

Journeying The Labyrinth With Pillow Talk Creations

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When attending a labyrinth seminar, Joyce Layman, owner of Pillow Talk Creations was presented with an exciting new challenge: could she capture the intricate designs of a labyrinth on a pillow?

The answer is a resounding, YES!

Besides the challenge, Joyce says, “The thing that appealed to me about putting a labyrinth on a pillow is the ease of use. Many people can't just go out and walk a labyrinth. And, a piece of wood or cardboard on the lap isn't as comforting as a soft pillow.”

Using labyrinth designs from all over the world, Joyce creates unique pillows for her customers. Designs include the Seven Circuit Concentric design and the Hopi Mother Earth labyrinth from Arizona, in both square and round designs.

Some designs are identified simply by the location they were found, such as the Santa Rosa Labyrinth from Santa Rosa, California. The two most well-known labyrinth designs she uses are the Chartres, named after the Chartres Cathedral in France where it originated, and the Classical design, believed to have evolved from the natural spiral patterns found in nature.

Labyrinths symbolize life's journey and are used to help guide the person inward to the centre of their soul. They are often confused with mazes, however they are two very different things. Mazes contain many false paths and are designed to mislead while labyrinths have only one entrance and one path designed to help people find their way. “A maze is meant to confuse you,” Joyce explains. “A labyrinth is meant to calm you.”

Joyce finds that people using her pillows gain “a feeling of calmness and relaxation” and are able to “get in touch with one's inner-self, inner-strength, and with a higher power. Whether or not one chooses to approach the labyrinth from a spiritual aspect doesn't really matter,” she says, “it's whatever is good for the individual.”

Joyce makes pillows for individual sale, for consignment sales through labyrinth facilitators and shops, and even for charities. Having made over 70 pillows, Joyce says, “I've never made two exactly the same. Each one is different. I enjoy the creativeness of it.”

All of Joyce's pillows come with a slip cover that can be removed for easy cleaning. Information about the process for using a labyrinth is also included with each pillow and personal demonstrations are available.

Joyce creates pillows from materials and designs that inspire her. “Sometimes I have one for a while before the right person finds it,” Joyce says. “People will come in and pick one up right away, saying 'Oh! I really like this one.' They usually end up buying the first one they picked.”

In addition to her own fabric choices and designs, Joyce also custom makes pillows based on whatever fabric, colour and labyrinth design appeals to the customer. The size of the pillow is the customer's choice as well. One of her commissioned pillows was for a former forestry worker who was in rehabilitation for severe physical and mental injuries. Joyce was asked to use forest colours.

“I found a fabric that had a subtle leaf-type pattern and chose green cord for the design,” she describes. “For the back of the pillow, I had pieces of tapestry fabric with leaves, acorns, pine needles and all kinds of forestry images. From these, I made a little patchwork in greens and browns. It certainly reflected the forestry image.”

Both Joyce and her customer were very pleased with the outcome.

“He used his labyrinth pillow as an integral part of his recovery, using it to focus his mind and follow with his fingers to work the small muscles of his hand,” she explains. “It was very rewarding to hear that it was helpful, because that's what a labyrinth is for; to be helpful.”

From a powerful challenge of creativity to a powerful way to help others, the journey of the labyrinth has made a difference for both Joyce and her customers.