

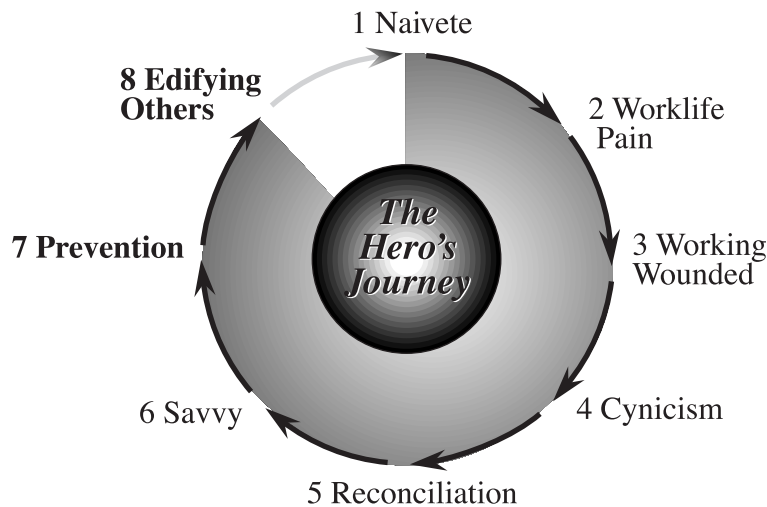
## **Part Three: The Return**



From the weakest within and among us, we learn the deepest lessons of life's journey. Through defeat we become victorious. From the ordinary events of life, we learn to see the extraordinary.

After the agony of breaking through personal limitations, "crossing threshold after threshold," confronting dragon after dragon, finally the hero quest is accomplished. The experiences of the past are brought into a unified, harmonious, interrelated whole. Now we can see more clearly, peeking backward but not lingering. Our focus is the present and it feels good to be savvy and safe once again. The temptation is to rest, escape, hide—to refuse to go where we have been before. After the soul-satisfying experiences of the hero's journey, who wants to return to the predictable turbulence? Having transcended our attachments, why reenter the world of inane prattle?

Because the journey is unfinished. Comfort and contentment are poor substitutes for the bliss that is yet to come, the joy that comes from helping others along the path where we have traveled. For the hero's journey to be complete, the hero bestows boons or blessings upon his or her fellow beings. The "power of the powerless" must be passed on for the benefit of others.



How [to] teach again, however, what has been taught correctly and incorrectly learned a thousand thousand times, throughout the millenniums of mankind's prudent folly? That is the hero's ultimate difficult task. How [to] render back into light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark? How [to] represent on a two-dimensional surface a three-dimensional form, or in a three-dimensional image a multi-dimensional meaning? How [to] translate into terms of "yes" and "no" revelations that shatter into meaninglessness every attempt to define the pairs of opposites? How [to] communicate to people who insist on the exclusive evidence of their senses the message of the all-generating void?<sup>1</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1949), 218.