

The Butterfly's struggle

A lesson about the importance of challenge and hard work. A story for older children or parents!

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day he saw a small opening in the cocoon. He sat and watched the butterfly 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 and could go no further. 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. But it had a swollen body, and small shrivelled wings. He continued to watch the butterfly, because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would emerge and expand to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen

body and shrivelled wings. It was never able to fly. The man felt a great sadness.

What he had not understood was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon. It had needed to struggle.

Sometimes, struggles and hard work are exactly what we need in our life. They strengthen us. They teach us courage. If we lived through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as we could have been. And we could never fly.