

# We Are All Paralyzed

## The Pursuing Perspective Podcast Season 2

The Hero's Journey, Episode 20

December 16, 2019

Outline	
<b>Guest:</b>	Brandon Sulser
<b>Format:</b>	Shantell interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduces guest</li><li>• Review the Hero's Journey and episode focus</li><li>• Guides four main questions (key points of the Hero's Journey stages)</li><li>• Guides the 2 take-aways</li><li>• Wraps up</li></ul>
<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose is to use the archetype of the Hero's Journey to share experiences and lessons learned by interviewing individuals who have overcome and share a redemptive story.
<b>Summary</b>	The guest in this episode, Brandon Sulser, shares his powerful story of enduring four near-death experiences. As he recounts these experiences, he shares the difficulty in the darkest moments and the fight to seek and hang on to the light. He exemplifies the Hero's Journey as he chooses faith over fear, conquers his thoughts and perspective, and chooses to live rather than just survive. His inspirational story reminds us all of the healing powers of hope and love.
<b>Intro:</b>	<p>Hello, friends! I'm so happy that you are here! I'm your host Shantell Thaxton Blake. This is Episode 20: We Are All Paralyzed.</p> <p>This season we are sharing stories of individuals who clearly exemplify the Hero's Journey (Episode 17)--the redemptive story of overcoming and rising victorious in the face of great adversity. This is such a powerful archetype that's used in the majority of stories because it is truly reflective of our lives. We all go through challenges that provide a powerful opportunity for change and growth, but the choice is ours whether they destroy us or we use them to build us.</p>

	<p>My guest today could be the poster-boy for the Hero’s Journey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction of the guest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brandon has endured four near-death experiences in his lifetime--a bike accident at 12, a cervical fracture at 18, an ATV accident at 29, and a head-on car collision at 34.</li> <li>○ There is a running theme through all of these experiences of choosing faith over fear, of conquering your thoughts and choosing to live rather than just survive. It is such an honor to have you on today. Welcome, Brandon.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Main:</b> (Interview)</p>	<p>The Hero’s Journey starts with the hero in the Ordinary World. Share with us what your ordinary world looked like before this “call” and some insight into who you are. (Details about you—your interests, hobbies, family, etc.)</p> <p>Question 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Would you share with us the experience you were “called” to? (This would include details about the experience, talking about mentors that showed up, how fear was handled in order to accept the call to the experience, and the tests experienced.)</li> <li>● Refusal of the call: How did you go from resisting what was to accepting and moving forward?</li> </ul> <p>Question 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tell us about the biggest challenge during this experience. (This would be referred to as “The Ordeal.”) This is the point where your very existence is challenged. How did you handle this? What got you through?</li> </ul> <p>Question 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What has the road back been like for you? How were you challenged to keep the knowledge and growth gained? How are you different?</li> </ul> <p>Question 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is the elixir or reward from this experience? (Knowledge gained, growth, healing, etc.)</li> <li>● Share insights in how you were able to change this from a contamination story to a redemptive story. <b>How long did it take you to realize or create this as a story of redemption</b></li> </ul>

	<b>rather than contamination (the turning point)?</b>
<b>Two Take-Aways</b>	<p>This leads us to the final portion of the podcast, where I'd like you to share with our audience the two main take-aways that you gained from this journey that could help others on their journey.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li></ol>
<b>Conclusion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You can get Brandon's book, <i>We Are All Paralyzed</i> on Amazon and find it at Deseret Book. If you want to contact Brandon, you can go to his website, <a href="http://www.brandonsulser.com">www.brandonsulser.com</a> and he can be found on Facebook and Instagram under Brandon Sulser. I will list all the options for contact in the notes for this podcast, which can be found at <a href="http://pursuingperspective.org/podcast">pursuingperspective.org/podcast</a>.</li><li>• (Preview the next episode.)</li><li>• I appreciate you all so much for being here--for listening and sharing and everything you do to help be a light.</li><li>• I look forward to connecting with you on this journey of healing and growth as we pursue perspective and progression.</li><li>• Until next time...</li></ul>

**Background Information**

**Overview video** This is a quick overview video to help explain the Hero's journey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1Zxt28ff-E>

**Pursuing Perspective Podcast Episode 17** Episode 17 of the Pursuing Perspective Podcast covers the Hero's Journey and telling a redemptive story. (The podcast can be found on any major podcast platform.)

**Summary of the 12 Stages of the Hero's Journey**

The diagram shows the 12 stages of the Hero's Journey arranged in a circle around a central point. The top half is labeled 'ORDINARY WORLD' and the bottom half is labeled 'SPECIAL WORLD'. A horizontal yellow line separates the two worlds. The stages are:

1. Ordinary World
2. Call to Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting the Mentor
5. Crossing the Threshold
6. Tests, Allies, Enemies
7. Approach to the Inmost Cave
8. The Ordeal
9. Reward, Seizing the Sword
10. The Road Back
11. Resurrection
12. Return with Elixir

**1. Ordinary World**

This is where the Hero's exists before his present story begins, oblivious of the adventures to come. It's his safe place. His everyday life where we learn crucial details about our Hero, his true nature, capabilities and outlook on life. This anchors the Hero as a human, just like you and me, and makes it easier for us to identify with him and hence later, empathize with his plight.

**2. Call To Adventure**

The Hero's adventure begins when he receives a call to action, such as a direct threat to his safety, his family, his way of life or to the peace of the community in which he lives. It may not be as dramatic as a gunshot, but simply a phone call or conversation but whatever the call is, and however it manifests itself, it ultimately disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World and presents a challenge or quest that must be undertaken.

### **3. Refusal Of The Call**

Although the Hero may be eager to accept the quest, at this stage he will have fears that need overcoming. Second thoughts or even deep personal doubts as to whether or not he is up to the challenge. When this happens, the Hero will refuse the call and as a result may suffer somehow. The problem he faces may seem too much to handle and the comfort of home far more attractive than the perilous road ahead. This would also be our own response and once again helps us bond further with the reluctant Hero.

### **4. Meeting The Mentor**

At this crucial turning point where the Hero desperately needs guidance he meets a mentor figure who gives him something he needs. He could be given an object of great importance, insight into the dilemma he faces, wise advice, practical training or even self-confidence. Whatever the mentor provides the Hero with it serves to dispel his doubts and fears and give him the strength and courage to begin his quest.

### **5. Crossing The Threshold**

The Hero is now ready to act upon his call to adventure and truly begin his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He may go willingly or he may be pushed, but either way he finally crosses the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. It may be leaving home for the first time in his life or just doing something he has always been scared to do. However the threshold presents itself, this action signifies the Hero's commitment to his journey and whatever it may have in store for him.

### **6. Tests, Allies, Enemies**

Now finally out of his comfort zone the Hero is confronted with an ever more difficult series of challenges that test him in a variety of ways. Obstacles are thrown across his path; whether they be physical hurdles or people bent on thwarting his progress, the Hero must overcome each challenge he is presented with on the journey towards his ultimate goal.

The Hero needs to find out who can be trusted and who can't. He may earn allies and meet enemies who will, each in their own way, help prepare him for the greater ordeals yet to come. This is the stage where his skills and/or powers are tested and every obstacle that he faces helps us gain a deeper insight into his character and ultimately identify with him even more.

### **7. Approach To The Inmost Cave**

The inmost cave may represent many things in the Hero's story such as an actual location in which lies a terrible danger or an inner conflict which up until now the Hero has not had to face. As the Hero approaches the cave he must make final

preparations before taking that final leap into the great unknown.

At the threshold to the inmost cave the Hero may once again face some of the doubts and fears that first surfaced upon his call to adventure. He may need some time to reflect upon his journey and the treacherous road ahead in order to find the courage to continue. This brief respite helps the audience understand the magnitude of the ordeal that awaits the Hero and escalates the tension in anticipation of his ultimate test.

## **8. Ordeal**

The Supreme Ordeal may be a dangerous physical test or a deep inner crisis that the Hero must face in order to survive or for the world in which the Hero lives to continue to exist. Whether it be facing his greatest fear or most deadly foe, the Hero must draw upon all of his skills and his experiences gathered upon the path to the inmost cave in order to overcome his most difficult challenge.

Only through some form of "death" can the Hero be reborn, experiencing a metaphorical resurrection that somehow grants him greater power or insight necessary in order to fulfill his destiny or reach his journey's end. This is the high-point of the Hero's story and where everything he holds dear is put on the line. If he fails, he will either die or live as he knows it will never be the same again.

## **9. Reward (Seizing The Sword)**

After defeating the enemy, surviving death and finally overcoming his greatest personal challenge, the Hero is ultimately transformed into a new state, emerging from battle as a stronger person and often with a prize.

The Reward may come in many forms: an object of great importance or power, a secret, greater knowledge or insight, or even reconciliation with a loved one or ally. Whatever the treasure, which may well facilitate his return to the Ordinary World, the Hero must quickly put celebrations aside and prepare for the last leg of his journey.

## **10. The Road Back**

This stage in the Hero's journey represents a reverse echo of the Call to Adventure in which the Hero had to cross the first threshold. Now he must return home with his reward but this time the anticipation of danger is replaced with that of acclaim and perhaps vindication, absolution or even exoneration.

But the Hero's journey is not yet over and he may still need one last push back into the Ordinary World. The moment before the Hero finally commits to the last stage

	<p>of his journey may be a moment in which he must choose between his own personal objective and that of a Higher Cause.</p> <p><b>11. Resurrection</b></p> <p>This is the climax in which the Hero must have his final and most dangerous encounter with death. The final battle also represents something far greater than the Hero's own existence with its outcome having far-reaching consequences to his Ordinary World and the lives of those he left behind.</p> <p>If he fails, others will suffer and this not only places more weight upon his shoulders but in a movie, grips the audience so that they too feel part of the conflict and share the Hero's hopes, fears and trepidation. Ultimately the Hero will succeed, destroy his enemy and emerge from battle cleansed and reborn.</p> <p><b>12. Return With The Elixir</b></p> <p>This is the final stage of the Hero's journey in which he returns home to his Ordinary World a changed man. He will have grown as a person, learned many things, faced many terrible dangers and even death but now looks forward to the start of a new life. His return may bring fresh hope to those he left behind, a direct solution to their problems or perhaps a new perspective for everyone to consider.</p> <p>The final reward that he obtains may be literal or metaphoric. It could be a cause for celebration, self-realization or an end to strife, but whatever it is it represents three things: change, success and proof of his journey. The return home also signals the need for resolution for the story's other key players. The Hero's doubters will be ostracized, his enemies punished and his allies rewarded. Ultimately the Hero will return to where he started but things will clearly never be the same again.</p>
<p><b>Redemptive vs. Contamination Story</b></p>	<p><b>Redemptive</b> stories transition from bad to good. They are about events happening <i>for</i> us rather than <i>to</i> us. A redemptive story is the Hero's Journey, which is one of overcoming and gaining something from the journey.</p> <p><b>Contamination</b> stories transition from good to bad. They are about events happening <i>to</i> us rather than <i>for</i> us. A contamination story is one where we are always the victim—there is no rising, only barely surviving.</p>