



Dorothy, her dog Toto, the Tin Man and the Scarecrow on the Yellow Brick Road

The Wonderful Wizard of Us!



Deborah Marshall-Warren invites you to step out along the Yellow Brick Road and to consider the promising and positive journey ahead through the film 'The Wizard of Oz', dedicated to the 'Young in Heart' and therefore to all of us!

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ven as an adult have you really grown out of the film *The Wizard of Oz*?

On the face of it, the film is a children's movie, but look behind the scenes and the film is about life and our life's journey, our insecurities and fears along the path, the people we meet and what matters in our hearts and coming home to ourselves, and to our families. Let us re-visit the film now, but re-interpret it from the perspective of universal trials and tribulations, which we all pass through in life, and which reveal our inner strengths. These are strengths that we may

be in denial of, and are waiting for a 'wizard' to reveal that we already possess. So, let us now re-trace the yellow-brick road and note how the four protagonists demonstrate the skills that they thought they lacked.

Imagine the heroine, young Dorothy, setting out along the yellow brick road with her trusty dog Toto to find her way home to Kansas, having landed with a crash in a faraway place. A place far, far away, and out of sight of her known material home. Far away from Aunt Emily and Uncle Ted, and the farm hands who are her closest friends.

Dorothy has been longing to be somewhere else, believing her nearest and dearest to be 'against her'. And, having longed to be 'Somewhere, over the rainbow, way up high, [in] a land that I heard of once in a lullaby' when, in a freak tornado, she bumps her head and falls into a deep, deep dream in her inner mind, and wakes to find herself in that faraway land.

Longing to go home, to go back to Kansas, where she will not be at risk from the Wicked Witch of the West, she is told of a good wizard who lives in the Land of Oz. Dorothy is directed to follow the yellow spiral of brick beneath her feet, a road that leads to the 'great and wonderful Wizard of Oz'. Once she has found this mysterious person, she must request an audience with him, and report that she wishes to go home. He promises that he will share his wisdom, his ideas and his suggestions, and grant her wish to go home.

Along the way she acquires a great team of companions, all of whom are experiencing a different sense of lack within themselves. At a fork in the road, Dorothy meets the Scarecrow, who believes he is a 'failure' because he has 'no brain'. The Scarecrow laments that he lacks intelligence, and longs to acquire it. The two continue along the road together. They come across a man made out of tin — one who does not believe he has feelings. The Tin Man longs to have a heart. The Tin elects to join them along the path. Together, they continue until eventually they come upon the Lion, who believes that he is lacking in courage. He too is enchanted by what the trio share about the 'wonderful wizard' and his wisdom and his renown for far-reaching powers. So, with respective absences of intelligence, feeling and courage Dorothy and her team of companions continue their journey.

The four players travel the road quite unaware of the buried treasure within themselves. On occasion, latent and longed-for qualities speak by example, but the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion each fail to recognize the voice from within themselves and the ring of truth in their own words. They each lack clearness of inner vision and self-understanding. Each is in denial and continues to lament the absence of a quality, not sensing or intuiting the existence of the seeds of that very quality and their own success deep inside themselves. Perhaps you know someone who continues to do this?

Let's consider the evidence. There is a scene, where the four come to a field of vibrant red poppies, with the Emerald City within their sight at last. As they romp through the field of

red flowers, commanded by the Scarecrow, Dorothy is overcome with weariness, claiming she cannot run any more, and must rest. She falls into the bed of poppies in slumber. The Scarecrow beseeches her to carry on. The Tin Man bursts into tears of emotion, *unaware of his feelings*. Moments later he even screams at the presenting crisis. "This is a spell, this is! It's the Wicked Witch!..." reports the Scarecrow, his brain sparking into life, *unaware of his brain-power*. The Scarecrow seizes upon what has happened, not recognizing or acknowledging his intelligent analysis of the situation.



Eventually, the four stand at the door of the Emerald City. The anticipation and sense of excitement and the Lion speaks of his success. "In another hour I'll be King of the forest. Long live the King!" commands the Lion as he warms to the feelings of courage, the body-language of courage, and the words of courage. So empowered is the Lion with the sense of courage that he easily and effortlessly parades a vision of himself before his companions. The seeds of his courage are couched in a majestic display of grandeur.

What these seeds need now is nourishment and growth, and this is fuelled by the final demand of the seemingly all-powerful wizard. He commands that they seek out and kill the Wicked Witch of the East, and return with her broomstick. Shortly after embarking on the journey to fulfill the wizard's command, however, Dorothy is captured by the Witch's army. Together with the Scarecrow and the Tin Man, the Lion sets forth to rescue Dorothy.

Curiously, as the trio approach the Witch's castle, the Lion leads the way, *unconsciously* emerging as a natural and courageous leader. The Scarecrow announces his plan, and as the rescue unfolds, the Scarecrow's supreme brain-power is made manifest. He shows himself to be a creative and masterful tactician and strategist. The Witch is a challenging evil, and with a menacing and leering glint she lights a torch and sets the Scarecrow on fire. Dorothy acts instantly to dampen her friend with water. The residual liquid spills into the face of the Witch and she is literally liquidated melting to the floor, leaving no trace. The last remaining 'block' to the companions' liberation and freedom is eliminated.

The four return to Oz, and announce their success. They remain *unaware* of their awakening. Although they have demonstrated the very qualities their heart's desire, their old labels – 'no brain', 'no heart', and 'no courage' – are all that their conscious minds are seemingly able to recognize and own, because that is how they perceive themselves, and have done so for as long as they can remember. Do you know someone in your family like this? Perhaps even yourself?

The Wizard continues to block their requests with his belligerent blabber. 'Why have you come back?' he demands, perhaps quite exasperated by the trio's inability to grasp the glaringly obvious? The Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion, *if only they had noticed*, had already enjoyed so many *opportunities*, to realize their newly discovered talents.

It is Toto who, with a paw-stroke verging on wizardry, pulls back a curtain to reveal an elderly mortal at a microphone bellowing forth his bullying banter. The Wizard of Oz is revealed in person an ordinary man, with an extraordinary ability to engender belief to help people to change their lives by changing their beliefs about themselves. The Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion are presented with pieces of paper testifying to their desired inner qualities. At last, each accepts and believes in himself because an outside source, revered and respected, decrees that it is so. Do you know someone like this?

Do you know someone who is always, and has always been studying towards *becoming*, or working towards *becoming*, rather than being and *believing* they have *become*? How much more powerful it would be to recognize and acknowledge what you *are being* and *experience* what you are being in the moment as you *create it*. How much more empowering it would be to remember and to validate your success in the here and now, rather than to wait for someone else to present you with a certificate in the future.

The Wizard senses the best in the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion. So often we see the best in others and not in ourselves. And what of Dorothy? "You've always had the power to go back to Kansas," the Good Witch of the North tells her. Dorothy brightened and enlightened reports. "...if I ever go looking for my heart's desire again, I won't look any



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further than my own backyard, because if it isn't there I never really lost it to begin with." Dorothy discovers that love and connection that she really sought has been literally under her feet.

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