



The Hero's Journey as it Applies to the Social Artist
Social Artistry Network Conference Call
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The Hero's Journey is one of the great paradigmatic patterns for the journey within and without. Gives us a sense of who we are, and the power to awaken to a new story. Social Artists help people shift from the old to the new story. We are shifting to a new order—a planetary civilization where all people are honored, and where problems are addressed in new ways. There is an essential story that encompasses all the other. Joseph Campbell researched world literature, and found a similarity between hero's journey stories in different cultures. It is about the transformation of consciousness, and it connects all people.

Social Artists can use this story to illustrate the journey of their own lives, and to evoke excitement, discovery, exuberance by putting yourself into this context of awakening. Then it becomes co-revelation.

First, tell the story briefly.

The Call: that which beckons you to leave the old situation and journey to new ways of being. What are the psychological dramas, feelings, events that bring about the call? Where does it originate? It could be a call from the earth. From the awakening of human capacities. From new societies in transition. From the breakdown of the membrane—being exposed to new cultures. From the spiritual depths.

Refusal of the Call: We often joke about it. “When I have enough money, I will get on with it.” But we can help people actualize their faith, so they don't refuse the call. Help organizations realize that their paradigm isn't working. It may be a sense of dread, being caught in the “same old, same old” stuckness, being at a crossroads, and nothing is happening. People dismay over the current conditions, but don't know how to solve problems or use skills. In the form of tough love, you give people a kick in the cosmic pants, to see a new possibility. You get them to read unlikely books, engage counselors and shamans, talking to new people.

You are always servant, never lord. It's the organic version of “Ask and you shall receive.” You help them announce to the universe that they are ready for the journey, that they are willing to respond to the evolutionary principle that is beating on the brain. You help them change the outmoded structure, and move. Some leave marriages, homes, jobs, etc., hoping that the new will arrive. You help them in the journey of revelation, and in so doing, delve into the mysteries of body and mind as they connect self to greater reality. Get them to write poetry, vision, sing, dance—help them release the stuckness that causes them to refuse the

call. You are an evocateur of new discoveries, a pathfinder of deeper realities. You help them explore the new world of the inner consciousness, and find the firing points. I start intellectually or academically, and then add a new perspective or some kind of comic foolishness. Make a commitment to a daily process, because once a new portal opens, a new approach is needed, purposefully.

Finding the Allies: In Campbell, the ally can come from anywhere. It can be magical, curious, or strange. This is part of the faith paradigm. You are in a co-creative process with others, with a few friends who support each other. You become part of a teaching/learning community. When you say “Yes,” the allies show up, even in the most unlikely situations. Example: Story of the Seven Brothers.

Crossing the Threshold: There is always a demon, always entropy. Let people dramatize it (e.g., Dame Ragnal story), and satirize it. Create a more aesthetic or comical version, and then people can face it with a new mind. It can represent fixed attitudes and habits. It can show up as supervisors or friends who invest in the status quo. It hones our pluck and cunning to find witty ways to get past its rigidity. Use creativity exercises. Use extended senses, brain exercises, dramatizing the demon and getting past it, etc.

The Realm of Amplified Power: Once across, the hero is swallowed by the unknown. They go into the belly of the whale, enter crystal caves, going into a sarcophagus for three days and nights—different traditions. Reconstruction occurs here. We let go of the habits that are no longer useful. It can involve deep silence and listening. I also use the “Via Positiva”—getting in touch with the nature of genius, creative power, seeing new possibilities.

The Great Journey in this Realm: You take on more allies and supernatural partners, see the deeper patterns of your co-creators. You are allowed your project or vision, and you tap into your image-making mind to help you. You find your own adventures and stories. Train people to see the four levels within themselves. Introduce the concept of trim-tabs. There is a new willingness to find ways to build a network of support and change.

Sacred Marriage with the Beloved of the Soul – Transformation: You recognize the givens of the situation or the society or things as they are, and you enter into atonement (or at-one-ment)—release of old patterns that kept you stuck. This can be a celebration. It can also involve coming into resonance with the entelechy, and trusting that a very great enterprise has been entrusted to each of us, by virtue of our being human. Help them Know that what we do in time and space is important. In a corporate setting, you can use stories of the Dalai Lama or Mother Teresa. Find a

larger partnership, or the deepest qualities within the self—love, peace, the greater story, that which gives meaning.

The Return: After facing trials and receiving supernatural help, the hero has a number of revelations. Thus the hero returns with boons or gifts that revitalize the community.

Questions

What do you do when you're in an organization that resists change and is in a state of entropy?

Jean – You can “hospice it out.” Or you can take the road of trials and take on other journeys—either creates within another alternative, or spends time with the leader and takes them through their own hero's journey, and look at the story from different perspectives. The great story can be downloaded into the personal. People get entrenched within the drama of their own story.

There seems to be an important distinction between those who are feeling the openings, the opportunities, and hope in the midst of destruction, and those who are holding on to fear, downward spiral.

Wendy – I've been in all these stages. It's difficult to stay with it through the difficult times.

Jean – Sometimes it's about knowing when to let go, and be sourced in water or earth. We don't have to be “on task” or “on journey” all the time. Odysseus has long resting points, like seven years on the island where he is tended to, and deepens. The belly of the whale can be a place of deep restoration, where the wisdom of the soul takes over, and you allow yourself to be renewed. It's “cosmic R&R.”

If you work with a group, lay out the hero's journey. Is there a good resource, or how would you do it?

Jean – The summary is in [A Mythic Life](#), the [Social Artistry Field Book](#), [The Hero and the Goddess](#). Use a diagram.

As a novice, I have difficulty with a daily process. How do we undergird the commitment to a daily process?

Jean – Identify a process that fits for you. Draw or write it—express it. Put it up, so the sun illumines it. Give it stained glass window status. Gather with friends and formally make a dedication to the process. Have them bless it, and check in with you regularly.

Comment: I've taught The Hero's Journey, and used it extensively. I feel like I'm in the belly of the whale. Allowing for a space for something new to emerge is almost an organic process. There is a piece that is not arduous. Sweetness and sustenance come in. It's a strong, amazing journey. I love the idea of acting it out. We can use our bodies and show what it's like to refuse the call, cross the threshold, etc.