

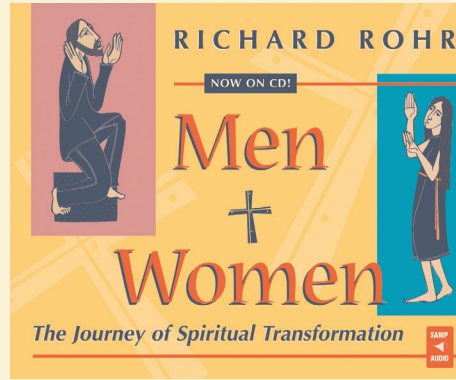


# LISTENER RESOURCE

A6940 and A6950

# Men + Women

## The Journey of Spiritual Transformation



*“We’re living in a major, major time of transition on about 10 levels and one of them is what seems the ultimate archetype of the soul—the issue of gender—the issue of male and female. That scares us the most, because those are the definitions and roles that most give us our identity.” —ROHR*

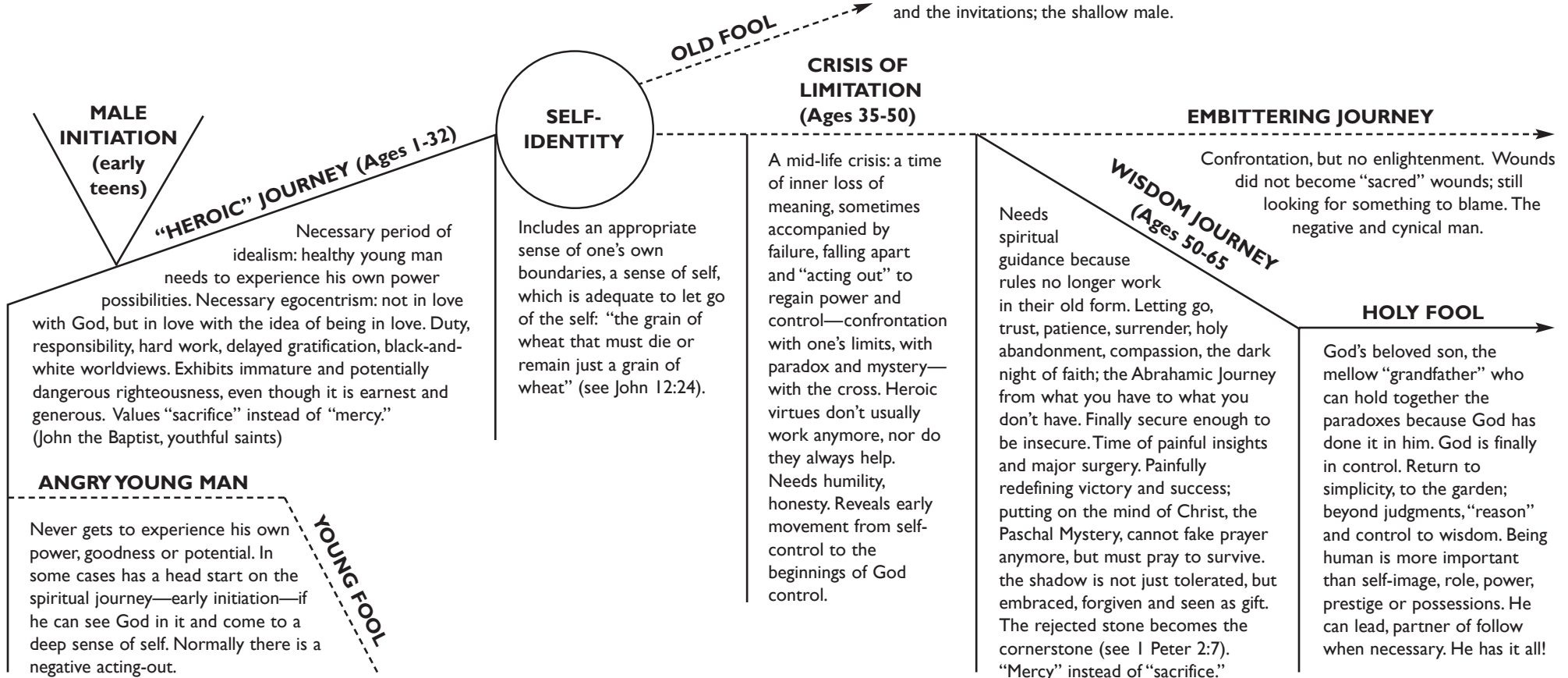
### MEN: JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION

#### STAGE OF ASCENT

Needs to make and keep promises to grow

**STAGE OF DESCENT**  
Needs to rest in God’s promises and model the wholeness/holiness for other

Doesn’t get it; tries to keep ascending despite the evidence and the invitations; the shallow male.



# WOMEN: JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION

The young girl in most cultures is first reminded of her “inferior status,” her weakness, her dependency, her neediness. Her early journey is usually an experience of limits, embodiment, “bleeding,” no-power, losing not winning. She is a “mixed blessing” to herself.

She does not need to be taught the holy mysteries of dying, letting go, not getting your own way. Life, culture, body already tell her that life is hard and she is not in control.

She has a symbolic advantage, a head start in terms of gospel and spirituality. But she has a slow start in terms of a sense of self-worth, autonomy and her own boundaries and identity. Normally, she seeks herself in relationships more than in visions and ideals, as the male does. No surprise that Jesus is invariably inviting the woman to come “up” (and trust herself and God in her.)

The ascent of “spirit”/heroism is admired, but rightly mistrusted in men.

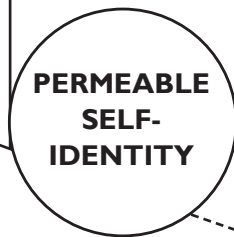
The “incarnational” (descent) movement of Jesus comes first for women (a more natural progress.)

Much more flexible sense of self—for good and for ill.

Open to letting others influence her, change her, and thereby grow.

Also more ready to doubt herself when she need not—more open to hurt—“vulnerable.”

More “codependent” on others, but also on God and on social fabric.



The busy and involved and growing years—probably not realizing that she is “treasuring all these things in her heart,” pondering “the signs of contradiction.” Love, loneliness, loss, and letting go become her teachers: Friendship, marriage, children, survival, career, struggle, failure/success, sickness each have their lesson.

Cannot get lost in ideals and ideology, has to learn from the now, the concrete, the ordinary—which cannot be fixed, controlled or even understood.

If no love, support or time for reflection, she, of course, becomes empty, superficial, with little sense of herself apart from her tasks and her few relationships. Life is just problem-solving. Lost in anecdotes and gossip, with no patterns or meanings. Trapped in body, no soul; and so unready for any ascent into Spirit.

A gathering storm—for good or for death.

Normally, not a one-time dramatic confrontation with “the cross” but many little crosses that reach a crescendo. Loss of meaning, loss of sense of purpose or satisfaction—along with a new desire for wholeness and selfhood.

Often a period of necessary anger—“Who has kept me from myself?”

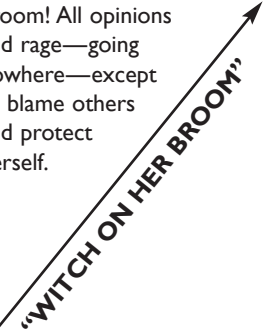
A time of necessary grief and re-evaluation. Needs a wise old crone and true spirituality to survive.

Aphrodite emerging from the sea! Sophia coming to her fullness! Amazing combination of both strength and vulnerability and true wisdom. She knows that she knows, but cannot always explain it in linear fashion—very threatening to men—she is ascending just when he is hopefully descending!

The strong old woman and the mellow old man are universal stereotypes. Now they can meet as partners.

If her pain is not transformed into mercy and understanding.

If she uses her new answers/power for herself, or if it merely becomes “mind” and “explanations,” or if her wounds have not been transformed, she merely ascends on her broom! All opinions and rage—going nowhere—except to blame others and protect herself.



**HOLY FOOL**

God’s beloved daughter. The “*mulier fortis*” of Scripture. She can live with paradox and mystery, with compassion and forgiveness. She does not need to punish or shame others. As the ultimate mature feminine, she can lead, partner or follow when necessary. She has it all. She has been there.

**POWER ASCENT (Ages 50-65)**

**FEMININE DESCENT (Ages 1-21)**

Normally initiation is not necessary for women in most cultures

**WORK OF BODY & SOUL (Ages 22-42)**

**MID-LIFE CRISIS (Ages 42-49)**

**EMBITTERING JOURNEY**

**SELF-DESTRUCTIVE “YOUNG FOOL”**