

Scott's Meditation Practice

Scott's Strategy of Spiritual Soul Seeking 😊

I have evolved this outline of practice over the course of time as I have encountered new approaches. You can safely ignore the [labyrinth cues], as they are just ways of including the use of the labyrinth within a broader mindfulness practice. The outline includes more steps than would be typically included in any given meditation experience, but interesting combinations of steps can be included according to what might be right for a given situation. Some exposure to the various sources of concepts is recommended for making choices about what to include.

Uniquely incorporating concepts from these specific sources and other incidental experiences along the way:

- Various meditation traditions and practice guides, including Buddhism, Headspace, and Insight Timer.
- Bill Plotkin and The Animas Valley Institute: regarding our Souls' connection to nature, facets of wholeness, and stages of development and maturity
- Parker Palmer, the UU church's Soul Matters small group practice, and other variations on Quaker traditions of deep listening
- Various labyrinth traditions, including Veriditas, and back to Greek mythology and Egyptian architecture
 - Walking meditation
- One Spirit Interfaith Seminary
- Many great guided meditation leaders
- and My own sensibilities

Whether actually in a labyrinth; otherwise walking mindfully; making/sharing coffee/tea; sitting quietly alone or in a group; or using any other physical

strategy to support mindfulness...

AcE_DDA_EAr:

1. Acquiesce / calm — notice and accept without need to change:
 - [honor the labyrinth from outside]
 - Breathe... re-center on breathing throughout; initial deep breaths w/eyes open...
 - [close my eyes, as practical (moving could require vision), but especially when breathing to re-center (stillness would be good practice for re-centering)]
 - Acknowledge my surroundings and senses
 - Do a body-scan and notice any tension or unusual feelings
 - Acknowledge my state of mind — also, my emotions/feelings/moods
 - Honor/notice my Spiritual connection with, and impact upon, community w/varying scopes (from breadth to individuation)
 - Be present: mindfulness; gratitude, humility, authenticity...
 - Breathe...
2. Enter — into the mindful journey:
 - [step into the labyrinth]
 - What need* draws me in?
 - *Question, struggle, wound, conspicuous defenders, understanding, reconciliation, clarification...
 - What is my purpose?
 - ◆ (E.g.) Seek peace, Soul's voice; bring love, courage, blessing, generosity, and peace to the world
 - Breathe...
3. Descend — from the outer world toward the center:
 - [begin walking the labyrinth trail mindfully]
 - [non-labyrinth: this can be simply breathing, visualization, and/or

other ritual practices]

- Journey inward/downward to reconnect w/Soul
- Honor the 4 directions over the course of the journey: notice the sentinels of wholeness from each direction
- Allow the ritual of moving/descending inward to free the mind
- Bring any needs* to the Soul
- [stop before stepping into the center]
- Breathe...

4. Dwell / muse — be with My Shy Soul; receive its presence:

- [honor the center: where My Soul dwells]
- Safety... openness... serenity... grace...
- [step into the center]
- Breathing... contemplation... listening...
- Seeking clearness... open/honest questions... [I can do this with a partner...]
- Consider the wisdom and gifts of wholeness from each direction
- The gift or message* of the Soul's inner voice can be heard
- What does my Soul reveal about its place among All Souls, including Other-than-Human Souls? Its place in the Universe...?
- Dwell as long as needed [and as long as is polite to others in the space...]
- [honor the center: where My Soul dwells]
- Breathe...
- Gratitude... humility... authenticity...
- [step out of the center]
- Breathe...

5. Ascend — from the center toward the outer world:

- [begin walking the labyrinth trail mindfully]
- [non-labyrinth: this can be simply breathing, visualization, and/or other ritual practices]
- Journey outward/upward to reconnect w/Spirit

- Allow the ritual of moving/ascending outward to focus the gift/message
 - Honor the 4 directions over the course of the journey: notice the affirmations of wholeness from each direction
 - Preserve/interpret/appreciate the gift/message
 - [stop before stepping out]
 - Breathe...
6. Emerge — notice and accept without need to change:
- Honor/notice my possibly-evolved Spiritual connection with, and impact upon, community w/varying scopes (from individuation to breadth)
 - Sense my possibly-evolved moods/feelings/emotions — also my possibly-evolved state of mind
 - Re-engage with my senses and surroundings
 - [open my eyes]
 - [step out of the labyrinth]
 - [honor the labyrinth]
 - Be present with my overall state of being and the received gift/message with gratitude, humility, authenticity...
 - Breathe... breathe life into the gift as it emerges into the real world...
 - Celebrate the grace of the gift/message brought into presence/reality
7. "Actual"-ize / "real"-ize — perhaps when I am in a better place to take notes or have a discussion:
- Re-center on love, courage, blessing, generosity, and peace
 - How am I: enlightened; renewed; transformed; reborn
 - Express the message as actionable/purposeful service
 - Embody my purpose

*If I have a specific need for a message, I may receive varying degrees of

satisfaction in any given attempt to receive a message. The message may be elusive to the point of needing to reframe the need, or it may suffice to merely try again — my own wisdom and patience must come to bear on the circumstances for the extent of the variations taken.

A need may be anything:

- Generalized needs...
 - Affirmation...
 - Calmness...
 - Gratitude...
 - Joy...
 - Energy...
 - Healing...
 - Relaxation...
 - Visualization...
- Or more focused or articulated needs*...
 - Prepare for the day...
 - Is something bothering me?
 - Why do I struggle with my jealousy of ABC?
 - How can I become allied with defenders of my wounds in any direction of wholeness?
 - Is my belief in XYZ warranted or problematic?
 - How do I reconcile DEF with PDQ?
 - Clarity about an issue...
 - Open/honest question...
- It is best to state a need in a way that is consistent with open/honest questions...

What I receive, in the context of my need and my current circumstances, may not be as directly applicable as I originally imagined it might be, but even the silence can be revealing with further contemplation...