

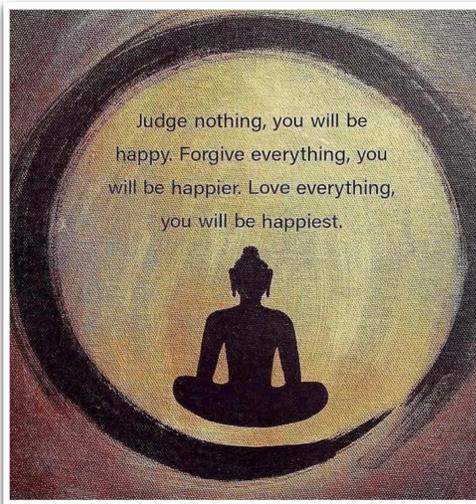
### What is Love?

Love never dies a natural death. It dies because we don't know how to replenish its source. It dies of blindness and errors and betrayals. It dies of illness and wounds; it dies of weariness, of witherings, of tarnishings.

**Anais Nin**

Above all, don't lie to yourself. The man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes to a point that he cannot distinguish the truth within him, or around him, and so loses all respect for himself and for others. And having no respect he ceases to love.

**Fyodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov**



### Do you Agree?

Ponder the quote inside the image. Let it speak to and challenge your assumptions about relationships and life itself. It's not about agreeing or disagreeing with the quote. Simply let the words find a place in your mind. Let them wash over you and see how the words shape you today and this week.

Take five breaths exhaling longer than you inhale. Then, calm your body and focus your mind on the quote.

## Labyrinth

The labyrinth is a walking meditation, a path of prayer and an archetypal blueprint where psyche meets Spirit. It has only one path that leads from the outer edge in a circuitous way to the center. There are no tricks to it and no dead ends. Unlike a maze where you lose your way, the labyrinth is a spiritual tool that can help you find your way.

-Veriditas Website

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Labyrinths are usually in the form of a circle with a meaningful but purposeful path, from the edge to the center and back out again. Each one as only one path, and as we make the choice to enter it, the path becomes a metaphor for a journey through life.

Lauren Artress

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The labyrinth requires you to choose a different space, outside of everyday paths. There is a kind of constraint you must be willing to engage in order to experience what the Labyrinth has to offer. This is not unlike life itself.

Dave Fleming



## The Way to Love

In week one we explored the “indirect route.” This means that so many of life, wisdom, and meaning is apprehended in indirect ways. Wisdom, for example, grows as we live life, learn from failure, and cultivate important ideas and actions.

**Reflect back on a goal you achieved in your life.** Can you see how the goal was achieved in an indirect manner? Reflect on the ideas and actions that you engaged that led you, in an indirect way to your desire.

**Now reflect on some element of your life you are currently exploring and/or expanding.**

What indirect ideas and actions are important for you to embrace? Bring focus and patience to bear as you walk the labyrinth of this current goal or desire.



## Walking the Path

### Courage and Vulnerability

The path to love is also indirect. We enlarge our ability to love as we walk a labyrinth lined with the stones of courage and vulnerability.

**Courage leads us to love because it invites us to summon our energy to do what is difficult and unsettling. This is often an action we must take to change ourselves or to better serve another.**

**Reflect on an area in your life where you need courage to do something life-changing.** Can you see how this action could lead you to love better in the future? What will it take to summon the courage needed?

**Name the courageous action and describe how you will engage it.**

**Vulnerability invites us embrace our human frailties. Without vulnerability we become overly reliant on self or overly controlling of others. Vulnerability evokes a grace that allows us to love.**

**Reflect on the vulnerabilities in your life.** What are those vulnerabilities saying to you and how might they invite you to better love yourself and others? How might your vulnerabilities enable you to better love others?

The Power of Both/And

**The real power of the path to love is the integration of courage and vulnerability. Each makes the other possible and together line the path to love. Embracing them together brings us to a deeper experience of love.**

**In the days ahead,** look for the moments where courage is needed and vulnerability is nearby. When you feel vulnerable, the courage to live and love well can be summoned .

**Spend some time pondering the next week of your life;** where will courage and vulnerability emerge? How can you ready yourself to walk that path?