



Lesson 10: **Wanderer in the Cocoon**

Scene 16: "Nala and Simba Reunite"

Scene 17: "Can You Feel the Love Tonight"

Scene 18: "Trouble in Paradise"

YouTube video: Nala sings "Shadowland"

Objectives:

1. To acquaint the youth with **the psychological aspects of late adolescence and early adulthood** (the "Wanderer in the Cocoon" life stage) and how to envision their own life as a mythic journey.
2. To help youth recognize that **periods of doubt and confusion** are impossible to avoid — and that dark times may play a creative role in helping them transit from one stage of life to the next.

Materials:

- **chime or bell**
- *The Lion King* DVD and DVD player. Before class, **put Disk 1** into the player and cue it up to **Scene 16**, "Nala and Simba Reunite," then pause it.
- **Grab-bag** provisioned with cut-apart copies of the "Wanderer in the Cocoon" **Readings** printed at the end of this lesson.
- **Photocopies** for each youth of the **"Shadowland" lyrics**, printed at the end of this lesson.
- Extra copies of **Human Circle of Life Diagram** and the **CHECKLIST for Time Capsule** and the **Stardust Chart**, all handed out in previous weeks.
- **The lock box with the journals**, plus extras for any newcomers. Lots of **pens**, colored markers, and colored pencils.
- **5-minute You-Tube clip of the stage performance of Nala singing "Shadowland."** At: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6OnzytMzL4>

ACTIVITIES: DVD watching; You-Tube Song Video watching; discussion; Grab-Bag ritualistic readings; journal-writing



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Classroom preparation:

- Before class, cue up **Disk 1** of the DVD to **Scene 16**: "Nala and Simba Reunite." Cover monitor with cloth.
- Set out extra copies of the "**Human Circle of Life Diagram**," "**Time Capsule Checklist**" and the **Stardust Chart** (all of which were used in previous lessons and which students should have tucked into their journals).
- Provision the **Grab-bag** with cut-apart copies of the "Wanderer in the Cocoon" **Readings** printed at the end of this lesson.
- Have accessible the **photocopies** for each youth of the "**Shadowland**" **lyrics**, printed at the end of this lesson.
- Put the **Lock Box** of **journals** onto a table; have **extra journals** available for newcomers, colorful pens and markers.
- Have the **chime** or **bell** accessible.
- Have accessible this **You-Tube clip**:

5-minute You-Tube clip of the stage performance of Nala singing "Shadowland."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6OnzytMzL4>

Lesson flow:

1. **Recollections from previous week**, based on youth experiences at home this past week. **(5 mins)**
2. **DVD:** Watch **Scenes 16, 17, 18** **(10 mins)**
3. **Discussion:** "Wanderer in the Cocoon" (with "Human Circle of Life" diagram) **(10 mins)**
4. **You-Tube Video** of Nala singing "Shadowlands" **(5 mins)**
5. **Grab-bag Readings** of the "Wanderer in the Cocoon" stage **(10-15 mins)**
6. **Discussion and journaling** for remaining time, leaving 5 minutes for the closing **(flexible time)**
7. **Closing Song:** "Shadowlands" (YouTube) + **lyrics handout** **(5 mins)**



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GUIDE:

*[Recruit someone who has not been very active in class to pass out **the journals to everyone.**]*

Recollections from previous week (5 mins)

GUIDE:

Q: "Any **insights** from during this past week you want to share?"

Q: "Did anybody get a chance to experience the **night sky** — and did you feel any differently about the **stars**?"

Q: "Any **great discoveries** of meaningful items to put into your Time Capsule?"

*[This discussion will probably take no more than **5 minutes**, but let it go longer if the youth are on-topic and engaged.]*

Date and Title a New Journal Page

[Invite the Youth to select a fresh page in their journal to date, and title it "Wanderer in the Cocoon." . . . Also write down the titles of the new scenes we will watch today: "Nala and Simba Reunite," "Can You Feel the Love Tonight," and "Trouble in Paradise."]

DVD Viewing: Scenes 16, 17, 18 (5 mins)

Scene 16, "Nala and Simba Reunite," starts at 53:44 into the movie. Continue on through through Scene 17, "Can You Feel the Love

Tonight," and Scene 18, "Trouble in Paradise," which ends at 1:03:00.

*[You know it **ends when Nala and Simba are angry at one another, and Nala calls out angrily, "Fine," as Simba walks away.** When Simba is pacing and says, "She's wrong, I can't go back, what would it prove anyway?" hit the PAUSE button.]*

Discussion: Wanderer in the Cocoon (10 mins)

*[Invite the youth to pull out the "**Human Circle of Life**" Diagram that they stuck in their journals from previous lessons.]*

GUIDE:

"So Nala and Simba have both passed from the "Thespian in the Oasis" stage of life to the "Wanderer in the Cocoon." Let's take a look at the **chart** to compare these two stages."

Q: "So how does the **TASK** shift from the Thespian stage to the Wanderer stage?"

Q: "How does the **GIFT** shift between these two stages?"

Q: "How does the **CENTER OF GRAVITY** shift between these two stages?"

*[After those questions are discussed, (about **5 minutes**), take **4 minutes** to read the following introduction to the You-Tube video of Nala singing "Shadowland"]:*

GUIDE:

"**None of you** can possibly be in the cocoon stage yet. The psychologist who created the diagram says that the earliest it happens is **age 15**, and in our culture it usually happens much later — sometimes never. The author writes:

"In contemporary societies, the Cocoon is rarely attained in the teen years and is more commonly reached in the late twenties through forties, or later still, if ever."

"Now that may seem odd, but the Cocoon stage can be **frightening**, and so we may prefer to say, 'No Thank You,' and keep saying no thank you, again and again, whenever our inner self, our 'soul,' invites us to take the plunge. This life passage truly would be a kind of death,

a **psychological death**, and we as yet have no idea what our **resurrected self** will look like. Just like a **caterpillar**, we first need to disintegrate —to come apart — inside a cocoon.

"Remember in the scenes we just watched **when Nala invites Simba to come back to the Pridelands** to assume his role as king? Simba says, no. And he *has* to say no, because before he can possibly take on that kind of a **visionary** role, he must first get in touch with his inner character, connect to history, and **feel compelled to make a difference in the world**. He can't do it out of obligation — that is, he can't do it merely because he thinks he *should* do it. Rather, he *must feel compelled from the inside, not the outside*. So he needs to **plunge into darkness**, to enter the cocoon.

"**Nala**, when we see her in these new scenes, is already a **Wanderer in the Cocoon**, and at the very end of the last scene we watched, Simba finally entered it too.

"The role that Simba adopted as a **carefree Thespian at the Oasis** is no longer right for him, but he **does not yet know** who he will become. We will see the depths that he goes through in his Cocoon stage next week.

"But now let's **focus on Nala**. As it turns out, the **stage production** of *The Lion King* on Broadway does a superb job of tracking Nala's departure from the Oasis and into the Cocoon. Whole new scenes are added onstage that never occur in the movie. To begin, **Scar calls Nala into his cave** and announces to her that she should become his wife. This is the final straw for Nala. She cannot stay a Thespian any longer. She knows she must leave, and the **Pridelands are truly an ecological disaster**, too — perhaps like what the older generations of humans have done to Earth, and what your generation will inherit.

"But before **Nala** embarks on her wandering, **Rafiki** (who is the shamen character in *The Lion King*) does a "**rite of passage**" ritual for Nala.

"Fortunately somebody has put that part of the Broadway play up on **You-Tube**, along with a **powerful new song** written for Nala to sing at this point in the play. Her song is called "**Shadowland**." Let's watch Nala singing "Shadowland" now, as Rafiki helps prepare her to become a Wanderer in the Cocoon.

Q: "But first, to help you understand the lyrics, does anybody know what a group of lions is called? (A group of wolves is a pack, a group of birds is a flock, a group of deer is a herd. So what is a group of lions?" [ANSWER: a **pride**.] "So when Nala sings the word 'pride' it means both her family and her own self-esteem."

You-Tube Video of Nala singing "Shadowland" (5 mins)

*[Play the 5-minute **You-Tube song video** from the Lion King on-Broadway performance. The song is "**Shadowland**". Note that you will play this video again to end the class, and at that time you will pass out the SONG LYRICS, so the youth can follow along on their second viewing of the video.] 5 mins*

Grab-Bag Readings (10 - 15 mins)

*[Printed at the end of this lesson are **9 quotations** drawn from the book in which the diagram appeared. Psychologist Bill Plotkin writes about the "Wanderer in the Cocoon" stage of life in his book Nature and the Human Soul.*

*Invite the youth to **take turns drawing cards** from **the Grab-Bag** and **reading the quotation**. Each card may or may not generate some short discussion.*

*NOTE: If you want to make the readings **more ritualistic**, then **delay any discussion** until all the readings are done, and recruit a volunteer to ring a **chime** to signify each transition between readings.*

Discussion and Journaling (flexible time)

*[Leave **5 minutes** for the closing You-Tube song.]*

Closing Song: You-Tube Video, "Shadowland" (5 mins)

*[Play again the 5-minute **You-Tube song video** from the Lion King on-Broadway performance. The song is "**Shadowland**". This is exactly the same short video that the youth watched earlier in this lesson. But this time, **pass out in advance the song LYRICS** to each student so that they can follow or sing along.] 5 minutes*

"Shadowland"

Music by Hans Zimmer and Lebo M. Lyrics by Mark Mancina and Lebo M.

Performed by Heather Headley

To watch the YouTube video of the stage performance of this song, go to
YouTube "Shadowland"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6OnzytMzL4>

Fatshe leso lea halalela

[The land of our ancestors is holy]

Fatshe leso lea halalela

Shadowland . . . The leaves have fallen

This shadowed land . . . This was our home

The river's dry . . . The ground has broken

So I must go . . . Now I must go

And where the journey may lead me . . . Let your prayers be my guide

I cannot stay here, my family . . . But I'll remember my pride

Prideland

I have no choice

My land

I will find my way

Tear-stained

Lea halalela

Dry land

Take this

Take this prayer

With you

What lies out there

Fatshe leso

Lea halalela

And where the journey may lead you . . . Let this prayer be your guide

Though it may take you so far away . . . Always remember your pride

Fatshe leso lea halalela

Fatshe leso lea halalela

Fatshe leso lea halalela

And where the journey may lead you . . . Let this prayer be your guide

Though it may take you so far away . . . Always remember your pride

And where the journey may lead you

Giza buyabo, giza buyabo

Let this prayer be your guide

I will return, I will return Beso bo

Though it may take you so far away

Giza buyabo, I will return

Always remember your pride

Giza buyabo, oh giza buyabo

Beso bo, my people, beso bo

Grab Bag Readings: *Photocopy, cut apart, put in grab-bag.*

GRAB-BAG Readings

As you enter the Cocoon — which is not at all a comfy haven, but a frightful place where caterpillar bodies disintegrate — your perspective on the meaning of life shifts. . .



Where once you thought life was primarily about social, academic, economic, or religious projects, now you recognize it for the spiritual adventure it truly is. Now you begin to search for the shape of that greater story you are destined to live, the larger conversation you might have with the world. Your foremost quest becomes your own soul — that unique psycho-ecological place that only you can inhabit. You are like a dislocated species that must wander through the world until it once again finds a place it can call its own.

(p. 233)



In a soul-centered community, it is not considered 'better' — either for the individual or for society — for a person to be in a later stage than an earlier stage. Every stage provides fulfillment for the individual and gifts to the community when a person is in a healthy version of that stage.

The only way to cooperate with the process is to embrace fully the stage you are in, including its tasks. Paradoxically, you have to love the stage you are in, in order to eventually leave it.

(p. 60)



Every transition between life stages is painful, involves loss, and entails a crisis for the conscious self. Not only do you usually regret leaving a stage, the leaving has challenging and unpleasant features. But the next stage always brings new and greater opportunities for fulfillment and for growing more fully human. Soon enough, you fall in love with that stage, too.

(p. 60)



Late adolescence (the Cocoon) is a time of withdrawal from the everyday social world. We leave behind our adolescent beliefs about self and world, as we seek our unique gift of soul to bring to our community and world.

(p. 61)



The Cocoon is a psychologically perilous and tumultuous place and one that we must enter and inhabit on our own, without the support of parents or siblings. The Cocoon is as destructive as it is protective, and it is as big as the world. There can be no predetermined limits to our wandering. The whole world — the wild Earth, in particular — becomes our Cocoon. When we finally emerge, it will be Earth herself who gives birth to us this second time.

(p. 242)



During our time as Wanderer in the Cocoon, we gradually make our way from a life centered in society and personality to a life centered in soul. We transform from an individual whose goal is to improve his socioeconomic standing to one whose primary motivation is to discover his destiny and to turn it into lived reality that is a gift to others.

(p.242)



We weave our cocoons with more than just the things of nature. Other strands include our solitude, our deepest wounds from childhood and adolescence, our dreams, our greatest passions and allurements, our mortality, ceremonies, the dark, and our own shadow. All are woven together to serve as a cauldron of change.

(p. 242)



You begin life with no consciousness of anything, and then, in what seems a sudden opening, you are vibrantly aware of this immense world and all its wonders, and you are sure that life will forever remain an uncomplicated exploration of the world. And then puberty alters you at your core, and your social and sexual standing comes to mean everything to you.



Several years later (at the earliest), just when you are finally getting used to social life, the world shifts again and terrifying mysteries beckon that were previously unsuspected — and on which your life now depends. This sequence of periodic lurches is the way it has always been, and this is the way it will continue through the remainder of your life. (p. 234)



While in the Cocoon, the Wanderer longs for two things: (1) deep fulfillment through the experience of truly belonging to the world and (2) the ability to serve the world in a genuine way. The wanderer understands that these two things — fulfillment and service — cannot be obtained separately. True fulfillment arises from service. The cocoon stage is the time to fall hopelessly in love with the world.

(p. 288-289)