

Meditations for Relaxation

Transcriptions

Golden Fields

Relaxation in Nature

Welcome to the Golden Fields meditation. In this meditation, I will guide you through a simple series of images, sounds, textures, and smells which will help you to release your cares and anxieties, and cultivate instead relaxation, peace, and joy. Find a place to sit or lie down with your eyes closed where you will not be disturbed for twenty minutes. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow.

I will now count from ten down to one; and as I count, you will become more and more deeply, deeply, relaxed.

Ten. Relax your feet. Relax your ankles. They are warm; all tension in them is released.

Nine. Relax your legs. Feel the warmth moving up through you. Your legs feel heavy.

Eight. Relax your midsection. It is warm, it is relaxed.

Seven. Relax your stomach, relax your chest. They are warm and relaxed.

Six. Relax your back. Feel the warmth flowing up your back, relaxing all the muscles there.

Five. Relax your arms, relax your hands, all the way to your fingertips. Feel your arms become heavy.

Four. Relax your neck, all the muscles in it, front and back. It is warm and relaxed.

Three. Relax the muscles in your face, your tongue, all around your eyes. Let all the tension disappear. Relax it all.

Two. Feel the warm relaxation reach the top of your head.

One. Your whole body is relaxed, warm, heavy, quiet.

Now...

Imagine that you are standing barefoot in a field of soft green grass in the summertime. Hear the birds singing. Hear the buzz of industrious insects going about their summer business. Feel the gentle, warm breeze on your face. Feel the soft grass under your feet, caressing them. Feel the warmth of the summer sun embracing your body. Smell that distinctive grassy scent, with a hint of

honeysuckle coming from somewhere at the edge of the field.

The scene is utterly peaceful and relaxing.

Now...

Imagine that you turn around and see that you are standing just a few paces away from the end of the grass. Beyond it is a vast field of golden grain, extending as far as you can see. Just at the horizon is a line of rolling purple mountains.

You see that there is a path leading into the field of grain, and you follow it off the grass and among the tall stalks. The path of bare soil under your feet is cool and yielding. A breeze is blowing over the great field, crisp, relaxing, and refreshing, smelling clean and clear. You can hear the soft swish of the tall grain in the breeze, like the rise and fall of the ocean. The birdsong seems quiet and far off, hushed in this sacred space of peace. The grain is a ruddy gold, shot through with flashes of yellow where the sun glints on it. The sky is broad and blue, like a vast aquifer. The purple mountains at the horizon beckon from the distance with stately mystery.

Take a moment now to relax and enjoy this beautiful, peaceful place.

You can remain here in the meditation as long as you wish.

When you are ready to end the meditation, simply take three deep, clear, cleansing breaths.

Draw the peace and beauty of the golden fields into yourself, and carry that peace and beauty with you back to the waking world.

Open your eyes, and arise.

Stonehenge

Relaxation in the Ancient World

Welcome to the Stonehenge meditation. This meditation will help you to release your cares and anxieties, and cultivate instead relaxation, peace, and joy. Find a place to sit or lie down with your eyes closed where you will not be disturbed for twenty minutes. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow.

I will now count from ten down to one; and as I count, you will become more and more deeply, deeply, relaxed.

***Ten.** Relax your feet. Relax your ankles. They are warm; all tension in them is released.*

***Nine.** Relax your legs. Feel the warmth moving up through you. Your legs feel heavy.*

***Eight.** Relax your midsection. It is warm, it is relaxed.*

***Seven.** Relax your stomach, relax your chest. They are warm and relaxed.*

***Six.** Relax your back. Feel the warmth flowing up your back, relaxing all the muscles there.*

***Five.** Relax your arms, relax your hands, all the way to your fingertips. Feel your arms become heavy.*

***Four.** Relax your neck, all the muscles in it, front and back. It is warm and relaxed.*

***Three.** Relax the muscles in your face, your tongue, all around your eyes. Let all the tension disappear. Relax it all.*

***Two.** Feel the warm relaxation reach the top of your head.*

***One.** Your whole body is relaxed, warm, heavy, quiet.*

Now...

Imagine that you are standing barefoot in a field of green grass in the summertime. The sun is low in the sky in front of you; it won't be long before it sets behind the low forested hills on the horizon. The grass is soft and gentle on the soles of your feet. Hear the birds singing, and the buzz of insects. Feel the

gentle, warm evening breeze on your face.

Now...

Imagine that you turn around and see that you are standing just a few paces from a great granite standing stone, mottled gray and green, twice as high as a man. It's not the only one; there is a complete circle of them, stretching away to your left and right, two by two, each pair topped by a third stone laid across them.

You walk up to the stone nearest you and lay your hand on it. It is cool; and you can feel the soft lichen growing on the rough stone.

You can sense the strength and age of the stone, its weight and majesty. You walk around the stone, into its shadow, and feel its surface on this side; it is colder, and speaks of sleep.

Inside the circle of tall stones is a semicircle of lower ones. In the very center is the Altar Stone, standing twice the height of a man. You feel safe, protected, and at peace inside the great protected circle, surrounded by these silent majestic giants.

You walk among the stones, touching them one by one, and feeling their presence, their age, and drawing peace and strength from them...

Now you go to the center of the circle and sit at the foot of the Altar Stone. From where you sit, the setting sun shines between two of the stones. The sky above the sun is painted with a watercolor of pink, red, purple, and gold, and the great silent stones are silhouetted utterly black against the colors.

The breeze of evening is stronger, but still warm. You can hear a few crickets start their song of dusk, and the rustle of the breeze in the grass. Feel the peace and majesty of the great stones filling your soul.

Now the sun blinks out behind the hills, and the purple velvet night slowly blankets the sky. You see the stars coming out high above. The wind is whispering among the stones, like the half-forgotten voices of the ancient ones, whispering words of peace, rejuvenation, encouragement, and long-standing strength.

Take a moment now to relax and enjoy this beautiful, peaceful place. If you wish, listen to the wind and see if you can hear messages in its whispers.

You can remain here in the meditation as long as you wish.

When you are ready to end the meditation, simply take three deep, clear, cleansing breaths.

Draw the peace and strength of the ancient stones into yourself, and carry that peace and strength with you back to the waking world.

Open your eyes, and arise.

Moving Meditation I

Walking in the World

Welcome to the Walking in the World meditation. This meditation is designed to cultivate peace, relaxation, and joy, by helping you remain present and mindful while exercising and moving in the world. For twenty minutes, while you walk at a pace of your choosing, I will guide your attention to facets of your body, your motion, and the world around you, to draw you away from the concerns of the ego, and into the joy and peace of simple motion in the present. Find a pace you are comfortable with. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Draw your attention first to the heart center of your body. Feel the warmth there as your heart keeps pace with your exertion. Feel...warmth from your heart spreading through your chest. Breathe deeply; feel the invigoration from the breath, and allow your chest and arms to relax. Let your arms move comfortably and freely as you walk.

Focus now on the movement of your legs, and the rhythmic strike of your feet on the ground. Don't change your pace, don't exert control; simply observe your body's natural motion. This sense of being present without taking control, allowing everything to move along naturally, is an essential practice for lifelong peace and joy. Feel your toes moving to help keep your balance. Feel your leg muscles moving; feel the gentle rise and fall of your body with each step; feel your lower legs swing from the knees; feel your upper legs swing from your hips; everything moving in a symphony of miraculous coordination. Ride this movement; let it carry you as effortlessly as a boat carried by current.

Now turn your attention to the world around you. Focus first on what you see. Look around as you walk; notice colors and textures. Allow your eyes to pick out things that are red; now focus on things that are yellow; now find things that are blue; now green. Allow your attention to fall on things that are primarily vertical, like trees, signposts, walls. Allow your attention to fall on things that are primarily horizontal, like distant clouds, the horizon, lines in the sidewalk, tree branches.

Now unfocus your visual attention; let it fall naturally on a spot in the middle distance, such that you can easily find your footing with your peripheral vision. Now allow your attention to expand from that central point out to the edges of

your peripheral vision, so that your attention fills your whole visual field at once. Don't try too hard -- simply allow it to happen. Allow the world to envelop you.

Now turn your attention to your hearing. Listen for high pitched noises: birdsong, whistling wind, squeaking brakes or tires or shoes. Listen for low pitched noises: ocean waves, car engines, trees creaking in the wind, perhaps the long low song of the earth, just below hearing range. Take notice of noises from your right ear. Take notice of noises from your left ear. Focus only on the sound of your feet. Now release your focus, and try to hear everything at once, a continual stream of undifferentiated sound. Simply be a well into which the sounds of the world can fall.

Return your attention now to your heart. Is it beating more strongly? Feel the warmth there, feel the love it has for its purpose, its rhythm. Feel your lungs rising and falling as they draw the air, the outside world, into you, and make it a part of you. **Feel the love of your body for the motion and the movement,** the life flowing through you. Feel the love for the world around you, for being in the world. Allow the world to move around you and through you. Release your visual focus; release your auditory focus; allow both sights and sounds to flow through your eyes and ears unobstructed; **you are a fish swimming in a sea of sensation.**

This is the end of the guided meditation, but of course, you can continue in this way as long as you feel...so moved.

Moving Meditation II

Relaxation and Affirmation

Welcome to the Affirmation in Motion meditation. During this meditation, I will be leading you through a sequence of affirmations designed to cultivate relaxation, peace, and joy. Meanwhile, in the background, you will hear music played at a brisk, lively, even pace, to encourage and assist you in your physical movement. **The combination of affirmation and motion** will reinforce the exercise and the meditation, making both more effective. **I will speak a sequence of 20 affirmations, and I repeat the sequence three times.** Say them along with me. In my experience, speaking aloud is more effective, but you can also get results by speaking them in your mind. The meditation will last 20 minutes. We will begin in 15 seconds.

I am relaxed and comfortable.

I move easily and effortlessly.

I take joy in my own movement.

My movement is relaxed, yet lively.

I move with grace and rhythm.

My mind is at rest, at ease.

My mind is quiet, and at peace.

My head is clear, my thoughts are orderly.

My thoughts are quick and creative.

I take joy in my mind's flexibility, creativity, and peace.

My heart is at rest, at ease.

I feel happy and relaxed.

I feel joyful and peaceful.

I feel safe and secure.

I take joy in the peace in my heart.

Every day, I delight in the lessons life brings.

My spirit is strong and at peace.

I am grateful for the blessings of spirit.

My soul is at ease, my soul is quiet.

I am grateful for the peace that lives in my heart and brings me joy.

This concludes the affirmation sequence. The music will continue for another three minutes.

Sunrise Meditation

Dawn at the Pyramids

Welcome to the new day.

This is the Sunrise Meditation, Dawn at the Pyramids. In the next 20 minutes, I will guide you through a series of images that will bring you into the day alert, awake, relaxed, and at peace. Sit comfortably. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow.

Now...

Close your eyes, and imagine that you are sitting in darkness. You are outside at night, in the desert; and all is dark. Only the stars are visible to you; look up and see them there, bright and hard and cold in the desert night, millions of them. Feel the soft cool sand under you. The air is still, and all is silent, as the world waits breathlessly for the dawn.

Place your fingertips of both hands on your abdomen. Rest them there lightly, just touching. Imagine a yellow light radiating from your fingertips throughout your lower torso.

Now there is a breeze blowing over the desert sands, gently touching your face.

Move the fingertips of one hand to the base of your sternum, at the bottom of your chest. Now move the fingertips of your other hand over your heart. Feel the light spreading from your lower torso, spreading from your fingertips, filling your entire torso.

The breeze blows a little harder, and you can hear the hiss of wind over the sands. Now you can see a dim line of red light marking the horizon in front of you. The wind is invigorating; feel the cool freshness of the air as it enters your lungs.

Now move your fingertips from your sternum to your throat, keeping the other fingers on your heart. Feel the light moving up, surrounding and warming your

throat. Your neck and shoulders are filled with energy, yet relaxed, at ease.

Now the light at the horizon has become yellow, and the stars above have become dimmer; the sky is not black, but a deep, deep purple. Now you can see the silhouettes of the mighty pyramids, sharp-edged against the dawn. They are tall, solid, the embodiment of peace, serenity, calm, and infinite patience.

Remove your fingertips from your throat and place them on your forehead, between your eyebrows, keeping your other fingertips over your heart. Sense the yellow light of dawn emanating from your fingers throughout your head, warming, invigorating. Allow the light to permeate your eyes, nose, and mouth, your ears, and everywhere, shining, enlivening, relaxing.

Lower your hands into your lap. Allow the light to spread to every part of your body, through your hips, into your legs, past your knees, into your feet, and to the tips of your toes. **The light brings life, energy, power, relaxation, readiness.**

Now the golden light of dawn spreads through the sky, driving back the darkness. See the sands of the desert seem to catch fire, the light flowing over them, so that they seem like molten gold. Still the pyramids stand in silhouette, stark and black on the horizon. At last, the sun appears between two pyramids.

Imagine its rays shining directly onto your forehead, between your eyebrows; imagine the sun light joining with the light suffusing your body. Feel this connection; it is a true connection, a real link between you and the guiding light of the universe. This light stands beside you and behind you each day, supporting you in both victory and defeat, expansion and contraction, joy and sadness. **Feel that presence with you now.**

The sunlight is warm on your skin. Your whole body feels light, powerful, rested.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow. Stretch your arms up over your head, and breathe long and slow once more.

Bring your attention again to the golden light filling you and the world around you. Hold that light in mind as you open your eyes and return to the present moment.

The light is in you, the light is with you, the light is you, always.

May you go today in peace and joy.

Sunset Meditation

Dusk Among the Redwoods

The day is ending; let us prepare to rest.

Welcome to the Sunset Meditation, Dusk Among the Redwoods. In the next 20 minutes, I will guide you through a series of images that will bring you into the evening relaxed, calm, and at peace. Sit comfortably. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow.

Now...

Close your eyes, and imagine that you are standing barefoot on the rocky edge of the sea. In front of you, the sun is going down; in fact, half of its golden-red disk has already dropped below the horizon. The sky is slashed with clouds, red, gold, purple, pink, yellow; the sea glitters and flashes with the last of the sunlight.

The rocks under you are smooth, spattered with sea foam, and warm from the heat of the day. The wind from the sea is salty and warm, and caresses your face. You can hear the crashing of the water on the rocks, and the lonely cries of the gulls, and the whisper of the wind as it plays among the tumbled stones around you.

Now watch as the sun sinks into the sea. Only a third of it is left... Now a quarter of it... The glittering sea is going dark, the dancing lights on it are disappearing; it now appears to be a vast blanket of purple gray resting under the blazing sky.

Now only one shining spark of the sun is left on the horizon... And now that is gone. The breeze picks up, a little rougher, a little colder. The seagulls seem to cry louder in the gathering darkness, but the rocks are still warm under your bare feet. Take a breath in; and now let it out slowly. **The day has ended, and night is beginning.**

Now turn from the sea and look behind you. You are standing on a soft path of sand and fallen leaves that leads into a redwood forest. Near you, the path is lined

with ferns and other short plants; further along, there are clusters of small bushes; and at last the path disappears under the huge trees perhaps 100 paces away. Their branches are dancing in the evening breeze. The path leads to your campsite. Above the trees, the sky is glowing deep, dark blue.

You walk along the path, passing the ferns. The ground is moist and springy with fallen leaf matter. The wind plays on your back, tousling your hair. Now you are passing the bushes, many of which are as tall as you are; and the breeze is lessened. The sounds of the darkening sea behind you get a little quieter.

Now you pass among the redwoods. They are tremendously tall and stately, and all is hushed and quiet under them. The light is fading quickly. The air is wet and cool. All manner of birds are singing under the great canopy. The huge redwood trunks, like mighty pillars, seem to surround you protectively. The gently rustling leaves and the birds and the wind sing of rest, peace, and sleep.

Now you have arrived at your camp, a simple dry comfortable tent next to your extinguished campfire. If you wish, you may envision a beloved companion who has been waiting for you here. You enter the tent, closing the flaps behind you, and crawl into the sleeping bag. The ground here is soft and comfortable, and the bag wraps around you warmly. You can still hear the birds and the gentle breeze. Everything else is utterly silent.

Night has fallen, and the forest whispers to you of deep peace and joy. Wrapped in the sleeping bag, enclosed in your tent, and guarded by the mighty redwoods, you feel completely safe, relaxed, peaceful, and restful.

May you sleep at peace, and rise rested and with joy in the morning.

Universal Peace and Compassion

The Zen Garden

Welcome to the Zen Garden meditation. In the next 20 minutes, I will guide you through a series of images of a traditional Japanese garden, interwoven with affirmations of universal compassion and loving kindness drawn from ancient Buddhist meditations, to cultivate peace, joy, and love. Sit comfortably. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow.

I will now count from ten down to one; and as I count, you will become more and more deeply, deeply, relaxed.

***Ten.** Relax your feet. Relax your ankles. They are warm; all tension in them is released.*

***Nine.** Relax your legs. Feel the warmth moving up through you. Your legs feel heavy.*

***Eight.** Relax your midsection. It is warm, it is relaxed.*

***Seven.** Relax your stomach, relax your chest. They are warm and relaxed.*

***Six.** Relax your back. Feel the warmth flowing up your back, relaxing all the muscles there.*

***Five.** Relax your arms, relax your hands, all the way to your fingertips. Feel your arms become heavy.*

***Four.** Relax your neck, all the muscles in it, front and back. It is warm and relaxed.*

***Three.** Relax the muscles in your face, your tongue, all around your eyes. Let all the tension disappear. Relax it all.*

***Two.** Feel the warm relaxation reach the top of your head.*

***One.** Your whole body is relaxed, warm, heavy, quiet.*

You are standing on a stone path, surrounded by a stand of tall bamboo. It is late afternoon, and golden light is everywhere, falling through the bamboo and casting bars of gold across the path. A few paces ahead, the path makes an abrupt right turn at the foot of a tall red cedar tree. There is a light warm breeze that rustles the bamboo and touches your face gently. Some distance away, you can hear a woodpecker hard at work. You can smell the cedar up ahead, as well as a freshness on the breeze that hints of open water nearby.

Now I am going to give you words of universal compassion and loving kindness. The words will plant love at the center of your self, and then expand it in widening spiral to the *limits of the imagination*. As I speak the words, say them again to yourself in your mind, and let them slowly sink into you, and become a part of you.

Love yourself.

May you be full of love.

May you be full of joy.

May you be full of good will.

May you be free from all suffering.

May your body be healthy and strong.

May you be filled with loving kindness.

May you be happy.

May you be at peace.

Now step forward along the stone path. When you come to the red cedar, the path turns right, and you step carefully up a few stone steps. At the top of the steps you look up again, and you are treated with a view of the whole garden. There is a large pond, perhaps 100 paces across; the near water edge is about twenty paces away, and the path you're on leads right down to the water, lined with unusual stones of various shades of gray and brown. A grassy verge surrounds the pond, and the path circles it. In the middle of the pond is an island dominated by a grove of evergreen bushes, and a trail of large white stones leads over the water to the island.

Now, send love to those who are dear to you.

May their difficulties fall away.

May they be full of love and strength.

May they feel only joy and good will. May they be healthy and happy. May they be at peace.

Step down the path as it leads you around the water's edge. As you walk the path, you can feel the cool breeze and see its ripples in the clear deep green water. You walk over a short rise and through a clump of shapely, long-leaved evergreens. Now the path turns, following the water, and you come to the trail of white stones

that leads over the pond to the island.

Now, send loving kindness to your friends and associates.

May they be full of love, peace, and joy.

May they feel compassion and goodwill. May they be healthy and happy. May they be at peace.

Now walk along the large, closely-spaced stones, over the water. There are only short hops between them, and you are never in any danger of falling. The white stones seem to be painted pastel gold in the afternoon light. The pond is nearly still, but ripples encircle the stones gently. You step from stone to stone.

...Now step off the last stone onto the springy turf of the island. Most of the island is covered with tall evergreen bushes, but there is a thin footpath of white stone that leads toward its center.

Before you follow this path, send love and kindness to all the people of the world, known and unknown, everywhere on earth.

May all on this planet be free from suffering.

May they be full of joy, goodwill, and hope.

May they be happy and at peace.

Now step slowly along the path to the center of the island. Here, the tall bushes part, and you see a Zen garden: a flat space of sand, carefully raked and sculpted with water-like ripples, punctuated at intervals by remarkable stones placed in the sand like a mysterious archipelago. ***I am not going to tell you the pattern of the stones;*** instead, allow their shapes and configuration to arise in your visualization without conscious intention.

May all beings in the universe be free from suffering.

May all beings in all universes, everywhere, be free from suffering.

May they be well, and happy, and at peace.

Now walk around the Zen garden; see it from different angles. Allow the deep peace and joy here, generated by the mystic stones in their mysterious pattern, to echo in your soul, and reverberate in these affirmations:

May all beings of all kinds, in all directions, be happy and at peace.

Above and below, near and far, high and low.

All types of beings.

Humans and non-humans. Seen and unseen. May they be happy; may they be at peace.

Open your heart and receive loving kindness of all beings in return. Let that love into your heart.

May all be well and happy.

May there be peace.

Guidance from Spirit

The Labyrinth

Welcome to the Labyrinth Meditation, Guidance from Spirit. This meditation is designed to bring you into a state of relaxation and peace, while simultaneously opening you up to guidance and assistance from the spiritual realm. I will guide you into a labyrinth of possibility and manifestation, where you will be free to wander and explore as your meditation guides you. At the end of the meditation you will reach the center of the Labyrinth, where you will find a treasure to help you in your waking life. Sit comfortably. We will begin in 15 seconds.

Breathe in; feel the air filling your lungs; and let out the breath long and slow. Breathe in again, all the way up; and let out the breath long and slow.

I will now count from ten down to one; and as I count, you will become more and more deeply, deeply, relaxed.

***Ten.** Relax your feet. Relax your ankles. They are warm; all tension in them is released.*

***Nine.** Relax your legs. Feel the warmth moving up through you. Your legs feel heavy.*

***Eight.** Relax your midsection. It is warm, it is relaxed.*

***Seven.** Relax your stomach, relax your chest. They are warm and relaxed.*

***Six.** Relax your back. Feel the warmth flowing up your back, relaxing all the muscles there.*

***Five.** Relax your arms, relax your hands, all the way to your fingertips. Feel your arms become heavy.*

***Four.** Relax your neck, all the muscles in it, front and back. It is warm and relaxed.*

***Three.** Relax the muscles in your face, your tongue, all around your eyes. Let all the tension disappear. Relax it all.*

***Two.** Feel the warm relaxation reach the top of your head.*

***One.** Your whole body is relaxed, warm, heavy, quiet.*

You are on a grassy path leading through a sunny wood in high summer; the sun is high in the sky. The trees and bushes lining the path are decked in brilliant golden green, and you smell flowers of all kinds in the forest – rhododendron, hydrangea, and honeysuckle. The wind whispers in the trees, and insects buzz gently.

You emerge from the forest about twenty paces from the edge of a lake, deep and green. In the middle of the lake is an island covered with a thick grove of oak trees. A thick blanket of grass lines the water's edge, and you see a rowboat resting on the brink.

Now you hear voices of people you love. They have been waiting here by the edge of the woods, sitting on benches nearby. They call out to you enthusiastically, welcoming you, congratulating you on the journey you are about to make. They are delighted that you have chosen this path of self-discovery. They encourage you to continue on, and walk with you down to the water.

A young woman is sitting on a stone bench near the rowboat, reading a book; she stands and smiles as you approach, takes your hand, and leads you to take a seat in the boat. Then she takes a seat herself, picks up the oars, and rows you across the lake.

The water skims quickly under you; lazy, thick waves ripple away from the boat and the oars as you go.

Now you have arrived at the island. The boat docks at a small pier made of white stone, and you can see more white stones forming a path, leading into the trees. The woman gives you a hand up onto the bank; then she waves a cheery goodbye, and rows back out into the water again.

You follow the white stone path into the forest. At first it leads you along the edge of the water, following the curve of the island. You can hear the occasional bird, but for the most part all is silent. Under the trees, by the water, the heat of the day is cooled.

The path continues a long time. You begin to suspect that you have gone all the way around the island, and are walking in a slow spiral, carried in towards the center.

Suddenly the trees open up, and you step into the sunlight. In front of you is an archway of green, vines teased and twisted up and over a marble arch... **the entrance to the labyrinth.** Beyond it, you can see the marble path continuing, branching and forking in various directions, lined with tall green hedges, carefully

clipped and maintained. Here at the threshold are two white marble statues. On the left of the arch is a small stone podium, and on the podium is a golden chalice filled with water. You step forward and look into the water; allow images to form there; what do you see?

You bow your head to the chalice in thanks, and leave a gift there as a symbol of gratitude. You may leave whatever gift there you feel comfortable with.

Now you turn and enter the labyrinth. The white stone path branches out in front of you, its twists and turns hidden by the high green hedges. Choose a path and walk along it. Every few paces, you see another chalice, or a small statue, or a planting of exquisite flowers.

Wander now in the labyrinth. Who knows what fountains you might see, what gardens wait for you? Perhaps you will see a plaque explaining the answer to a question you have; perhaps you will even meet someone or something to guide you on your way. Allow your feet to lead you among the branching paths, and travel with joy, for your goal is assured.

You are now arriving at the center of the labyrinth. The hedges open into a wide circular courtyard, with a small bright sky-blue pool in the center; the sun plays in its waters. A sculpture of a river sprite stands proudly at its far edge, and water splashes and ripples down the statue's surface to the pool. As you enter the space, a flock of birds lifts from the fountain and courtyard and scatters into the open sky.

You walk up to the pool, and sit at its edge. You can see now that the pool appears to have no bottom; the sky-blue upper regions give way to turquoise and darker depths below. Nevertheless there is something there in the water, something you cannot identify, apparently just a few inches below the surface, right within reach.

You realize that this is the Labyrinth's gift to you; this is a symbol of wisdom, of joy, of peace, which it is giving to you to bring back with you to the waking world.

You stretch out your arm, plunging it into the cool water, and draw it out. What is it? Feel its surface, enjoy its color and texture. Let yourself feel fully whatever feelings it evokes in you. This is your gift, your treasure. Place it by your heart, and

give it life there.

Now you may either sit here for a while, enjoying the peace and relaxation here at the center of the Labyrinth; or you may end the meditation.

When you are ready to end the meditation, simply take three deep, clear, cleansing breaths.

Draw the peace and strength of the Labyrinth into yourself, and carry that peace and strength with you back to the waking world.

Open your eyes, and arise.