

## **The Journey Demystified**

The journey is a map. The basis for the journey is in almost all of the books and plays we read. The journey gives you a meaning for understanding and benefiting from fictional characters. Even if the characters aren't real, the journeys they take and challenges they encounter are reflections of the real journeys we face in life. In our own lives, the pattern is the same as we face challenges and move from child to teenager, teenager to adult, from adult to old age, and from old age into death. If we understand the journey pattern, we will be able to face difficulties and use our experiences to become stronger and more capable.

### **THE CALL**

This is the invite into adventure; however, the invitation doesn't come via snail mail. The hero may enter willingly, or more often, may be dragged into the calling. The call may come as a traumatic event (Batman), or as a slow realization of discontent. Heroes may want to reclaim something taken, sense something is lacking, want to save or restore honor, or realize a group of people are being oppressed.

### **THE THRESHOLD**

This is often referred to as the "jumping off point." It is the spot between the known, comfortable world and the unknown. At the threshold, we encounter people or situations that may block us if we are not ready, or may find guides to help us on the journey.

- *Threshold as a child*
- *Threshold as an adult*

### **THE CHALLENGES**

At this point, the adventure puts us more and more at risk both emotionally and physically. We face a series of challenges or temptations. By meeting them successfully, we build maturity and skill. We must rely on our sense of purpose and judgment to recognize true helpers. By directly facing weakness, we can acknowledge and incorporate them.

### **INTO THE ABYSS**

The challenge is so great at this point that we must surrender ourselves completely to the adventure and become one with it. There is always the possibility that because we are unprepared or have a flaw, the challenge beats us.

### **TRANSFORMATION**

As we conquer the Abyss and overcome our fears, our transformation becomes complete. The final step in the process is a moment of death and rebirth: a part of us dies so that we can be born. Fear must die to make way for courage.

### **THE ATONEMENT**

We are "at one" with our new self. We are at harmony with life and the world; the imbalance that sent us on the journey has been corrected until the next call.

### **THE RETURN**

We return to everyday life, we discover our gift, which has been bestowed upon us based on our new level of skill and awareness. We may become richer, stronger, a leader, or enlightened. The essence of our return is to contribute to society.