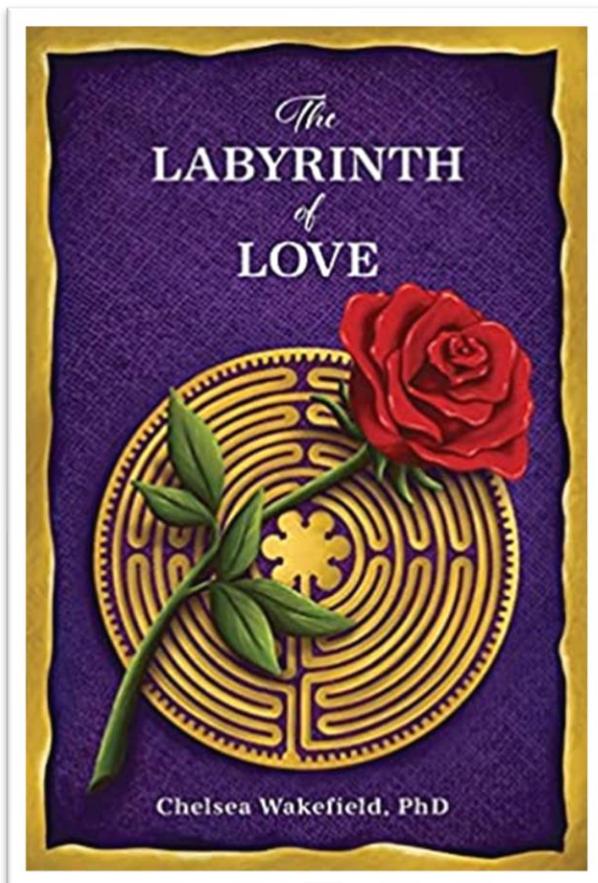


## BOOK REVIEW



by **Erick Messias**

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### THE LABYRINTH OF LOVE

**Chelsea Wakefield**

Publisher: Chiron Publications (2021)

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Dr. Chelsea Wakefield's new book on relationships is a natural product of her deep engagement with couples in therapy for many years. Like her previous books "Negotiating the Inner Peace Treaty: Becoming the Person You Were Born to Be" and "In Search of Aphrodite: Women, Archetypes, and Sex Therapy" this volume uses the Jungian vocabulary to express Dr. Wakefield's many insights and learnings on the path couples take in their relationships. In summary, this book is a master class in Couples Therapy.

The text has the poetic tone one has grown to expect in Jungian-oriented literature. The usual personality types or psychoanalytic positions are described in the "inner cast of characters" and the path towards the mature relationship is described as paths in a labyrinth. It is important here to realize the difference between the English use of the words maze and labyrinth in which *labyrinths have a single continuous path which leads to the center, and as long as you keep going forward, you will get there eventually. Mazes have multiple paths which branch off and will not necessarily lead to the center.*

At the center of this labyrinth of love Dr. Wakefield didactically places six "capacities" – which is a term familiar to those practicing Positive Psychotherapy according to Peseschkian: Commitment, Courage, Curiosity, Communication, Compassion, and Creativity. Commitment is organized into that to a person, to a process, and to a presence. Courage follows the vulnerability storyline so that those in relationship can be "all in." Curiosity builds on Dr. Wakefield's experience with dreamwork in the Jungian tradition. Communication "initiator-

inquirer” process – proposed by Elyn Bader and Pete Pearson – to get to real dialogue – the worksheets for the process included in the appendix are an added bonus. Compassion starts with the three components of self-compassion: self-kindness, shared humanity, and mindfulness. Finally, creativity is required since each couple creates its own relationship in the process of being together. The book closes with chapters dealing with the labyrinth of sexuality, the issue of faithfulness and fidelity, interpersonal dreaming, and concludes with a chapter on “the soulful relationship.”

It is important also to call attention to some pearls almost hidden in the appendix which includes recommendations on effective listening – listen calmly, ask questions, remind yourself, recap, empathize, and acknowledge each individual – and on what she call the conscious relationship roadmap – going from enchantment – where idealization and projection reigns - to the conscious relationship level – where the capacities of love are realized.

For those interested in couples therapy Dr. Wakefield maintains a website full with information beyond that included in the book at <https://www.chelseawakefield.com/>.

