



Freedom by Rae Strozso

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An interfaith arts journal

“And it is art that is everywhere
Rejoicing of its own existence”

~Anthony Graffagnino

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A Directed Path: The Meditative Labyrinth

Maria Judnick

Put your right foot forward.
Take the next step.

Pause.

Wonder how long you should give yourself before starting again.

Realize the instructions couldn't have expected you to clear your mind completely.
Lose track of what your focusing question for the walk was supposed to be.

Inch ahead. Face your first curve.

Resolve to figure out a way to ask better questions of yourself.
Send a mental scratch down to the itch in your foot.
Stare down the pilgrim ahead of you - a steady, silent guide checking your path's progress.

Exhale.

Wish you could face the path alone; just you, the stones, the sun.

Inhale.

Assure yourself you are not yawning. Pretend you are farther along than you are. Contemplate racing ahead of that other person and their practiced tortoise spirit.

Acknowledge your terrible ideas.

Remind yourself to tell others of this moment when they ask again if you ever considered being a nun. Say to yourself that being told "well, you seem holy" should be a compliment.

Breathe in the scent of roses just off the path.
Consider stopping to sit in the garden.
Accept the buzz of distraction.

Close your eyes briefly.
Long for transcendence -- in statements, in questions -- not definitions.

Fidget.

Round another bend.

Stop.

Admit you are moving too fast.

Glare at the well-loved prayer beads of the other still engaged as they leave the path.
Vow to lead next time, then remember you decided to stop being so competitive.

Count the number of changes still to come.
Convince yourself the path is shorter than you think.

Gaze down at your feet.
Call upon every desire you've ever had to be silent.
Re-adjust your stance.

Approach the center.

Relax.

Announce a fresh start.

Doubt yourself.
Decide to give yourself a break.

Put your right foot forward.

Repeat to the end of your path.

**Photo courtesy of Deb Hansen.*

