

## “Moana”, a sea of adventures in search for her vocation. Direction: John Musker, Ron Clements. 2016. Disney (United States)

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On a distant Australian island, little Moana listens attentively to the tales told to her by her paternal grandmother, Tala. Other children hear them as well, many of them frightened by the adventures of warriors and monsters. Moana, however, is fascinated and hangs on to her grandmother's every word. According to Nise da Silveira (1981): "Stories and myths bring the rich substances contained in the roots of the psyche to the infantile consciousness in formation" (p. 11). One who reads or listens, in moment of syntonic sharing of fantasy with the child, validates the story for the child, who accepts it as it is. There is a transformative power in the validation that the child receives. This is an experience that draws attention to and gives new meaning to the inner world.

Grandparents impart the family tradition and the notion of continuity to a child. As they look back together at their origins, a view of the future is established. Grandma Tala, the voice of ancestry and wisdom, shared with the children of the island of Motunui (John Musker & Ron Clements, 2016) stories about the origin of the world and their people.

### Conflicts of interest:

The author states no professional or personal interest that may create a conflict of interests regarding this manuscript.

First there was only the ocean, until the emergence of the mother island, Te Fiti - whose heart had the power to create life by itself, which was shared with the world and in communion with nature. But the desire to usurp the power made some men try to take the heart of the island. One day, Maui, a demigod that could transform himself into many animals, and therefore had many attributes, used his magical fishhook to steal the heart of Te Fiti and, from this



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moment, the island began to crumble and nature began to die out. [The inflation of the ego through power usurped creative, generative ability.] The fish began to disappear, the coconuts were dry and hard, and all were confined to the island by fear (excerpt from the film).

In her tales, Grandma Tala talked about boats and adventurer peoples, whose struggles with monsters and dangers seemed to prepare her little granddaughter for what awaited her and any challenges she might face. When we look at legends and myths, we notice that whenever there is a young woman in distress, an elderly woman appears, who "knows" and can help. The grandmother is a representation of the mysterious archetype of the wise woman open to challenges, spontaneous, anchored in the traditional and but also introducing the possibility of creative inspiration to live life to one's fullest. The role of the grandmother is also to legitimize, bless, teach, and to speak about the spirit and the soul.

According to Clarissa Éstes (2007), the blessing lies in the discovery and the possibility of recognizing in oneself the gifts one possesses, so that one can fully realize herself.

When she reached the age of 16, Moana's father took her to the mountain, to a pile of rocks on its peak; each leader had placed a stone on this pile, as a way to mark himself. One day, Moana would place her stone over her father's mark, in her role as heiress. Today our psychic imagination includes other attributions for women, such as modern princesses, fearless warriors - Mulan, Pocahontas, Merida, Moana-- who struggle, seek and find their vocation in a world that is still predominately masculine.

Moana is the first heiress to naturally receive the "kingdom," even though she is a woman, without having to prove anything, other than carefully listening to an inner calling to fulfill her legacy, according to her inner desires. After Tui took his daughter to the mountain, Grandma Tala led her to a secret cave, showing her the answer to the question that burned in Moana's heart since she was small: "Who are you meant to be?" Witnessing images, dreams and a glimpse of her ancestral heritage, she comes into contact with the history of her people. She sees hidden vessels and with the beating of drums, she has a vision of her people: as adventurers and expert navigators.

Moana was saddened to learn from her grandmother that after Maui had stolen the goddess's heart, he ran away and confronted the monster Te Ka, who also wanted the heart. In the battle, the heart was lost in the ocean, disappearing along with Maui and his magic fishhook. Therefore, darkness spread through the seas, and the chiefs forbid their people to sail, for their own safety. This endangered the island, which was imprisoned. Only if someone could find Maui and force him return the heart of Te Fiti, would the spread of darkness cease. This was the secret guarded for so long, and now revealed by the grandmother.

As a leader, Moana needed to offer protection and security to her people and, despite her father's constant admonitions that she must remain on the island, according to tradition. Nevertheless, she had an inner call to return to her people an adventurous spirit and the quest to discover the seas, which was long dormant. The grandmother, in her wisdom and experience, always knew this, but the girl's mother and father wanted to avoid such a confrontation. Moana's mother, however, did not stop her, which in a way authorized and confirmed this call, but at the same time did not contradict her father.

The primary relationship of "mother and daughter" is the basis for the construction of the female ego. In addition to intimacy and security, the daughter needs permission, support and recognition to differentiate herself from her mother. Such an important primordial relationship needs to mirror and strengthen autonomy and security. The grandmother, although she plays a different role from her mother - and sometimes even in her absence - can also be an important reference in this process, illuminating, with her experience and wisdom, the path of discovery for her granddaughter.

Grandma Tala then falls ill, but before she dies, she tells Moana that she has been chosen by the ocean and that she must heed the call. She tells Moana that if she sees stingray next to her, it would be her spirit, to accompany her granddaughter anywhere she went. Moana, through confused and frightened, now understands her constant fascination with the sea. As she approaches the water's edge, she stares out, nearly hypnotized, and sees a shining light with a brightness that beckoned her to follow to begin her quest. She longed for something that would lead her to her destination. The sea opens at this moment, a small spiral stone appears and she reaches to pick it up.

Moana sings: "The sea called, now I'm going. This moon in the sky that blows me the truth. And soon I will know who I am!" (excerpt from the film)

And so Moana left on her quest, in a boat she took from the cave, along with some supplies and many doubts. She faced storms, darkness, and embarked on this great adventure, guiding herself by the nighttime stars in the shape of a fishhook. She was taken to an island and met Maui, who refused to accompany her or to help her recover the heart of Te Fiti, the island. Instead, Maui only wanted to recover his lost magic fishhook, and trapped Moana in a cave.

Moana managed to escape and free herself, facing many adventures and difficulties. Finally, she and the demigod became friends and managed to keep the island's heart safe. They fought bravely against monsters and faced many dangers. From this warrior, Moana learned the art of sailing, as all her people did. At one point, Maui, furious at rediscovering his fishhook and seeing that it was ruined, turned into a bird and flew away, leaving Moana alone and very sad.

The heart of Te Fiti, in possession of the young woman, is thrown back to the sea, in a moment of great distress and doubts about fulfilling her mission. In

this moment of confusion, a stingray appears in the water, and Moana hears her grandmother's voice next to her, and is filled with happiness. Grandmother says she would stand by her side no matter what she decided. And Grandma Tala repeats to Moana, "You know now who you are ...". With this, Moana found strength within herself and understood that her destiny was to continue on her mission.

At this point, Maui reappears, next to Moana, helping her to face the terrible monster Te Ka, despite his broken fishhook. Moana arrives on an island with mountains and perceives TeFiti/nature, whose heart has been stolen. However, there is just one crater where the heart can be replaced.

The demon Te Ka is there as well, and as she approaches him, Moana leans her forehead against him and realizes that there is room for a heart. By placing the heart on Te Ka's chest, the glow spreads throughout the body. The goddess who was originally within this dark monster emerges and returns: it is TeFiti, the goddess of nature and mountains – and light appears, darkness disappears and vegetation starts once again to blossom.

Back on the boat, Maui and Moana begin their journeys to their respective destinations, knowing that can always count on one another. On Motoniu Island, Moana's parents had searched in aguish for their missing daughter. Upon her return, Moana goes to the mountain, where she had been with her father, and places her shell atop the pile of her ancestors' stones. Now she knows who she is: a great navigator destined to lead her people in search of new adventures.

Grandma Tala says: "The voice that comes to you and asks you softly: Moana who are you? That whisper that the star will guide you, that voice is yours. Try it, you will find..." (excerpt from the film)

Moana (John Musker & Ron Clements, 2016) responds:

I've had to face so much. I faced my fears. Who I am, this instinct, this voice that calls to me. With you by my side, I can go much further. I have discovered it, now I know: I am Moana! I answered your call. My mission is to find my place. (excerpt from film)

Hillman (1996) says in "The Code of Being," that each person is born with a vocation that defines him or herself and leads the individual to a particular destiny. Within each child lies a seed that can grow and bear fruit when cultivated. Therefore, we can understand the process of individuation that has been proposed since childhood - "a becoming", whose goal is to increasingly become the real self, listening to the inner call to follow a path. This is the voice of the self that guides the vocation. This is the path of the hero, a process filled with anguish, doubts and suffering. There are tasks, struggles, and achievements to be accomplished.

The hero myth speaks of the archetypal desire to forge unknown paths, in confronting adversities and through perseverance, bringing forth the possibility of creative life and transformation, with a new meaning that

endows life with a purpose. This path demands each one to remain true to him or herself and a commitment to his or her own life.

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