

**BUTTERFLY**

# ButterFly

A HEALING ARTS RESOURCE



## What is Your Life Telling You?

By Sandy Penny

As I follow my journey through this world, I notice synchronicities and events that stand out as more than coincidences. In the Celestine Prophecy book by James Redfield, the first step on your spiritual journey is that life begins to speak to you.

For instance, since I began this ButterFly section, butterflies suddenly abound in my life. I see them unseasonably flying around Taos. Women on the street wear butterfly jewelry. Even men sport t-shirts with butterfly logos. The Horse Fly has butterfly fly swatters. Just this week, I received an email and several photos from a friend who found a pupa in her yard, fallen from a tree. She took it inside her house and allowed it

to complete its journey of becoming a Monarch butterfly.

Some say I'm just seeing butterflies because the image is prominent in my mind, something I'm focusing on. I actually agree with that. There's a metaphysical principle that says, what you put attention on, you create. That begs the question, what are you seeing more of in your life? According to this philosophy, whatever is growing is a product of your focus.

When you begin to observe your life, examining the details as a way of taking responsibility for your experiences, then you claim the power to change. Wouldn't it be a great experiment to choose something you'd like more of and focus on it to see if it

grows?

The tricky part is, if something negative persists in your life, you can't just stop thinking about it. It's the "don't think of pink elephants" theory, the mind has to create a picture of something before it can negate it, so you defeat your purpose with the original mental picture. The key to eliminating the negative is to focus on something positive to replace it.

Suppose you're having health issues. Instead of trying to ignore them or spending all your time talking about being sick, focus on seeing yourself healthy. What does that picture look like? What would you be doing if you were healthy? Focus on the positive things you want. For some reason, it seems easier to list what you don't want than to figure out what you do want. However, that's just using your time and attention to create more bad. Reallocate that time and energy to what you want.

When you find yourself lapsing into a negative rant about life, ask yourself what you'd like instead and immediately shift into thinking about that. Ask what steps you can take to make your life look more like the positive vision. Then, just start taking small steps toward the life you've imagined.

You can spend all day discounting this technique as fantasy, and you'll probably prove that to yourself, but why would you want to do that? Doesn't it make more sense to go for what you want in life? As simple as it sounds, many of us have negative programs that immediately try to kill our posi-

tive desires. Voices in our heads say, you can't have it, or what makes you think you deserve that? Just keep returning to the positive vision and eventually those voices will quiet. The pink elephant theory can work to your advantage. A positive vision that gets a negative critique already created the positive mental picture, so the negative voices have a more difficult time getting rid of that picture. Once good things start happening, it gets easier to stay positive.

Another part of looking at your life is controlling who you spend time with. The more time spent with positive people who encourage you and help you refine your vision, the better and faster your results. That brings up the media. Listening to negative economic projections ad infinitum can defeat your efforts to move forward. For every terrible news report, there's an inspiring story of someone who beat the odds. Wouldn't you rather be that person?

The last tool I want to share to create a life that reflects back all the good things you desire is gratitude. Every time you give thanks for something you receive or tell someone a story about the great thing that just happened, the more you increase your positive energy. It becomes an exciting upward spiral.

Whether you know it or not, you are living the life you've imagined. If you want something else, imagine something new and infuse it with your love, joy, acceptance, and gratitude.

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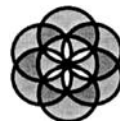
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## The Slim Volume

By Linda Kemper Fair

Everything I need is already here inside me.

The words float down, shower over my body as if from some unseen place above me. I pat my pockets, feeling for something I might need, but I know not what.

It's inside of you.

I don't need a manila file with bits of paper holding jotted notes from radio news shows. I don't need the encyclopedia or the newspaper. I have 67 years of internal filing waiting for me to insert the correct key.

It's been a measured and reflective day here. A quiet one. I watch the dogs living their dog lives and consider studying them for the whole day to see if I can learn anything about life well and simply lived. Sadie is gnawing on a bone with deep concentration and intention. I think about the benefits to her teeth and immediately lose the point of the exercise. She rises up over her bone and slams down upon the ground, on her other side this time. She recommences gnawing, as if she were being paid \$100.00 an hour for gnawing. Oh dear, I'm lost in human thinking again. Then she stands up, shakes, and heads for the giant pile of roof-slid snow. She drills her cheek along the cold wet surface, first one cheek and then the other. She is a seal, sliding along the snow, clearly reveling in this movement, this moment. She scoots to the edge of the snow, rolls over into the mud and dead leaves, and rolls and rolls, kicking her skinny black legs into the air. She stands up, her eyes glazed with pleasure.

"Shake!" I'm thinking. "Shake, damn you." I've lost the point again.

There must be a reason I was born into human form rather than as a poodle or a pit bull, but I can't seem to put my finger on it today. The world feels quite cattywampus. Society/humanity/civilization seems to be poised, slightly aloft, in a posture of hesitation. I think I can hear the sound of held breath. Isn't that strange? It's like an interruption, a no-breath, a listening for something, perhaps a new sound never heard before?

My brother calls me on the phone and wants me to read about the world economy on pimco.com. I don't bother to tell him that would be a silly waste of time because bringing those incomprehensible bits of banal disaster into my body only causes the bits to stack up like rotten wood. It gets wormier and wormier. It doesn't turn into a

body of knowledge. It makes a mess. It begins to rot and stink. I can't make any sense of it and I suspect no one else can either: this failing body of capitalism, horrifying and violent in its final twitchings. We keep hanging on like fleas on a dying dog, determined to get one last suck of blood before the end. My brother assures me that capitalism will never die. Does it matter that I can't understand why we're not leaping off the ghastly, gasping beast, and seeking nourishment on a fresh young host?

In dark and confusing times, I go to my bookshelf and pull out a slim volume of work by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Don't ask me why. I'm not the scholarly type, but when the train wreck ahead begins to glimmer dimly through the dust and debris, I turn and reach out for those old visionaries who came before us, before we had mechanized our world and made it all about money. And I fish through their sayings, looking for something to hold onto.

I find my "slim volume" (I love that expression) of Emerson's thoughts curried from his


journals and essays. I bought it at a used bookstore in Denver many years ago. An inscription on the inside flap says: "For our friend, Marylu, whose nature it is to be primary ... the Lehmans." As I hold the slim volume, I wonder about Marylu and what it is like to be "primary." I wonder about the Lehmans. Are they alive? What was their relationship, their friendship with Marylu? Social? Literary? Did their lives work out? Did the wisdom gleaned from Emerson's brilliance carry them through?

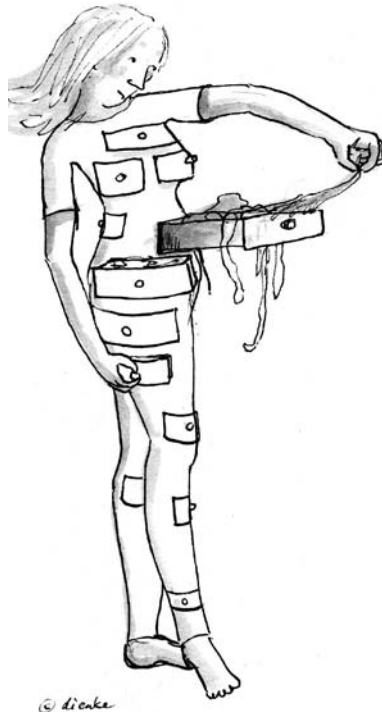
I choose a writing from the section entitled "America and Politics."

"All our political disasters grow as logically out of our attempts in the past to do without justice, as the sinking of some part of your house comes to defect in the foundation. One thing is plain; a certain personal virtue is essential to freedom; and it begins to be doubtful whether our corruption in this country has not gone a little over the mark of safety, so that when canvassed we shall be found to be made up of a majority of reckless self-seekers. The divine knowledge has ebbed out of us and we do not know enough to be free."

I go outside to sit near my dog, who is now sleeping, nose twitching, sleek black hair soaking up the heat of the sun. I chew on Emerson's pith for a while. My mind sniffs around the marrow buried inside the hard casing. The dog wakes up and looks at me expectantly.

We go for a walk.

They say a storm is coming soon. 



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