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The Alchemy inside a chrysalis

One of the most unforgettable experience during the lockdown is to observe the transformation of a caterpillar into a monarch butterfly.



When we picked up the baby caterpillars on the swam plant, some were too tiny to be even noticeable by eyes. We moved them to a high-ceiling container home, making bed for them with kitchen towel, , cleaning their bed and feeding them with fresh leaves every day. Now and then they had long sleeps for a couple days without moving at all that we thought they were dead, but then they woke up and started eating again. And we notice every time they woke up, there were bits of old skins in their bed, and they grew bigger.





Watching the caterpillars eating and moving in a slow and graceful manner is like a meditation. Each caterpillar has its own pace totally different from one another. Some fancy a nap in between meals while others might prefer a long 'walk' overnight. None of them seems following an agreed daily routine. They don't hurry to go anywhere. They lead a perfect example of embracing simplicity and presence.



And witnessing them turning into shiny green chrysalis and coming out as butterflies is rather enlightening. How comes all the green leaves they ate now become such beautiful creatures. How the amazing colours, wings, eyes and legs of a butterfly were created inside the still small chrysalis in two weeks. The magic process doesn't require anything other than the stillness. What an incredible process!



Appreciation of a butterfly's birth leads me to reflect on ancient Taoist teachings:

- The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.
- Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes.
- A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving;
- When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be.
- Stillness is a source of Great Strength.
- Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.
- From wonder to wonder, existence opens.
- If you realise that all things change, there is nothing you will try to hold on to. If you are not afraid of dying, there is nothing you cannot achieve.



Would this “global pause” possibly be a global chrysalis?

Ecologist proposed the entire earth is a complex living organism system that nothing can change in isolation without affecting the whole (Gaia hypothesis). If the globe wants to come out this chrysalis as a butterfly, what we need to achieve it? Looking closely into what happens inside the chrysalis, do we have the courage to melt ourselves into liquid? Do we have the resilience to discard the old identities? Do we have the trust to each other to become one? Do we have the patience to wait until the new wonder opens? Does the world need more money, houses, food, work to make it a better place? Or is there anything we can change based on what we already have had without asking for more resource?

Despite considerable amount of negative news, there have been many reported positive stories all around the world. People sang opera in Balcony, pollutions dramatically reduced, animals went back to the cities, neighbours trained together and encourage each other, low-paid food workers, nurses and cleaners gain respect, and many people including myself, have improved cooking skills in the kitchen, etc. Change is inevitable, what we can do to change for the better?

(I also have a few videos of the butterflies)



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