

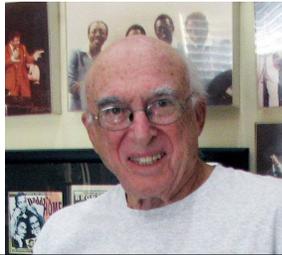
DELRAY SUN

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Join the In-Crowd to transform lives | Opinion

By Steve West
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You are now old enough to hear the story of the “Butterflies and the Bees.” You’ll need to sit still for five minutes, avoid embarrassment and read this to the end.



Steve West

Long ago you were an egg the size of a pinhead. You didn’t know that you’d have this body, mind and feelings, and everything that makes you what you are.

You went through a process of transformation from pinhead to person, which included a series of milestones including fertilization, birth, growth, and for us older folks, a touch of deterioration.

Transformation is a change that is unpredictable from past evidence. Take the plain-looking earthbound caterpillar that transforms into the unpredictable butterfly whose beautiful wings lift it to its destiny to sip the sweet nectar from the garden.

The butterfly’s karma is to beautify the world and bring hope and possibility to those still crawling through the dirt below. Ornamentation and reproduction are its mission. It flits from flower to flower and does its lonesome job.

The butterfly shares the garden with the bee. The bee has a beauty of its own but has little concern about its looks. The bee is all abuzz with energetic work. The bee is literally as busy as a bee.

What’s the distinction between these two flying nectar-sucking species? The butterfly is a showboat while the bee works its little stinger off for itself and its community.



THE BEE HAS A PURPOSE THAT’S BIGGER THAN ITS OWN EGO. THE BEE USES THE FLOWER’S NECTAR FOR NOURISHMENT AND FOR BUILDING ITS COMMUNITY. THE IN-CROWD INITIATIVE IS WORKING TO BUILD AN ALL-INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY IN PALM BEACH COUNTY. **STEVE WEST / COURTESY**

The bee has a purpose that's bigger than its own ego. The bee uses the flower's nectar for nourishment and for building its community. The bee builds the hive and the hive builds the bee.

Each bee instinctively knows that as strong and industrious it is, it cannot build the hive by itself. Each bee understands that without everyone's unity of purpose it would be a lonesome butterfly with no home, no community.

Are you a butterfly or a bee? I'll bet my wings that deep down you're a true bee and not just a son of a bee. You are the one who envisions the beauty and purpose of the hive even when it exists only as an aspiration and a single moist drop of nectar enfolded in the bowels of a rose.

Does your heart ache knowing that some of your neighbor bees aren't welcome in the hive merely because of the color of their wings? Do you cringe at the injustice that limits them and limits you as well? Palm Beach County can be a place where all bees have a shot to be their best.

Do you wish you can do something to level the hive so all bees are fully welcome? If you are a bee in waiting for such an opportunity, just buzz on over to the [THE IN-CROWD](#) website where you'll find a menu of ways to open your heart and mind to transform the quality of life for another bee, and for yourself as well.

You butterflies can fly over too. There's a place for you to show your beauty and add a drop of honey to the pot.

When you go to the website you will immediately see "My Pledge." Make the pledge that says that you would like to live in a community that is a true home of equality for all.

Draw your first precious honey drop and know that your drop, unified with others, will transform the hive from a dream to a reality.

Now is the time for all of us to make Palm Beach County a true home of equal opportunity and justice for all.

Visit [TheIn-Crowd.org](#) for information.

Steve West is a social justice advocate and entrepreneur living in Delray Beach.