

THE GARDNER AND THE COCOON

I have heard a story of a gardener who was out tending his garden one day and observed a butterfly struggling to break free of its cocoon. The gardener watched in amazement as the delicate creature struggled violently to work its way out of its constraining space. The entire cocoon shook and trembled with the butterfly's efforts to emerge. This struggle went on for what seemed like an eternity to the concerned gardener. Eventually, the gardener became so distraught over the butterfly's wrestling to break free that he lost patience and decided to help the process along. He went into the house and obtained a pair of scissors, returned to the garden and cut a larger opening in the wall of the cocoon, allowing the butterfly to tumble out onto the ground. What the well-meaning gardener did not realize is that *the struggle is part of the transformation process*. In the cocoon, the young butterfly's wings are engorged with fluid, and the struggle to emerge from the cocoon forces the fluid out of the wings and into the young creature's body where it can be absorbed and processed. Deprived of part of its transformative process, this particular butterfly's wings remained fluid-filled and it was never able to fly. The gardener watched in despair as the butterfly slowly died, lying on the ground in his garden. In our lives, individually and together, metamorphosis comes as part of a process that involves joy and sorrow, pain and liberation.

Metamorphosis is a process, which involves struggle, dissolving, reimagining, revising, and flying. It is not always easy, however, when you emerge, spread your wings and begin to fly, you will have a greater appreciation for who you are and what God has called you to become.