

BURSTING OUT OF THE COCOON

19 Important Life Lessons
A Caterpillar Can Teach Us



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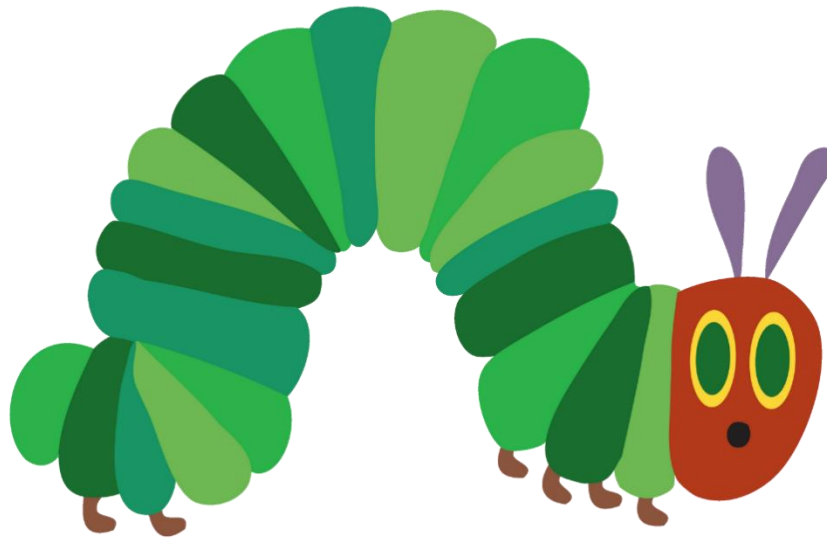
Why Learning Lessons From A Caterpillar Is Good & Important?

Why A Caterpillar?

Before it becomes a butterfly, the caterpillar evolves many times over. It changes form until it turns into something completely different.

The caterpillar offers us the promise of flying and teaches us the wisdom of incremental and constant evolution.

To advance, to compete and to win, in our personal lives and in our businesses, we must evolve purposefully and constantly, always.



"What the caterpillar calls the end of the world the master calls a butterfly."

Richard Bach

Despite its simplicity, this quote is my favorite quote of all time because in its simplicity it expresses the complex cycle of all existence. Everything that can be called life willingly, continually, destroys itself in order to renew itself.

We see this in physical terms when we observe the processes of nature: from the evaporation of water, to natural disasters, to the cycle of the seasons. And most importantly from the transformation of the caterpillar into the butterfly.

We see it in our own bodies too as our cells die willingly in order to be replaced with new ones: we can scratch our heads and watch dead skin cells fall to the ground and though we can't see it, the cells within us die off too so that our organs are continuously regenerated.

Which begs the question: since physical life is a mirror of nonphysical life, wouldn't physical law provide a hint into universal law?

I think it does.

We see this Law of Transformation happening not only in our bodies and in nature, but in psychological and spiritual terms as well.

In spiritual terms, the soul destroys and renews its physical forms just as nature does. Those physical forms happen to be us. It willingly, continually, destroys and creates various physical selves in an eternal cycle in order to expand, renew, and grow.

Much like the leaf of a tree is born and dies, we as a human being born and die too. But we are the tree too. The tree part of us is our inner being, the soul. We are uncomfortable with this process when we do not understand that we are the tree and that we live on even as we die.

If we look upon death through the eyes of the caterpillar, we see the end of ourselves. But if we look through the eyes of the Master within, the soul, we see death as a mere transition into more.

If we want to grow, old beliefs must die and be replaced with new ones - and if we don't replace them we remain lifeless and stunted in our being. Belief determines the situations we attract into our lives and so it is normal, natural and healthy that circumstances also be destroyed and created fresh: we become ill, a marriage ends, we lose our job.

We miss the opportunity they provide for personal transformation when we resist these little deaths. If that is the case, we simply regenerate new circumstances that sadly mirror the old ones and nothing in our lives appears to change. However, when we understand that these end of the world moments are pivotal to our life purpose we can make the leap towards fulfilling and knowing that purpose.

From the Master's perspective a disaster is the wonderful and necessary adventure into a bigger life – i.e. the butterfly life.

But in order for that adventure to take place we must develop such a deep level of faith and trust in the unknown that we leap into it enthusiastically and willingly and tell our courage and confidence to simply catch up with us later. That is the work we must do. It is not rooted in struggle, but rather in alignment.

I believe that the Law of Transformation is at work right now not only in the individual life, but in the collective life as well.

All around us we see a world breaking down - environmental crisis, financial crisis, ethnic and religious crisis, political crisis in the forms of terrorism and war. Could it be that this is not the end of the world, but the call to transition as a human race to the next level of our evolution?

I believe we are. What a glorious time! The success for this leap to happen requires every human being to make a personal leap of faith in their own lives and to choose to commit to fulfilling and finding their individual purpose for being here. Instead of viewing the current circumstance of your life as disastrous, what if you chose to view them as the bugle call to greater freedom, happiness, and a more meaningful way of living?

Commit to get to know the Master within you. It is so patiently and powerfully waiting to share with you its humor, wisdom, and secrets.

The Master, your own soul, is a great magician who knows how to manifest your every need so that you may fulfill your purpose. When you agree to get on the path to purpose you will delightfully discover that prosperity, freedom, love, health, wisdom, creativity, and joy are your natural state of being.

To enter a cocoon of unknowingness and to leave the safe ground where the caterpillar dwells is frightening, but the reward is to discover your capability for flight.

Now let's have a look at the 3 stages a caterpillar or a butterfly goes through in its life and see what we can learn when we study the caterpillar or the butterfly:

The Caterpillar Stage

Consumption is the main task in this stage of the butterfly's life (this stage starts right after hatching from an egg). In order to fuel the growth that will take place in the future, the caterpillar's purpose is simply to eat as much as possible. During this stage the caterpillar will outgrow and shed its skin as many as 4 or 5 times.

This represents the learning stage of growth for me, where I am consuming as much training and knowledge as I can about something new I want to master and understand. During this process, I usually attend workshops, read, consult with teachers, and listen to webinars to take in information so that I will be prepared for what comes next. As I sort through what fits or doesn't fit my current life, there is also some shedding of ideas during this phase. This is often a stage of great excitement and energy for me as I enjoy the flow of creativity and inspiration it brings.

The Chrysalis Stage

Appearing catastrophic from the perspective of the caterpillar, this is the most intriguing stage of butterfly development. Once the caterpillar is fully grown, it hangs itself from a branch and starts spinning a protective cocoon around itself. This process takes place so that the caterpillar can safely digest all the food that it consumed earlier and rest. There is dramatic transformation taking place inside of the chrysalis. The body of the caterpillar starts dissolving while the previously dormant precursor cells of the emerging butterfly begin developing.

This stage is the one I most often misunderstand. When I am trying to grow or create something new, I usually don't recognize the need for recovery, rest, and retreat, and therefore I miss out on the emergence of inspiration that comes during these times of cocooning and relaxation. Instead I view this stage as a downturn or crisis by taking the caterpillar perspective, while I frantically, at all costs, try to push my growth forward.

The Butterfly Stage

At last in this final stage, the fully developed butterfly is ready to emerge from the chrysalis. After breaking free, the butterfly's wings are still wet and folded and more rest time is necessary to allow blood to flow into the wings. It is only when the wings are finally fully dry that the butterfly is ready share its beauty with the world and take flight.

During this stage there is an intentional breaking free that has to occur with proper timing before flight is undertaken. When I have gone through the other stages and am finally ready to display my new project or growth to the world, I have to leave behind the old way of doing things and move forward with courage and some risk-taking, while recognizing the fragility of my new wings.

How Reading This eBook Will Help You?

This eBook will help you understand what a caterpillar and a butterfly can teach us in order to help us recognize our purpose in life and how we can build our inner strength in order to achieve that purpose, dream or goal in life.

Are you seeing butterflies in your life? Are you a butterfly? Butterflies are symbols of change. Through their metamorphosis from egg to caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly, we see our own life cycle of struggle and change.



The caterpillar stage is where the worm-like body is crawling, much like a child crawling on the floor, except the floor is a leaf. At this stage, the skin is shed several times to accommodate its growing body because it constantly eats all day.

Similarly, a child goes through several sizes of clothes as it grows. We have to crawl like a caterpillar and a child, learning our lessons in life. Although we don't know what we will look like later, we still must crawl and learn. Through our lessons we work out our karma and gain our spirituality.

The transformative stage of the butterfly is the chrysalis. It is a pupa structure where inside the caterpillar tissues are broken down and reformed into an adult butterfly. Our transformation starts with being out of our comfort zone, stretching our perceptions and learning more about love and our relationship with God and people. This is life.

Some say life is too hard, too much of a struggle. It's important not to give up. Just when you think your lessons could not be any harder, you could have a butterfly moment, where everything falls gracefully into place. And now, you have the knowledge and wisdom to help others in their daily struggles, going through the same circumstances you were presented.

When the colorful adult emerges from its chrysalis, it waits until its wings are dry. Then the butterfly takes flight. Everything in your life, has brought you to this moment. All the struggles and trials, are not all for naught.

Struggles strengthen us. God doesn't give us more than we can handle. Everyone is searching for the truth. Truth is all about loving God and all that is. Don't give up, your butterfly moment is just around the corner.

Butterflies are simply gorgeous. To be in their presence is an honor.

They symbolize hope, strength, and love. Like all things in nature, the butterfly has many lessons to share with us. They teach us the importance of being who we are.

Imagine the grand metamorphosis of the butterfly. Let's relate the stages of this experience to the various aspects of our lives: first the tiny egg of potential, then the tireless caterpillar working toward that potential, then the chrysalis allowing that potential to take shape, and finally the butterfly who realizes that potential and takes flight.

The butterfly teaches us that it is not possible to go from egg to butterfly without the stages in between. And in our lives we cannot go from birth to death without the journey. So like the caterpillar, we must do the work. George Carlin said,

"The caterpillar does all the work but the butterfly gets all the publicity."

We rarely think about what the butterfly went through to get where it is and often admire the beauty of the butterfly! So it is for all of us that we must have a grand ideal for our lives and walk the path, putting one foot in front of the other.

Many people ask me, “How do I know what my life purpose is?”

My answer is this: we sit with ourselves in silence and just listen. In this sitting, we place our attention within on the breath and drop our attention into our heart. By spending time each day listening to our heart’s whisperings, our life’s work takes shape, and we begin the journey—strong, loving, and connected within.

I promise that as you spend time with you every day, you will come to know exactly what you came to this life to do. Like the butterfly, you will experience the magnificence of being who you are!

This eBook will even help you understand transformation and its importance in our lives.

When something is transformed, it is expanded so that it becomes more than what it was. The metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly is a great example of a transformation. The caterpillar, in changing its appearance, literally expands its form and becomes much more than what it was; the transformation creates a new reality.

Not only is a new reality created in a transformation, but a whole new mindset also occurs.

Transformation is an important strategy in dealing with change. Why? Because when the change is so dramatic that one’s world becomes drastically different, that new mindset, that new consciousness – a transformation – might be needed so life can be positive and productive.

Transformations bring about a future that is new which is something a particular change may necessitate.

Things that can help you deal with a change that may necessitate a transformation are explained in the next chapter of this eBook.

Dealing With Change.

If you are dealing with a change that may necessitate a transformation, what are some things that will help with that?

A. Let Go Of The Past

To get what will be, you must give up what is. Mourn the past, what you are giving up, but don't become stuck in it. Relish the memories, the good from the past. Learn from what was. As Louise Smith said:



"You can't reach for anything new if your hands are full of yesterday's junk."

B. Accept The Loss

In order to be able to fully let go and embrace what the change brings, the acceptance of the end of the current, of the loss, is vital. You need to let go of the past in order to adjust to life and accept change, so that you can remain optimistic and create the future you want.

C. Ride The Emotional Roller Coaster

You do need to acknowledge all the emotions that may overcome you. Just as a roller coaster has highs and lows, so will you. Deal with the lows: the fear, anger, frustration, sadness, sorrow. Embrace the highs: the joy, hope, understanding, relief. Allowing yourself to work and experience through the emotions will help connect you to what will be and help free you from the past.

D. Roam The Wilderness

I call the place between what was and what will be the wilderness. Some call it the neutral zone. Others call it the void. Whatever term is used, this is the time in our transition where we have a foot in two worlds. For the caterpillar and/or the butterfly, this is the time spent in the cocoon. The wilderness gives us some time and space to think, reflect, question. A lot is unknown at this point and that is okay. The wilderness gives us time to explore.

E. While Roaming The Wilderness, Experiment With The Ideas That Come To The Surface

Use trial and error in deciding what direction in which to go, what to do, who to see. Be patient. Give others and yourself time to work through the ideas, thoughts, and suggestions that come to the surface. Be observant. Watch for footprints in the snow or those signs of how things are evolving. Capitalize on the moments of creativity and set short-term goals. Where do things need to be in a day? A week? At the end of the month? What should things look like in a day, week, or month? Listen to your inner voice. Your inner voice will help you to take advantage of new opportunities and to develop new understandings.

F. Capitalize On Your Childlike Wonder

Childlike wonder is an attitude that among other things, allows us to be imaginative and creative, to have little or no fear of the unknown, to take on challenges, to believe we can achieve whatever we conceive, to try new things. Unleash your inner child and see things with the eyes of wonder and awe when dealing with the unfamiliar.

***“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes,
but in having new eyes.”***

Marcel Proust

This is exactly what we need to do in our transformation – see something for the first time.

G. Build New Skills

If your transformation is taking you in a direction where you will be doing something quite different, new skills may be needed. Take classes. Read. Work to develop them. Talk to others. Observe. Remember that a butterfly is a transformation, not a better butterfly. New skills were needed by the butterfly like learning to fly. It is the same with us.

H. Keep Going

It is easy to start; many don't finish. Don't let your fears sabotage your process. Have a vision of your transformed self and let that be your motivation to keep going. If need be, write down how the vision can be achieved, and then work diligently to achieve what will be.

I. Transformation Is A Journey

It is a process. It takes time. It happens when your desire to live your new life replaces the desire to live the old life. When you no longer want things to go back to the way they were, you are transformed.

Once a transformation occurs, you will never be what you once were. Transformation requires a change on both emotional and intellectual levels. It requires a willingness to make the journey.

The process of transformation challenges us to address, and indeed heal, those aspects of our being which we may be hesitant to acknowledge but which can prevent us from moving forward. Transformation involves change at the core of our being, change that is implemented in a thoughtful and intentional manner.

19 Exquisite Lessons A Caterpillar Can Teach Us.

1. Embrace Change

To embrace change means we are accepting of it. The following quote nicely sums up this thought:

"Do not see acceptance as a weakness. Acceptance simply means that you understand and recognize your current situation. Acceptance allows you to be free from the shackles of denial and move forward in life, creating a new path and a new life for yourself."

Nothing is permanent; change happens all the time. Before change happens, remember that some things go and are replaced by new things. This is a fact of life. And, with some change, it is necessary for the old, the former to go so that the new can come. The caterpillar needs to change for it to become a butterfly.

2. All Change Begins With An Ending

All change begins with some sort of loss. To get what one wants, one must give up what is.

"It's the end of the world," said the caterpillar. "It's the beginning of the world," said the butterfly.

3. Let Go Of The Past

The acceptance of the loss, of the end of the current, is vital in order to fully let go and embrace what change brings. You need to let go of the past in order to accept change and adjust to life, so that you can remain optimistic and create the future you want. Louise Smith says,

“You can’t reach for anything new if your hands are full of yesterday’s junk.”

We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.

During this phase of rapid internal growth, the caterpillar actually has to break down its parts or liquefy in order to come into another form. If we relate this process to some of life’s transitions, it actually means that our body requires a giving in or a metaphorical melting into the process. However, this movement process of letting go of something in order to grab onto something else actually means that for a period of time we may feel like we are holding on to nothing. We may not consciously identify what is happening to us during times of uncertainty, but our body can sense the change and can have a range of emotional reactions.

By examining the caterpillar’s physical breaking down of form in order for restructuring to happen as a metaphor, it may provide some guidance during these uncertain feelings, normalizing this part as an important stage in the transition.

As the caterpillar grows, it splits its skin and sheds its skin 4 or 5 times. How valuable to look at this movement as a mandatory process of shedding, expansion, and that this must occur not once but over and over.

4. Spend Time In The Wilderness

In our lives, the neutral zone or wilderness comes after a change has occurred and we have let go and ended something. This is a place when the old and the new overlap. When it comes to the butterfly, wilderness is the pupa stage of its transformation. This is where a larva encapsulates itself into a shell-like structure that hangs from a twig or branch. Inside the structure, the insect is rapidly changing; transforming.

It is in the wilderness of the change process that we, too, begin our transformation into something new. It is here that new discoveries, new ideas, creativity, and re-orientations take center stage and help propel those undergoing the change toward something that might make their life better. Something they might be able to accept.

5. Come Out Of The Cocoon

The cocoon is the comfort zone of the caterpillar. Imagine if the caterpillar never emerged from its cocoon? We would never have the beautiful butterfly.

Yes, change can be frightening. It is unsettling when a person is moved out of his or her comfort zone. When wrapped in the zone, we feel safe and secure. But, you will never know what is possible unless you leave the confines of what is comfortable and known.

How can you move forward unless you are willing to open new doors and try new things. Indeed, you may never reach your full potential or may even never know what you are capable of doing, unless you venture beyond the boundaries of your comfort zone.

The shift outside our comfort zone forces us to try new things. The shift outside our comfort zone gives us an opportunity to learn things about ourselves and to see ourselves in a different light. The shift outside our comfort zone gives us our wings.

You can only fly once you are willing to give up the safety of your cocoon. And it only then that like the butterfly, you have the hope and strength to believe that in time, you will emerge from your cocoon, fully transformed.

6. Trust The Future

Today a caterpillar; tomorrow a butterfly. Don't lose hope because you never know what tomorrow will bring. Clasp the opportunity to pursue your dream, your vision, your goal! Sonia Ricotti's thoughts sum up this thought nicely,

"Just trust that everything is unfolding in the way it is supposed to. Don't resist. Let go of what was, surrender to what is, and have faith in what will be. Great things are waiting for you around the corner."

7. Unfurl Your Wings

When dealing with change, you need to be confident in yourself. The more confident you are, the more likely you are to deal positively with whatever change is facing you. The stronger your confidence, the stronger your sense of direction and control will be. A stronger sense of direction and control will you to approach anything change challenges you with.

You must believe in yourself because when you believe in yourself, you become more willing to take action which is really needed when dealing with change, to be pro-active, and thus allow transition. If you move forth confidently keeping your goals, your dreams, and what you want front and center, you will invariably be successful, no matter what change is bringing to you. If you remember to remain confident in yourself, you can rise above any challenge that change throws your way!

8. Dare To Get Off The Ground

"Just when the caterpillar thought, 'I am incapable of moving,' it became a butterfly."

Annette Thomas

There is a certain amount of risk involved when traveling down the unknown route when transition and change alter the course of your journey, forcing you to try a new route. Instead of curling up in the safety of your comfort zone, step up to the challenge and be bold. Remember, life begins at the end of your comfort zone.

We have all heard the proverb, "Nothing ventured; nothing gained."

In times of transition and change, if we want to make progress in the new situation or environment, to gain, we must venture. With that venture, we will sometimes have to take risks to make progress. So, don't regret the chance you didn't take. Make things happen for you. Take that first step. Be brave. You may be surprised what you learn about yourself.

9. Ride The Breezes & Savor The Flowers

Butterflies seem to dance as they flutter among the flowers and along the breezes. Their dance on the breeze can be a reminder to us to approach things with enthusiasm; with joy.

Enthusiasm is the fuel that sustains you when dealing with change. In the face of difficulties, enthusiasm is the fire that keeps you moving forward and lights you up. It lifts you up (just as the breezes lift a butterfly) when the situation looks dark, and it energizes you when you are tired. Your experience will increase in a really good way if you are being enthusiastic about what you are doing. It increases your vitality. You will go about your life with energy and you'll feel good about what you are doing, no matter what it is.

When we are enthusiastic, we are: less stressed, more optimistic, more positive, and more excited about life. If we can maintain enthusiasm and excitement, we are able to better deal with whatever issue the change may be presenting. As Norman Vincent Peale said,

“Enthusiasm releases the drive to carry you over obstacles and adds significance to all you do.”

Enthusiasm is the fire that keeps you moving forward and lights you up in the face of difficulties. It energizes you when you are tired, and it lifts you up when the situation looks dark.

10. Put On Your Brightest Colors

“Butterflies bring color and joy with them.”

Trish Phillips

Don't hide yourself after a change. Announce to the world that you are here and you are ready to face whatever challenge the change has brought. Be the same as the butterfly. A butterfly becomes more noticeable when the colors on it are brighter.

Wearing your brightest colors might release your inner child – the part of us that takes us back to a time when: our imaginations would run wild; we were free spirits; our days were filled with laughter, joy, fun, and play; we were wildly happy about anything and everything; we were creative beyond reason; when cardboard boxes became cars, houses, caves or airplanes; we weren't afraid to take a risk or make a mistake; curiosity drove a lot of what we did; we lived in the moment; we bounced back from any type of daily disruption.

Our inner child exudes boundless energy, unbridled joy, a wild imagination, a free-spirited nature, happiness, creativity, resilience, enthusiasm, laughter, stamina, curiosity, fun, a sense of wonder etc. Aren't these characteristics that we want working for us as we deal with change?

There'd be no butterflies if nothing ever changed. It is the same with us. We'd remain caterpillars all our lives if nothing ever changed with us. This is not how life is meant to be lived. There is nothing you can do that can stop change from occurring, so just like the butterfly, channel that change for the better. We need to continually evolve and grow. We must go through a metamorphosis, just as the butterfly goes.

The butterfly is a wonderful symbol for metamorphosis, adaptation, change, and transition.

11. Outward Appearances Can Be Deceiving, So Don't Go Judging Too Quickly

Some caterpillars aren't much to look at, while some are a thing of beauty. They have the personality of a sea slug, they eat leaves as food and they crawl around like colored worms. What is the number of people that have invited you over to look at their caterpillar collection? Few to none, I'll bet.

Once a caterpillar matures, it spins a silken chrysalis around its body, and they goes into something that resembles hibernation. They're not much to look at either in the chrysalis stage either. A chrysalis may represent outstanding engineering, but as a thing of beauty it's an abject failure. While God works the wonders of metamorphosis, a caterpillar's chrysalis condo is just a crash pad.

When the butterfly finally emerges from the chrysalis, a miracle has happened. A creature that that was formerly ugly, is now a thing of beauty. Colors splash across its wings, and the former slug like plant eater now enjoys the freedom of flight. The rest of its days are spent flying from flower to flower, sucking up the nectar of life.

Everybody likes butterflies. These delicate flying palates of color remind us how much God loves beautiful things. God didn't have to make them beautiful. If He wanted, He could have made them look like flying slugs.

Perhaps God made butterflies to teach us lessons about life and make us less judgmental and more tolerant. We can't become butterflies without first being caterpillars. We've got to do a lot of growing and eat a lot of leaves before blossoming into our final state. Just as you can't judge a book by its cover, you can't judge a caterpillar by its color. The caterpillar might not be visually appealing to you at the moment, but when God gets done with it, it will become a creature of magnificence.

You know what's a big mistake? Judging people bitterly in their caterpillar stage. Every person is a work in progress, and what you see is not the finished product. Let God finish his miracle.

Don't be quick to judge yourself in a harsh manner either; you also are a work in progress. Your caterpillar stage might not seem like fun, but God knows what He is doing. Before you can become a butterfly, you have to be a caterpillar; there is no other way. God is working behind the scenes, taking care of the details, and things are going to work out.

God has a dream for your life that is better than you can imagine. When you get into agreement with His plan, there's no limit to how good your life can become.

12. If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes

In order to come into form, a butterfly develops through a process called metamorphosis that has four stages; each stage is fully dependent on the other. While change can at times feel painful, if we don't allow ourselves to go through the all stages of change, nothing will ultimately change. We will stay in the same form. This inhibits us from flying.

13. Everything We Are Taking In Will Be Fuel & Nourishment For Our New Form

During the first stage, the feeding stage, the caterpillar's job is to eat and eat and eat. It fills itself with nourishment as the food eaten at this time is stored and used later as an adult. Trust that the process of nourishing yourself with experiences is ultimately feeding your future form—even if the experiences are particularly challenging.

14. Never Underestimate Yourself, Your Abilities, Or Your Power

A butterfly never underestimates itself. It does give up on being a caterpillar its whole life.

"How does one become a butterfly? You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar."

Trina Paulus

You can do just about anything you set your mind to. And just about is plenty good for accomplishing more in life than you have time to accomplish.

Yes, there are some things in life that we won't ever be able to achieve. I will never be a professional golfer no matter how diligently I train. You may be confident about a certain thing and a 100% sure that you'll achieve it, but then something unexpected prevents you. You may not get the specific job you want because the employer won't hire you. Severe emotional or

physical illness can of course hinder you. But these are the exceptions. The rule is that there are millions of things you can accomplish.

I wish I could tell you that these thoughts had enough truth in them to merit inertia. But that's not the case. There are millions of desires and goals for which you have the intelligence, resources, ability, and stamina (emotional, mental, and physical) to accomplish.

It may not be easy.

It may not always be fun.

You might fail the first time and have to start again.

But most of the time, with the proper research, training, planning, preparation, and consistency, you can do what you set out to do if you really want to do it.

We are all creatures of habit, some bad and some good. One of the worst habits people have is that we tend to let others cast undue influence over how we feel about ourselves and the decisions we make. This causes us to second guess ourselves and make decisions based on how we feel others think instead of making the best choices for ourselves.

Here are seven daily habits that are probably keeping you underestimating yourself and playing small:

A. You Don't Have A Daily Practice Of Any Kind

Having a daily practice, a routine that gets you in sync with yourself — your mind and/or your body — and aligns you with your intentions, is key for tapping into your strength and power. It reminds you why you are here and sets the stage for calm in the midst of daily chaos.

My daily practice consists of guided gratitude and meditation. Yours can include things such as reading, yoga, meditation or prayer. Whatsoever works to get you feeling centered and good can be made into a habit. Try starting your day with a positive outlook?

B. You Constantly Compare Yourself To Others

We now basically have access into everyone else's lives with social media. As a result, it's hard not to compare yourself to others constantly. Just remember that you are not seeing the whole

picture. No one is on Facebook flaunting their bad days, their problems, and their fears. All you see is the good, fun stuff.

So what to do? Focus on your journey and your story. Never ever compare your beginning to someone else's middle. We all have something to offer. No matter how many people do what you do, only you can do it like you.

C. You Over-Prioritize The Opinions Of Your Parents (And Your Need To Please)

So many clients, colleagues, and friends struggle with this need to please their parents. Except freedom of expression, I had everything I wanted. My thoughts and beliefs were not my own. And every time I didn't agree with my parents, I felt immense guilt. I put so much weight on their expectations and opinions that I abandoned my own.

Yes, your parents gave you life and raised you, and did the best they could, but you are an adult now. It's time to start thinking for yourself. It's time to start putting your needs first. The only person that has to live your life is you. You ought to be happy with it.

D. You Are Sticking Around The Wrong Crowd

It is crucial to surround yourself with people of value, who lift you up and support you. No one can have a positive life if they spend all their time with negative people. Find people who get you, create a tribe, and immerse yourself in their excitement and love.

Not sure where to start? Check out your local Facebook groups or meetup groups, join a church or a club. You don't have to keep certain people in your life just out of guilt or because of your history. You have every right to choose who takes up your time and energy.

E. You Don't Fuel Your Body Properly

Properly fueling my body was a major thing that kept me stuck when everything else in my life began to align. I made every excuse for why I couldn't take an hour to exercise or eat right. I ended up hating the way I looked and feeling like crap most days.

This was self-sabotaging. I was growing and so was my business. If I didn't feel uncomfortable in my skin or like the way I looked, then I wouldn't put myself out there. It was all one big, fat lie. Feeling good from the inside out and getting healthy are the keys to growth and expansion. Stop making excuses and get out there and move.

F. You Forget About All Sorts Of Self-Care

We often forget to care for ourselves. We're taught to treat others with respect, but we don't do it for ourselves. Can you expect someone else to treat you well if you yourself can't?

Self-care can include a digital detox, exercise and health, grooming and bubble baths, scheduling you time to do absolutely nothing. Putting yourself first is not a crime, rather it's a necessity. Take care of yourself so you can take care of those around you.

G. You Don't Believe In Yourself

There are few people who will love you unconditionally. You should always strive to be one of them. You heard that right: love yourself unconditionally. How everyone around you treats you and views you depends on yourself.

If you don't think you are worthy, why would anyone else? Set the standard for how you want to show up, how you want to feel and how you want to live. Know it. Believe it with every fiber of your being. Believe in the amazing gifts you have to share with the world and believe in yourself. Let your light shine and don't ever be ashamed of it.

15. Solitude Provides Space & Time For Internalization

When the caterpillar is full-grown and stops eating, it becomes a chrysalis. Depending on the species, the caterpillar may suspend itself under a branch, hide in the leaves or bury itself underground. During times of transition, we too may need to go underground to hibernate and give our body and mind the space to go internal. What is significant about this stage and

important for our own emotional and personal transition is that while visually it may look like nothing is going on, instead, big changes are happening inside. Special cells that were present in the caterpillar are now growing rapidly. They will become the legs, wings, eyes, and other parts of the adult butterfly. This stage can last from a few weeks, a month, or even longer.

16. Struggles Are Necessary

A famous story with some variation goes like this.

One day a woman found the cocoon of a butterfly dangling from a branch in her garden. She started observing the cocoon daily and one day a small opening appeared in the cocoon. The woman watched the butterfly for quite a few hours as it struggled to force its body through that small hole. The butterfly then seemed to stop making any progress. It looked as if it was the most that the butterfly could manage on its own.

The woman then thought about helping the butterfly. So she took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining cocoon. Thanks to the woman, the butterfly emerged easily, but it had small, shriveled wings and a swollen body. The woman continued to watch the butterfly and expected that the wings would expand and enlarge to be able to support the body. But nothing happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with shriveled wings and a swollen body. The butterfly was never able to fly.

The woman in her haste and kindness didn't understand was that the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening and the restricting cocoon, were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings, so that once it achieved it's freedom from the cocoon, it would be ready for flight.

Struggles are sometimes exactly what we need in our life. If nature allowed us to go through life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would never fly, and we would not be as strong as we could have been.

17. Be Content With Where You Are

Most importantly we need to recognize that it's okay to be a caterpillar or to be resting in a chrysalis state. We must stop valuing only the fully-formed butterfly and judging our own progress. When we engage and embrace our current stage of development completely, we will give up less often, grow more efficiently, and find more satisfaction in the entire process.

With this new principle in mind I plan to slow down the pace of my next project and enjoy each stage of growth and development. I will appreciate being exactly where I am rather than pushing so hard to get ahead. I will be sure to gather all the knowledge I need before I move forward, I will allow time for a bit of rest during the process, and I will stop berating myself when a simple little moth emerges after my months of hard work.

18. Teaching Others

Imagine a caterpillar teaching another caterpillar how to turn into a butterfly. There is an innate intelligence within the little critter that allows it to convey the theory of it all. How to create a cocoon. How to let go during metamorphosis. How to break through as a butterfly.

Once the then-caterpillar-now-butterfly has undergone the process to develop wings and a whole new body, the other caterpillar is not as useful as it once was as a teacher. “But we can always benefit from going back to the basics,” some may argue. Going back to caterpillar-ing isn’t as useful to a butterfly’s growth. Its mechanics and being have changed.

The mentor has reached its capacity to influence the mentee, while the mentee has increased its capacity to be a mentor. However, among other butterflies, this newly hatched butterfly requires a back to the basics approach to flying. To dealing with the air currents. To finding and ingesting food. To protecting itself from new dangers. It needs a more developed butterfly to take it further along its path.

A caterpillar knows nothing of these butterfly things. The theory involved is so abstract and far-fetched that it is more often heard as things that happen in an ideal world or as fables that happened once upon a time rather than instructions on how it works for butterflies.

One can only develop another to the point at which they themselves have been developed. This dynamic is not unique to caterpillars and butterflies. We see this relationship take shape in parent-child, boss-employee, and coach-athlete relationships all the time. The fun part here is that we play both roles.

As a caterpillar, the focus is placed on continually developing our capabilities and awareness to be helpful for those around us and to know when it’s time to let a mentee teach us or to let them fly. As a butterfly, the focus is on helping caterpillars transform and then finding the tribe that provides us with our next lessons. Because a caterpillar can’t teach you how to fly.

19. A Butterfly Teaches Us About Spiritual Growth

Here is one last insight from the butterfly. When a butterfly turns from an egg to a caterpillar to a chrysalis to a butterfly, it is just becoming what it always was. You could prevent the egg from growing, but the natural course of life for the egg is to turn into a caterpillar, chrysalis, and finally into a butterfly. When it does this, it is just the natural outworking of what it already is.

The egg, the caterpillar, the chrysalis, and the butterfly share the same DNA. If a caterpillar committed a crime, the butterfly could be charged and go to jail.

To fail to change is to masquerade as something you are not. You are a changed person. God has given you a new heart. Let it out.