

# Emily's Butterfly

*By T.D. Brodie*

You really can learn a lot from your kids. They are so open and honest. A child who has not heard the word “can’t” simply hasn’t got the grasp that something isn’t possible. In their eyes the world is open for enjoyment and the possibilities for achievement are without border. My youngest daughter, Emily, reminded me of that

It was a summer morning when she was about 6. She always was an early riser and, if I was lucky, I could catch her in the morning on the way to the washroom before she woke the rest of the house. This one particular day I was that lucky and, with my tea in one hand and my angel in the other, we went outside to talk and listen to the world awaken.

I remember the morning with complete clarity, for it was magic.

She was wearing her oldest sister’s swim t-shirt. Although it was early the sun had already warmed the grass and the dew had vanished. The birds were singing, the flowers were in full bloom and there was only the slightest of breezes. It was one of those days that defines the joy of summer.

Beside me sat my sweet “Button”. That was my name for her and she revelled in how it made her special. As we sat there she talked endlessly filling the air with the musical sound of her voice. I sat sipping my tea and making occasional grunts and noises to confirm that I was listening, but in all honesty I was enjoying the moment without concentration.

Somewhere in the midst of Emily’s conversation with me she interrupted herself. With a gasp and a point she said “Look Daddy ... a butterfly”. She held out her hand and followed with “Here butterfly”.

I looked in the direction she was pointing and, to my astonishment, saw this delicate butterfly wobbling about in the air. There was no mistaking its change in course as it tried to make it to my Emily’s hand. Even more astonishing was my little girl’s conviction and sincerity in the moment.

To Emily it was no surprise that the colourful delicate insect was coming her way. She was equally unsurprised when it landed on her hand. After all, hadn’t she called to it? Didn’t she love it and want to just say hello? Why wouldn’t it come to her?

I was so fortunate to have my camera with me to capture this most poignant of gifts that my daughter gave me that morning. She taught me that the smallest of creatures can have the strongest of values. My Emily’s value of commiseration with all living creatures hasn’t been forgotten to this day ... by either of us.

She still calls to butterflies. She's not patient enough to await their arrival as she was on that day so many years ago. But, somehow, I am. I remember that day so well and she taught me so much.

Now I see her flit through my life. Sometimes I like to put out my hand and call "Here butterfly". Sometimes, if I sit still enough and believe, she comes. And I wonder anew at the beauty that is her.

Yup ... your kids can sure teach you a lot. All it takes is a cup of tea to still your mouth, a warm summer day to open your heart, and a beautiful little girl who hasn't heard "can't". Then sit back and watch the butterflies come.

