

“Into the Wild” by Jon Krakauer is about a guy named Chris McCandless who grew up through many troubles with his family, leading to him thinking that he was a burden and loathed his parents for it. He made it his goal to forget about those troubles, adventuring to Alaska in his early 20s without his family knowing, using as little money as possible. He wanted to live his life to the fullest, and didn’t get to do that for most of his life. Not only that, but he had a path already made for him to succeed, and he threw that away and paved his own way through his life, even if it was cut short. He also seemed to achieve this goal of his. Because of this, his adventure is something to be admired.

One reason why I think Chris McCandless’s adventure was admirable is because he wanted to live his life to the fullest, which many people don’t have the courage to do. In Chris’s note sent to Ronald Franz, it says: “So many people live within unhappy circumstances and yet will not take the initiative to change their situation because they are conditioned to a life of security, conformity, and conservatism, all of which may appear to give one peace of mind, but in reality nothing is more damaging to the adventurous spirit within a man than a secure future.” And in his journal, it states, “It is the experiences, the memories, the great triumphant joy of living to the fullest extent in which real meaning is found. God it's great to be alive! Thank you. Thank you.” These quotes support the argument, because Chris makes sure to express that he is enjoying himself and seems to understand that in order to live correctly, you have to enjoy yourself, which is what he did.

Another reason why I think Chris McCandless’s adventure was admirable is because he already had a path paved out for him towards success within society, but he didn’t want it. Chris’s letter to his sister said, “...a car that I will never trade in, a car that I am very strongly attached to—yet they ignore what I say and think I'd actually accept a new car from them! I'm going to have to be real careful not to accept any gifts from them in the future because they will think they have bought my respect.” And the text states, “Immediately after graduating, with honors, from Emory University in the summer of 1990, McCandless dropped out of sight. He changed his name, gave the entire balance of a twenty-four-thousand-dollar savings account to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet.” These quotes support the argument, because Chris’s parents were a rich couple who wanted to, with lack of a better term, spoil Chris. They tried to buy him a car despite him being content with the one he already had, gave him thousands of dollars, and he didn’t use any of it the way that they wanted him to. Despite being successful with a lot of money to start off with, he still gave most of it away and burned the rest, which might seem crazy and

unbelievable to most. But it seemed more of a rebellious act to me, to prove that he didn't need their help or money before he left.

The third reason why I think that Chris McCandless's Adventure was admirable is because he seemed to achieve a goal of his, which was most likely something along the lines of wanting to forget about his burdened past. The text states, "Writing on a piece of birch bark, he made a list of things to do before he departed: 'Patch Jeans, Shave!, Organize pack. . . .' Shortly thereafter he propped his Minolta on an empty oil drum and took a snapshot of himself brandishing a yellow disposable razor and grinning at the camera, clean-shaven, with new patches cut from an army blanket stitched onto the knees of his filthy jeans." The text also states, "...in the midst of this idyll, came the first of two pivotal setbacks. Satisfied, apparently, with what he had learned during his two months of solitary life in the wild, McCandless decided to return to civilization: It was time to bring his 'final and greatest adventure' to a close and get himself back to the world of men and women, where he could chug a beer, talk philosophy, enthrall strangers with tales of what he'd done. He seemed to have moved beyond his need to assert so adamantly his autonomy, his need to separate himself from his parents. Maybe he was prepared to forgive their imperfections; maybe he was even prepared to forgive some of his own. McCandless seemed ready, perhaps, to go home." These quotes support the argument because it makes it seem like he was getting ready to, as stated in the second quote, go home. He spent two months in the wilderness, which was not just because he wanted to be some homeless man living so far away from home to test how much fun he could have, no. This was a learning experience for him, and possibly even an attempt to get himself to realize that he has a place in society as well as to forget about his past.

In conclusion, Chris McCandless's adventure to Alaska was admirable because he took the chance to live to the fullest, he paved out his own path instead of using something that was made for him to succeed, and he seemed to have had a goal to forget about his burdened past which came out positively. NOTES

This essay presents a solid argument and uses good evidence from the text, but the analysis could be more developed, and the writing would benefit from greater attention to grammar and style. With more detailed examination of McCandless's motivations and the consequences of his actions, the essay would become even more compelling.