

The Hero's Journey & Martial Arts – Initiation

In my previous book, *The Hero's Journey Act I – The Separation*, I explored the first segment of the Hero's Journey and how it applies to parents and martial arts. I drew from Joseph Campbell's work, particularly his detailing of the Hero's Journey, which he also called a *monomyth* in that it appears in some form in every culture and represents the basic conceptual framework for a vast number of sagas, legends, folk tales, holy texts, and modern methods of entertainment such as movies and television. The Hero's Journey is relevant because it's deeply ingrained in the human psyche and is a useful way to illuminate a person's path and interpret what they are going through.

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Joseph Campbell describes the Hero's Journey as “a process that challenges an ordinary person to become a hero by answering a Call to Adventure.” He then defines a hero as someone who willingly gives their life to something bigger than themselves, someone who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of their group, tribe, or civilization. Once the hero has answered the Call to Adventure, he crosses the threshold to the Special World and enters the Initiation.

In the Initiation, the hero must face a series of tasks until he reaches the climax of the story, the main obstacle, or the enemy. Here the hero must put into practice everything he has learned so far on his journey to overcome the obstacle. It takes a great deal of courage and faith to accept what is yet to be known and surrender to living into it, rather than anxiously trying to control it or attempting to revert back to a familiar path that is no longer there or no longer works.

Everyone wants to be a hero at some point in their life. Whether it be saving the damsel in distress or bringing justice and order back to their town. Even though we may not think about everyday people living their normal real lives as heroic, the journey they are embarking on inspires the Hero's Journey, and the Hero's Journey, in return, inspires their real lives.

We're all surrounded by heroes every day, so much so one could say that we are always going to be inspired in our lives to follow them. Movies, television shows, theatre, plays and stories of all kinds contain countless examples of the Hero's Journey. We connect with these heroes, and we ourselves are inspired by their journeys.

This Hero's Journey represents something that all people have in them. Human beings are built for action. We are built to climb. We're built to explore. We're built to take on challenges. We are not built to wallow in the shallows or hesitate at the first sight of danger. That's not who we are meant to do.

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This is a dynamic phase with complexity and depth, showcasing the hero's adaptability and resilience in the face of diverse challenges. The tests serve as opportunities for personal growth and learning, while the alliances he meets at this critical point will provide crucial support and camaraderie on his Great Journey. Simultaneously, the emergence of enemies introduces tension, conflict, and intrigue to the adventure.

The Allies, Enemies, and Tests stage helps define the hero's relationship with other people. The hero learns the rules of his new world and finds out who can and can't be trusted. The tests provide preparation, practice, and training to meet and overcome the ultimate challenges he will face.

The cast of characters expands dramatically here, and a new setting, the Special World, is introduced. The hero may be lost in this new world, so he must evaluate the new people he meets to identify potential allies, enemies, or morally ambiguous characters. Trust is established or denied. Just like anyone would struggle when encountering a new environment, the hero will struggle in this new environment, but this is how he'll determine who is friend and who is foe. The rules of the Ordinary World do not apply to the Special World, so from the friends and allies he meet he will have to learn the ways of this new life.

At this time the hero must overcome his fear of fighting. It is only through sheer determination to achieve what he wants that he will gain the skills of battle and earn the gifts of advice and aid from his friends and allies. This stage is essential in shaping the hero's character and determining their capacity to overcome obstacles on their journey toward their ultimate goal. Below are a few examples of the types of opponents and obstacles our hero may encounter:

- **The Rival:** The hero is challenged by an opponent who is not exactly evil but still seeks the hero's defeat and humiliation. Rivals are often the mirror image of the hero and can later turn into allies if the circumstances are right.
- **The Friend in Need:** One of the hero's friends or allies has gotten in trouble, and it's up to the hero to get them out.
- **The Competition:** The hero is challenged to a competition, often by their Rival. Such competitions are almost never as simple as they seem, so the hero will likely have to overcome additional problems, such as technical issues, cheating or defective equipment before the challenge is over.
- **The Maze:** The hero gets lost and becomes separated from his allies. Here, he must rely on his inner strength to succeed.
- **Recruiting the Expert:** There's something the hero wants to do, but they can't do it themselves. To succeed, they must find an expert in the problematic task. This can be a pilot, scholar, or a person with skills the hero lacks.

- **Poisoned:** The hero has been fatally poisoned and must find the antidote before it's too late. Or he becomes deathly ill and must find the right combination of medical or health care to recover his health.
- **Bankrupt:** The hero has run out of money (or any other important resource) and must earn or, scheme his way back into solvency.
- **Framed:** Someone has committed a dastardly deed, but the hero is blamed for it and must prove his innocence.
- **Hot Potato:** The hero has been given something (or someone) that he needs to get rid of but can't just throw on the side of the road.

In reading through these examples, you can probably think of situations in your own life that reflect these scenarios and tested your fortitude. This is why the Hero's Journey rings so true for many of us—we recognize ourselves in it.

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In *Star Wars*, the cantina is the setting for the forging of an important alliance with Han Solo and the start of an important enmity with Jabba the Hut. Luke sees the danger of this new world firsthand as he enters the Cantina on Mos Eisley with Obi-Wan Kenobi, C-3PO, and R2-D2. He immediately encounters rough bar patrons and, soon after, stormtroopers. Interestingly, in many Westerns, it's the saloon where these relationships are first seen.

At this point, the hero is out of his comfort zone and is confronting obstacles, meeting allies, and enemies. The Allies he makes in the Cantina are Han Solo and Chewbacca, who agree to take both Luke, Ben and the droids to Alderaan. Han and Luke pass their first test when they shoot down Imperial Tie fighters who are pursuing them. A friendship begins to emerge.

After Luke and Kenobi hire Han and Chewbacca to transport them off Tatooine and onto Alderaan, Kenobi begins Luke's training in the ways of the Force. Wielding his father's lightsaber, Luke is challenged by Kenobi to block the shots of a small training remote. At first, he can't do it, but then Kenobi gives him a helmet with a blast shield to wear. The blast shield blocks his view of the remote. Kenobi teaches him to reach out, trust his feelings and use the Force.

This defines for Luke, the mystical Force and the Jedi. And as a result, he improves rapidly. We begin to understand not only the setting but also the difficulty of the task ahead for Luke to become a true Jedi Knight. The early laser battles with the Imperial Fighters are another test, which Luke passes successfully.

The evil nature of the enemy is reaffirmed to Luke and his allies. And the very real danger they face in opposing Grand Moff Tarkin who used the Death Star to destroy

Alderaan. Then Luke and the others get pulled into the Death Star. This is the first serious trial they face.

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At last, the hero comes to a dangerous place. The hero approaches what Joseph Campbell called the Inmost Cave or the Belly of the Beast, metaphorically representing their ultimate goal or the heart of their journey. This phase symbolizes the hero's descent into the heart of darkness, whether it be a physical location or a symbolic representation of their deepest fears and vulnerabilities.

This stage is laden with tension as the hero prepares to confront the ultimate challenge, often personified by a formidable adversary or a hidden truth that lies at the core of their quest. The journey into this inner sanctum represents a crucial moment of self-discovery for the hero. It's a time of reckoning as they grapple with the shadows lurking in the background.

Up to this point, the hero has adjusted to the Special World and now goes on to seek the heart of his journey. He passes into an intermediate zone with new threshold guardians and tests. He approaches the place where the object of the quest is hidden and where he will encounter supreme wonder and terror. He must use every lesson learned to survive.

The Inmost Cave may represent many things in the hero's story, such as an actual location in which lies a terrible danger or an inner conflict that, up until now, the hero has not had to face. As the hero approaches the cave, he must make final preparations before taking that final leap into the great unknown.

The Approach is important even though it is not the ultimate point of the hero's journey. During the Approach to the Inmost Cave, our hero embodies his willingness to be transformed. The changes our hero experiences and the challenges he overcomes prepare him for the final transformation. Without this approach, he cannot complete the journey.

At the threshold to the Inmost Cave, the hero may once again face some of the doubts and fears that first surfaced upon his Call to Adventure. He may need some time to reflect upon his journey and the treacherous road ahead so that he may find the courage to continue. The hero often has disheartening setbacks while approaching the cave. He is torn apart by challenges, which allow him to put himself back together in a more effective form for the Ordeal to come.

The Approach encompasses all the final preparations for the Ordeal. It brings the hero to the stronghold of the opposition, where he needs to use every lesson he has learned. He has gone through many tests after Crossing the Threshold from his Ordinary

World to the Special World, where the major conflict lies in wait. He has met the allies that will help him and the enemies that are trying to hinder his progress.

I'll get into the *Star Wars* parallels in a moment, but for now, *The Wizard of Oz* is also an excellent example of the Approach. The film has been around for over eighty years, and odds are, most people have seen it. Dorothy and her friends—the Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion—face a series of obstacles, enter a second Special World (Oz) with its own unique guardians and rules, and are given the impossible task of entering the Inmost Cave, the Wicked Witch's castle. Dorothy is warned of the supreme danger in this quest and becomes aware that she is challenging a powerful status quo. There is an eerie region around the Inmost Cave where it is clear that the hero has entered the territory on the edge of life and death: the Scarecrow is torn apart, the Tin Man is dropped upon the rocks, and Dorothy and Toto are flown off to the castle by monkeys.

Dorothy's Approach raises the stakes and rededicates herself to her mission. The urgency and life-or-death quality of the situation are underscored. Her dog, Toto, escapes to lead the friends to Dorothy—Dorothy's intuition tells her that she must call on the help of her allies. The headquarters of the villain, the Wicked Witch, are defended with fierceness. Dorothy's allies express misgivings, encourage each other, and plan their attack. They disguise themselves as the Winkie Guards, enter the castle, and rescue Dorothy.

The Approach is a profound stage, rife with emotional and psychological intensity. It marks the hero's readiness to face the most significant Ordeal that will determine the trajectory of his entire quest. The hero has survived his descent into the Special World.

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You will grow from adversity. Overcoming obstacles and failures is a central part of life's journey. Children's fairy tales prepare us for adversity by featuring heroes who grow from their setbacks. The three little pigs find a way to outsmart the big bad wolf. Bambi overcomes his mother's death to grow into a great leader. Campbell said, "Where you stumble, there lies your treasure." Heroes use adversity to better themselves. When you are challenged by the darkest of life circumstances, know that your journey is fashioning you into a wiser, more resilient individual.

Buckle up, and this is about to be a wild ride! That's right, our hero has finally made it to one of the biggest challenges of all. He is no longer approaching the Inmost Cave, but rather, he is fully in it. And not only that but he is fully in the Belly of the Beast, and what a beast it is! The Ordeal is a complicated and nearly impossible task that our hero must accomplish on his way to achieving his goal. It may involve their greatest fear or a physically or mentally demanding task.

The Ordeal is the biggest test up to this point and a transformative event that affects how the hero goes forward on their journey. This confrontation has the highest stakes so far,

and it's part of the central conflict. It brings the hero to their darkest point yet and results in a metamorphosis that allows them to push through to the other side. Joseph Campbell spoke of the Ordeal in terms of death and rebirth. He wrote,

"The courage to face the trials and to bring a whole new body of possibilities into the field of interpreted experience for other people to experience. That is the hero's deed... There's a large journey to be taken, of many trials. If you want to put it in terms of intentions, the trials are designed to see to it that the intending hero should be really a hero. Is he really a match for this task? Can he overcome the dangers? Does he have the courage, the knowledge, the capacity, to enable him to serve? Here we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness... Either by the trials themselves or by illuminating revelations."

Trials and revelations are what it's all about. The hero uses all they have learned up to this point to push through. Someone close to the hero is often (metaphorically) killed in this stage, whether it be the mentor, a close ally, or a loved one. However, it's not always a death. It could involve facing fears, going up against the biggest foe, or breaking through some seemingly insurmountable mental barrier. Whatever form the Ordeal takes, the hero is broken down and comes out the other side stronger than before.

In The Ordeal, the hero confronts the death of a sense of self that no longer is relevant to his life and purpose. If the Call to Adventure is the commitment to exploration, then the Ordeal is the final nail in the coffin. If we cannot completely and wholly let go of the person we were, we cannot have any hope of becoming the person we have the potential to be.

It is easy to focus on the external struggle of the hero in the Ordeal, but the challenge of accepting our potential is every bit as formidable. For example, in the *Harry Potter* series, the adolescent wizard faces the external threat of Lord Voldemort, but he also has to let go of a dream of a "normal" life, a desire which was worsened by the countless days living in the cupboard under the stairs. He must rise up to the challenges and triumphs of the life that is waiting for him. Throughout the seven-book series, we can almost hear "the boy who survived" shouting, "Why me?"

The Ordeal is the zenith of the Hero's Journey. It pushes him to his limits and forces him to confront his deepest fears. It is a symbolic death and rebirth, a profound test that the hero must endure to emerge transformed and ready for the final stages of his quest, a test of strength, strategy, and skill. This stage is charged with emotional intensity, suspense, and the potential for both failure and triumph.

This marks a turning point in the narrative, representing the hero's resilience and capacity to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds. It is a step that propels him toward its climax, where the hero will either rise victorious or succumb to the challenges he faces.

There is a “storming of the castle,” so to speak, where our hero must face a task that is greater than anything he has encountered so far. For the hero, this is the moment he hits rock bottom. He faces the possibility of death, brought to the brink in a fight with a mythical beast. It’s a critical moment in which the hero appears to die but somehow survives.

The hero engages in the Ordeal, the central life-or-death crisis, during which he faces his greatest fear, confronts this most difficult challenge, and experiences “death.” His journey teeters on the brink of failure. The Ordeal is the central, essential, and magical stage of any Journey. Only through death can the hero be reborn, experiencing a resurrection that grants greater powers or insight to see the journey to the end. The hero may directly taste death or witness the death of an Ally or Mentor or, even worse, directly cause that death. The Ordeal may pit hero against Shadow or Villain (the dark side, unexpressed, unrealized, or rejected aspects of something), and the hero's failure heightens the stakes and questions the journey's success. The hero may have the power to defeat a Villain in the Ordeal, only to have to face greater forces in the journey's second half.

This is the ultimate test. In movies, this part is called the climax—it’s the peak of the action. The hero must face his greatest fear or face his most terrifying foe. One way or another, the hero must face death, whether literal or figurative. The hero uses the skills and experiences he gained from the challenges he has already faced, leading him closer to facing this final challenge. It’s the hero’s moment of truth. Everything is put on the line, and the hero moves forward, knowing nothing will ever be the same. It can't—this must be done. And looking back, it is obvious that this moment was inevitable.

The Supreme Ordeal may be a dangerous physical test or a deep inner crisis that the hero must face in order to survive or for his world to continue to exist. Whether it be facing his greatest fear or most deadly foe, the hero must draw upon all of his skills and experiences he has gained thus far to overcome his most difficult challenge.

The most common Ordeal is a battle or confrontation with the opposing force, which usually represents the hero's own dark shadow. No matter how alien the villain's values are, in some way, they are the dark reflection of the hero's own desires; magnified and distorted, his greatest fears come to life. The unrecognized or rejected parts are acknowledged and made conscious despite all their struggles to remain in darkness.

There may be greater adventures to come, the most exciting even, but every journey has a center, a bottom, or a peak somewhere near the middle. Nothing will ever be the same after the crisis. Just as on a roller coaster, you’re hurled around until you think you might die, and you get off elated that you’ve survived. In your life, what is the “death” you will face, the fear, the situation, or the foe? What skills and experiences have you picked up along your journey that will serve you now? What, exactly, must you do? Can you see that your entire life has been leading up to this moment?

In *The Wizard of Oz*, the Wicked Witch is enraged that Dorothy and her friends have penetrated the inmost cave. She threatens each of them with death. She lights Scarecrow on fire. We feel the horror of his imminent death. Dorothy grabs a bucket of water to save him and ends up melting the witch. We watch her agonizing death instead. After a moment of being stunned, everyone is elated, even the witch's minions.

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This significant step in the Hero's Journey sees the hero going into the Belly or Inmost Cave. In *Star Wars*, that beast is the Death Star, and its belly is the detention level. Han and Luke Skywalker, disguised as stormtroopers, pretend to lead Chewbacca, who is posing as a prisoner. They proceeded to take over the hangar's control room, killing two officers in the process. Their goal is to free Princess Leia from her prison cell.

Luke soon found Organa and let her out of her cell. Organa was a member of Alderaan's royal family and was an important political figure. She was known for her honesty and commitment to justice. When Organa questioned Luke about his height, Luke unmasked himself and explained that he was present to rescue her and that he was allied with Kenobi, who was also aboard the station. As he did this, Stormtroopers started pouring into the hallway, pinning them down with blaster fire, but Luke, Han, Princess Leia, and Chewbacca escape from their assault by diving down a chute that leads to a garbage compactor.

Once inside, both Han and Luke, in turn, tried to blast open the door, only to find that it was magnetically sealed. Luke was then pulled into the water by a dianoga, a large, octopus-like creature that was living inside the compactor and feeding off garbage. Han managed to shoot it and save Luke, though not before Luke lost the commlink, his communication device with the droids.

To make matters worse, the dianoga, sensing that the compression cycle was about to start, abandoned its prey and disappeared deep underwater. No sooner had Luke been rescued than the compression cycle began, and the walls started to close in on them. Luke desperately searched for the missing commlink as the others tried to climb out or halt the cycle. Finally, finding the commlink, Luke called for C-3PO's help, and just before they were crushed, R2-D2 managed to stop the cycle.

Before escaping from the Belly of the Beast, Luke had to go deeper into its belly, jumping down the garbage chute into the monster-infested sludge of the trash compactor, the deepest regions of the Death Star. Here, he faced life-and-death trials: the dianoga and the compactor closing.

This is the magic of the hero myth. We identify with the hero and feel the near-death experience with him. We are depressed by the apparent death and then exhilarated when

the hero returns from death. Think of the joy the group experiences when they are freed from being crushed.

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After surviving the Ordeal, and they earn the Reward, whether it is a valuable physical object, newfound knowledge, or liberation from captivity. It represents the hero's growth and the transformation they have undergone. This phase is characterized by a sense of fulfillment and the recognition of the hero's prowess. Whatever the Reward might be, it serves as a testament to the hero's journey, highlighting the transformative nature of the experiences.

The Reward is a crucial pause in the journey. It allows the hero to reflect on the challenges overcome and the progress made, motivating them for the final leg of the quest. Whatever trials and tribulations the hero has endured, the journey has shown him that he can survive death, overcome his greatest fear, slay the dragon, or weather a crisis of the heart.

Whatever the treasure, the hero has earned the right to celebrate and replenish his energy, catch his breath, and prepare for the climax and resolution of his journey. The hero may have earned the Reward outright, or he may have stolen it. The hero may rationalize the theft but in time he will have to face the consequences of the theft as the Shadow Forces race to reclaim it. They see it as an "elixir" that must not see the light of the Ordinary World.

In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy wins the burned broomstick she has been challenged to steal. She returns to Oz to seize her next reward: her trip home. The wizard balks, and Toto reveals the little man behind the curtain. This is the hero's moment of insight.

The hero defeated the enemy, survived, and overcame. But more than anything, the hero transformed like a butterfly emerging from its cocoon. Out of the ashes of death rises a phoenix of symbolic rebirth. The hero receives a reward in some form, whether it is recognition, power, wisdom, reconciliation, or a treasure, but in the end, no matter the price, the true reward is always the glory of personal transformation itself. The real change is internal. This personal transformation is a sword that allows them to take on the biggest conflicts they might experience and persevere.

Whatever the treasure, the hero must put celebrations aside and prepare for the last leg of his journey. Victory is often bittersweet, and every successful transformation requires a death. By the time you reach this point, you can no longer go back to the way things were before you started.

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The reward in *Star Wars* was when Luke, Han, Leia, and the crew escaped the Death Star. While Luke manages (with his friends) to rescue Leia, and the group makes it to the Millennium Falcon, it's important to note that Luke suffers the loss of his Mentor. Obi-Wan Kenobi sacrifices himself in a duel with Darth Vader to allow others to escape the Death Star. Obi-Wan's death allows Han, Luke, and others to lock Vader behind blast doors, board their ship, and escape with Death Star plans stored in R2-D2 memory banks.

Obi-Wan willingly perishes at the business end of Darth Vader's lightsaber. Luke witnesses his mentor's demise but escapes with the others, thanks to some otherworldly prompting by Obi-Wan. Luke's Mentor continues to communicate with him and through him after death.

Leia leads the Millennium Falcon to the Rebel base on Yavin IV, although she suspects the Empire is tracking them. Using R2's data, the Rebels strategize to destroy the Death Star by having a one-man starfighter launch a photon torpedo into a tiny exhaust port connected to the station's reactor.

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I believe we have many Hero's Journeys in our lives. I see it in my own life. If you feel like someone pulled the rug from under your feet, or you feel like you've lost your ground with nothing to hold on to, you may be on your hero's journey. If you feel like you can't fall lower in life and everything that you knew about yourself and the world no longer applies, you may be on the hero's journey. If you try to push through a problematic relationship, holding tight to the very thing that hurts you, you may be about to start the hero's journey. And when you finally answer the call, more struggles await, but it will feel different. It will feel right.

Understanding a hero's journey empowers us and gives us wisdom and insight to interpret our seemingly unrelated feelings and thoughts. Through the Hero's Journey of self-discovery, we grow and become wiser. We discover who we really are and what our life is about. With such wisdom, we are empowered to define our core values and unique way of life. We establish our very own Personal Mythology.

In its simplified form, Personal Mythology refers to one's core values and guiding principles in life and the world. It declares not only the person's view of life but also how the person sees themselves in connection to Nature, society, spirituality, the world, and even the cosmos. Our Hero's Journey of self-discovery makes us wiser and humbler. It gives us clarity regarding who we are and how we should lead our lives. Personal Mythology is an internal declaration of that clarity and wisdom, and if you keep it in mind as you parent your child, you are a Heroic Parent.

A growth mindset changes everything. If you believe that you are continuing to grow with all you experience and learn, you will become a better listener, a curious seeker, and

an active player in daily life. Your children are no longer vessels to fill and mold but mysterious wonders from whom you can discover great truths—even truths about yourself. With the growth mindset you, depending on your child's age and maturity, you engage equally with them in problem-solving, planning, and especially in playing. Joseph Campbell described living the Hero's Journey as a life lived in self-discovery. What a wondrous approach to parenting.

Heroic parents want their children to be held accountable for their choices. It's not that they are happy about it. It's that they know their children will be better off in the long run if they learn to deal with mistakes, problems, and failures while they are young and when the stakes are relatively low. In contrast, ordinary parents will look to blame the system, the school, or whomever is involved and aim to lessen the consequences their child experiences.

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The Hero's Journey in real life begins in darkness. A seed burgeons way below consciousness. This seed is the germ and kernel of ourselves-in-becoming. It is not us-as-we-are. It is who we will be. Plato wrote, "We are pregnant with ourselves," and we feel it. We experience it as restlessness, dissatisfaction, anger, shame, and irritability with ourselves and with others. We experience it as Resistance.

The Hero's Journey in real life is personal. It is about us and us alone. Our gift—which is unique to you and me and which no one else on the planet possesses—breaks through the soil like a fiddle-headed sprout, which is ourselves-in-becoming. No wonder our knees knock as we launch on the journey. No wonder we feel fear and pain. No wonder the stakes seem like life and death. They are.

The Hero's Journey can take place on a battlefield or in a cubicle. We can live it out amid public clamor or in the soundless vault between our ears. The demons we are dueling are always the same. They are our own fears of becoming who we are. No one who has ever lived—or ever will—has a journey like ours. And yet, our journey is universal. It belongs to every woman and every man. Nor can we fail on our journey because failure is part of the tale itself. It may indeed be the point of the tale.

What do we achieve when we undergo a Hero's Journey? When we "return home," what have we got?

First, we have acquired a history. A personal history that is now tattooed on our innermost, secret souls. This narrative is ours alone. No one can take it away from us. This history differentiates us from others. It starts us on the path to becoming who we are. If we undergo this passage as part of a group, platoon, or gang, we acquire brothers and sisters who share our secret and will be bound to us for life, as we are to them.

Second, we have changed. The definition of death is statis; the definition of life is growth. To change—and to know that we have changed—gives us the only power that means anything. We might not have money, we might not have found love, but our toes have touched the seafloor, and we know we have not gone under. If we can do it once, we can do it again.

Third, we have done what we were meant to do. We have not shrunk or held back. We have answered the bell. We may be only an acorn (for now), but we have turned our face to the sun and started on the path to becoming an oak.

I believe in Hero's Journeys. I believe we undergo them, one after another, throughout our lives. As human beings, we were made for this. It's in our DNA. The life of comfort and ease is not what we were designed for. Hero's Journeys are real.

The next time, if you find yourself stagnated in life but hear an inner voice calling you to change, look for the hero inside you struggling to emerge and transform your life. Or, if you have already committed to a goal but find yourself drowning in self-doubt, look for the hero inside you fighting to stay the course. And next time, if you are close to reaching your goal but find yourself surrounded by temptations asking you to settle for less, recognize it as a stage in your Hero's Journey and don't succumb to the temptations.