

The Heroic Journey

steps and descriptions below adapted from Joseph Campbell

- 1. The Call** – The moment the hero is called on a quest is known as his/her call. The hero may make a deliberate decision to start a journey or he/she may have no choice.
- 2. Allies** – Individuals who assist the hero during the journey are known as allies. They may be acquired at any point during the journey and may be family members, friends, guides, animals, or even gods.
- 3. The Preparation** – The hero needs to prepare for the journey. His/Her needs may be physical (e.g. training, supplies, etc.) or they may be knowledge-based, such as information. Occasionally the preparation is psychological. For instance, the hero may have to muster courage to begin his/her great adventure.
- 4. Guardian(s) of the Threshold** – The hero encounters obstacles which interfere with or delay the start of the journey. The obstacles may be literal (e.g. physical barriers or individuals who oppose the hero) or figurative (e.g. fears and doubts).
- 5. Crossing the Threshold** – The hero actually begins his/her journey, crossing over into a new and unfamiliar world. Often the hero realizes that in this new place, the “underworld,” he/she must acquire new skills or knowledge to function well.
- 6. Road of Trials** – The hero faces a series of difficult experiences which test the courage, strength, intelligence, determination, and wisdom of the hero in the “underworld.” It may even seem that he/she has no hope or chance of getting out of a dangerous situation.
- 7. The Saving Experience** – Just when things are at their worst for the hero, he/she meets a special person, has a powerful experience, or receives a special gift that “saves” him/her, enabling him/her to achieve the journey’s goal.
- 8. The Transformation** – The hero is changing, now understanding the “underworld” around him/her and adapting accordingly. The transformation of the hero is sometimes physical, often mental, emotional, and/or spiritual.
- 9. The Return** – The hero returns to the “normal world” but now sees life differently because of the journey.
- 10. Sharing the Gift** – The hero shares the gift of experience, knowledge, and wisdom—gained through the journey—with the broader community.