

Caterpillar

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Burwin Lewis Atkinson.

One day a small opening appeared on a cocoon. A man sat watching and waiting for the butterfly to appear — and once it did, he remained there for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress — it appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could go.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily through the enlarged hole — but it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which he thought would contract in time. Neither happened. In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It was never able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand is that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening are nature's way of forcing fluid from its body and into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes, struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. If we went through our days without any obstacles, it would cripple us — we would not be as strong as we could have been, and we could never fly.