

## International Conversation Cafe

Lifestyle Topic: Hero Journey

Throughout history, people are inspired by those who show unusual courage and achieve beyond the ordinary. We call them heroes. Countries celebrate their heroes by setting aside certain days to remember them. They also have monuments and statues where their achievements are remembered.

*Who are your country's heroes and what makes them heroes?*

*What are some of the famous monuments and statues or days devoted to your country's heroes?*

Some heroes are recognized around the world. These could be people who have worked in politics, the arts, science, religion, or education.

*Name some people that have accomplished great achievements in these areas. Would you call them a hero? Why or why not?*

Joseph Campbell, an American author wrote the book, *The Hero's Journey*. In the book, he details steps that heroes find themselves on. Their journey eventually transforms them. Though Campbell outlines seventeen stages, they can be condensed into three stages.

1. Departure or separation. This is when a person begins on a new path, a new journey.
2. Initiation. This is when the person meets difficult challenges. Often, they find a mentor or resource that helps them through the difficulty.
3. Return. This is when the person is transformed with new abilities, skills, and compassion they then can pass on to others.

*Think about your country's heroes. Do they follow the steps that Campbell suggested? Explain. Do you have any personal heroes, people that have helped you through difficult times?*

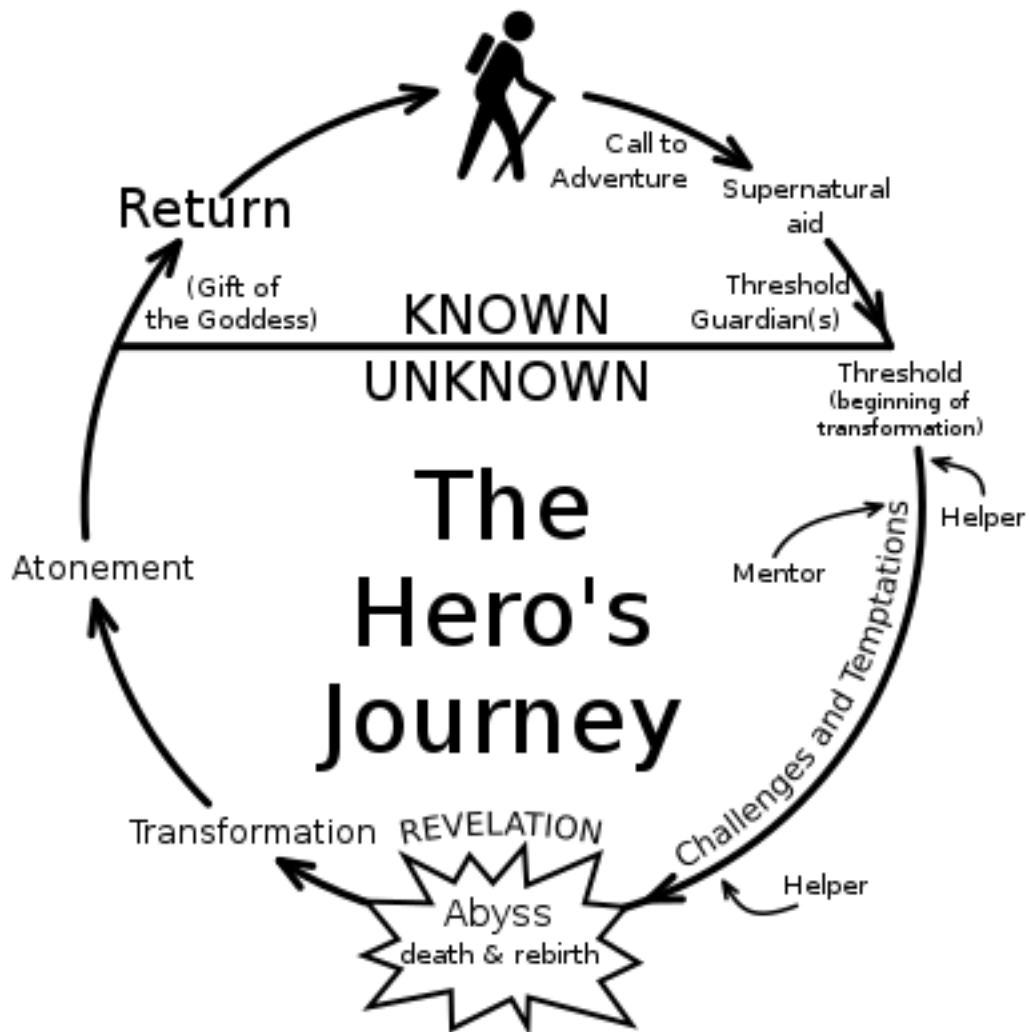
Often, we have fictional heroes. George Lucas, the author of Star Wars, was influenced by Joseph Campbell's writings. Many current films follow the themes of heroism described by Campbell. The internet is filled with lists of the all-time best superhero films. *Wonder Woman*, *Logan*, *Thor: Ragnarok*, *The Dark Knight*, and *Spiderman* is the top of the list for the Rotten Tomatoes website.

*Who are your favorite fictional heroes and why? Do their stories follow the steps outlined by Campbell?*

Have you ever seen yourself on a "hero journey?" The start of a new semester, especially if you are beginning in a new school and/or a new country is sure to bring you new challenges that perhaps you have not encountered before. Without a doubt, you will learn something about yourself and the world around you.

*Explain new challenges that you have already met or expect to meet due to your new direction. What resources or mentors can you draw on to meet the new challenges? How do you see yourself changing as a result of your new experiences?*

The image outlines the basic path of the monomyth or "Hero's Journey."  
 Choose a hero and see if you can trace their journey through the diagram loosely based on Joseph Campbell and Christopher Vogler's work.



The diagram is loosely based on Campbell (1949) and (more directly) on Christopher Vogler, "A Practical Guide to Joseph Cambell's The Hero with a Thousand Faces" (seven-page-memo 1985).

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Heroesjourney.svg>