

CIRCLE OF DISCOVERY

Beth Lyons, SRC

Truth is something that each mystic must understand for themselves. That idea was one of my insights about being a Rosicrucian that was uncovered during a recent webinar with the Grand Master. She referenced Ernest Hemingway's idea that a writer's job is capturing "one true thing" in a story, and three times she asked us to search inside for our own "true thing" and write it down.

As I contemplated the words I'd written on the page, I was reminded of the meditation labyrinth at the Peace Garden in Mount Shasta, California. The autumn before we became Rosicrucians, my wife and I visited Mount Shasta. She was drawn to the mountain and its mystical aura, and one of the many activities we planned was a day at the Peace Garden.

The highlight was the labyrinth. It's a beautiful, heather-covered circle, winding and narrow. On the outermost edges, the trees lean in as if in witness. Near the center, the heather drapes across the path as if in greeting.

That day was a perfect fall day, the mountain regal against the bright blue sky, a slight chill on the breeze. I'd never experienced a meditation labyrinth before, so I placed my foot on the path and opened my heart.

Finding truth takes as long or as short as it needs to. That was my second idea, which felt as true as the first. Here I am not quite in the autumn of my life, and I have found Rosicrucianism. I could wish that I'd discovered it sooner, but all that I did before has led me here. And our life experiences necessarily inform our understanding of the monographs, which

means that some lessons feel easier than others. Some lessons feel like remembering.

We bring ourselves, our full selves, with us on this solitary journey. The effects of our actions, good and bad, follow in our wake: the accumulation of a life lived moment by moment. They should not hamper us, the "should haves" and "would haves." They helped us get here, to this moment. They help us recognize that the way is open before us, and now we must decide how long it takes to find our soul's truth.

As I grow in understanding, my understanding about truth grows, too. There in the Peace Garden labyrinth I didn't know what I wanted to take from the experience of walking the circle except the experience of having done it.

As I stood at the opening of the labyrinth, I could see a small statue in the near distance, at the center: a robed figure with hands outstretched. It was too far for me to discern who it might be standing in the center in the circle. Mary? Guan Yin? Hestia? I was interested to know, but that wasn't the reason to begin the walk.

The labyrinth is formed in furrows. The tops of the rows are covered in heather; from a distance it looks like the rolling hills of a sage green land. I kept my eyes on my feet at first, learning to walk this strange narrow path. I'd glance up occasionally gauging my progress by how close or far I was from the statue.

Naturally, as I moved along the labyrinth, my perspective shifted. The statue's face in profile - was that a smile on her lips? The statue from the back - were her shoulders bent with worry? As I moved around the twisting path, I considered

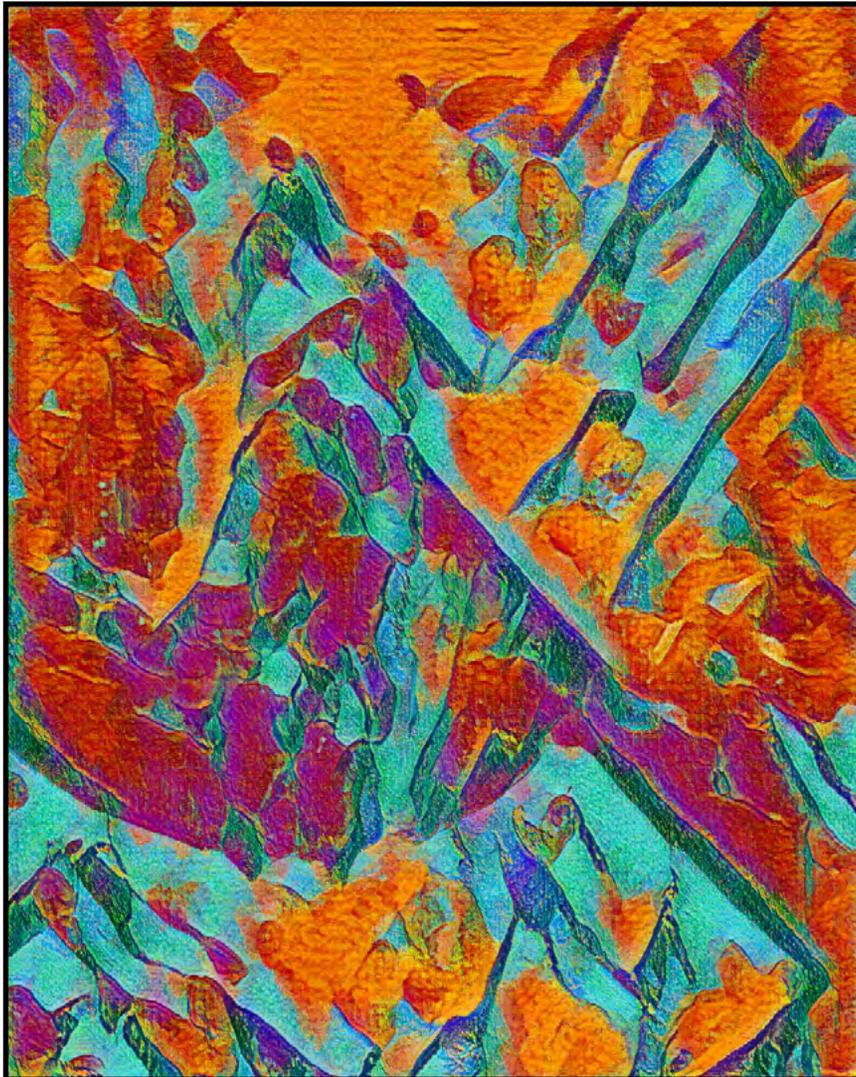
those open hands. Was the statue offering or accepting?

She's accepting, I told myself, and I considered finding a special pebble or a heather sprig to place in those hands as my own small "thank you." More steps and a different view and I realized she was offering something. The statue was offering this moment to every walker, allowing them to take what they would from the labyrinth.

I wasn't conscious of the taking, but I did leave the circle with something new. I realized later that my view of life shifted slightly that day, my steady orbit

was thrown just out of kilter by my time in the labyrinth. Journeys can change us. I knew that before I ever stepped foot in the Peace Garden. I didn't know then that we would join the Order a few months later, but I can look back to that perfect fall day knowing that I left the circle but not the path.

My understanding of the labyrinth grew as I walked it, just as my understanding of my own life journey has grown during my time with AMORC. Daily life is filled with true things, and Rosicrucian teachings have shown me that I should pause and reflect in order to recognize them.



Dawn Miracle, Geoffrey Geiger, FRC, 2021.

