

The New Hero's Journey

Taking the path less travelled

By Lisa Murrell

As coaches, we have consciously chosen a path different from other professions that often focus on individual benefit. The coach's only complete and right path is that which compassionately helps others. Coaching from this perspective is purely from the heart, with more emphasis on listening and connecting than figuring stuff out.

Coaching can be described as an archetypal character on a journey of self-discovery to benefit others. It is a kind of new 'hero's journey.' And our journey definitely impacts the journey of our clients.

So how do we support our journey? Many of us don't. Interestingly, 'compassion fatigue' is common among people in the helping professions. There is high burnout in the therapeutic fields, and coaches are more often feeling drained and exhausted after a day of seeing clients than inspired and invigorated. Why is this?

There are probably many reasons, but I feel it is directly related to the absence of focus and attention to our own journey. Because we are so focused on others, we don't take the necessary time to contemplate our paths and what is needed to move us forward toward our on transformation.

Are you aware of where you are on the new hero's journey?

Step 1 – Ordinary World: The coach in her normal setting before the opportunity for personal transformation presents itself.

Step 2 – Call to Adventure: The coach creates the possibility of success, which will take her out of her current state and onto her next level of being.

Step 3 – Refusal of the Call: Typically, the coach will question her worthiness for success or if she wants to go on this journey.

Step 4 – Meeting with the Mentor: At this stage, if the coach is wise, she will seek out a mentor of some sort to guide her through this process.

Step 5 – Crossing the First Threshold: The coach finally decides to go for this new challenge and the journey commences in earnest.

Step 6 – Tests, Allies and Enemies: After many clients and marketing courses, the coach is disoriented and must decide whom she can and cannot trust.

Step 7 – The Approach (to the Inmost Cave): Before the coach can get to the heart of the matter and truly transform, she needs to go inside and spend some time on her inner journey.

Step 8 – The Ordeal: In some way the coach must face her biggest fear, which will generally identify her char-

“When is the last time you contemplated your own journey? How can you support others' transformation if you are not aware of your own?”

acter flaw and force her to change if she is to progress in her quest.

Step 9 – The Reward: Having faced this fear with equanimity, the coach feels truly transformed and surrounds herself with like-hearted and minded people to support her going forward.

Step 10 – The Road Home: Just when things seem comfortable, the coach is reminded that life is dynamic; the journey is ongoing.

Step 11 – Resurrection: The coach



is again faced with challenge; yet with support of her newfound community and mentors, finds success and validates her transformation.

When is the last time you contemplated your own journey? How can you support others' transformation if you are not aware of your own?

We as coaches have chosen a different path; one that supports others. To truly find success we must forge ahead on our own journey, with heart and mindfulness. ●