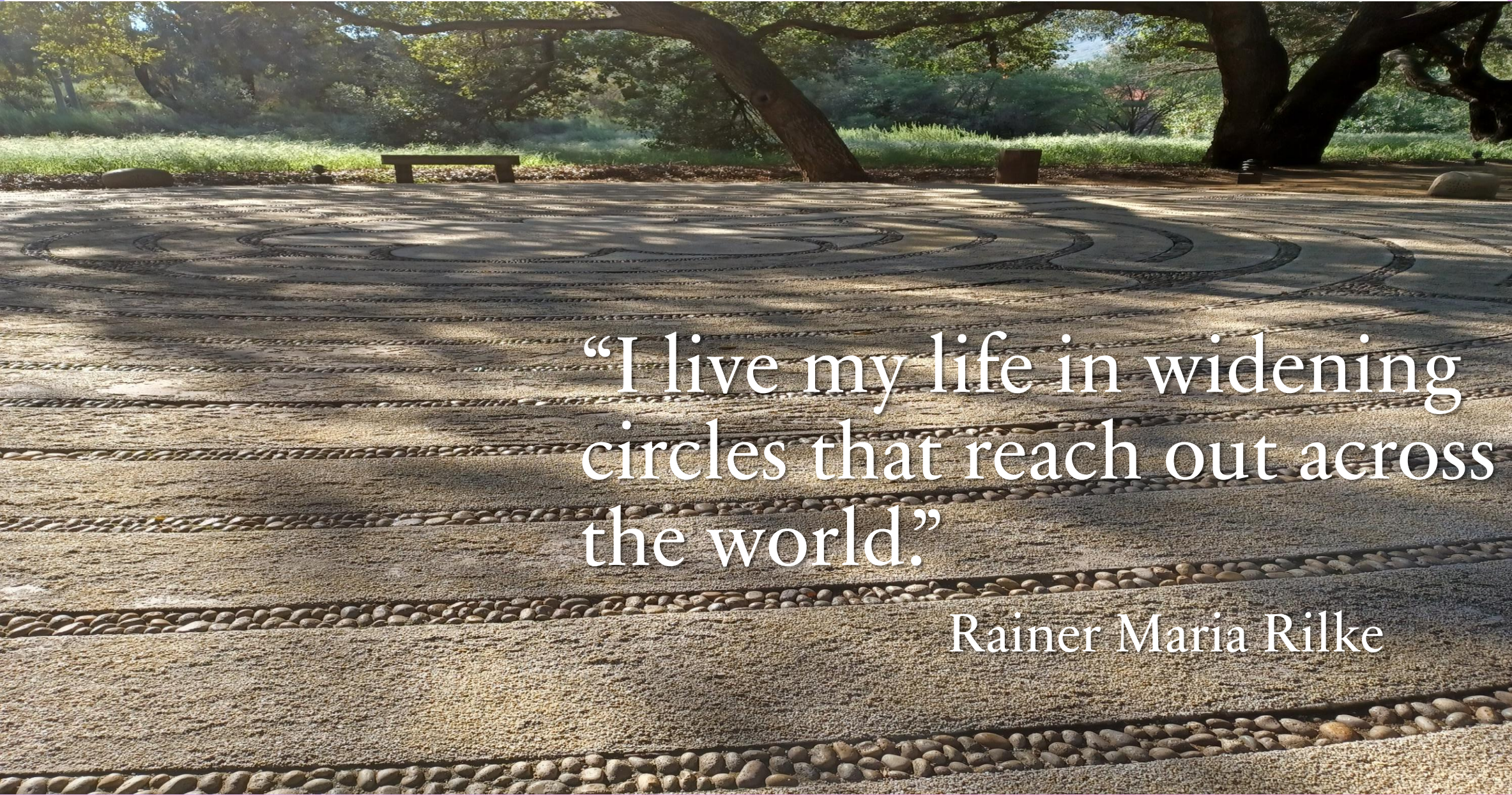




**WALKING IN CIRCLES TO NEW INSIGHTS:
CONDUCTING REFLECTIVE MEDITATIONS**

ONE STEP AT A TIME

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A photograph of a large, circular stone mosaic in a park. The mosaic is composed of concentric circles of small, light-colored stones set into a darker, textured ground. The circles radiate from a central point, creating a sense of depth and expansion. In the background, there are large, leafy trees and a wooden bench. The scene is bathed in soft, natural light, suggesting a peaceful outdoor setting.

“I live my life in widening
circles that reach out across
the world.”

Rainer Maria Rilke

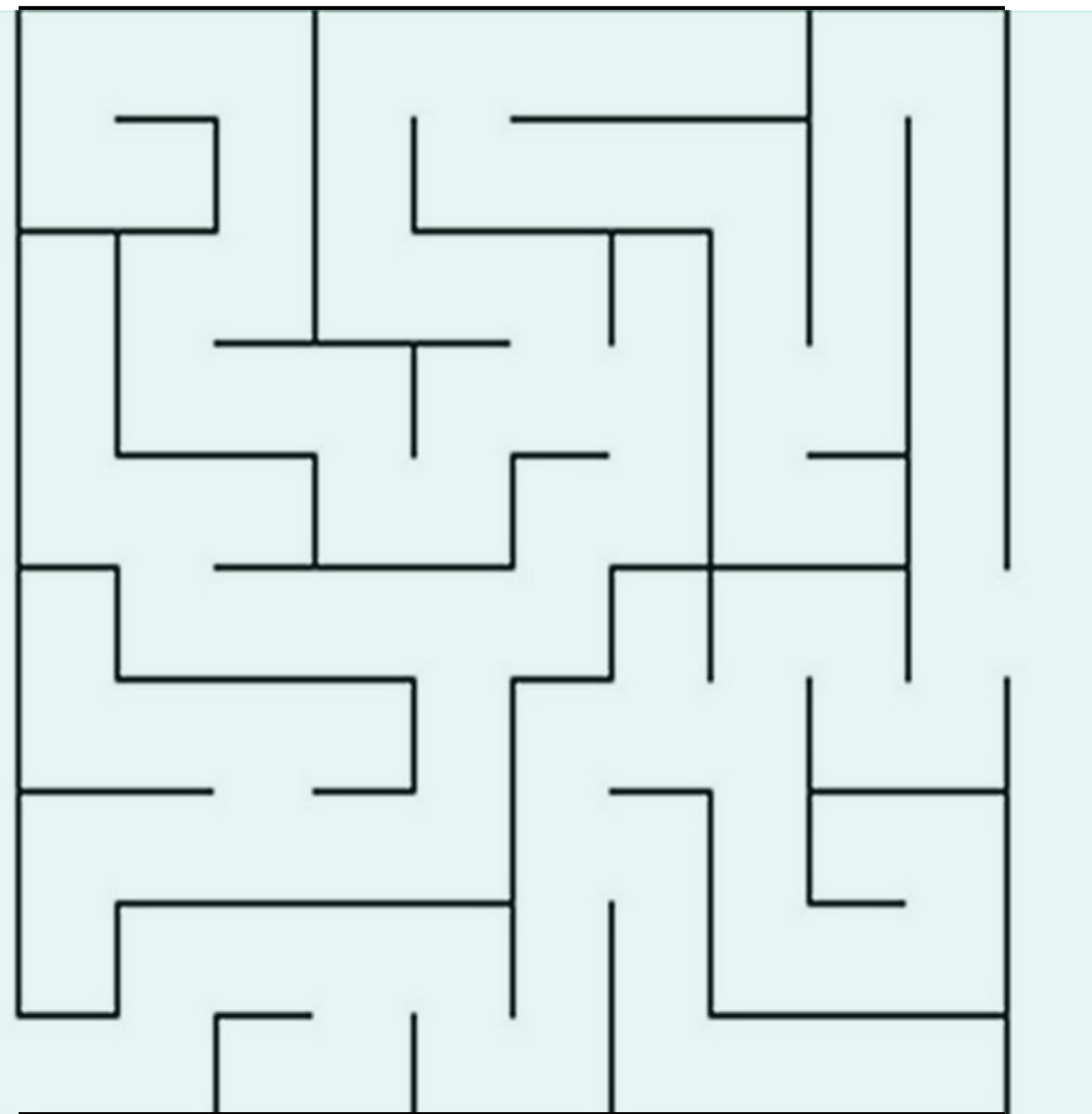


Rilke reimagined
for our profession:

“We practice law
in widening circles
that reach out
across the world.”



HERE IS AN INVITATION TO ALL OUR LEGAL COMMUNITIES – IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN PRACTICE:
**EMBODY THE COMMUNAL AND LEARNING POWERS
OF LABYRINTH WALKING**



How do we experience labyrinths and mazes? What is different?



My journey from
Indiana
to
France
to
Mexico
to
NYU School of Law
to
Singapore



Why walk a labyrinth?

- **“...whenever and wherever society is going through rapid change and development, the labyrinth has blossomed.**
- **Now humanity is seeking the sure path of the labyrinth in an uncertain and confusing world.”**
 - Jeff Saward, Labyrinth Historian
- **“ . . . a tool to guide healing, deepen**
- **self-knowledge, and empower creativity.”**
 - Reverend Dr. Lauren Artress, creator and founder of Veriditas,
 - The World-Wide Labyrinth Project

Mental Health Crisis: Touching our legal profession and our law students

- -- Ongoing studies describing legal profession's high incidence of "despair illnesses"
- -- American Psychological Association recent report describes a mental health crisis (some call "epidemic") taking place within GenZ as this generation is experiencing elevated stress levels in the face of extraordinary uncertainty

More stress to come as AI disrupts an already “disembodied” legal profession

- Are we growing/training law students and lawyers to be 2-dimensional people where their “significant lives” are found only:
 - 1) at work
 - 2) on a screen
 - and their physical bodies don’t matter?
- Is cognitive atrophy within lawyers unavoidable in a world where law practices depend increasingly on AI?

Where learning happens (or doesn't)

- Learning takes place in many forms and is interconnected: cognitive, emotional and embodied
- Cognitive processing requires attention, acquisition of knowledge and memory
- Attention Challenge: Creating and sustaining focus (need directed attention and open attention and opportunities for bridging attention)
- Acquisition Challenge: Triggering synaptic connections in brain
- Memory Challenge: Retaining and storing retrievable knowledge

Where communities of legal practice exist (or don't) in our law schools

■
Shifting reward system from a solo sport to a team sport

Bonding, not just adversarial, experiences

Entrainment – syncing bodies and minds

Why step into a labyrinth practice as a lawyer now?

- ❖ To calm our nervous systems
- ❖ To breathe deeply
- ❖ To tamp down fear
- ❖ To replace reactivity with intentionality
- ❖ To get comfortable with complexity and the disorientation that often arises from complexity
- ❖ To change our relationship with time
- ❖ To get physically proximate to others
- ❖ To shape interior patterns of responding to challenges and opportunities

Why introduce a labyrinth practice into legal education now?

- ❖ To tap into embodied wisdom (that is carried by the full body and that of prior generations)
- ❖ To grow powers of discernment
- ❖ To spur moral imaginations
- ❖ To find the pleasure in activism
- ❖ To expand toolkits to include new ways of being and expression
- ❖ To ask better questions (and dwell with them) so as to offer better answers
- ❖ To prompt thought patterns that move from the linear to the metaphorical
- ❖ To birth a new generation of lawyers who act as social healers and social creatives

Why carry a labyrinth practice to our legal communities now?

- ❖ To activate critical yeast for change
- ❖ To grow communal resilience where ruptures are taking place
- ❖ To create systems that reward cooperation over competition
- ❖ To cultivate multi-generational thinking and behaviors
- ❖ To celebrate and embrace communal victories
- ❖ To strengthen our legal communities' moral formations and build collective moral memory
- ❖ To become communities where whole human beings flourish

FIND A LABYRINTH NEAR YOU

Worldwide Labyrinth Locator website:

www.labyrinthlocator.org

Jointly sponsored by Veriditas and The Labyrinth Society, this website currently has over 3500 labyrinths listed in its database.

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