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2020

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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citation for published version (APA)

Seijmonsbergen-Schermer, A. E. (2020). *Intervene or Interfere? Variations in Childbirth Interventions and Episiotomy in Particular*.

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Intervene or Interfere?

Variations in Childbirth Interventions and Episiotomy in Particular

Anna Seijmonsbergen-Schermers



One day, a little girl found a butterfly cocoon. She brought it home and couldn't wait to see the butterfly emerge. After a few days, a small opening appeared in the chrysalis. The child sat with the cocoon and watched in awe as the butterfly struggled for hours to force its body through the opening. She noticed that the butterfly's body seemed too large to get through, and eventually it appeared to stop making any progress at all, as though it had gotten as far as it could go and was too tired to go on. As she watched the butterfly cease its struggle, she became concerned and decided to help the butterfly out. She found a pair of scissors to carefully cut the cocoon away from it. But instead of seeing a bright new butterfly as she expected, the child noticed that it had a swollen body, and small shrivelled wings. She didn't understand that the restriction and struggle required to get through the tiny opening in the chrysalis were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings and that the butterfly needed this struggle in order to come into the world healthy and ready to fly.