

# The Hero's Journey® program



Thank you for your interest in applying to the Hero's Journey program!

Below is some important and pretty cool information, which we encourage you to read to gain some insight in to the Hero's Journey program!

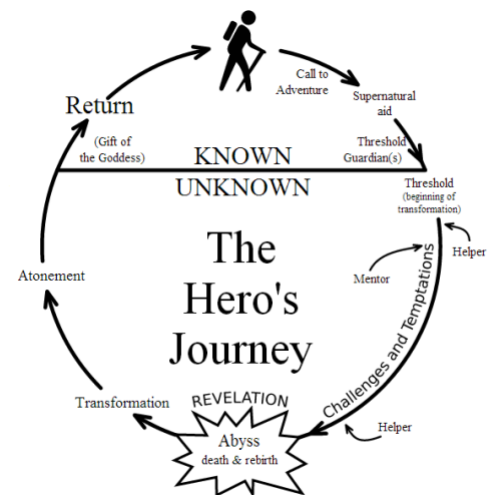
## What is the Hero's Journey program?

The Hero's Journey program is a seven-day program designed to serve 16-18 year-old adolescents living with serious illness and/or its effects. The program is based on the philosophies of Joseph Campbell, Kurt Hahn, Paul Newman and the Adventure-Based Counseling model (more info below). Program participants encounter a natural setting in the woods, free from the distractions of technology in which they experience group challenges, personal challenges, rites of passage, wilderness first aid training, and search and rescue training. The weeklong journey provides opportunities for participants to act skillfully in the service of others, examine perceived limitations, discover unknown skills they possess, and to take on the role of "the hero of their own story".

## Why is it called the Hero's Journey program and why is it important?

The Hero's Journey program gets its name from the experience a "hero" or "heroine" goes through as they embark on a new adventure. This process was philosophized and explained by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* written in 1949. Campbell's research revealed that myths and stories throughout all cultures and across time share one similar theme of a hero's journey. These stories may have had different characters, settings, and challenges, but the structure never changed. This is still the case with some of our most beloved stories today, such as *Harry Potter*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Hunger Games*, *Star Wars*, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and so on. Campbell theorized that these types of myths and stories are always surrounding us because they are a reflection of our own lives; our lives are a compilation of the many Hero's Journeys we have experienced. To better understand how this idea connects to our lives, take a moment and check out this video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9blXbBqVac>

This concept is important for our program because it provides the structure and platform for how we plan the week, the language we use, the conversations we have, and the metaphors discussed when exploring the meaning behind all the ceremonies, initiatives, activities, and programming you will experience. The week emphasizes and celebrates the fact that each of us are on our own personal hero's journey. It provides an opportunity to discover your true self and gain perspective on how you want to continue your path when you return home. In addition to the adventure and self-discovery, creating lasting bonds and memories with others is central to the Hero's Journey program. Participants return home feeling accomplished and proud. To learn more about the Hero's Journey, take moment and watch this short explanation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhk4N9A0oCA>.



For more information, refer to our website at <https://www.holeinthewallgang.org/programs/Heros-Journey/> or contact Greg Yeager, Hero's Journey manager, at [greg.yeager@holeinthewallgangcamp.org](mailto:greg.yeager@holeinthewallgangcamp.org).