

Breath and Heartbeat: A Ritual of Synergy for the Walk

Presenter: Vicki Longhofer

My theme centered upon the breathing process as it assists us to elicit calmness and well-being. In this handheld meditation we visualized the collaborative ritual of heart and lungs that helps us to invite and receive peace, on the labyrinth and in the moment.

Print sources:

1. Article by Edith Zimmerman:

<https://www.thecut.com/2019/05/i-now-suspect-the-vagus-nerve-is-the-key-to-well-being.html>

2. The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature *Author: David Suzuki*

From this book I used a portion of the following quote in the meditation:

“From our first cry announcing our arrival on earth to our very last sigh at the moment of death, our need for air is absolute. Every breath is a sacrament, an essential ritual.

As we imbibe this sacred element, we are physically linked to all of our present biological relatives, countless generations that have preceded us, and those that will follow. Our fate is bound to that of the planet...”

3. To Bless the Space Between Us by *John O’Donohue*. Excerpts from this poem were read before and after the handheld walk:

In Praise of Air

*Let us bless the air,
Benefactor of breath,
Keeper of the fragile bridge
We breathe across.
Air waiting outside
The womb, to funnel
A first breath
That lets us begin
To be here,
Each moment
Drawn from
Its invisible stop.
Air: vast neighborhood
Of the invisible, where thought lives,
Entering, to arise in us as our own,
Enabling us to put faces on things
That would otherwise stay strange
And leave us homeless here.
Air, home of memory where
Our vanished days secretly gather,
Receiving every glance, word, and act
That fall from presence,
Taking all our unfolding in,
So that nothing is lost or forgotten.
Air: reservoir of the future
Out of which our days flow,
Ferrying their shadowed nights,
The invisible generosity,
That brings us future friends*

Resources for Veriditas Handheld Labyrinth Walk

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*And sometimes stones of sorrow
On which our minds refine.
Air along whose unseen path
Presence builds its quiet procession;
Sometimes in waves of sound,
Voices that can persuade
Every door of the heart;
Often in tides of music
That absolve the cut of time.
Air: source of breath
That enables flowers to flourish,
And calls the dark, rooted trees
To ascend into blossom.
Air, perfect emptiness
For the minds of birds
To map with vanishings;
Womb of forms
That shapes embraces
to hold animal presence.
Air makes the distance kind,
Opening pathways for the eye
To reach the affections of things,
Yet never lets its invisible geography
Come anywhere near thought
Or the voyage-edges of the eye.
Air: kingdom of spirit
Where our departed dwell,
Nearer to us than ever,
Where the gods preside.
Let us bless the invigoration
Of clean, free air.
The gentleness of air
That holds and slows the rain,
Lets it fall down.
The shyness of air
That never shows its face.
The force of air
In wall after wall
Of straining wind.
In the name of the air,
The breeze,
And the wind,
May our souls
Stay in rhythm
With eternal
Breath.*

Audio:

Album: *Music from the Labyrinth* by artists Diana Stork and Portia Diwa

Songs: [Arran Boat Song](#) and [Heartbeats](#)

Sourced from Apple Music: <https://music.apple.com/us/album/music-from-the-labyrinth-from-chartres-to-grace/1192541549>