

OVERCOMING FEAR & BECOMING COURAGEOUS

The Hero's Journey

“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.” -Anais Nin

What I've found is that when it comes to people changing their lives, they're often times in COMPLETE conflict with themselves! On the first hand, they know that there's *gottttta* be more to living life than a meaningless, mediocre, monotonous existence. But that other pesky paw of theirs is embarrassed to admit that they're not fully satisfied with their life. And it's understandable.

Society says loudly and clearly that we're supposed to play along with the way it works. If we don't, we're considered outcasts... rebels... frightening freak-shows! Big brother doesn't accept questioning. Na! No hand-raising and no suggestion boxes.

Consequently, some people have a hard time expressing themselves authentically. They put up a front and half-heartedly walk around, grudgingly engaging in what they “SHOULD” do.

The hero's journey is bigger than all that ass-crackle. It's about following your bliss – the stuff that gets YOU excited - not Uncle Sam dollars.

The idea was first introduced to me by Joseph Campbell and comes from classic mythology. As you read along, feel free to *be the hero*.

Essentially, in all great stories of triumph, there's a hero who goes out into a forest of the unknown. He's excited because he doesn't yet know the outcome of the journey that awaits him. But by the same token, it freaks him out because the forest appears dark, dangerous and scary.

This journey requires the hero to change his old habits; to shed his old skin. He's gonna have to let an old part of himself die so a new and improved part can emerge.

He looks for the path he's supposed to travel but realizes that it hasn't yet been paved. If there IS a path that already exists, it's not his! He must make his own way in order to reach his full potential.

The hero continues to travel through the terrain and is faced with challenges; he battles dangerous demons and fights ferocious dragons with flaming fire breath.

Ultimately, the hero defeats the opposition and moves forward to find the treasure that awaits him. Homeboy, I mean *hero*, claims the treasure and then ventures back through the forest to bring it home.

We all have our own unique hero's journey ahead of us – both internally and externally. It looks



dark and scary and we think that there's a big-bad-dragon with garlic breath waiting to suck us up like split pea soup. Maybe there is, but when our dreams are at stake, it's worth the battle!

Your soul is calling to you. It's tryna tell you that you have a unique path that only you can take. Your mind can rationalize all sorts of award winning reasons why you shouldn't take the untraveled trail. But to deny that call from your soul is to deny yourself the life that you deserve to live. It's the difference between being fully ALIVE and cruising aimlessly on auto-pilot all your life.

If you don't answer that call, not only will you waste the positive energy that enables you to go get the treasure, but that same energy will turn negative and ultimately, it'll destroy you!

If we wanna live a life on purpose, we've gotta go out on our own hero's journey. (Check out ***A Joseph Campbell Companion*** for more on this!)