

# A modern day transcendentalist

[People](#)



The story of Chris McCandless is an inspiring one. Transcendentalism is the act of finding inner peace and relaxing. David Henry Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson are two authors who are transcendentalists. The idea of transcendentalism was started in America in the 1850's. Chris McCandless is a college student who decides to become a transcendentalist. Chris McCandless is an example of a modern day transcendentalist because he fits the ideals of Walden, Self Reliance, and Civil Disobedience.

One of the big ideas of Walden is that a person needs to separate himself from society to inner peace. Thoreau writes " I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life. " Chris McCandless fits this idea because he goes into the woods to find inner peace after college along with other adventures in the desert and Denali National Park. Another big idea of Walden is a person only needs to live with the essentials. Thoreau writes "... to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms. Chris McCandless fits this idea because he only brings a backpack, a gun, a bag of rice, and a sleeping bag into the woods. Nature has a lot to teach is also a big idea of Walden. Thoreau writes "...and see if I could not learn what it had to teach. " Chris McCandless fits this idea because he learns a lot of survival techniques while in nature and he lives and dies while in nature. One of the big ideas in Self Reliance is trust yourself. Emerson writes " Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Chris McCandless fits this idea because whenever he is offered help he declines it. Another big idea of Self Reliance is do not be afraid to be different and do not conform to others standards. Emerson writes " Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. " Chris McCandless fits this idea

because he does not care what other people think about him and he did not conform to others expectations. For example his parents want him to go to college and he decides not to because he wants to go into the wild. Do not envy what others have is another big idea of Self Reliance.

Emerson writes " There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance. " Chris McCandless fits this idea because he rejects supplies, his parents, his car, and help. One of the big ideas of Civil Disobedience is laws do not have to be followed because each person should make their own laws. Thoreau writes " That government is best which governs not at all. " Chris McCandless fits this idea because he goes to Mexico without a passport, he kayaks into Mexico, he burns his money, and he train hops.

Another big idea of Civil Disobedience is the majority is not always right and that people should follow their own beliefs and thoughts. Thoreau writes " When the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. " Chris McCandless fits this idea because people may not support his way of life because it is against how the majority live.

He lives differently in a lot of people's eyes because he lives out in the woods instead of being with society. Based on his belief in the ideals of Walden, Self Reliance, and Civil Disobedience, Chris McCandless is a modern day transcendentalist. This type of lifestyle is not all that abnormal. Many people in the world live just like Chris McCandless. They all want to get away

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of society and live peacefully. The story of Chris McCandless gained popularity in the late 1990's. One reason people are drawn to this story is because McCandless is a young guy and lives such a different lifestyle.