

Summary of the Steps of the Hero's Journey (Copyright 1999 Liz Warren)

A. DEPARTURE

1. The Call to Adventure is the point in a person's life when something important happens that sends the person in a new direction.

2. Refusal of the Call. Sometimes when a person receives a call to adventure, he or she refuses to go. The future hero might be afraid, or feel like he or she can't leave responsibilities, or might not feel strong enough or smart enough to start an adventure.

3. Supernatural Aid. Once the hero has started the adventure, a guide or magical helper appears to provide help. The helper does not have to be human.

4. The Crossing of the First Threshold is the point when the person actually begins his or her adventure. The hero leaves his or her familiar neighborhood and normal life and goes into unknown and dangerous places where the rules are not known.

5. The Belly of the Whale At this point in the adventure, the hero is truly between worlds. The familiar world has been left behind and the world of the adventure lies ahead. For many heroes this is a very frightening moment when they feel all alone and very aware of challenges to come. He or

she may truly realize what an important task they have taken on.

B. INITIATION

1. The Road of Trials is a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that a person must undergo as part of becoming a hero.

2. The Meeting with the Goddess After surviving the road of trials, the hero may experience a great love. In many stories it is a romantic love. Or it may be the warm heart filling love we feel for friends and family. It may also be an experience of a divine love. Either way, the hero gains strength and wonderful feeling of well being from the experience.

3. The Temptation. At some point in the adventure, the hero will be tempted to quit the journey and go home.

4. Atonement is the center point of the journey. All the previous steps have been moving in to this place, all that follow will move out from it. In this step the person must face whatever holds the ultimate power in his or her life.

5. Apotheosis. After facing and surviving the great power in his or her life, the hero may have an experience of the oneness and beauty of the universe. For some heroes it is like being in heaven. Of course, if the hero did not survive the encounter with the great power in his or her life, he or she may actually be in heaven. It is a period of rest

and reflection before the return journey is made.

6. The Ultimate Boon is the achievement of the goal of the quest. It is what the person went on the journey to get.

C. RETURN

1. Refusal of the Return. Sometimes, when the adventure has been a glorious or very satisfying one, the hero refuses to come back to normal life. If the hero is concerned that his or her message will not be heard, he or she may also refuse to return.

2. The Magic Flight. Sometimes the hero must steal the boon and then make a daring escape. It can be just as adventurous and dangerous returning from the journey as it was to begin it.

3. Rescue from Without. Just as the hero may have needed a magical guide or helper to set out on the quest, sometimes he or she must have help to come back to everyday life.

4. The Crossing of the Return Threshold. The hero crosses a threshold to return just as when the adventure began. The hero's task at this point is to remember what was learned during the quest, and to use it to make life better for him or her and others.

5. Master of the Two Worlds. At this point in the journey, the hero has learned how to be comfortable with the everyday world and the world of adventure. The hero is

comfortable with him or herself and with the rest of the world, too. He or she is equally comfortable in both places, and may be ready to be a guide for someone else.

6. Freedom to Live. When a person has survived a great adventure, and has learned to accept him or herself, they often become free from the fear of death.