



WE 005: The short-witted bear

Dear all. It's good to be back with you again I'm very excited every time we meet, not in person that is, it is sort of whispering to the ear, but indeed it is a meeting

Today I'd like to tell you about my visit to the cinema. You are going to hear a song and I wonder if you know kind of film I saw.

Dum dum de dum dum dum

Dum dum de dum dum dum

I'm busy, busy, busy doing nothing

Doing nothing, that's the life for me

For when I'm doing nothing, I'm busy doing something

Something that suits me to a tee

Because I'm busy, busy doing nothing

I find I never find the time to rest

Being busy doing nothing, I'm busy doing something

Doing nothing is the something I do best

I am pretty sure some of you already know the film I'm talking about. It is a new adaptation of Winnie the Pooh series entitled Christopher Robin. Disney decided to make actor's versions of some their most famous films and the time it was Winnie the Pooh.

I guess we all know the story of this little bear that can speak and is surrounded by a gang of friends who live together in one acre wood, they have all sorts of adventures, that help each other, they promote love, friendship, caring for each other and they develop this great **bond** with Christopher, their human friend.



Christopher, as we meet him in the film, is a grown up man now, he has said goodbye to his childhood friends, unfortunately, he's moved to London with his family - an adorable wife and adorable daughter.

He works hard to provide for his family, he struggles with the everyday problems that most adults have, that is most of us have. What I mean here is lack of time and how to combine your professional life with your family life.

If I were to tell you whether I liked the film or not, I would say that I am in love with this film. Why? Well, it brings back memories from my childhood, from the best years, from the most carefree days, when everything and anything was possible.

I liked this film do much also because it is full of very emotional scenes, it is full of some great, strong quotes and what I enjoyed very much here is the message that the film conveys.

At one time Pooh says *people say nothing is impossible and do nothing every day*. This quote refers to the song that you have listened to at the beginning of this episode and before we discuss what Pooh actually means here I'd like to quote yet a few expressions from this very song.

*For when I'm doing nothing, I'm busy doing something
Something that suits me to a tee*

I wonder if you know what kind of tee I am talking about and of course as I'm pronouncing this word, I am sure that the thing you have in mind is this kind of liquid that we all know very well, that we drink I presume every day. Of course, you have no chance to know the word if you don't know how it is spelled and it is not spelled the same way tea the liquid is. Because this word that I'm using is tee, double e. Of course we know the word tea as a liquid and people drink it with sugar, or with lemon, the British also drink it with milk. Not my favourite variety



have to tell you. But some people like it this way. But this tee that I'm talking about so tee, double e it has nothing to do with the liquid.

A tee is a little thing used by golfers to keep the golf ball in the right position, so what the golfers do is they put the golf ball on it and then they hit it with the bat. So as you see it has nothing to do with the liquid. Tee can also mean a central point of something, and altogether that phrase *something suits me to a tee* means that something suits me perfectly. I guess that you can understand this phrase, this quote without knowing the exact meaning because you can understand it from the context.

When Pooh sings or when Pooh says that he is busy doing nothing, do not believe that he is promoting laziness or that he is promoting being a lazy thing, and staying in bed the whole day. I wouldn't agree here, I wouldn't say that he is a lazy bear actually. But what I would say he is promoting is this living life actually to the fullest and in his understanding it means just deriving pleasure from all the little things in life that you enjoy doing. And this is something we adults very often forget about. So we are actually busy doing something and that's why people tell him, grown-ups tell him that it is impossible to do nothing but in fact Pooh is very good at doing nothing. But what we adults do it is we keep staying busy with all the different activities, very often they are these activities connected with work, with our professional life. As a result, we neglect our families, children, partners, pets, and we just keep on going, climbing up this ladder, and just earning more and becoming these great workers. Of course there is nothing wrong about it, but what Pooh actually tells us to do, and I think this is very wise, although he is this short-witted bear, I think this is very wise, that we should actually stop for a while and think about the things that really make us happy, that we shouldn't neglect our little joys, we shouldn't neglect the hobbies, we shouldn't neglect the things that make us truly happy because if we follow what we truly like we simply become more successful in life and we simply become happier.



As I said, this film is a fantastic thing, I would say it is a must to watch. Because it is full of these very emotional scenes, and I have to tell you it's very easy to cry a little bit, believe me, even if you are a grown-up person. So these emotional scenes make you cry a little bit but this film is also full of very strong quotes, these quotes, these strong words that make you stop and think for a while if what you are doing, if the kind of life that you are leading is actually the right direction.

Another quote, another strong scene in the movie is when Pooh asks Christopher Robin why he is not supposed to be behaving the way he is. I'll tell you how it was. So Christopher Robin is, at the very beginning when he meets Pooh, of course he is super surprised and he is super happy because he thought well I said goodbye to my friends a long time ago when I was a little boy and now these friends have disappeared from my life, they are no longer a part of it. As we find out in the film, they are a part of his life because they came to rescue him, rescue him from himself actually, so when Christopher meets Pooh for the first time in his adult life, he is super happy, he is super surprised but after some time Pooh becomes a little bit too troublesome for him because he is clumsy, because he asks these difficult questions, because he occupies his time and we know that Christopher Robin is very busy. So at one time Christopher decides to take Pooh to the country, to the famous tree and he decides to ask him to go to One Acre Wood, to come back to One Acre Wood because this grown-up Christopher doesn't have actually time and doesn't have a place in his life for mascots from his childhood.

So he needs to take Winnie-the-Pooh to the train and this is how they are going to travel to the countryside. But before they reach the train they have to cover some streets of London and this is the moment when here is a problem because Pooh being himself, as it is a natural thing for him, he start talking to other people, he starts talking to passers-by. I am sure you won't be surprised when you think about the people, their reaction, as it is not a natural thing for us, for adults to see a grown-up man talking to a bear. The people are very surprised and the moment Christopher realizes that there is a problem, he starts talking to Pooh and he says *well, you can't be behaving like that because you are different.* And then Pooh



asks him back and he says *so I shouldn't be me?* Of course the moment this little bear asks this question Christopher realises that this is not what he wanted because you cannot possibly tell anybody to stop being themselves. And this is the moment when we also can realise how important it is to stay yourself. So no matter whether we are tall or short, no matter whether we are rich or not, no matter whether we live in a big city, or in the country, we just need to stay ourselves, because we are enough, we are fine the way we are.

I hope you agree with me because I think it is just this wonderful message, something we can't forget about, something that we actually forget about because very often we pretend to be other people than in fact we really are and the short-witted bear teaches us you're fine even if you are clumsy, even if you are short-witted you are just fine.

Another quote I would like to refer here to is something that Christopher Robin's wife tells him. Of course this wife understands and sees the problem. She is really worried. The point when she gets really sad, really devastated and angry is when Christopher Robin comes back home and he tells her that he is not able to join her and their little daughter and go together to the countryside for the weekend as he promised some time before. So this is a very sad scene, she is sad, she is upset and she comes to him and says *look your life is happening now, right in front of you.* Again, something to think about. Most of us, most of adults make this mistake I mean we think about all the things that are ahead of us, we just postpone most of the things because we hope that there will be some other time, there will be some better time that we actually can do things later on because right now we've got something more important and this more important means that we have to work very hard, that we have to develop our careers, that we have to keep on going. Well, obviously there is nothing wrong about that because we all want to develop and we all want to be wiser, want to just have better jobs but what we can't do is we can't stop living right now. And our children won't wait, and our pets won't wait, partners, husbands, wives, families. Very often when we postpone these activities, we realise after some time that our children are not little children any



more because they have grown up and we have just missed the wonderful days that we could have spent with them.

And here we come to a very modern phrase actually, this expression is life and work balance. I guess you might say that this is a very up-top-date expression and indeed this is true. We talk a lot about life and work balance in today's world because we do have a problem with it and don't know how to keep it. Of course the story comes back to London from the past and it refers to London from the past but I would venture to say that there is a problem, I mean there is a problem like that in Christopher Robin's life. So he doesn't know how to keep this life and work balance and this film teaches us that we should start and think about how to do it.

The super final thing I would like to mention here is something that I would say is the main message of the film and that is keeping the child within yourself. Of course I am not saying that we shouldn't grow up. Obviously we can't stay children the whole life, that's not possible, we should develop, we should say goodbye to our childhood friends sometimes, we should say goodbye to our toys, we should keep going and move forward because otherwise we won't develop, but here is noting wrong with keeping this little child within ourselves and I do believe that the moment Christopher Robin realises that he is allowed to stay this child at least for a few moments then he realises that all the trouble can be solved this way.

His daughter, when she sees that, when she realises that her father understood at least a little bit that there is nothing wrong about being a child, I guess that she develops this stronger bond with him because, of course this is only natural he wants this great future for her, that's why asks her to study a lot, that's why she has to read some good books, but of course he shouldn't forget that she is this little girl and this little girl needs to read the books that interest her actually, she needs to play in the mud, in the open air with her imaginary friends just like he, I mean Christopher Robin used to play when he was a little boy.



Please go to the cinema, really, with your family, with you partners, best friends and indulge in this dream-like reality. Well, obviously it is a dream because there are mascots, there are toys that spend time with us, I mean with the people watching the film and also with Christopher and his family. But indeed it is a reality because the film is set in London with some certain problems, it is happening among adult people.

Listen to the soundtrack and to the great British English. Unfortunately, I wasn't that lucky to see this film in English, I only saw the dubbed version, but there are some nice extracts of it on the Internet that you can watch and listen to.

I would also like to find about your opinions, whether you like the podcast, I hope you do, whether you like spending time with me and English, what interests you, what subjects you would like to listen about. If you like it, please leave a comment, the podcast is available on iTunes and so you can click „like” there if you want to. I would just like to find out about your opinions.

I would also like to thank you for this meeting, and I can't wait to meet you again.



GLOSSARY

bond - więź

adorable - cudowny/ uroczy

(to) struggle with - walczyć/ zmagać się z

tee - podkładka dla piłki golfowej

bat - (*tutaj*) kij golfowy

(to) derive pleasure - czerpać przyjemność

(to) neglect - zaniedbywać

troublesome - kłopotliwy/ dokuczliwy

clumsy - niezdarne

short-witted - o małym rozumku

(to) postpone - przekładać na później

up-to-date - nowoczesny/ modny/ aktualny

(to) venture to say - odważyć się powiedzieć

obviously - oczywiście

in the open air - na świeżym powietrzu