



## Q&A



### ***The Unwinding Path*** ***A Soothing Stroll to Slumber***

May 19, 2026 | \$18.99, 32 pages, hardcover | 978-1-5140-1315-1

*Betony Coons is an artist, storyteller, and mom of four fierce and wonderful kids. She grew up on an apple orchard in Kansas, where she spent her days climbing trees, chasing fireflies, and letting her imagination run wild. Now she lives in colorful Colorado with her family of six, where life is full of art, adventure, and a little bit of chaos (the good kind). Betony loves to make things—whether it’s giant interactive art for kids, whimsical picture books, or an epic mess in the kitchen. She believes art is all about play and curiosity, and she’s always looking for new ways to turn everyday moments into something magical. Her art is filled with wonder, joy, and heart, inviting kids (and grownups!) to slow down and explore the beauty around them. Follow her on Instagram (@betonycoonsart) or check out her website at [www.betonycoons.com](http://www.betonycoons.com).*

## A Bedtime Story That Blends Play, Reflection, and Peace

### **What inspired you to write *The Unwinding Path*?**

**Betony Coons:** I wanted to create a picture book that invited children to move, to wiggle, wander, and play, while also gently guiding them toward stillness and peace. As I was dreaming about ways to connect movement and mindfulness, I watched my own kids running joyfully through our church’s prayer labyrinth. Their laughter and curiosity in that sacred space sparked something in me. I realized that a labyrinth, with its winding path and quiet center, could be the perfect metaphor and physical journey for a bedtime story that blends play, reflection, and peace.

### **What is the main idea of your book and what makes it distinctive?**

**Betony:** This book guides readers through a journey along a prayer labyrinth, a physical and imaginative path that mirrors the quieting of the heart and mind before rest. It weaves together poetic text, interactive prompts, and gentle sensory imagery to create a bedtime experience that is both playful and deeply centering. What makes this approach distinctive is how it invites children to engage their bodies and imaginations by tracing, touching, and breathing along the path, while also nurturing mindfulness and spiritual connection in a way that feels natural and joyful.

### **Where do you draw inspiration from for your artwork?**

**Betony:** I am constantly inspired by the wonders of the natural world and the tiny everyday details that most of us walk right past. My father is a botanist, so I grew up noticing the shapes of leaves, the patterns of tree bark, and the secret worlds hidden in a field or riverbank. As an artist, I like to slow down and look for the quiet magic of nature: shifting light, the swirl of water, paths worn by creatures, and textures left behind by time. I am also inspired by the emotional stories we carry as humans. My own children, our family adventures, and the small triumphs and worries of daily life often shape the images I make. Much of my work isn’t just about what something looks like, but what it feels like inside the heart.

### **What are five main things you would like readers to take away from your book?**

**Betony:**

- A sense of joyful play that shows spiritual practices can be full of movement, imagination, and delight.
- The wonder of exploring beautiful sacred spaces, both in the world and within themselves.
- Mindfulness tools and calming imagery that children and parents can return to in moments of restlessness or anxiety.
- A poetic journey through nightfall that reminds readers of the peace and beauty found in returning home and preparing for rest.
- Inspiration to explore and learn about real labyrinths as a family.

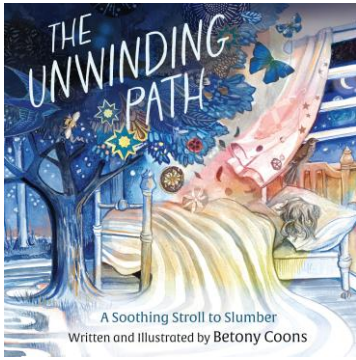


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If the little ones in your life struggle to calm and quiet themselves for bedtime, *The Unwinding Path* can help. As children trace the labyrinth's path with their fingers, they are invited to slow down and experience God's presence in the world around them. Filled with the author's tender, whimsical illustrations and a lyrical, meditative text, this book becomes more than a story. It becomes a bedtime practice that helps hearts unwind, hands unclench, and the body prepare for sleep.

#### **How has illustrating *The Unwinding Path* been different from other art projects you have worked on?**

**Betony:** Illustrating *The Unwinding Path* was different because it asked me to create a visual world that helps children gently move toward rest, reflection, and peace. Many of my earlier projects centered on play and nature, but this one invited me to pair art with spiritual quietness and emotional support. I wanted the images to be comforting companions, meeting young readers wherever they are, whether they feel curious, unsure, calm, or growing.

The project became a journey of its own. As I created the illustrations, I found myself exploring the same inner questions the book invites children to step into. It was not just about making pictures but about creating a gentle space to breathe.

#### **What was your creative process like while working on the book?**

**Betony:** My process for *The Unwinding Path* felt a lot like walking through a labyrinth. I followed my own winding thoughts, slowing down, noticing what helped me feel centered, and imagining how that experience could become pictures for a child to travel through.

I did much of the artwork in my quiet basement studio, surrounded by little scraps of paper, doodles, colors, and textures that sparked new ideas. I love gathering bits of inspiration and building new worlds from them, much the way children can create an entire universe from a few toys and a blanket.

One visual idea that threads through the whole book is the slow setting of the sun. As readers turn the pages, evening gently moves into night, just as a child's mind and body settle toward sleep.

I also spent time journaling, sketching, walking outside, and learning about calming practices used to ease anxiety and restlessness. I wanted the book to not only show a peaceful journey, but to actively help a child feel it. My hope is that the book becomes a soothing experience for little readers, guiding them toward stillness, comfort, and dreams.

#### **Is there anything else you want to tell us about your book?**

**Betony:** This book is meant to be experienced with the whole body, inviting children to trace paths, notice textures, breathe deeply, and settle into stillness. It draws from contemplative Christian practices while remaining accessible to all readers who long for a moment of peace and wonder. I see it as both a bedtime ritual and an invitation into sacred play, helping families discover that stillness and imagination can live beautifully together.



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