



The Hero's Journey

By Alvin Soon

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1: The Ordinary World

The Hero's Journey was originally coined by [Joseph Campbell](#) from his book [The Hero with a Thousand Faces](#). He was an American professor who studied the myths across different world cultures and found that they had common patterns of story woven through them.

For some reason, these patterns of story are so prevalent in our human psyche that even today, the movies and novels of our time still follow it. It's almost as if this story pattern reflects our everyday lives and journeys so much that we build it back into the stories we tell.

Find yourself on The Hero's Journey, and you find yourself. Where are you on your Hero's Journey? The Hero's Journey first starts with...

The Ordinary World

You begin in the mundane world, where everything is status quo. Or is it? Everything seems ok, and that's just the problem, isn't it? Everything is *just ok*. But sometimes, a soft little voice inside your head tells you that there should be something more. You can't quite articulate it yet, but you just get this nagging feeling, maybe it's you, or maybe it's everyone else, but life can't be just about this...

In the words of Morpheus from [The Matrix](#):

"It's that feeling you have had all your life. That feeling that something was wrong with the world. You don't know what it is but it's there, like a splinter in your mind, driving you mad."

Where are you right now in your life? Is it where you want to be? Or do you get the sense that something's just not quite right, that something needs to be changed? Maybe it's not about the external environment; do you feel that it's you who needs changing?

You feel it, don't you? That there should be something more.

Listen to the voice that separates you from your ordinary world, because it's asking you to take a step further on your Hero's Journey. What does it say?

2: The Call to Adventure

The Call to Adventure

All this time, you've felt a nagging feeling that something's not quite right, that something needs to change, and there should be something more in your life. You haven't thought about it till now, but as you reflect on that message in [The Ordinary World](#), you realize just what it is.

In The Call to Adventure, you will face 2 things: the pain of something in your life that you're no longer willing to accept, therefore you must move out of your old world, or the pleasure of a new goal, that will thrust you into The Hero's Journey.

What is it you're no longer willing to accept anymore in your world? And what is a new goal that you want to set for yourself, a goal enticing and powerful enough that would want to make you leave behind your old world and step into a new one? That's the treasure you seek.

And this is your Call to Adventure.

But is this the first time you've heard this call? In The Hero's Journey, many heroes actually refuse the first call to adventure. They might be reluctant to do so, perhaps they fear the challenges that they imagine they might face, or they think perhaps they're not the best person for this mission.

This is called the inauthentic state, because it's inauthentic to believe that you're not good enough compared to someone else. It's inauthentic to believe that you don't have the resources you need already inside you to rise up to any challenge you'll face. It's inauthentic to believe that other people deserve the treasure at the end of the journey while you don't.

In the words of [Marianne Williamson](#):

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's

in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

In short, it's inauthentic to recognize that you *are* the Hero in The Hero's Journey.

For heroes who refuse the call to adventure, there's only one thing that happens: they flounder. They start dying inside...but the call keeps coming, until one day they have no choice but to answer the call. Events sweep them up into motion, they find themselves drifting along without a direction until they're just before a waterfall and they realize they have to start paddling like crazy or they're dead. They are forced, they don't choose, to undertake The Hero's Journey.

Wherever you are in your journey, what is it that's calling you to step out into a new world now? Is it something you're no longer willing to accept? Is it a new goal you need to set for yourself? What's the treasure you're after? What in your life is calling you to a new adventure?

3: Meeting the Wise Mentor

Meeting the Wise Mentor

An interesting thing happens as soon as you commit to The Call to Adventure, when you've had it, things are going to change, they're going to change now, you're leaving The Ordinary World of the status quo and there is no turning back; a wise mentor appears to guide you.

It's simple. Haven't you heard someone tell you about their goals in a very wishy-washy, not sure kind of way before? When it's obvious they're not committed? Do you feel inspired?

But what happens when you listen to someone describe their goals with utter conviction? You feel like helping them, don't you? You're swept along by their drive! You think of someone they should talk to, a book they should read, or a company they should approach.

In the words of Goethe:

“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.”

A wise mentor might appear in the form of a person, a book, a movie, or the lyrics of a song. He or she might appear to give you a special tool, advice, or training to help you face the challenges in your Hero's Journey.

As you think about the treasure you're after in this journey, what are the wise mentors you could use? In this day and age we're surrounded by an abundance of mentors, either people you can meet in person, talk over the phone, thru the internet, or books, videos and audio programs from experts you haven't even met,

from across the globe, who can give you instant advice.

As you go across your day, keep your eyes and ears open. Notice what mentors 'magically' pop out to give you advice you can use. Is it going to be someone you meet? A song you overhear? A book you glance over? A course introduced by a friend?

And who would you choose to be the wise mentors in your Hero's Journey, and what would they tell you?

4: Crossing the Threshold

Crossing the Threshold

You've committed to leaving behind the Ordinary World and stepping into the New World of your Hero's Journey. And as you do, you're exposed to new sounds and sights, new learning, surprises, adventures and experiences you've never had before.

As you do so, you might feel out of place. You might feel uncomfortable, inexperienced. You are the proverbial babe in the woods. You ask yourself, 'What was I thinking to leave my ordinary world behind?'. We've all been in situations like this.

But you're stretching beyond your old self.

Sometimes, when crossing the first threshold, you meet with boundaries. It might be the environment, a roadblock or obstacle in the way, the road might be too far away, a storm or a drought might test your resolve, or it might be people, who come up and challenge you.

Meeting the Threshold Guardians

These are the Threshold Guardians, who will test if you're serious about setting out on your journey. The Guardians are there to test your commitment, they might throw all kinds of obstacles, threats or difficulties in your way to make you back off and go home.

The Threshold Guardians will not waste their time, they've seen too many people who start out with grand ideas but give up at the very first obstacle. But once you've shown these guardians you're not only inspired, but committed; by locking down and doing the hard work, ignoring naysayers who want to discourage you from leaving the flock, by leaving behind cumbersome luggage that was only weighing you down, by passing the guardians' tests; you are allowed passage into the brave New World.

Who or what are the Threshold Guardians you'll have to face in crossing the first threshold into the new world of your Hero's Journey? Are they people you have to meet, places you have to go, things you have to do that are outside of your comfort zone? Or are they fears and doubts you have to overcome inside of yourself?

Into the New World

Once you're in the New World in pursuit of your treasure, you have to learn new rules, you have to go to new places, see, hear and feel new things. How do things work differently in this new world? What new gadgets, weapons, and magical instruments do you need to learn to use? How do you need to interact with your new environment to get what you want?

How do the people act differently, how do they think? What's the new language they speak here? How do they carry themselves, discuss, argue, and carry out deals?

Where is your New World, and what threshold do you have to cross in order to get there? What do you have to learn in order to not just survive, but thrive in this new place in search of your treasure?

5: Meeting Your Helpers & Challengers

Now that you've passed your **first threshold** and have entered into the New World, you'll begin to meet new people and situations. You might be charting unknown territory in the New World, and you'll also be seeing new sides of yourself you've never known before.

You will be tested in the New World.

The good news is, you will also be helped.

Whenever a Hero moves forward to seek his treasure, he'll trigger resistance. No matter how great the outcome you want to create, someone else somewhere is not going to want the same thing. You might discover that the New World is more complicated than you thought it was.

Resistance is good when you use it to grow; the only way you can build muscle is to increase the resistance you bring to bear on it. Your skills, talents and abilities are tested and stretched in the New World. The challenges you face might test your limits, but every time you surmount them you grow, and every time you don't, you learn and sharpen your game.

Unearthing negative energy can be positive, because bringing problems to the surface will allow you to solve them and either negate them or turn them into resources. On the other hand, the negative energies will do anything in their power to save themselves.

But the more persistently you act in the direction of your treasure, the more you'll attract helpers and allies who'll want to aid you in your cause. In the test of trials, you'll meet your sidekick, your lover, your mentor, your friend, your ally, your objects of power.

Who are the helpers in your New World? Who are the people and resources that will aid you in your **Hero's Journey**? How about internal resources and allies inside you, the skills and talents that you already have?

Who and what are the challenges and tests you're facing? How can you overcome them or turn them into resources for you? Which of these are internal challenges you have to overcome, like fear, resistance or doubt?

The more you stretch the higher levels your challenges become. You might not realize it, but the challenges you're encountering along the way are strengthening you up for the biggest test of all, as the stakes are raised and things get more and more difficult. The next threshold you're coming up against is going to be even stronger than the first **Threshold Guardians** you faced down. Something's coming, but what?

6: Into the Innermost Cave

Now the challenges you faced in [meeting your helpers and challenges](#) have escalated to a point where you can no longer avoid them or ignore them: you must face them and end them once and for all, or risk losing your treasure forever.

To do that you'll have to take your [Hero's Journey](#) into the source of your worst fears and difficulties. This is the second threshold you have to cross in your journey, and it is more fearful and difficult than the [first](#). This is the journey into the dangerous Innermost Cave, the beginning of your deepest and darkest point in your [Hero's Journey](#).

In real life, it might be as simple as walking into the office of someone who's been giving you difficulties from day one, a sudden phone call from someone you've been avoiding, or an inward journey to confront your worst fears and doubts. This is when you see the face of the negative energies that have been impeding your progress, and you discover their true extent.

The face of these negative energies is usually called the Evil One in the Hero's Journey, the main antagonist of your journey. It might be someone real, a circumstance you have to overcome, or an internal obstacle.

Where is the Innermost Cave in your own life? Who or what is your Evil One? Is there someone you've been putting off facing even though you know you need to? Is there a situation that's been giving you difficulty but you've avoided facing? Or a limiting belief that's been weighing around your neck slowing you down?

What is the one thing that is most stopping you from reaching your treasure right now?

7: The Supreme Ordeal

You've walked into the [Innermost Cave](#) to confront your worst fears once and for all, and you know there is no turning back; you either make it or break it.

This is the final test to which your challenges and helpers have been helping you to grow stronger for; this is the final stage of your initiation from the [inexperienced, naive, inauthentic state you started out from](#) into a true Hero.

Remember the saying 'it is always darkest before the dawn'? You'll know when you're at this stage in your journey when everything seems bleak. You've journeyed into your [Innermost Cave to face down the Evil One](#) and suddenly you realized that he, she or it is stronger than you thought.

All hope seems lost, your confidence is sinking, and you're afraid and trapped. There is no-where to run, this is the deepest and darkest point in your [Hero's Journey](#).

We've all faced times like this. I know I have, how about you? When was the last time you felt this way, or are you facing a similar situation in your life right now?

The Change

And yet, there is something inside of you that won't give in. It might be someone else you know who's depending on you. It might be the knowledge that if you don't stop the Evil One he will continue to wreck his evil on others. Or it might just be the fact that if you don't do something now, you know you'll never be able to live it down.

Whatever the case, you have no choice, for the greater good you know you cannot give up, you have to rise above your despair and go forward.

This is what begins to trigger The Change. Regardless of whatever dangers might befall you, you're determined to move forward and end the Evil One's hold over you, no matter the cost. And that commitment triggers a rush of positive resources that have been dwelling and growing within you from the moment you started out on your Hero's Journey.

With this decision, you have proven that despite the very real danger of failure, and despite facing your worst demons and fears, you have

chosen to see through your Hero's Journey until the very end. In some stories, this part of the Hero's Journey is also called The Sacrifice.

What is the greater cause for which you're willing to overcome your limitations and push on? What are the resources you'll need which would help you do that?

The Climax

You take up arms against the Evil One and begin your final assault. For good or evil, this is the turning point. With the rush of new resources strengthening you, you rise up against despair and overwhelming odds; you face your biggest challenge, your most difficult test of all.

And, stretching yourself past your limits, calling every skill, strength and talent in you, you do what you once thought impossible: you triumph over the Evil One.

It could be an argument you finally win, a decision finally made, someone agreeing to leave you in peace, or a deal secured. It might be a rule changed, or a rule made. It might be a limiting belief you finally break, a moment of hard-won clarity you gain about your own life.

When you finally defeat the Evil One, who represents the worst of the negative energies you face in your Hero's Journey towards your treasure, it also means that you've become the master of these negative energies. You've stretched yourself so far beyond your old self from the Ordinary World that you will no longer return back to that state, your initiation is complete and you are now a true Hero.

8: Claiming Your Treasure

Claiming Your Treasure

You've faced down **your worst demon** in **his stronghold**, and you've defeated him. You're no longer in the **inauthentic state** you were in when you were stuck in your **Ordinary World**, your initiation by fire is complete and you are now a true Hero.

It is time to claim your Treasure, the goal of your Hero's Journey.

It may be a thing that you wanted, like a car, or someone you love, a recovery from illness, a comeback in business, a raise, an achievement like a book published, an event accomplished, or something intangible like knowledge or self-worth. Another word for the Treasure is the Elixir, something that once you possess, will change you forever.

And hasn't the Hero's Journey changed you already? It has stretched you beyond your old self, given you tests that have challenged you to grow, forged new friendships and alliances along the way, brought you to new places in the world, and let you know of weaknesses but also resources within you that you never knew you had. The Hero's Journey itself has been a Treasure of sorts, giving its own rewards along the way.

We've all had times when we've triumphed over the difficulties of life and achieved our heart's desires. Times like that when we feel on top of the world, and let us know just how strong and resourceful we can be. Celebrating those victories help stack up our self-esteem and confidence, and they are always worth acknowledging, no matter how small.

When was the last time you claimed your treasure? How did it feel? What empowering beliefs did you build or can you build from that experience to aid you in the future? And how many more victories can you remember, right now?

9: The Journey Home

You've achieved your heart's desire, and claimed your Treasure. And now you're ready to make the journey back into the [Ordinary World](#) from where you came.

But when you return, you're not longer the person you used to be. You've been strengthened by your Hero's Journey. And no longer is the [New World](#) the place of uncertainty it used to be; now it's a place you know intimately, with friends and allies you can count on. You have become the master of both worlds, free to journey in-between both.

If you've been overseas you'll understand this feeling. Before you go, the new country might seem intimidating, you're a little nervous, not knowing exactly what to expect. But as you travel around the country, learning its rules, you learn to adapt yourself to this new place and how to survive and thrive in it. And when you return to your home country it is no longer an unknown you're afraid of, but a place you know you can return to with confidence.

Using Your Treasure

The Journey Home is also the time when we begin to think outside of ourselves; it's not just about us, now how can we contribute? You're returning with your Treasure, what if its use isn't limited to just you? How can you use it to help better the people living around you in the [Ordinary World](#)? Most of them have no idea what lies outside of it, and what can be possible for them if they just step outside of their comfort zones and [Cross the Threshold](#) into the [New World](#) that lies beyond.

You've returned with stories and experiences they can only dream of, and perhaps you stir the awakenings within some of your friends of a desire to go into the [New World](#) but one look at your battle scars and they might be frightened off. But you know the only secret to your success here was that you started, and figured out everything else along the way.

Who knows? You might just inspire someone to start on their own Hero's Journey and seek their adventure. At that point, you might become the [Wise Mentor](#) to someone like someone was to you.

The treasures you've accumulated in your life, whether intangible like knowledge, or tangible like money, will benefit someone else out there who needs it. To whom and where can you bring the benefits of your treasures? What can you contribute, and to whom?

The Next Journey

After the return home, after the celebrations that might have greeted your return, after visiting with your old friends and family, after settling down and taking it easy for a while, you begin to get the nagging feeling again that something isn't just quite right, that there should be something more...

Life itself is a series of journeys, and you know the journey doesn't end here. To grow, to become more, you know you need to seek new Treasures, face down the new challengers, meet new helpers, explore new worlds and so keep on growing your skills and abilities.

So, one day, you set out on a new Hero's Journey, and it starts again.

If you find yourself at the end of one of your Hero's Journeys, what is the next one you can take? What is one new goal you can set that will excite you, stretch and grow you?

The Hero's Journey: Conclusion

The Ordinary World

You started out in the [Ordinary World](#) of your life; with nothing but a nagging notion that things could be better than the status quo you saw all around you, that there must be something more to life.

The Call to Adventure

That nagging feeling built up until you couldn't take it anymore, and you received the [Call to Adventure](#). Finally, a chance to change things!

Meeting the Wise Mentor

When you finally committed to making that change, you found help and information. [A Wise Mentor](#) appears to guide you before you set out on your journey, whether through the advice of a friend, a paragraph in a book or the lines of a song.

Crossing the Threshold

Whether it was the pain that something wasn't acceptable anymore in your life that drove you on more, or a goal so enticing that you knew you had to move forward, you [Crossed the Threshold](#) into the New World, facing down the Threshold Guardians, in search of your Treasure.

Meeting your Helpers & Challengers

In New World, you began to meet [Helpers & Challengers](#). All sorts of tests and challenges came your way in the New World as you struggled to be the master of it. At the same time, you built friendships and allies that aided you on your Hero's Journey.

Into the Innermost Cave

The closer you came towards your Treasure, the more difficult the challenges facing you became, until you had no choice but to face down your most difficult challenge of all. You traveled into the heart of darkness; you went into the [Innermost Cave](#) of the Evil One, the bane of your journey who would do anything to see you fail.

The Supreme Ordeal

Deep into the lair of the Evil One where he was strongest, you faced the [Supreme Ordeal](#). This was the darkest point in your Hero's Journey, where everything seemed bleak and all hope was lost. Yet, it was also the point towards which all your efforts had been preparing you for. This was the final test, it was time to make it or break it, but you knew it was always darkest before the dawn. Facing the worst of your demons, you pushed beyond your limits, and triumphed over the Evil One.

Seizing Your Treasure

In doing so, you [Claimed Your Treasure](#). But the Treasure wasn't the only reward that came with the Hero's Journey, the journey itself has strengthened you, you've grown wiser with experience and knowledge, with the battle scars you've earned, and the alliances you've forged. You've been reborn, from an inauthentic beginning into a true Hero.

The Journey Home

You begin [The Journey Home](#) to the Ordinary World, not as the potential Hero you were, but a true, realized Hero. And you find a way to use your Treasure and experience to help the people in the Ordinary World, many of whom have no idea just how much they could accomplish if they took their own Hero's Journey into the New World. But a few are inspired, just like you were, and thus you become their Mentor, or even Threshold Guardian, just like someone was to you.

The Next Call to Adventure

And yet, you know that for you to continue to grow and expand, you can't stay stagnant. You have to pick a new goal, a new Treasure, and cross a new threshold into another New World, one where you'll meet new friends, face new challenges, conquer other Evil Ones and earn more Treasures to bring back on your Journey Home. The Hero's Journey never really ends, and a new one is just beginning...

In Conclusion

The Hero's Journey is a marvelous reflection of the different stages in our lives, and a great tool to help us on our own journeys. Setting out into a New World? Who are the Wise Mentors you could consult before you go? Facing a roadblock? You might be facing a Threshold Guardian who's testing your commitment.

Facing tough Challenges? Who are the Helpers who could help?
Feeling like all hope is lost? Sometimes it's darkest before the dawn,
and you just need to commit to taking that next positive step.

Just as your life can be a Hero's Journey, so can it also be full of many
different Hero Journeys overlapping at the same time. You could be in
a different point in your journey at work, compared to your journey in
starting a family, a new skill you're learning, a side business you're
starting.

Reading through these posts on the Hero's Journey, were there
any posts that struck you more than others? How did it help you
better understand where you are on your current journey? And
how could you use this learning to make your journey even
smoother?

About: Life Coaches Blog

Hearing the call to move out of your ordinary world? Having trouble crossing the threshold into new worlds of personal growth? Facing challenges or need a powerful ally to guide you into the innermost cave to overcome the supreme ordeal?

Whether in the guise of a friendly helper or a valuable mentor, we can help. Life Coaches Blog is full of free and useful articles on excellence in relationships, communication, leadership, success, balance, time management, personal development, motivation, productivity, fulfillment, achievement, NLP & coaching.

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About: The Author

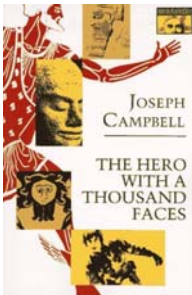


Alvin Soon is another Hero just like you, on his own Hero's Journey. Along the way he's picked up tools, tips and tricks that have been invaluable helpers and mentors along the way.

He shares them on Life Coaches Blog regularly, does his best to walk the talk, and is available to coach others to do the same.

Contact him: alvin@lifecoachesblog.com

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The book that revealed it all. Read more about it or pick it up at Amazon: [The Hero with a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell](#).