

My AU/NTL MSOD Experience: An Interview Guide

Purpose

To surface the high points and key learnings from your AU/NTL MSOD experience in order to support you in integrating the experience into your work and your life.

In your trios, one person is the interviewer, another takes notes, the third is interviewed. Then switch roles until everyone has played each role.

*As **interviewer**, your task is to draw out the interviewee's story so that s/he relives not only the facts, but also the "music" – the feelings, the energy, the excitement, the color – of the story.*

*As **note taker**, you have a sacred duty: to capture the reflections on behalf of the interviewee and provide the notes in a coherent form to her/him.*

*As **interviewee**, your job is to tell your story as fully and deeply as you can, so that you and your partners benefit from the telling.*

A Hero's Journey...

There are only two or three human stories, and they go on repeating themselves as fiercely as if they had never happened before."

Willa Cather

Over the last two years, you have been on a journey of discovery and growth. This activity is a chance to reflect on that journey, to draw out insights of what it has meant for you. To put your experience in perspective, you are invited to consider the experience through stages adapted from Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey. Each question is a chance to more deeply understand the human experience and your place in it. And by doing so, to enhance your preparation as a practitioner of system change.

The Call to Adventure: *The hero faces a problem or challenge, although she/he is reluctant to accept.*

1. Take me back to before the beginning. Perhaps it was an unexpected and seminal experience. Or the desire for more education. Or, perhaps a seed planted many years ago blossomed into a desire to attend a graduate OD program. What was the spark that inspired you to apply for the AU/NTL MSOD program?
 - a. What enabled you to take the leap of faith that this program was where you wished to invest your time and energy?
 - b. What do you most want to remember about the nature of a calling?
 - c. What insight does this have for working with a client who calls?

Initiation: *The hero crosses a threshold, entering into the special world of the story for the first time.*

2. Remember what it was like when you first arrived in the AU/NTL MSOD program?
 - a. Tell me a high point story of entering the program. What excited or inspired you? What challenged or surprised you?
 - b. What do you most want to remember about initiations?
 - c. What insight do you have for facing initiation with a client?

The Road of Trials: *The hero faces tests and challenges, making allies and enemies, coming at last to a dangerous place where the object of the quest is hidden, often deep underground. Through the ordeal, the hero touches bottom, confronting fears and possibly death. Because of this trial the hero is reborn in some way—mentally, physically, emotionally, or spiritually.*

3. Deep learning is often a result of challenges overcome. So I have a variety of questions for you about this heart of the journey.
 - a. What moment in the program tested you the most?
 - b. What helped you through?
 - c. What was it like for you to be part of a cohort? What did it teach you about yourself? About working with others?
 - d. As you consider the allies who supported you, tell me about the theories, the models, and the authors that most influenced you.
 - e. How are you different as a result of your experience?
 - f. What do you most want to remember about your approach to overcoming trials?
 - g. What insight do you have for traveling through challenges with a client?

Return and Reintegration with Society: *The hero returns, changed, bringing new wisdom for the benefit of her/his self and others. Perhaps the hero has learned resourcefulness and endurance. Or brings new skills and gifts to the ordinary world.*

4. Your AU/NTL MSOD journey is close to, though not quite, complete. And, of course, endings contain the seeds of what comes next in our travels through life. So when you think about who you are now, how you have changed because of your experience with the AU/NTL MSOD program?
 - a. What have you learned? What new wisdom guides you?
 - b. What skills and gifts have you acquired?
 - c. What do you want a client to know about you and what you have to offer to them?

5. Now imagine it is over. You've finished your practicum. Your comps are complete. You have your hard-earned degree in hand.
 - a. What's the first thing you did to celebrate?
 - b. What do you most want to remember about the experience? About the people?

In Conclusion: *Thank your interview partners for the conversation.*

For more information on the hero's journey, see:

Campbell, J. (2008). **The Hero with a Thousand Faces (The Collected Works of Joseph Campbell (3rd ed).** Novato, CA: New world Library.

Discussion Guide

Purpose: *To discover the resonant themes from our interviews so that we can use the insights and ideas we uncover to gain some preliminary perspective on what we have learned and how we have prepared ourselves to apply our learnings.*

The questions below are to help uncover the “juice” of the interviews. As you complete discussing each question, agree on compelling highlights and write or draw those highlights on a flip chart.

1. Reflecting on our interview experiences, what were the highlights?
 - a. *Go around the group until everyone has spoken.*
 - b. *As stories are shared, listen for resonant themes: high points, insights into implementing system change and what you want to learn about it.*
2. What did we discover about what we have learned over the past two years?
3. What do we now know about ourselves and our ability to apply what we have learned?
4. What about the theories, models, and authors who have influenced us?
5. What do we now know about working with a client that we most want to remember?

Create a flipchart that captures the high points of your discussion – resonant themes, images, metaphors, root causes of success, learning areas.