side by side with the Spirit of God.

Which of these meanings of purple resonate with you right now ?
Take a few moments to ask Yourself why ?

Lies that make transformation more difficult are

I am what I have
I am what I do
I am what others say about me
Indifference
Self rejection
Resentment

Self rejection, is the greatest, actively hostile opposition of transformation in the spiritual life. It contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the beloved.

Being the beloved is the core truth of our existence, a transformation bringing us to our true home, our true nature (self), our true identity.

Contemplative practice does not produce this self but facilitates the falling away of all that obscures it.

This voice of the free hidden self, the sacred within, joins the Psalmist's, "Oh, Lord, you search me and you know me. ... It was you who created my inmost self. ... I thank you for the wonder of my being"

By the mercies of God, present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, this is your spiritual worship. Do not hold on to this age but **'be being transformed'**, by, being given, fresh trust, fresh life, fresh self compassion and the strength of self kindness to your thinking, moving from fear to love, then you can recognise and realise the adequate and good life God has for YOU. Adaption based on Romans 12:12

"Be being transformed" are the words that are used in Holy Scripture, to 'be being' is a present tense. It is a continuous ongoing process. This metamorphosis is an internal sea change in our very nature.

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom and we are 'being transformed' into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.2 Cor 3:17-18.

This metamorphosis is not something we can do, it is a transforming gift of self kindness and self compassion from God's love, grace and mercy.

Transformation in our God journeys is not something that is not acquired but realised. You are a new creation, you have been given the mind of Jesus Chris. Be being transformed from fear to love.

Meditations on transformation

Father,
I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands, without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.
Amen

Charles de Foucauld

Give me a candle of the Spirit, O God, as I go down into the depths of
my being. Show me the hidden things, the creatures of my dreams,
the storehouse of forgotten memories and hurts. Take me down to
the spring of my life, and tell me my nature and my name. Give me
freedom to grow, so that I may become that self, the seed of which
You planted in me at my making.
Out of the depths I cry to You...

George Appleton

Allow me to rest in Your will and be silent.
Then the light of your joy will burn my life.
Your fire will burn in my heart and shine for your glory
That's what I live for.
Amen, Amen

Thomas Merton

Meditations on transformation

With the labyrinth prayer ball, your prayer can now literally be “all fingers and thumbs”, in a good fresh way! Intentionally following the labyrinths prayer route. You are ‘doing’ prayer, embodying prayer, trusting the metamorphosis, that you are becoming prayer itself.

There is no wrong way or right way to hold and pray these meditations. Go with the way that resonates with you.

Find a quiet space where you can't be disturbed. Turn off/ mute your phone. As you read a meditation, you may find a phrase or word that ‘sticks’. Take that phrase or word and hold it with intention in your head, your heart, your body.

Holding that word/phrase slowly trace the cyclical route of the labyrinth. When you get to the centre rest and wait a while, on the phrase/word. Slowly retrace the way back. Trust God's transformation work in you.

Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart,
and try to love the questions themselves
as if they were locked rooms
or books written in a very foreign language.

Do not search for the answers, which could not be given to you now,
because you would not be able to live them.
And the point is to live everything.

Live the questions now.
Perhaps then, someday far in the future,
you will gradually,
without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.
Rainer Maria Rilke , letters to a young poet

Lord Jesus I surrender myself to you
I surrender myself to you
Take care of everything Lord

We have what we seek, it is there all the time, and if we give it time, it will
make itself known to us. Thomas Merton

Meditations on transformation

Close your eyes and follow your breath to the still place that leads to the invisible path that leads you home.

St. Teresa of Avila



Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something
unknown, something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through
some stages of instability—
and that it may take a very long time.
And so I think it is with you;
your ideas mature gradually—let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on,
as though you could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances
acting on your own good will)
will make of you tomorrow.
Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.
Give our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Meditations on transformation

We so often see ourselves as failing, but God sees us only rising, and me
thinks God has the greater insight,
Julian of Norwich showings



Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that
we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that
most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous,
talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a Child of
God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing
enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure
around you. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It
is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own light
shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates
others.

Marianne Williamson



The bright field

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realise now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying
on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

R S Thomas

The heart is the place we are most ourselves,
it's the centre of our being
solitude and silence are the pathways there,
it's where the beloved's meet
father up and father in
to find your true identity.
Made with love for a heart to heart
you were named before the stars
to be who you are

You were shaped in love first inside then out
woven in the secret place
all of your hours spread out and prepared
before you'd even lived one day
Your uniqueness is your gift
you were born in heaven's heart
you are held in God's very thought
you have been carried this far
to be who you are

Your soul was made to bloom blossom and unfold
In this broken earth

Your spirit was made to soar to unfurl and fly
In this wild whirling sky
Journey in this fragile skin
where the scars now bear the gold
Your true beauty comes from deep within
and you have come so very far
becoming who you are

Thank you Father I'm perfected in your love
I rest in you for the days ahead
Thank you Jesus for your untamed grace
I can never be the same
Thank you Spirit, for the way
You reveal and heal my heart
On this path you have brought me so far
So I give you all my thanks
for being Who you are.

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You need to be generous to yourself in order to
receive the love that surrounds you.

You can suffer from a desperate hunger to be loved.
You can search long years in lonely places, far outside yourself.
Yet the whole time, this love is but a few inches away from you.
It is at the edge of your soul, but you have been blind to its presence.
We must remain attentive in order to be able to receive.

John O'Donohue



In the beginning, you weep.

The starting point for many things is grief,
at the place where endings seem so absolute.
One would think that it should be otherwise,
but the pain of closing is antecedent
to every new opening in our lives.

God's invitation to the spiritual life
is a call to the high-risk venture
of being loved more fiercely
than we ever might have dreamed.

Belden C Lane

The Solace of Fierce Landscapes



And the day came when the risk to remain tight in the bud was more painful
than the risk it took to blossom.

Anais Nin



When a great moment knocks on the door of your life, it is often no louder
than the beating of your heart, and it is very easy to miss it.

Boris Pasternak



If you think you have blown God's plan for your life, rest in this my beautiful
friend, you are not that powerful

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I give you my heart to make it complete
I rest on Your shoulder to hear Your heartbeat
You're gentle and loving, powerful and meek
I stand at the crossroads to hear Your heart speak
I've come to be open, I've come for embrace
I long for the laughter, to see Your face
Here together my deepest friend
Here in a heartbeat be made new again

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Don't fail me, God
Throughout this journey
Teach me your paths, Show me Your ways
Please let Your tender love still overwhelm me
Through these long nights and darkened days
Reassure me of Your promises
I seek Your face of gentle tranquillity
Reveal again I'm Your beloved,
Tell me again that this is enough
A chill comes slow through my winter-filled soul
And You seem so far away
I hear the refrain of Your Love songs
And realise it's me who's gone astray
Based on Psalm 119 :3-4 Psalm 25 v 4

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At the end of the day may you know God's peace
At the end of the day seen some justice
At the end of the day as the night closes in
May you know deeper what trust is
At the end of the day, you're encircled with prayer
At the end of the day you are blessed
We walk this narrow way, alone and together
To the end, to the end of the day
May you lean on the breast of Jesus
May you feel the heartbeat of God
May you rest on the breast of Jesus
May you feel the heartbeat of God

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You are being presented with a choice: evolve or remain. If you choose to remain unchanged, you will be presented with the same challenges, the same routine, the same storms, the same situations, until you learn from them, until you love yourself enough to say 'no more,' until you choose change. If you choose to evolve, you will connect with the strength within you, you will explore what lies outside the comfort zone, you will awaken to love, you will become, you will be. You have everything you need. Choose to evolve. Choose love. Henri Nouwen



If you want the moon, do not hide from the night. If you want a rose, do not run from the thorns. If you want love, do not hide from yourself. Rumi



In any given moment, we have two options:
to step forward into growth or to step back into safety. Abraham Maslow



Dear God,
I am so afraid to open my clenched fists!
Who will I be when I have nothing left to hold on to?
Who will I be when I stand before you with empty hands?
Please help me to gradually open my hands
and to discover that I am not what I own,
but what you want to give me.

Henri Nouwen