



DIANA'S
GROVE

Newsletter Volume 5

Between The Worlds Patterns of Possibility

Diana's Grove Mystery School

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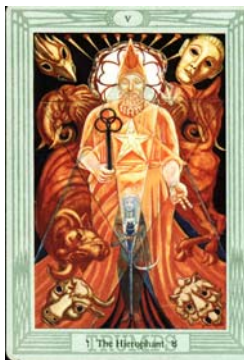
Number 5

The Hierophant

by Cynthia Jones

In some decks, the 5th card is called *The Pope*. In some decks, this figure of spiritual authority has been eliminated. And why not...all of our religious history is stored behind this portrait. Look for the archetype behind the image and you will find the keeper of the *Doorway to the Divine*. Even in an Arcana of mythic principles, this card represents a highly mythic place. Yes, Mom is mythic and Dad is Mythic - they precede this card. Your lover is mythic. That magical being follows this card. But, even in this grand company, *the one who speaks to and for the Gods* is MYTHIC even in the world of myth.

Don't let that stop you. Open the door. Wander down the corridor. It is filled with hope, prayers, and the stories of mortals who were ask to take omnipotent roles. Some of those Priests and Priestesses believed that they were the role they assumed. They took on names of distinction worthy of their greater knowledge. And, like the



rest of us, history revealed that they were voices of their times as often as they were speakers of a timeless truth. But...they are not the only ones who dwell behind this doorway. Walk on. Go down the corridor. You will find the gentle ones, the wind talkers, the trance dancers, the sun-watcher, the medicine women and men, the seventh daughter of a

seventh daughter who knew she was born to live her life in service to the mystery.

In the Crowley Harris deck, *The Pope* is called *The Hierophant*. The Hierophants were the women and men that Demeter initiated into her

mysteries of Life and Death. The number five in the tarot is the number of transition. One to four describe an inner reality, six to nine are self in relationship to others. Look at those cards and you will see *Self* in the dance to enter a relationship and *Self* in the dance to leave a relationship. You will see *Self* attempting to be in a community and *Self* attempting to be different from that community. So many dances, so little time.

Five is the number that places stepping stones between these two realities, between individual perception and a world or communal view. Five is the number that describes leaving home and going to school for the first time. Imagine that you can remember yourself discovering that the absolute world of your family with its definitive rights, wrongs, gods and icons, and ways of communicating is only one world. That world spins in a universe filled with other worlds. Those fives...strife, worry, disappointment and defeat are the issues that we discover as we attempt to live in a world larger than our own. Five is the number of family. It is the number of our extended family, our clan, our community. Communities create shamans. Shamans create communities. This card is where those two statements meet.



And finally, this card is also associated with teaching and learning. Difficulty isn't the only teacher or the best teacher, but difficulties send us searching for teachers, for solutions. The fives let us know what

we don't know.

Hiero - Sacred. Phant - to reveal. Hierophant: One who reveals the sacred.

Theology shapes the work of the Hierophant. In some traditions, a Hierophant takes a message to the Gods and Goddesses. In others, she brings a message from the divine to the clan. In the Tarot, this card is associated with Taurus, that first primal earth sign who speaks through a May-filled world. If you think of The Hierophant as the Priest of Beltane, you will see him in an older role that might give you a new view of him. Taurus is a sensual sign. It rules music and the throat. Think of the power of voice that leads us beyond ourselves and into unexplored realities.

This card is associated with ears, hearing and listening. The music of the May world falls on the Hierophant's senses. Listen. There is a message being sung by those who placed this card in this season. That earthy Hierophant, his spiritual practice connects him to life rather than removes him from it. Embodied spirituality: this spiritual leader's goal is not to transcend her body but to embody transcendence. Her path of

spiritual leadership asks her to let all that is whole and holy find feet and live her truth as she walks the earth. Listen...she says. "Let *that which is more* take action through *we who are of time and form.*"

What other voice does mystery have but yours? Who but you can plant Demeter's seed and harvest her wheat? Whose job is it to turn her offerings into bread? Are we not the ones who are called to develop belief systems and theologies that will feed the people in our communities, feed them body and soul?

Look at this card again. Let the Hierophant back into your Deck of Life. Invite this Major Teacher, this Major Mystery, to drop his stones in the river of your life and change the course of things. He will take you beyond form. He will reclaim a wider shoreline and restore the marsh grass and the wetlands that thirst along your edges. He will cut new channels through your reality. If you don't like the card, change his form, his robes, his shape but give her a role in the pattern of your society. She listens to the wind and hears the voices of Goddesses and Gods. Let the One who Reveals the Sacred reclaim her original role in your deck.

Theme for this Month is "Valuing Healing"

by Canyon

Chiron's challenge – to value present healing more than past hurts – at first sounds so simple. Sure...I can do that. I even *want* to do it. It's pretty much a no-brainer, you know? After all, who would choose to value past hurts more than present healing and, as my mom says, "for pity's sake, why?"

Oh...for pity's sake. There it is.

When I elevate my status as Wounded One above my status as one who seeks health and wholeness, it's for pity. It's for attention. It is a bid to receive nurture, receive love. At this point in my life, when my wounds are no longer in the driver's seat, they have become a way to make a connection with you, with community. But this connection is one that forces you,

forces my community, into the role of my caretaker. Like an injured dog, I present myself to my pack with submissive belly up to receive nurture. Licking my wounds as a way to get your pity forces you to lick them with me...and forces me to receive nurture as an act of submission.

Once upon a time, I did not have this choice to make. There was a time when I didn't even know that I was wounded. I thought it was normal to get drunk every time I drank, to do drugs to get through the day, to engage in various other activities that could kill me, and to be in relationships that hurt me. I thought all that was *the way life was*. I didn't know any better because I didn't have any part of me that was healed. My life was entirely acted out of

my wounds and, so, they were invisible to me, those wounds. *Acting out* looked like living. Only it hurt so much...all the time.

I can see my wounds and know that they are not Me. They don't define me and they don't define my thoughts, feelings and actions...most of the time. I can make a connection with you, with community, from a desire for continuous healing and growth. Instead of finding ways for my pathologies to snuggle up against yours, my wholeness can seek yours. The divine in me can find the divine in you. I can receive nurture as shared power that enables life-sustaining relationships.

And there is where my choice lies. My ability to see my wounds as separate from my Self, with some experience of healthy connection...these allow me to recognize the difference between acting from wholeness and *acting out* from a wound. In those moments when my acting out begins, I see the truth of what I'm doing almost instantly. In that moment, I am empowered to choose. Will I roll my belly to the sky and re-open my wound for you to lick with me? Or will I stand on my legs, feeling the wound there beneath my fur – a wound of my past no longer defining my present? Will I choose to find you with my healthy self? Will I have the courage to let you love me whole?

What would you choose?

Who are the Mysteries?

By Solice Novia

This month I had the opportunity to interview two women from our community on the subject of health and healing. It was so great to get their unique perspectives on this subject, that in some ways is relevant to all of us. Doctor Ann Allegre and Lucinda Sohn are both members of the mystery school community who have dedicated their time and energy to helping people in their healing processes. Here is what Lucinda had to say:

Lucinda Sohn

*I asked **Lucinda:** Where are you from, background in education, social, spiritual, and/or political interests, etc.*

Answer: I was born in St. Louis, Missouri and seem to be hooked. My partner, Juliet Jackson and I have a thirteen year old son, Mitchell, three dogs and an iguana. Juliet and I are dedicated to raising Mitchell, so we are involved in his activities. My spiritual leaning is pagan, and I am a "Diana's Grovian" through and through.

Question: *What is your chosen profession? (What you do, where you do it, how long have you been doing it ?)*

I have dual licensure as a speech pathologist and massage therapist. Professionally I treat individuals with voice loss or barriers to vocal

success. Specifically, I assist in releasing tension in the mechanisms of the voice and breathing as well as introduce new patterns of behavior regarding breath support, voice production, and vocal resonance. The techniques I use apply to both speaking and singing. Along with my life and business partner, Juliet Jackson, I have treated hundreds of voice users. We started our business, The Voice Studio, in 1991. We are located in St. Louis County.

Question: *What called you into this profession?*

Right after I graduated with a masters degree in speech pathology I was called on to work with several women's choral groups as a coach. I instructed them in basic vocal production techniques and really enjoyed the work.

Question: *What are some of the most challenging aspects of the work that you do?*

Personalities, definitely. It is necessary for me to be flexible in the way I instruct, guide, and interact with my clients. Sometimes folks carry a lot of baggage around issues regarding their voice. I believe that the voice is closely tied to the psyche. It seems that the voice is an integral part of who we are. Creating a setting where it is safe to explore and potentially change voice habits can be a challenge. Helping to ingrain those habits can be just as tough.

Question: *What are the most rewarding aspects of your work?*

Helping people. It is extremely rewarding to help others recover from vocal difficulties. Voice is powerful, as demonstrated by sayings like “having my say” and “giving voice to an issue”. For singers and speakers alike, loss of voice can be devastating. Recovery brings freedom and new possibilities.

Question: *What is your approach to health and healing?*

I believe in the mind/body/spirit connection. I am most successful when I am able to help in all of these arenas. When an individual feels healthy, believes they are healthy, and are connected with the energies of health and vitality available to them, then they are truly healed.

Question: *What are some of your personal philosophies about healing?*

I am very leery of any one discipline “standing alone”. I think that it takes a village of healers to heal the people. Western medicine has become a stand alone culture based on a model of treating illness. Driven by popular thinking that there must be and are alternatives, western medicine is forced to deal with other ideas and disciplines. I think that we all belong: East, west and all, and that a healthy population will be served by cooperating professionals and healers.

Dr. Ann Allegre

*Here is what **Dr Ann Allegre** had to say when I asked her about her background, her chosen profession, and what called her into that profession.*

Ann: I was born in Kansas. I went to medical school, have a bachelors degree in biology, with radiology training. I practice general internal medicine and had one year in cardiology. I have been doing geriatrics work in Kansas City for 18 years.

I started doing work with Hospice part time in 1988 and moved into working with Hospice full time in 1999. The work that I was doing at The Grove at the time had to do with “*what is your hearts desire?*” That helped me make the leap into doing the Hospice work full time, to help those who are dying and their families.

Hospice is designed to help people in the last six months of their lives, but the reality is that most people come to Hospice in the last three weeks of their lives. I work with something called palliative medicine, which focuses on comfort and the whole person.

Question: *How did you get to palliative medicine?*

Two things- a definite need for better care and my own experience of surviving cancer in 1981. That experience taught me a lot about being a patient and facing the fact that I would die someday. I really had to face the possibility of my own death. I got to experience medical care from a patients perspective. It taught me about how important all of the little things are.

Before I had dealt with my own possible death, I had feared death. Looking in the face of death moved me beyond that fear, then I wasn't afraid to be around people who were dying... a really great gift.

In this particular field of medicine, spirituality is right up front. People start asking a lot of questions...like why is this happening to me? Practicing my own spirituality is a very important part of me being able to do this work. I have to be grounded in my own life as I sit

with other people searching for meaning. My spirituality is a source of nourishment for myself. Most of the people that I serve are Christians, so I have learned to translate. I have learned to speak to them in their own language, while incorporating my own knowledge and practices.

For example, we had a costume party once and I came dressed as a spirit guide. I brought my drum and played it. I taught several chants (that I did not refer to as chants) including We All Come From The Goddess. I changed the words to We All Come From Heaven. People loved it, some people have even asked me to bring my drum back.

I incorporate little bits of rituals into my work where I can, for example I start each staff meeting with reading from different sources on deeper meaning. I find that this is very grounding work to do.

Question: What are some of the more challenging aspects of the work that you do?

Dealing with end-of-life issues all day long and the emotions of the people that the hospice program serves.

Question: What are the most rewarding aspects of the work that you do?

Knowing that we make a difference. Knowing that we are appreciated. Dying is such an important time as far as how life will be

remembered. It is profound and meaningful work every day.

Question: *What is your approach to health and healing?*

Healing is not about cure. Healing is about finding a way to make a completeness when your life, or part of it has been taken away. I have been inspired by the writings of Erik Cassell in this subject. He wrote a book called *The Nature of Suffering and The Goals of Medicine*.

Question: *What are some of your personal philosophies around health and healing?*

Most of us are going to die of chronic illness. We will know the end is approaching. We will have opportunity to find meaning in that situation and that is such an important opportunity...an important part of life.

In facing death there are so many opportunities for understanding ourselves, others we care about, and the divine. It is a lot like the Mystery School work, only on a much larger scale...and you are being forced to deal with it. There are so many blessings to be gained from that time and experience.

I was truly amazed by both of these women and the work that they do in service to healing. I am incredibly grateful to be a part of this community. As I dig deeper and explore who we are, I continue to be awed at the strength and beauty of this diverse Mystery School community. May peace be with us all.

My Favorite Places

by Jane Holt

I want to tell you everything about the Meadow; its size and shape, the flowers that grow there, the color of the grasses and the way they change throughout the year. I want to describe how the seasons paint their essences upon it; the lush, vibrant, and oh-so-vital green of spring, the tall sweet smelling grasses of early

summer that are cut to feed our neighbor's cattle, the hundreds and hundreds of wild flowers that bask in the late summer's sun, the reds and golds of autumn grasses and the patterns of ice and snow and wind that etch themselves across the surface in the winter.

I want to tell you about the Seven-Circuit Labyrinth that was mowed into the meadow 9 years ago. I like to mow it and keep the grass on the path short and soft and green. In the Spring, I call the color of the grass *Trance Green* because its intensity holds the attention of my eyes and conscious mind freeing my imagination to go where it will. When I walk the Labyrinth's path, I imagine how the grass has cushioned and guided the feet of so many prayers and meditations. When I get to the center, I think about the number of hearts that have found answers, comfort and sometimes simply companionship in that middle ground.

I want to tell you about the metamorphous that is happening on the hills; it is a palette of the color green, more greens than I can name or describe. There are yellow olive greens and pale moss greens as well as Kelly and neon greens. There are reddish-greens and gold-greens climbing up the hills mixing with deep pine-greens and delicate hues of yellow and pink. The woods that surround the meadow have a large, diverse population of trees. Each one has its own special spring outfit.

I want to tell you about walking the Labyrinth at night. When the Moon is close to full, you can easily walk the path without additional light. It is a magical experience. The moonlight and taller grasses create shadows that lace across the edges of the path. When the moon is less bright, the stars come into view and the show is spectacular. The Milky Way stands out bright and clear, creating a haze of stars across the center of the sky. Sometimes I will cheat a bit and walk directly out into the center of the Labyrinth. We usually keep a bench there. I feel small and very special looking up at such an incredible sky.

I want to describe everything to you because I want to share the Meadow with you. I want to share my experience of the Meadow and the Labyrinth. When I stand in the Meadow I feel myself held gently between earth and sky. I am human and I am alive. It is a wondrous experience. In the Meadow, whether it is day or night, it is easy and natural for me to be in sensual communion with the world that surrounds me. Like the grasses and the stars, I am very much part of that world.

Finding the way in

by the five of disks

Would you really like to hear from me? I have been asked to speak to you and I will be glad to do so...if you are truly interested in what I have to say or offer. I am so sorry, let me back up a little bit and introduce myself. I am Worry. Well, in all actuality my name is The Five of Disks, but most people refer to me by my "chosen name" or more accurately, my given name - *Worry*.

I live in the suite of disks or pentacles. My suit represents those human experiences of work, money, time invested and the results gained, of life manifesting. The Disks are all about physical manifestation. I am the fifth card in the suit of disks. My number, Five, is a transitional number. Five points create a star.

Just imagine the four point that you connect to make a square. Add a fifth point above the center of the top line, the roof, of the square. I'm that point and when I call the bottom line, the floor of the square to me, the square is reshaped into a star. I challenge the square. I initiate change and the star (that's me) is created.

Perhaps you are familiar with one of the popular images of me...the picture in the Rider-Waite-Smith deck. The picture shows two people making their way through a dark and cold night. The man is injured. Old and tired, a woman walks beside him. They are both in rags and without shoes. There is a stained glass window behind them, perhaps a church.



The building and the window seem to suggest warmth, abundance, and perhaps safety. So why haven't they looked up? Why not stop and knock? Why don't they look for a way in? What could be on their minds? What do they fear?

Have you ever looked at this image and gotten frustrated? Why can't they see what they are passing up? Why are they still outside? What would it take to get them to see what is right in front of them? I love the way different pictures of me show you the different aspects of who I am or who I can be.

In the Crowley deck of tarot, I am shown as shapes and colors...images meant to invoke feelings, emotions...subconscious knowledge. The pictures in the Rider-Waite-Smith deck encourages your brain to create a story about reality. The images in the Crowley deck challenge your body and soul to remember - to feel, to go to the depths and connect with your inner wisdom.

Now step out of these pictures and step into your own life. Have you ever been so consumed with your reality that you haven't been able to see what is present in the situation? Have you ever known things were not as they should be, but you couldn't see a solution? Have you ever had to try to find a way

to meet not only your own needs, but the needs of an entire family, business, or organization? Have you ever felt excluded from an established structure? Have you ever felt that there was no place for you, no space for you? Have you ever known where you wanted to be, but you couldn't find the door way in?

I am that transitional point.

I am the desire for change or transition. I am the awkward rebalancing of structure and form. I am that point at which change happens even if there is no solution in sight. I am the need to be flexible in order to discover new possibilities, new ideas, and new people. I am also the stress caused by the need to shift and change. I am that place of trying to do the impossible...because it has to be done.

I am the need to carefully balance the use of physical resources. Sometimes the worry or stress brought on by the situations I represent become all consuming. Sometimes the worry created by the need to successfully manage all that life physically manifests becomes the biggest part of the picture. Sometimes worry is all that is obvious, even though it is never all that is there.

I am worry, I am the Five of Discs. I am, as you are, so much more complex than a simple name or number can reveal. Now that you have taken a closer look at who I am, I hope you will recognize me as I visit you on your journey. Until we meet again...may you be blessed with the ability to see the larger picture through the worry and the stress. I hope that things in your physical reality manifest for you in positive and beautiful ways, and that your transitions take you to the places you are striving to reach.

Chiron the Bridge Builder

by Teri Parsley Starnes

Traveling through the first four cards of the Tarot, the self is born, meets an other, merges in union, creates form, and then in the fifth step reaches beyond that form. This is the point we reach the *Hierophant - the Teacher and the*

Teaching. It seems to me that this is the point where we crack open the shell of the acorn of our self and find out just what kind of tree we are. In "The Souls Code," James Hillman writes "the acorn theory holds that each person bears

a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived." If this is true, there must be a key that unlocks that uniqueness opens the acorn, and reveals to us our destiny. Perhaps the keys on the Hierophant card represent this mystery. Perhaps if we study the story of one Hierophant in myth, we can learn the pattern of discovering this destiny for ourselves.

In Greek myth Chiron is a wise teacher, a centaur half-human and half-horse, who has his own Mystery School for heroes and healers. Kings and gods, both, sent their sons to Chiron's cave. He taught Asklepios, Jason, and Achilles. In story, Chiron is always placed in a cave. He held the key. I wonder what he taught them? What did these mythical figures learn from a half-human, half-horse being who lived in a cave? The ending to Chiron's story gives us another clue. The teacher received the final lesson. At some festivity, his good friend Herakles accidentally wounded Chiron with a poisoned arrow. The great and immortal healer tried but could not heal himself. In his final act, Chiron chose the oblivion of death by offering his immortality to Prometheus bound to a mountaintop for offending the gods. The teacher unleashed the trickster/creator.

I work with Chiron in the horoscope because I love this story so much. When I look at Chiron I see a story about teaching, teachers, holism, darkness, healing, healers, warriors, friends and the wound that opens us up to releasing the fiery creator within. Astronomically, Chiron, discovered in 1977, is thought to be perhaps a comet. Its orbit lies between Saturn and Uranus. In fact, it is called the Rainbow Bridge because it moves within Saturn's orbital path and then out to Uranus orbital path. This bridging is an important symbol for Chiron as seen in this orbit pattern, the centaur split between animal and human, and the split in pupils between healers and warriors. Another fascinating coincidence occurs between Chiron and the Hierophant - the glyph for Chiron is a key. Melanie Reinhart in "Chiron and the Healing Journey," writes, "Chiron is the Inner Teacher to whom we owe our allegiance. The cluster of astrological ingredients surrounding it may symbolize the tests, tasks, disciplines

and ordeals which unfold under the tutelage of this Inner Teacher, whose path is life itself."

Looking at Chiron in our charts might give us some ideas about what we are looking for in a teacher, one who seems to hold the key to our self-understanding. I believe the dualism of Chiron shows us that we must also look within for the inner teacher. I have found that Chiron can be a very sensitive spot. It can represent a vulnerability that gives birth to compassion and wisdom to be shared with others. Where Chiron is in our charts and the aspects it is making with other planets and important points in the chart can reveal to us how we may become the teacher for others even though we may not feel like the expert in that area. Here are some ideas for creating your Chiron story. An aspect is a geometrical distance between planets. Particular distances have distinct qualities of ease, opportunity, challenge or illumination. For the sake of brevity, let's consider any aspect (i.e., conjunction, sextile, square, trine, or opposition) between the planets and Chiron.

Sun and Chiron. You may find yourself drawn to teaching or healing. How do you identify yourself with any of the Chiron themes? Are you sensitive to wounding around your identity? Has this vulnerability given you deep insight into helping others to find out who they are? Do you wish to find a teacher who will tell you what you are here for?

Moon and Chiron. You may have an emotional need to teach or heal others, or be particularly sensitive to vulnerability. How do you take care of your needs for safety? Are you able to help others create feelings of security? Do you look for a teacher that has the qualities of The High Priestess or the Great Mother?

Mercury and Chiron. You may have had to overcome vulnerability in the area of communication or learning. You may be strongly drawn to teaching in order to help others overcome their difficulties. Have you felt the wounding of words and thoughts? Are you very aware of duality and the need to bridge oppositions and differences? Is your ideal teacher one who is brilliant with words and expression?

Venus and Chiron. You may find Chiron teaching you about relationship, beauty, and balance. What wisdom have you learned about partnership? Are you able to synthesize beauty and harshness? Do your partners mirror the inner and outer teacher for you?

Mars and Chiron. You may need to learn the warrior's lesson from Chiron. Can you bridge assertiveness and compassion? Can you find discernment to know when to act and when to wait? Have you developed an ability to act for others? Does your teacher embody strong leadership?

Jupiter and Chiron. You may have a story to tell about Chiron, a philosophy or teaching about Chiron themes. Do you believe that your wound is you? Do you battle with your teachers or fear the teacher in you? Can you share with others the faith that comes from survival? Does your ideal teacher seem larger than life?

Saturn and Chiron. You may feel a responsibility to bridge, teach or heal others. Do others see you as wise beyond your years? Have you built defenses around a wound? Do you have a sense that it will take a lifetime to know yourself? Is your teacher an authority figure, wise and old?

Uranus and Chiron. You may befriend the rebel and desire to release wild creativity from confinement. Like Chiron, does your wound seem inescapable? Are you able to bridge differences in community? Does your teacher display radical inventiveness and service to freedom?

Neptune and Chiron. You may have a heart that knows no bounds and therefore must learn boundaries. Do you wonder if the pain you feel is yours or someone else's? Have you ever lost yourself when trying to escape? Do others see you as a visionary? Is your teacher the mystic, the servant?

Pluto and Chiron. You may find your authority through accepting transformation - from wound to oak tree. Does being a healer mean letting healing flow through you? Do others see you as insightful and penetrating? Is Death your teacher?

The Hierophant teaches us about sacred truths. The figure on the card can appear as a priest. Liz Greene writes, "The ancient word for priest, pontifex, means maker of bridges." The sacred truth revealed by Chiron is that the wound is not the stopping place but the bridge that leads us to unlocking our unique selves.



Skippy's Version of the Hero's Journey

The Call. "Here Skippy...Here Skippy...Come on girl, over here, come on, here Skip." Oh, no, not *The Call* again. We dogs are just naturally hero types, you know. I've answered *The Call* to the Hero's Journey numerous times. Sometimes the call comes in the form of a friend, another canine companion who wishes a bit of adventure, a stroll over the hill or a romp across the creek. We never know what adventure will find us or where the journey will take us. Sometimes *The Call* comes on a whiff of breeze. Sometimes I just know that it is time to go. Sometimes I answer the call and sometimes I take a nap. I realize that you humans take these *Calls* a bit more

seriously, but we dogs are lucky, we know there will be another call tomorrow. Ah, there it is again, "Here Skippy...come on girl...let's go."

Answering the Call. So what do you do when you hear that call? I mean, first you have to decide whether it is a call to dinner and kibbles or *The Call* to the adventure of a lifetime, a call to leadership, a call to new heights of personal excellence, a call to fulfill your destiny, a call to be all that you can be...oops, that's a myth of a different type. So, first you need to decide whether you are going to answer that call. I have found it personally useful to check the call out. I usually trot in to see if food is being

served. If it turns out to be the other type of *Call* then I need to do a little more figuring: is it a good day for lounging in the sun or would an adventure get my adrenalin going? When you hear *The Call*, I recommend that you spend 3 or 4 minutes figuring out how...or if, you want to answer it. I mean sometimes these adventures take a little more time than one expects. Sometimes you might have to miss a meal or two. Sometimes these adventures even take longer than a two-week vacation. Sometimes they take years and when you come back things just won't be the same anymore. Trust me. My advice is to take a few minutes to decide: What do you really want to do this afternoon...or for the next 7 years of your life?

The Threshold. So you've decided to take the plunge, Uhh? Remember I did warn you, this might take more than a few hours. Now, what? You're on the edge, the threshold, ready to step off into who knows what and...nothing happens. I mean you are all geared up for adventure, you've said you're willing, you've psyched yourself up to grapple with Cyclopes, Sirens and Minotaurs and all that happens is...another day. Do you feel ripped off? Do you feel like you want to call the Hero's Union and complain? Do you think the Goddess has been trifling with your affections? Do you feel like you've been left at the altar holding a wilting bouquet? Never fear! The threshold is deceptive. Sometimes you don't even know when you've taken that step. Sometimes that drop-off goes waaaaaay down. The worst is when you're think you are still contemplating whether to answer the call or not and suddenly, you step off the edge for the hell of it. All you wanted to do was see what it would be like and, yikes, there is no turning back now. Your adventure has begun.

The Abyss. This is the moment when you realize that you probably shouldn't have answered that call to begin with. You should have just let the phone ring, so to speak. But you didn't. You really did pick it up and you

said hello. Once that conversation started you were in this adventure for better and for worse. Now...it's the *worse* part. That giant, yawning abyss in front of you has to be crossed. Oh, yes, it's possible to turn around and go back home. You could even turn in another direction, but...man, I'm telling you, those abysses are almost as wily and numerous as coyotes. Chances are yours is going to show up some place else. I'm telling you, you can run, but you just can't hide. Besides, just like coyotes those abysses are always showing up at the worse possible moments. Sneaky things they are, hiding just out of sight until you least expect them and least want to see them. Then...WHAM...there they are, smiling and waving at you like some old, long lost friend.

I can hear you asking, "Why would any one want to answer *The Call*?" That is a really good question. After all, if you do manage to survive the Hero's Journey to begin with when you return home people often don't seem to be thrilled to see you. They usually ask what happened to that other fellow, you know, the women who never rocked the boat or the guy who fit in so well. Well, to tell you the truth there is a lot more to the story, but I'm running out of space. My editors, you know, they keep telling me that you all don't have time to read 97 pages a month. It's so too bad.

The Rest of the Story. The rest of the story goes like this: Some place along your journey you're going to meet the Goddess. Hopefully, she will feed you. If you recognize her things will go swimmingly for you. Oh, that doesn't mean nothing will happen. It just means you'll have a lot of help with all the things that are going to happen. And you'll be darn glad to have the help. Eventually, you'll reach the center, where ever that is, and begin your journey home. You will undergo a lot of transformation and by the time you get home you won't fit in comfortably with the pack. In fact, you might not fit in at all. You might be that extra point, the one outside the box that turns a square into a lovely five-pointed star. And that's that.