

Introduction to The Five Paths meditation walks

pic - Valley of 10,000 Palms



In our increasingly busy ‘always on’ lives we could all do with a little more time for contemplation. Time to smell the roses, as well as the coffee. “Where is the life we have lost in living?” asks TS Eliot.

One way to recover our sense of balance in life is to practice the ancient spiritual (and healthy) practice of walking meditation which slows you down and brings mindfulness to your breath, body and Being.

The word ‘meditation’ comes from the Latin ‘medio stare’ - to stand in the middle - and the slow rhythmic pace of a walking meditation is a welcome introduction for those who, like novelist Tim Parks, pleads “teach me to sit still.”

Walking meditation has been practised over the centuries by monks and laymen, practitioners of all religions and none in cloisters, churches and cathedrals such as the labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral. But you don’t have to be a monk to benefit from these walking meditations. And you don’t need a cloister or labyrinth to walk them - they are circular and slow and can be enjoyed anywhere, anytime and will appeal to the thoroughly modern mystic in you.

Now you can become an urban monk and play these walking meditations on your iPod, phone or

mp3 player in any space where you can slow down and tune in to a more soulful rhythm.

You will feel grounded and uplifted, centred and expansive, connected with your deepest purpose and your true Self.

I created these walks on the Canary Island of Lanzarote in Ignacio's garden - the finca or country house, La Fuentecilla, in Haria in the 'Valley of 10,000 Palms' which is in the north of the island. Ignacio built the finca with his sons and he and his wife Marian have lovingly nurtured the garden in a demanding climate with many endogenous species of plants, flowers and cacti featured in Jerry Lampson's photographs. Although designed as circular walks in Ignacio's garden you will find they work just as well in your own backyard ... or any urban or green space where you can walk at a slow pace.

Just transfer the five audio tracks to your iPod, iPhone or mp3 player ... and press 'play'.

The first track is a short introduction which gives you some simple instructions and advice on how to get the best out of the meditation walks.

If you find them helpful please share your experience on www.facebook.com/TheFivePaths and 'Like' - and you can find out more about what inspired The Five Paths and the course I offer at www.thefivepaths.com.

Walking meditations - for the modern monk in you.

"Every path, every street in the world is your walking meditation path."

Thich Nhat Hanh

Enjoy.

Phil Shankland

Lanzarote, Canary Islands and Sheffield, UK.