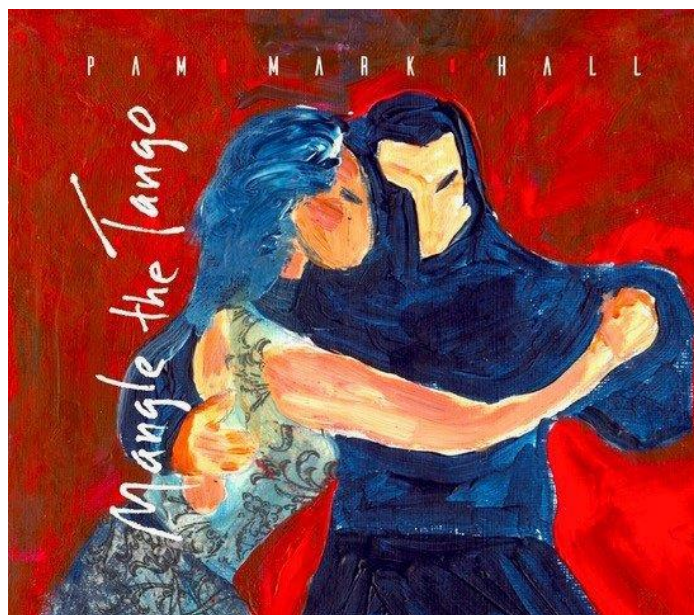


---

# “A HERO’S JOURNEY”

---

Mangling the Tango



Wendy Quinn

February 2019

## **LIVING WITH THE HERO'S JOURNEY:**

It would be fair to say that 2017 did not turn out the way that I planned. Strangely what eventuated worked out better than I could have ever imagined for myself. This was however, not before living through a deeply anguishing time. A 'dark night of the soul'.

Let me share my story with you.

But first, let me tell you about The Hero's Journey. It's an archetypal pattern for all good story, and has become an important guide in my life over many years (1).

### **Part One: Early Encounters with The Hero's Journey**

Professor Joseph Campbell, a former Harvard University academic who died in 1987, spent over 30 years researching myths and legends in cultures all around the world, before accidentally writing a best-selling book. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* was first published in 1949. Campbell reached the profound conclusion that all myths and legends around the world, and indeed all good stories, follow the same archetypal pattern – that of a hero on a quest.

Typically, the Hero goes out into the world and battles with demons and enemies – internal and external – to achieve great deeds, before returning to normal life. The Hero however can never quite return to normal life, as they are forever changed or transformed by their experiences.

The pattern can be distilled to as few as three main stages – life, death and resurrection. But the model can also be expanded to provide more detail, as in Christopher Vogler's practical guide to Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey, describes twelve stages (2):

1. **The Ordinary World:** The Hero is at home in his or her usual world.
2. **The Call to Adventure:** Something happens to disrupt the usual world. Either the external or internal world is calling to the person to leave their normal world and pattern of existence.
3. **Refusal of Call:** The notion of disruption to the regular pattern of life is rejected and the Hero attempts to keep going as though nothing has changed.
4. **Meeting with the Mentor:** A wise person or guide comes into The Hero's life and assists them to make sense of what might be required and also work through the courage required to proceed.
5. **Crossing the Threshold:** The decision to follow the Quest is made. The Hero moves out of their normal world and the Adventure begins.
6. **Test, Allies and Enemies:** Along the way there are numerous obstacles or hardships, as well as people who work against the Hero in a variety of ways. The Hero also encounters Friends or Helpers. Sometimes these are not readily identifiable and might take surprising forms.
7. **Approach:** As the Hero moves further into the journey there is often a place of great desolation and loneliness. These might be represented with images such as a cave, desert or wilderness. The Hero contemplates and prepares for the great trial that they must endure or conquer.
8. **The Ordeal:** The Hero faces a time of great suffering and challenge. They often feel very ill-prepared. The Ordeal might involve battling forces in the outside world or it might involve

battling with inner demons. The Hero may or may not overcome the challenge in the first attempt.

9. **The Reward:** The Hero receives something positive as a result of confronting or overcoming the challenge. Unexpected Gifts or acts of grace in the form of meaningful co-coincidences often occur in the darkest most difficult places and times. Events happen at just the right time. People or things come into the Hero's life at just the right time. New learning and insights gained can start a transformational process.
10. **The Road Back:** The greatest trial is over and the Hero is on the way back to the normal world. However, there is often one more unanticipated challenge to overcome. Something else that must be done before returning to usual life.
11. **The Resurrection:** The Hero returns to normal life but they are not the same person. They have been forever transformed by the journey.
12. **Return with the Elixir:** The Hero returns from their journey with a Gift. This might be something tangible obtained on the journey or it might be part of their transformation. As a result of their journey, they have something new to offer the world that can be shared with others.

## **Living with The Hero's Journey**

Many years ago, just setting out on my career in leadership and management in health and human services, I was reading a book by Robert Greenleaf on the concept of servant leadership (3). In it was a circular diagram of the Hero's Journey (Attachment One) together with a very brief description of the archetypal pattern.

Not long before, I had been through a very difficult time. It had challenged the very core of my identity and understanding of myself, including my role in leadership and working with other people. The detail of this journey is however, part of a larger story.

In summary, out of an intense two-year period spent grappling with inner demons, external enemies and a series of seemingly insurmountable challenges, I eventually emerged as a transformed person. My fears, self-doubt and loneliness were replaced with an extreme awareness of grace at work around and through me together with a new confidence that my life was precious and had an important purpose.

I had experienced the 'paradox of pain' where I had encountered a divine presence in the depths of my despair and this completely changed my understanding of everything that I thought I had known up until that point in life. Mystical encounters and meaningful coincidences of events and interactions with people could not be explained rationally (4). These experiences left me with the lingering presence of joy and peace together with a heightened empathy for others who are suffering. It led to a renewed commitment for a life of leadership, but this time with my eyes newly opened regarding my own vulnerabilities and flaws. There was also a greater understanding of the full spectrum of the range of people I would most likely encounter along the way.

The pattern of the Hero's Journey that I had come across in the Robert Greenleaf book resonated profoundly with me. I could see in it the pattern of what I had just lived through. Contemplating the stages of the journey over the following months helped me make sense of what had happened and integrate the experience. In the following years, and without a clear intention at the beginning, I began to use the archetypal pattern of the Hero's Journey as a companion in my life and leadership adventures.

As my career unfolded, I moved into increasingly senior leadership positions and found myself working in areas that involved all of the complexity of the human condition. These included mental health, palliative care, disability, correctional health and complex exceptional needs. Not surprisingly, I was called to Adventures in many other Hero's Journeys. Increasingly, I became more adept at seeing the pattern and its stages, and even began experimenting with learning to relax into them. I was however, not yet ready to welcome them.

## **Part Two: A recent experience: 2017-2018**

### **“Mangling the Tango”: A Hero’s Journey**

### **From Fear of Public Failure to Prophetic Blessing**

In September 2011, I retired from a very full and long career of over 25 years working in state government health and human services in Tasmania to begin what I now call my Encore Career.

What is an Encore Career? The concept was coined by author Marc Freedman (5).

My interpretation is that an Encore Career is the career you move into after you have completed your major life’s work. A key driver of earlier careers is usually making money to support basic living costs. Encore Careers however, involve intentionally moving into a form of employment that is more in line with your vocational heart. By this I mean doing work aligned with what you love to do, and where there is an acknowledged need in society. If someone is willing to pay you to undertake any of this work, even better, but making money is not the main motivator. You might instead be primarily motivated by being able to contribute to society and support the transfer of knowledge and wisdom to upcoming generations.

My motivation was to seek work aligned with the core of my vocational heart in areas of leadership. Inherent in this was a desire was also to structure the rhythm of work and commitments in a more balanced way than I had been able to achieve in my career in the Tasmanian state government. After a period of intense reflection and contemplation I discerned that the area of leadership focus for my Encore Career would be on life-changing conversation, healing wounded leaders and guiding transformation. In my Encore Career it would also be important to balance the focus on these areas of leadership work with other areas of

my life. These include time to sing in a choir, having weekends off for family and social life, incorporating the ability to attend Pilates more regularly and even have time for coffee conversations afterwards.

Another strong motivator for me was having plenty of time to play with our three little grandchildren. With my two sons and their families all living interstate this meant needing to have time for regular trips to visit them. I also promised myself that I would not climb any more corporate ladders or indeed work for any organisations full time again.

The shape of my Encore Career began to form throughout 2012 and is best summarised as an ABC career:

A for Academic: With a part-time role at the University of Tasmania coordinating and teaching a distance leadership course for postgraduate students working in health and human services.

B for Boards: Sitting on a few Not for Profit Boards; and

C for Consulting: Establishing my own company specialising in leadership and change management.

My Encore Career has kept me busy and fulfilled for nearly seven years. In early 2017, a number of opportunities to progress my Encore Career emerged. They related to all three strands of my Encore Career but in particular the board work. These opportunities would all require me to put myself forward by application. I would need to *put my hat in the ring* or *step onto the dance floor*.

At the beginning of 2017 I was serving on three boards. This included being Deputy Chair for two of them. Chair positions in two of my existing boards were becoming vacant due to expiry of terms of office for sitting Chairs. I had been encouraged by others involved in these organisations to consider applying.

Other opportunities to expand my leadership influence were also available for consideration. These included submitting an abstract to



speak at a national leadership series for a leadership membership organisation, applying for a board director's mentoring program, and submitting a nomination for a leadership award program. It seemed to me that each of these would further strengthen my ability to undertake my chosen vocational leadership work. Collectively they would have a significantly increased impact on the credibility and influence of my leadership work. Individually, any of the opportunities would by themselves expand my leadership influence and credibility.

I counted up the opportunities. There were nine in total. I weighed up the risks. All would be onerous. All would involve considerable additional work in not only the application but also undertaking the roles if chosen. All would have an impact on my capacity to continue to balance my Encore Career commitments with my other personal and family activities. Each of the nine opportunities required a willingness to undertake some form of selection process. Consequently, all of them had the capacity for the outcome to be some form of public failure.

So why would I contemplate doing this? Why would I disrupt my already fulfilling life to add yet more work and the risk of public humiliation?

This was my Call to Adventure. I didn't feel at all ready.

Fear lay at the heart of my reluctance. Indeed, the fear of public failure and rejection. Over the years I have reflected deeply on the pattern of my early life enough to know that rejection and not belonging are at the heart of my inner woundedness and vulnerability.

As a person with an Enneagram Type Three personality type, my predominant way of approaching the world is through the importance of achievement, public recognition and belonging. Some of my early life experiences involved being rejected in a profound way. By proceeding with this Hero's Journey, I would be facing one of the core fears of my inner psyche. This was my idea of the worst possible nightmare.

Listening to an International Women's Day presentation delivered by Rosalie Martin in March 2017, deeply challenged me. The challenge arising from within me was to have the courage to respond to the leadership opportunities before me and the bravery to enter this Hero's Adventure.

Moving towards the Crossing of the Threshold, I prepared an application for the first of the nine opportunities. While I was aware that I probably wouldn't succeed at all of them I was growing in the courage to face the hurt of public failure. At this early stage of the Adventure I could not imagine the full extent of what was to come. If I had known, I would probably have pulled out of the Journey before it began and Refused this Call to Adventure.

My first few applications were indeed met with failure and rejection. An application for the mentoring program for women serving on boards was not successful. Neither were my abstracts for leadership papers for a national leadership and management conference. Not a good beginning!

I began to wonder if facing up to my inner fears about rejection was part of this Hero's Journey.

Around this time, as we moved closer to wintertime in Tasmania, synchronicity entered my life in the form of an album of music by singer-songwriter Pam Mark Hall. I have loved Pam's music for many years and have frequently returned to her exquisite voice and encouraging lyrics at different points in my life. My husband Raymond (or Mondo to many of the world's musicians on Facebook) is a great appreciator and encourager of musicians. In 2016, when the opportunity emerged to support a crowd-funded venture to enable Pam to produce her new album, Mondo signed us up. Many months later, and at just the right time in my Hero's Journey, several tracks from Pam's newly completed album *Mangle the Tango* were sent to us to sample prior to

its official release (6). I didn't realise it at the time, but her album – in particular the title track was to become my Hero's Journey Guide

As I began to become aware of what was unfolding for me with my journey into public failure and rejection, I immersed myself in the protective and energising power of the music and the wisdom of the words of the title song (Attachment Two). My adopted mantra quickly became the words of the song.

*Even if we mangle the tango, there's one thing I know. It's better to fall than never to dance at all. Let's Dance.*

The sound system in my car is excellent. On the 30-minute journeys into Hobart from our home and return, I shut the windows and turned up the volume and sang along to *Mangle the Tango*.

The applications continued, and so did the rejections. *Mangle the Tango* continued to minister to my increasingly hurting soul. Around this time, I realised that this was indeed a Hero's Journey. I was going to have to learn to embrace the risk of 'falling flat on my face' in public in order to have the opportunity to dance my leadership dance. The words of the song were a source of deep encouragement for me to continue what I had started.

*It's better to fall than never to dance at all.*

How very difficult for someone like me who likes to hide behind the mask of respectability, preserving public appearances and the outward perception that all is well. But what if the rejections kept coming? What if they did not stop? Surely, I could not fail in all of them! How could that possibly happen? It would not be consistent with the pattern of my life and all of its achievements.

One small win occurred in the middle of this desert of rejection. I was selected as a regional finalist in an award program for excellence in leadership. Maybe this was the start of the turn-around in my fortunes? Surely, I'd had enough lessons in *Mangling the Tango* and I could return to my usual life. But no! Following my success at the regional level my application for the state level awards did not meet with a similar result. At the awards evening, in front of my family, friends, colleagues and a sample of the general public, I was informed that I hadn't won my category. I had 'fallen' yet again.

I was now fully aware that I was deeply immersed in this Hero's Journey. There was, however, hope that the end was in sight. Number seven of the nine opportunities was about to come up and this was the biggest of my challenges. It was an opportunity to chair the board of a large faith-based organisation. I had been on the board for nearly five years and had been deputy chair for about half of that time. When the position became available, I had been encouraged to apply. Surely this was where the lessons would stop.

In retrospect. I can now see that what was about to happen was The Ordeal stage in the Hero's Journey. I 'fell' yet again and I 'fell' very spectacularly flat on my face in what felt like the middle of the dance floor with a crowd of people watching.

I had an interview for the position. The news that I was not successful was communicated to me in a way that damaged the core of my now fragile ego and self-respect. In communicating the outcome. This feedback was delivered by a person who I deeply respected. The content of the feedback, even more than the outcome of the process, rocked the core of my understanding of myself and my belief in my own leadership abilities. The fact that my leadership skills had been recently acknowledged through appointment to several important roles by the same person only served to confuse the situation even further. How profoundly devastating to my inner being.

I fled to my Melbourne hotel room and spent an anguished night with little sleep, journaling many pages of my thoughts. By morning I had come to the conclusion that only two things could possibly explain the outcome. Either the people who I had been serving on the board with for the last five years did not really know me or I, who prided myself on self-awareness, mindfulness and assisting others with the same, did not really know myself at all. Both of these options were deeply confronting and painful.

With a very heavy heart I retreated back home to Hobart.

I had descended to the lowest point in the Hero's Journey. This was 'dark night of the soul' territory. Over the coming weeks *Mangle the Tango* was played even more loudly and frequently. Friends and Helpers emerged. I found myself attempting to tell them the story even though a sense of embarrassment and shame tended to make me wish to keep the story to myself.

Once again synchronicity was at work with the right people turning up at just the right time asking probing questions with the right mix of empathy and wisdom to extract my story. These Friends soothed my soul and battered ego and affirmed my value in healing ways. They were also protective of me and encouraged me to immediately part

company with the organisation. I remained deeply distressed and confused.

Despite being immediately attracted by my Helpers' suggestions to withdraw from this painful place as rapidly as possible, I decided to stay. I have learned enough about Hero's Journeys over many years to know that staying for a while longer in the darkest, hardest places is often, paradoxically, when the most wonderful things begin to happen. Against their advice, I decided to stay and follow the Journey to its deepest level.

The second last of my opportunities rolled around. An opportunity to take on the deputy role with a different board. I had been appointed to this board about a year ago. It came with a strongly communicated intimation that my involvement was with a view to becoming the chair. Surely this would mark the turning point in my *Mangling the Tango* falling. But no! Yet again, rejection. Surely by now, I must have learned all there was to know about rejection, humiliation and public failure.

There was one opportunity to go. The Deputy position for the larger organisation where I had just failed to become the Chair was open. I had been the Deputy for the previous two years. This position was now open for applications from existing board directors. I had since spoken in depth with the new Chair and we had established that we had a lot in common. She encouraged me to continue my involvement with the organisation and to consider applying for the Deputy position.

This time, I confided in no one. Only my whispered prayers. It would have been too difficult to explain why I was applying and my Friends would have wanted to talk me out of it. They would be worried that I could only get hurt even more. It was something to do with continuing to follow the pattern of the Hero's Journey through to the end that encouraged me to apply. I think by now that you can now guess what

happened. Yes. Once again, I fell on my face in the middle of the dance floor.

*My tally was now Eight failures from Nine. Only one success.* This time however, in contrast to my earlier experience, I was treated with care and concern. The new chair offered to immediately fly to Hobart to talk in-depth about the outcome related to both processes and how it might be possible for me to stay in the organisation. What an ego battering. What a soul-destroying outcome. I was still not sharing any of this with any of my friends. I was too embarrassed and ashamed. I was however still listening to *Mangle the Tango* very loudly at every opportunity.

Meanwhile, back in the rest of my life, I was continuing to teach post-graduate students about leadership and provide coaching sessions on leadership and vocation. As often happens in Hero's Journeys, I was experiencing a period of heightened empathy and connection with other people in need. Richard Rohr calls this 'dark luminosity'. Without me being really aware of it, other people that I was encountering in my everyday life were being drawn to something in me that was resonating with them.

During a period of a couple of months in early 2018, a series of strangely synchronistic encounters occurred eventuating in requests for coaching and counselling. People wanted me 'to share what I have' with them to help them make sense of their lives even though I was in a place where I felt I had nothing to offer. A few of them commented specifically on the kindness and depth of gaze in my eyes. It seemed that something about my eyes was drawing people in need to connect with me. These were indeed remarkable encounters. It seemed that this heightened awareness and resonance with other's needs was part of my Gift in this '*Mangle the Tango*' Hero's Journey. This concept is hard to articulate but I have recently encountered a song by the amazing musician Andy Gullahorn in his album *Beyond the Frame* called *My*

*Language* that has packaged this phenomenon with some exquisite words.

*There are stories that your eyes are telling.*

*But you don't have to say a word*

*Because you, oh you, speak my language*

There was however another more amazing Reward to come.

One of my Friends during this journey, (and to whom I had said nothing about my final two '*falls*'), rang me a short while after the last one had occurred to tell me she had a book for me to read. Would I come and pick it up from her sometime soon? She was sure that there was something in the book for me but she didn't know what. Over the years in our long friendship, I have learned not to disobey this Friend, so I dutifully called by her place to pick up the book prior to heading to Melbourne for another round of board meetings.

It was an exploration of the Biblical book, *Song of Solomon*, written by Brian and Candice Simmons and entitled *The Sacred Journey: God's relentless pursuit of our affection* (7)

I started reading. The book was not really connecting with me. In fact, I was finding it rather tedious. I started to wonder what on earth I was going to say to my Friend who had been so eager and enthusiastic about the book. So, I kept reading! In fact, I read the first 197 pages without any connection.

Then I turned to page 198 and started to read the words at the beginning of a new section. It was a paraphrase of Chapter Seven of the *Song of Solomon*. My eyes glanced down the page and fell on the words two thirds of the way down. I started to laugh.

*Your life stands tall as a tower, like a shining light on a hill.*



*Your revelation eyes are pure, like pools of refreshing –  
sparkling light for a multitude.*

It seemed to me that the second part of this section was describing exactly what had been happening in recent weeks in my encounters and conversations with others including a focus on my eyes. The first part however, was what was making me laugh. As a rather vertically challenged woman it seemed somewhat ironical that I was being described as ‘*a tall tower*’. Acknowledging me as a ‘*tall tower*’ right at this time in my life when I felt so small, invalidated and insignificant seemed deeply ironical and appealed to my sense of humour.

The final point of resonance with this blessing was the ‘*shining light on a hill*’. Seven years ago, when I began my consulting business the owner of my husband’s workplace – a community newspaper – offered to have business cards made for me. A graphic artist who I had never met designed the logo for them – a lighthouse with spreading beams of light! I loved it and had kept it ever since.

Nothing had changed in my outer world, yet instantly everything was different. I was seeing the world and my life through a different lens. I was immediately aware that this was possibly an affirmation of my vocational calling for the next stage of my Encore Career. It might even be viewed as a Prophetic Blessing from God. A foretelling of the purpose and nature of the work that I would be doing in the next stage of my life’s work. I had never had one of these before. How mind blowing.

Reading the rest of the chapter in the book my excitement grew as layers of new understanding were forming. The chapter explored the historical context behind the words in introductory section. It made more a more sense to me and for me. I decided to memorise the blessing (Attachment Three). This is always a slow contemplative process for me; learning a phrase or two each day. Over the next couple

of weeks as I walked through the streets of Hobart in the chilly early morning light on the way to my Pilates classes, I worked on each new phrase. Committing the words to memory and writing them on my heart was a slow but exquisite task.

It became clearer to me, as I explored the words, that the words appeared to be a Blessing of Evangelism. Evangelism is a much-misunderstood word. The real meaning of Evangelism is in fact 'bringing the good news'. The beginning of the blessing commences with the evocative words:

*How beautiful on the mountains are the sandaled feet of this one bringing such good news.*

I had never thought of myself as an Evangelist. In fact, anything but that. I thought again of the work that I was doing with my postgraduate leadership students. I thought about my coaching clients and the depth-work I was doing with them. I thought about the people who had gravitated to me over the recent months. Suddenly I could see that sharing good news about different ways to live life and be transformed was at the very heart of my Encore vocation. What a Reward to be given this blessing. How much richer than anything I had been striving for with external accolades over the long last year.

Another concept in the blessing was the idea of;

*beautiful sandaled feet on the mountains.*

The notes in the section of the book explained that the messengers with the good news, dressed themselves in fancy shoes (sandals) and were constantly setting out on journeys to far places as denoted by the mountains. Here was another affirmation of my vocational calling for the next stage of my life. At a time when many people are slowing down into retirement, the work that I have a heart for involves

constantly dressing up and traveling to other places to engage in life-changing conversation.

A number of weeks later I had breakfast with my Friend and shared with her the specialness of her gift of the book at just the right time and what I discovered within it. At the end of our time together I handed the book back to her commenting that I wasn't quite sure if I was ready to return it. She laughed and told me that the book was not hers, but mine. She hadn't even read it, but had followed an inner prompting to purchase it for me.

Filled with a new sense of amazement, I handed the book to her and asked her to inscribe it. She wrote:

*To my dearest friend Wendy,  
May these words be written deeply in your heart and spirit today  
and always  
With love and blessing.*

Being rejected is still a painful process and I suspect always will be for me. But I have had an encounter with the living God and a blessing on the work that I am doing and will continue to do in my Encore Career. For the time being I will continue to keep putting on my *sandals* and heading off to climb yet another *mountain*. I will do this holding close to my heart the assurance that this is indeed the work of my heart. It is what I am meant to be doing, being part of life-changing conversation with others that I meet along the way. Working with those who are seeking to work in positions of leadership and finding ways to assist them to heal their inner woundedness that releases them to transformed levels of wholeness to in turn progress their work with others.

My most recent Hero's Journey is now complete. I have Returned to the Normal World knowing that I am forever transformed by what I have

seen and learned in my *Mangle the Tango Hero's Journey*. Resting for the moment with the gift of a Prophetic Blessing for the next stage of my life, contemplating the deep privilege of the work that I am able to do with others. Feelings of quiet joy but remnant sadness wash over me as I consider all that has happened in such a short time.

Quiet Joy because of the richness of my experience and new levels of deep awareness of other dimensions of life. Remnant Sadness because of my ongoing encounters with the complexities of suffering associated with the human condition and renewed awareness of my ongoing role to act as a Guide for others on their Hero's Journeys. Here I rest for a time, alert to the invitation for the next Call to Adventure, seeking to be ready to *climb more mountains in my sandaled feet*, providing places of quiet and refreshment for others. Knowing, in the beautiful words of the Irish poet Derek Mahon (8) that:

*Everything Will Be All Right*

*Why should I not be glad to contemplate  
The clouds clearing beyond the dormer window  
And a high-tide reflected on the ceiling?*

*There will be dying, there will be dying.  
But there is no need to go into that*

*The lines flow from the hand unbidden  
And the hidden source is the watchful heart.*

*The sun rises in spite of everything  
And the far cities are beautiful and bright.*

*I lie here in a riot of sunlight  
Watching the day break and the clouds flying.*

*Everything, Everything is going to be all right.*

## **Part Three: Guideposts discerned from living with The Hero's Journey over the years.**

1. You never get to go on the same journey twice. That would be too easy! Strangely the ones you have been on before give you a capacity to try the next one. It's a bit like mountain climbing.
2. Sometimes the challenges come from within yourself. Sometimes they are in the external world. The internal ones are often hidden from your view initially and uncovering them might indeed be part of the journey.
3. You learn far more in the difficult, dark places on The Hero's Journey than in regular easy-going life. How I wish this one was not so! There is very real transformative power in pain and suffering. Theologian Richard Rohr teaches that transformation can be achieved through contemplation and mindfulness practices but in order for these to work they usually require long periods of time and intensive devotion. He teaches that the fastest way to transformation is through great suffering or great love. Both are likely to be painful and intense.
4. God's grace is always, always there. Especially in the darkest, lowest and most alone places. Paradoxically this is where the most amazing, unexpected and intimate mystical encounters with God's presence occurs. This is the 'dark night of the soul' experience.
5. God works through people, places and events that you would never expect or imagine.
6. There is always a Guide and Helpers or Friends who are companions for at least part of your journey. You just have to have open eyes and listening ears to encounter them. They are often not in an instantly

recognisable form and may not conform with your pre-existing expectations. Sometimes they will be the last people you would expect of ever choose for yourself.

7. There is always, always a Gift, some Treasure or Elixir. Once again, this often takes the form of something unexpected and possibly not even initially recognised as a treasure. However, in my experience the gifts usually end up being so much better and more valuable than anything that could ever be imagined. The timing of their arrival often forms part of the Elixir.
8. Times of extreme challenge, despair and suffering often are accompanied by a heightened empathy towards other people including an increased awareness of their need. This leads to an increased capacity for unexpected deep connection or resonance with other people who are hurting. Theologian Richard Rohr calls this 'dark luminosity'. This often occurs right when you think you have nothing to offer anyone else. Others seek you out and respond to you in more intensive ways than is usual.
9. You eventually Return to normal life. In the middle of a Hero's Journey you might find it difficult to imagine how this can happen, but it always does.
10. While you do Return, you are however never the same. You have been forever transformed by your Journey. Sometimes in ways that you are not aware of when you first Return. Full integration of your experience takes time.
11. You can get better at recognising the archetypal pattern of the stages of the Hero's Journey. When you realise that you are being called to yet another Adventure you can become more aware and alert for each of the stages establishing a contemplative practice that witnesses your Adventure as it unfolds. You then have the opportunity to participate in

each of the stages in a deeper way with more capacity to mindfully slow the stages to increase learning and transformation.

12. It is possible to undertake a shared Hero's Journey. You can intentionally contract with others who are undertaking a shared Adventure involving an external challenge to travel together, supporting and learning from each other through the stages of the Adventure. In doing this you might simultaneously be a Hero in your own Journey but a Guide or Friend for others. You might even become a Gift to a fellow traveller. Acting as a Guide or Friend in a communal Adventure's Hero is a potentially intensive transformational experience and deeply privileged leadership work.
13. Hero's Journeys mostly involve a call to go somewhere or do something that you would normally not volunteer to do. They are not innately attractive options. It doesn't seem to matter how experienced you are with Hero's Adventures, they never become more attractive.
14. As you learn the pattern you can, however, learn to relax into the Journey and the inevitable stages. You can even learn to do the seemingly impossible and embrace the murky depths and the darkness and not fight to come back too soon. This is where the most amazing things happen including deep encounters with an Infinite Being's presence, unexplainable outcomes in line with quantum physics and synchronicity, unexpected and unasked for gifts from others who may not even know you or your circumstances and perception-changing, healing insights about your inner psyche. It is the place of paradox where the most profound learning takes place in the last place that you want to be.
15. All Hero' Journeys are inevitably painful in an endless variety of ways and I still hesitate to readily embrace a Call to Adventure. I have, however, learned to say yes to more of them and stay in them longer. I don't know any other way that offers such a rich environment for

transformational life experiences and mystical encounters with God's presence.

16. Hero's Journeys are always invitational and it is indeed possible to ignore them or say no to the Call to Adventure. You always have within your reason the capacity to say yes, no or not yet to the invitations to leave your normal world and move into the Adventure of the unknown. This is central to the understanding of why the character in question is a Hero. The Hero chooses of their own free will to go on the Adventure. It is possible to say no and to keep saying no. In my experience, sometimes the invitations come once and don't reappear. Other invitations, if ignored or rejected, reappear at intervals over time offering you additional opportunities to accept but there is always free will with a capacity for the Hero to accept or decline. The tragedy of some people's lives is that they never say yes. I wish for you the courage to say yes to your next Call to Adventure and the eyes and ears of discernment to be present for others on their Journeys.

Wendy Quinn

December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018



## References

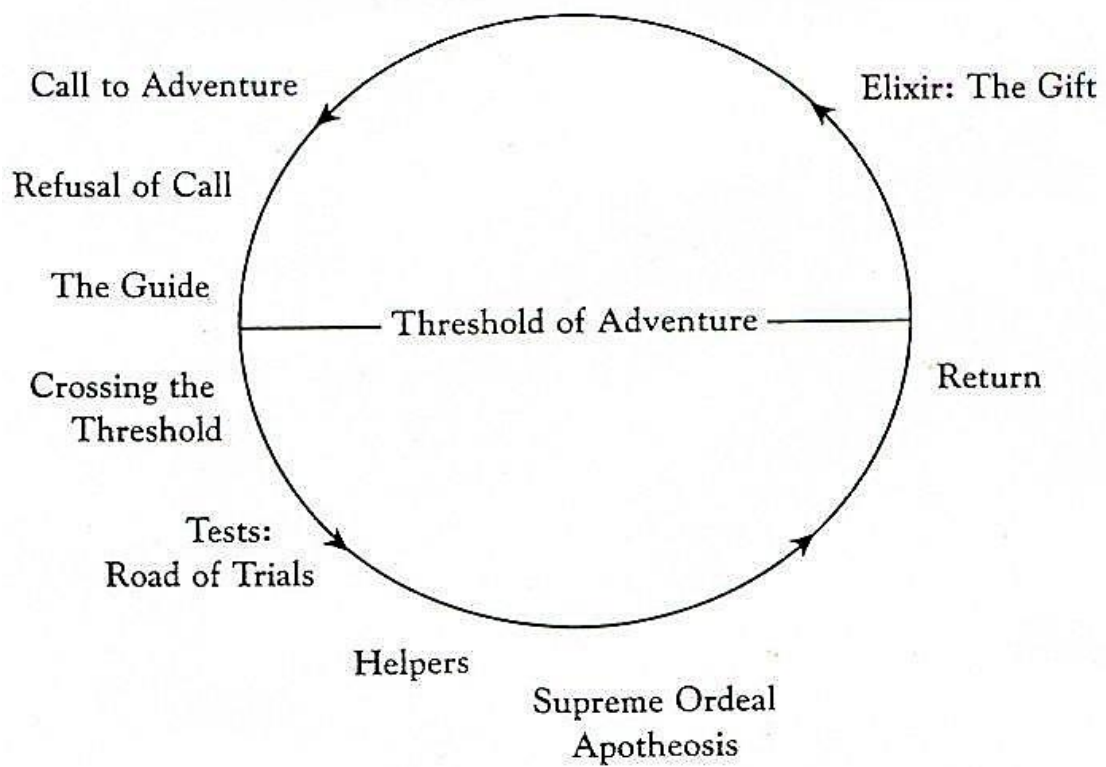
1. Campbell J. *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. 3rd ed. California New World Library 2008 2008. 418 p.
  2. Jones C. *Christopher Vogler and The Hero's Journey. The Outline, Archetypes and Mythical Memo* 2017. Available from: [chrisjonesblog.com](http://chrisjonesblog.com).
  3. Greenleaf R, K. *On Becoming a Servant Leader*. California Jossey-Bass Inc; 1996. 394 p.
  4. Jaworski J. *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership* San Francisco Berrett Kohler Publishers; 1998. 213 p.
  5. Freedman M. *Encore: Finding work that matters in the second half of life*. New York: Public Affairs; 2007.
  6. Mark Hall P. *Mangle the Tango: It's better to fall than never to dance at all.:* Exhuma Worldwide; 2017. Lyrics and cover image used by permission
  7. Brian S, Candice S. *The Sacred Journey Wisconsin* Broadstreet Publishing Group ,LLC 2015. 248 p.
  8. Whyte D. *Life at the Frontier: Leadership through Courageous Conversation*2013.
- Copyright Wendy Quinn. Not to be reproduced without permission.

# ATTACHMENTS

## Attachment One: The Hero's Journey Diagram

### PART THREE

# THE HERO'S JOURNEY



## **Attachment Two: MANGLE THE TANGO**

### **LYRICS**

*It's your turn to lead*

*My turn to follow*

*So push or pull me like there's no tomorrow*

*Let's not waste the dance debating the right way to begin*

*Even if we mangle the tango*

*Feel the music, oh, so mesmerizing*

*Gaze into my eyes while improvising*

*Defy the fear of falling or tumbling as we spin*

*Even if we mangle the tango*

### **Chorus**

*Even if we mangle the tango*

*Oh, there's one thing I know*

*It's better to fall*

*Than never to dance at all*

*Let's dance!*

### **Instrumental**

*Hold me close then let me move beside you*

*Let's lift our heads,*

*Oh steady now, we can do,*

*If we take four steps and then pause*

*We'll make it 'cross the room*

*Even if we mangle the tango*

### **Chorus**

*Even if we mangle the tango*

*Oh, there's one thing I know*

*It's better to fall*

*Than never to dance at all*

*Let's dance!*

Written by Pam Mark Hall © 2011 Pam Mark Hall Music (ASCAP) All rights reserved

**Attachment Three: THE SACRED JOURNEY:  
God's Relentless Pursuit of Our Affection**

Brian and Candice Simmons (2015).

Broadstone Publishing Group, Wisconsin, USA

CHAPTER 30 (pp 198):

**DELIGHTED WITH HER BEAUTY**

*How beautiful on the mountains*

*are the sandaled feet of this one bringing such good news.*

*You are truly royalty!*

*The way you walk so gracefully in my ways displays such dignity,*

*You are truly the poetry of God- his very handiwork,*

*Out of your innermost being is flowing the fullness of my Spirit—*

*Never failing to satisfy.*

*Within your womb there is a birthing of harvest wheat;*

*They are the sons and daughters*

*Nurtured by the purity you impart.*

*How gracious you have become!*

*Your life stands tall as a tower, like a shining light on a hill.*

*Your revelation eyes are pure,*

*Like pools of refreshing- sparkling light for a multitude.*

*Such discernment surrounds you,*

*Protecting you from the enemy's advance.*

*Redeeming love crowns you as royalty.*

*Your thoughts are full of life, wisdom, and virtue.*

*Even a king is held captive by your beauty.*

Song of Solomon Chapter 7: 1-5