



Introduction – The following story is an allegory. An allegory is a story with a greater meaning. You will probably soon figure out the meaning behind the story. As the story is discussed, please keep in mind, the purpose of this exercise is for **self-inspection and insight**.

This story is not meant to open the doorway to finger pointing, accusing, blaming or judging of others in the group. It is for learning about and looking at yourself. Also, there is no expectation that anyone make any confessions, and no one should feel judged or expected to say anything that they do not want to. Now please focus for a few minutes and listen to the story of **Addy the Caterpillar** –

Addy –

All the caterpillars were eating leaves and their lives got out of control. Eating leaves was fun at first but soon it became an obsession and all the caterpillars did was eat and eat and eat and eventually eating leaves took over their lives. Finally, an instinct kicked in with all of the caterpillars which told them it was time to change and grow. All of the caterpillars made their cocoons and started their transformation. All except one

One caterpillar who we shall call Addy was very smart. In fact, he may have been too smart for his own good. Addy knew that going into the cocoon was hard work and doing all of that changing was going to be a long process and at times painful struggle. Another problem that Addy had was that he didn't want to stop eating leaves. He knew he was out of control, but he wasn't ready to stop his leaf eating habit just yet. Addy, being very clever, came up with a plan.

When all of the other caterpillars went into their cocoons, Addy pretended to make a cocoon. He just worked on the outside so it would look like a cocoon, but it was just the mere shell and no real change could happen inside of it. As the other caterpillars went into their cocoons, Addy pretended to go in his, but as soon as the others were all gone, Addy came right back out and started eating leaves again with no one to bother him.

After a few weeks of enjoying his leaves Addy could hear the other caterpillars coming out of their cocoons. Addy had to come up with a new plan so the others couldn't figure out what he was doing. Addy, being as clever as he was, got two colorful leaves and glued them to his back to appear to be a butterfly like the others.

Soon as other caterpillars all came out as butterflies, Addy pretended to be one of them. The butterflies had changed and now were eating nectar, but Addy still was hooked on leaves. This time however, Addy had to eat leaves in secret when none of the other butterflies were looking

Over time the other butterflies started to notice something wasn't right with Addy. He just didn't look like a healthy butterfly like they did, and he wasn't growing and learning to fly. The other butterflies would periodically check in with Addy and ask him things like "is everything OK Addy, something doesn't look right" but Addy would always insist he was feeling fine and that he was doing great and making awesome progress as a butterfly, even though he was only pretending. With time the other butterflies couldn't help but notice something was wrong with Addy and he was no butterfly. But Addy had spent so much time and energy trying to fool them, so they all stopped asking and just wished him the best. They all knew something was wrong with Addy, but they had their own lives to worry about as they were butterflies and it was time to move on

Eventually all of the butterflies started to fly away but Addy kept up his charade, always making excuses why he wasn't flying like the rest of them. Soon all the other butterflies were gone and by then Addy's fake wings had fallen off and there he was again eating leaves, living the life of a caterpillar. Addy reflected on his life and he was truly disappointed as all of his butterfly friends had grown up and flown away and he was stuck alone living the same life he had been living with no progress. Addy regretted not taking the time and putting in the effort to become a butterfly because being a caterpillar for this long had become tiresome and dreadful. The leaves were no longer as enjoyable, and he was alone and afraid. Addy thought to himself "why didn't I just speak up and ask tell the other butterflies about my struggles, they could have helped me, and I could have been a butterfly right now!"



Group Discussion

What is the meaning behind the story? – Obviously it is an allegory about addiction and duplicity

- **Duplicity** - deceitfulness in speech or conduct, as by speaking or acting in two different ways to different people concerning the same matter; double-dealing. Another way people often describe duplicity is “*living a double-life*”

Again, the rules for discussing this topic is for **SELF ASSESSMENT**

- No judgment
- No accusations
- No one is asking anyone to admit or deny anything – Just food for thought -for YOU as an individual

Discuss:

1. Can anyone identify with Addy’s story at any point in their lives? Living a double life can be common in the process of addiction.
2. Why do people choose to live a double life when it comes to addiction and sometimes even when a person is supposed to be changing or recovering?
3. Why may it be even more tempting to live a double life during a situation like the COVID-19 pandemic (Think about how it may feel like it is easier to hide things)
4. What is the eventual outcome of living a double life?

Consider the credit card illustration:

A person can use a credit card for a while and really enjoy it until it ends up getting maxed out. What comes next – **The Bill – With Interest!** - Payback can be very difficult and take a while.

Why is it a foolish decision to live this way?

What does it feel like after all the money is gone and there is nothing left but a huge debt?



Duplicity Self-Assessment – Again, this is for you to assess yourself in your own head. No one is being asked to share anything and no one is being asked to call anyone else out. Just think in your own head if any of the following statements are true for you:

Checklist – THIS LIST IS ONLY FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT – Confidential, no questions. Read each one and pause a second to think about if it is true

Group -

- ★ This group doesn't really know how much I have been using
- ★ This group doesn't know the real me
- ★ I've lied in this group
- ★ The date and details of my last use is really not out there
- ★ I have come to this group under the influence
- ★ I am overusing my medication sometimes
- ★ I am taking things or drinking things that I am not supposed to on occasion
- ★ I have skipped sessions and lied about it
- ★ I say yes to my counselors and probation officer with my words but then later my actions say no

Family

- ★ My family thinks I am doing better than I really am

Legal

- ★ There is stuff out there that if the legal system knew I could be in trouble

Social –

- ★ I am hiding things from my friends or relationships
- ★ I still talk to dealers
- ★ I still talk to others who I know that I should be avoiding

Financial

- ★ I am still doing shady or illegal things for money
- ★ I am spending money and hiding it from other people

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Why Lie?

Living a double life – ***How long will it last?***

The goal of living a double life is most likely to avoid consequences – ***But what is the cost?***

- ***Time***
- ***Energy***
- ***Stress***
- ***Lies to cover up lies***
- ***Loss of sleep***
- ***Anxiety***
- ***Hiding***
- ***Paranoia***
- ***Guilt/Shame***
- ***Other?***

We know the outcome of living a double life, the truth eventually always comes out - ***so when it finally comes to light what is that often like?***

What emotion or feeling is usually behind living a double life? – (Answer – FEAR)

What thought can perpetuate living a double life? (Answer – “I’ll just lie one more time or for one more day, and then I stop”)

Why is this type of thinking the greatest lie of all? (Answer – Tomorrow often never comes and the lying continues)

GETTING HONEST

“*To thine own self be true*” – William Shakespeare, year 1609

- ★ You can always start today – It’s never too late to start getting honest
- ★ Just talk to someone - Sample phrases to start the conversation:
 - “Here’s what is really going on with me right now...”
 - “I need help”

Finally, what are the benefits of coming clean with the truth and starting to work on honesty?