

It was suggested at the Hermetic Study Group (# 5 – Tarot for Improvers) that people explore the 22 cards of the Major Arcana in relation to the stages of the Hero's Journey or Monomyth described below; this would enable people to understand the Major Arcana as representations of stages of life, as well as spiritual and universal concept. These can be journeyed through during a lifetime, or they can form stages on a smaller journey, e.g. one's magickal and spiritual path, and initiatory period, etc. Generally speaking, it is the first card of the Major Arcana (0 The Fool) that is perceived as the hero or seeker who travels through the cards, facing various issues and truths along the way, eventually ending with the last card of the Major Arcana (XXI The World/Universe) and returning back to his state of potential at 0 The Fool once more.

Joseph Campbell's Monomyth

What human beings have in common is revealed by myths ...
—Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*

Joseph Campbell was a famous mythologist who spent a lifetime analyzing world mythology for similarities, themes, and differences. His analysis has enabled us to see more clearly the idea that there is a common human experience and a journey that we all make throughout life—this journey comes out in the stories we tell. Campbell studied world mythology and from his research created the concept of the Monomyth. This was an over-arching story that was to be found in most Western myths (with some slight variations). Campbell said that it demonstrated Western peoples' common needs, desires, fears, and experiences. This Monomyth is surprisingly similar to the idea of a "Fool's Journey," and indeed it is often called "The Hero's Journey," with a hero undergoing trials and tribulations until he reaches a conclusion:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.
—Joseph Campbell. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*

Campbell's Monomyth of the Hero's Journey is split into three sections: Departure, Initiation, and Return.

Departure

- 1. THE CALL TO ADVENTURE.** "Help me Obi Wan Kenobi—you're my only hope." Luke Skywalker receives this message from Princess Leia, and it is the call to adventure that starts him thinking about his origins and a life beyond Tatooine. Other calls to adventure could come in the form of a threat to the peace of the community, or the hero simply falling into it accidentally.
- 2. REFUSAL OF THE CALL.** Many would-be heroes' first response to this call is to refuse to listen: they are scared, or too busy with their current lives to consider leaving. The hero immerses himself in everyday life, trying to ignore the call. (It took Frodo Baggins 11 years after receiving the One Ring before he finally left the Shire.)
- 3. SUPERNATURAL AID.** When the hero finally accepts the adventure he is aided by a figure of authority and wisdom who possesses what appear to be supernatural or

