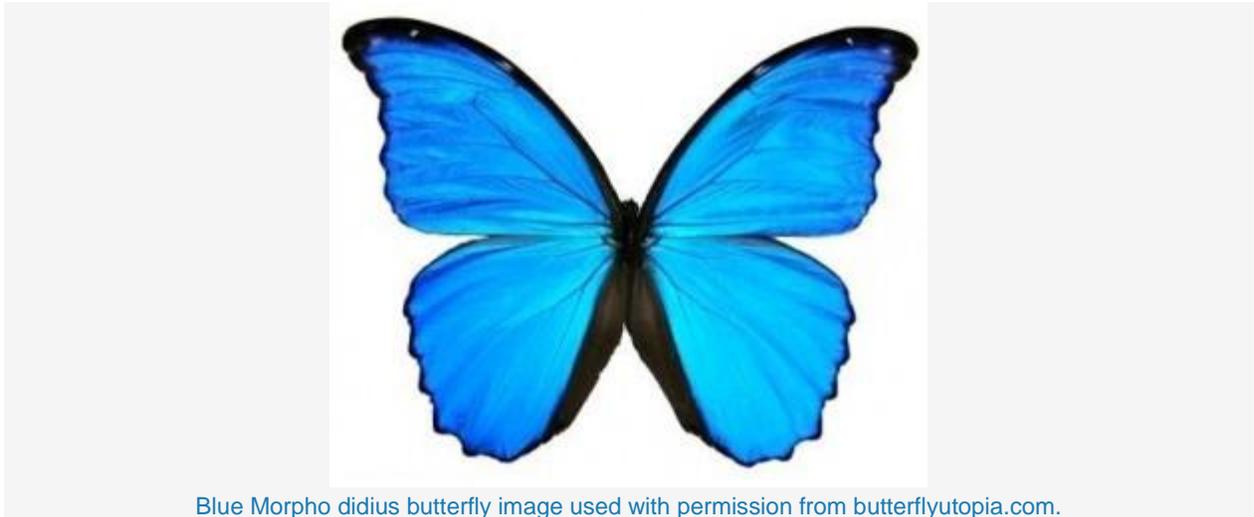


The Story of Imaginal Cells



Blue Morpho didius butterfly image used with permission from butterflyutopia.com.

The term “Imaginal” has connotations of *imagination*, the process of creating new ideas and concepts of things that do not yet exist.

But in biology, the term is applied to Imaginal cells – and the startling science behind Imaginal cells is where we get our inspiration for the work we do.

We all grew up knowing a bit about the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly. The truly amazing part of this process, however, is in the scientific detail of how it actually happens in nature.

After a period of ravenous consumption, a caterpillar finds an appropriate perch and forms a chrysalis – so far so good. The end result, we know, is a butterfly, but the truly astonishing thing is that there is ***no structural similarity at all*** between a caterpillar and a butterfly.

Inside the chrysalis the caterpillar, unable to move, actually dissolves into organic goop. Cells, which had been dormant in the caterpillar and which biologists have the poetic genius to call “Imaginal cells,” begin a process of creating a new form and structure.

At first these Imaginal cells – the seeds of future potential, which contain the blueprint of a flying creature—operate independently as single-cell organisms. They are regarded as threats and are attacked by the caterpillar’s immune system. But they persist, multiply, and connect with each other. The Imaginal cells form clusters and clumps, begin resonating at the same frequency and passing information back and forth until they hit a tipping point. They begin acting not as discrete individual cells but as a multi-cell organism – and a butterfly is born.

We believe that courageous leaders are the Imaginal cells within their organizations to help them transform to meet the challenges of our times.

Our life’s work is to find new and more effective ways to help courageous leaders imagine a better future and work with others to make their dreams a reality. **Share this:**