

Shadow Work 2019: Butterfly Transformation

Close your eyes and take a deep breath.

Shake out your arms, your shoulders, your neck. Wiggle your toes.

Breathe deep

Fill your lungs fully, and empty them completely.

Deep breaths in

and deep breaths out

Feel yourself shrinking, this is not an uncomfortable feeling, its just a new sensation. You feel excited as you grow smaller and smaller. This is an adventure and you are along for the ride. Finally, you are small enough that you can fit on a small twig attached to a tree. Here you elongated into the shape of a caterpillar. What sort of caterpillar are you? Are you covered in hair? Are you covered in thorns? Are you brightly colored? Are you long? Are you short? Are you a specific caterpillar from memory or are you one of creative imagination. Are you poisonous?

Take a moment to make your caterpillar feel like you, safe, comfortable. Your caterpillar is a new form of your heart and mind. It moves slowly along the branch and you feel calm, and warm without a care in the world. Take all your kindness, your love, your joy, your inner light and feel the caterpillar radiate with the essence that is you. Leave your stress behind. All your dreams, all your desires, fill your caterpillar with everything you are. You have no predators here, just a safe place to be your own caterpillar.

You move slowly down the branch, there is no rush, feel the branch with your little legs, its firm, stable, and warms as you move along it. Bring yourself to a stop at the perfect spot on the branch. Near a leaf, near the tree trunk, wherever your heart guided you.

This is the spot for the next part of your journey.

You feel a cool breeze. Not one that can move you from your branch but one that feels strange. Feel this strangeness, its uncomfortable.

The breeze signaled something inside you. It awoke something unfamiliar to your happy existence. You know now that should protect yourself from the outside world.

Instinctively, you realize you are creating a cocoon around yourself. This cocoon is a barrier between you and the breeze. The outside world. Spin your cocoon tightly around you quickly. Urgently. The breeze awoke foreign emotions to you. You feel fear. You don't feel safe around that breeze.

You close your cocoon but despite your speed, some of the breeze got in. It seeps through your skin and mixes inside your body. You're safe world now feels something different.

It remembers.

All of those dark things you kept away from your happy caterpillar break open and crawl like parasites under your skin.

You remember shame.

You remember embarrassment.

You remember guilt.

You remember pain.

You are trapped inside the cocoon with the worst parts of yourself and you cannot escape. One memory eats away at your flesh from the inside out. Shame. It begins to decompose your body. You feel yourself melting. Feeling helpless and attacked by the memory of something you are ashamed of.

You melt. You are liquid filling up your cocoon. You have Light, and you have Dark mixing around and you are at war with yourself. Who will win? Will this memory poison you beyond repair? Everything feels uncomfortable and cold. You've let yourself be consumed with that shame.

Slowly, you start to feel a tingling sensation. It is everywhere. It's both painful and comforting at the same time. Does it feel like fire? Or does it feel like ice?

You realize that tingling is rearranging you. Your liquid is hardening into new shapes. You panic. You haven't gotten rid of the darkness yet! You feel it mixing around you still. It will be trapped within your new body, and there is nothing you can do to stop it. For a moment, you feel defeated, you have lost, but then you realize you forgot something. You forgot about your joy. You have been so focused on the memories, that you forgot how strong love was. The feeling of love wraps around the shadow of memory and your cocoon hardens faster. You remember the light parts of yourself, and the painful memory of shame seems more distant. The memory is surrounded by a thick veil of love.

You feel your heart begin to beat again. It feels emotionally secure. With each beat you feel stronger. You feel alive again. You feel your brain, your mind forms and expands. Its full of wisdom and balance. Your challenging memories have mixed with your inner happiness, and you have found a place of peace with both.

Your cocoon begins to crack.

You emerge and open that veil of love you have placed around yourself. You let your love expand and radiate from you. You are now a beautiful butterfly that fought strongly to morph into the creature you are now. You could not have transformed without your light soul. You could not have transformed without your dark shadow. Both were needed to start your heart and mind. Both were needed to burst you free from your shell.

Take a moment to look at your butterfly. It's been through a lot. What does it look like as it flies as it is now prepared to take on the world?

Caterpillars are easily parasitized because they can be naive, much like our hearts can be pierced with our shadow when we don't expect it. But you have found balance, you fought to become who you are now.

Send a burst of power from your heart, all throughout your body and the area surrounding your body. Let love and wisdom pulse through you. Release any judgment of yourself. Sink into balance and allow it to calm you and help you relax. Breathe deep and allow yourself emotion.

With each deep breath feel that calm energy, and with each exhale release any pain, fear or judgment.

Continue to Breathe and when you are ready, hear the sounds around your physical body. Feel where you are sitting or lying down; wiggle your fingers and toes. When you are ready, open your eyes.

- Written by Amber Araneae, Columbia Grove ADF, 2019