

## The Hero's Journey

A hero is often considered to be someone born with outstanding ability, courage, and bravery. But are heroes really born that way... are they superior beings?

Some heroes you are familiar with have forged their strength and character through their experiences. Their bravery and courage are developed in spite of fear and human failings. Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* must travel with her companions to develop qualities of courage, heart, and brain before she can return home with a new appreciation for her loved ones. And in the recent movie, *Titanic*, Rose must learn to take hold of her own life and make it truly her own.

Television has its share of action heroes and battles between the good guys and the bad guys. But perhaps you could also think of these stories and images as reminders of the heroic nature of your own individual journey--no matter how ordinary you may think your own life is.



Many artists have depicted the hero's journey as a great battle with evil or a quest for something sacred that will help their community. Other heroes must complete a bigger-than-life task. We love these stories! Gawain, Percival, and Galahad quest for the Holy Grail and Jason for the golden fleece. Hercules must complete twelve nearly impossible tasks as an act of penance.

A familiar theme in paintings is Michael slaying the dragon. In our own lives, the dragons we meet are not so much breathing fire *on* us as breathing fire *in* us. Our dragons might be an illness or a loss or a great fear. Or perhaps we have to conquer self-doubt. Slaying the dragon can be an important metaphor for our inner quest for peace, truth, love, and wisdom.

### What are *your* dragons?

Sometimes, the hero's journey involves learning to believe in ourselves and our ability to play our part. We may even need to grow into and accept our ability to lead others, overcoming guilt or confusion--you remember Simba in *The Lion King*? Joseph Campbell taught that the hero's journey is primarily a journey to the center of yourself, an inner journey to wholeness and understanding.

So it's possible to see your entire life as a hero's journey.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Frayer's Model

What \_\_\_\_\_ is...

What \_\_\_\_\_ is not...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Persistence

Examples of \_\_\_\_\_

Non-examples of \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.