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"If you are the parent of a child with autism, perhaps you have searched long and hard for that one thing, the quick fix, the magic answer, only to discover it does not exist."

So begins Gayle Nobel's latest book, "Breathe: 52 Oxygen-Rich Tools for Loving and Living Well with Autism" (Desert Beach Publications, id="mce_marker"7, paperback). In 52 short, breezily written chapters, Nobel identifies each tool, from appreciation to inspiration to heart's desire, amplifying her definitions with real-life anecdotes and specific strategies for animating them. "Who is your rock? Who holds your hand?" she asks at the end of her story on appreciation. "Look that person in the eye and express your heartfelt appreciation."

Each of the short chapters resounds with Nobel's positive energy, and her hard-earned knowledge of how to cope with the needs of a son with autism, two daughters and a loving husband. The book is further enhanced with beautiful photos by Nobel's daughter, Rachel.

Stop, slow down, find the easy way, breathe. Nobel distills her practical advice into accessible sound bites that resonate.

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clients experience exhaustion, frustration, depression, anxiety, insomnia, health issues, etc. I highly recommend "Breathe" as the perfect antidote to the inevitable stress that can come with caring for others.

I have seen firsthand the transformative power of Gayle's oxygen-rich tools in my clients and myself—including "Gratitude in Action", "Laugh", "Live Now", and so many more. Each tool is simple, do-able, and yet so meaningful and powerful. Each one takes only a moment and can easily fit into a busy schedule. One of my favorite tools is "Rest". As Gayle points out, it is essential to pause and rest at least once each day, even for just a moment. This provides us the fuel we need to continue going and helping others. One of my clients recently began pausing for 2-3 minutes in between her busy tasks to close her eyes and breathe. Her stress levels have come down tremendously! As Gayle teaches us, small moments add up and can truly transform our lives in beautiful, positive and surprising ways.

Reading "Breathe" is easy to fit into anyone's busy schedule. You can be uplifted in a matter of moments with one easy-to-read, short story and oxygen-rich tool. Or, you can sit and read several at a time. In today's busy world, where fewer of us have time to sit and read, "Breathe" is a wonderful answer. Despite my busy schedule, I found myself craving a moment to sit and read even one chapter of "Breathe". And each time I did, I felt uplifted, energized, and had a refreshing perspective on life.

I cannot thank Gayle Nobel enough for creating this divinely inspired, uplifting book and toolkit. It is a must-have, not only to read once, but to refer back to any time you need a change in perspective.

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"It's all about attitude"

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Kathy Almeida is my dear friend, mentor, and co-founder (with yours truly) of a unique women's group called Wild Outrageous Women. She has achieved one of her life long dreams of becoming a published author! She and her friend Gayle Nobel have co-authored and self published their book *It's All About Attitude* loving and living well with autism.

Kathy and Gayle met at a workshop for their sons fourteen years ago and have only met in person a handful of times. They have been long distance support for each other through their young son's home programs, training volunteers, and helping their adult sons find their way in the world. Kathy lives in Belleview, Florida and Gayle makes her home in Phoenix, Arizona.

These amazing women began their book six years ago and met once in 2004 to brainstorm and flesh out their vision. Their editor Andrea Beaulieu Creates completes the virtual triangle. Desert Beach Publications has come to fruition completely virtually! The collaboration process, editing, rewriting, proofs, feedback, design, and layouts were all accomplished electronically.

I was honored to be asked to write a quote about Kathy and her son Mark for the book's upcoming website:

For thirteen years Kathy and Mark have graced me with their friendship and the gift of unconditional love. Kathy is the most inspirational, authentic, and loving, mom, friend, and person I know! Her smile and her eyes convey her joy of life and living. And then of course there's her laugh, which is an irresistible invitation to connect! The Almeidas laugh often! She walks her talk; it is all about attitude and so is Kathy! She and Mark are mirrors for each other, and the world, by being love in action.

It's All About Attitude is about living and loving unconditionally, authentically, and embracing every challenge as a gift directly from the Universe. Attitude is the key to accepting the gift of a child with autism or the stranger who judges him. Kathy and Gayle deliver heartfelt, inspiring, and practical lessons that life is all about attitude. I am grateful for their dedication to see this book become a reality.

People who are successful in the roles of VA, parent, author, coach, business owner, or spouse understand that attitude is essential. People who excel at life and living have taken their positive attitude to the next level. They create their success with their attitude and intention!

Attitude check in: are you focusing on what you don't want in your life or are you thinking about what you do want to create in your life? What would it take to shift your thoughts? It's all about attitude!

Note: This article originally appeared in the Virtual Wire.com.

Older - and Wiser

"I look the same - only older."

So Gayle Nobel described herself in an e-mail exchange to arrange a date to meet. We had last seen each other 17 years before, when I wrote a story about Gayle and her son, Kyle. Now we were getting together to talk about a book she had co-authored with another mother of an autistic son. It was time to catch up on her life - and Kyle's.

At the local Starbucks on a recent afternoon, I immediately recognized Gayle - same pretty face framed with dark curly hair, but with an arresting maturity.

When we met in 1990, Gayle and her husband, Neil, were immersed in a structured program for Kyle, then 6, developed by Barry and Suzi Kaufman at their Option Institute in Sheffield, Mass. My story, "Connecting with Kyle," detailed their efforts.

The Nobels persevered with the intensive at-home therapy until Kyle was 10, even as their family grew to include daughters Rachel and Leah, now 20 and 18. Eventually, Gayle sought other options. At age 17, Kyle was enrolled in a special class in the Scottsdale School District; at age 23, no longer eligible for public school services, he participates in a private young-adult day care program organized by Gayle and a group of other parents.

Autism, a developmental disorder that interferes with development in language, intuitive thought and social interaction, presents a baffling display of symptoms and behaviors. Diagnosed in one in 150 children, it has no known cause or cure. So parents like the Nobels are on a continuous search for new therapies, new modalities and new ways to learn to cope. And to accept their child.

"You want to fix him," Gayle says poignantly, expressing common sentiments of parents of a child with mental or physical disabilities. "But you have to learn to come to terms with the child you've got."

Gayle says that giving up the need to "fix" Kyle has opened the door to loving him just as he is. She describes Kyle's progress with a quiet appreciation for how far he - and she - have come.

She writes in her book "It's All About Attitude: Loving and Living Well with Autism" (Desert

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Beach Publications, \$14.95 paperback): "We are now living the future I worried about for so long. There are no more age deadlines to meet. The developmental windows, if they ever really existed, have faded into the background. The doors of possibilities are wide open, and we have plenty of time to explore them.

"What if my attitude really is the only thing on this journey that matters?"

What if, indeed.

Note: This article originall appeared in the Phoenix Jewish News.

Parent's Perspective

□ **It's All About Attitude** - *by Gayle Nobel*

Besides autism, my 22 year-old son Kyle also experiences cyclical anxiety episodes each month when the moon is almost full. The doctors have yet to come up with an explanation/diagnosis or even a permanent treatment. These episodes greatly diminish the quality of Kyle's life as he is confined to the house during these weeks and in essence, so are we. It would be easy to enter the doctor's office in fighting mode, demanding immediate answers and solutions. Then I remind myself that medicine is not an exact science especially when you are dealing with something as complex as the brain in an individual that already has one that is wired differently. So my goal is to communicate my observations and concerns as clearly and effectively as possible and remember that this is a process. While our doctor is an expert on medical treatments for anxiety or whatever this mysterious version of Kyle is, I remain the expert on Kyle. We are a team and hopefully, treating each other with equal amounts of respect for our roles in the process of helping Kyle.

It's important that I not be afraid to speak up even if it's the middle of the night on a Saturday

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night and Kyle's level of agitation and anxiety is at an all time high after recently beginning a new medication. I appreciate that the doctor does not tell me to give it more time or question whether I am sure this is a reaction to the medication. She calmly offers solutions and I begin to calm as well. I don't take my frustration out on this human being on the other end of the phone because she is on my team.

As usual, "it's all about attitude!" My attitude is going to determine my experience. If I want this to be a positive one where both myself and the doctor are working as partners to find solutions, I am aware that I want to remain patient, helpful and calm. I am even striving for acceptance, while trying to find solutions to help Kyle maintain his mental health even when the moon is full.

- Gayle Nobel is a Raising Special Kids volunteer and coauthor of the newly released book "It's All About Attitude - Loving and Living Well with Autism"

Note: This article originally appeared in Raising Special Kids newsletter. For more information, visit www.raisingpecialkids.org