



Men As Learners and Elders

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Use *INTO THE WILD* for your men's group!

(Richard Rohr, OFM)

On October 22nd, I went to see the movie *INTO THE WILD* with several men from the Center for Action and Contemplation (including some of our young male work interns). We left moved on many levels, and discussed it afterwards. It is a movie version of the best-selling book of the same name by Jon Krakauer, and chronicles the life of a young man, Chris McCandless, who died in 1992. His life could impact yours.

I believe this chronicle is a young man's dramatic and inspiring attempt to "self initiate" as well as a young man dealing with his sacred wound in ways that were both good and also tragic. It includes captivating cinematography, some lovely scenes of mentoring, the male search for authenticity, and how the need to forgive and move on can come too late to share.

If you decide to use **Into the Wild** for your men's group, I offer these possible discussion questions (you might have others):

How did the movie most challenge you?

What does **Into the Wild** say about men, and particularly young men?

Does Chris ("Alexander Supertramp") offer any kind of pattern for self initiation?

Is self initiation even possible?

How did he deal with his father wound in a positive way? Negative way?

Did he love "truth" more than relationships? Are they mutually exclusive?

In what ways was his life an example of generosity? Of selfishness?

At what points did you see him change and how?

What was Chris (Alexander) seeking/needing from the older man (Ron)?

What was the older man (Ron) seeking/needing from Chris (Alexander)?

What was Chris' virtue(s)?

What was Chris' tragic flaw(s)?

If Chris had returned, what form, shape, and influence might his life had taken?

How did **Into the Wild** impact you?

What emotions did the movie arise for you – during it? Immediately afterwards? Later?

What form does your life take in its search for "Into the Wild"?

