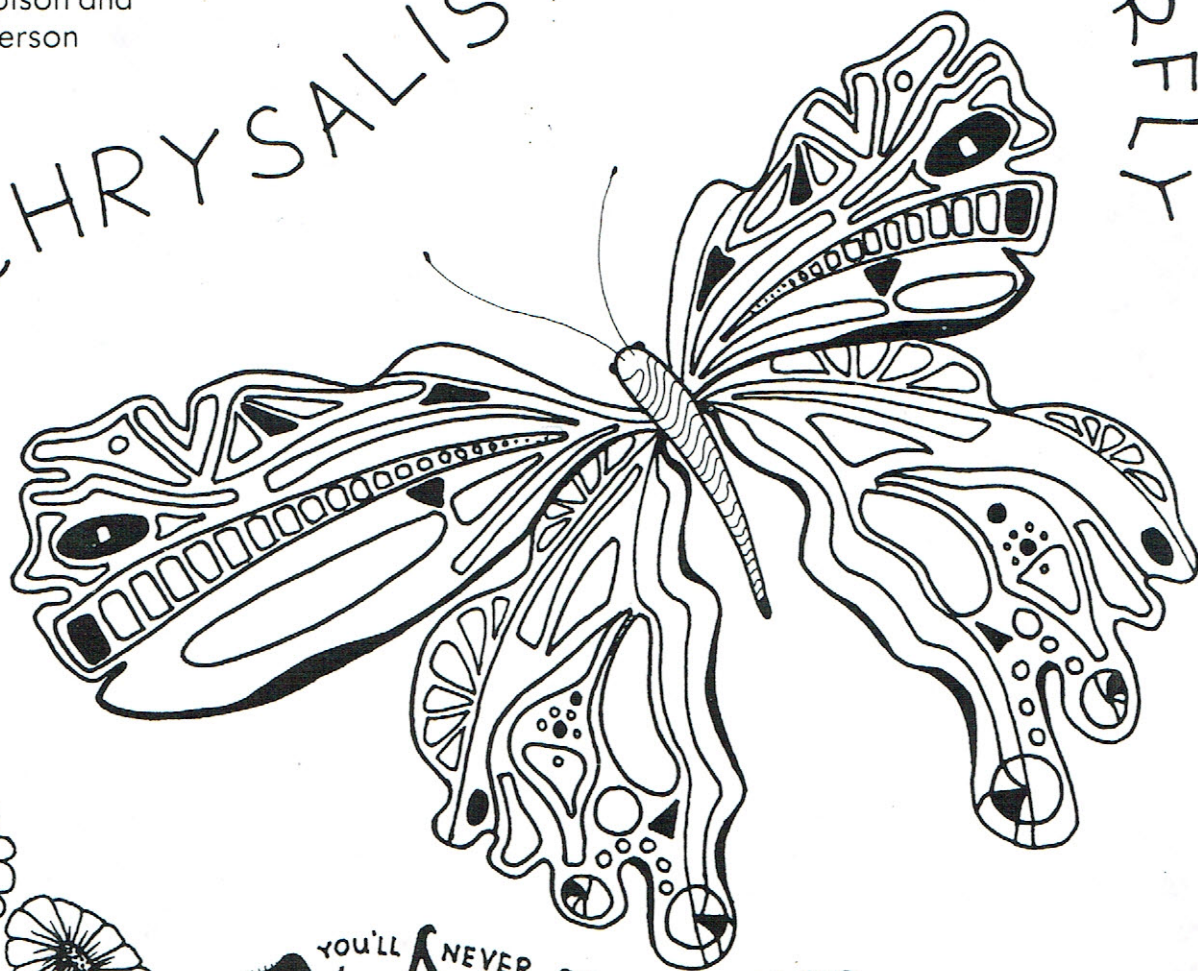


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# CHRYSALIS AND BUTTERFLY



YOU'LL NEVER GET ME UP IN ONE OF THOSE THINGS...





## CHRYSLIS AND BUTTERFLY

Futurism is an ever-expanding space in which we express our relationship to our environment. It is not a science, but an art.

The following is a dance between optimists and pessimists – between love and fear – between entropy and evolution. Now, we humans can see our planet whole, warmed and nurtured by our mother star, the sun – and more of us wonder – *can the human race survive on this planet, that we have over-run, polluted and plundered?*

The pessimists say – *it's too late – the problems have grown too big and the governments too far from the people: you can't fight city hall. It's all set in concrete – there's no way to change the next five years. So let's live for now.*

The optimists who see new possibilities reply – *But you are using an old fashioned model of change: the pre-determined mechanistic clockwork universe of Newton. The world is not a spaceship but a living planet – a biological organism: the Greeks called this the Earth Goddess: Gaia. We humans too are biological organisms and a part of Gaia: the earth mother. We must use biological models of change if we are to understand these living change processes.*

## MORPHOGENESIS, METAMORPHOSIS!

(the process by which a chrysalis becomes a BUTTERFLY). Dynamic – unexpected dramatic forms of change. The chrysalis does not know it will become a butterfly.

The pessimists fear this 'uncertainty' because they cannot predict or control it with their clockwork models. But there is a happier side to uncertainty: everything can change in the twinkling of an eye – for the **BETTER!**

Such a model of change helps us see that as all the *old* systems go into crisis and breakdown (pollution, nuclear weapons, malfunctioning technology, cities that don't work, hunger, wars, monetary crises, depression, etc.), there is also something *new* breaking *through*. It is never a matter of GROWTH VERSUS NO-GROWTH . . . .

. . . but : What is growing

: What is dying

: What must be maintained.

We can *expect* that something is being *born*.

Some futures conferences are dominated by physical scientists who don't understand *living processes*. But as we open up the study of the future to even more people in all fields and include generalists, artists, poets and children – all those with fresh vision – we can enrich the future and its possibilities for all people.

Pessimists say: the world is too dangerous for such dreamers and idealists. *We* must maintain our arsenals or *they* will destroy us.

Optimists respond: on one planet, there is no *we* and *they* – only *us*: the human family. Continuing the old military 'we/they' competition will only lead to destruction. So there is nothing to lose by breaking

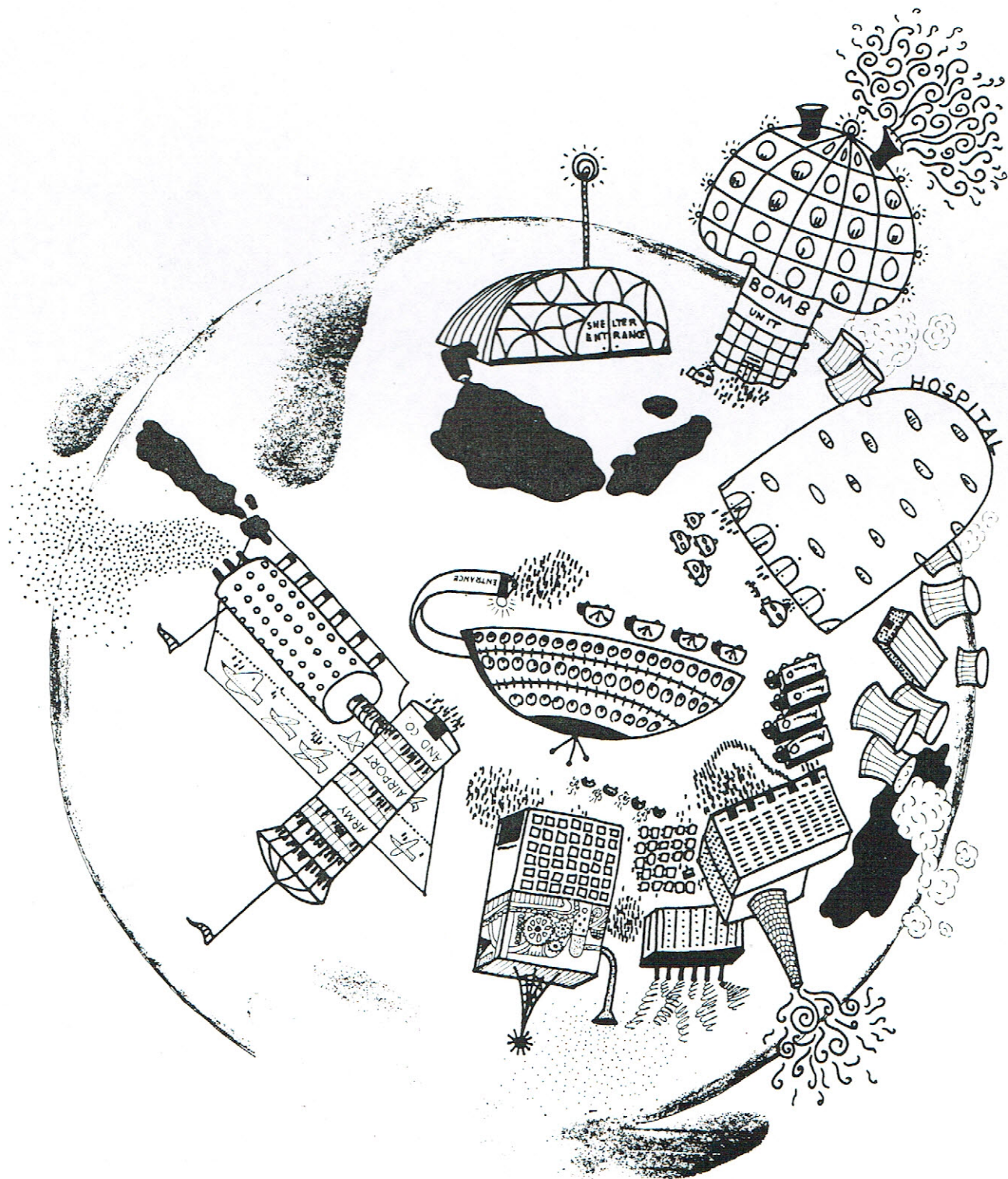
out of the spell of such 'protection racket' leadership because we are all hostages anyway. These leaders say, in effect, 're-elect us because we have created such a dangerous situation that only we know and can manage the dangers that we have created'. This insane illogic must be exposed. Now, only the *idealists* are pragmatic! It is not only a question of being fully aware of all the different levels and systems (this may, if we focus *all* our attention on them, lead to a kind of paralysis), but also – because we care and worry about the future – we must ACT: *where we are, when we can and however we are enmeshed in whatever culture and social system.*

*NOT TO ACT makes us actually sick!* It is clear that we need a new approach to being a change-agent: IT IS BETTER TO *DO* SOMETHING – however small – in one's own life or community than it is to block frustrated energies and get sick. IN A SICK SOCIETY – ACTIVISM KEEPS US *HEALTHY*. AS WE DO THINGS WE LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE BAFFLING SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND ARE ABLE TO LINK WITH OTHERS IN CITIZEN GROUPS AND TACKLE LARGER ISSUES . . .











At the same time – in particular in the older, industrialized societies – there are emerging winning coalitions composed of people for whom the existing society and economy does *not* work. These coalitions arise among the poor; the untrained; the young; the senior citizens; the unemployed; people formerly designated as 'housewives'; members of unions who see labour losing its membership base and who are organizing women, non-white, young people and others hitherto excluded; activists who are re-thinking (and re-ACTING) elements of our society which many people thought of as fixed and unchangeable, such as food and nutrition, housing, learning, law, health, technology, mass-media, energy, consumerism in general and all matters affecting the environment and ecology – including nuclear expenditure, pollution and proliferation in particular. In many cases these activities involve *new social inventions*.

The new coalitions may have individual differences but on the whole they comprise a new world view, that is, a view based less 'on the past', which involves cooperation, mutual aid and ecological tolerance – and which involves a new kind of planetary citizen who '*thinks globally, acts locally*': we do not inherit the world from our parents – WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN.

The idea that change is impossible is simply wrong. It seems that, in fact, many pessimists want to escape. Thus they tell everyone how hopeless things are so as to excuse themselves for not doing anything.

These 'armchair militants' don't really want to make the effort – so they put down efforts of others by insisting that everything is hopeless.

If we use our own efforts as 'good therapy' we can keep going and growing. Our motivation changes. We do not *need* to see instant results from our efforts. We make our own efforts of social innovation and change in recognition that they best express our feelings and our own unfolding as human beings. Thus social activism is a form of self-expression – and an ART FORM.

As we work and play to make the world more desirable we also change ourselves – we discover our potential and capabilities and we learn to say to ourselves:

**Tomorrow** : I will open my eyes and see the world fresh and new . . .  
: I may change the way I eat  
: I can talk to the people I meet in shops, on the bus, in my own occupation – about what really concerns me and interests me  
: I can find problems *intriguing* – as new puzzles. I can learn to enjoy problem-solving with a sense of play and as a game of seeing, living and breathing the world differently . . .  
: I will no longer be intimidated by 'experts'. I will recognize that improving my neighbourhood or street, or organizing to clean up a river or stop a factory polluting are all ART-FORMS, and that all aspects of life are art.

- : I can find out if others in my community share my concern and communicate with them – or join a group.
- : I may invite new friends into my own space to share concerns, share problems, and learn together.
- : As I grow, act and change by altering my corner of the world I will learn and discover A NEW ART OF LIFE.
- : Lastly, I will try always to remember that I *too* am a chrysalis and inside ME, waiting to emerge, is a gorgeous BUTTERFLY!

Hazel Henderson and Simon Nicholson  
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### Acknowledgements

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*The most important thing about the  
future is what you make happen.  
Another important thing about the  
future is what is going to change.*

Tuula Nicholson (1977)