



# Taffy and the Invisible Magic Bandage

(a story for young children to encourage disclosure of a traumatizing event)

Once upon a time there was a puppy named Taffy. Taffy lived with her parents and brothers and sisters with whom she played all da. She wasn't afraid of much at all and everyone said that she was an adventuresome puppy. Taffy often went exploring all around her home, looking under rocks and barking at bugs and spiders She especially loved the evening when the sun went down, because she could chase lightning bugs and howl at the moon with the other animals at night

One day Taffy went on a journey into the deep woods and when she returned, she was different from the old Taffy. She was afraid to go to sleep and afraid to be away from her family. She had nightmares and shook with fear when anyone mentioned the idea of looking under rocks or going out alone at night. She often got stomach aches, and her head hurt a lot, too.

Now her family noticed that Taffy had not been the same since her journey into the deep woods, and they asked the puppy to tell them why she had changed.

But Taffy was unable to talk about her journey, because while she was in the woods, she had gotten an invisible magic bandage over her mouth and was told that if she removed it, she would disappear.

Taffy must have really been afraid that she would disappear because she left the bandage in place, even though everyone around her kept asking her why she was acting so differently. It especially made Taffy afraid when adults asked her questions, because she was sure that if the bandage came off, she would disappear. When the subject of the deep woods came up, she paced and ran around in circles because of all the feelings that she had inside. She turned her back on those who questioned her and felt like she was sick to her *stomach*.

One-day Taffy was stuck by a thorn and she cried in pain. Her family knew that she had been in the thorn bushes (or sticker bushes) and they asked her where she hurt, but the invisible magic bandage kept her from telling them

Those around her tried guessing, "Is it in your leg?" "Is it in your front paw?" "Is it in your ear?" But no one could find out where the thorn was located, and it continued to hurt the puppy more and more Taffy knew it was in her tail, and she couldn't get it out by herself. Her family became more and more upset with Taffy and told her that she must tell them where the thorn was so that they could help her, But Taffy remained silent. She still had the invisible magic bandage in place, and she was more afraid to take it off than she was to keep the thorn in her tail

One day an old dog in the neighborhood, a mean old mutt named Spot, began to bully Taffy. "I'll bet you don't even know how to swim," he said in a nasty way. "Of all the dogs in the

world, you're probably the only one who was ever born who doesn't know what to do in the water. Ha!" On and on went Spot, teasing and poking fun at Taffy, until Taffy began to realize that the old dog was just talking to hear himself talk. Going to the edge of the water (and more than just a little bit scared), Taffy waded in, moved her paws and her body, and went quickly across the pond. She could swim.

The old dog had tried to trick her, but Taffy understood that children can figure out when they are being tricked. Taffy had discovered that she did have the power to figure out the difference between a lie and the truth

After her experience with Spot, Taffy began to wonder about the invisible magic bandage. She began to understand that she had been tricked into thinking that she must never remove it. So, Taffy raised her paw to her mouth. Carefully she pulled at the bandage to get it off. It hurt a little as it came off, but Taffy DID NOT DISAPPEAR.

With a great feeling of relief at being rid of the bandage, she ran home and told her family all about it. Then she told them where the thorn had been stuck in her tail and asked their help in removing it. She had the thorn in her tail for so long that it hurt a little as it was being removed, but she felt relief *ONCE IT WAS OUT!*

Soon after that, Taffy went back to being her old self, chasing after lightning bugs and looking under rocks. She found that it was easier to sleep; she stopped having nightmares and wasn't afraid to be alone anymore

And to make sure that she never got an invisible magic bandage again, Taffy told everyone all about the journey into the deep woods and how afraid she had been to talk about it. And the more she told the truth, the safer and more powerful she felt. Taffy had discovered that the invisible magic bandage was not magic at all - it was only there to keep her quiet. Taffy had learned a lesson that she would always remember: talking to trusted adults who protect children helped her to feel powerful and safe.

Nancy Davis, Ph.D.,  
Karen Custer, LCSW-C

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