

*Midlife Metamorphosis*  
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# Midlife Metamorphosis for All 9 Enneagram Types

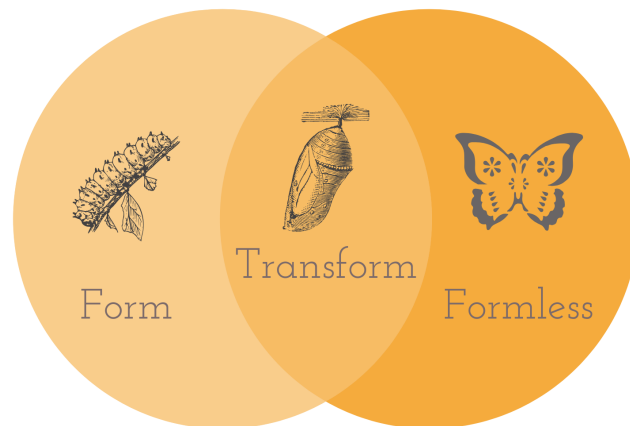
*"How does one become a butterfly?" Pooh asked pensively.*

*'You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar.' Piglet replied.*

*'You mean to die?' asked Pooh.*

*'Yes and no,' he answered. 'What looks like you will die, but what's really you will live on.' — A.A. Milne*

Transformation - a convergence of dying and rebirth, but dying isn't the end of life; it's emerging from a limited form identity to formlessness - detachment from an identity that has served its purpose.



## What is Form?

There are two types of FORM, and each FORM has its own boundaries.

- External forms (everything that exists in the physical world) are measurable.
- Internal forms are not measurable but are observable and subject to questioning.

Internal forms refer to our internal beliefs, including those related to our **identity**.



THE UNFOLDING ENNEAGRAM

"Form" is the story and collection of  
many stories we carry  
in service to our sense of self.

The attachment to those  
stories  
becomes our identity.

The belief that we are our stories  
becomes  
the source of suffering.

From the first day of life, all creatures begin consuming what is necessary for their existence. In the case of the caterpillar, it starts eating as soon as it hatches from its egg. In fact, the first thing it eats is its own egg. After a satisfying egg breakfast, it begins eating the very leaf on which it was born.

*It eats from the environment in which it came into existence.*

Likewise, once we, humans, are born, we begin consuming information from the environment in which we exist, creating a story that will shape our **internal** identity—who we believe ourselves to be.

### What are the stories that begin to form our sense of identity?

- Gender Identity?
- Race/Nationality?
- Family history?
- Generation you were born into?
- Relationship to parents?
- Educational Experience?
- Religious/Spiritual influences?
- Enneagram type
- Major life events and how they affected you (both positive and negative)?
- Unresolved Shame
- Location of residence?
- Cultures that exist in your family/upbringing?
- Marital status?
- Physical capacity?
- Native language?

The caterpillar only knows itself as a caterpillar. This is its **form-identity**. It eats, gets too big for its current form, molts or sheds its restrictive form, consumes more, and repeats this pattern until nature signals that it's time to transform completely.

We do the same over and over. We consume information, change our beliefs, search for even greater understanding, and we outgrow our old ways of thinking. We continue to repeat this pattern of creating a new identity until we encounter that inner knowing that it's time to stop **reforming** and **transform**.

### What identity or story does each Enneagram type tend to form in the Caterpillar stage (first half of life)?

#### Type 1



I'm young type 1 developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I haven't learned to trust that it's ok to make mistakes. I fear being wrong or imperfect. I judge situations as right or wrong and try to err on the side of grace while still holding myself and others to higher standards. It's very painful when someone calls me judgmental or a perfectionist. I feel deeply that I have a purpose in bringing goodness and justice to the world. Structure and integrity are important to me and my environment.

When I apply these values to my life, I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity is "THE RATIONAL REFORMER."

I am the GOOD and responsible one.



## Type 2



I'm young type 2 and developing my boundaries and my sense of security. People depend on me for help. I will earn the love and appreciation of others through acts of selflessness. I find such joy in helping others, but I'm trying to understand how to consider my own needs. I fear being unloved or unwanted. I truly do have the best of intentions, but it's painful when others don't seem to appreciate or want my help. I have empathy for a world so in need of a tender, caring heart. I feel that I am worthwhile if I am liked and needed; therefore, I will be safe and loved if I am loving.

I believe my identity is "THE CARING HELPER."  
I am the HELPFUL loving one.



## Type 3



I'm a young type 3, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I feel the exhilaration of accomplishment and find such joy in being recognized for my efforts. The world values winners. I am what I do. I am highly adaptable and can effortlessly change my persona and behavior to fit different social situations and environments. At times, I wonder if I'm valued when the applause stops. I fear failure, so I push myself at times. I find purpose in working to develop all areas of my life so that I can make worthwhile contributions to the world. I am action-oriented and feel a strong sense of responsibility to be the best, so it pains me deeply when someone calls me arrogant. I feel I must be the best at what I do to earn my worth. When I apply these values to my life, I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity is "The Adaptive Achiever."  
I am the Successful one.



## Type 4



I'm a young type 4, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I often feel so misunderstood and different from my peers...like something is missing. I find such joy in not trying to be like everyone else but creating a unique aura. It's hard for me to feel confident in relationships because I fear that if they know my story, they won't be able to handle it. It's painful when someone says I'm dramatic or overly sensitive. I see deep meaning and beauty in places that seem ordinary to most. I find purpose in expressing my unique observations of life in a variety of ways. I feel deeply and passionately and am not afraid of the highs and lows of the emotional spectrum. When I embody these authentic qualities, I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity is "THE SENSITIVE INDIVIDUALIST."  
I am the unique one.



## Type 5



I'm a young type 5, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I question almost everything, which often seems to frustrate others when I don't immediately agree. I can't tell you what I want to 'be' when I grow up because the world is full of so many mysteries and I'm fascinated with it all. I feel safe in a space where I can be alone with my thoughts and ideas. Please don't call me a bookworm in a derogatory voice or question why I seem so interested in subjects that don't fit into many mainstream conversations. The world is intrusive; I must protect my resources and energy so that I can think. To be worthy, I must be self-sufficient and not depend on others too much. I must understand and make sense of my world. I don't need much, but I need my space. This is how I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity to be "THE PERCEPTIVE INVESTIGATOR."  
I am the capable one.



## Type 6



I'm a young type 6, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I know I seem cautious and apprehensive at times, but in my mind, I'm trying to gauge what everyone around me is thinking before I commit. The world is a threatening and unsafe place, so I must be prepared. I want people to be able to count on me. When it's my time to proceed with an activity or an idea, I feel safe if I consider all the potential outcomes first. I want to find stability and certainty about what I believe and who I can trust to be a guide or safety net when I begin to doubt. Once I trust someone, I am loyal for life! When I know I have the support of others, I can move forward with some degree of confidence. It pains me when others say things like "just stop worrying" or "don't be so anxious...it'll be fine." To be worthy, I must provide certainty. This is how I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity is "THE RESPONSIBLE LOYALIST."  
I am the certain one.



## Type 7



I'm a young type 7, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. Sometimes I have trouble sticking with projects. I get bored with routine, but I'm also intrigued by the possibilities of what I can do. I don't like feeling limited or trapped. Life is exciting to me and yes, I can be impulsive and very persuasive when I want others to get on board with my ideas. I feel genuine joy when others appreciate my emphasis on seeing the world through an optimistic lens but I don't really know how to connect with those who are suffering and sad and I don't know why. It pains me when people call me 'shallow' or accuse me of constantly having FOMO." The world is full of exciting possibilities and if I prioritize planning for future activities, I can escape confronting present, painful circumstances. If I can create a happy world even when things get tough, this is how I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity is "THE OPTIMISTIC ENTHUSIAST."  
I am the happy, optimistic one.



## Type 8



I'm a young type 8, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I feel so alive when I'm the one in charge of whatever I'm a part of because I know my strengths and I don't know that of others. I am passionate about what I believe in and I'm often accused of being confrontational or angry when, in truth, I just can't wait around for everyone else to get on board with what I feel needs to be done. I believe that if people knew how deeply I care about justice for all and how, in my heart, I want to inspire others to greatness, they would understand why I can't back down from a confrontation and leave myself vulnerable when challenged. Please don't call me an ego-maniac or accuse me of not having feelings. The world is a harsh and unjust place - only the strong survive. I am a rock; If I am not weak and in control, I will earn my worth, and I'll do it my way! This is how I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity to be "THE CHALLENGING PROTECTOR."

I am the one in control.



## Type 9



I'm a young type 9, developing my boundaries and my sense of security. I feel that all is right in the world when I'm alone in a beautiful space in nature where I feel grounded...where nothing disrupts my peace of mind. People tell me it's great that nothing really seems to upset me and that I'm so easygoing. They don't see beneath the smooth surface waters that I'm working hard to maintain calm when so much around me is chaotic. Sometimes I do 'go along to get along' because I'm not really sure what I want, but I know I don't want conflict. It pains me when others accuse me of being apathetic or lazy. I'm okay as long as the people around me are OK too. I must be tolerant, accepting and keep the peace to be worthy. This is how I feel safe and loved.

I believe my identity is "THE AMIABLE PEACEMAKER."

I am the peaceful one.



Think about where you were when you realized things you once defended as the truth about yourself were shifting.

**Your boundaries were expanding.** You were detaching from something that became restrictive, just like the caterpillar does when nature sends the signal that it's time for metamorphosis.

Perhaps you were forced into change, or maybe you began questioning due to life circumstances. Whatever it was, the old paradigms became unworkable.

At some point in our lives, we must simply step back and say, 'Enough is enough.' All the years of consuming information and developing strategies and defense mechanisms, along with the constant fear of not being enough or being too much, of being rejected or accepted because of my behavior or lack thereof, are simply too much. I've outgrown this old skin!

What is the hardest for each type to release during the chrysalis stage?

## Imaginal Cells and The Imago...The Heart of the Story of Metamorphosis

Before the caterpillar even hatches, it has within the larvae what are called "**Imaginal Cells.**" So - What are they?

You may have heard the word 'imaginal' and thought it must be related to imagination, and you wouldn't be wrong. Imagination is the process of creating new ideas and concepts of things that do not yet exist. **In biology, the term 'imaginal' (as in imaginal cells) comes from the Latin word Imago, which simply means 'image' — the same root as the word imagination.**

These cells contain the blueprint for what will become the 'true image' - the wings, antennae, legs and more of the adult or the butterfly. **They are the concepts of things that do not yet exist!** Remember, the caterpillar doesn't grow wings out of its body - it must go through a complete change of form. **THIS** is transformation.

Before emergence into its true identity, metamorphosis takes place. This is one of the most epic LOVE STORIES ever conceived (in my opinion.)

We know the caterpillar dissolves in the chrysalis, but how does it know it's time to surrender that form?

Was this a cruel twist of fate for a young life to be cut so short? How could what was once life-sustaining now become death to the caterpillar? **If it was pre-programmed to die this way after all the struggle to survive, what was the point of life?** If this were the end of the story, it would be an epic tragedy, but we know how the story ends.

Two hormones have been working together this whole time. One is called Ecdysone and the other is called Juvenile. In a nutshell, Ecdysone instructed the caterpillar each time it needed to molt and Juvenile's job was to delay metamorphosis. Juvenile hormone levels stayed high to block the genes in the Imaginal Cells.

What happens next is such a dance of love that I get teary-eyed just writing about it. Ecdysone and Juvenile begin to work in partnership **with** each other, side by side, each knowing their work is complete. No more molting, no more crawling, confined to the limited existence of the caterpillar. Juvenile levels take a nose dive and it is the lack of this hormone that triggers the metamorphosis mechanism.

The symbolic surrendering to death of the form that once was, so the true can emerge, is why I use the life cycle of the butterfly as a metaphor to show what transformation is for us.

But let me be clear... Butterflies are not reflective, and while this life cycle can be a beautiful metaphor for our own transformation, we are more than subjects of an evolutionary process. The movement from form-attachment to formlessness (form-detachment) requires consciousness. We are the only creatures that can think about our thinking.

We can grieve the loss of what once was, even if there's so much good in saying goodbye. A butterfly doesn't grieve. We can feel the joy of a new beginning, be grateful for a new way of understanding our true nature and still mourn the passing of such an important time in our lives.

Grief and Gratitude often walk hand in hand.

The forms that we once embodied no longer exist. The world of past generations no longer exists. As the Roman philosopher, Seneca, said... *"every new beginning is some other beginning's end"*. We can mourn that truth while, at the same time, embrace and celebrate the entry into form-detachment. It is the beginning of formlessness.

The mystery of **formlessness** lies in knowing that we live in a physical world within a physical body, yet neither is our true identity. We have a rich history that has produced countless ideas, beliefs, accomplishments, failures, and relationships, and none of those define who we are. They are outward expressions of an internal story.

They are the gifts of being able to experience the unfathomable reality that beyond all mathematical odds... **We exist**. In the movement from form-attachment to the transformative space of surrender, we become conscious of the awareness that we do not look to any form, whether magnificent or devastating, for our source of identity.

The symbolism of the butterfly as FORMLESSNESS, as I've shown in the Venn diagram, is simply the detachment from the FORM we once believed was our identity. If we can remember that we are the image (Imago) of God, then our true identity is nothing less than a perfect reflection of our Creator. We are the light of the world!

But, you may ask, what would this light look like for me... for my Enneagram type?

Consider what the Enneagram teachers call the Virtues of each type, and how these virtues can be seen as a guiding light to answer the question -

**“What might this look like for each type in the Butterfly stage?”**

## Type 1

Your guiding light is Serenity



Your light of integrity and a longing for justice shines a pure and gentle light, providing serenity in times of chaos. In this space of knowing, you bring the energy of love in the perfection of imperfection or as the saying goes... "Que sera sera" meaning, "whatever will be, will be." You are at peace with all your emotions as you embody and balance their ebb and flow. Grace overshadows judgment as you recognize divine beauty in everything and everyone.



## Type 2

Your guiding light is Humility



Your light of empathy for a world so in need of a tender, caring heart is like the warmth of a gentle fire on a cold, dark night. You radiate altruistic love that welcomes others in the blessing of mutually giving and receiving, humbly and joyously embracing your intrinsic worth, living in harmony with the recognition of the divine in your own life and that of each life.



### Type 3

Your guiding light is Authenticity



Your light of an unmasked heart draws others toward you in a safe and welcoming space, not measured by performance or image but fueled by a deep knowing of your own inherent worth. In revealing your genuine self, you become a beacon of realistic optimism, worthy motivation, hope, truth and inspiration for living life from divine purpose.



### Type 4

Your guiding light is Equanimity



Your light of emotional balance is like a prism that refracts the full spectrum of light. Like pure light, you are the presence of all the colors of emotion..the absence of none. Your ability to know the ebb and flow of joy and sadness, and the myriad emotions in between, gives you the unique gift of being present with the highs and lows of life, to comfort and celebrate knowing that 'this too shall pass'. Your light becomes the calm in the storm.



## Type 5

Your guiding light is Non-Attachment



Your light of unrestrained generosity is a testimony that we live in a world of abundance with an unending supply of resources for mind, body and spirit. Your open mind and keen observations provide rational knowledge combined with wisdom. As you have become free of the fear of being depleted, you now share your energy (like a circuit that allows electricity to flow from a power source) providing a continuous path of giving and receiving.



## Type 6

Your guiding light is Courage



Your light of restorative courage shines and gives guidance and support as you embrace the truth that there is only this present moment. Faith becomes the compass that points you in the direction of trust and assurance of your own inner knowing. You create stability and security in your family and communities with a spirit of loyalty and perseverance, independent yet cooperative as a vital part of the whole.



## Type 7

Your guiding light is Sobriety



Your light of sobriety is like the soft glow of a candle in the window, welcoming the wandering child home. Your search for satisfaction in all the pleasures of possibility has been found in staying with the present reality. "Stay" has become your mantra, whether it is in days of celebration or long nights of suffering. Your joy is authentic and contagious because it shines from your own satisfied and grateful heart.



## Type 8

Your guiding light is Innocence



Your light of passion and courage shines through your heart of justice. You provide a shield of protection for those who are not strong enough to protect themselves. As you honor your own natural commanding presence and power you remember the true power and value of the tender places in your own heart. As you lay down your own armor, surrendering emotional reactivity, replacing the fear of being harmed with the energy of innocence that does no harm, you invite others to do the same, creating a safe place for authentic and healing connection.



## Type 9

Your guiding light is Right Action



Your longing for harmony in a chaotic world is evident in your gift of understanding and honoring different perspectives and making others feel valued and included. As you transition from being a mediator to a change-maker, your 'right action' becomes a brilliant light of disruption to the status quo, asserting yourself in matters of ultimate concern. As you consider and give priority to the impact your voice, your ideas, and your wisdom can make in this world, you become a shining beacon for justice and peace.



### This is your Apocalypse

I know I've shared a lot about butterflies, but I can't not share this fact because it's just the icing on the cake!

I'm sure you know this, but for those who don't, the literal translation of the word apocalypse comes from the Greek word "***apokálupsis***" and means "an unveiling or unfolding of things not previously known and which could not be known apart from the unveiling."

Unlike the caterpillar, whose simple eyes only perceive light and dark and do not distinguish shapes or colors, the butterfly emerges with the ability to see even more colors than the human eye.

Her amazing compound eyes have almost **360° vision with up to 17,000 tiny lenses**, each with its own lens.

For the butterfly, those first few moments of **eclosion** (*emerging from the chrysalis*) are the most vulnerable time. As her legs push their way out of the chrysalis, she will, at the same time, remove the triangular piece covering her eyes, ***revealing her first view of the open sky.***

For the first time, the butterfly becomes aware that she is a new creature, with a new vision and a new purpose.

Can you feel the awe and wonder as you begin to *remove what was covering* your ability to see what you never knew was possible...to see yourself as the beautiful creature you were designed to be?

As you shift in your consciousness, opening your eyes to new awareness, emerging with a **new vision, you begin to see the full spectrum of your own light — a prism of all the colors you never even knew existed — an unveiling** or unfolding into what was waiting to be revealed.

It is ***not*** a time of destruction but a time of revealing — ***this is the revelation...the awakening to what we once did not see. This is your Apocalypse***



*“Our deepest fear is not  
that we are inadequate. Our deepest  
fear is that we are  
powerful beyond measure!  
It is our light,  
not our darkness, that most frightens  
us.*

*We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be  
brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’  
Actually, who are you not to be?  
You are a child of God. Your playing  
small doesn’t serve the world.”*

*~Marianne Williamson*