

Is there a song that just hits you between the eyes when you hear it? Is there a movie, or a particular aroma that causes you to remember a significant time in your past, and has the power to make you stop and reflect for a while? When I was a teenager, then a young adult, and even during the first half of my marriage, I could not listen to or sing *Puff the Magic Dragon* without my throat getting tight, causing me to force back tears. I remember being laughed at for this, and I can see how it might be funny to see a grown woman get choked up over a child's song.

I was reminded of this song recently, while we were watching *Hook*, with Robin Williams as Peter Pan and Dustin Hoffman as Captain Hook. I shared with my grandsons how the story of *Peter Pan* is very similar to the message of *Puff the Magic Dragon*. Both stories tell how as children, we are full of imagination, playing games and pretending to be whatever we want to be. *Puff the Magic Dragon* is told through the eyes of Jackie Paper's imaginary friend, Puff, who grieves the day when Jackie Paper stopped coming to play with him. Peter Pan is more of a narrative, describing what happens when one grows up, forgetting the wonder and carefree time of childhood. Whether we have forgotten how to fly back to Never-Never Land, or no longer play along Cherry Lane in a land called Honalee, it is with a bit of sadness that we all must grow up.

No, I wouldn't want to remain a child forever. Aside from this idea simply being unrealistic, at some point we must put away childish things. In 1 Corinthians 13:11, Paul said, "When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me." And yet, Jesus also tells us to have faith like a child. I don't believe these two ideas conflict with one another. I believe they go hand in hand.

As adults, we need to have childlike faith, trusting our Heavenly Father in all things. He is our Creator, and we were designed for his pleasure, and for his purpose. I believe it takes a mature adult to acknowledge that we cannot do this life on our own. We need God in every aspect of our lives. He allows us to wake to the next day, just as he can decide our time on earth is over. The very breath in our lungs is by his grace. I believe the rewards we receive on earth are when he is telling us, "Don't forget to laugh. Don't forget to play. Build the castle in the sand, eat that piece of cake."

If you have visited 'my publications' and have seen the *Meet Lisa Jo* character, she is me as a child. When I was in therapy, there was a point when I told my psychologist that I hated Lisa Jo, because she was the part of me that was always in pain, crying to songs, like *Puff the Magic Dragon*. I wanted to be the independent Lisa Jo who liked to travel alone, could work hard and take care of myself. Little Lisa Jo was always bringing me down.

I also shared with my psychologist how I dearly love Christmas. Everything about it. Soon, I started having bad dreams that included my family (who are all gone now), and Christmas. But in every dream, Christmas was a disaster. Something went terribly wrong, or we fought (as we often did), or some sort of tragedy occurred to ruin the holiday. My psychologist literally laughed out loud and asked, "Lisa, don't you see what's happening? You said you hated little Lisa Jo, but she is the part of you that loves Christmas! It is the child inside you that still experiences wonder at Christmastime."

I don't know if I would have ever realized this on my own. I have finally learned to embrace my little Lisa Jo, and I can even look at pictures of myself from when I was a child without hating the face I used to despise. And I don't cry when I hear or sing *Puff the Magic Dragon* anymore. Little Lisa Jo reminds me to keep my childlike faith, and I am so thankful. She is the best part of me.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo

[Puff, the Magic Dragon - YouTube](#)

