



Module 4 | Lesson 1

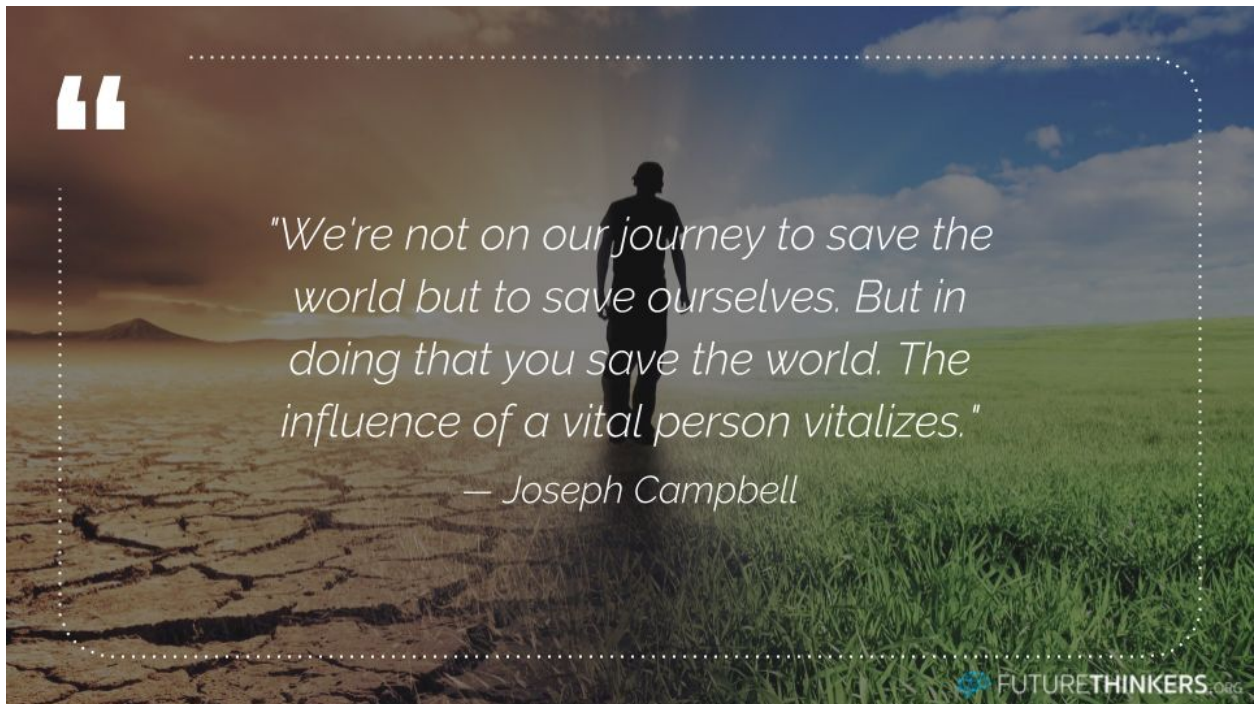
# The Hero's Transformation

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Why it's important to change yourself before trying to change the world.

## The **purpose** of this lesson

Understand what your motivations to change the world are, so that you can make better decisions and focus on the things that will truly have an impact.



## The hero's journey

The hero's journey has become the most prevalent narrative structure of the last century. It follows the pattern:

1. The hero is down on his luck, living in an old world (the status quo).
2. The hero is called to adventure by a wise master.
3. The hero's world is threatened, or a new character is introduced which thrusts the hero into the new world.
4. The hero must face great challenges, go to the brink of death, and defeat a foe to win a treasure or sacred knowledge. The narrative is most effective when the villain represents the dark side of the hero.
5. The hero must then make the return home to share the knowledge and or experience with people still living in the old world. There is a period of integration in the old world.

## A coming of age story

- The hero's journey is a coming of age story, it's about transitioning from boyhood to manhood. A rite of passage.
- It is meant to represent a transformation in the heart and mind of the hero, and integration of the hero's own shadow.
- If this internal transformation does not take place, the hero's journey is incomplete.

## What most modern narratives have in common

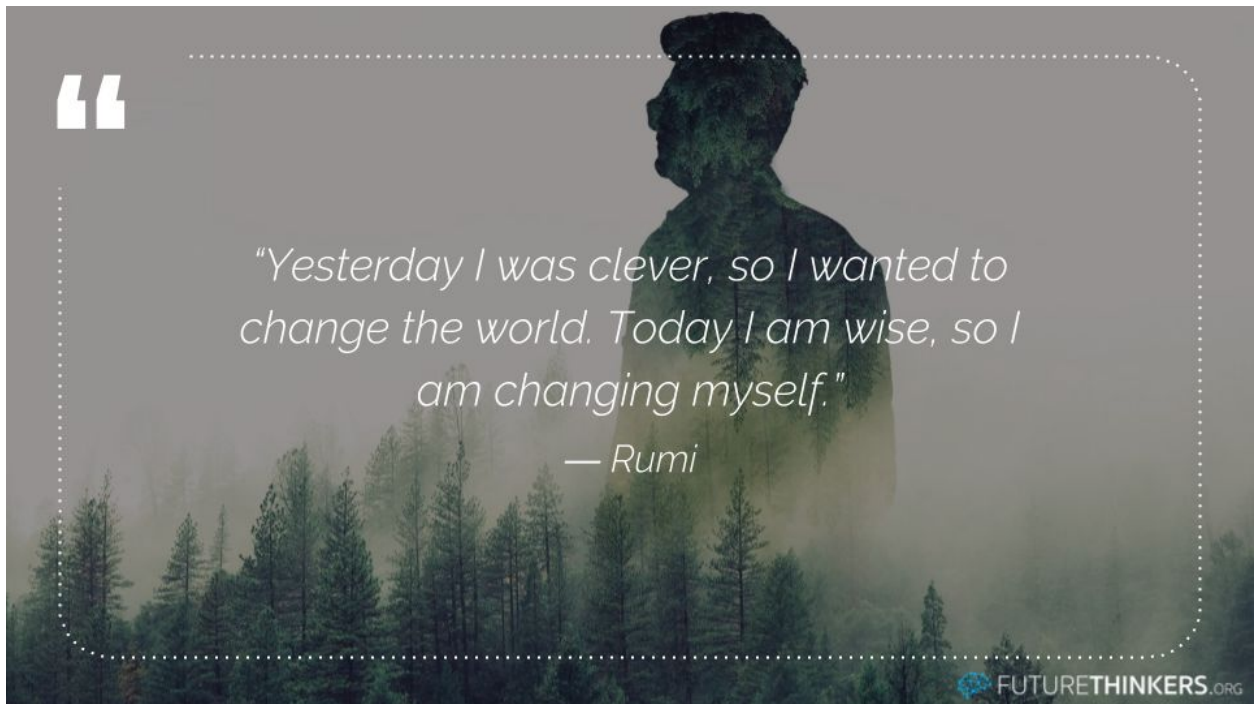
- Little to no personal or psychological transformation. Little or very shallow character development.
- They externalize the enemy / villain.
- The villain is almost always evil for evil's sake.
- The main character follows the "Hero's Journey" narrative arc, but does not gain the sacred knowledge or bring it back.
- The hero is stuck in a perpetual loop of the same "us vs them" narrative with no internal transformation, only new villains.

## An incomplete narrative

Societally, we have already transitioned to the new world. We already possess the ability to access any and all sacred knowledge.

What we need is to stop viewing the villain as external, so that we can discover, defeat, and integrate the shadow in ourselves, and bring that secret knowledge to the world.

Without this wisdom, we will continue to perpetuate the same "us vs. them" narrative that is at the heart of many of our greatest problems on this planet.



## What can you do about the **state of the world**?

Most young people believe they can change the world. This can be a positive trait, but it can also be wildly naive and misguided.

The problems we see are often far more complex than they appear, and the solutions require wisdom, experience, and holistic thinking before we should begin to attempt to solve them.

They require the hero's transformation.

**Yes, the world can be changed by a small group of dedicated people. But there are many questions that need to be considered:**

1. What is the reason for seeking to make the change?
2. Are you sure your proposed solution is the right solution for the problem?
3. Are there historical examples of this solution being attempted, and how did it go?
4. Is there a simpler path that would produce the result you seek?
5. Are you sure the problem is solvable?

6. Have you considered the potential negative outcomes that can result from destabilizing existing systems? (they always exist)
7. What makes you think you're capable or qualified to create this change?
8. How much time & money are you willing to invest into this? Are you prepared to make this your life's work?
9. What are you willing & not willing to sacrifice to solve this?
10. Are you prepared to face the consequences of attempting to make this change in society, including unintended negative outcomes, backlash, and failure?

## In many cases, people seek to change the world for the wrong reasons

### For example:

- To feel like they matter, or to feel virtuous.
- To avoid dealing with their own problems.
- To solve their own problems, or make their own life better.
- To have meaning and purpose in their lives.
- To use the "change the world" narrative to advance their own agendas.

## Why change yourself before changing society?

- Your primary sphere of influence is you. If you haven't figured out how to produce deep change in yourself, you have no business trying to change the world.
- We all create our reality, individually and collectively. Understand how you are contributing to it, and take responsibility for what you create.
- We are moral hypocrites. We see the mistakes of others to be far larger than our own.
- Our ideas of how things should be are often out of touch with reality, and are driven by external narratives.
- We have a simplistic view of the world. Our individual solutions often don't get to the heart of the problem, or can produce overall negative outcomes when implemented on a societal level.
- By attempting to change the world to fit our biases or pathology, we create a more biased and pathological world.

- Creating meaning, purpose, and impact doesn't have to mean some grandiose large scale change. Many of the most meaningful and impactful things start small and personal.
- Many of the problems we are facing in the world today have to do with deep human psychology, which is difficult to regulate externally. The change has to come from within.

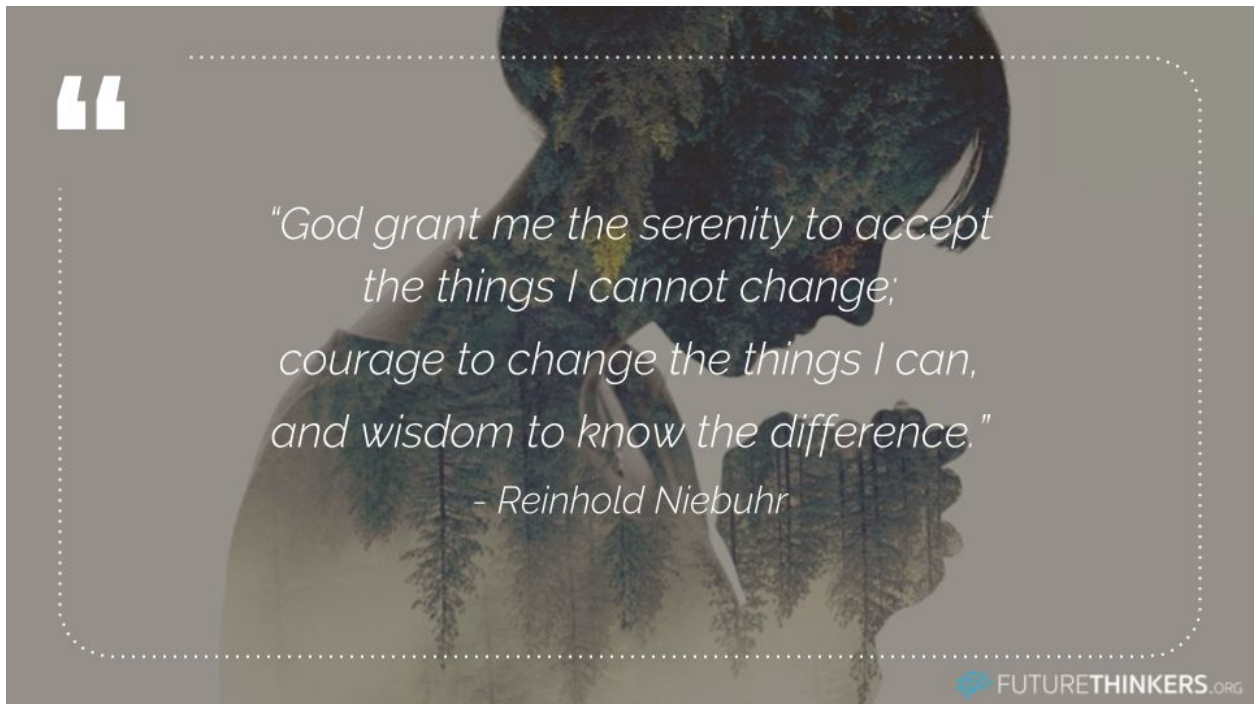
**This is not meant to disempower or discourage you from trying to change the world or to dream big.**

It is meant to point out the difficult questions that should be contemplated whenever proposing or attempting large scale changes, and to invite you to create the internal transformation necessary to start producing them.

## Seeking sovereignty

1. What in your life do you have control over? Where are you inadequate?
  - Failing at my job
  - Relationships are in disarray
  - Unable to overcome addictions
2. What are you worrying about that is not up to you?
  - School shootings
  - Global warming
  - Global income inequality

**Consider:** is a person with problems in the first category able to tackle problems in the second?



## When am I done?

### When can I go back to trying changing the world?

- Gain practical experience in creating change. This starts with changing yourself.
- Participate in small scale experiments. Over time, move to larger scale experiments. The problems will become obvious as you scale.
- Share the stories of your experiments.
- You can't think on a global scale, you can only do it at a small scale that gradually grows to a larger scale.
- If you want to go fast, try to break your solutions and ideas.

## Written Exercise

- Contemplate: What is the most profound, persistent transformation you have been able to create in your own life?
  - Example: quit an addiction permanently.
- Write about this transformation you went through.
  - What was the trigger for it (the thing that pushed you to do it)?
  - What was the catalyst (the thing that sped up the process)?
  - What were the tools you used? Who helped you?
  - What was your biggest a-ha moment in the process?
  - What is a piece of experiential wisdom you can share with others?

Think of this transformation as a benchmark for the kind of change you can create in the world.



## Summary

- **The hero's journey** has become the most prevalent narrative structure of the last century.
- It's a coming of age story about **transformation from boyhood to manhood**. A rite of passage.
- Modern interpretations of the hero's journey are a perpetual loop of the same "us vs them" narrative with **no internal transformation, only new villains**.
- Many of the problems we are facing in the world today have to do with **deep human psychology**, which is difficult to regulate externally. The change needs to be internal.
- There are many **questions that need to be considered** before attempting to change the world, about the validity of ideas, historical examples, competence, time & monetary investment, sacrifices, risks and consequences.
- Figure out how to **change yourself before trying to change the world**.
- Contemplate the most **profound, persistent transformation** you have been able to create in your own life, and use that as a benchmark for what you can change in the world.